



## SNAPSHOT OF FALSE NARRATIVES DURING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS 2025

**Period: 7th and 8th of May**

### Summary

This monitoring exercise identified a range of misleading and fabricated narratives that circulated during and after the recent local government elections in Sri Lanka. The findings highlight sustained disinformation campaigns aimed at distorting public perceptions of the electoral process, undermining political cohesion, and aggravating ethnic and geopolitical sensitivities. Key trends observed include the dissemination of misleading and unofficial election results, with manipulated figures and speculative forecasts shared by partisan or anonymous accounts.

Additionally, false narratives linked to Indo-Sri Lanka relations circulated, including fabricated migration figures and claims involving high-level political negotiations. Unverified claims also targeted the National People's Power (NPP), such as alleged defections, internal divisions, and the resignation of the Prime Minister, all of which lacked credible evidence. The circulation of misleading content intended to cause ethnic tension, including recirculated or fabricated videos designed to provoke hostility between communities, was another key trend. These findings indicate that disinformation actors strategically exploit political, ethnic, and geopolitical issues to influence public opinion and erode trust in democratic processes and institutions.

### Introduction

The post-election information environment in Sri Lanka has been characterized by heightened disinformation activity, with misleading narratives spreading across multiple platforms including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. This monitoring initiative sought to document and analyze prominent examples of such narratives during the election, the silent period, and the post-election phase. The report focuses on four main categories of disinformation: misleading and unofficial election results, false narratives relating to Indo-Sri Lanka relations, unverified claims of internal divisions in the National People's Power (NPP), and misleading narratives attempting to provoke ethnic tensions. By examining these trends, the report aims to highlight the strategies employed by disinformation actors and to underscore the risks such narratives pose to political stability, social cohesion, and public trust in institutions.

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