greatgameindia.com
An India-based news and politics site that has promoted false and unsubstantiated health care conspiracy theories.

Ownership and Financing
GreatGameIndia.com does not clearly disclose its ownership. The site's About Us page identifies Raja Sekhar and Shelley Kasli as the site's co-founders and editors. Sekhar and Kasli are also listed as co-founders on a similarly named website, GGIIndia.in.

Although the site describes GreatGameIndia as a "quarterly magazine," it has not published an issue since April 2017, according to the Subscribe page.
The site runs advertising and solicits donations from readers.

Content
GreatGameIndia.com's logo describes the site as a "journal on geopolitics and international relations." The About page states that the site seeks "to understand and unearth the truth behind hidden historical events and enhance everybody's understanding." Articles often advance conspiracy theories relating to international and Indian politics. Articles from GreatGameIndia promoting false claims about the coronavirus outbreak in early 2020 have been republished by popular U.S. sites that NewsGuard has found to be unreliable, including Zero Hedge and NaturalNews.com.

The site has three main sections: National Security, History, and a section with Hindi language articles that in January 2020 included only five articles, the most recent from August 2019. The National Security section includes subsections for Terrorism, Intelligence & Espionage, Global Threats Marine, Energy Crisis, and Science & Society.

Typical headlines have included "United Nations Hacked & Covered-up - Leaked Report," "China's Economic Espionage is Influencing India's Food Policy," and "NASA's Orbital Debris Mitigation Strategy Against India's National Security Interests."

Credibility
Articles on GreatGameIndia regularly include false and unsubstantiated conspiracy theories, including false claims about the coronavirus outbreak in 2020.

For example, in a January 2020 article titled "Coronavirus Bioweapon - How China Stole Coronavirus From Canada And Weaponized It," the site claimed that the virus was stolen by two Chinese scientists who were acting as spies for the Chinese government and working at the National Microbiology Lab (NML) in Winnipeg, Canada. The article claimed that the virus was then taken to Wuhan, China.

"Last year a mysterious shipment was caught smuggling Coronavirus from Canada," the article said. "It was traced to Chinese agents working at a Canadian lab.

Subsequent investigation by GreatGameIndia linked the agents to Chinese Biological Warfare Program from where the virus is suspected to have leaked causing the Wuhan coronavirus outbreak."

PolitiFact, FactCheck.org, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corp all concluded that there is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus was stolen by Chinese spies from a Canadian lab. GreatGameIndia.com's evidence for the claim is that two Chinese scientists were arrested from the lab in July 2019. The CBC did, in fact, report that two Chinese scientists were arrested from the lab that month. However, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) told the CBC that they were asked to leave due to an investigation of what described as a "policy breach" and "administrative matter," and that the matter was not connected to the coronavirus outbreak. "This is misinformation and there is no factual basis for claims being made on social media," a PHAC spokesperson said.

GreatGameIndia had promoted conspiracy theories about these scientists even before the outbreak began. A July 2019 article was headlined "Chinese Researchers Caught Stealing Coronavirus From Canadian Lab." However, the site's article was a copy of CBC's article about the scientists being arrested from the Winnipeg lab.

The site, article, headlined "Ouster of researchers from National Microbiology Lab still a mystery," did not say anything about the virus or about anything being "stolen."

Other stories on GreatGameIndia.com have promoted the unsubstantiated claim that the COVID-19 virus is a man-made virus. In a February 2020 article titled "Indian Scientists Discover Coronavirus Engineered With HIV (AIDS) Like Insertions," the site claimed that "a group of Indian scientists have discovered that Wuhan Coronavirus has been engineered with AIDS like insertions." The article later stated "the study gives credence to GreatGameIndia's earlier reports on Coronavirus Bioweapon."

This claim was attributed to a study posted on a bioRxiv, which publishes scientific studies before they have undergone peer review. According to a February 2020 article on the fact-checking website HealthFeedback.org, the study's finding that there is a similarity between the new strain of coronavirus and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) was detected using extremely short protein sequences, a practice that often gives rise to false positive results, noting that those same sequences are found in many other organisms.

The authors of the study withdrew it from bioRxiv just two days after it was published. Although GreatGameIndia.com updated its original article to say the research had been withdrawn, the site did not correct or retract the story's claims that the COVID-19 virus was "engineered." The article also failed to mention that the study was not peer-reviewed.

GreatGameIndia.com has also published articles denying that Russia was responsible for the crash of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17, which killed 298 people in eastern Ukraine.
In July 2014, a January 2020 article, headlined "Was Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 Brought Down By British Secret Service?", asserted that the crash "was orchestrated by British Secret Service with Ukrainian Security Service." The article attributed this claim to "evidence from classified documents," supposedly obtained by Vasyh Prozorov, a former Ukraine intelligence officer who defected to Russia.

A Joint Investigation Team from several countries, as well as investigations by independent researchers, concluded that the missile came from a Russian brigade and was transported into Eastern Ukraine by pro-Russian fighters.

Another January 2020 article, titled "Was Iran Plane Shootdown A Setup By The Deep State?", suggested that the crash of Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752, which Iran admitted to accidentally shooting down with a missile, killing 176 people, was actually a setup by the U.S. government. According to the article, "the fateful incident was a setup. It seems reasonable to speculate that in the early hours of January 8 a calamitous incident was contrived to happen."

The Iranian government released a statement days after the crash — and nine days before GreatGameindia.com wrote its article — admitting that its military shot down Flight 752 due to "human error."

Because GreatGameindia.com has frequently promoted false and unsubstantiated conspiracy theories in its articles and headlines, NewsGuard has determined that the site has repeatedly published false content, fails to gather and present information responsibly, and does not avoid deceptive headlines.

GreatGameindia.com does not post a corrections policy, and NewsGuard could not find corrections on the site.

GreatGameindia.com does not clearly disclose that it is advancing a particular point of view or agenda, stating on its About page that it provides "global intelligence through strategic analysis by placing events in a geopolitical and historical framework to better understand international developments and the world around us."

The site does not label any articles as opinion, yet stories regularly include opinionated statements. For example, a July 2019 article titled "Will Google Be Investigated For Treason in India?" stated, "Whether Google colludes with Chinese military or has been already infiltrated by Chinese spies or whether the Americans are successful in getting it out of the Chinese orbit, Indians should be well warned that Google is a military front company and as was the case in Mumbai attacks it will be used as a weapon of war against India if a situation so arise."

In a May 2019 article, the site stated, "It is alarming that India is becoming a boy-scout for British-American regime change / creation of democracy / mediated and propped up by Nomenklatura psychopathic corporate media aligned with the interests of the British-American military industrial complex for whom war is a terrific business..."

None of these articles were labeled as opinion.

Because GreatGameindia.com does not disclose an agenda and regularly includes opinionated statements in articles without labeling them as opinion, NewsGuard has determined the site does not handle the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

Co-founders Raja Sekhar and Shelley Kasli did not respond to two emails and two phone messages, seeking comment on the site's history of publishing false information, its approach to corrections, and its separation of news and opinion.

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**Transparency**

GreatGameindia.com does not provide information about its ownership. The site's About page identifies Raja Sekhar and Shelley Kasli as the site's co-founders and editors, but not as its owners. A general email address is provided on the site's Contact Us page, which also includes a general contact form.

Articles are generally credited only to "GreatGameindia," without identifying authors or providing biographical or contact information.

Advertisements are distinctly separated from editorial content.

Sekhar and Kasli did not respond to two emails and two phone calls inquiring about the site's lack of disclosure regarding ownership and content creators.

**History**

The website's domain name was registered in 2013.

Correction: An earlier version of this Nutrition Label misstated the publication date of a fact-check by the site HealthFeedback.org on a fake claim about the coronavirus outbreak. The article was published in February 2020.

Editor's Note: This Nutrition Label was updated on March 27, 2020.

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Send feedback to NewsGuard: Click Here

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**Sources**

**Ownership and Financing**

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