

# YOUTUBE'S PARTNERSHIP WITH SUDARSHAN NEWS

*Revenue Sharing from Hate Speech and Misinformation*

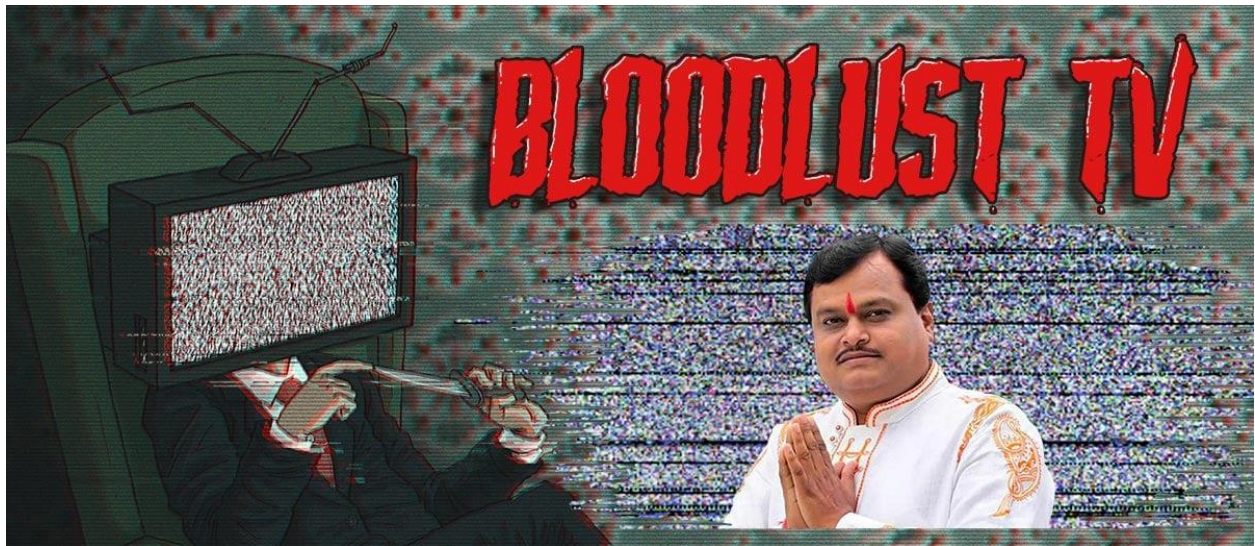


Image credit: Newslaundry

**Dalit Solidarity Forum, Indian American Muslim Council,  
India Civil Watch International, Hindus for Human Rights,  
Tech Justice Law Project**

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## KEY FINDINGS

1. Sudarshan News is a privately owned Hindi television channel which has a long history of prolifically spreading hate speech and misinformation targeted at India's Muslim community.
2. Leading up to and during this election cycle, our team of researchers reported twenty-six videos on the Sudarshan YouTube channel which violated the platform's policies on hate speech and misinformation. *YouTube took no action in response to the reports.* The videos had a collective 3.5 million views at the time of publication.
3. Seventeen of the reported videos are from the election period, when YouTube claims to have dedicated increased efforts to addressing the issue of hate speech and misinformation in India. These videos contain virulently hateful content on various Islamophobic conspiracy theories including "Vote Jihad" and "Namaz Kurbani." They also spread obvious fake news and misinformation about the opposition Indian National Congress (INC) political party.
4. YouTube has allowed the propagation of the conspiracy theory of "UPSC Jihad" by Sudarshan News despite the fact that it violates several of YouTube's own policies and received heavy criticism from the Supreme Court and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting during a months-long court case.
5. YouTube allows for Sudarshan News videos to stay on the platform despite it containing narratives that have been repeatedly found to be false or based on doctored information. These fact checks seem to have had no impact on YouTube's policy enforcement.
6. YouTube is likely to profit from the content on Sudarshan's channel through revenue sharing, with no disclosure on the revenue sharing arrangement or amounts. Estimates suggest that Sudarshan News is likely to be earning between \$7,600 and \$22,900 per month through its YouTube channel.
7. Advertisements of reputed brands—including Make My Trip, Goibibo and Zomato —aired on Sudarshan's YouTube channel, raises concerns about advertisers' reputational losses. YouTube's ad library fails to provide any meaningful transparency on advertising placements.
8. YouTube serves as a link to other far-right networks. The content posted on the Sudarshan News YouTube channel is also spread on Telegram by users within the Hindutva-affiliated, far-right online ecosystem.

## INTRODUCTION

YouTube is a major source of news for users in India.<sup>1</sup> Much of the “news videos” ostensibly being shared on YouTube platform, however, in fact contains misinformation and hate speech, which poisons Indian political discourse and undermines its democracy.<sup>2</sup> Another increasing trend is the proliferation of vox pop channels, parading as news channels.<sup>3</sup> Reports have shown how this is deceptive and extremely damaging to the information environment.<sup>4</sup>

YouTube’s platform works on “self-regulation.” That is, they draw up election related policies and community guidelines—which address issues like hate speech and misinformation—and use a variety of methods to enforce these. In theory, YouTube says they ensure that no content that violates in-house community guidelines rules is published on the platform. In reality, content in violation of its own community guidelines proliferates on social media platforms in various parts of the world, especially in India.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, it is not just a passive platform upon which hate and misinformation are propagated, but one that actively rewards the creation and spread of such content through the YouTube Partner Program in which YouTube shares advertising revenue with channels.

This report focuses on Sudarshan News, which offers a particularly clear example of this dangerous dynamic. This privately owned television channel, about whose operations more details are presented in the next section, and its YouTube channel, has a long history of prolifically spreading hate speech and misinformation targeted at India’s minority Muslim community.

Sudarshan’s violations in this regard have caught the attention of the Indian legal system, which restrained the broadcast of its episode on “UPSC Jihad” leading to months long public debate on the limits of free speech. Throughout the election period it has continued to spread hateful content and misinformation against the opposition, all clearly in violation of YouTube’s community guidelines.

Despite reporting multiple videos, YouTube has failed to enforce its own policies against Sudarshan News’s channel. This allows for content from Sudarshan News’s YouTube channel to then serve as a feeder into the Hindutva far-right online ecosystem on Telegram. Each day that these policies are not enforced leads to a poisoning of discourse and puts those at the receiving end of hate speech at the likelihood of violence. Instead of enforcement of community guidelines, both Sudarshan News and YouTube have earned revenue from this hateful content full of misinformation.

## METHODOLOGY

This report focuses on the contradiction between YouTube’s self-proclaimed policies to address hate speech and misinformation and their complete lack of enforcement.

For 2024, “the biggest election year in history”, YouTube [announced](#) that “we **remove** content that violates our Community Guidelines, **reduce** the spread of harmful election misinformation and **reward** trusted creators via the YouTube Partner Program. Our policies apply to everyone and are enforced with consistency, regardless of the political viewpoints expressed, the language the content is in, or how the content is generated.”

The Sudarshan News YouTube channel features 160000 published videos, has 1.65 million subscribers, and has received over 301 million views. On average, per month, the channel posts about 148 videos and receives 2.7 million views.

As part of this investigation, we reported a total of 26 videos from Sudarshan News to YouTube, noting that this content violated the platform’s community guidelines (see Annexure 1 for detailed descriptions of reported videos).

The majority of these videos target Muslims by demeaning and dehumanising them, making totalizing remarks about the community based on selective reporting, and even instigating violence against it. Speakers on the channel have almost entirely replaced the word “Muslim” with “Jihadi.” Some videos recycled older controversial conspiracy theories like “UPSC Jihad”, explained in the next section, and spun new ones like “Vote Jihad” and “Namaz Kurban.”

We reported six videos from the pre-election period, three from the run up to the elections, and a further seventeen during the elections. Taken together these videos have a collective viewership of at least 3.5 million. There is a wide variation in the viewership of the videos, with some scoring views in the hundreds, while others in the millions.

The videos were reported under YouTube’s [hate speech policy](#) which states that, “Our hate speech policy protects specific groups and members of those groups. We remove policy violative content. We consider content hate speech when it incites hatred or violence against groups based on protected attributes such as age, gender, race, caste, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status. This policy also includes common forms of online hate such as dehumanising members of these groups; characterising them as inherently inferior or ill.”

Some videos spread falsehoods about the opposition. Its recurring targets are Asaduddin Owaisi, a popular Muslim leader and head of the All India Majlis-E-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM). False themes relate to the opposition Indian National Congress (INC), plans to redistribute wealth from Hindus to Muslims. YouTube makes [this claim](#) about their election misinformation policies: “Our elections misinformation policies do not allow misleading or deceptive content with serious risk of egregious real-world harm like content containing hacked information which may interfere with democratic processes, false claims that could materially discourage voting, or content with false claims related to candidate eligibility.”

Since 2017, several fact-checking websites, including [AltNews](#), [The Quint](#), [Scroll](#), [NewsLaundry](#), and [Boom Live](#) have found narratives promoted by Sudarshan News to be false or based on doctored information. More recently, from three weeks ago, [this YouTube video](#) claims that a Sunni Muslim

organisation in Dubai is offering financial incentives to Indian Muslims to vote for the INC. This claim was [fact checked](#), and found to be false. And yet, this video remains on Sudarshan News's YouTube account. These fact checks seem to have had no impact on YouTube's policy enforcement.

YouTube's policy on [enforcement](#) says *"we have review teams with linguistic and subject matter expertise. We also deploy machine learning to proactively detect potentially hateful content to send for human review. For channels that repeatedly brush up against our policies, we take severe action including removing them from the YouTube Partner Program (which prevents the channel from monetizing), issuing strikes (content removal), or terminating a channel altogether."*

At the time of publication, YouTube had not taken any of them down. There is no disclosure of the revenue earned by YouTube and Sudarshan News from this content.

## BACKGROUND ON SUDARSHAN NEWS

Founded in 2005, [Sudarshan News](#) is a privately owned organisation with a long history of spreading conspiracies targeting religious minorities, particularly Muslims. These conspiracies include "Love Jihad," and during the 2024 Lok Sabha Elections, "Vote Jihad." "Love Jihad" is a conspiracy theory first seeded by far-right groups, which suggests that Muslim men are duping Hindu women into relationships and then forcibly converting them to Islam. Other recent Sudarshan programming reflected two narrative themes being propagated by the BJP in this election cycle. The first is the existence of a supposed "Vote Jihad" — an attempt by Muslims to somehow take over India through elections and their right to vote. The second is the falsehood that the opposition INC plans to redistribute wealth from Hindus to Muslims.

The force behind Sudarshan News is its chairman and editor-in-chief, Suresh Chavhanke. Chavhanke is closely associated with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a far-right, Hindu extremist paramilitary organisation which runs a wider network of economic, labour, political, religious, social service and cultural organisations, known as the "Sangh Parivar," in India and abroad. Its political wing is the current ruling political party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Chavhanke regularly speaks at events of the Sangh Parivar and has campaigned for BJP candidates during elections as well. Several times during such events, he has called for violence against Muslims and the making of the "Hindu Rashtra" or "Hindu Nation." This close relationship appears to have benefited his television channel. As per a report by NewsLaundry using data accessed through the Right to Information, in 2014-15, the first financial year with the BJP in power at the Centre, government advertisements to Sudarshan increased over twenty-fold in a single shot, to Rs 23.3 lakh. They continued to rise in subsequent years, peaking at Rs 81.3 lakh in 2017-18.<sup>6</sup>

As per further data presented on expenditure by the government on media advertisements in parliament, a report by NewsLaundry notes that the viewership of Sudarshan does not match up to



the other news channels, thus making the advertising revenues disproportionate with viewership numbers.<sup>7</sup>

Sudarshan's content covers recurring Hindu supremacist themes such as mosques passing decrees against police, the threat of violence against Hindus from Muslim mobs, the targeting of Hindus by the police, to name just a few.<sup>8</sup>

Recent reporting by the *New York Times* on the Indian media's coverage of the Ram Mandir consecration ceremony, singled out Sudarshan News for pushing a divisive communal agenda.<sup>9</sup> "Every time guests veered into theological tangents," the journalists Mujib Mashal and Hari Kumar wrote:

*"Suresh Chavhanke, the channel's chairman, interjected to steer the show back to its focus: the opposition Indian National Congress party, which had to pay for its absence from the consecration, and India's Muslim minority. "We can get religious knowledge from anyone," he said in cutting off a seer. "Tell me what your message is to the enemies." When another seer struck a tone of reconciliation, saying that the temple dispute was now in the past and that Muslims and Hindus should work on "brotherhood," Mr. Chavhanke interrupted him. He pivoted to something often instigated by the Hindu right: an economic boycott of Muslims. "See, on Sudarshan, this 'brotherhood' doesn't work," he said. "This drug of 'brotherhood' has damaged the Hindus a lot.""*

Sudarshan News has been taken to court for its inflammatory content multiple times, and its editors have been arrested for incitement of communal violence.<sup>1011</sup> Action by YouTube against the content of Sudarshan News would thus have plenty of precedent within recent Indian law. In any case, regardless of Indian law, YouTube claims to be governed by its own global community standards. All of this content is clearly violative of such community guidelines.

The most outrageous case was a September 2020 [episode](#) of "UPSC Jihad", which led to a months-long public debate on the limits of free speech, given the heinous content being pushed on the channel. The UPSC - Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) - exam is a highly competitive national-level common entrance exam for entry into the Indian Civil Services. The episode contains several misleading, factually incorrect and hateful claims to vilify Muslims who successfully take this exam to serve the country as bureaucrats. The attempted spin by Sudarshan falsely claimed that Muslims are strategically "infiltrating" the Indian bureaucracy with the help of "funds from terror-linked organisations abroad". This claim has been fact checked by [AltNews](#), [Boom Live](#), [The Wire](#) and [The Quint](#). The channel assigned this "conspiracy" with a clickbait term "UPSC Jihad."

This led to various restraining court orders and guidelines issued by the Supreme Court and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, which found that the episodes were "not in good taste, offensive and [have] a likelihood of promoting communal attitudes".<sup>12</sup> Sudarshan News was allowed to broadcast the episodes with "suitable modifications and moderations", and warning of

“stricter penal action if the channel [was] found in violation of the programme code.”<sup>13 14</sup> Sudarshan News continues to produce content on this theme such as this video justifying the “UPSC Jihad” and accusing UPSC coaching institutes of “propagating Islamic Jihad by distorting facts.” This theme is repeatedly regurgitated with [multi-part videos](#) and seemingly endlessly iterated upon with YouTube taking no action.

In addition to the channel itself, its editors too have been arrested or charged. In 2023, resident editor of Sudarshan News, Mukesh Kumar, was arrested by Gurugram cybercrime police for tweeting “untrue facts” in relation with the 2023 communal riots in Nuh district of Haryana.<sup>15</sup>

The editor-in-chief Chavhanke has been previously arrested in 2017 for running episodes that were “high on communal content” and “promoted communal disharmony and hostility between religious groups”.<sup>16 17</sup>

In yet another incident from June 2023, Chavhanke delivered an inflammatory speech at a Sakal Hindu Samaj rally in Sangamner, Maharashtra, where he warned that Sangamner “could soon turn into Pakistan”.<sup>18</sup> While inciting Hindus against Muslims, he also said that Muslims girls “must marry Hindu men” to save themselves.<sup>19</sup> Right after Chavhanke delivered the speech, violence broke out in the area, and multiple instances of violence against Muslims were recorded, leading to another First Information Report (FIR) against him.<sup>20</sup> While speaking about these charges in an [interview with Newslandry](#), Chavhanke boasted that this was the 1,827th FIR against him.

## “VOTE JIHAD” & “NAMAZA KURBANI” NARRATIVE

Given all of this, during the election period, Sudarshan News should have been an obvious high target for YouTube, as it is a repeat offender primed to spread propaganda. It did exactly this during the election cycle, repeating older conspiracy theories of “Love Jihad” and “UPSC Jihad”, and spinning a new one on “Vote Jihad” and “Namaz Kurbani.”

In May, at a campaign rally in Gujarat, Prime Minister Modi [said](#) that the INC is asking to Muslims to engage in “Vote Jihad.” He was referring to an incident in which Maria Alam, a leader of the opposition Samajwadi Party, had used the word “Jihad” in a speech encouraging Muslims to vote out Modi. Talking to Al Jazeera later, she clarified that, “by ‘Jihad’, Arabic for struggle, she was encouraging Muslim voter participation.”<sup>21</sup> Modi, however, spun the term to suggest that India’s Muslims were somehow nefariously using elections to launch a religious crusade against Hindus.

The “Vote Jihad” narrative was amplified by Sudarshan News, which added more misinformation, derogatory language, and hate speech against Muslims. The thumbnail of a YouTube [video](#) (Image 1), aired on May 2, depicts four Muslim women in veils, and one Hindu woman, wearing a saree, with the title, “Let's attack ‘Vote Jihad.’” It contains further hateful images on this theme depicting the ink stain indicating a vote, in the form of a sword with a woman in a burqa (Image 2).



Image 1: Thumbnail of YouTube video aired on May 2nd on “Vote Jihad”



Image 2: Screenshot of YouTube video aired on May 2nd on “Vote Jihad”

In the fifty-six minute-long live video which is still on the channel, a panellist refers to another “Jihad” – ‘Reservation Jihad’ – implying that the INC plans to take away a provision of reservation system (affirmative action) from oppressed caste Hindus and give these to the Muslims. He says,

*“Modi says on chest thump that once the population of Muslims will become more than Hindus. Then they'll be doing ‘Vote Jihad’ and all reservations meant for Hindu lower castes will be given to Muslims. And Hindus will be forced to give Jizya Tax [a tax levied on non-Muslims by Mughal emperor Aurangzeb].”*

Chavhanke, the chief of the TV and moderator of the show nods and responds,

*“I'm not surprised. Elections have always been a ‘Jihad’ for them (Muslims)... Making of Pakistan, fooling the Hindu Dalit community to stay in Pakistan and forcefully convert them or make them leave the country. Everything has been ‘Jihad’ for them. Hindus need to understand this.”*

This flows from earlier messaging around “Namaz Kurbani” or “sacrifice of prayers.” In an [episode](#) aired on April 27, the anchor, Mukesh Kumar, claims that Muslims have turned up for voting not because of “their faith in democracy” but because of “their hatred for Modi.” The anchor brings guests to discuss this and probes them into answering why Muslims would leave their Friday prayers to come and vote Modi out of power—a question that is disrespectful and Islamophobic.

## MISINFORMATION AGAINST THE OPPOSITION

Sudarshan News has also published several videos that are rife with misinformation against the opposition parties of India. Its recurring targets are Asaduddin Owaisi, a popular Muslim leader and head of the All India Majlis-E-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), [Digvijay Singh](#), former General Secretary of the INC, and other members of the INC.

A video from [April 13](#) on the Sudarshan News YouTube channel demonises Owaisi, by morphing his image with devilish features including horns, protruding teeth, blood dripping from mouth and a snake-link tongue (see Image 3 below). The caption says, “die or be killed— Owaisi, openly threatening the Qafirs (infidels).” Sudarshan News is deliberately misquoting an Owaisi statement about the death threats he was getting on social media. At the time he had said, “*If you want to kill me, kill me. My life span was written when I was in my mother's womb. I'll keep living as a warrior.*”



Image 3: Screenshot of YouTube video aired on April 13th

A panellist in the discussion, H. S. Rawat, says:

*“These are parts of Islam to create fear, give birth to many children, make noise when offering Namaz on loudspeakers. This way, even if there's only one muslim living in a locality, they'll be able to push away nine other families and migrate to other places.”*

The same image of Owaisi was recycled in an hour long [broadcast](#) on April 22 about the INC Manifesto, as well as in several other episodes. In the broadcast, Chavhanke amplifies a false claim that Prime Minister Modi made about Congress’s election manifesto at an election rally in Rajasthan’s Banswara.<sup>22</sup> Modi lied that the INC election manifesto included a policy proposal for confiscating the mangalsutras (a gold ornament) of Hindu women and distributing them among Muslims.<sup>23</sup>

Chavhanke starts the show by endorsing Modi’s claims, which the Prime Minister supposedly made “because he is fearless.” After playing a video of false claims by Narendra Modi, a monologue voice over on the show says:

*“Congress who calls Hinduism a malaria, who maintains silence over attacks on Hindus... and who hide behind the Muslim appeasement and pose as seasonal Hindu why they are angry over the analysis (by Modi) of their own manifesto.”*

Later in the show, a panellist falsely claims,



*"When Congress was in power, they formed the Sachar Committee [a committee formed in 2005 to study the social, economic, and educational condition of Muslims in India] to make Muslims first-class citizens and Hindus second-class citizens of India."*

Chavhanke nods in agreement and adds, *"The minority institutions established by the then Congress are still promoting 'UPSC Jihad'."* As noted earlier, the courts had initially stopped this original episode on "[UPSC Jihad](#)" and others in the series from being broadcast because of "rabid and divisive propaganda." Yet this conspiracy theory has been recycled freely through [subsequent](#) and more [recent](#) programming.

This misinformation about the opposition party continues with a [video](#) on April 25 on the inheritance tax. In the episode, the anchor, Pradosh Suresh Chavhanke, twists statements made by Indian Overseas Congress chairman, Sam Pitroda, to suggest that the INC has always wanted to seize the personal wealth of Indians and redistribute it among Muslims.

## **"LOVE JIHAD"**

On [April 20, 2024](#), the channel took up the case of Neha Hiremath, a Karnataka resident and daughter of Congress corporator, who was murdered by a former Muslim friend of hers. Predictably, they presented this as another instance of "Love Jihad," as they did with the case of another Hindu woman, Anita Sharma, who was murdered by a Muslim minor in Jahangirpuri in Delhi. Sudarshan's [coverage](#) of these events featured hateful and abusive language against Muslims. Panellists on the show referred to all Muslims as "Jihadis" and the described the entire area of Jahangirpuri as a "mini-Pakistan"—a derogatory term for Muslim ghettos—where people see the "nanga-naach [an extremely lewd phrase, literally translating to "naked dance," for "shamelessness"] of Jihadis." [Further](#) Sudarshan programming on these murders incited Hindu viewers to rise up against "these Muslim Jihadi men" who are out after their "Hindu daughters."

The title of a [video](#) published on April 29 declares that, "Another incident like the Shradha murder case: Jihadi taxi driver murdered a girl." [Reportedly](#), a Muslim man who was in a relationship with a Hindu girl had murdered her, suspecting that she was having an affair. However, Sudarshan News gave it an Islamophobic angle and played a [byte](#) of BJP leader Mangal Prabhat Lodha, who said, "To stop cases like this, I have informed the police to take action against Rohingyas and Bangladeshis living in this area illegally and encroaching on government lands." Lodha was implying either that Muslims in the area were foreign infiltrators or that Muslim refugees from other countries are committing such crimes in India.

There are several other such videos on Sudarshan's channel containing misinformation about the crimes of 'Muslim men against Hindu women.' All these videos have been posted in the last two weeks, causing religious disharmony in India's public discourse while elections are going on.

## YOUTUBE TO TELEGRAM

YouTube is useful to Sudarshan News because it serves to create a public portal from which content can be fed into multiple other social media channels, such as Telegram. Indeed, content posted on Sudarshan's YouTube channel is downloaded and widely shared within the Hindutva, far-right online ecosystem (see Annexure 3 for screenshots).<sup>24</sup>

We found videos of Sudarshan News circulating on multiple Telegram channels. Consider an episode on the theme of "Namaz Kurbani," [published](#) on Sudarshan News, which has approximately 2900 views on YouTube. But it has also been downloaded and circulated within several Hindutva-affiliated Telegram channels, including one named [Hindustani Beast](#), which has 7400 subscribers. On Hindustani Beast the video appeared with the caption:

*Friday voting, Who knew, only Hindus would defeat Modi. There was no benefit in building Ram temple even after 500 years. 🙏🙏 To defeat Modi, Muslims are leaving Friday prayers in mosques and reaching the polling booths. Empty mosques seen in Sudarshan News's exclusive ground report.*

Replying to the video a user comments, "don't sacrifice this country to these mother\*\*\*\*\* Muslims and if you don't want to sell honours of your house these Muslims, go and vote"

Another [video](#) from Sudarshan News was posted on a Telegram channel named "काफिर कन्या," ("unbeliever girl"), which has 9700 subscribers. The video claims that six Hindu brothers and their father were murdered in Bangladesh for wanting to build a Hindu temple. The family of the deceased [claimed](#) their death was a premeditated murder, but local police concluded it as a road accident. The Sudarshan video, however, does not mention the police statement.

Later in the video, Chavhanke warns:

*"Today it was Bangladesh, tomorrow it'll be Pakistan, and the next day it'll be India." On the telegraph channel, the video appeared with the video, "A very heart-wrenching news has been broadcast on Sudarshan News's Channel. If you are a Hindu then watch this video and think. Just 15 years later, as soon as the population of Taliban and Jihadi forces reaches 50% in the whole of India, these scenes will be common. Kashmir was emptied of Hindus in 1990 itself, Kerala and Bengal have been lost, now the danger has reached every Hindu's home. Before they enter your house and massacre you, put pressure on the government to implement 1) Strict Population Bill 2) Uniform Civil Code 3) NRC and become only Sanatani Hindus by moving away from castes/varnas, otherwise these properties and houses are nothing. Oh Mahadev, I will be saved, give good wisdom to the Hindus of India, Om Dharma Rakshati Rakshit (religion protects those who protect it)."*

## YOUTUBE AND SUDARSHAN'S REVENUE SHARING

Underlying all of this is a hidden financial architecture hidden in plain sight that benefits both Sudarshan News and YouTube.

Started in 2007, YouTube pioneered the advertising revenue distribution model through its YouTube Partner Program, as a part of which advertisements are placed both in the overlay and in-stream of user-generated content, in exchange for which a share of the revenue generated is given to the channel.<sup>25</sup>

However, YouTube has made extremely limited public disclosures about how its advertising revenue share program works. In the first place, there is no comprehensive way to know whether an account is monetised. Second, there is no clarity on the nature of the revenue sharing arrangements with users. Third, it is not clear what content, accounts, and entities have been demonetised.

Nonetheless, it is safe to assume that Sudarshan News is a YouTube revenue partner, since there are advertisements on its channel at the start of the video, buttons for “Join” and “Thanks,” and advertisements on the page. There is no disclosure of the revenue earned by YouTube and Sudarshan News from this content. However, the website [VidIQ](#) estimates that Sudarshan News is likely to be earning between \$7,600 and \$22,900 per month through its YouTube channel.

It should be stressed that YouTube is at its core an advertising business, with the vast majority of its revenue coming from advertisers who pay to serve advertisements to targeted audiences. In the course of watching and reporting Sudarshan News's YouTube channel, we noted advertisements placed by brands such as Make My Trip, Goibibio, and Zomato (see Annexure 2). The placement of their advertisements alongside such hateful content could raise major concerns of possible reputational risk to advertisers. We also noted advertisements by the BJP placed alongside videos of Sudarshan News (see Annexure 2). An extensive report by Mozilla assessing ad libraries across platforms, finds YouTube's ad library to have “bare minimum data and functionality.”<sup>26</sup>

The biggest failure of enforcement is YouTube allowing Sudarshan News to be an advertising revenue sharing partner when it is clearly violating multiple policies on hate speech and misinformation.

On Monetisation YouTube [states](#),

*“All channels on YouTube must comply with our Community Guidelines. We set an even higher bar for creators to be eligible to make money on our platform via the YouTube Partner Program (YPP). In order to monetize, channels must also comply with the YouTube channel monetization policies, which includes our Advertiser-friendly content guidelines which do not allow ads on content promoting or advocating for harmful health or medical claims; or content advocating for groups which promote harmful*



*misinformation.”*

Given that several posts on Sudarshan’s YouTube channel violate the platform’s community guidelines, the channel is, by extension, also violating the platform’s monetisation policy.

Not only is Sudarshan News’s YouTube channel causing serious harm, YouTube is also enabling Sudarshan News to earn revenue from this harm. This makes YouTube complicit in financially benefiting from Sudarshan’s content that includes hate speech and misinformation.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOUTUBE

1. Enforce your own policies on hate speech and misinformation to the videos on Sudarshan’s channel.
2. Immediately remove Sudarshan’s channel from the YouTube Partner Program, as the videos on it clearly violate community guidelines and monetisation policies.
3. Disclose all your advertising revenue sharing agreements via YouTube Partner Program, including with Sudarshan News.
4. Initiate meaningful disclosure reports on the YouTube Partner Program including reports on accounts monetised, revenue redistributed, and entities demonetised.
5. Ensure complete disclosure of ads and ad entities, including detailed information about micro-targeting strategies and funding sources.
6. Enhance ad data by providing extensive details on ad content, ad duration, targeting strategies, audience metrics, and advertiser disclosures.
7. Invest in providing more context and debunks rather than deleting videos.
8. Take action against all repeat offenders such as Sudarshan News.
9. Conduct an independent third-party audit on the enforcement of YouTube’s election misinformation policies and remedies provided to those exposed to hate speech, fake news, and misinformation.
10. Consult with civil society members, journalists, fact-checkers, and other stakeholders in a sustained manner to meaningfully incorporate feedback into policies and their enforcement.

## CONCLUSION

The case of Sudarshan News demonstrates the compounding failures of YouTube. Not only are Sudarshan’s videos on YouTube full of hate speech and election-related misinformation, both Sudarshan News and YouTube are earning revenue from this content. The content posted on the Sudarshan News YouTube channel is also spread on Telegram by users within the Hindutva-affiliated, far-right online ecosystem.

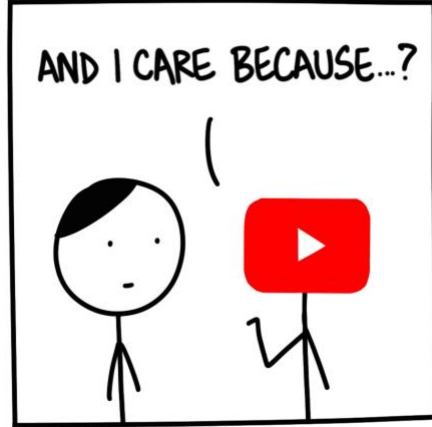
YouTube failed to take action on the 26 reported videos, with a collective viewership of 3.5 million views. These videos contain virulently hateful content on various Islamophobic conspiracy theories including “Vote Jihad” and “Namaz Kurbani.” They also spread obvious fake news and misinformation about the opposition.

Fact checks seem to have no bearing on YouTube as content that has repeatedly proved false by fact checks conducted by multiple sources is not only allowed to stay on the platform, but also to generate revenue.

This report reinforces the findings of two other recent investigations. An investigation by Global Witness and Internet Freedom Foundation found that YouTube allows hateful, misogynistic content that violates their policies in both Hindi and English to remain on its platform even after it has been reported.<sup>27</sup> To test YouTube’s treatment of election disinformation in India, Access Now and Global Witness submitted 48 advertisements in English, Hindi, and Telugu containing content prohibited by YouTube’s [advertising](#) and [elections misinformation policies](#). These ads passed the review process and YouTube approved every single ad for publication.<sup>28</sup>

Civil society groups, with access to limited resources, have repeatedly pointed out, through empirical investigation, this gap between what YouTube claims it does to regulate hate speech and misinformation and the reality of its platform—to no avail.

During the election period, Sudarshan News should have been an obvious high target for YouTube, as it is a repeat offender primed to spread propaganda. If YouTube cannot address this known high profile hate actor, there is little hope that it will take any step to address hate speech and misinformation at a platform level—not just in India, but globally.



@sanitarypanels

## ANNEXURE 1

| S NO. | DATE          | LINK   | VIEWS       | REPORTED FOR                                | DESCRIPTION  |
|-------|---------------|--|-------------|---|--|
| 1.    | April 6, 2017 | मिनी पाकिस्तान कहे जाने वाले मालेगांव में सोते शेरों को जगाते हुए श्री सुरेश चव्हाणके जी     | 2.5 million | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation | <p>The very title of the video includes language that promotes hatred and violence towards Muslims: “Shri Suresh Chavhanke awakening sleeping lions in Malegaon which is known as ‘mini Pakistan’”. The description further specifies that it is the “flame of Hindutva” that he is “awakening” in the “sleeping lions” of Malegaon. “Mini Pakistan” is a term that right-wing extremists use to derogatorily refer to Muslim ghettos or localities which have concentrations of Muslim population.</p> <p>Blatantly calling for enmity towards Muslims - whom the speaker in the video derogatorily refers to as, “these Mullahs” - to save Malegaon. Says, “Open your eyes, at least have enmity with these Muslims to save Malegaon.”</p> |
| 2.    | Sep 11, 2020  | Uncut Bindas Bol on #UPSC_Jihad #नौकरशाही_जिहाद पर सबसे बड़ा खुलासा सुरेश चव्हाणके जी के साथ | 307K        | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation | <p>The entire video is replete with false, communally divisive and hateful statements made against Muslims and Muslim community in general, and Muslim UPSC exam aspirants in particular. Accuses the Muslim community of conspiring a “UPSC jihad” with foreign funding to “infiltrate” the Indian civil services. The content in this video has been heavily reported against, its claims have been fact-checked to be false and was also taken to the Supreme Court of India.</p>   |

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| 3. | Sep 12, 2020 | #UPSCJihad पार्ट- 2,<br>#zakatfoundation @zakatindia का पर्दाफाश.<br>#नौकरशाही_जिहाद   | 164K | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation | Video on how a Muslim NGO called Zakat Foundation, which provides training to aspirants for the Indian civil services exams, is funded by terror-linked organisations outside India. It claims that the foundation is therefore training Muslims for an “infiltration” of the Indian bureaucracy. The video is replete with false, communally divisive and hateful statements against Muslims. Heavily implying that Muslims are not just infiltrating the bureaucracy, but India at large, and are therefore posing a threat to the “freedom” of India at large. The anchor of the show, Suresh Chavhanke, calls for the “immediate suspension” of all IS, IAS appointees who received training for the civil services exams from this Foundation. He also calls that the students who will now appear for the exam, and have received training from the Foundation, should be stopped from doing so - basically accusing all those (Muslim) students trained at Zakat Found. to be “infiltrators” |
| 4. | Sep 13, 2020 | #UPSCJihad पार्ट- 3,<br>#zakatfoundation का सरकारी तन्त्र पर कब्जे की साजिश का खुलासा. | 127K | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation | Extending on the previous episode, #UPSCJihad पार्ट- 2, #zakatfoundation @zakatindia का पर्दाफाश. #नौकरशाही_जिहाद, propagates more false, alarmist and extremely Islamophobic conspiracies against Indian Muslims and the NGO, Zakat Foundation. Accuses it of training “infiltrators” for a planned and conspiratorial “infiltration” of the Indian bureaucracy. The video is replete with false, communally divisive and hateful statements against Muslims.  |

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| 5. | Sep 14, 2020 | #UPSC_Jihad<br>पार्ट- 4, #Zakat<br>Foundation का<br>अम्बेडकर जी के सिद्धांतों<br>पर हमला.     | 132K | Hateful or<br>abusive content<br>+<br>Misinformation | This episode is the 4th episode in the vile UPSC Jihad series by Sudarshan News, in which it is vilifying Indian Muslims relentlessly. Following up on its “uncovering” of the “jihadist invasion” of the Indian civil services and its national-level entrance exam, in this video, Suresh Chavhanke lands new attacks on Muslims and the Zakat Foundation. The crux of these attacks is that “Muslim infiltrators” are launching an “attack on the principles of Dr. Ambedkar”. The principles in question are the reserved categories of SC/ST and OBC. |
| 6. | Mar 4, 2022  | UPSC कोचिंग के<br>मदरसे से जिहादी एजेंडा<br>बंद करो, गजवा-ए-हिन्द<br>की नौकरशाही !            | 79K  | Hateful or<br>abusive content<br>+<br>Misinformation | The entire video is replete with false, communally divisive and hateful statements made against Muslims, particularly in context of them preparing and appearing for the Indian civil services exam UPSC. Calls some UPSC coaching centres “madrasas” in a derogatory manner, and claims that students there are being taught “jihadi agenda”. Raises false and alarmist concerns of how these “jihadists” will infiltrate and take over the Indian civil services and run administration in the country.  |
| 7. | Nov 29, 2023 | देश का पहला इस्लामिक<br>स्टेट बना बिहार, आंशिक<br>शरिया कानून लागू...!<br>  <br>SudarshanNews | 21K  | Hateful or<br>abusive content                        | Islamophobic: links the government/state of Bihar in India, to terrorism, by calling it the “Islamic State of Bihar”. Accuses Nitish Kumar, Lalu, and the Bihar government of Muslim appeasement, in the process mongering hate against Muslims. Calls Muslims “jihadists” at several points throughout the entire video. Misleading information that Hindu holidays were removed from Bihar state   |

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|     |                |  |      |  | government holiday list, and Muslim holidays increased. Questions/frames the Bihar government for “conspiring to promote Ghazwa-e-Hind (Muslim invasion of India)”.  |
| 8.  | Dec 1, 2023    | कश्मीर में जिहाद 2.0, टारगेट पर हिन्दू छात्र   NIT Srinagar Protest    SudarshanNews             | 2.7K | Hateful or abusive content                               | Islamophobic: Questions a Muslim guest on his loyalty to his religion over the nation. Asks the speaker to not question them (the right wing) over the killing of Gandhi, and instead talk of (his/his community’s own exploits) which he lists as “You have killed millions in 1400 years. You caused the death of ten lakh people in 1947. You talk about creating Pakistan. Will you tell us who the terrorist is? I have been homeless for 35 years; will you tell me who the terrorist is?...Have you ever seen any Muslim scared of Hindus?” |
| 9.  | Dec 2, 2023    | अल्पसंख्यक छात्रवृत्ति योजना में फर्जी निकले चौथाई से भी ज्यादा स्टूडेंट्स    SudarshanNews      | 926  | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation +Child abuse | Hate and fear mongering against Muslims and madrasas. Accusing them of terrorism. Says: “Who is not familiar with Madarsa and the activities taking place in Madarsa? Establishing a terrorist base, showing the path of terrorism, and raising anti-national slogans, these are the specialties of Madarsa. Adding beauty into Madarsa now, Jihadis have fooled the government with a plan to raise the moon.”  |
| 10. | April 13, 2024 | Owaisi Hate Speech: असदुद्दीन ओवैसी ने कहा दुनिया में गाजियों की तरह रहेंगे   AIMIM I Bindas Bol | 1.1K | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation              | Smears Asaduddin Owaisi, leader of AIMIM political party. Shows an edited image of Owaisi with devilish features including horns, protruding teeth, blood dripping from mouth and a snake-link tongue. Narrative in the video:   |

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|     |                |  |     |   | Owaisi is inciting Muslims to take revenge for the razing down of mosques, including Babri; asks them to live as “ghaazi” or Muslim warriors. Video explains “ghaazi” as a “jihadi” who fights against non-Muslims, whereas it actually just means a “warrior”.   |
| 11. | April 13, 2024 | आखिर क्यों नहीं लिया गया मुल्ला Owaisi पर Action ? कैसे लोगों में भय फैला रहे है Owaisi जैसे लोग !   | 870 | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation | In this video, a morphed graphic of Owaisi is playing in which a red tongue of a snake is coming out. A panellist in the discussion says, “These are parts of Islam to create fear, give birth to many children, make noise when offering Namaz on loudspeakers. This way, even if there's only one muslim living in a locality, they'll be able to push away nine other families and migrate to other places.” |
| 12. | April 13, 2024 | खुदा के नाम पर दे दो 'बोट ' -DIGVIJAY SINGH  | 472 | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation | Smearing Congress MP Digvijay Singh for standing in prayer at a mosque, by saying that he’s playing vote-bank politics by appealing to Muslims. The video also says that because Singh visited a mosque, it is clear that he hates Hindus/ is a Hindu hater.  |
| 13. | April 20, 2024 | Bindas Bol: Love Jihad में काँग्रेस नेता के बेटी के हत्या पर तो बोलो सेकुलरों   Dr. Suresh Chavhanke | 12K | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation | Communalising the murder of Karnataka resident and daughter of Congress corporator, Neha Hiremath by a former Muslim friend of hers. Persistently calls the whole incident a case of “love jihad” and Muslim man a “jihadi”. Trying to “awaken” “Congress” and “secularon” (Congress members and secularists, derogatorily) and prove to them that their Muslim appeasement is                                  |



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|     |                |  |      |   | of no use, because the “jihadi” Muslims will only stab them in the back by “trapping” their “Hindu daughters” in their trap of “love jihad”.   |
| 14. | April 22, 2024 | Bindas Bol: Congress हिंदुओं की संपत्ति मुसलमानों को देगी - Modi   Congress Manifesto   Election2024 | 16K  | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation | <p>In a one-hour-long video, Suresh Chavhanke amplifies the misinformation stated by Prime Minister Modi against the Congress party in an election rally. The claim by PM is that the election manifesto of the Congress party suggests they intend to confiscate 'Mangalsutras' (a gold ornament worn by Hindu women) and distribute them to Muslims, infiltrators, and those with more children. The above statement is a fake claim and has been fact checked by many fact checking portals.</p> <p>Suresh Chavhanke starts the show by endorsing Modi’s claims “because he is fearless”. After playing a video of false claims by Narendra Modi, a monologue voice over on the show says, “Congress who call Hinduism a malaria, who maintains silence over attacks on Hindus... and who hide behind the Muslim appeasement and pose as seasonal Hindu why they are angry over the analysis (by Modi) of their own manifesto.”</p> |
| 15. | April 23, 2024 | Jago : गोवा को अलग देश बनाएंगे- काँग्रेस, #modi का नया हमला, Pradosh                                 | 4.7K | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation | This episode covers PM Narendra Modi’s highly controversial election campaign speech on April 23, 2024 in Rajasthan, where he made several factually incorrect   |

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|     |                | Suresh Chavhanke<br>#जागो #jago<br>#inc  |      |   | and anti-Muslims statements to smear the opposition party, Congress. In media coverage, the speech has been called “hate speech”. This video agrees and defends these statements that Modi made, which have been fact-checked to be incorrect here. The entire video is trying to bring in arguments in support of Modi’s incorrect statements; in doing so, the video calls Muslims and some Muslim criminals charged of murder “jihadis” repeatedly. It also fuels Muslim stereotypes and hatred towards them.  |
| 16. | April 25, 2024 | Jago : पिता की आधी सम्पति सरकार को आधी पुत्र को Sam Pitroda Controversy   Inheritance Tax in India | 3.2K | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation | Smearing opposition party Congress by twisting statements made by Indian Overseas Congress chairman, Sam Pitroda on the inheritance tax. The video shows, supports and endorses the misleading narrative spun by BJP/right-wing leaders that Congress has always strategized to take the personal wealth of Indians and redistribute it among Muslims to appease their Muslim vote bank. The episode is also trying to provide evidence to support PM Narendra Modi’s misleading and false claims against Congress which he made during an election rally. Shows Yogi Adityanath referring to Muslims as “ghuspetiye”. Shows Amit Shah making the misleading claim that INC prioritises Muslims’ right over national wealth for minorities. |

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| 17. | April 27, 2024 | Congress के अंदर अतिवादी वामपंथ हैं जो हिन्दुस्थान को बर्बाद करना चाहती हैं                        | 1.1K | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation | Title of the video says, “There are extremist leftists within the Congress who want to destroy India”. Shows a picture of Owaisi with horns, a snake’s tongue and devilish features edited onto his face. Also smearing Congress; says that it is infested with “ultra-leftism” and is going to destroy the (Indian) nation.   |
| 18. | April 27, 2024 | Modi को हटाने के लिए नमाज़ की कुर्बानी   Lok Sabha Election 2024   #JawabToChah iye                | 5K   | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation | Vile content against Muslim voters. Claims that Muslims have turned up for voting not because of “their faith in democracy”, but because of “their hatred for [PM Narendra] Modi”. The anchor brings guests to discuss this and is trying to probe them into answering why Muslims would leave their Friday prayers to come and vote Modi out of power - a claim that is baseless, Islamophobia, and which vilifies Muslims. |
| 19. | April 28, 2024 | Delhi के जहांगीरपुरी में जिहादियों का नंगा नाच लड़की ने प्रेम प्रस्ताव ठुकराया तो मां को मार दिया. | 2.5K | Hateful or abusive content                  | Video about the Jahangirpuri murder case of a Hindu woman by a minor Muslim. Uses very hateful and abusive language for Muslims. Refers to all Muslims as “jihadi”. Says Jahangirpuri is a “mini-Pakistan” (a derogatory term used for Muslim ghettos) where people see the “nanga-naach (an extremely lewd phrase for ‘shamelessness’) of jihadis”. Communalises the incident in very inflammatory ways.                    |
| 20. | April 28, 2024 | Delhi प्रशासन की नाकामी की वजह से ही   | 1.3K | Hateful or abusive content                  | Communalising the Jahangirpuri murder case through extremely Islamophobic, transphobic and   |

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|     |                | जिहादी हिन्दू लड़कियों को निशाना बना रहे ।  |      |                            | abusive language. Uses abusive and hateful language: calls a Muslim man a “haramkhor jihadi”; also refers to the man as a “hijra”, a slur used for transpersons. Incites Hindu viewers against “these Muslim jihadi men” who are out after their “Hindu daughters”.   |
| 21. | April 29, 2024 | श्रीमंत बाजीराव पेशवा की 284 वां पुण्य स्मरण समारोह पर Dr. Suresh Chavhanke Ji की धर्म चर्चा  | 986  | Hateful or abusive content | This is part of a “religious discussion” that Sudarshan editor-in-chief Suresh Chavhanke had with a Hindu audience on the death anniversary of Bajirao Peshwa. He begins the speech by encouraging Hindu men to “bring home a Mastani” (i.e. bring a Muslim woman into a Hindu marriage), saying that only if they bring 20-25 lakh Mastanis, will they be able to impact the religious demographics (i.e. less Muslims, more Hindus). Further says that this will be considered “ghar waapsi”, and then goes on to talk about “ghar waapsi raajneeti”. |
| 22. | April 29, 2024 | Mumbai में नहीं थम रहे love jihad के मामले, जिहादी ने हिंदू युवती के साथ किया दुष्कर्म        | 3.2K | Hateful or abusive content | Communalises the rape of a woman in Mumbai, calls the rapist a “jihadi”. Calls it a case of “love jihad”.   |
| 23. | April 29, 2024 | एक बार फिर Shradha murder case जैसी वारदात जिहादी टैक्सी ड्राइवर ने युवती को उतारा मौत के घाट | 1.2K | Hateful or abusive content | The title of this video says, “Another incident like the Shradha murder case: Jihadi taxi driver murdered a girl.” Reportedly, the man who was in a relationship with the girl had murdered her, suspecting that she was having an affair. However, Sudarshan News gave it a communal angle and   |

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|     |                |  |      |   | played a byte of BJP leader Mangal Prabhat Lodha, who said, “To stop cases like this, I have informed the police to take action against Rohingyas and Bangladeshis living in this area illegally and encroaching on government lands.” The leader implied either that Muslims in the area were infiltrators or that Muslim refugees from other countries are committing such crimes.  |
| 24. | April 29, 2024 | धर्म योद्धा डॉ. सुरेश चव्हाणके जी ने देखी फिल्म रजाकार जिहादियों के अत्याचारों पर आधारित है यह फिल्म | 1.3K | Hateful or abusive content                  | Video shows Suresh Chavhanke talking about a communal propaganda film, Razakar: The Silent Genocide of Hyderabad. He says that by watching this film, Hindus should familiarise themselves with the “massacre of 2 lakh Hindus by the Nizam of Hyderabad”. Video commentator also says that the film is “based on true events”. Both these statements and the narrative peddled in the video are misleading. The truth and distortion of historic events in the movie has been explained in this article by The Wire. |
| 25. | May 2, 2024    | Bindas Bol : आओ बोट जिहाद पर चोट करो   Salman Khurshid On Vote Jihad   Loksabha Election             | 11K  | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation | Episode maligning Salman Khurshid’s family after his niece made some statements asking for Muslims to do “jihad”. Using her statements to claim that all of Salman Khurshid’s and Zakir Hussain’s political aims were anti-national, because their loyalties were with Pakistan - their native. Claims that the family is Pashtun and has origins in Pakistan’s Pakhtun lands and is therefore  |

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|     |             |  |      |   | jihadi by nature. Uses this to vilify Muslims in Indian politics and the Muslim community in general.  |
| 26. | May 6, 2024 | Bindas Bo: 1<br>करोड़ की सुपारी,<br>Suresh<br>Chavhanke जी,<br>Nupur Sharma,<br>T.Raja और Rana<br>के हत्या का षड्यंत्र | 138K | Hateful or abusive content + Misinformation | Talking about Mohammed Sohail aka Maulana Abu Bakr of Surat who has been arrested for “threatening to kill Hindu leaders”, according to the Free Press Journal. He episode goes on to make sweeping misleading statements about Bakr saying that he is the 27-year-old maulana of a mosque and has been involved in “terrorism” and has been “training terrorists” in the mosque in which he’s the maulana for 27 years. The video provides no evidence for this, and there are no other media sources online either which verify this. In fact, there is no other mainstream or alternative media house covering this arrest at all, except Free Press Journal and Zee News - both of which produce highly pro-right-wing/BJP content. Propagating Islamophobia by asking to “screen all the Madrasa children” that the Maulana taught to see “how many more terrorists he has given birth to”. |

*\* All videos links accessed as of 3rd June 2024*

## ANNEXURE 2



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देश का पहला इस्लामिक स्टेट बना बिहार, आंशिक शरिया कानून लागू...! || SudarshanNews

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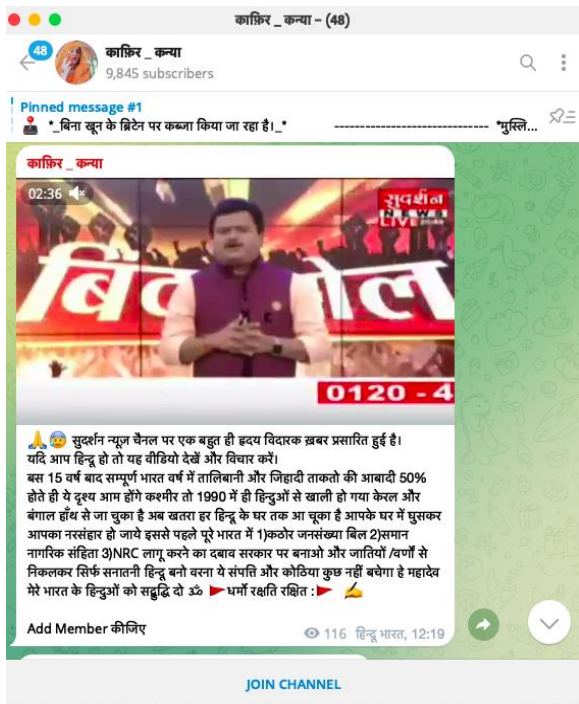
\* Screenshots of ads on YouTube Sudarshan channel



## ANNEXURE 3



\* Screenshot from Telegram Channel "Hindustani Beast"



\* Screenshot from Telegram Channel "Kaafir Kanaiya"



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