



**Truth Matters, We Verify**

# **Train Hijacking** **INCIDENT** **REPORT** **2025**

**The Train Hijacking in Balochistan,  
Pakistan (11-13 March 2025) and  
The Role of Fake News in  
Amplifying Its Impact**

**Fake News Watchdog**

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## **About Us**

Fake News Watchdog (FNW) is a dedicated non-profit organization committed to countering the spread of disinformation and misinformation in the digital age. As an advocate for truth and transparency, we empower individuals, institutions, and communities with the tools and knowledge to navigate the complexities of the modern media landscape.

## **Our Mission**

Our mission is to expose falsehoods, analyze misinformation trends, and promote media literacy to create a more informed and discerning society. By combining cutting-edge technology, artificial intelligence, and in-depth research, we aim to tackle the challenges of fake news head-on, fostering trust and accountability in information sharing.

## **Our Belief**

We believe that a well-informed society is the foundation of a thriving democracy. Through fact-checking services, research and educational initiatives, and collaboration with global stakeholders, we are building a world where truth prevails over deception.

## **Join Hands With Us**

Join us in this crucial endeavor to combat fake news and safeguard the integrity of information for the betterment of humanity.



## A Message from Our Team

At Fake News Watchdog, our mission is rooted in the belief that truth is not just a principle but a cornerstone of a thriving society. In an age where disinformation spreads faster than ever, the responsibility to uphold integrity in information is one we share collectively.

This report serves as both a reflection of the challenges we face and a call to action. It dives deep into the anatomy of disinformation, examining its sources, impact, and the societal vulnerabilities it exploits. By bringing these incidents to light, we aim to empower individuals, institutions, and policymakers with the insights necessary to recognize, combat, and prevent the spread of falsehoods.

Our work is not possible without the contributions of vigilant fact-checkers, dedicated researchers, and the trust of those who believe in a better-informed world. Together, we can build an ecosystem where truth has the power to outpace lies, fostering trust and accountability in every corner of society.

We hope this report inspires meaningful dialogue and decisive action. Thank you for standing with us in this crucial fight against misinformation.

**– The Fake News Watchdog Team**

Email: [info@fakenewswatchdog.org](mailto:info@fakenewswatchdog.org)



## Founding Members

### **Dr. Asad Ali Shah** (Co-Founder)

Dr. Asad Ali Shah is a professor, researcher, and entrepreneur. He has earned his Ph.D. in media and sociology from Canada. He has been teaching at different universities in Pakistan and Canada. He is the author of a number of publications, including a book, journal articles, and reports. After completing his doctoral degree in Canada, Dr. Shah returned to Pakistan to serve his country.

### **Muhammad Nasir Butt** (Co-Founder)

Muhammad Nasir Butt is a seasoned journalist and academic, currently serving at Public TV. With extensive experience in media, he has previously worked with Capital TV and GNN. In addition to his journalistic endeavors, Nasir is also teaching media & communication courses at prestigious institutions including IIU and RWU. He holds an MPhil in Media & Communication and is pursuing a PhD in Media.

## Team Members

### **Prof. Rehan Hasan** (Head of Trainings & Production)

Rehan Hasan is an accomplished Director with extensive experience in the broadcast media industry, showcasing a proven track record of excellence. Renowned for his expertise in Immersive Reality, Journalism, Media Relations, Radio, and Film Production, he brings a dynamic and innovative approach to every project. With a strong professional background and a passion for storytelling, Rehan continues to make significant contributions to the ever-evolving media landscape.

### **Rubab Jaffery** (EU and UK)

Rubab Jaffery holds a Master's degree in Media and Communication from the UK and brings a wealth of experience in journalism, having worked with several prominent media organizations, including Daily Jang.

### **Muhammad Umair Khan**

A Media and Communication Professional, writer, public speaker, public relations specialist, content writer, spokesperson, media management expert, and crisis communication expert. He has served with Lahore Waste Management Company (LWMC) Govt. of the Punjab, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Peshawar KP, and Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) Govt. of Pakistan.

### **Rashid Khan**

a leading expert in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Deepfake Technology, specializing in the development, analysis, and ethical implications of AI-driven content creation. With years of experience in machine learning, computer vision, and digital forensics, he has contributed to groundbreaking projects that push the boundaries of innovation while addressing the societal challenges posed by deepfake technologies.

### **Muhammad Faraz** (North America)

Muhammad Faraz holds a Master's degree in Media and Communication and has demonstrated a strong commitment to the field of journalism and research. He brings valuable expertise to media analysis, reporting, and communication studies.



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# **The Train Hijacking in Balochistan, Pakistan (11-13 March 2025) and the Role of Fake News in Amplifying Its Impact**

## **Train Hijacking INCIDENT REPORT 2025**



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## Introduction

The Jaffar Express train hijacking incident on March 11, 2025, in Balochistan triggered a wave of misinformation and fake news across various digital platforms especially on X (formerly Twitter). False reports circulated widely, with fabricated narratives emerging from both foreign sources, particularly Indian social media accounts, and some domestic political groups within Pakistan. The rapid spread of these misleading claims created confusion, fear, and mistrust among the public, highlighting the urgent need for fact-checking mechanisms to counter propaganda.

This report, compiled by the Fake News Watchdog Team, investigates and debunks several major fake news stories that emerged following the train hijacking. These include misrepresented videos, doctored and misleading old images, false casualty reports, and manipulated political narratives. By systematically analyzing and verifying the claims, this report aims to provide a fact-based account of the incident, exposing the tactics used by various entities to exploit a sensitive security crisis for propaganda purposes.

The increasing reliance on social media as a primary news source has enabled both state and non-state actors to manipulate information, often using old, unrelated footage and misleading headlines to spread disinformation. Such practices not only distort public perception but also undermine national security efforts by promoting panic and distrust. The Jaffar Express train hijacking case serves as a critical example of how terrorist incidents are exploited for political and ideological agendas, reinforcing the importance of media literacy and fact-checking initiatives in combating fake news.

This report provides a detailed breakdown of false claims, their sources, and the real facts uncovered through verification efforts. It underscores the impact of misinformation on public discourse and calls for greater responsibility among media outlets, political figures, and social media users in ensuring accurate and reliable reporting during crisis situations.

### Timeline of Events

- **11 March 2025:** Armed militants hijack the Jaffar Express train in Balochistan, taking passengers hostage, followed by a flood of fake and misleading news on social media.
- **12 March 2025:** Security forces surround the train and begin operation against hijackers.
- **13 March 2025:** A military operation successfully clears the train, rescuing all passengers safely and neutralizing the attackers.

## Methodology

The Fake News Watchdog Team employed a systematic and multi-layered verification process to investigate and debunk the misinformation surrounding the Jaffar Express hijacking incident. The methodology used in this report follows rigorous fact-checking standards, digital forensics techniques, and cross-referencing of official sources to ensure accuracy.

### 1. Data Collection

- **Monitoring Social Media Platforms:**

- Social media platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp were closely monitored for viral posts related to the Jaffar Express hijacking.
- Hashtags and keywords such as #JafferExpress, #JafferExpressHijack, #Baluchistan, #BalochistanAttack, were analyzed to track the spread of misinformation.

- **Identification of Misinformation:**

- Posts containing exaggerated, unverified, or misleading claims were flagged for further investigation.
- User accounts spreading disinformation were categorized into foreign sources, political entities, and independent propagandists.

### 2. Verification Process

- **Reverse Image & Video Search:**

- All images and videos shared as evidence were analyzed using Google Reverse Image Search, TinEye, and InVID video verification tools.
- Metadata analysis was conducted to determine the original upload date, location, and source of the media content.

- **Cross-Referencing with Official Sources:**

- Verified information was obtained from Pakistan's security agencies, government officials, and credible news outlets.
- Press statements and eyewitness reports were reviewed to confirm or debunk the viral claims.

- **Historical Context Analysis:**

- Previous terrorists attacks and insurgent activities in Balochistan were studied to check for recycled or misrepresented media content.
- Past incidents involving Baloch militant groups (BLA, BLF) and TTP were examined to verify authenticity.

### 3. Expert Consultation

- **Security and Media Analysts:** Experts in counterterrorism, digital media, and security affairs were consulted to assess the authenticity and possible motives behind fake news propagation.
- **Set Patterns:** Patterns of disinformation warfare, psychological operations (PsyOps), and cross-border propaganda were evaluated.

### 4. Categorization and Reporting

- **Classification of Fake News:**

- Verified misinformation was categorized into:
  - Misrepresented Media (Old images/videos presented as new).
  - Completely Fabricated Stories (Fictional events with no factual basis).
  - Politicized Disinformation (Propaganda for political narratives).

- **Final Reporting & Public Awareness:**

- The findings were compiled into this detailed report, highlighting each fake news instance, the original claim, and the verified truth.
- The report concludes with recommendations for combating fake news and promoting responsible media consumption.

This methodology ensures that the findings presented in this report are data-driven, evidence-based, and free from bias, contributing to the broader efforts of countering misinformation in Pakistan's security landscape.



## Data and Analysis

The hijacking of the Jaffar Express train in Balochistan on March 11, 2025, was followed by a surge of misinformation and fake news across various social media platforms, particularly from Indian accounts and political groups in Pakistan. Several fabricated claims were circulated, falsely exaggerating the incident to create panic and propagate anti-state narratives. The Fake News Watchdog team conducted investigations into these misleading claims and debunked them.

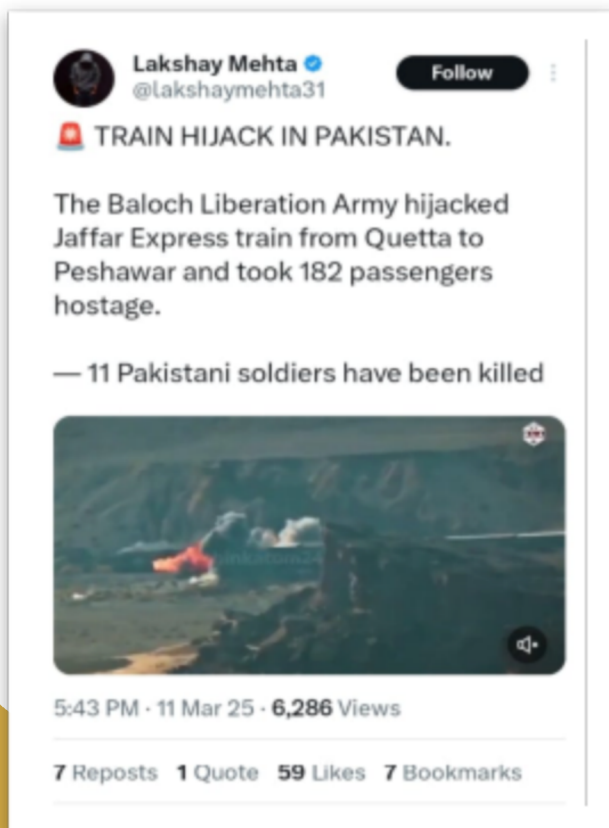
### 1. Fabricated Video Claiming Hostage Situation

#### False Claim

Indian social media accounts shared a misleading video, alleging that Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) had hijacked the Jaffar Express and taken 182 passengers hostage, killing 11 Pakistani soldiers.

#### Reality

The video was actually from 2022 and depicted an IED attack on a military train near Sibi, Balochistan. It had no connection to the Jaffar Express train hijacking on March 11, 2025.



## 1. Fabricated Video Claiming Hostage Situation - Cont....

A viral claim circulating on multiple Indian social media accounts alleged that the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) hijacked the Jaffar Express, took 182 passengers hostage, and killed 11 Pakistani soldiers while the train was traveling from Quetta to Peshawar. The post quickly gained traction, accumulating over 6,286 views and widespread shares across various platforms. However, upon verification by the Fake News Watchdog Team, it was revealed that the video in question was neither recent nor related to the alleged hijacking incident of Jaffar Express Train in Balochistan.

Further investigation uncovered that the same footage had been previously shared on April 15, 2022, in a post claiming that the BLA had targeted a Frontier Corps (FC) train near Sibi, Balochistan, using an improvised explosive device (IED).

Additionally, a January 2022 report confirmed that an explosion on the Jaffar Express had derailed multiple bogies and resulted in military casualties. The BLA had taken responsibility for that attack and had publicly released the video showing the IED strike on the train.

Fact-checking efforts conclusively proved that Indian social media accounts had deliberately misrepresented old footage from January 18, 2022, falsely attributing it to the March 2025 Jaffar Express train hijacking. This misinformation campaign was part of a coordinated propaganda effort aimed at spreading false narratives and fueling anti-Pakistan sentiments.

## 2. Misleading Video of Alleged Hostages

Following the attack on the Jaffar Express train in the Dhadar area of Bolan Pass, Balochistan, various misleading reports began circulating on social media. One such claim alleged that a video showed hostages taken by Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) militants, with the majority of them being military personnel. This claim gained traction online, fueling panic and misinformation.

However, a thorough fact-checking investigation by the Fake News Watchdog Team revealed that the video in question was actually from December 10, 2024. The footage depicted Pashtun tribal individuals migrating and had no connection whatsoever to the Jaffar Express attack. The video was falsely associated with the incident to spread confusion and manipulate public perception.

Given the spread of such misinformation, the public is strongly advised to verify news from credible sources and avoid sharing unverified claims. Misinformation in times of crisis can escalate fear, mislead the masses, and undermine security efforts, making fact-based reporting essential.

## 2. Misleading Video of Alleged Hostages - Cont....

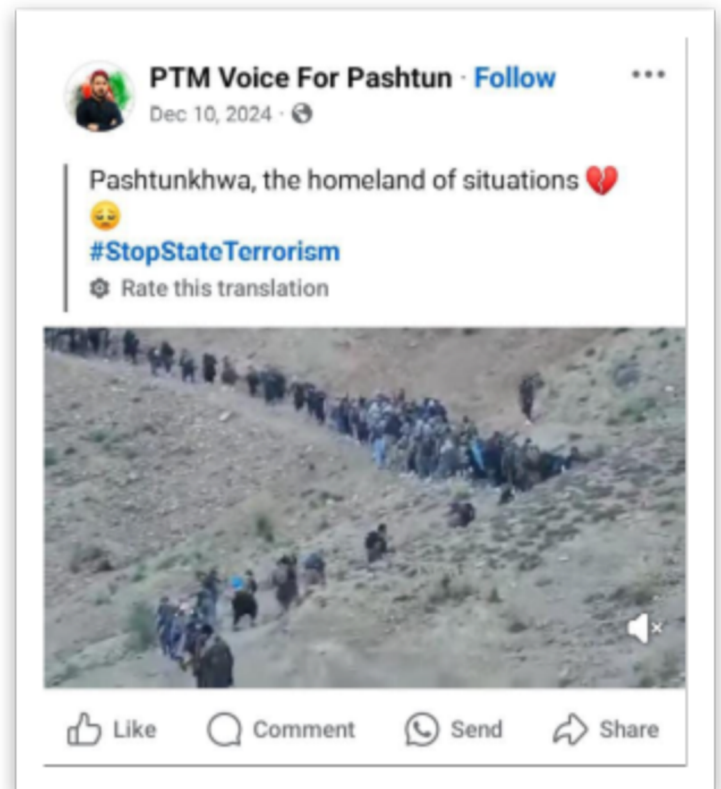
### False Claim

A viral video claimed to show military personnel taken hostage by Baloch militants after the Jaffar Express attack.



### Reality

The video was actually from December 10, 2024, depicting Pashtun tribal people migrating. It was wrongly linked to the train hijacking.



The video was reposted and shared multiple times by different foreign accounts falsely attributed to the Jaffar Express train attack in Balochistan on March 11, 2025, to spread misinformation and panic.

### 3. Fake Image of a Soldier Killed in the Attack

#### False Claim

An Indian social media account posted an image of a Pakistani soldier allegedly killed in the Jaffar Express attack.



Due to lack of Planes in Pakistan, Balochistan freedom fighters had to hijack a train 😂

#TrainHijack #Pakistan #PakistanArmy  
#Balochistan #BalochLiberationArmy  
#Train #PakistanTrainHijack



1:46 PM · Mar 12, 2025 · 357 Views

#### Reality

The image was actually from a previous attack by Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Lashkar-e-Islam, showing a burning army truck.



An Indian social media account on platform X shared an image claiming to show a Pakistani soldier killed during the Jaffar Express attack. The post included hashtags like #TrainHijack, #BalochLiberationArmy, and #PakistanTrainHijack, contributing to the spread of misinformation. The same image was shared by other X accounts but later deleted.

However, the investigation by our Team revealed that the image was completely unrelated to the Jaffar Express incident. In reality, the footage originated from a previous attack by Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Lashkar-e-Islam, depicting a burning Pakistani army infantry truck in Sep. 2024. Alongside the video, several images of injured and deceased Pakistani soldiers were released at that time.

This fact-checking effort confirmed that the claim was deliberately misleading, with old footage being falsely linked to the Jaffar Express hijacking as part of a propaganda effort. Such misinformation campaigns aim to manipulate narratives, create panic, and exploit sensitive security incidents for political or ideological agendas.

## 4. False Claim of Train driver killed in the attack

### False Claim

A Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supporter claimed that Jaffar Express driver Chaudhry Amjad Yasin Manj was martyred in the attack.



### Reality

The train driver was alive and unharmed. He was safely rescued and confirmed his well-being in media interviews.



A PTI supporter, Ahmad Hasan Bobak, falsely claimed on X that Jaffar Express driver Chaudhry Amjad Yasin Manj had been martyred in the Bolan terrorist attack, adding fabricated personal details to make the story more emotional. His post quickly gained traction, spreading panic and fueling misinformation. However, an investigation by the Fake News Watchdog Team confirmed that the driver was alive and unharmed, having been safely rescued and later speaking to both his family and media outlets to verify his well-being.

Despite the truth coming to light, several PTI supporters continued to spread the false claim, attempting to use the tragedy to push an anti-government narrative. Once the facts were widely reported, Ahmad Hasan Bobak faced severe backlash, with social media users mocking the contradiction of declaring someone dead before they were even rescued. This incident highlights how fake news can be weaponized for political purposes, emphasizing the need for responsible media consumption and fact-checking.

## 5. Misrepresented Security Operation Video

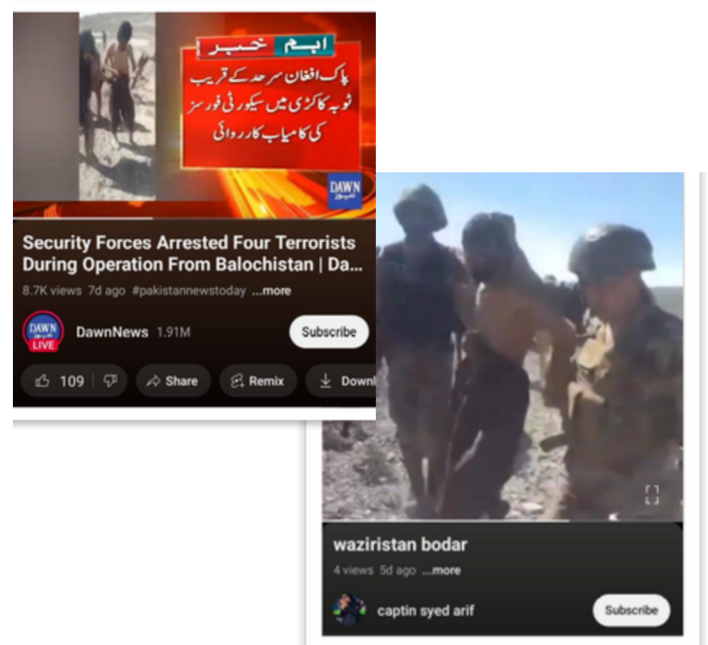
### False Claim

An Indian user claimed the Baloch Liberation Army hijacked the Jaffar Express, using a video showing a man being detained by security forces.



### Reality

The video was actually from a successful security operation in Toba Kakari, Balochistan, where Pakistani forces arrested terrorists on March 5, 2025.



An Indian social media user on X falsely claimed that the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) had hijacked the Jaffar Express and taken over 100 passengers hostage, sharing a video as alleged proof. The video showed a person being detained by Pakistani security forces, leading to further speculation and misinformation. As the video went viral, several Indian accounts amplified the false claim, portraying it as a major terrorist operation in Balochistan without any verification.

However, an investigation by the Fake News Watchdog Team confirmed that the claim was completely false and part of Indian propaganda. The video was actually from a March 5, 2025, security operation in Toba Kakari, near the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, where Pakistani forces arrested four terrorists planning a sabotage attack. The operation also uncovered weapons, explosives, and evidence of cross-border infiltration from Afghanistan. The false association of this footage with the Jaffar Express hijacking was a deliberate attempt to mislead the public and spread anti-Pakistan propaganda, once again exposing India's role in disseminating fake news.

## 6. PTI's Controversial Retweet and Public Reaction

PTI's official Twitter account retweeted a user's post about the Jaffer Express hijacking incident, calling it an "Interesting Perspective." The original post compared the release of abducted women by terrorists in Balochistan to the arrest of Dr. Yasmin Rashid in Punjab.



### Public Reaction

The retweet sparked intense public backlash. Many accused PTI of sympathizing with terrorists and promoting an anti-state narrative. A large number of users condemned the party for allegedly politicizing the incident to create unrest.

## 6. PTI's Controversial Retweet and Public Reaction - Cont....

People reacted strongly to PTI's retweet, criticizing it in harsh terms. Some notable comments included:

- "Shame on you people..."
- "Curse on PTI members."
- "Even an enemy should have honor and substance!"
- "Shame on PTI!"
- "You people have your own agenda... very interesting!"
- "Imran Khan and all PTI members using this terrorist attack to spread chaos should be dealt with like terrorists!"
- "This is disgusting even to say??"
- These cult followers are mentally deranged!"
- "For these foreign-funded internal enemies, terrorism in Pakistan is just 'interesting'!"
- "Are you for real? A federal party sharing these low tier ragebait posts is extremely dangerous. Get a grip."

### Analysis

PTI's official Twitter account sparked controversy by retweeting a post regarding the Jaffar Express hijacking, labeling it an "Interesting Perspective." The original post drew a parallel between the release of abducted women by terrorists in Balochistan and the arrest of Dr. Yasmin Rashid in Punjab, framing both incidents as politically motivated. This comparison led to widespread outrage, with many accusing PTI of sympathizing with terrorists and promoting an anti-state agenda. Critics argued that politicizing a national security crisis was irresponsible and only fueled further instability.

The backlash was immediate and intense, with social media users condemning PTI's stance in harsh terms. Many labeled the party's actions as reckless and dangerous, arguing that a federal political entity amplifying such narratives could have serious consequences. Public reaction included calls for state institutions to take action against PTI for its alleged exploitation of terrorism-related incidents. This incident underscores PTI's ongoing strategy of leveraging national crises for political advantage, potentially undermining Pakistan's national security stance on terrorism. The overwhelming public rejection of this narrative signals a growing intolerance for misinformation and political opportunism in sensitive matters of national security.





## Information Warfare by Indian Media

The Jaffar Express train hijacking incident on March 11, 2025, in Balochistan, Pakistan, was not only a terrorist attack but also a battleground for information warfare. While Pakistani security forces were engaged in resolving the crisis, Indian mainstream media and social media accounts launched a coordinated disinformation campaign, spreading fake news, old images, AI-generated visuals, and propaganda videos to distort reality. This deliberate media manipulation aimed to undermine Pakistan's security institutions, create fear and chaos, and glorify the actions of the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) hijackers.

This study has observed a systematic misinformation campaign, a collaboration between Indian media and terrorist elements, and the wider implications of such hybrid warfare strategies on regional stability and national security.

### 1. The Disinformation Campaign: Methods and Tactics

Indian media and social media activists used multiple tactics of misinformation and psychological operations (PsyOps) to exploit the crisis. These included:

#### 1.1 Spreading Old Images and Videos as “Live Coverage”

- Several Indian news channels and social media influencers shared old images and videos of past train attacks in Pakistan, falsely attributing them to the Jaffar Express hijacking.
- A widely circulated video claiming to show hostages being taken was actually from a Pashtun tribal migration in December 2024, having no connection to the incident.
- Another video, showing a burning Pakistani army truck, was actually from a previous Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) attack, but was falsely linked to the hijacking.

#### 1.2 Use of AI-Generated Images

- AI-generated images were used to create fabricated visuals of Pakistani military casualties, injured passengers, and hostages, making the false claims appear more credible.
- Fake AI-generated videos attempted to show “statements” from alleged BLA commanders, which upon verification, were proven to be digitally altered.

#### 1.3 Amplifying Terrorist Propaganda Material

- Indian media circulated videos and statements released by international terrorist groups, including the BLA and its affiliates, presenting them as authentic and heroic resistance against Pakistan.
- Some Indian news commentators openly praised the train hijackers, portraying them as freedom fighters rather than terrorists.

#### 1.4 Highlighting “Security Failure” and Promoting Fear

- Indian media extensively covered the incident as a security failure of the Pakistani government, framing it as evidence of Pakistan's inability to protect its citizens.
- Several fake reports falsely claimed the number of hostages and Pakistani soldiers were killed, significantly exaggerating the scale of the event.

## 2. The Nexus Between Indian Media and BLA Terrorists

The timing, coordination, and content of Indian media coverage strongly indicate a well-planned nexus between Indian media outlets and BLA terrorists.

**2.1. Simultaneous Disinformation Release:** As soon as the attack occurred, multiple Indian news outlets began pushing the same false narratives, indicating a pre-prepared propaganda strategy rather than genuine reporting.

**2.2. Indian Journalists Citing BLA Propaganda:** Several Indian journalists used unverified BLA sources, giving them a platform to spread misinformation.

**2.3. Coordinated Social Media Campaign:** The hashtags #TrainHijack, #BalochLiberationArmy, and #PakistanTrainHijack were artificially boosted by Indian accounts, with many of them later identified as bots or fake profiles.

**2.4. Celebratory Tone in Indian Media:** Indian news channels celebrated the attack, portraying it as a victory against Pakistan, which aligns with past Indian intelligence-backed disinformation campaigns against Pakistan.

This deliberate collaboration between Indian media and separatist militants is a dangerous escalation, showing how state-backed hybrid warfare tactics are being employed to destabilize Pakistan through psychological and media manipulation.

## 3. The Strategic Objectives of India's Information Warfare

The fake news campaign surrounding the Jaffar Express hijacking was not an isolated event but part of a broader strategy of hybrid warfare against Pakistan. The main objectives included:

**3.1. Destabilizing Pakistan Internally:** By creating fear and confusion, the disinformation campaign aimed to weaken national morale and trust in state institutions.

**3.2. Promoting Separatist Narratives:** The BLA and other insurgent groups were depicted as freedom fighters, fueling separatist ideologies and inciting further militant activities in Balochistan.

**3.3. Discrediting Pakistan's Security Forces:** False claims about Pakistan's security failure were repeatedly amplified to tarnish the reputation of the military and intelligence agencies.

**3.4. Strengthening India's Diplomatic Narrative:** By portraying Pakistan as unstable and unsafe, India sought to justify its aggressive policies and strengthen its international position against Pakistan.

## 4. Pakistan's Response and Countermeasures

The Fake News Watchdog Team and other investigative agencies quickly moved to debunk the misinformation campaign, exposing the false claims and identifying the sources of fake news.

**4.1. Fact-Checking and Digital Forensics:** Reverse image searches, AI detection tools, and metadata analysis were used to identify old and manipulated content.

**4.2. Official Clarifications:** Pakistani authorities issued timely updates to counter the false narratives and prevent panic.

**4.3. Strengthening Media Regulation:** Discussions on legislative measures to combat foreign disinformation campaigns gained momentum.

**4.4. Strengthening Cybersecurity and Digital Diplomacy:** Pakistan intensified cyber intelligence efforts to track the origin and coordination of fake news campaigns.

The Jaffar Express train hijacking incident exposed how information warfare is being weaponized against Pakistan, with Indian mainstream media and social media accounts playing a direct role in spreading disinformation. By using fake videos, AI-generated content, and terrorist propaganda, the coordinated campaign aimed to destabilize Pakistan's internal security and promote separatist narratives.

This incident serves as a critical lesson in the evolving landscape of hybrid warfare, highlighting the need for proactive countermeasures against digital propaganda. Moving forward, Pakistan must invest in advanced information verification systems, strengthen its cybersecurity infrastructure, and enhance public awareness campaigns to prevent such disinformation-driven psychological operations in the future.

## Post Incident Events

### Press Conference by DG ISPR and CM Balochistan:

The DG ISPR, Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, exposed this disinformation campaign, highlighting how Indian media deliberately distorted the incident to undermine Pakistan's security forces and glorify the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) terrorists. By showing fabricated visuals and misleading reports, Indian outlets attempted to portray the attack as a failure of Pakistani intelligence and security apparatus, rather than an act of terrorism backed by foreign-sponsored insurgents. DG ISPR played video clips proving that Indian media had shared AI-created images and old terrorist attack footage, misrepresenting them as live visuals of the hijacking.

Additionally, he reaffirmed that India was the primary sponsor of terrorism in Balochistan, with Afghan and foreign weapons being used in the attack. This coordinated media warfare was part of a broader hybrid warfare strategy, aimed at destabilizing Pakistan by spreading fear, misinformation, and propaganda.

## **Indian intelligence officer's Confession:**

The Director General of Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR), Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, showcased a video confession of captured Indian intelligence officer, Kulbhushan Jadhav. In the video, Jadhav admitted that he had entered Balochistan, Pakistan, a few years ago as part of an Indian intelligence mission. He confessed that his objectives included conducting espionage, gathering resources, and supporting insurgent groups to carry out anti-Pakistan activities, particularly in Balochistan.

Jadhav, a serving officer in the Indian Navy and an agent of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), was arrested in 2016 by Pakistani security forces. His confessions, which have been corroborated by intelligence investigations, revealed a larger network of Indian-sponsored terrorism in Pakistan, including funding and arming separatist groups like the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA). By highlighting this confession during the Jaffar Express crisis, DG ISPR aimed to expose India's deep involvement in destabilizing Balochistan, reinforcing the long-standing Pakistani claim that India is actively engaged in hybrid warfare against Pakistan.

This revelation served as a strong counter to the disinformation campaign run by Indian media, which attempted to falsely portray the Jaffar Express hijacking as an internal security failure rather than an act of foreign-backed terrorism. The video reaffirmed Pakistan's stance that the BLA and other militant groups operating in Balochistan receive external support, further proving India's role in fostering unrest within Pakistan.

## **Cases Registered by FIA Against the Perptrators of Anti-State Propaganda**

The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has registered three cases against Ahmad Noorani, Shafiq Ahmad Advocate, and Aina Durkhanai under the PECA Act for spreading fake news and anti-state propaganda following the Jaffar Express attack. The accused allegedly used their verified social media accounts to incite hatred against national institutions, promote a banned organization, and create public uncertainty.

The FIA Cyber Crime Wing Islamabad is investigating further to identify additional accounts involved in spreading malicious content. This action is part of the FIA's intensified efforts to combat cybercrimes, particularly misinformation and hate speech online.

## Conclusion

The Jaffar Express hijacking incident on March 11, 2025, was not just an act of terrorism but also a major battleground for information warfare. The attack, carried out by the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), was exploited by Indian mainstream media, social media activists, and political elements within Pakistan to spread fake news, disinformation, and propaganda. From old videos and AI-generated images to fabricated casualty figures and misleading narratives, a coordinated effort was made to destabilize Pakistan, discredit its security forces, and create fear among its citizens.

The Indian media's role in amplifying terrorist propaganda was particularly alarming. Instead of reporting facts, it glorified the hijackers, exaggerated the failures of Pakistani security agencies, and attempted to fuel ethnic divisions. The deliberate distortion of facts—such as falsely claiming hostages were executed, using unrelated past attack footage, and presenting AI-generated images as real—was part of a hybrid warfare strategy aimed at weakening Pakistan's internal stability. DG ISPR exposed these tactics, highlighting India's sponsorship of terrorism in Balochistan and presenting evidence of the nexus between Indian intelligence and BLA insurgents.

Domestically, misinformation was also weaponized for political purposes. Certain political figures and journalists attempted to use the attack to criticize state institutions, spread false narratives, and incite public distrust. The FIA Cyber Crime Wing took legal action against individuals accused of spreading fake news under the PECA Act, reinforcing the government's commitment to combatting disinformation.

This incident underscores the growing threat of digital misinformation and the need for stronger media literacy and cyber regulations. While Pakistan's security forces successfully neutralized all 33 terrorists without losing a single hostage in the final rescue phase, the battle against disinformation continues.

Moving forward, Pakistan must strengthen its cyber defenses, enhance real-time fact-checking mechanisms, and hold foreign and domestic actors accountable for spreading fake news. The Jaffar Express hijacking and its aftermath serve as a critical reminder that terrorism today is not only fought on the battlefield but also in the digital sphere—where controlling the narrative is just as important as securing the nation's borders.

## Lessons Learned and Recommendations

### Strengthening Cybersecurity

- Improved monitoring of social media platforms to detect and remove fake news.
- Collaboration with tech companies to address misinformation.
- Develop and implement a reliable mechanism to identify and curb the fake news.



## **Promoting Media Literacy**

- Public awareness campaigns to educate citizens on identifying fake news.
- Encouraging critical thinking and verification of sources.
- Enforce media literacy at school, college, and university level.

## **Enhancing Crisis Communication**

- Timely and transparent communication from authorities during crises.
- Establishing official channels for verified updates.
- To build capacity, regular training workshops should be conducted for governmental and private organizations, equipping them with the skills to manage crises effectively, counter misinformation, and maintain public trust.

