UNIT-2 : EDITORIAL WRITING

UNIT STRUCTURE

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2.5 Writing the Feature
2.6 Writing the Article
2.7 Writing the Middle
2.8 Letters to the editor
2.9 Let Us Sum Up
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2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to :

- discuss the finer points of writing editorial
- know the difference between news writing and editorial writing
- explore their structure, content and style of writing
- develop specific language skill for writing editorial.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

Editorial writing in a newspaper is a great learning and education process. Analytical and incisive editorials and thought provoking articles expand our mental horizon and enable us to understand the complexities of the burning problems of the day. As students of journalism, one has to learn the difference between news and editorial writing. News writing as we have already learnt has a definite structure, starting with headlines, credit line,

dateline, intro or lead para which is followed by the body of the report. It is important to note that news stories are written in the Inverted Pyramid style, where the most important points of the story are put in the beginning. The less important points are presented in sequence as per their importance. Well written features give us an insight to the world around us, while middles add a dash of humour and wit. A close reading of the editorial, articles, features, middles and letters to the Editor will reveal that their structure, content and style of writing are different from one another. A journalist may be a good news reporter or article writer, but may prove to be a poor editorial writer. To be a good editorial writer, one needs a good grasp of the language. As such one has to develop his or her language skills. Editorial writing gives one the opportunity to use his or her command over vocabulary and usage to the best of one's abilities. Letters to the Editor is an important feature of a newspaper where feedback from the readers is received in the form of opinions on various burning issues, besides, criticism and suggestions for improvement of the coverage of the newspaper. Language skills coupled with craftsmanship to structure a readable editorial, article or feature adds to the overall attraction of the newspaper. A letter to the editor sent by a reader may not be in the desired format needed for a newspaper. A sub-editor has to apply his skills to correct or even re-write a letter to make it fit for publication.

In this unit we shall discuss the finer points of Editorial writing which largely consist of the editorial, features, articles, middles and letters to the Editor.

2.3 INTRODUCTION TO THE EDITORIAL PAGE (EDITORIAL, FEATURES, ARTICLES, MIDDLES, LETTERS TO THE EDITOR)

The editorial page can be described as the soul of the newspaper as it reflects the mindset and taste of the newspaper. The policy and stand of the newspaper on the burning issues of the day are projected through the editorials. Diverse opinions and analysis of different issues are presented

through the articles where eminent persons specialising in their area of activity are given a platform to express their views and thereby expand the horizon of understanding of the readers. Features in newspapers today are an extension of the hard news capturing the news headlines. Historical and cultural background of problems in the news, interesting facets of tourism spots, environmental issues, write-ups on film characters, celebrities etc. make interesting features. Writing Middles require writing skills and craftsmanship of a high order as a situation has to be developed and concluded with a punch line within limited words. The letters to the Editor column published in the editorial page is an important channel of interaction between the readers and the newspaper. The views of the readers on the burning issues of the day and their criticism and laurels of the quality of publication of the newspaper forms an important feedback for the newspaper to take remedial and corrective measures. On the whole, the editorial page of a newspaper provides food for thought for the serious readers. This page is not for the casual readers looking for some light reading. Well written editorials, articles, features, middles and letters to the editor, may in many cases attract readers to a particular newspaper. Eminent editors and columnists make their name through the columns of the editorial page.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 1 : How does an editorial page reflect the mindset and taste of newspaper?

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Q. 2 : Where do we find letters to the Editor column?

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2.4 WRITING THE EDITORIAL

The editorial is the soul of a newspaper. The editorial reflects the policy and stand of the newspaper on the burning issues of the day. Strong and powerful editorials published in popular newspapers mould public opinion and act as catalysts of change. They also serve as watchdog of public interest by pointing out anomalies and irregularities in public policies and developmental works, besides offering suggestions and solutions to problems and burning issues of the society.

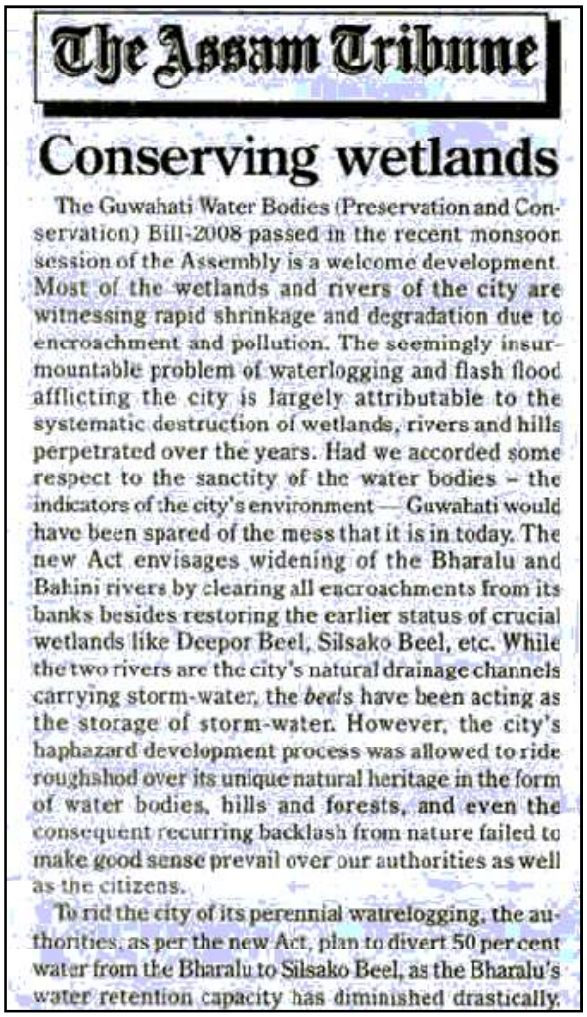
All editorials in the newspaper are published in the name of the editor. However, all editorials are not written by the editor himself. In big or medium-size newspapers, there is generally a panel of editorial writers who are assigned subjects of their specialised study by the editor. Sensitive and delicate issues which call for spelling out the newspaper's stand are generally handled by the editor himself or a close aide who is well acquainted with the newspaper's policies.

In the days when communication technology was in its nascent stage and the geo-political situation in the world developed at a slow pace, the general trend for the newspapers was to have one editorial, or at the most two. As the electronic media like the television was not much developed, the people depended on the newspapers for the news and views on the developments taking place around the world. As most of the readers were not aware of the background and causes of sudden socio-economic and political developments, most editorial writers used to discuss the subject on hand by giving the reader an idea about the background of the subject, then going on to analyse the pros and cons of the new development and its consequences and finally concluding with the newspaper's stand on the issue and suggestions for a solution.

However, with the development of communication technology the world today has become much closer. Any happening around the globe is immediately flashed on our television screens. People are today aware of the developments taking place. As such, the reader does not need to be explained about the development. Present day editorials directly approach the subject with the newspaper's views and comments, thereby cutting

down the number of words compared to earlier editorials. This has given the editorial writers liberty to write two to three editorials regularly touching on varied subjects and engaging the attention of the society ranging from politics to sports and every subject of interest to the readers. Many newspapers write on off-beat subjects in the third editorial, thereby lightening the burden of serious issues in the editorial page.

Editorial writing has always been an art which has to be mastered by practice and judicious use of language. It cannot be written in the style of a news report nor in the format of an article. Limitation of words and space offers the editorial writer a challenge to encapsule his thoughts and views within the given framework by using the appropriate word, usage and language to tackle his subject. A good editorial is one that is not only thought provoking but also eminently readable.



The Assam Tribune

Conserving wetlands

The Guwahati Water Bodies (Preservation and Conservation) Bill-2008 passed in the recent monsoon session of the Assembly is a welcome development. Most of the wetlands and rivers of the city are witnessing rapid shrinkage and degradation due to encroachment and pollution. The seemingly insurmountable problem of waterlogging and flash flood afflicting the city is largely attributable to the systematic destruction of wetlands, rivers and hills perpetrated over the years. Had we accorded some respect to the sanctity of the water bodies – the indicators of the city's environment — Guwahati would have been spared of the mess that it is in today. The new Act envisages widening of the Bharalu and Bahini rivers by clearing all encroachments from its banks besides restoring the earlier status of crucial wetlands like Deepor Beel, Silsako Beel, etc. While the two rivers are the city's natural drainage channels carrying storm-water, the *beel*s have been acting as the storage of storm-water. However, the city's haphazard development process was allowed to ride roughshod over its unique natural heritage in the form of water bodies, hills and forests, and even the consequent recurring backlash from nature failed to make good sense prevail over our authorities as well as the citizens.

To rid the city of its perennial watrelogging, the authorities, as per the new Act, plan to divert 50 per cent water from the Bharalu to Silsako Beel, as the Bharalu's water retention capacity has diminished drastically.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 3 : Explain the importance of editorial writing ?

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ACTIVITY

Read the editorial of two leading English newspapers of Assam over a week .Now compare and contrast the style of writing and choice of issues discussed in the editorial in the two newspapers. Which one has appealed to you more and why ?

2.5 WRITING THE FEATURE

Every reporter likes to write a story that is interesting from beginning to end and which can be used next week or even next month because it has a semitimeless quality. Such stories which rely on something other than immediacy for their appeal are known as features.

The subject of a feature may be anything – a person, an idea, a situation, a hobby, a process, a historic anniversary. The objective of the writer may be to inform, to explain, to instruct, or only to entertain.

The qualities that set the feature apart from other stories are its lack of immediacy and its indepth treatment of an interesting or provocative subject. Good example of features can be found in the Sunday supplements of newspapers.

An important quality of a feature is that it should have a 'news peg', that is, it should be related to a topic recently in the news. The 'news peg' is at

times implicit in the story itself or sometimes expressed clearly at the beginning. The 'news peg' is the writer's way of telling the readers why the features is being published and why they should bother reading it.

Most good features contain a considerable amount of human interest ingredient though it is not an absolute requirement. However, human interest expressed in colour, description, anecdote and dialogue helps in a big way to keep the reader's attention throughout a long story.

The language of features offers an opportunity to the writer to display his command over the language and to show his craftsmanship skills. The principles of journalism stipulate that ornamental language should not be used while writing the hard news, but full liberty of language use and creative skills in writing features is allowed. Ofcourse, the writer has to be careful to ensure that he does not lose the focus of his theme and subject. He has to apply his language and literary skills to make his feature attractive and readable. How he handles the facts and materials of the subject and give shape with application of appropriate language will ultimately decide the fate of his writing.

Traditionally, features were used in the editorial and magazine sections of the newspapers. Attractive headlines and a liberal use of photographs were distinctive characteristics of a feature. However, news features and human interest features are quite popular in the modern newspapers. As we live in a fast moving world today where the television intrudes into our lives every moment, newspaper readers also cannot wait for the Sunday magazines or supplement to read more about a topical event. Hence, news features on topical events by reporters on the spot of the incident are elaborately used. In many cases the story behind the news is projected through news features where comments and views of opposing parties are projected, the reaction of the victims and the common people are presented and the merits and demerits of the issue is discussed with comments from experts.

Human interest features are quite popular among readers of newspapers. The struggle of ordinary mortals to reach dizzy heights and the actions of the rich and powerful which display their human face fascinate the common

readers. An ordinary rickshawpuller returning a bag containing Rupees two lakhs to its rich owner captures our imagination. Similarly, the action of a rich man who goes out of his way to help the poor and weak in a novel way may make interesting reading.



Golden threads of Asom

Pat and muga mekhela chaddar designs

Mahatma Gandhi once while visiting Asom said that the weavers of Asom weave dreams in their looms. And it is so much true. *Pat* (Assam silk), *muga*, *endi* are beautiful, elegant and so sophisticated in their colour and design. The Ahom rulers were the patron and connoisseurs of these dress material. An Asomiya wedding without *pat* and *muga mekhela chaddar* is unthinkable. Many shops have mushroomed into existence that cater to the requirements of the dress materials of the Asomiya people as well as to a wide mass of people in India and abroad.

The Assam Co-operative Silk House Ltd. was one of the first co-operative societies to be registered before Independence, in 1941 which is still catering to the people of Asom. They even started a department store named Kalpataru in 1970.

They deal in authentic *pat* and *muga mekhela chaddars* and *saris* which are produced in Sualkuchi and cotton *mekhela chaddars* which are produced in Azara, south Kamrup and Dhemaji. 70% of the goods are produced by the co-operative society themselves while they procure 30% to 40% from other establishments. Apart from the traditional dresses, they also deal in *gamochas*, Indian National flags, Manipuri and Naga shawls etc.

The *mekhela chaddar* with golden thread work (*guna*)

Different designs of muga mekhela chaddar



Different muga creations

can come for a minimum price of Rs 2,500 to a maximum price of Rs 7000 depending upon how light or heavy, the thread work is. The bridal *mekhela chaddar* can cost around Rs 5,000 to Rs 12,000-13,000. The price of *muga mekhela chaddar* can range from Rs 5,500 to Rs 8,000.

But prospective buyers beware — what you see is not what you actually get. Polyester is fast replacing *pat* while *tasshar* is being sold for *muga*. People are fooled easily as they cannot make out the difference. *Tasshar* and *muga* are less expensive but the clever sellers sell the garments to the gullible buyers at high prices. *Pat, muga* and *endi* garments are expensive because they are hand crafted by people in hand looms which takes up a lot of time and effort.

We asked Birendra Kumar Das, the Secretary of the Assam Silk House, whether we could differentiate between *muga* and *tasshar* and he informed us that it was very difficult if both the yarns have been mixed. The texture of *muga* material is rough to the touch while *tasshar* has got a more smooth finish. He also told us that some unscrupulous traders from a different part of India took away some samples of borders of *chaddars* from Asom (which are normally hand crafted here and is expensive) and produced them in high quantities in the power loom and supplied them here at low prices. This becomes a threat to the local products market.

The Assam Silk House is not only providing their products to the local market but has also made their foray in the international market. Once they provided the raw material (*muga*) to Artfed who had exported it to Germany. The raw material had been used to make bed covers, tea cozy sets, curtains, skirts etc. Being a member of Artfed, the Silk House has also participated in exhibitions in Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Kanchipuram and Chennai. Assam silk *saris* are in heavy demand in Mumbai and Delhi. And during the *Pujas*, Kolkata provides a good market to the *pat* and *muga* dresses. The popularity of *mekhela chaddar* in Asom is of course very high during Bihus and weddings.

B K Das jokingly relates about a time, a few years back, when customers came and asked for *Jaanmoni chaddars*. He was surprised and later came to know that the main character in an Asomiya musical CD named *Jaanmoni* had worn a kind of cotton *chaddar* and as the song touched the highest position in the popularity charts, the dress too got popularity.

Keeping with the modern times, the Silk House has also tried to delve into different creations out of *muga*. As for example, umbrellas, men's ties, shoes, purse, shirts. The *endi-muga* shirts have been made with different floral motifs and other designs and can come for a price of Rs 700-Rs 800.

As recognition for their efforts and contribution in the handloom sector, the Textile Ministry, Government of India had awarded the first prize (gold) to the Assam Silk House for the year 1995-96. They had also been awarded the second prize (silver) for the year 1993-94.

As beautiful as they are, the *pat* and *muga* should be kept carefully. They should not be subjected to frequent washes as they lose their shine, if they are washed frequently. Moreover, they should be washed with a very mild detergent. *Reetha* is very good for washing *muga mekhela chaddars*.

Sualkuchi which is the major centre of these dress materials has been very rightly termed as the *Manchester of the East* for its unique speciality and we should take ample advantage of our uniqueness to promote our beautiful and extraordinary land Asom.



Displaying a chaddar design



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 4 : What are the qualities that set the feature apart from other stories?

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Q. 5 : What is 'news peg'?

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ACTIVITY

Write in about 500 words a feature on :

1) Famous personality of Assam.

2) Sattra culture of Assam.

2.6 WRITING THE ARTICLE

The article is one of the most serious piece of writing in the editorial page. It is generally written on a topical subject of importance or on a debatable issue. It is positioned at the top of the page, thereby reflecting the importance accorded to it by the editors.

The objective of the article is to enable the readers to understand better the burning issues of the day. It provides the readers an insight to the issues involved and gives crisp and though provoking analysis of the problem. Generally, articles are written by experts specialising in their area of work so that the reader gets an inside view of the issue at hand.

Analysis of an issue by considering all its pros and cons and interpreting the development in the light of past history and the prevailing socio-economic and political situation through the article provides useful insight and food for thought to the readers.

Normally newspapers try to get their articles on specific subjects written by experts in the field. If the subject pertains to national politics, an article written by a popular political commentator who has been closely monitoring

the developments and have wide experience in the field would be preferred. Similarly, a former diplomat or senior foreign service officer may be asked to write on foreign affairs and so on.

Apart from their regular article writers, most newspapers subscribe to syndicated feature services which supply the newspaper with a wide range of articles on various subjects of interest, written by a panel of reputed writers drawn from different fields like politics, foreign affairs, social issues, health, education, defence etc.

As article writers are considered to be experts in their field, hence they are given the liberty of presenting their views in their own way. They may relate their own experience in assessing a problem and offer solutions. In the process, an article gets a personal touch and offers the reader on insider's view on the subject.

Article writers have to have deep study of their subjects and personal experience add to the flavour of their writings. As such article written by amateurs by gleaning their information from various sources of the media are not taken seriously by the editors.

The language of articles like all journalistic writings should be preferably reader friendly. A non-journalist may have the tendency to write complex and ornamental language which should be curtailed while writing articles. The writer should try to convey their thoughts in a simple, lucid manner so that the reader has no difficulty in understanding him.

Editors who edit the articles have to ensure that the writings could be understood by the common reader without any difficulty. Even articles on technical subjects have to be written sans their technical jargons, as otherwise, there would be no difference between an article and textbooks. Infact, such problems have today given rise to a distinct form of journalism on scientific writings called science journalism.

The Trend of Inflation

Dr BK Mukhopadhyay

The ongoing situation has been worrying everyone. It has mainly emerged from unprecedented rise in global oil prices and the resultant effect on the economies. Not only India, but also the developing economies in Asia are facing the inflation challenge. Inflation alarm bells have started ringing in financial markets as soaring energy as well as commodity prices have affected growth. Many companies are nervous about an economic slowdown.

In fact, for as many as 2.6 million people living in extreme poverty, the actual situation has rather worsened over the last couple of years which have been marked by poor harvest brought about by natural disasters like flood and drought. Food inflation has even affected aid efforts at a crucial time, as aid agencies anticipate the need for more handouts in rural areas facing a leaner than normal year ahead. Global economists have rightly warned that the second-round inflation effect (rising prices for goods and wages across the board) would pose a major threat to developing countries.

Inflation is termed as an increase in the overall level of prices in the economy and the inflation rate refers to the percentage change in the price index from the preceding period. Stagflation, on the other hand, refers to a period of falling output and rising prices, whereas recession refers to a period of declining real incomes and rising employment. Depression is a case of severe recession.

Inflation is thus a situation of sustained increase in the general price level. Creeping inflation sometimes accelerates, while at the same time on some occasions decelerates as well. While creeping inflation has many causes, galloping inflation occurs only when the government prints an incredible amount of money. The fact also remains that low inflation does not necessarily lead to high inflation.

It is already a popular myth that during inflation the workers lose purchasing power (purchasing power of a given sum of money is the volume of goods and services that it will buy). It is, however, clear that the wages that the people earn are also prices (price being paid for the labour services). Real wage rate, in such a context, refers to the wage rate adjusted for inflation, which in turn indicates the volume of goods and services that money wages will buy.

During the times of such inflation, people pay higher prices for the same quantities of goods and services they had paid before. For example, in Philippines, inflation is soaring now to nine-year high. Food, which accounts for around half of the basket of goods and services in the consumer price, jumped by 14 per cent in May 2008 from a year earlier. Filipino households have had to pay 14 pesos more in May 2008 for buying the same amount of food they had bought in May 2007. So, more and more income is needed for just maintaining the standard of living.

Inflation does not typically erode real wages since increase in nominal wages is compensated for the rising prices. Inflation acts as a redistributor of income and wealth; as inflation does not proceed evenly, it redistributes income and wealth in arbitrary, unfair ways and, as such, systematically discriminates against people living on fixed incomes. It may favour the borrower at the expense of the lender (here, real interest rate comes into play, which refers to percentage increase in purchasing power that the borrower pays the lender in exchange for loan).

Accurately anticipated inflation need not redistribute wealth between the borrower and lender. That is to say, if the actual inflation rate turns out to be different from the expected rate, unanticipated redistribution would follow suit. Fewer social problems are created in case inflation is (i) lower than higher and (ii) remains steady (that is, relatively predictable) rather than being variable in nature.

Yet, the fact remains that the inflation-created uncertainties may hamper long-term contracts that have been made. The other cost of this sort of cyclical fluctuation is that inflation may impose real costs on shoppers whose information feedback about relative prices goes down.

So far the ongoing global increase in prices of commodities is concerned, a number of factors have played their roles: (1) demand for food crops and edible oils rose due mainly to rise in income in the developing world — strong demand from the oil exporting countries as well as increased use of these crops/commodities in biofuels, with biofuels accounting for 5 to 10 per cent of the global production of primary biofuel feedstocks; (2) food prices rose because of low output stocks; (c) higher cost of cultivation; and (d) rise in the price of metals was due to increasing demand from emerging economies like China.

Also, in an open economy, the domestic prices of commodities depend on the very behaviour of their global process. The pass-through is found to be very often incomplete and, that too, it may get influenced by administrative and fiscal interventions.

Though in these days of globalization the external factors cannot be fully insulated, yet avoidable areas must not be lost sight of. One clear example is food grains. In many cases it is better to concentrate on boosting indigenous production than to depend on others for various reasons. The prices do rule high (wheat, for instance) and imports would be costlier in view of the fact that global demand, stemming from population rise and other factors, would be higher as compared to supply.

What about food security? The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has clearly indicated that despite record output, import costs would go up by 35 per cent.

In fact, global prices these days have more pronounced impact on domestic prices as the ability to meet shortfalls at affordable prices in being eroded by global shortages and rising prices. It is higher productivity and efficient supply-chain functioning that could contribute to the growth process productively.

(The writer is a faculty member at the Indian Institute of Bank Management, Guwahati)



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 6 : What is the objective behind writing an article ?

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Q. 7 : Where do we locate an article in the newspaper ?

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2.7 WRITING THE MIDDLE

The Middle is an integral part of the Editorial Page of a newspaper. The objective of the Middle is to provide humour and wit in an otherwise serious page which has thought provoking editorials, enlightening articles and letters to the editor from the readers highlighting their grievances and problems and offering their point of view on the myriad issues of the day.

The length of a Middle should be around four hundred words and it is generally positioned between the two articles of the editorial page. Hence, the name Middle given to it.

The word limitation in writing a Middle make Middle writing all that difficult. The writer generally picks up a topical subject, gives it a humourous twist and ends it with a punch line that provides the reader a humorous or satiric fare.

Middle writes enjoy liberty in the use of language. There is no journalistic restrictions. As it is the product of their creative mind, the Middle writer is allowed to use even colloquial words and slangs. However, he has to ensure that normal decency and decorum is maintained.

Changing taste and dearth of good Middle writers have today pushed the Middle to oblivion. Many newspapers in which the Middle used to be a regular feature are today stopping its publication and going in for other columns.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 8 : What is an integral part of the editorial page?

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Q. 9 : What is the objective of the middle?

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2.8 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The 'Letters to the Editor' column is an important component of the newspaper where the views of the readers on burning problems of the day, their grievances and aspirations are reflected. This column is a part of the editorial page and acts as a medium of interaction with the readers. The input received from the readers is a good indicator of the popularity of the newspaper. Some of the letters also offer suggestions for improvement and constructive criticism of the published material which may help the editorial desk to take corrective measures keeping in view the likes and dislikes of the readers.

As the name suggests, 'Letters to the Editor' should be addressed to the Editor of the newspaper or publication. Writers should not waste time in introducing a subject but should go to the point. Ornamental language should be avoided. Simple and lucid language should be used so that the idea is conveyed in clear terms. Letters should be short and concise. Different ideas should be presented in different paragraphs.

It may be a good idea for aspiring journalists to start their foray into journalism by writing letters to the editor of their local newspaper. They should select people-oriented subjects and put forward their points of view in well-structured letters. Their efforts should be directed at marshalling their thoughts in proper sequence and structure which will help them in perfecting their writing skills by the use of appropriate words, phrases and construction of sentences. Letter writing will help them later in writing news reports and features.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters e-mailed to Sentinel@sancharnet.in/thesentinel@satyam.net.in must carry the full postal address and the full nam

For a Sporting India

As the Beijing Olympics gets closer, we must ponder as to what has stopped our players from winning medals at the Olympics so long, barring a very, very few exceptions, that too long ago.

India is obsessed with just one game — cricket. Our cricket players are God-like figures who are worshipped despite their flaws, because it gives relief to our psyche wounded for not having achieved anything spectacular in other areas of games and sports. This obsession with cricket must go if we are to rise as a sporting nation. True, there is a lot of money in cricket, and glamour too, especially after the IPL extravaganza. But it is also true that every game has some glamour — one can check out with the games played in the Olympics and the glamour associated with most of the games there. Look at the innovation too, with new sports being developed and added to the list.

There is potential in India for almost all the games and sports played in the Olympics. States like Manipur, for instance, have produced wonderful weightlifters and boxers. In fact, the tribal States of the Northeast would have produced great athletes, weightlifters and footballers had there been an initiative to identify talents and harness their potential.

It is time to establish coaching academies in the Northeast for Olympic sports. These academies are to be managed professionally. There must not be any room for politicians to carve out their space in sports bodies. In fact, politicians should be kept out of all sports bodies — these are institutions to be manned and managed by past sportsmen who will guide the youth to sporting excellence.

It is time for parents too to change their mindset. If they find that their children have an interest in any of the games and sports where they can prove their natural talent, the parents should encourage them to treat their sporting inclination as a career option. These children are then to be admitted to the proposed sports academies and groomed accordingly. Who knows we could have an Olympic gold medallist in one of them!

It is actually a matter of mindset. China is a great Olympic performer because its approach to games and sports is radical and, therefore, practical — there is no fixation with any particular sporting activity, but there is a great national initiative to reach out to every sporting activity and improve upon it. India should learn lessons from such countries and even emulate their games and sports regime. There is no harm in emulating good things.

Subrata Deka,
Khanapara, Guwahati-22.

Public Opinion

This refers to the public meetings held by ULFA's 28 Battalion in upper Assam to mobilize public opinion on the issue of insurgency. It is good that the pro-talk ULFA leaders are now realizing the worth of public opinion. If the ULFA had realized that a few years go, it would have also realized that the people of Assam have never supported "sovereignty" for the State as demanded by the outfit. The ULFA would have realized that the people of Assam are happy to be in India because they are already sovereign.



2.9 LET US SUM UP

Editorial writing in a newspaper is a great learning and education process. Analytical and incisive editorials and thought provoking articles expand our mental horizon and enable us to understand the complexities of the burning problems of the day. So in this unit you have learnt the importance of editorial and how to write an editorial. Letters to the Editor is an important feature of a newspaper where feedback from the readers is received in the form of opinions on various burning issues, besides, criticism and suggestions for improvement of the coverage of the newspaper. You have also learnt about the importance of middle and feature in a newspaper. By now you must have understood how to write an editorial and importance of middle, feature and letters to the Editor .



2.10 FURTHER READING

1. Mehta, D.S. Mass Communication and Journalism. New Delhi : Allied Publishers,



2.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No 1 : The policy and stand of the newspaper on the burning issues of the day are projected through the editorials. Diverse opinions and analysis of different issues are presented through the articles where eminent persons specialising in their area of activity are given a platform to express their views and thereby expand the horizon of understanding of the readers.

Ans to Q. No 2 : The letters to the Editor column is published in the editorial page .

Ans to Q. No 3 : The editorial is the soul of a newspaper. The editorial reflects the policy and stand of the newspaper on the burning issues of the day. Strong and powerful editorials published in popular newspapers mould public opinion and act as catalysts of change. They also serve as watchdog of public interest by pointing out anomalies and irregularities in public policies and developmental works, besides offering suggestions and solutions to problems and burning issues of the society.

Ans to Q. No 4 : The qualities that set the feature apart from other stories are its lack of immediacy and its indepth treatment of an interesting or provocative subject.

Ans to Q. No 5 : The 'news peg' is the writer's way of telling the readers why the features is being published and why they should bother reading it.

Ans to Q. No 6 : The objective of the article is to enable the readers to understand better the burning issues of the day. It provides the readers an insight to the issues involved and gives crisp and though provoking analysis of the problem

Ans to Q. No 7 : It is positioned at the top of the page, thereby reflecting the importance accorded to it by the editors.

Ans to Q. No 8 : The Middle is an integral part of the Editorial Page of a newspaper.

Ans to Q. No 9 : The objective of the Middle is to provide homour and wit in an otherwise serious page which has thought provoking editorials, enlightening articles and letters to the editor from the readers highlighting their grievances and problems and offering their point of view on the myriad issues of the day.



2.12 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words):

Q. 1. Why is editorial writing considered to be on art ?

Q. 2. Explain the qualities of a feature Writing

B. Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words):

Q. 1. How can one write a good article ?

Q. 2. Are letters to editor an important part of a newspaper ? Give reasons for your answer.