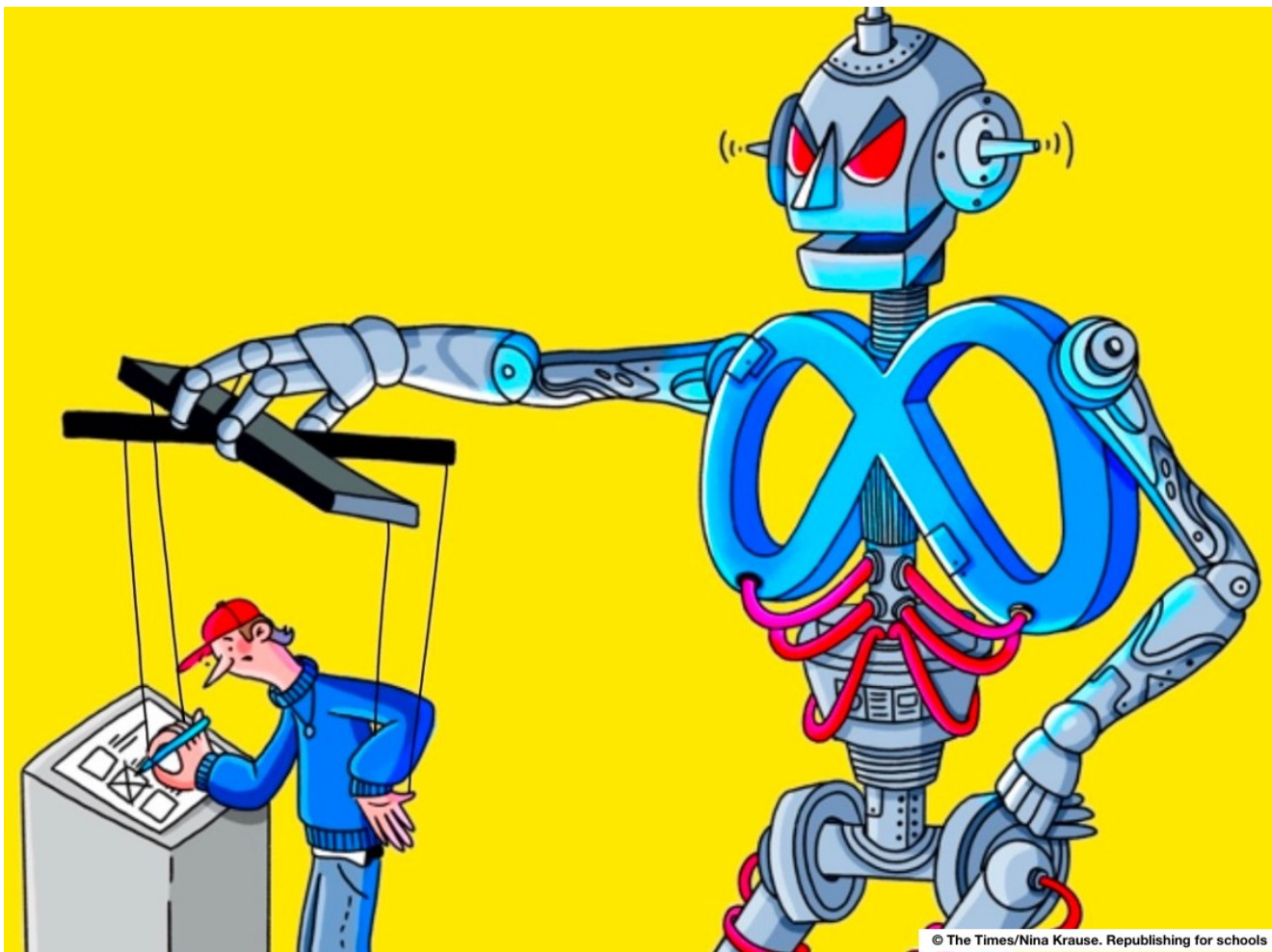


theday.co.uk/experts-fear-year-of-deepfake-elections-4



Election deception: An estimated two billion people will vote in national elections this year.

Is democracy at risk? Helped by AI, deepfakes are becoming ever harder to spot. Experts fear that they could trick voters in a key election year.

What's happening?

The video seems to show British leader Rishi Sunak talking. "We've done our best to sort out the terrible mistakes made by the Conservative **government**," he says. "But it's an impossible task. I would honestly tell people to vote for **Labour**."

If this video was real, it would be a disaster for the **Conservative party** as they prepare for a **general election**. Of course, Rishi Sunak did not say that. But with the help of AI, someone has made a video to make it look as though he has. It is called a deepfake.

Find out more

Last month 143 posts with **deepfakes** targeting Sunak were found on Facebook. They came from 23 different countries and may have reached 400,000 people.

Labour's leader Keir Starmer has also been targeted, as was a candidate running for election in Slovakia in September.

These are worrying events in a year when Britain, the US, India and more than 60 other countries have elections.

There is nothing new about using fake pictures and documents. But AI tools make fake videos and pictures even harder to spot.

That is not the only worry about deepfakes. Another is the fact that politicians could brush off real videos which show them in a bad light as deepfakes.

Is **democracy** at risk?

Some say

Yes! Deepfakes are becoming very hard to spot. It is almost impossible to know if you have seen one. Some think this puts our whole political system at risk.

Some people say

“Tricks and treachery are the practice of fools that don’t have brains enough to be honest.”

Benjamin Franklin (1706 – 1790),
American statesman and inventor

Empty heading

What do you think?

Others think

No! Most people know about fake news. They will be careful to check that any videos they see online are real. And tech companies are working to stop fake videos spreading.

Six steps to discovery

1. **Connect**

How do you feel about this story? - Have you seen a deepfake? How do you know?

2. **Wonder**

What questions do you have? - For example: How do you make deepfakes?

3. **Investigate**

What are the facts? - Pick out one thing we know for certain and one thing we cannot say for sure from this story.

4. **Construct**

What is your point of view? - What can you do if you spot a deepfake?

5. **Express**

What do others believe? - What should the minimum voting age be? Hold a class debate.

6. **Reflect**

What might happen next? - Create a poster showing people how to find trustworthy news.

Glossary

Government - The group of people who govern - or lead - the country.

Labour - Britain's main left-of-centre political party.

Conservative party - A British political party. Members are known as Tories.

General election - In the UK, when an election is held for all 650 members of the House of Commons. One must take place every five years.

Deepfakes - This technique uses artificial intelligence to change the identity of a person in an image or a video — or to make it appear that a person is saying or doing something that they never said or did.

Democracy - A system of government based on the idea of rule by the people.