

Reporting period: October to December 2025



# **Adversarial Narratives Targeting the Rohingya Community in Bangladesh**

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# Executive Summary

Between October and December 2025, online discourse about the Rohingya community was shaped less by humanitarian realities and more by politics, elections, and security concerns. Across Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok in Bangladesh and the Indian state of West Bengal, the Rohingya were often invoked during moments of tension – border clashes, voter roll debates, local crime reports, and administrative disputes.

This report analyzed 27,022 posts collected over three months. More than one in four posts mentioning the Rohingya were adversarial. Social media actors relied on ridicule, exclusion, demographic fears, and claims that framed Rohingyas as criminals or security threats. Slurs and dismissive language were common. Explicit calls for harm appeared less frequently, but when they did, they were stark.

Facebook hosted the largest volume of adversarial content - almost one in three. YouTube carried fewer such posts but generated far higher engagement, especially for misinformation. TikTok showed a different pattern: fewer hostile posts overall, but repeated use of sexualized and misleading titles targeting Rohingya women.

Individual users produced the vast majority of adversarial posts. However, media and political actors often achieved higher engagement per post, especially when narratives intersected with elections or security incidents. Political actors had the highest proportion of misinformation and hate speech within their adversarial content.

False claims linking Rohingyas to militant training, demographic takeover, or political manipulation circulated repeatedly. Unrelated videos were repurposed, AI-generated videos spread exclusionary narratives, and individual incidents were attributed to the whole community in gross generalisation. In Bangladesh, the word “Rohingya” was sometimes used as an insult in unrelated political or social disputes, reflecting a normalization of exclusionary language.

Supportive and humanitarian narratives were present, but adversarial content generally received greater visibility. Platform dynamics favored emotionally charged framing, particularly during politically sensitive moments.

Protecting this community now requires attention not only to physical security, but also to the digital information ecosystem. For UNHCR and its partners, it means strengthening real-time narrative monitoring, expanding partnerships with local media and civic stakeholders and community leaders, engaging platforms to address high-risk content more consistently, and investing in proactive communication that reinforces accurate, evidence-based information before harmful narratives take hold.

# 1. Introduction

From October 2025 to January 2026, online discussions about Rohingya refugees unfolded against a backdrop of political change and regional uncertainty. This report traces how those narratives evolved across Bangladesh and, to a lesser extent, India's Bangla-speaking West Bengal. It builds on earlier monitoring conducted between December 2024 and February 2025.

Bangladesh hosts more than one million Rohingya refugees who fled violence in Myanmar's Rakhine State from 2017 onwards (UNHCR, 2026). Most live in densely populated camps in Ukhiya and Teknaf in Cox's Bazar, while around 35,000 have been relocated to Bhasan Char (UNHCR, 2025). The crisis remains one of the largest protracted displacement situations in the world. Funding gaps continue to strain humanitarian services, and renewed violence in Rakhine over the past 18 months has pushed tens of thousands more people across the border, adding pressure to an already fragile protection environment (UNHCR, 2025).

The earlier monitoring took place during a turbulent period. Bangladesh was six months into a popular uprising, with a newly sworn-in interim government pursuing reforms amid mounting tensions over law and order and the country's political future (Khasru, 2025). Across the border, West Bengal had just emerged from a heated Lok Sabha campaign in which the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Trinamool Congress repeatedly invoked Rohingyas and so-called "Muslim infiltrators" as part of a polarised electoral contest (India Hate Lab, 2025).

This round unfolded in a different, more domestically focused moment. Public and media attention shifted toward internal political developments, particularly the February 12, 2026, general elections, reducing the visibility of the Rohingya crisis in national debate. In India, Rohingya-related discourse remained closely tied to electoral politics. The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in West Bengal became a focal point of online debate. As attention turned toward the Legislative Assembly elections expected in April–May 2026, the "Rohingya migrant" continued to feature prominently in arguments about identity, citizenship and demographic change (Kumari, 2025).

Despite this domestic focus, several developments kept the Rohingya crisis a flashpoint in online conversations: Bangladesh's calls for repatriation at international forums in New York and Doha; the announcement of a new USD 96 million response budget (The Report, 2025); a major fire in Camp 16 in Cox's Bazar (Rising, 2026); deteriorating camp conditions (Cole-Schmidt, 2025); isolated crime reports; and armed group activity involving ARSA and the RSO amid fighting in Myanmar (Singh, 2026). Each resurfaced familiar security fears, humanitarian anxieties and conspiracy-driven narratives across social media.

Developed with support from the Association for Progressive Communications (APC), this report is intended to inform the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and its partners as they design responses to online harms affecting Rohingya refugees. It maps key narrative trends, identifies trigger events and actor patterns, and aims to strengthen coordinated, evidence-based engagement in digital spaces.



## 2. Methodology

This section outlines the research methodology, explains the data collection process across Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok, and describes how adversarial and MDH (misinformation, disinformation, and hate speech) narratives concerning the Rohingya community were organized and analysed.

### *Monitoring*

Different collection methods were used for each platform. An automated content scraper was deployed on YouTube API for data collection. Facebook data was gathered through a daily search-and-scrape process based on predefined keywords. For TikTok, researchers conducted site-specific Google searches using selected keywords and manually documented relevant results. Posts were reviewed individually for relevance and keyword presence. All collected data were later compiled, cleaned, and standardized for analysis.

The collection process relied on a curated list of Bangla spellings and Banglish variations of the term “Rohingya”. This included multiple spellings in Bangla script, such as “রো\*হি\*ঙ্গা” “রোহিঙ্গো”, “রোহিংগো”, and “রোয়াইংগো”. Any post containing these keywords was stored in structured spreadsheets for further review.

### *Categorization*

The study applied a dual analytical framework to interpret the dataset. First, the Adversarial Narrative Framework was used to identify adversarial content across three core categories: (1) negative targeting, (2) sensationalization, and (3) in-group and out-group framing. This approach allows the analysis to move beyond narrow definitions of misinformation or hate speech, focusing instead on how adversarial framing reinforces exclusionary or hostile discourse.

Each of the three categories was further divided into eleven subcategories to examine how harm is structured and expressed. In-group and out-group framing included content that portrayed the Rohingya as outsiders, associated them with crime, promoted discriminatory narratives, or called for violence. Negative targeting included slurs, ridicule, and content designed to seed distrust. Sensationalization covered fear-based narratives and sweeping generalizations intended to provoke strong emotional reactions.

After identifying adversarial posts, researchers conducted a second layer of review to assess whether the content met the criteria for misinformation or hate speech. The terms are defined as:

- **Misinformation:** Refers to false, misleading, or exaggerated claims.

- **Hate Speech:** Refers to explicit or implicit messages that encourage hostility, exclusion, or harm toward the Rohingya community.

## *Actor Classification*

Narratives about the Rohingya community come from many different actors, ranging from individual users to large institutions, each shaped public understanding in a unique way. These actors share both adversarial and non-adversarial content, influenced by personal views, institutional goals, and organizational interests. The study identified key categories of actors involved in these narratives:

- **Media:** Actors are classified as media if a media or news company is mentioned on their profile and has a working website.
- **Individual:** Refers to personal profiles and independent actors. Actors are classified as individuals if profiles are under a person's own name, including personal vlogs, posts, pages, and personal business pages.
- **State:** Only official government pages, verified institutional accounts, and pages or channels managed by state-owned departments, institutions, or government ministries fall under this category.
- **Political:** Actors are classified as political if the account represents an official party page, political leader, political fan page, local political group page, or any page/channel named after a recognized political party, party symbol, or prominent political leader.
- **Religious:** Includes accounts primarily spreading religious content. This covers religious teachings, sermons, faith-based discussions, and content promoting specific religious beliefs or practices.
- **Other:** Refers to NGOs, advocacy groups, and unofficial organizations. Accounts managed by verified national or international NGOs, area-based community groups, or youth organizations are classified under this category.

## *Review*

The study integrated quantitative and structured qualitative content analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dataset. The quantitative component measured the frequency and distribution of harmful content over time and across platforms. The qualitative component involved systematic narrative coding, examining how adversarial themes were framed, the contexts in which they appeared, and which actors were associated with specific narrative types.

Each Hate speech content was evaluated using a three-level severity scale. Lower-severity posts included discriminatory or offensive language, whereas more serious cases involved dehumanizing or hostile rhetoric. The highest severity level consisted of content that encouraged exclusion or explicitly promoted harm.

Content was treated as misinformation that was already debunked by professional fact-checkers or contradicted by media reports. In many cases, reviewers also conducted independent verification.

Three independent researchers reviewed and categorized the data using the predefined framework to reduce potential bias. In cases of disagreement, the reviewers discussed their assessments and reached a consensus decision. A subset of posts was evaluated through blind review, where identifying details such as the original source or account type were withheld during assessment. In addition, the full coded dataset underwent one round of independent audit to check for consistency and alignment with the classification criteria before final analysis.

## ***Limitations***

The study has several limitations. Data collection relied on selected keywords in Bangla and Banglish. While this helped define the scope of monitoring, it may have excluded posts that used alternative spellings, slang, or coded language. As a result, some indirect or less explicit narratives may not have been captured.

Facebook data was collected manually due to restrictions on automated scraping and included only publicly available posts. Content shared in private groups or personal profiles was not accessible and is therefore not reflected in the dataset.

For YouTube, data was collected using automated tools. Although this enabled systematic monitoring, the monthly sample size remained small relative to the overall volume of content on the platform. The tools were designed to analyse themes and tone rather than measure total scale, which limited the scope of quantitative assessment.

TikTok content was gathered using site-specific Google searches (“site:tiktok.com”) with selected keywords. All relevant results were included in the dataset. This method may have captured some content that was only partially related to the study.

Finally, content analysis involves interpretation. Although reviewers followed a shared framework and review process to ensure consistency, some variation in judgment is unavoidable.

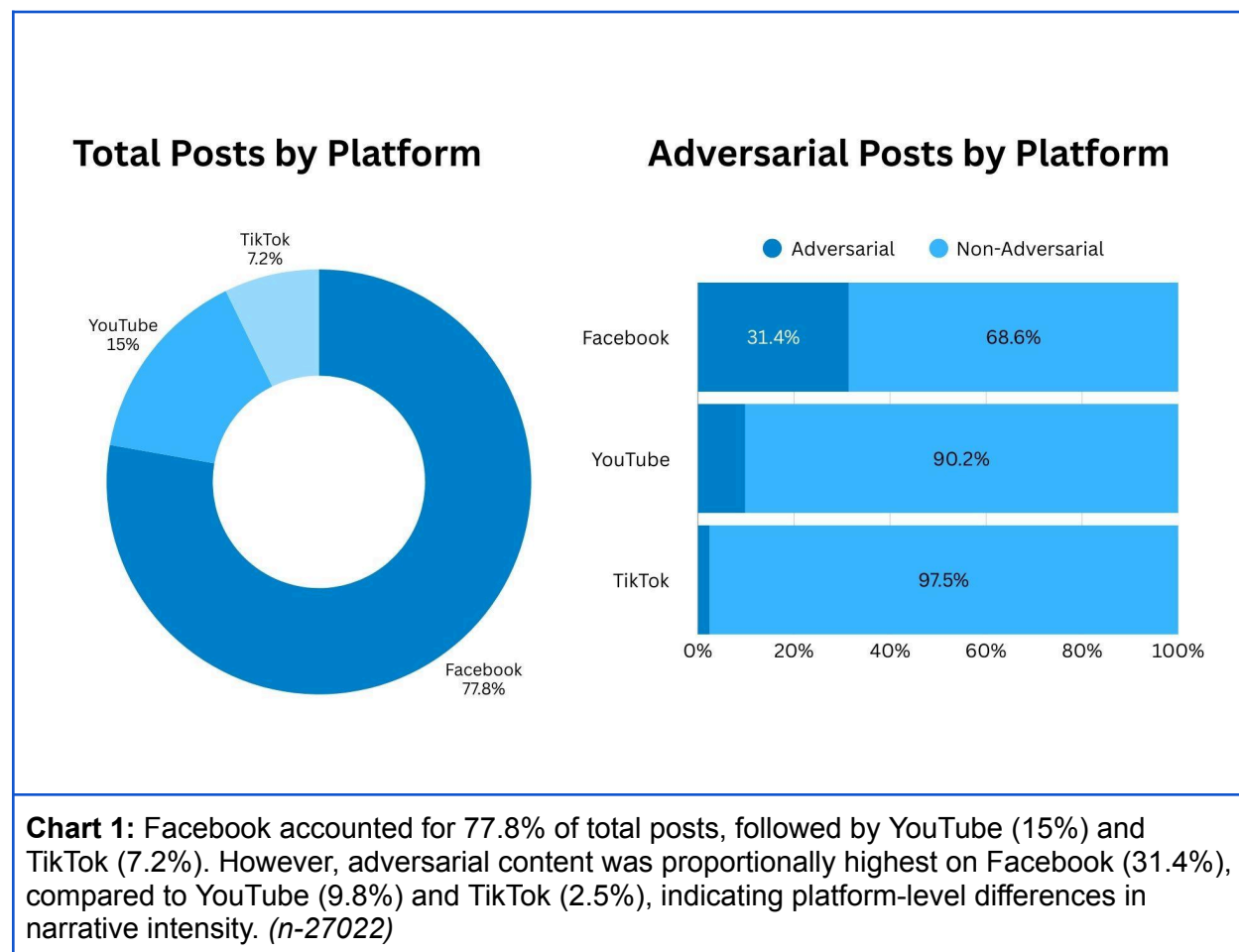
## **4. Adversarial Narratives: Trends and Dynamics**

This section examines platform-level trends in Rohingya-related online content across Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok, based on keyword-driven data collection. It focuses on overall volume, the distribution of adversarial content, and how different platforms contribute to the spread of harmful narratives.

***More than a quarter of Rohingya-related posts were classified as adversarial with the majority published on Facebook.***

The monitoring documented 27,022 social media posts referencing the Rohingya across Facebook, YouTube and TikTok between October and December 2025. Across platforms, 26% of collected posts were categorised as adversarial, while 74% were non-adversarial. Most content was sourced from Facebook, which accounted for just under four in five posts overall. YouTube contributed around 15%, with TikTok making up the remaining small share.

Within Facebook itself, nearly one-third of posts were adversarial. On YouTube, it accounted for just under one in ten posts, while on TikTok it represented around 2% of total content.

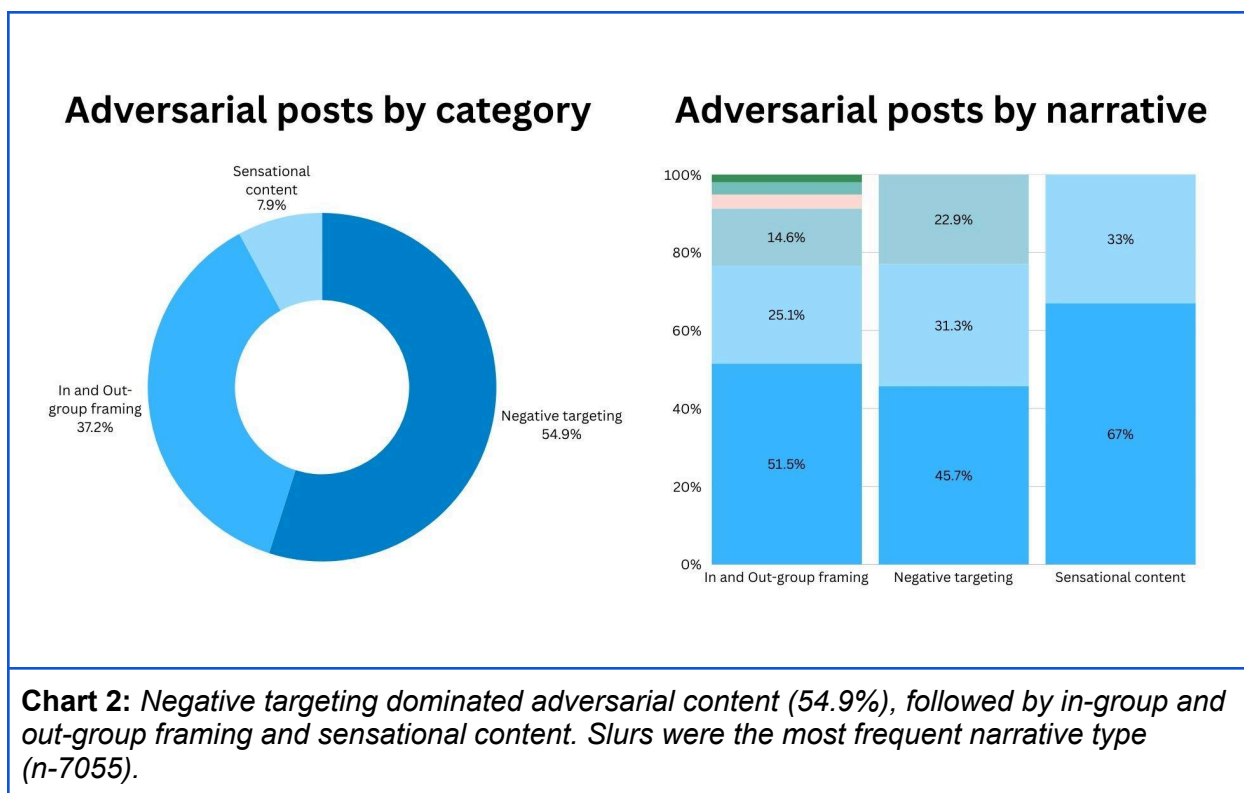


### ***Slurs, exclusion and sowing distrust were the central elements of adversarial narratives.***

Adversarial posts were grouped into three narrative categories: Negative Targeting, In-Group/Out-Group framing, and Sensationalization.

Across all three platforms, negative targeting was the most prevalent adversarial category, on each platform accounting for 55% of adversarial posts. Negative targeting refers to posts that use dismissive, mocking or hostile language towards the Rohingya, including slurs, ridicule and content that seeks to cast the community as untrustworthy or illegitimate. In-group and out-group framing made up a further 37.2%, while sensational content accounted for 7.9% of adversarial material recorded during the monitoring period.

Slurs constituted the single largest narrative sub-category, accounting for 25.1% of adversarial posts. This was followed by othering (19.2%), where Rohingya refugees were portrayed as outsiders, and content seeding distrust (17.2%), which questioned the community's intentions, legitimacy or presence. Ridiculing language, including mockery or sarcasm, accounted for 12.6% of posts.

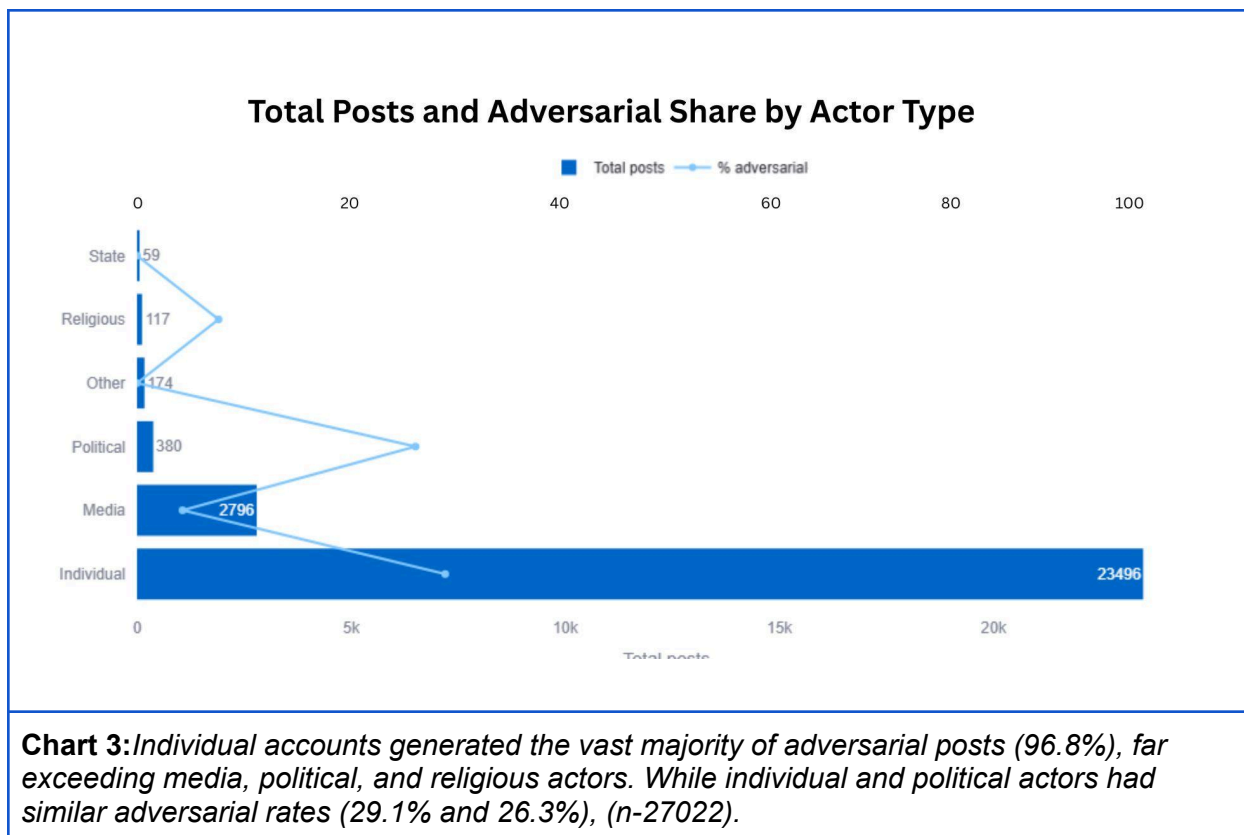


Narratives framing the Rohingya in explicitly exclusionary or harmful terms appeared less frequently. Discriminatory framing accounted for 9.3%, while criminalisation, which associated the community with illegal or threatening behaviour, made up 5.4%. Sweeping generalisations (5.3%) and fearmongering (2.6%) represented smaller shares. Explicit calls for harm (1.3%), dehumanisation (1.2%) and stereotyping (0.7%) were comparatively rare.

### ***Adversarial discourse is predominantly individual user-driven***

Across all platforms, and not surprisingly, individual accounts were responsible for the vast majority of adversarial posts, accounting for 96.8% of adversarial content. Media accounts accounted for 1.7%, political actors 1.4%, and religious actors 0.1%.

However, adversarial posting rates varied by actor type. Individual accounts had an adversarial post rate of 29.1%, while political actors recorded a similar rate at 26.3%, despite producing far fewer posts overall. By contrast, media accounts recorded a much lower adversarial rate (4.3%), while religious actors recorded 7.7%.

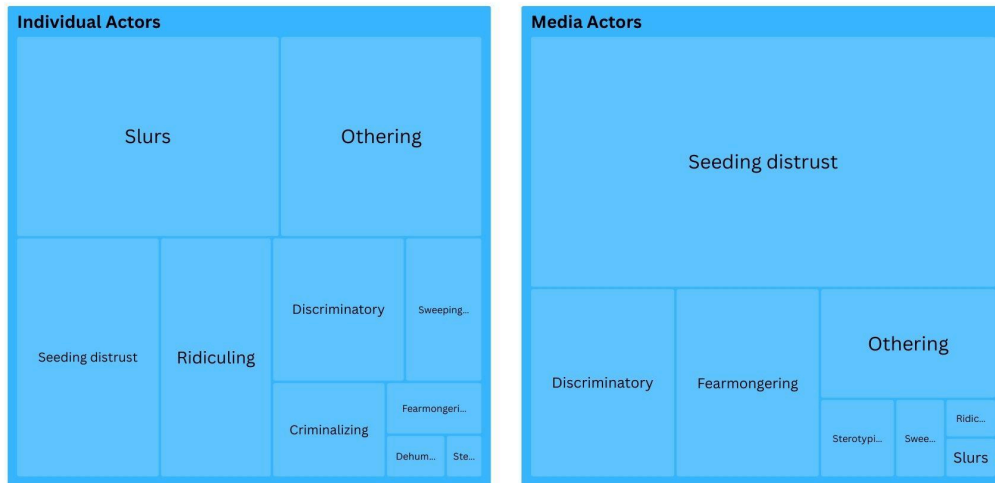


Across all three adversarial categories, individual accounts accounted for more than 95% of posts, regardless of category. Political actors, while accounting for a small share of total posts, appeared more frequently in negative targeting (1.5%) and in- and out-group framing (1.3%) than in sensational content (1.4%).

At the narrative level, individual accounts dominated every narrative type, accounting for more than 90% of posts in nearly all categories, including 100% of dehumanising narratives and over 98% of slurs and othering.

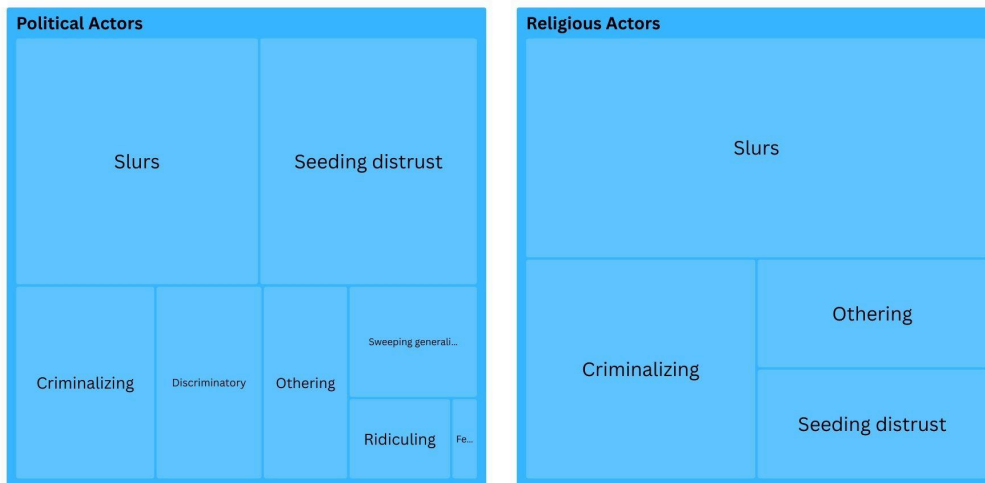
In media-produced content, seeding distrust accounted for just over half of adversarial narratives (50.4%), a substantially higher concentration than seen in other narrative types within the same actor group.

### Adversarial narrative distribution by Individual and Media Actor



**Chart 4:** Among individual actors, slurs and othering were the most dominant narrative types, followed by seeding distrust and ridiculing content (n=6827). In contrast, media actors concentrated heavily on seeding distrust, with comparatively smaller shares of discriminatory, fearmongering, and othering narratives (n=119).

### Adversarial narrative distribution by Political and Religious actors



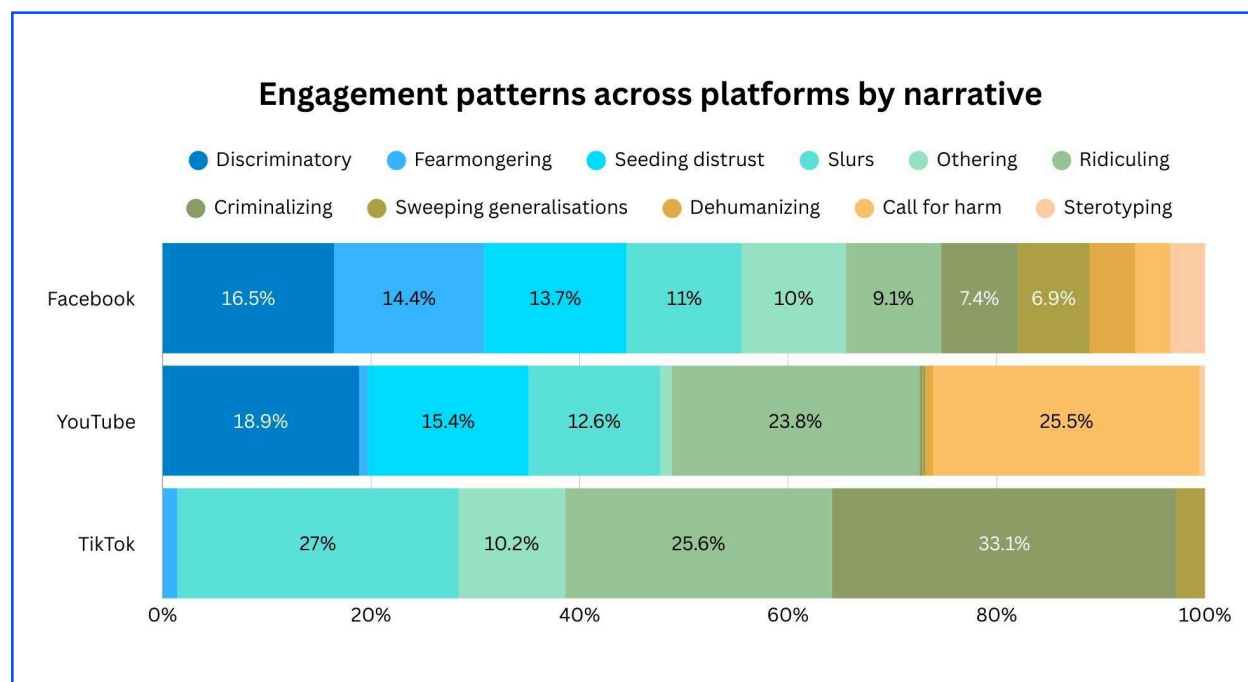
**Chart 5:** Among political actors, slurs and seeding distrust were the most prominent adversarial narratives, followed by criminalizing and discriminatory framing (n=100). In contrast, religious actors concentrated largely on slurs and criminalizing narratives, with smaller shares of othering and seeding distrust content (n=9).

Political actors showed a narrower spread, with slurs (29%) and seeding distrust (26%) accounting for more than half of their adversarial content. Criminalising narratives also appeared more frequently among political actors (13%) than among individuals or media accounts.

Religious actors accounted for very small absolute volumes, though within that limited set, slurs made up nearly half of adversarial narratives, followed by criminalising and othering narratives.

### ***Engagement patterns varied sharply by platform and narrative type***

Engagement with adversarial narratives varied substantially across platforms, with clear outliers. On Facebook, where average interactions were comparatively moderate, discriminatory posts recorded the highest engagement (188 interactions on average), followed by fearmongering (164) and seeding distrust (156), while calls for harm and stereotyping attracted the lowest levels of interaction (38 each).



**Chart 6:** *Engagement patterns varied across platforms and narratives. On Facebook, discriminatory and fearmongering content generated comparatively higher engagement (n=6610). On YouTube, othering and dehumanizing narratives received substantial interaction (n=397). TikTok engagement was concentrated around ridiculing and criminalizing narratives, indicating platform-specific amplification trends (n=48).*

On YouTube, engagement was markedly higher and more uneven: calls for harm averaged 12,847 interactions and ridiculing 11,951, far exceeding other categories, with discriminatory (9,488) and seeding distrust (7,764) also performing strongly; by contrast, criminalising (156) and sweeping generalisations (154) generated limited engagement. On TikTok, engagement was more concentrated but lower overall, with criminalising narratives averaging 667 interactions, followed by slurs (545) and ridiculing content (517), while fearmongering (28) and sweeping generalisations (55) attracted comparatively little interaction.

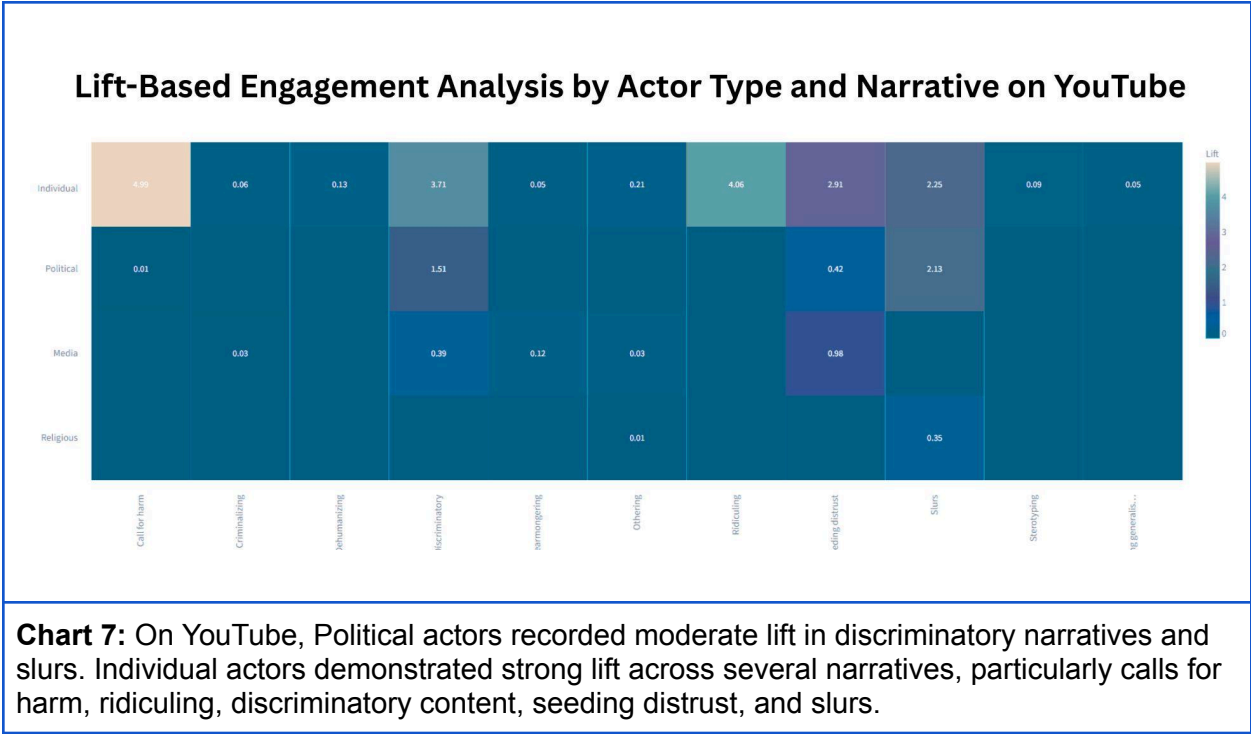


In contrast, other high-volume narratives attracted far lower engagement. Slurs averaged 601 interactions (lift 1.09), only marginally above baseline, while seeding distrust (552; lift 1.00) and discriminatory content (565; lift 1.03) performed roughly in line with typical individual posts. Narratives such as othering (130; lift 0.24), criminalising (85; lift 0.15) and dehumanising (70; lift 0.13) generated substantially lower interaction relative to the individual average.

***Not all adversarial narratives attracted equal attention; actor type mattered.***

Engagement with adversarial content varied significantly depending on who produced it, where it was published, and the type of narrative used. For example, Media actors generated the highest average engagement per post at 1,290 interactions across platforms, despite contributing only 1.7% of total adversarial posts. In contrast, individual accounts produced 97% of all adversarial content but averaged 483 interactions per post, reflecting high volume but comparatively lower per-post amplification.

On YouTube, engagement lift patterns show sharper concentration within specific actor-narrative combinations. Individual actors demonstrate exceptionally high lift in calls for harm (lift 4.99). But there were only 8 posts for this category and one AI-generated video received more than 100,000 views, which generated this high lift. Individual users also strongly overperform in ridiculing (4.06), discriminatory (3.71), seeding distrust (2.91), and slurs (2.25) narratives.

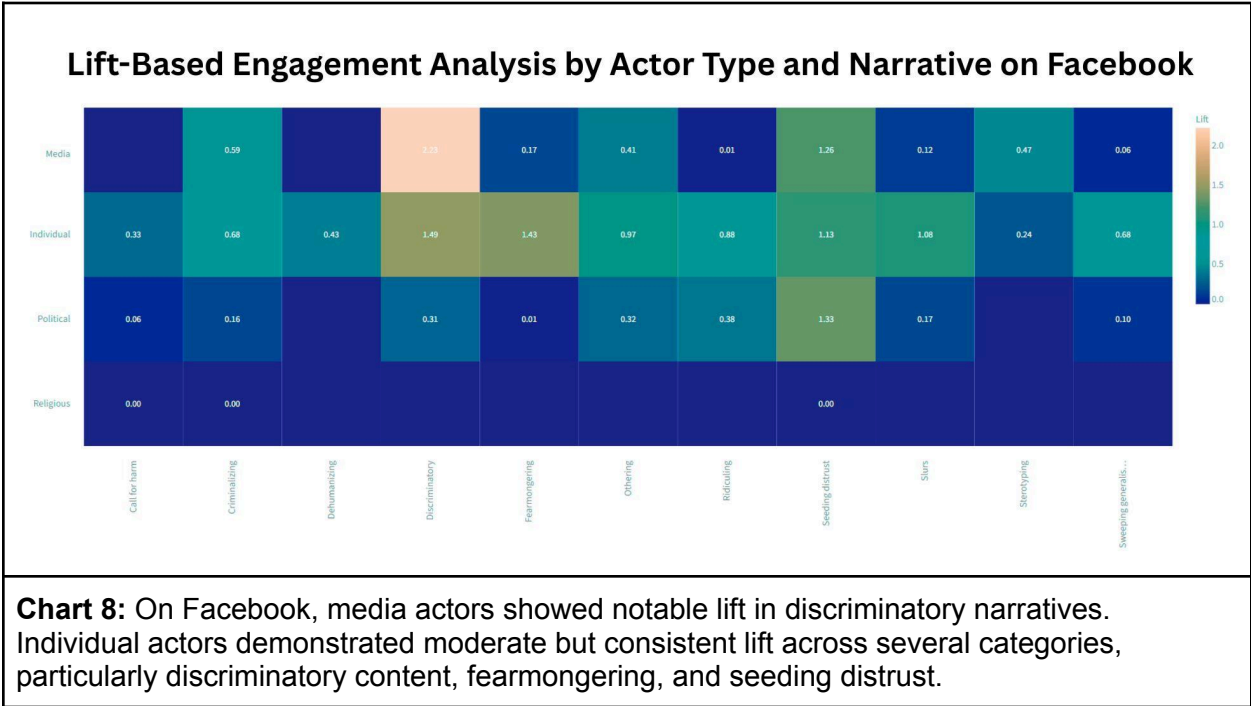


Lift refers to the ratio between the average engagement of adversarial posts and the overall average engagement for that actor type. A lift above 1 indicates higher-than-average engagement, while a lift below 1 indicates lower-than-average engagement.

Political actors on YouTube show a moderate lift in discriminatory narratives (1.51) and slurs (2.13), suggesting that identity-targeting rhetoric draws higher engagement within political content compared to their baseline.

Media actors generally underperform across most adversarial themes, with no narrative significantly exceeding baseline engagement. Religious actors also show minimal lift, with adversarial narratives largely underperforming relative to their average engagement.

Facebook presents a more distributed engagement pattern with comparatively moderate lift values. Media actors show the highest lift in discriminatory narratives (2.23) and notable overperformance in seeding distrust (1.26). This indicates that distrust-oriented or exclusionary framing performs relatively well when circulated by media pages.



Individual actors on Facebook demonstrate consistent lift across multiple categories, including discriminatory (1.49), fearmongering (1.43), seeding distrust (1.13), and slurs (1.08). Unlike YouTube, Facebook lift values are less extreme but more evenly spread across adversarial narratives.

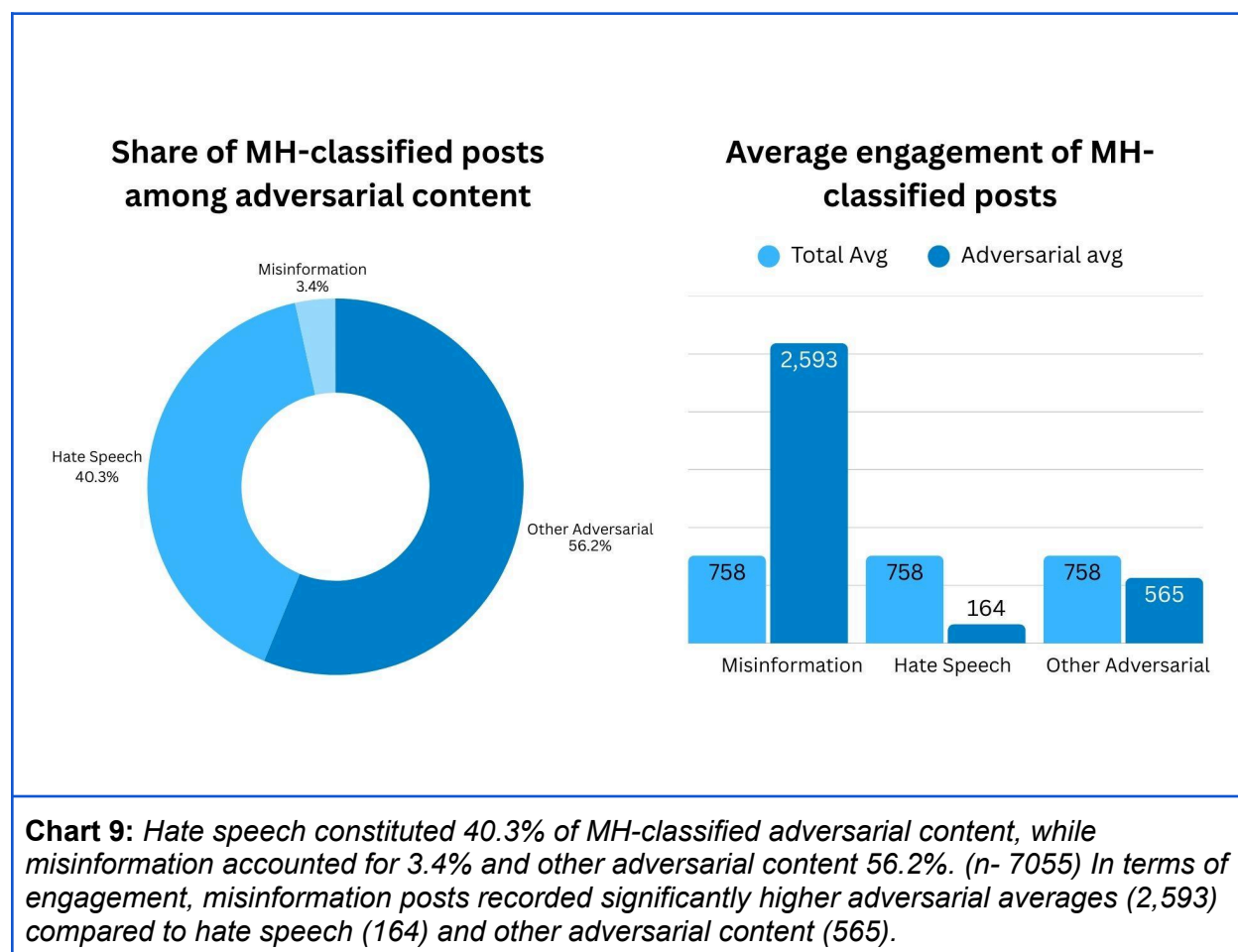
Political actors show limited lift overall, with only seeding distrust (1.33) exceeding baseline engagement. Most other political adversarial narratives underperform relative to their average post engagement. Religious actors display a negligible lift across themes

## 5. Misinformation and Hate Speech Trends

A total of 7,055 posts in the dataset were classified as adversarial and further categorized under the MDH framework into four post types: Hate Speech, Misinformation, Hate Speech combined with Misinformation, and Other Adversarial content. The largest share of adversarial content (56.2%) fell into the category of Other Adversarial.

***Hate speech forms a substantial share of adversarial content.***

Hate speech accounted for 40% of adversarial content. Misinformation constituted 242 posts (or 3.4%) and all of these were independently checked by the research team. Only two posts were seen to use misinformation to spread hate. When combined, posts explicitly typed as misinformation or hate speech totaled 3,090, representing 44%% of all adversarial content.

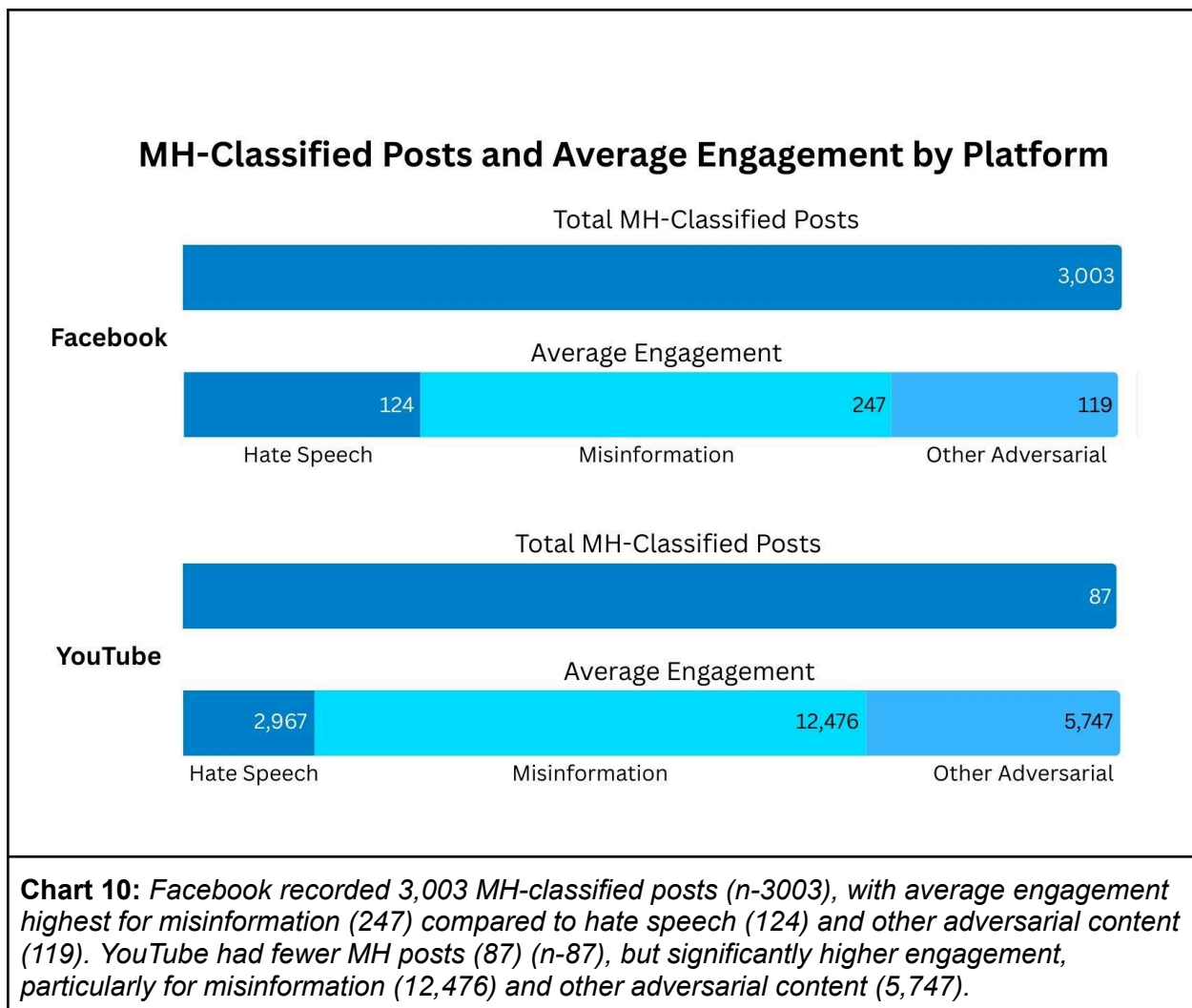


The relationship between volume and engagement is platform-dependent. Facebook hosts higher volumes of adversarial content overall but exhibits lower average engagement per post. YouTube hosts fewer adversarial posts but displays substantially higher engagement intensity, particularly for misinformation.

All platforms combined, misinformation posts recorded the highest average engagement at 2,625 interactions per post. Other adversarial content averaged 565 engagements, while hate speech averaged 164.

However, the overall average engagement for misinformation across platforms is influenced heavily by its performance on YouTube, where engagement intensity is significantly higher than on Facebook.

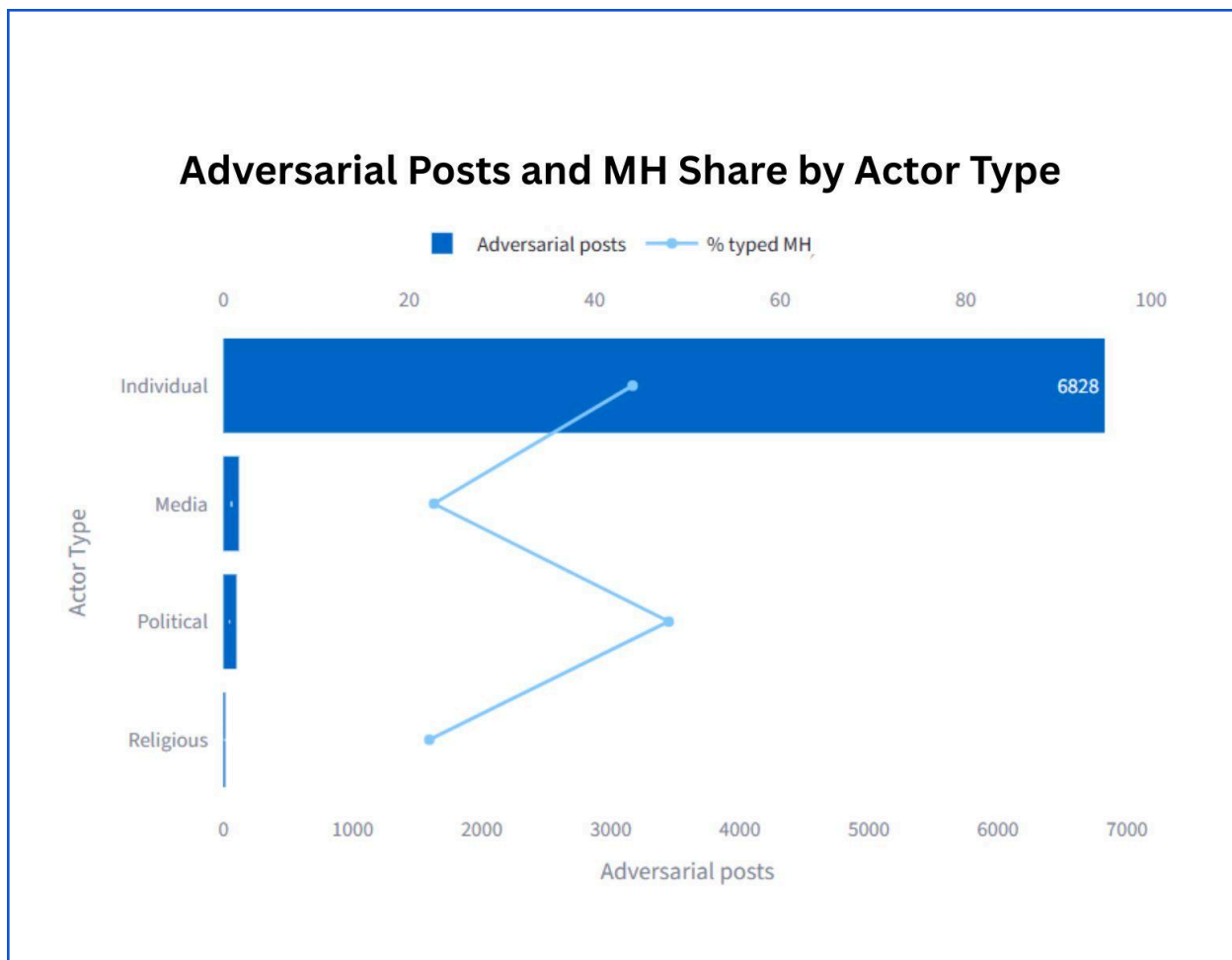
On YouTube, misinformation posts averaged 13,030 engagements per post, substantially exceeding other adversarial content at 5,747 and hate speech at 2,895. On Facebook, engagement levels were markedly lower across all categories. Misinformation averaged 248 engagements per post, hate speech averaged 124, and other adversarial content averaged 119.



***Political actors post less, but a larger share of their posts are misinformation or hate speech.***

Actor-level distribution further shapes these dynamics. Individual accounts produced 6,827 of the 7,055 adversarial posts and accounted for 3,013 of the 3,090 posts typed as misinformation or hate speech. Individuals, therefore, dominate both adversarial volume and MH-classified (misinformation or hate speech) volume in absolute terms.

Although political actors contribute relatively few posts overall, nearly half of their adversarial content falls into explicit misinformation or hate speech categories. Out of 100 documented adversarial posts from this group, 48 were classified as misinformation or hate speech. Individuals contribute the overwhelming majority of MH posts due to scale, but their MH rate is slightly lower (44%) than that of political actors, yet significant. MH narratives in Media (23%) and religious actor groups (22%) are comparatively low.



**Chart 11:** Individual accounts produced the overwhelming majority of adversarial posts (6,828) and also dominated MH-classified content, with 44.1% of their posts labeled as misinformation or hate speech. Political actors showed the highest MH rate (48%), while media and religious actors recorded comparatively lower shares.

### ***Platform differences shape who amplifies MH content most: Media on FB and Individuals on YT***

Engagement per MH-classified post varies. All platforms combined, media MH posts recorded the highest average engagement at 920 interactions per post, followed by political actors at 458 and individuals at 351. On Facebook, media and political actors achieved higher average engagement per MH post than individuals, with media averaging 428 engagements, political actors 384, and individuals 127. On YouTube, the engagement hierarchy shifted. Individual MH posts averaged 9,007 engagements per post, compared to 2,639 for media and 1,563 for political actors.

On Facebook, organized actors, like media and political accounts, generate higher engagement per MH post relative to individuals. On YouTube, individual MH content is associated with the highest engagement intensity. When engagement is aggregated across platforms, the combined averages reflect the interaction between these platform-specific distributions.

Analysis reveals several structural features of the adversarial information environment.

- First, most adversarial content operates outside explicit misinformation or hate speech categories, indicating that indirect framing constitutes a significant portion of hostile discourse.
- Second, misinformation, although rare in volume, generates the highest engagement intensity, driven primarily by high-performing YouTube posts.
- Third, individuals dominate adversarial output numerically, but engagement intensity varies by platform, with media and political actors exerting greater per-post influence on Facebook and individuals achieving the highest amplification on YouTube.

### ***Actor roles in adversarial content amplification***

Individual accounts produced 97% of all adversarial posts during the monitoring period. Media and political actors accounted for 1.7% and 1.4%, respectively. However, when measured as a proportion of each actor category's total output, adversarial content was comparatively higher among political actors. Among individual posts, 29% were adversarial. For political actors, the figure was 26%, while for media actors it was 4.3%.

Engagement patterns differed from volume patterns. Although media actors produced relatively few adversarial posts, their average engagement was significantly higher in certain categories. In the "seeding distrust" narrative, individual posts averaged 551 engagements, compared to 2,685 for media posts.

For example, reports by Channel 24 and RTV in early October regarding "700 CCTV cameras missing from Rohingya camps" were widely shared and accompanied by distrust-oriented commentary. Similarly, YouTube videos from Republic Bangla carried titles explicitly calling for the expulsion of Rohingyas and generated high engagement.

Political pages were limited in number (380 posts in total), but 26% of their posts were adversarial. Several BJP-supporting pages circulated demographic and expulsion-based narratives.

Under the methodological criteria, accounts were classified as political only if they explicitly declared party affiliation. Accounts that regularly posted party-aligned content without formal identification were categorized as individuals. A significant share of high-engagement adversarial posts originated from such accounts.

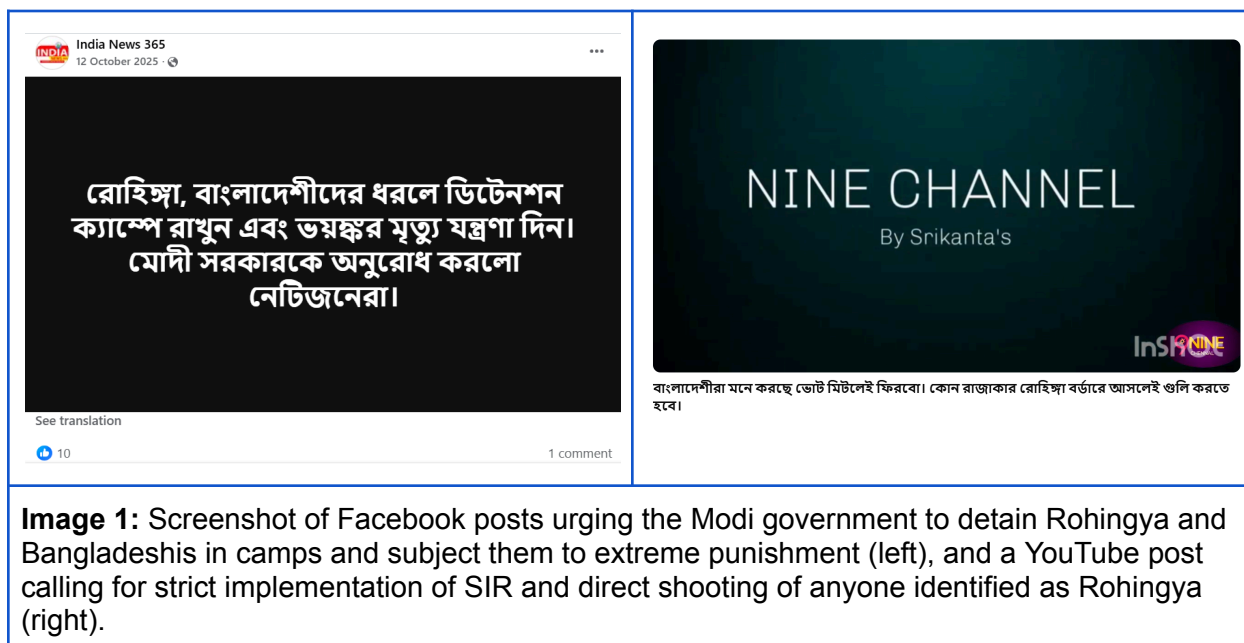
## 6. A Deepdive into Dominating Narratives

During the monitoring period, hate speech targeting the Rohingya community appeared mainly within discriminatory, slur-based, dehumanizing, and explicit call-for-harm narratives. Most of these posts were concentrated on Facebook and were often linked to electoral developments, security incidents, and border tensions in West Bengal and Bangladesh.

In West Bengal, the launch of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process prompted calls for “Rohingya-free” voter lists and demands for removal from the state. After attacks on BJP leaders, Rohingyas were blamed without evidence and described as infiltrators, “jihadis,” or terrorists.

In Bangladesh, particularly in Cox’s Bazar and surrounding areas, posts linked Rohingyas to drug trafficking, kidnapping, robbery, and arms smuggling, extending border security concerns into broader allegations of destabilisation.

### *Exclusion and call for harm*



*“If you catch a Rohingya, lock them in a detention camp and make them suffer as if they were facing death.”* The message, framed as an appeal to India’s prime minister, was posted in October 2025 by a Facebook page titled India News 365, apparently operated from West Bengal. A month later, another page, Sanatanai Hindu Parivar, called for Rohingyas to be “directly” shot if detained.





Dozens of similar calls for expulsion or violence were identified in the dataset, many emerging from West Bengal amid a tense political contest between right-wing Hindutva groups aligned with the Bharatiya Janata Party and the All India Trinamool Congress, which has been accused by its opponents of sheltering Rohingya and Muslim migrants.

Following the launch of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the voter list in West Bengal on 28 October, social media posts demanding the removal of Rohingyas intensified. Many framed the issue in electoral terms, calling for a “Rohingya-free voter list” and a “Rohingya-free West Bengal”. Others used openly dehumanising language, labelling Rohingyas as “jihadists” or “pigs” and urging their expulsion in the name of protecting the state.

Some of the narratives include:

- “We want a Rohingya-free voter list. We want a Rohingya-free West Bengal.”
- “Let us unite to build a Rohingya- and jihad-free India.”
- “To remove Rohingyas, illegal Bangladeshis, and illegal settlers from Bengal, SIR is absolutely necessary.”
- “Nothing much ! SIR effect ! Remove Rohingyas ! To save Bengal choose BJP!!”
- “You enter my country like a thief, then give birth like pigs, grab government land and claim it as your father’s property without any papers. We want a garbage-free India 🙌🙌 Drive out Rohingyas, save India.”

Calls for harm were also observed from Bangladeshi users. In one video, a speaker claimed that Rohingyas would take over Chattogram city and stated that a few of them needed to be killed. In another post, a call was made to eliminate Rohingyas in Hnila Union of Teknaf, alleging that they were renting houses and engaging in drug trade and kidnapping.



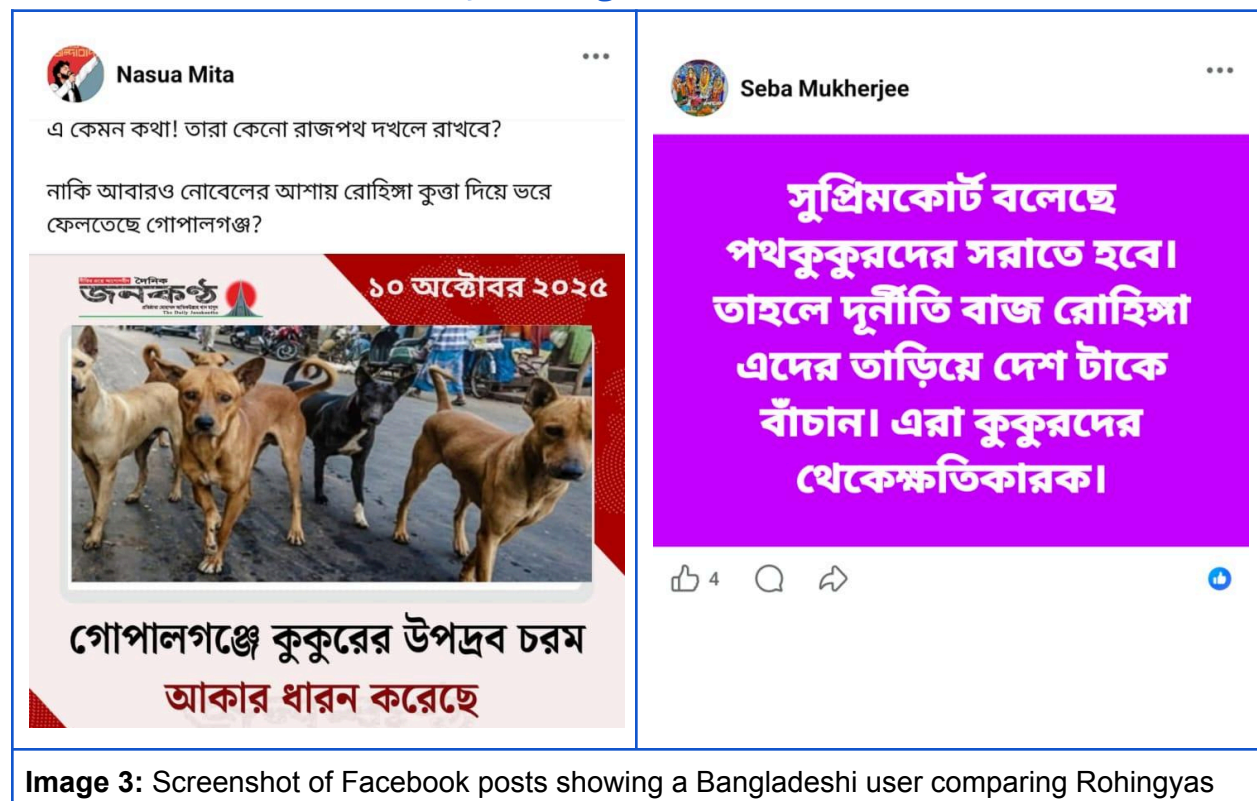
Most harmful posts in Bangladesh were typically from districts where Rohingya refugees are physically present, including Chattogram, Cox's Bazar and Noakhali. Posts accused Rohingyas of involvement in crimes ranging from land grabbing to extortion and terrorism, and called for their removal without further explanation. Slogans such as "Remove Rohingyas, save Cox's Bazar" and "We want a Rohingya-free Bangladesh" appeared repeatedly across the dataset. Many messages positioned the Rohingya as a security risk or a burden on local communities, embedding hostility within narratives of protection, law and order, or territorial control.

Some narratives include:

- "Stand up against Rohingya outsiders involved in extortion, terrorism, case-trading, sand theft, soil theft, land grabbing, and tender manipulation. The people of Kasba-Akhaura are united today. Remove Rohingyas, save Kasba."
- "Join the movement to expel Rohingyas. No terrorist activities will be allowed using our country's soil."
- "Remove Rohingyas, save Cox's Bazar."
- "Rohingya refugees have been forcibly imposed on Noakhali. They must be removed from Bhashan Char immediately."

Although similar themes appeared in both India and Bangladesh, the dataset did not identify patterns of coordinated cross-border amplification or direct narrative reinforcement between actors in the two countries.

### *Dehumanization and Inferiority Framing*



**Image 3:** Screenshot of Facebook posts showing a Bangladeshi user comparing Rohingyas

to dogs and questioning whether they have filled the country (left), and an Indian user stating that Rohingyas are “more harmful than dogs” and should be removed to protect the nation (right).

Another strand portrayed Rohingyas as inferior or less than human. Some users in West Bengal called for use of “pesticide” to remove Rohingyas, described them as “termites” altering India’s demographic balance, and comparisons suggested they were emerging from “holes” like snakes when exposed. Other posts referred to Rohingyas as “pests” damaging crops or likened them to animals who “climb onto your shoulders and start dancing” once given shelter.

Similar language appeared in Bangladesh, though in smaller numbers. In some posts, Rohingyas were described as a “virus” infecting the country. Others compared them to “black snakes” or used ridicule to question their legitimacy and dignity. A separate but related trend involved referring to the invasive suckermouth catfish as “Rohingya fish,” implying that just as the fish is harmful to the aquatic ecosystem, Rohingyas are harmful to the national environment.

Here are some of the narratives:

- “With the slightly powerful pesticide called SIR, the enemy insects of the country are leaving their holes and fleeing.”
- “This demographic change is the result of illegal Bangladeshis and Rohingya termites in India. We demand President’s Rule in Bengal immediately.”
- “Many political leaders loudly claimed there are no Bangladeshis or Rohingyas in our Indian state. As soon as carbolic acid was poured into the holes, snakes started coming out.”
- “Rohingyas and monkeys have similar characteristics. If given shelter, they climb onto your shoulders and start dancing.”
- “After letting in the black-snake force called Rohingya, they are barking in protest for not receiving a Nobel Prize!”

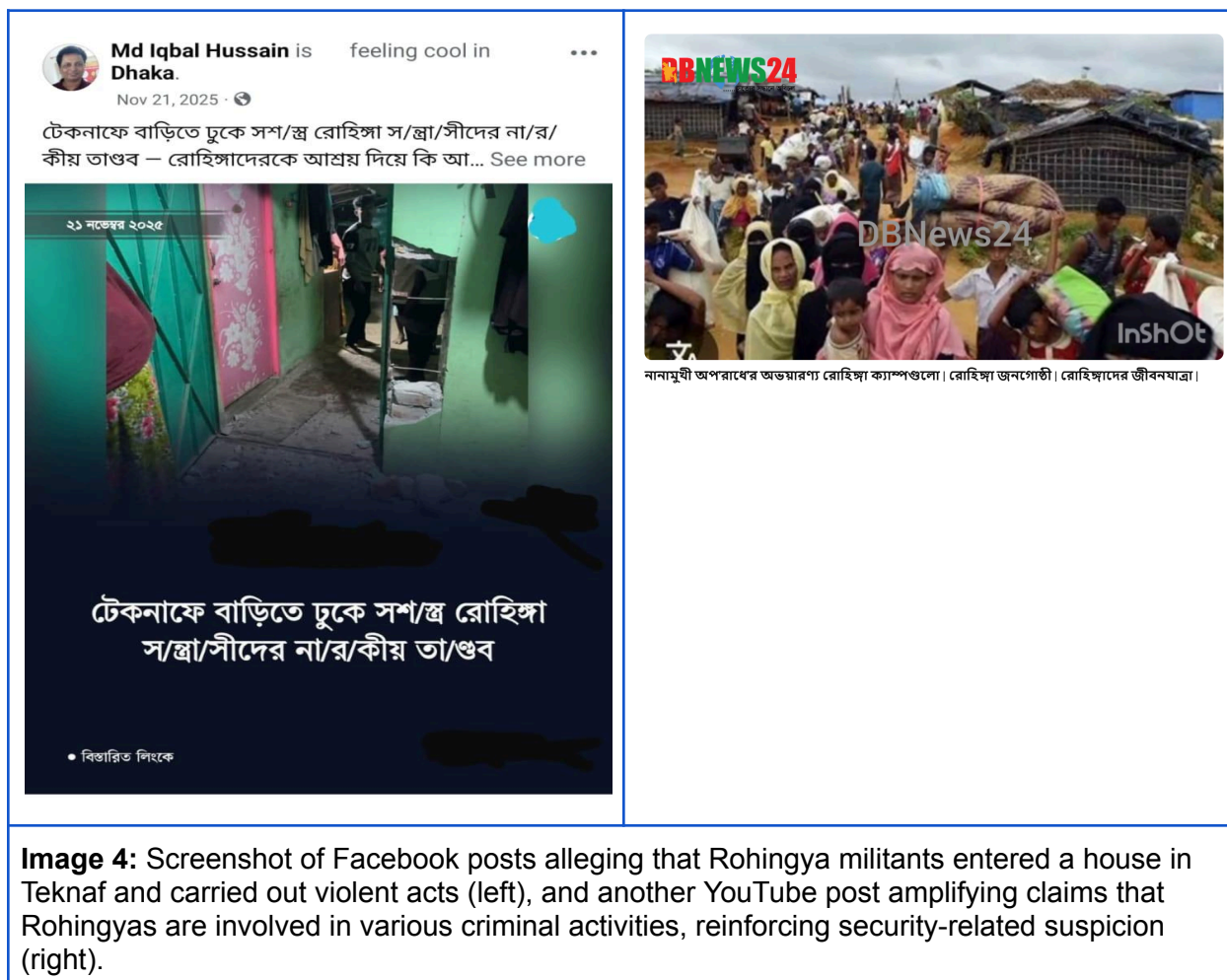
### ***Criminalisation and Fear-Based Narratives***

Framing Rohingyas as perpetrators of crime and agents of destabilisation was one of the most persistent strands within adversarial content. This pattern captured in the “criminalising” and “fearmongering” subcategories was among the dominant narrative types in this monitoring period and was also observed in the previous study.

Across both Bangladesh and West Bengal, isolated incidents were frequently used to target the community as a whole. In Bangladesh, posts linked Rohingyas to kidnapping, robbery, extortion and terrorism. Following reports that weapons were entering Bangladesh through routes along the Myanmar border, some users claimed Rohingyas were part of organised arms syndicates or would use the weapons to destabilise the country.

Concerns about camp security were also used to reinforce these narratives. After reports that hundreds of CCTV cameras in Rohingya camps were not working, social media posts

suggested that Rohingyas were leaving the camps and spreading across the country. Damaged fences and missing surveillance were presented as signs of growing insecurity.



Others alleged that members of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) were receiving training inside Bangladesh, in some cases extending the claim - without evidence - to suggest involvement by the Bangladesh Army or foreign intelligence services. Posts then linked these claims to broader warnings about national safety and sovereignty. Rohingyas were described as a threat to Bangladesh's future, with posts claiming that crime would rise and that Chattogram region could eventually be occupied by Rohingyas, framing these concerns as signs of growing instability.

In West Bengal, after separate attacks on BJP leaders Khagen Murmu and Suwendu Adhikari, social media posts blamed Rohingyas for the incidents without presenting supporting evidence. Elsewhere, Rohingyas were associated with temple vandalism, demographic change, theft, robbery and terrorism.

Posts such as "Rohingya Muslims and Bangladeshi Muslims together have cut off the heads of Maa Kali and Lord Shiva idols in Kakdwip" and "Rohingyas and infiltrators, along with carrying

out terrorist activities...” reflected a recurring pattern in which allegations of temple vandalism and terrorism were combined with claims of demographic expansion, reinforcing communal suspicion.

Environmental degradation also featured prominently in adversarial narratives. Posts claimed that Rohingya camps were exhausting bamboo resources, destroying forests and hills, and causing long-term ecological damage. Some cited figures about acres of forest loss or increased landslide risks, while others alleged that camp waste was contaminating farmland in Ukhiya and Teknaf. In several instances, environmental harm was linked to economic loss, with claims that Rohingyas were profiting from land belonging to the Forest Department while the state suffered revenue losses.

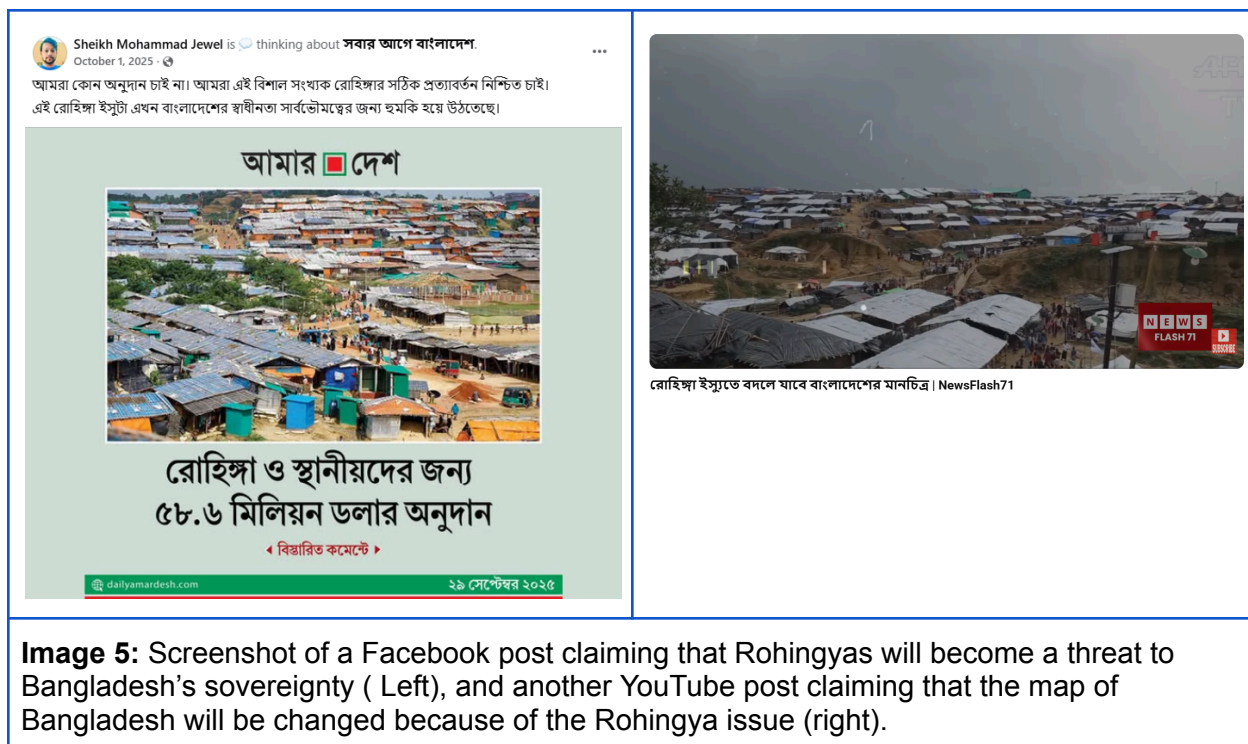
Key fearmongering narratives include:

- “Teknaf has become a sanctuary for kidnappers and Rohingya robbers.”
- “In this arms trade, Rohingyas from Cox’s Bazar are part of every syndicate.”
- “Illegal Bangladeshi Rohingyas/jihadis are entering North Bengal and engaging in theft, robbery, rape, and terrorist activities.”
- “Extremist Hindus, Rohingyas, and the Arakan Army are threats to our sovereignty.”
- “Rohingya militants have brutally killed hundreds of Hindus.”
- “On a highway in West Bengal, illegal Rohingya Bangladeshi Muslims are forcibly stopping bikes and extorting money.”
- “After some time, these Rohingyas will take over Chattogram.”
- “Cox’s Bazar has become unsafe because of Rohingyas. There is no crime they do not commit - kidnapping, theft, robbery, extortion, murder, mugging.”

### ***Othering and Normalised Insult***

Some posts relied on broad character judgments that portrayed Rohingyas as inherently untrustworthy, ungrateful, or socially incompatible. Rather than referring to specific actions or incidents, these messages described the community in generalised terms, suggesting that certain “habits” or traits were fixed and unchangeable. Comparisons implied that Rohingyas would overstep boundaries if accommodated, or that their character was similar to other negatively framed groups.

This form of othering positioned Rohingyas as fundamentally different from, and inferior to, the national community. For example, one wrote: “Look, they are Rohingyas. They were born in Bangladesh and can speak Bangla, but their Rohingya habits have not changed” or another that said, “If you give a Rohingya a corner in your house, they will take over the entire house.”



In Bangladesh, the term “Rohingya” is often used as shorthand for exclusion, neglect or illegitimacy. When citizens express frustration over administrative decisions, economic hardship or political outcomes, some compare themselves or others to Rohingyas to signal injustice. In doing so, the community’s long-term displacement and statelessness are invoked as a symbol of marginalisation.

Between October and December, such comparisons appeared repeatedly. During protests by school teachers demanding higher allowances, one post read: “Unarmed teachers are being treated like Rohingyas and pushed back into Myanmar.” When a rumour circulated that Tangail district would be moved to another division, some users wrote that Tangail was “not some Rohingya-type district that can be shifted at will.”

After a fire in Korail slum, a resident said: “Rohingyas are treated like landlords; we get nothing.” Garment workers protesting delayed wages asked: “Are we citizens of Bangladesh or Rohingyas?” When expatriates were required to register mobile phones after staying more than 60 days, posts questioned whether they were being treated “like Rohingyas”.





**Image 6:** Screenshot of social media posts showing a Korail slum resident stating that “Rohingyas are treated like landlords; we get nothing” following a fire incident (left), and in another YouTube post, protesters demanding proper wages compared their condition to that of the Rohingya, stating that they are not Rohingyas but Bangladeshi citizens (right).

Political figures also used the comparison. During an election rally, a BNP candidate stated: “I did not come from another country as a Rohingya.” Another party leader declared: “I am BNP; I am not a Rohingya.”

As a normalised expression of mockery, users joked that those who disliked a post were “Rohingya,” or dismissed political rivals as a “Rohingya panel” or “Rohingya-type candidate.” During online disputes between residents of Cumilla and Noakhali over administrative status, users from both districts called each other “Rohingya.” The term became a shorthand for disloyalty or inferiority, even though the dispute had no connection to the refugee community.

Some narratives include:

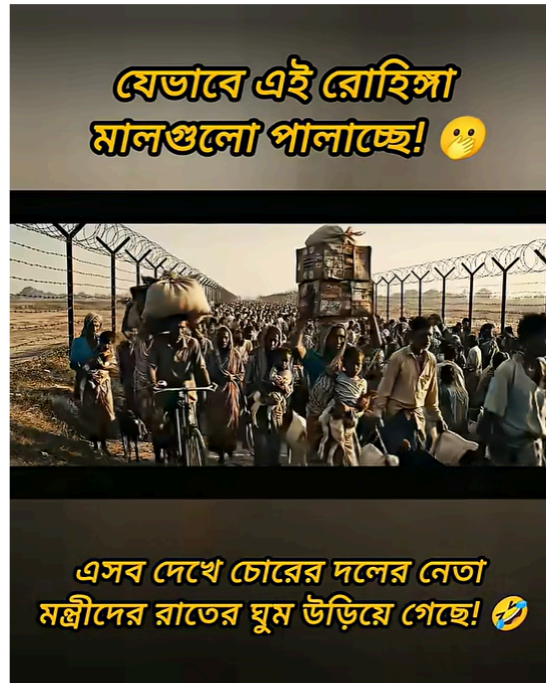
- “Are expatriates Rohingyas? Why should we have to register if we stay more than 60 days?”
- “Stop extortion, bribery, and harassment in the name of registration. We expatriates are not Rohingyas.”
- “Looking at these rules, it seems we expatriates are the Rohingyas of the country.”

## Misinformation narratives



Between October and December 2025, several false or unverified claims about the Rohingya community circulated across platforms. Many linked Rohingyas to electoral processes, communal incidents, militant activity, and national security threats without evidence.

In West Bengal, multiple posts claimed that large numbers of Rohingyas were residing in the state and fleeing following the launch of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process. At least four such claims used unrelated videos or images to suggest Rohingyas were escaping or being expelled. One widely shared video from Sealdah railway station in Kolkata was presented as proof of Rohingyas fleeing; verification showed it depicted ordinary passengers disembarking from a train. Another image from Delhi was falsely linked to alleged departures from Kolkata's New Town area. Exaggerated claims also circulated suggesting that more than 10 million Rohingyas were living in West Bengal. In one case, an AI-generated video showed a large group of people walking along a border fence, claiming that Rohingyas were fleeing as a result of the SIR process.



যেভাবে এই রোহিঙ্গা মালগুলো পালাচ্ছে! 🤔 এসব দেখে চোরের দলের নেতা মন্ত্রীদেব রাতের ঘুম উড়িয়ে গেছে! ⚡

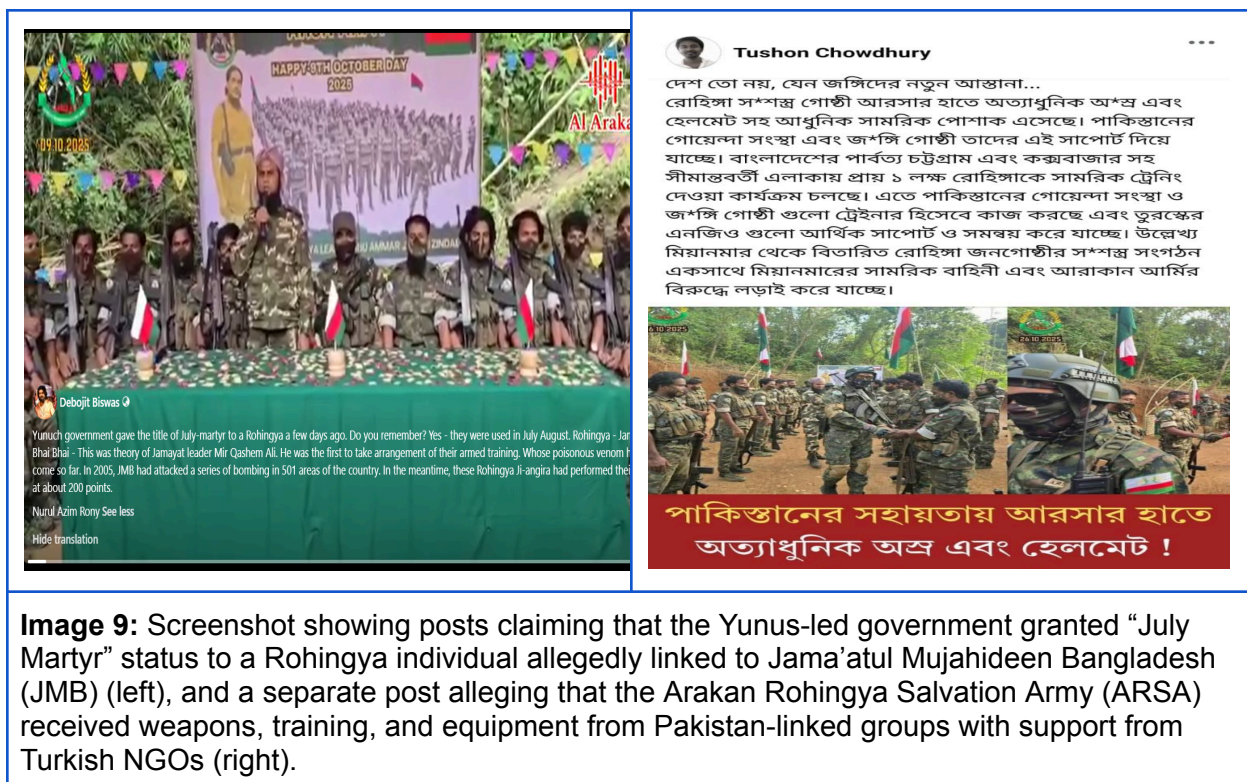
**Image 8:** Screenshot of an AI-generated video on YouTube portraying a large crowd of people walking alongside a barbed-wire border fence, falsely framed as Rohingyas fleeing in response to the SIR process. The overlaid Bengali caption claims “Rohingyas are fleeing like this”.

A communal incident in Kakdwip involving the alleged desecration of a Kali idol was similarly blamed on Rohingyas. West Bengal Police later clarified that misinformation was being spread and that no evidence linked Rohingyas to the event. In a separate incident in Nepal’s Dhanusha district during a Durga Puja procession, some online narratives again accused Rohingyas of involvement despite the absence of verified proof.

In Bangladesh, misinformation more frequently linked Rohingyas to armed training, militant coordination, and cross-border destabilisation. Posts claimed Rohingyas were receiving military training inside camps, being transported to Dhaka in police uniforms to attack political activists, or being supported by Pakistani intelligence agencies. Some alleged that up to 100,000 Rohingyas were being trained in border areas with assistance from foreign actors. None of these claims were supported by verified sources.

Other posts tied Rohingyas to the July movement, alleging that Rohingya shooters participated in unrest or that a Rohingya individual was honoured as a “July Martyr.” A video from Khagrachari showing local residents throwing stones at a security forces vehicle was mislabelled as an attack by Rohingyas. Fact-checking later confirmed the video had no connection to the refugee community.

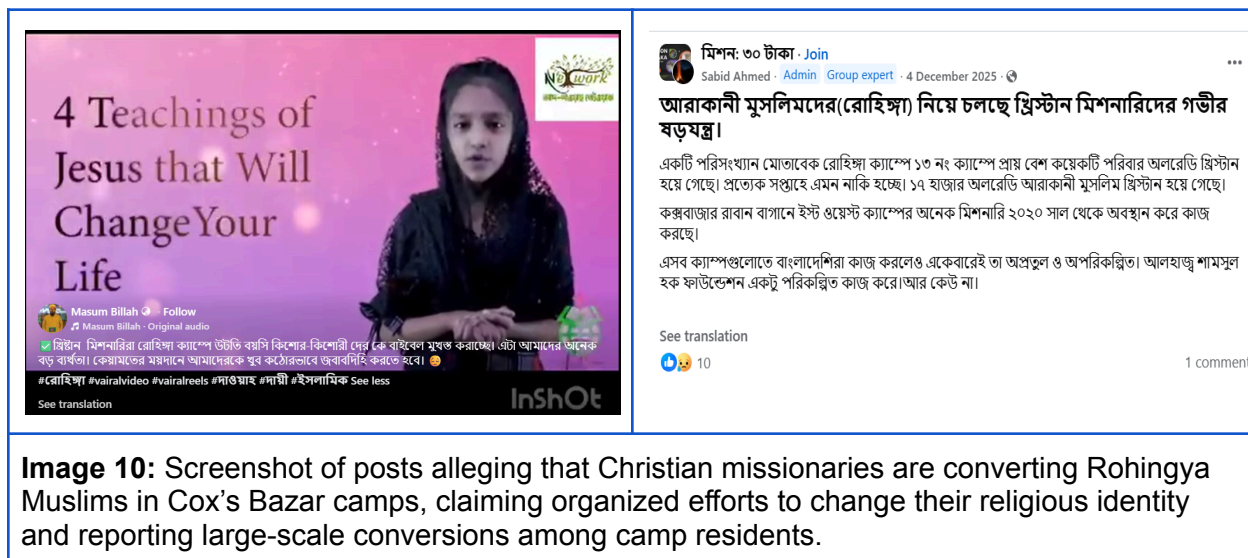




Misinformation also targeted individuals. Posts falsely claimed that the father of student leader Fatema Tasnim Juma had links to ARSA. The allegation was used to label her “Rohingya” in a derogatory manner, questioning her legitimacy and reinforcing the use of the term as an insult.

## 7. More Narratives to Watch For

### *Religious targeting of aid groups and NGOs*



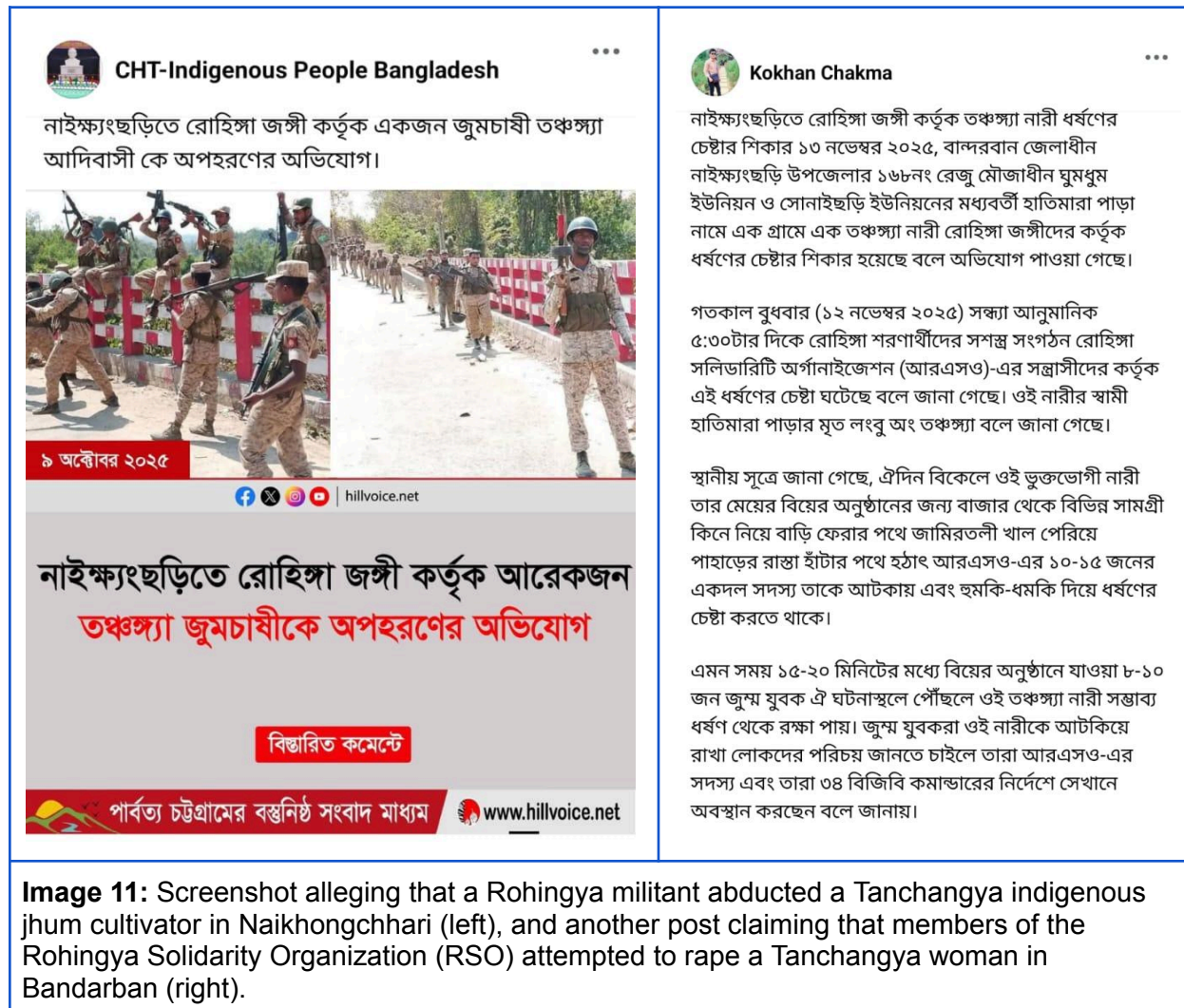
Although not overtly hostile, another recurring narrative framed humanitarian assistance in the camps as a cover for religious conversion. On Facebook, several posts alleged that relief efforts were being used to convert vulnerable Muslim refugees to Christianity. International NGOs and Western donors were frequently portrayed as pursuing religious transformation under the guise of aid. References to historical figures such as Mother Teresa were sometimes invoked to suggest continuity with earlier missionary efforts.

One post claimed: “Christian missionaries are carrying out extensive activities in Rohingya camps under the cover of Western assistance. They are very cleverly spreading religious extremism and division.”

Another extended the claim beyond Cox's Bazar to the Chittagong Hill Tracts: “In Rangamati, Khagrachari, and Bandarban there used to be many Chakma (Buddhists) and Muslims. Now there are none, only Christians. Do you know who is converting them? All the NGOs supported by UNESCO. These NGOs are converting people with church funding. Many Rohingyas are also being converted.”

Other posts alleged that Muslim NGOs were being restricted from entering the camps, while Christian missionaries were given access for conversion activities. These narratives cast humanitarian actors as deceptive and ideologically driven, shifting suspicion away from the refugees themselves and toward the institutions operating within the camps.

## Regional stability risks in the Hill regions



In areas surrounding the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar, online narratives frequently intersected with tensions in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Posts connected Rohingya armed groups such as the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) and the Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO) to cross-border militancy and instability. At the same time, separate posts accused hill and indigenous communities of collaborating with the Arakan Army, suggesting that border dynamics were creating broader security risks for Bangladesh.

On the other hand, members of hill communities were also portrayed as victims of Rohingya armed groups. Following reports of violence in November, including the alleged attempted rape of a Tanchangya woman, some posts directly blamed ARSA and RSO members. Allegations of abduction in Naikhongchhari were similarly attributed to Rohingya militants. Some Facebook posts even claim that Rohingya militants are attempting to take control of parts of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, creating fear among local hill communities.

Key narratives included:

- “The Arakan Army is taking hill tribes from Bangladesh to Myanmar and providing them with weapons training. After training, these armed individuals cross the border and re-enter Bangladesh freely.”
- “With the cooperation of tribal groups in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Arakan Army terrorists are putting Bangladesh’s sovereignty at risk.”
- “We urge the Bangladesh administration to keep an eye on the tribal communities, as they easily cross the border and join Arakan Army terrorists.”
- “On 23 September, ARSA abducted and disappeared Wamong Chakma (56) from Naikhongchhari. Most recently, another individual named Suman Tanchangya (38) was taken.”
- “Rohingya terrorists are targeting Thanchi, Alikadam, and Naikhongchhari for takeover. What kind of terrorists are they? In the name of fighting for the Rohingya nation, they have come to the hills to create terror.”
- “Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO) in a new form, in a new appearance. At one point, it will become a threat to the indigenous peoples of the hills and eventually a threat to the whole of Bangladesh and India as well.”

### ***Cross-Border Clashes and Renewed Influx Fears***

Social media posts linked clashes between the Arakan Army and the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) in Myanmar to growing insecurity along the Bangladesh–Myanmar border. Between October and December, at least six news reports covered renewed fighting near the frontier. Residents of Teknaf and Ukhiya in Cox’s Bazar, as well as Naikhongchhari in Bandarban, were reported to be living in fear as tensions rose. These reports were widely shared online, often accompanied by warnings about instability in the region.

Some users argued that renewed fighting could trigger another influx of Rohingya refugees into Bangladesh. They suggested that a new wave of arrivals would increase pressure on the country and contribute to crime and insecurity.

For narratives:

- “If a new influx begins, Bangladesh will face further pressure. Experts believe that the crime-prone Rohingya population will increase criminal activities in the country.”
- “Terrorist groups and criminal networks already active in Rohingya camps may expand further with the arrival of new Rohingyas.”

### ***Sexualized and Gendered Targeting on TikTok***

In the TikTok dataset, adversarial content accounted for a small share of posts, at 2.5%. However, in a distinct pattern, many posts used highly sexualised or gendered titles that mentioned Rohingya women, even when the linked videos had no connection to them.



## রোহিঙ্গা মেয়েদের ভাইরাল পিক ভিডিও ▾



## রোহিঙ্গা ক্যাম্পের মেয়েদের ভিডিও ▾



**Image 12:** Screenshot of TikTok search categories labeled “Viral Pictures-Videos of Rohingya Girls” and “Videos of Rohingya Girls in the Camp,” illustrating how sexualized and gender-targeted titles are used to attract attention, while linked content often appears unrelated to the Rohingya community.

Some of these titles included phrases such as “Rohingya woman porn,” “Rohingya woman dance,” or “Rohingya woman Emo (messaging app) number,” and in a few instances claimed to provide phone numbers of Rohingya women. The wording was often explicit or suggestive.

When the linked videos were reviewed, the content was frequently unrelated to the titles. In many cases, the videos did not feature Rohingya women at all. Some showed unrelated individuals, general entertainment clips, or AI-generated images. The Rohingya identity appeared only in the title, while the actual content lacked any connection to the community.

This is particularly problematic in two ways: First, it spreads sexualized and degrading narratives about Rohingya women; and second, it involves misinformation by falsely labeling unrelated content as Rohingya-related.

## 8. Recommendations

**Stand up rapid response:** Use monitoring alerts to trigger fast, coordinated messaging during key “trigger moments” (border clashes, camp security stories, elections, major crimes).

**Engage political stakeholders:** Brief major political parties and candidates on the protection risks of inflammatory Rohingya rhetoric, especially during election periods.

**Establish an election-period watch:** During voter list revisions, border incidents, or campaign cycles, intensify monitoring and rapid response to prevent Rohingya-related narratives from being instrumentalized.

**Establish a structured HSRM referral channel with platforms:** Develop clear protocols for escalating high-severity hate speech, incitement to violence, and misinformation affecting Rohingya communities.

**Engage platforms with evidence:** Share periodic “platform accountability briefs” with Meta/YouTube/TikTok: top narratives, sample URLs, policy mapping (hate, harassment, misinformation), and priority takedown/escalation requests.

**Escalate systemic moderation failures:** Where patterns of non-enforcement are observed (e.g., repeated slurs in Bangla), raise concerns through trusted partner or civil society escalation channels.

**Partner with trusted local voices:** Equip camp-adjacent community leaders, journalists, and civil society partners with shareable, verified talking points to reduce the spread of rumors.

**Support media standards and sensitization programs:** Work with local outlets on verification, headline framing, and corrections when reports are likely to drive distrust or panic.

**Improve reporting channels:** Create easy ways for host communities and refugees to report viral claims (WhatsApp, hotline, simple web form) and feed them into response workflows.

**Prioritise high-impact actors and posts:** Focus escalation and counter-messaging on posts with high engagement lift (especially YouTube misinformation spikes and Facebook media-led distrust narratives).

## 9. Conclusion

The monitoring period shows how Rohingya-related discourse becomes entangled with broader political and security debates. Rather than remaining confined to humanitarian concerns, online narratives frequently reposition the refugee population within electoral contests, border tensions, and identity-based politics. In such moments, the Rohingya becomes a symbolic reference point within domestic power struggles.

Such a dynamic carries operational implications for humanitarian actors. The reputational environment surrounding assistance efforts is increasingly shaped not only by material conditions on the ground, but by digitally amplified perceptions of security risk, demographic anxiety, and institutional distrust. Narratives that question the legitimacy of aid, portray refugees as destabilizing forces, or frame displacement through conspiratorial lenses can influence community attitudes and policy debates beyond the online space.

Constructive and rights-based narratives, on the contrary, can open space for engagement. That is why strategic communication, timely detection of harmful misinformation, and locally grounded outreach is essential. Monitoring patterns of adversarial framing, particularly during politically sensitive periods, can help anticipate narrative shifts and inform preventive responses.

The findings point to the importance of sustained online risk analysis alongside humanitarian programming. Understanding how refugee communities are framed online is not peripheral to protection; it is increasingly central to it.



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