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Minds over AI

Building a digitally-literate Bangladesh

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Every scroll on our screens now decides what we believe. Algorithms and artificial intelligence increasingly shape how we learn, think, and connect. The ability to differentiate between the truth and manipulation has become a survival skill for citizens of any democracy.

Every day, we are exposed to information that looks real but is crafted by machines, not minds.

This year, Unesco's "Global Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Week 2025," held under the theme "Minds Over AI: Media and Information Literacy in Digital Spaces," reminds us that education must do more than teach reading and writing; it must teach critical thinking.

For a young and fast-digitizing country like Bangladesh, MIL is not a luxury; it is essential. It helps people think critically before they click "share," and builds public trust in a society flooded with competing voices.

Understanding MIL goes beyond mastering digital tools. It is about curiosity, ethics, responsibility, the courage to

pause before reacting, and verify before forwarding.

In an age where generative AI can

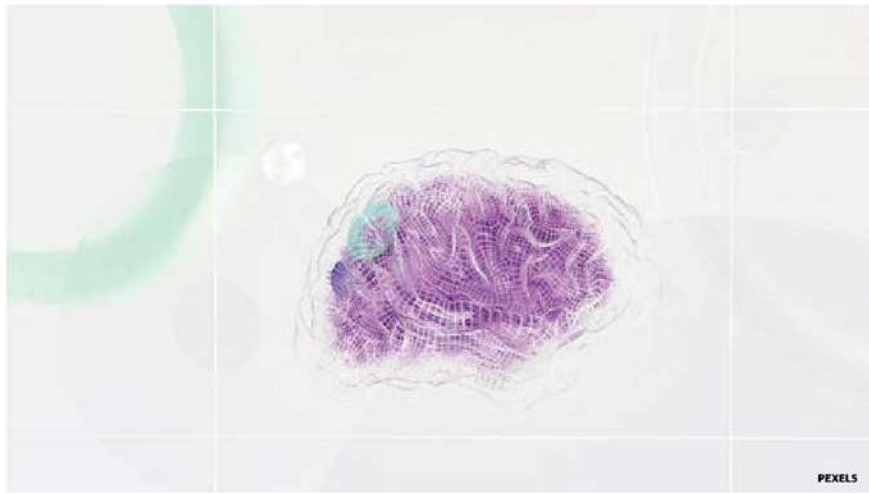
produce convincing but misleading content in seconds, media literacy is no longer optional; it is civic protection. It ensures that minds, not machines, guide our choices.

In Bangladesh, this vision came to life through East West University (EWU) which launched MILNetBD, the country's first media and information literacy network, created by its Department of Information Studies in partnership with Unesco. The network brings together teachers and students from 14 universities, forming a community of activists committed to tackling misinformation and building digital resilience across campuses. The network remains open for other universities, encouraging wider collaboration and

shared commitment to advancing media and information literacy nationwide.

Through seminars, rallies, workshops, digital campaigns, and student-led discussions, the university is also encouraging young people to verify information, understand AI's growing role in content creation, and engage responsibly online -- all with the aim to nurture informed and ethical digital citizens.

As Bangladesh heads toward a national election, this effort takes on added urgency. An informed electorate is the foundation of democracy. Equipping students and citizens with critical media skills are essential to preventing misinformation from eroding social trust and encouraging thoughtful, fact-based public dialogue.



Artificial intelligence may be writing our future, but it must never rewrite our values

Across South Asia, Unesco continues to help governments and universities embed MIL in education, foster youth leadership, and encourage ethical AI use. In Bangladesh, this partnership with East West University shows how academia can shape a generation ready to think critically, act ethically, and use technology for the public good.

Artificial intelligence may be writing our future, but it must never rewrite our values. We must ensure that, even in an AI-driven world, human judgment, empathy, and integrity remain the ultimate authors of knowledge. ●

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