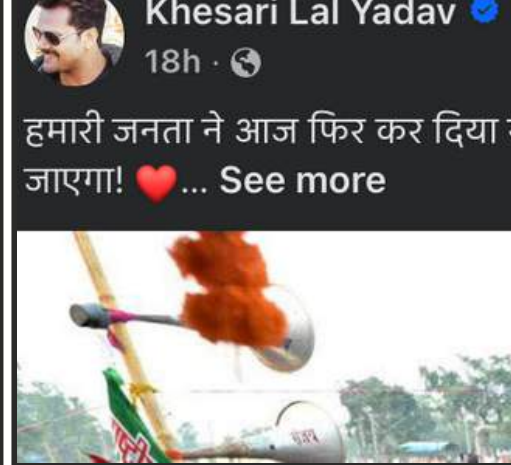




**From Reels to Revenue,
from Views to Votes
Facebook Sponsored
Candidates in Bihar
Elections**

**Democratic Charkha
National Alliance of People's Movement, Bihar**

November 2025

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KEY FINDINGS

- Based on data made available by Meta and processed by What To Fix, this report finds that Meta is violating its own guidelines on candidate monetisation in Bihar Legislative Assembly elections.
- Once declared to be a political candidate contesting an election, a person cannot monetise their account on Meta to earn revenue, as per guidelines of Meta and ECI rules.
- 16% of active social media accounts of Phase 1 candidates are monetised.
- 90% of candidates with monetised accounts have not declared source of revenue from social media in their submitted affidavit.
- We identify **3 categories of Influencer-Politicians**: popular entertainers with social media presence and first time candidates (Khesari Yadav and Maithali Thakur); popular on social media but not yet successful electorally (Pushpa Priya and Manish Kashyap); and incumbents holding public office (Krishna Kumar Mantoo and Prem Shankar Yadav).
- All currently monetized Influencer-candidates are likely to be seeing a **bump in reel revenues** given high visibility of political campaigning; possibly earning more than spending while campaigning.
- For those already in office (Krishna Kumar Mantoo and Prem Shankar Yadav), it is likely that **government resources are being used to shoot and edit Meta reels** of their public engagements, which then earns them revenue that goes directly into their pockets.
- We recommend that **ECI ensure compliance from platforms to disable monetisation** for the duration a candidate is in the electoral race. Post elections, the defeated candidates can be enabled for monetisation again.
- There is an easy technical solution to address this emerging trend of Influencer-Politicians – **using PAN account details to cross verify** which are already submitted by candidate to both ECI and Meta while filing a candidate affidavit and while enabling monetisation respectively.
- Communication between ECI and Meta on these matters needs to be made fully transparent and uploaded onto the ECI website so citizens can verify action is being taken.
- **Social media platforms are not only giving political candidates a communication platform but are also giving them a financial platform, opening another avenue to weaken democratic norms.**

INTRODUCTION

Elections in the state of Bihar are currently underway. Bihar has always been consequential to India's political terrain not just quantitatively for its large electorate (80 million voters), and therefore relatively high representation in the parliament (40 seats out of 543), but also for its powerful regional parties.

In human development indices, Bihar ranks poorly and most people live in grinding poverty. Out migration is high and employment opportunities within the state are limited, an evergreen political topic. Politicians save face by routinely extolling the "creativity" and "effort" of the people of Bihar, forced upon them by circumstance.

A version of this narrative has played out on the matter of "reelbaazi", with young people online making and watching endless content. Prime Minister Modi in a campaign rally claimed, "1 GB of data is now cheaper than a cup of tea ...my government did this. The youth of Bihar are earning money by making reels, by being creative."

Opposition leaders Rahul Gandhi, Tejaswi Yadav, and Prashant Kishor have weighed in. Kishor's riposte to Modi's statement was that rather than getting data, Biharis would much rather have their sons (*beta*) instead of them being forced to migrate for work. Yadav says people take to YouTube as a result of unemployment. Gandhi has made sophisticated points calling reels an addiction whose data consumption enriches Ambani through his Jio telecom company.

Earning money as a social media creator—being an "influencer"—has become part of the political discourse in Bihar's elections. This intuitively tracks the increased access to data, as noted by Modi and Gandhi, with the crushing lack of opportunities and functioning services. This is also reflected in the crossover of social media influencers running for political office, and the new set of contradictions this throws up for social media and democracy.

Earning revenues via social media is a fairly new trend, with little transparency provided by platforms on the norms, amounts and methods of monetising content on platforms. Influencers can now earn revenue directly from platforms based on the engagement their content creates.

Globally, as per estimates put together by What to Fix, platforms distribute over 20\$ billion annually to over 10 million accounts. These programs have grown rapidly since they have been introduced. Since January 2025, the participation rate in Meta's revenue redistribution programs has increased fourfold.

Put differently, this is the cost of creating an infinite scroll with endless content. Through all this the platforms are earning handsomely, \$252 billion in ad revenue to be precise. This means that platforms are distributing only about 8% of their revenues with content creators, if that, in an opaque manner that is designed to maximize precarity of the content creators.

Nonetheless, several in Bihar have tried their hand at it, and a handful have hit the jackpot with millions of followers and derivative income from years spent monetising. Some of them have now crossed over into becoming political candidates, continuing to use their social media platforms not just for communication, but also as a source of revenue for their political campaigns.

In this report we examine the Meta accounts of political candidates and provide first hand data on their monetisation status. We show how Meta violates its own policies, despite there being an easy technical fix, by continuing to allow political candidates to monetise their content. We provide recommendations for both the Election Commission of India (ECI) and social media platforms to address this emergent trend before it further frays our democratic fabric.

POLITICIANS AND MONETISATION

India, like most democracies has a rich body of regulation around money and politics. Our constitutionally mandated Election Commission of India enforces strict norms of campaign finance, expenditures and public disclosures to ensure the integrity of elections.

While we know that social media has been transformative as a communications platform for politics, it is now moving into the domain of being a financial platform for politicians. Out of the 20\$ billion being redistributed annually by platforms for content creation, a chunk of this could be going to political candidates and political parties through revenue redistribution.

Influencer-Politicians could mark the beginning of a new trend where instead of political parties spending *on* advertising on social media platforms, they could instead be funded *by* advertising from the social media platforms.

If we compare this to the previous medium of Television, it is the equivalent of shifting from a political candidate paying a channel to run an ad, to now being paid by the channel instead.

While there is some variation within platforms on monetisation of political candidates, Meta, likely given its sordid history around election influence, has some policies disabling political content from monetisation . Meta's Partner Monetisation Policies (PMP) prohibit the direct monetisation of content for politicians and government (see also below). This means they cannot earn revenue from features like ads in videos or supporter subscriptions on their official pages.

While candidates are likely monetized on other platforms like Youtube or X, those platforms are significantly worse than Meta platforms at disclosing details of monetisation . We recognise good efforts on Meta's part to both put in place this policy and maintain some public disclosures (see Annexure 1 for cross platform comparison).

The following political and government entities are ineligible for monetisation:

- Current elected and appointed government officials
- Current political candidates
- Political parties
- Registered political committees
- Government agencies and departments

Communications that are regulated as political advertising under applicable law are also ineligible for monetisation features. However, in the United States, the branded content tool may be used in branded content posts if the paying partner has been authorised to run ads about social issues, elections or politics.

Source: Meta Partner Monetisation Policy

In any case, the Election Commission of India also has guidelines on transparency of income sources of political candidates:

1. The Supreme Court of India [ruled](#) in 2018 that politicians, their spouses and associates to declare their sources of income, under form 26, along with their assets, in order to qualify for contesting elections.
2. The ECI has [guidelines](#) that require the communication of social media accounts of all candidates in Form 26: *The Commission finds it necessary that authentic social media accounts of candidates should also be informed to the Commission. This information should be furnished in the said Para 3 as follows:- "My contact telephone no.(s) is/are....., my email ID (if any) is....., and my social media accounts (if any) are....."*
3. The Representation of the People Act, 1951, [Section 125A](#) lays out the penalties of failing to declare full sources of income in affidavits: *A candidate who himself or through his proposer, with intent to be elected in an election,—fails to furnish information relating to sub-section (1) of section 33A; or gives false information which he knows or has reason to believe to be false; or conceals any information, in his nomination paper delivered under sub-section (1) of section 33 or in his affidavit which is required to be delivered under sub-section (2) of section 33A, as the case may be, shall, notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine, or with both.*

During political campaigning, there are various guidelines for campaign income and expenditure and paid advertisements.

All political advertisements require pre-certification by the ECI. If candidates are monetised, then they are in effect being sponsored by the platform, and technically should require pre-certification from the Media Certification and Monitoring Committee for their monetised posts. Political candidates cannot directly receive funds from foreign entities or corporations during the campaign period, and social media platforms are both.

Yet oversight is minimal and investigations by What to Fix have found a range of political accounts being monetised on Meta – including [Tarun Chugh](#), the National General Secretary of the BJP. As per Meta's own guidelines, such violations of their policy should result in losing monetisation access.

EXPERIENCE FROM BIHAR ELECTIONS 2025

Methodology

Given this, we attempted to examine the enforcement of monetisation guidelines for Bihar's 2025 legislative assembly elections. As per both Meta and ECI guidelines, no political candidate should be monetising their Meta accounts as this would mean Meta is providing candidates with a financial platform to contest elections.

Phase 1 of the Bihar Assembly elections includes 121 constituencies, and 1303 candidates. We identified candidates from major political parties — primarily RJD, JD(U), BJP, INC, HAM, CPI(ML) and AIMIM. The focus was on candidates with significant or public-facing social media presence, particularly those using Facebook or Instagram for campaign communication. Out of these 1303 candidates, we compiled a list of 76 candidates whose names or profiles were associated with active social media handles and checked for their monetisation.

Compiling this was not a straightforward affair. We first obtained the official list of candidates and their affidavits from the ECI and the Chief Electoral Officer, Bihar. Several affidavits did not include complete Facebook or Instagram URLs, providing only the page name or username text. See for example INC candidate from Kumhrar seat, Indradeep Kumar Chandravanshi submits "Indradeep Kumar" as his Facebook name in the affidavit, but his profile is in the name of "Indradeep Chandravanshi."

LIST OF CANDIDATES



1. INDRADEEP KUMAR CHANDRAVANSHI

Party : Indian National Congress

State : Bihar

Status : **Accepted**

Constituency : KUMHRAR

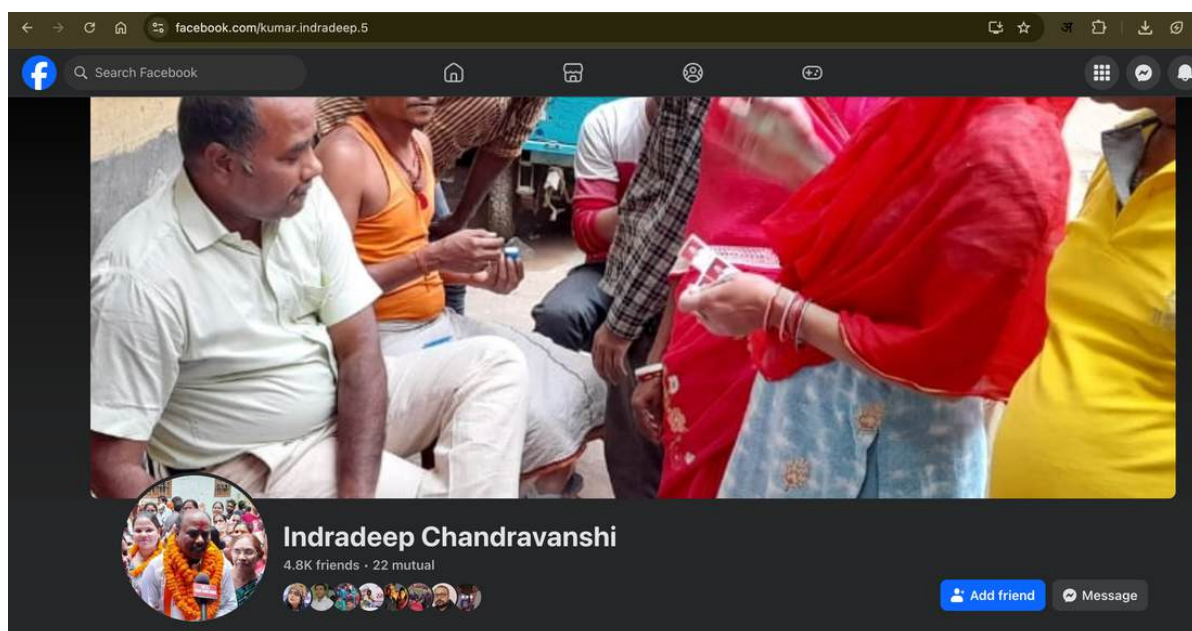
[View more](#)

Details of Indradeep Kumar Chandravanshi, Source: eci.gov.in

1036
10/03/2017
Indradeep Kumar Chandravanshi
who is entitled by S...
advocate: solemnly affirmed and
declare before me

मैं, इन्दरीप कुमार चन्द्रवंशी
पुत्र/पुत्री/पत्नी अश्विनी २१५
आयु ५७ वर्ष, जो
नन्द नगर इलाहाबाद, सैफपुर मंडल-१५ पटना-१६ (डाक का पूरा पता लिखें)
का/की निवासी हूँ, और उपरोक्त निर्वाचन के लिए अभ्यर्थी हूँ, सत्यनिष्ठा से प्रतिज्ञा करता हूँ/करती हूँ, शपथ पर निम्नलिखित
कथन करता हूँ/करती हूँ:-
(1) मैं एक अभ्यर्थी हूँ, जिसे भारतीय राष्ट्रीय कांग्रेस (**राजनैतिक दल का नाम)
द्वारा खड़ा किया गया है। निर्दलीय अभ्यर्थी के रूप में चुनाव लड़ रहा हूँ।
(**जो लागू न हो उसे काट दें)
(2) मेरा नाम 183- कुमहार (सामान्य) बिहार (निर्वाचन क्षेत्र और राज्य का नाम)
में क्रम सं० ५८२ पर भाग सं० २६५ में प्रविष्ट है।
(3) मेरा/मेरे ९१६२६७५५५५, ९३३५१८८०१५ संपर्क दूरभाष संख्या/संख्याएँ है/हैं
और digital ward ५८@gmail.com मेरा ईमेल पता (यदि कोई हो) है तथा
(i) Indradeep Chandravanshi 279@gmail.com
(ii) Facebook - Indradeep Kumar
(iii) Facebook - Indradeep Kumar
मेरा/मेरे Whats app - 9334188015, 9162675444 सोशल मिडिया खाता/खाते (यदि कोई हो) है/हैं
(4) स्थाई खाता संख्या (पैन) और आयकर विवरणी फाइल करने की प्राप्ति:

Affidavit of Indradeep Kumar Chandravanshi, Source: eci.gov.in



Facebook profile of Indradeep Kumar Chandravanshi

We also searched candidate names, nicknames, and party affiliation on Facebook and Instagram using both English and Hindi spellings. Verified badges, follower counts, and post content were used as indicators of authenticity. Pages were cross-checked with party announcements, media reports, and press coverage.

From the platform side there is no account wise disclosure of monetised benefits, but has to be pieced together from the presence of monetisation indicators such as ad placements, access to revenue tools and participation or branded content. We verified the identified Meta accounts using the [What to Fix Meta Monetisation Archive](#) (relevant images provided in case studies below).

Findings

Despite these limitations, we successfully documented 76 candidates with identifiable Facebook or Instagram presence, 11 of whom maintained monetized or creator-linked accounts. Thus during electioneering, Meta is directly funding about 16% of candidates. 10 out of 11 of the candidates have not declared social media revenue as a source of income in their ECI submitted affidavit.

Table1: Monetised pages of the candidates

Party	Identified Candidate Pages on Facebook	Candidate Pages Monetised
NDA	33	2
INDIA	36	8
Others	7	1
Total	76	11

Source: Click [here](#) to see full data

There is no apparent correlation between candidates with monetised accounts and their financial declarations (Table 2). However a closer look at most followed candidates shows different incentive structures. We present three illustrations – popular entertainers with social media presence, popular on social media but not yet successful electorally, and incumbents holding public office.

Maithali Thakur (BJP) and Khesari Yadav (RJD) are popular artists and entertainers who are first time political candidates. Manish Kashyap (Jan Suraaj) and Pushpa Priya (Plurals Party) are popular primarily because of their social media platform and as yet unsuccessful electorally despite being in the fray. Krishan Kumar Mantoo (BJP) and Prem Shankar Yadav (RJD) are both incumbents and currently hold public office.

We discount others with follower counts below 100K and Tejashwi Yadav's account as its monetisation was discontinued in April 2024.

There is no transparency on the amount of earnings for these influencers or their individual posts. However there is a cottage industry of digital brand and marketing set ups that provide services of maximising income for their influencer clients. Back of the envelope math suggests that the people profiled in this report could be earning multiple lakhs for one reel, and in the range of tens of lakh rupees over the period of monetisation.

S No.	Name	Party	Monetisation Status	Declared Income	Number of followes
1	Maithali Thakur	NDA (BJP)	Previously Last record: 26/08/2025	3 crore +	15 million
2	Shatrughan Yadav Urf Khesari Yadav	INDIA (RJD)	Currently	32 crore +	6.2 million
3	Manish Kashyap	Jan Suraaaj	Currently	N/A	5.8 million
4	Tejaswi Prasad Yadav	INDIA (RJD)	Previously Last record: 24/04/2024	9 crore +	3.7 million
5	Pushpam Priya	OTHER	22/05/2020	52 lakhs +	880K
6	Krishna Kumar Mantoo	NDA (BJP)	Currently	9 crore +	116K
7	Sandeep Saurav	INDIA (CPI-ML)	Currently	27 lakhs+	72K
8	Prem Shankar Yadav	INDIA (RJD)	Currently	2 crore +	56K
9	Karnveer Singh Yadav	INDIA (RJD)	Currently	18 crore +	66K
10	Shakti Singh Yadav	INDIA (RJD)	Previously Last record: 26/08/2025	6 crore +	60K
11	Amarjeet Kushwaha	INDIA (CPI-ML)	Currently	76 lakhs +	32K
12	Mitihlesh Nishad	INDIA (INC)	Currently	1 crore +	8.1K

Source: Click [here](#), to see source of financial assets:

3 out of 12 candidates are previously monetised - Maithali Thakur (BJP - Alinagar), Tejaswi Prasad Yadav (RJD - Raghapur) and Shakti Singh Yadav (RJD - Hilsa). Apart from Tejaswi Yadav, it is possible that the other two accounts have not yet migrated to the new monetisation policies that were announced by Meta in September 2025.

SHATRUGHAN YADAV (KHESARI YADAV)

Shatrughan Yadav, popularly known as Khesari Lal Yadav, is a celebrated Bhojpuri singer-actor and first time political candidate. He debuted as a Bhojpuri movie star in 'Sajan Chale Sasural' in 2012 which was a mass hit. Yadav has a popular YouTube channel with 11 million subscribers, and a Facebook page with 6.2 million followers, both created in 2017. While data for YouTube is unavailable, his Facebook page remained actively monetized under Meta's creator program since 2019 and continuing into the election campaign. His wife was initially going to contest as a candidate of Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) from Chapra constituency, but after a last minute snafu, he stepped in instead. Filing candidate papers should have removed monetisation privileges on Meta, but instead this continues.



KHESARI LAL YADAV ✓
@officialkhesarilalyadav | <https://facebook.com/110228756183267>
6,2M followers | Created On: 31/05/2017
🗣️ Primary Language: Hindi
📍 Primary Admin Location: India



Monetized
Last record: 31/10/2025

 <https://www.monetization.wtf/p/facebook/110228756183267> (31/10/2025)

First Recorded Monetization: 18/02/2019

First Recorded Name: officialkhesarilalyadav

First Recorded Handle: officialkhesarilalyadav

First Recorded Language: Hindi

Source: WTF

Interestingly, although he uses YouTube to post music videos, he has used Facebook and Instagram to promote his political campaign. Since filing his nomination papers on 16th October he has posted dozens of reels with political content, including a reel at a rally with [views of 10 million](#). This is likely to translate into considerable revenue as well.

Khesari Lal Yadav

The grid displays 14 video thumbnails for Khesari Lal Yadav:

- Thumbnail 1: Khesari Lal Yadav in a white shirt with a green and orange scarf, hands in a prayer position. View count: 99K.
- Thumbnail 2: Khesari Lal Yadav in a white shirt, surrounded by people, holding a green flag. View count: 269K.
- Thumbnail 3: Khesari Lal Yadav in a white shirt, surrounded by people, holding a green flag. View count: 323K.
- Thumbnail 4: Khesari Lal Yadav in a white shirt, surrounded by people, holding a green flag. View count: 1.1M.
- Thumbnail 5: Khesari Lal Yadav in a white shirt, surrounded by people, holding a green flag. View count: 4.9M.
- Thumbnail 6: Khesari Lal Yadav in a white shirt, surrounded by people, holding a green flag. View count: 794K.
- Thumbnail 7: Khesari Lal Yadav in a white shirt, surrounded by people, holding a green flag. View count: 384K.
- Thumbnail 8: Khesari Lal Yadav in a white shirt, surrounded by people, holding a green flag. View count: 9M.
- Thumbnail 9: Khesari Lal Yadav in a white shirt, surrounded by people, holding a green flag. View count: 678K.
- Thumbnail 10: Khesari Lal Yadav in a white shirt, surrounded by people, holding a green flag. View count: 521K.
- Thumbnail 11: Khesari Lal Yadav in a white shirt, surrounded by people, holding a green flag. View count: 10M.
- Thumbnail 12: Khesari Lal Yadav in a white shirt, surrounded by people, holding a green flag. View count: 677K.
- Thumbnail 13: Khesari Lal Yadav in a white shirt, surrounded by people, holding a green flag. View count: 3.3M.
- Thumbnail 14: Khesari Lal Yadav in a white shirt, surrounded by people, holding a green flag. View count: 821K.

Snapshots: Khesari Yadav Facebook profile



MAITHILI THAKUR

Maithili Thakur is a twenty five year old classically trained musician and artist, with a successful career in devotional music. She is a big social media star with 15 million followers on Facebook and her appearance on Coke Studio Bharat has 30 million views on YouTube. Like Khesari Yadav, her YouTube is restricted to music videos and not political content.

On the campaign trail, following the BJP strategy of renaming streets, she has proposed changing the name of her constituency Alinagar to "Sita Nagar."

**Maithili Thakur** 
Yesterday at 08:14 · 🎵 The Winner Is · Little Olive · 

मां का आशीष है शिरोधार्य
लिखेंगे विकास का नया अध्याय


मां का आशीष है शिरोधार्य
लिखेंगे विकास का नया अध्याय



1 मैथिली ठाकुर
Maithili Thakur   

मतदान दिनांक: 6 नवंबर 2025 | समय: प्रातः 7 बजे से शाम 6 बजे तक

  4K

396 comments 86 shares

She is the only candidate to declare that her main source of income is from social media. As per What to Fix's database, her last recorded monetisation was on 26th August 2025, before the filing of nomination papers. Whether this was done with knowledge of norms or on the prompting of ECI or Meta remains unknown, but she along with Shakti Singh Yadav are illustrations of political candidates who correctly stopped monetising before election season. She continues to use her Facebook page as a medium for her election campaign.

- (9) वृत्ति या उपजीविका के ब्यौरे :
- (क) स्वयं गायिका
- (ख) पति या पत्नी शून्य
- (9क) आय के स्रोतों के ब्यौरे,
- (क) स्वयं गायिका, सोशल मिडिया तथा ब्राण्ड इन्डोर्समेन्ट
- (ख) पति या पत्नी शून्य
- (ग) आश्रितों के आय के स्रोत, यदि कोई हों शून्य

Maithali

Translation: 9a) Source of income: Singer, social media and brand endorsements, declaration by Maithali Thakur to Election Commission of India on filing nomination as political candidate



MAITHILI THAKUR ✓

@maithilithakurofficial | <https://facebook.com/746758592124869>

14.8M followers | Created On: 10/01/2016

🗣️ Primary Language: Hindi

📍 Primary Admin Location: India



<https://www.monetization.wtf/p/facebook/746758592124869> (31/10/2025)



**Previously
Monetized**

Last record: 26/08/2025

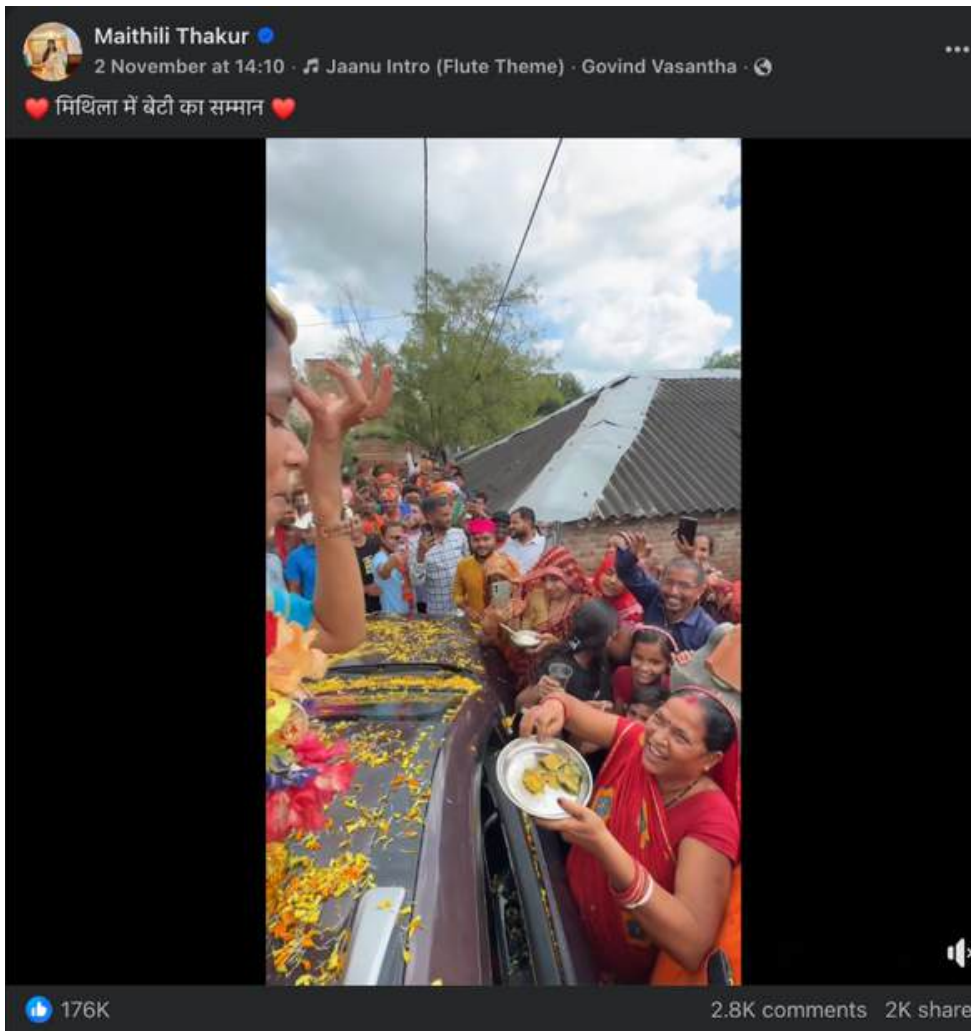
First Recorded Monetization: 30/11/2018

First Recorded Name: maithilithakurofficial

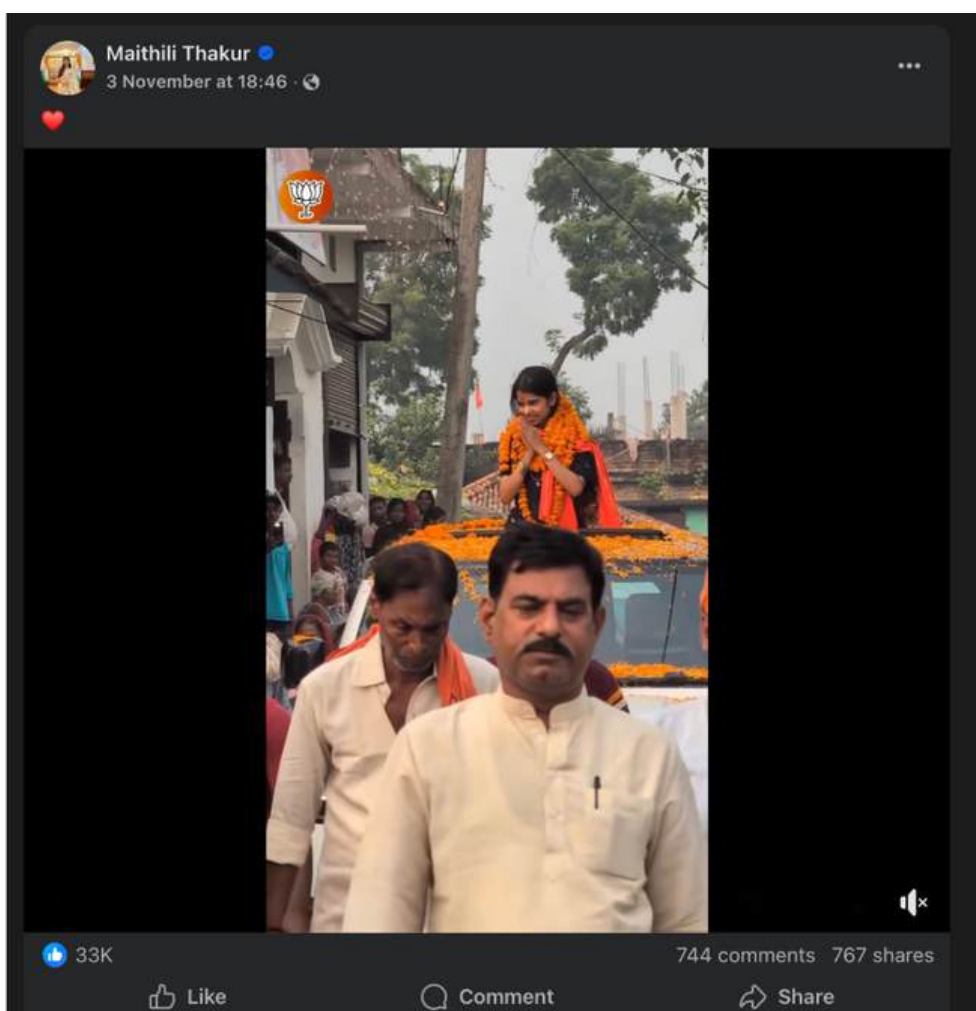
First Recorded Handle: maithilithakurofficial

First Recorded Language: Hindi

Source: WTF



Snapshots: Maithili Thakur Facebook profile



PUSHPAM PRIYA

Pushpam Priya, daughter of a former politician Vinod Kumar Chaudhary, formed the Plurals Party before the 2020 state elections. She is often profiled in English language media, as being educated at London School of Economics and returning to her home state to join politics. While she has high visibility on social media, she has not been successful in electoral politics. In 2020 she contested from two Vidhansabha seats: Bankipur and Bisfi. She got approximately 1500 votes from Bisfi and around 5200 votes from the Bankipur seat. She also cultivates an all black look (in contrast to the traditional white worn by politicians) and wears a black mask (having vowed not to take it off till she wins).

Her verified Facebook page has approximately 880,000 followers and serves as the official communication channel of the party. While her page primarily disseminated political manifestos and developmental policy discussions, it simultaneously participated in Meta's revenue-sharing ecosystem. It remains actively monetized under Meta's creator program during the election campaign.



Pushpam Priya Choudhary

2 November at 02:54 · 🌐

यह मेरा शहर है। बचपन में खुले रिक्शे में स्कूल जाती थी। आज खुली जीप में घूमती हूँ। किसी गुंडे को दिक्कत है तो रहे। हर दिन शिव के धनुष पर प्रत्यंचा चढ़ाने वाली माँ सीता ... [See more](#)

[See translation](#)



For this candidate, Facebook as a communication medium appears to be quite significant. It should be fairly straightforward for the ECI to ensure that monetisation is disabled for the duration of the campaign, and reenabled on conclusion. Even with the enforcement of monetisation guidelines, the candidate’s ability to use the platform to communicate and post will remain unaffected.

RECORD LOG

Download CSV

Program	Status	From	To ▼	Subscribers at Onboarding*	Language at Onboarding*
Content Monetization	●	02/09/2025	31/10/2025	873,346	Hindi
In-stream Ads	●	18/03/2024	02/09/2025	893,874	Hindi
Ads on Reels	●	02/09/2025	02/09/2025	873,346	Hindi
Ads on Reels	●	24/10/2024	26/08/2025	883,412	Hindi
In-stream Ads	●	08/03/2023	14/03/2024	909,070	Hindi
In-stream Ads	●	22/05/2020	05/12/2022	321,307	Hindi
Ads on Reels	●	08/04/2022	03/12/2022	925,185	Hindi

Source: WTF

TRIPURARI KUMAR TIWARI URF MANISH KASHYAP

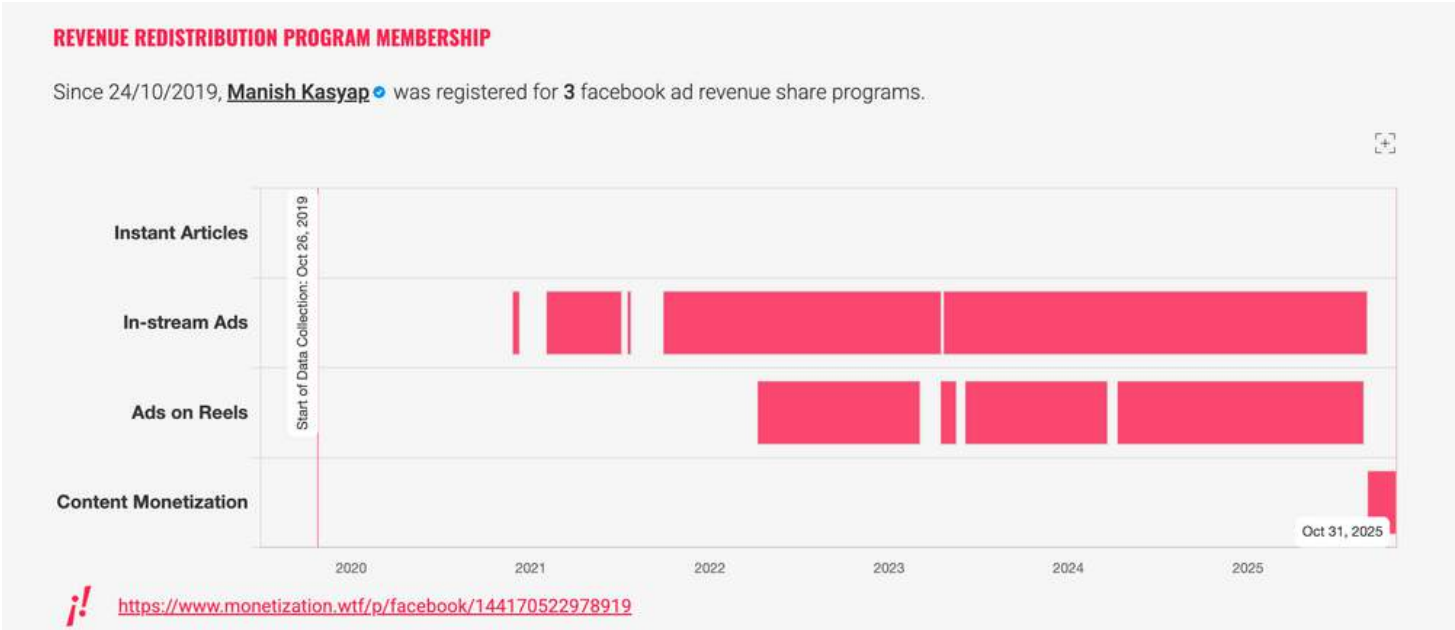
Tripurari Kumar Tiwari Urf Manish Kashyap, is an independent journalist and political activist. Although not contesting in the first Phase, we have included him as an illustration of a distinctive social media journey. He first started online with a page name – Sach Tak making videos on civic amenities issues but faced criticism for his harsh anti-minority language. He has been reported to have attacked Kashmiri shopkeepers after the Pulwama attack in 2019, called for the demolition of the statue of King Edward VII part of a medical school campus in Bettiah and circulated fake videos of Bihari labour getting beaten up in Tamil Nadu, which triggered panic and reverse migration back to Bihar.



Year 2019 post of Manish Kashyap

He contested state elections in 2020 from Chanpatia, West Champaran, as an independent candidate getting 5.26% of the vote share, then joined the BJP, and recently switched to Jan Suraaj party.

His verified Facebook page, with approximately 5.8 million followers, has long served as his primary medium for mass communication and indeed his platform. Unlike Kheshri Yadav who is an actor and singer, Kashyap's political platform is inextricable from his social media platform.



RECORD LOG

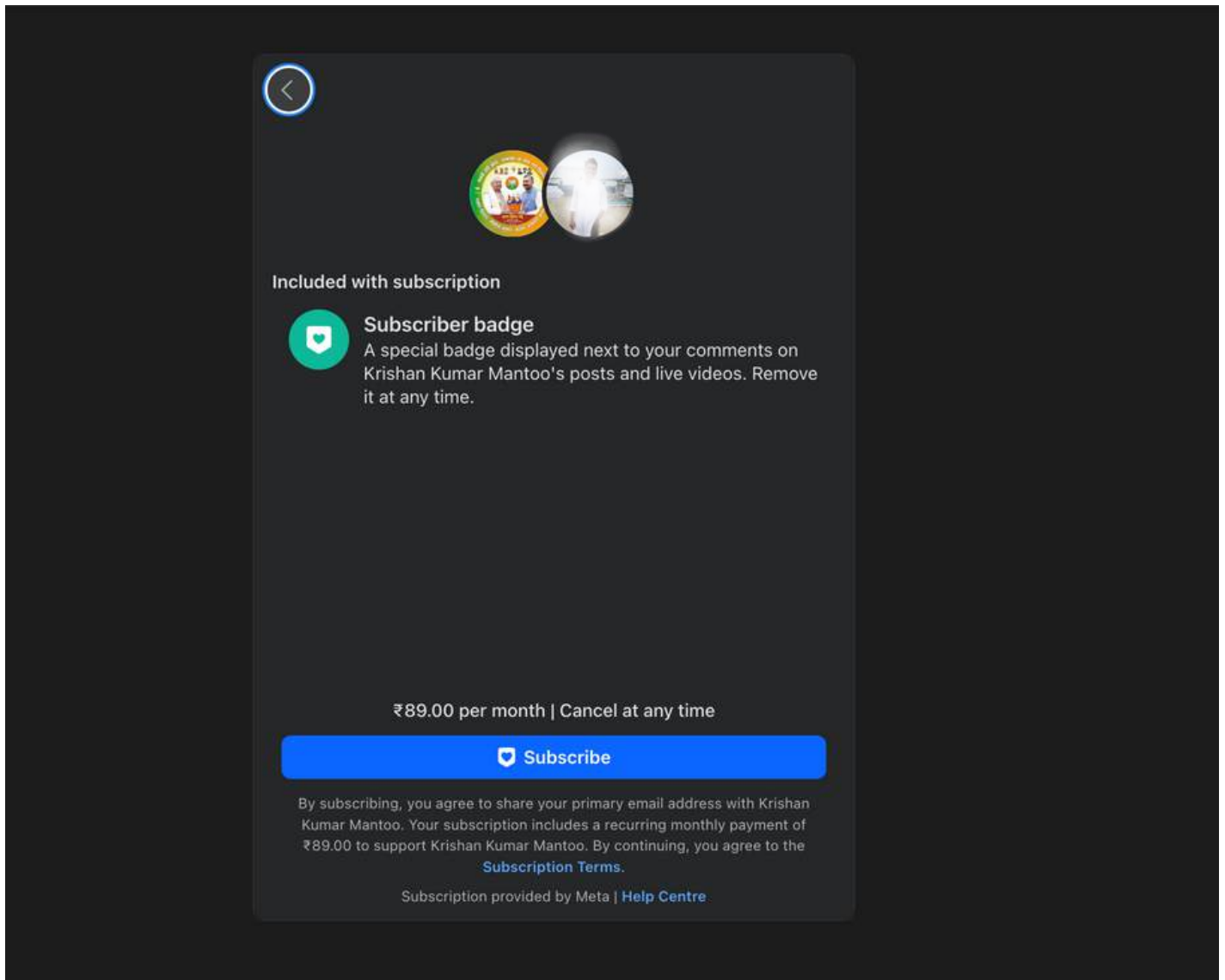
Download CSV

Program	Status	From	To ▼	Subscribers at Onboarding*	Language at Onboarding*
Content Monetization	●	02/09/2025	31/10/2025	5,638,002	Hindi
In-stream Ads	●	22/04/2023	02/09/2025	4,173,450	Hindi
Ads on Reels	●	02/09/2025	02/09/2025	5,638,002	Hindi
Ads on Reels	●	10/04/2024	26/08/2025	4,884,258	Hindi
Ads on Reels	●	05/06/2023	22/03/2024	4,203,703	Hindi
Ads on Reels	●	16/04/2023	19/05/2023	4,170,423	Hindi
In-stream Ads	●	28/09/2021	18/04/2023	651,765	Hindi
Ads on Reels	●	08/04/2022	06/03/2023	1,763,968	Hindi
In-stream Ads	●	17/07/2021	25/07/2021	365,639	Hindi
In-stream Ads	●	02/02/2021	06/07/2021	162,689	Hindi

Source: WTF

KRISHAN KUMAR MANTOO

Krishan Kumar Mantoo, is an incumbent official, contesting the election from Amnaur in Saran district on a BJP ticket. First elected on a Janata Dal (United) ticket in 2010, he has since shifted to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and is the former Minister of Information and Technology of the Government of Bihar. As a member of the government, let alone a political candidate, his account should not be monetising as per Meta's own guidelines.



Despite this, his page has been monetized since 4th July 2025 including "[Facebook subscriptions](#)" that users can pay for at Rs. 89 per month. His page has 116,000 followers and the content ranges from AI generated videos to use of green screen backdrop for Durga Puja. His most popular reel is of him inspecting an independence day parade (201 K views).

All of this is well and good, provided it is not being monetised. Else one can imagine a scenario in which **government resources are being used to shoot and edit Facebook reels of his public engagements**, which then earns him revenue that goes directly into his pocket.



Reels snapshots: Krishan Kumar Mantoo Facebook profile

PREM SHANKAR YADAV

Prem Shankar Yadav is also an incumbent, contesting for RJD from Baikunpur seat in Gopalganj district. His father, Deo Dutt Prasad Yadav, served this constituency multiple times. In 2020, he contested from the same constituency, and has been registered under the Meta monetization program since before then.

First Recorded Monetization: 27/04/2020

First Recorded Name: Prem Shankar Yadav

First Recorded Handle: premshankaryadav099MLA

First Recorded Language: Hindi

REVENUE REDISTRIBUTION PROGRAM MEMBERSHIP

Since 24/10/2019, [Prem Shankar Yadav](#) was registered for 3 facebook ad revenue share programs.



<https://www.monetization.wtf/p/facebook/106891377655933>

Source: WTF

He also uses the 'subscriber batch', costing 89 INR per month and his page has 56,000 followers. Like Mantoo, there are some experimental AI videos. Reels while doing government work and road shows in official vehicles appear to be favoured themes.



AI generated video on Prem Shankar Yadav's profile



'Janta Darshan' reels on Facebook

RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study reveal yet another avenue where social media platforms are at odds with democratic practice – the Influencer–Politician.

In clear violation of various electoral norms and Meta’s own guidelines, political candidates and elected officials are monetizing their Meta pages. They continue to earn revenue during elections without formal disclosure. This is a fairly easy issue to address technically on both sides, Meta and ECI. We recommend the following:

Election Commission of India

1. **Mandatory Disclosure of Facebook Page IDs:** The current election affidavit format already requires candidates to disclose social media accounts, and can be updated to specify the inclusion of the unique Facebook Page ID number and URL.
2. **PAN–Based Verification of Monetized Pages:**
 - a. Meta requires Permanent Account Number (PAN) details to activate monetisation features. ECI also requires submission of PAN details in affidavit.
 - b. ECI should establish a secure data-sharing protocol with Meta to cross-match PAN numbers to identify if a contesting candidate’s social media page is earning monetisation revenue during the election period.
 - c. Any page linked to a political candidate must be demonetized under these rules, whether or not they are run by the candidate themselves.
3. **Enforcement Reports from Platforms:** ECI should publish publicly reports on platforms’ enforcement of policies such as:
 - a. Pages of political candidates disabled from monetisation .
 - b. Winning candidates continue to be disabled from monetisation .
 - c. Losing candidates and concluding public office terms can have monetisation re-activated.

5. Return revenues: Incumbents and those already holding public office should be required to forfeit such income under ECI supervision.
6. Disclosure on communication: ECI should make public on its website all communication and interface with platform officials on enforcement of monetisation policies.

Platforms

1. Transparency: All platforms must disclose details on who it partners with for revenue distribution and amounts of revenue distributed.
2. Guidelines on Political Candidates & Public Office: All platforms must develop community guidelines around social media users either running for office or in office, given the major implications for democracy.
3. Follow own guidelines: Meta should enforce its own guidelines on monetisation of political candidates and public office.
4. Don't violate India's laws: monetisation is a new terrain and fast moving, with regulation catching up. Platforms should act in good faith and follow existing rules, guidelines and norms on campaign finance as applied to monetisation.

CONCLUSION

Elections in Bihar, alert us to the emergent trend of content monetisation by political candidates and elected officials. Developing at a steady clip, this is yet another avenue where social media runs roughshod over established democratic and electoral norms.

With Meta refusing to enforce its own policies, and given the opacity around revenue sharing, the end point could be Meta both extending and withdrawing significant resources to competing candidates, all without the public's knowledge.

The ECI and platforms can address this fairly easily and we call on them to do so. Let's not allow social media platforms to uncork yet another genie – a means of financially backing political candidates during elections.

ANNEXURE 1

Social Media Monetization Transparency & Oversight						2025
Monetization Disclosures	 YouTube Alphabet	 Facebook Meta	 Instagram Meta	 TikTok ByteDance	 Snapchat Snap	 X - Twitter X Corp.
Aggregate Membership	—	See publisher list	See publisher list	—	—	—
Registered Accounts	—	See publisher list	See publisher list	—	—	—
Registered Entities	—	—	—	—	—	—
Revenue Redistributed	—	—	—	—	See 2024 annual report	—
Accounts Level Financials	—	—	—	—	—	—
Entity Level Financials	—	—	—	—	—	—
Monetization Policy Enforcements	—	—	—	—	—	—