UNIT – 5 : REPORTING

UNIT STRUCTURE

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5.1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- define reporting
- explain the different types of reporting.
- define Beat reporting
- name the important beats
- explain the importance of Background research

5.2. INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit we have discussed about the basics of news. Now, in this unit you will be acquainted with Reporting as an important part of Journalism. A reporter's job is to file report of an event that is newsworthy. The reporting of such an event in a newspaper deals with facts. This unit aims at introducing the various aspects of news reporting such as the concept of reporting, types of reporting, reporting beats and importance of background research for a reporter.

This unit will be your first step towards practices of journalism and will help you understand the reporting in detail. So, let us first start with the different types of reporting.

5.3 CONCEPT OF REPORTING

In the simplest of terms, Reporting means 'collecting information, compiling and writing a news out of them and presenting a report about a subject if it is considered newsworthy by the news organization – whether it is a newspaper, a magazine or a TV or Radio news channel. In journalistic terminology news is also called a story and a report. (Some organizations treat news item as a relatively shorter version the story and a report is something which is more extensive).

Now, how does a reporter go about the process? First, he selects an event or an issue or some happening that makes news; collects information, writes it and transmits or sends it to his or her office at the same city or at a distance. Again, if it is a news about a major accident, an election spread over several days, a function held for a few days etc. how will the news items be presented?

First of all, when a reporter joins an organization, he or she would be instructed or supervised by the chief reporter or may be the News Editor or a senior editorial person about what sort of news he should go after and how he should do it. When this person acquires experience, he can exercise more autonomy in selecting the event to repot on. Yet at times his seniors might specifically instruct him to do a news report on some specific topic.

Besides, as a reporter grows up in an organization to a higher position and gains a lot of experience, he or she should be able to have developed a certain ability to spot a newsworthy event whenever he finds something interesting and knows that it will make a news.

So the reporter's responsibilities include – selection of a newsworthy events out of so many happenings in his or her area of reporting or beat, collection of all the necessary and relevant information about the issue, writing down the report in a lucid and good writing style and submitting it to the editorial office. The responsibilities given here may look quite easy, but when you go to the field, it assumes numerous dimensions and the task is not that simple the way it may sound while reading what is being said here. Because, it will be completely your responsibility, it will depend on you and your capacity to get in to the depth of the matter and collect relevant information about it.

Another important responsibility is to present the news item as 'exactly' as it has happened without any twist or bias or personal opinion.

While the job of both the editing desk and reporters are equally important, the ideal situation would be to have a great amount of coordination between these two wings. This is vital to present and make best of the news in hand with all aspects of the issue getting an attention that they deserve. The Reporters as well as the editing desk have to understand the pulse of each other so that the news is only presented in the best manner for the benefit of the readers and thereby ensuring a trust, credibility and popularity for the news organisation.

We have mentioned at the outset that both desk and reporting wings ought to have a better understanding of each other's nature of work. Then the outcome would be better. If the reporter has good idea of editing work and the editing desk understands the reporter's work, they will be able to produce a much better quality newspaper or news bulletin.

Some new trends are emerging in the work allocation of the editorial staff. In news agencies like Press Trust of India (PTI) and United News of India (UNI) the desk staff was also assigned reporting work from time to time. Now, in news channels and in some of the newspapers this pattern has been introduced and the desk staff is also assigned to the reporting job , mostly like features, interviews and writing analytical pieces but as far as hard and major events are concerned, it still remains the domain of the regular reporters. In television news channels this kind of rotation has become common.

Hence, the job of a reporter is getting more and more challenging every passing day. Also, the dividing line between a Reporter and Desk journalist is becoming thinner everyday and at times it even gets completely blurred and there is hardly any difference between the two.

A reporter, when trying to find out the detailed information at the site of an accident, natural disaster, political development etc. may not be able to write the story in the style and language as he or she is bogged down in looking for the relevant information. At such times, it is the prime responsibility of the editing desk to refine the language and present the news in a language suitable for the newspaper or magazine or the news bulletin without changing

the basic facts and the spirit of the news. This is also a major challenge for the desk staff because it is quite difficult to rewrite or reshape someone else's write up or information without changing the basics at the same time and not having the benefit of experiencing the event or happening by his own eyes.

In the next few sub chapters you will find out more about the exciting world of reporting and its various interesting aspects.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS – A

1. Define the terms:
   a. Reporter
   b. The Desk Staff
2. What is Reporting?
3. What are the reporter's responsibilities?



Activity - A

Attend an important meeting or any other programme in your home-town and make a report by yourself after returning home. Next day, compare it with the report of the same event in newspapers and find out how they have differed.

2.4 DIFFERENT TYPES OF REPORTING

Like other forms of mass media and mass communication, the profession of reporting is also classified into several categories based upon different parameters. The main categories are:

- Objective Reporting
- Interpretative Reporting
- Investigative Reporting

Objective Reporting: Objective reporting refers to the plain presentation of facts of the events as they have happened. Objective reporting does not involve analysis, interpretation, contextualizing and backgrounding. Here the reporter reports only what he has seen or observed without any kind of subjective inputs. Objective reporting is a kind of straight reporting and often an impersonal job. It can also be said that objective reporting is complete only when a reporter is able to set aside his subjectivity. Objectivity is looking at a story as though through a perfect lens uncolored by a reporter's thoughts about a subject; it means trying to view a story from a neutral perspective. Some critics believe pure objectivity is impossible as it is virtually impossible to be neutral while looking at various subjects or events.

A reporter is a human being and has certain ideas, feelings, attitudes, opinions and prejudices. Hence it is suggested that fairness and balance are more important to achieve the optimum level of objectivity.

The following points will summarize well the concept of objective reporting:

- Balance and evenhandedness in presenting different sides of an issue
- Accuracy and realism in reporting
- Presenting all the main relevant points
- Separating facts from opinions, but treating opinion as relevant
- Minimizing the influence of the writer's own opinions, attitudes or involvement.
- Avoiding slant, malicious or devious purposes.

Here is an example of a typical objective report: This report was published in *The Assam Tribune*, April 8, 2008.

AAU scientists probing mushroom deaths

By a City Reporter

GUWAHATI, April 7: The team of scientists from the Assam agricultural University probing into the poisonous mushroom case in Golaghat and other districts found that the mushroom consumed by the affected people was of a very poisonous variety named Amanita Phalloides Vaill.

The State Minister for Agriculture, Pramila Rani Brahma instructed the Vice Chancellor of the Assam Agriculture University SS Baghel a few days back to conduct an enquiry

into the Golaghat incident, where seven people died eating poisonous mushroom obtained from the Jungles of Bahupathar.

While questioning the people of the village and examining the quality of mushroom consumed by them, the team of experts comprising scientists and officials of the State Agriculture Department and the Health Department found that this poisonous variety, flourished after the season's first showers, was the cause of the deaths.

Interpretative reporting: Interpretative reporting is an outcome of the facts combined with the interpretation. This means the interpretation of facts to find some meanings and to analyze the consequences by applying certain set of reasons. But an interpretative report is also based on fact and is not a sweeping expression of opinion but in real terms it may indicate towards a direction of some opinion. The interpretation is substantially supplemented by the facts.

The interpretative reporting is necessitated depending on the nature of subject. For example, on government presentation of budget, the main story is bound to be objective but a lot of interpretation is required to provide meanings to the reader and the main story may be accompanied by some more interpretative reports. Covering elections, discussions or negotiations between different secessionist or agitating groups in a society or country, crisis of international or inter-state nature etc. are the topics that will demand a treatment of interpretative reporting.

Why do we need interpretative reporting? Suppose – we all know that coalition governments have come to stay in the Indian context both at Central and State levels. Now, just before the general polls and immediately after it (on some occasions) most of the big and small political parties start negotiations with others for forming alliances. This has become a common practice and there is nothing wrong or new in it.

Again, even if they did not engage themselves in such discussions prior to the polls, it is most likely that they would do so in the aftermath of the polls to form a government.

During such times, the reporters, normally senior ones are usually given the task of observing the situation closely and then making forecasts and interpreting the developments about which way they might turn. Whether political party A will negotiate with party B or vice versa etc.

In case of international disputes, like the China-Tibet issue, Iraq war, US presidential polls etc., interpretative reporting would be required to capture the entire reality and to analyze the process that goes behind the happening of these events.

The interpretative reporting is a specialized kind of reporting and demand a lot of analytical skills and experience. It is the process of experience in dealing with public affairs that mediapersons gradually develop the expertise to interpret and analyze the facts. He or she must be able to judiciously apply experience, expertise, knowledge into newer developments and thereby come up with such interpretative reports.

Right here, a question is sure to arise. That is, we have kept on telling you that news reports must not carry opinions. So how can we allow interpretative reports to contain opinions? We all know that interpretative reports contain certain amount of opinion. This is necessary because mass media has also a role to create public opinion and generate debate on various issues in a democratic society.

Hence, at times, in a situation like the Assam agitation of the early 80's or the controversy on the nuclear deal or the problems faced by the society in a transition times, this sort of Interpretative news reports are necessary to enlighten the people on the issues covered.

Here is an example of an interpretative report. This report was published in the news portal ibnlive.com on June 27, 2008.

Cong-SP look for mutual benefits, set for alliance

Sumit Pande/ CNN-IBN

New Delhi: In what is rapidly developing as one of the biggest political crisis for the Congress-led UPA Government, there has been no breakthrough in the negotiations over the Indo-US Nuclear deal.

The Left parties have rejected last ditch attempts by the UPA to allow the deal to go through and a break up seems inveitable.

Preparing for it's separation plan with the Left, the Congress-led UPA Government is now on the lookout for new allies. And there are enough indications that the Congress' former adversary, Mulayam Singh Yadav is slowly drifting towards the UPA.

He is a product of the famous JP Movement against the imposition of Emergency. Thirty years after the Emergency, Samajwadi Party President Mulayam Singh Yadav was seen sharing a platform with others who had struggled against Emergency. He shared his experiences with the crowd, but conspicuously missing in his speech were the names of then prime minister, Indira Gandhi and the Congress party.

Unlike the other United National Progressive Alliance (UNPA) partners - like the Telegu Desam Party and the Asom Gana Parishad - the Samajwadi Party has not committed itself to the nuclear deal. Mulayam Singh is keeping his cards close to his chest and thereby keeping the Government on tenterhooks.

"The final draft is not yet ready. Let the Congress complete the draft. The UNPA will meet on July 3 to take a final decision on whether the we will be supporting the nuclear deal or not. Whatever decision will be taken, it will be taken keeping UNPA in mind not just Samajwadi Party," Mulayam Singh said.

Cornered by Mayawati in Uttar Pradesh, Mulayam Singh needs allies to take on the BSP in UP in the next general elections and for him, Congress, with Ajit Singh's RLD, could form a formidable combination againt Mayawati.

In return, the Congress could get support from the 39 SP Lok Sabha MPs to save the Government and the nuclear deal. The Samajwadi Party's 39 MPs could bail the Government out in Parliament in case the Left withdraws support.

UPA leader, Ram Vilas Paswan says that they would like to keep the Samajwadi as an option because in his words: "We don't want to lose wickets, but at the same time we want to score runs."

Meanwhile, Samajwadi Party General Secretary, Amar Singh, is returning from his trip to the US on Sunday. Next week, after the UNPA meet, Mulayam Singh is likely to announce his decision on the issue, perhaps, just before the Prime Minister's departure for the proposed G8 summit.

Investigative Reporting: As the name itself suggests this kind of reporting involve investigations. The investigative reporter is expected to dig deeply beyond the facts stated in the news. Investigative journalism is needed to uncover important stories which people want to hide. Investigative journalists need all the skills of general reporting and need to possess an alert mind to recognise story ideas and important facts which people are trying to hide. It demands an ordered mind to make notes, file information and fit lots of

facts together and a great amount of patience to keep digging for information. A reporter needs to have a wide network of credible and trustworthy contacts.

Investigative reporting demands extra care to back every bit of the report by hard facts and evidences. Do remember that you are going to expose corruption and misdeeds of those who are holding the seats of power. Do not speculate, you will have to follow the rule that you should not write any such things which you think might be true, but which you cannot prove by facts and evidences.

Investigative reporters must take special care when writing a story. This is because it is said that an investigative report must result into downfall of someone of influence and power. Baseless accusations can lead to legal action. If you are not able to present facts and evidences it might result in you and your organisation losing the legal battle. You will probably be safe if your story is true and in the public interest. But it can lose the protection of the law if there are serious errors.

Finally, you and your editor must decide whether the issue in hand is worth of taking the risk for carrying out the investigative reporting which the government or those occupying seats of power will not like and you may get into some kind of trouble. But journalists have often had to make such decisions. Some have paid the price with imprisonment or death. You must decide in each case whether the issue is worth the risk that you are taking and never forget that the key premise of such reporting is always the Public Interest.

A few examples of this type of reporting are – the Shares Scam of the 1990s involving the big time share broker Harshad Mehta, the findings of the Tehelka sting operation, the cash for questions deal of a few MPs etc. Let us discuss these cases in some detail.

- In case of the shares scandal, the reporter who exposed the scandal, was one day having a conversation with a regular source of news. There she got a hint that a few prominent share brokers were taking big amounts of money on loan from public sector banks and returning the money after buying shares of selected companies without paying interests actually to the banks. And in a few cases the brokers failed to return the money taken as a loan as the market has failed to give

them adequate returns.

Armed with this preliminary information, she delved into the matter further and finally came out with the biggest scandal to have happened to the Indian share market ever.

- In case of the Tehelka news item, it was common knowledge that bribes were paid in return for deals for the buying of arms and ammunition which were worth many hundreds and thousands of crores of rupees by the India government's Ministry of Defence. So, the reporters of Tehelka laid a trap by secretly capturing a discussion on such a deal and actually paying a big amount as bribe to several prominent political leaders. And it has really created a major hue and cry all over the country and the government itself could not actually come out with a clean image after this scam.

These above mentioned cases are examples of thorough investigative journalism. Now let us discuss the essential qualities of an investigative journalist. The qualities needed for this type of reporting are patience, courage, presence of mind, close observational capacity etc. on the part of the reporter. It may take a lot of time for him to complete the investigation, requiring to meet many people because it may take a lot of time to complete, requiring to meet many people for collection of information and data etc. Besides, except for one who is a reporter of a reputed newspaper/ magazine or TV channel, others may not have any legal back up if they runs into some problem of law-and-order while trying to find information regarding any such investigative reporting adventure.

Let me give you an example which has a very good scope for carrying out an investigative reporting. You probably know that all our MPs and MLAs are given crores of rupees by the central and state governments for taking up developmental works in their constituencies. But have you ever come across any detailed news items about how these large amounts of money are being spent. And if they are being spent who are the actual beneficiaries, how many of these are only in papers, no concrete things has been achieved etc. We do get a few reports in the media from time to time about a few MPs or MLAs taking up such projects but not in an exhaustive manner. This aspect offers a very suitable ground for an investigative reporting exercise.

There are endless such possibilities in the society. Similar exercises can be carried out also to identify and expose those involved in different types of scams, and many kinds of corruption.



CHECK YOUR PRGRESS – B

1. What are the three different types of reporting?
2. Define the following:
   a. Objective Reporting
   b. Interpretative Reporting
   c. Investigative Reporting



ACTIVITY – B

Read a state-level newspaper and closely watch a TV news channel for 15 days at a stretch. Find out and make a list of the Investigative and Interpretative Reports carried there.

5.5 REPORTING BEATS

A reporting beat is a specific area assigned to a reporter. Just before going to discuss Reporting Beats, let us have a look at something interesting in this regard. In the initial days of newspapers in the USA, most of them were published by the established political parties or their sympathizers and supporters. This was going on for quite a long time.

However, one clever editor of a specific newspaper one day found out that it was difficult to get enough news stories and sustain readers' interests in the journals if there were no interesting political activities going on. So he devised a rather innovative system. He made a provision for his reporters to make regular rounds of selected organizations, people etc. who had the potential of doing something which could be termed as news. For example – offices of political parties, their senior leaders, municipality offices, Sheriff's

office (the defender of the town or city), a hospital etc. This way the area assigned to a particular reporter became his or her Beat.

Following this practice in America, newspapers in general now assign specific areas to some journalists from where to file reports. There might be various beats ranging from the municipality office, police or law-and-order, hospitals, important ministries of the government, political parties, university or big college campuses, offices of associations of business or commercial establishments etc. A few common ones are - the government offices/ ministries, political parties , law-and-order/crime beat, fire brigade, office of the district deputy commissioner, the state secretariat, legislative assembly or Parliaments etc.

Further it is not that this is a fixed division and allocation of duties. One may have to look after more than one beat at times whenever it might be required. So, in simple words a 'reporting beat' is a specific area that is assigned to a reporter.

Beat reporters and their functions:

In this system of beat reporting in the initial period the reporter will make rounds of the beats allocated to him or her alone or maybe with a senior from the news organization to make themselves familiar with the sources – the personnel employed in them.

After sometime he or she will have made adequate connections with the news sources in those organizations. Reporters need to develop and cultivate their sources -quality of their reporting is largely dependent on the richness of their sources for exclusive information.

However, for smaller newspapers and magazine in small cities and semi urban areas, this may not be feasible where not many important happenings are taking place. And the news organizations can't afford to hire many people for the job. Again, the correspondents of even bigger news organisations working at district level have to report all kinds of events and we can say their beat is the district assigned to them rather than a specialised area.

It is a common practice that a news organizations, whether a newspaper or a TV or Radio channel, have a good number of reporters on their regular payroll who are to report on all the important events of local importance.

This is because invariably all readers or audiences of newspapers and TV or Radio are definitely much more interested in what is happening in and around their city, state, region rather than in the national and the international level. Hence the trend of localization of news is increasingly getting strengthened.

But at the same time there are events at national and international level that are of importance and the people are interested to know about them. Bigger news organisations have their own correspondents in important places and for rest of the coverage are depend on national and global news agencies. We can divide the reporting beats into the following main categories:

Crime Beat : From your personal life experience you must have found that the crime stories attract a lot of attention. Therefore crimes and law-and-order have been an important beat for a long time. This is also very important also from the point of view of readers' or audiences' interest. There are major established news organizations in metropolitan cities have relatively greater number of reporters assigned to the crime beat.

Culture Beat : We know that a news organization has to cater to the diverse interests of the people with different attitudes, tastes etc. So, culture is also one of the important beats. Major news organizations have reporters being assigned to the culture beat that includes drama, dance recitals, music and other programmes, review of films, art exhibitions etc. Some news organisations also outsource these functions – that is they get these written by someone from outside the organization such as the people who are well-reputed and have expertise for such reporting.

Political Beat: Politics has an overwhelming presence and influence on almost every walk of the life. In fact, politics has become a kind of nerve centre of our national life. Therefore politics is an important beat for any news organisation. Major news organisations assign quite a few correspondents or reporters on various political beats. In an age when coalition governments have become more of a norm, reporters in the political beat have to be always on their toes – alert – as anytime of the day or night there is a possibility of the alliance parties withdrawing or extending support from the government.

Economics Beat : Economics, finance and business are now taking central

stage of our national life. It has now become as equally important as the political beat if not more. Economic situation has a huge impact on the life of people of every walk of life. Look at the economic meltdown, the inflation or the deflation, hike in the prices of petroleum products- they have direct bearing on the life of people and get extensive converge in the news media.

These are only a few examples. Our life is too tightly tied up with the economic situation of our country as well as the world over. So this is a highly important beat.

Sports : We hardly need to say much about the interest of people in various sports and games at every level. Hence news organisations devote a good amount of their space for sports news coverage whether it is from the local, national or global arena. There are a good number of people among the readers and audiences of newspapers and channels who are more interested in sports news rather than the general news items.

In recent year fashion and life style journalism has expanded a lot and now this segment is also an important beat for some of the news organisations.

As already mentioned, these are a few examples just to give you the idea of what a beat is. There may be many more beats depending upon the specific news organization's interests, readers or audiences' profile, area of publication etc.



Check your progress - C

1. What is Reporting Beat ? Give examples.

5.6 IMPORTANCE OF BACKGROUND RESEARCH

You have seen that the preparation and presentation of a news, writing an article or a feature may seem to be simple enough from the readers' point of view but it calls for a lot of painstaking work for gathering and analysing the information.

When a journalist is assigned a specific task for reporting on an issue –

whether it is a natural disaster, a political event, an economic crisis, a social phenomenon etc. he or she has to go through a few steps. These include first of all the collection of adequate authentic information. In case of a major event it is necessary to ascertain whether similar events had occurred in the past; if yes, how frequently they had occurred. The reporter must try to know the cause of the event from various sources in order to give an authentic account of the same. In this connection background research is of vital importance particularly for a reporter to attend a press conference, or for conducting interview etc.

Let me give you an example. Once the head of a prominent public sector undertaking of the central government was making very rosy statement about his organization's achievements in a press conference. However, just at that point one journalist reminded him that the Central Government minister of that time responsible for this organization, has made very adverse remarks against the head and the bad image of the organization established at Guwahati. The journalist wanted to know what was being done in this regard. The head of the organization did not expect this question and was initially at a loss what to say. And just by asking the question the journalist could get some information that was more newsworthy that the claims that were being made. This was possible because the journalist was aware of the background information on the subject.

Hence, background research is a highly important component of the profession of journalism.



Check your progress - D

1. What is the significance of background research in mass media?

2.7 LET US SUM UP

1. In this unit you have been introduced to the exciting world of reporting and different types of reporting which will further equip you to carry out your job in a better way in future when you will join a news organisation. Reporting is simply the job of presenting a news after

developing a story idea, collecting all the relevant information and writing the news story in a journalistic style and language without any personal bias. There are quite a few types of reporting like Objective, Investigative and Interpretative which represent different styles and aspects of reporting. Reporting beats on the other hand mean the areas to which a reporter is assigned to report on. He or she would be entrusted with the task of reporting any happening in his or her beat. This helps a reporter to stay updated and also develop certain amount of specialization and also keep a watchful eye on all the events in the beat. Thus it reduces the chances of missing a story and also helps to develop and cultivate the sources. And background research is simply the ground work or study that we have to carry out before embarking on a reporting mission or an interview with someone or writing of a feature or any other kind of journalistic writings.

2. A journalist needs to develop certain qualities and traits for becoming successful in this field, such as, a nose for news, an analytical mind, patience, systematic approach, ability to carry out background research, ability to listen to people, a conscious mind, a clear and logical thinking ability etc.



2.8 FURTHER READINGS

1) **Handbook of journalism and mass communication** — *VB Agarwal + VB Gupta, (Concept)*

2) **Journalism** — *N Jayapalan, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.*

3) **Essentials of practical journalism** — *Vir Bala Agarwal, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi*



2.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

A

1)

a. A reporter is a person who gathers information from different fields and writes reports for publication in a newspaper, magazine, etc.

b. Reporting is presenting facts and figures about an event or a happening to the people through the mass media – maybe a newspaper, TV or Radio channel – after collecting adequate and authentic information, arranging them in proper order of importance and then adding the advantage of a good language. Though it looks quite simple yet it is a time-consuming, painstaking activity requiring lot of patience, presence of mind etc.

B

1) The three different types of reporting are – objective reporting, interpretative reporting and investigative reporting.

2)

a. Objective Reporting: the objective reporting is to report an event in an objective manner representing only the truth as he has seen it without adding any personal colour or bias to it.

b. Interpretative Reporting: This is the sort of reporting in which information is analyzed and interpreted about an event or a happening or a certain developing situation and then makes a forecast or interpretation or analyze the consequences based on those findings about how things might move along. For example – prior to and just after elections, a lot of assessments are made about who will form government in alliances or who will get ministerial berths etc.

c. Investigative Reporting: This type of reporting entails investigating into the depth of any event, phenomenon, trend etc. and finding out everything related to it or all the causes behind it to present them to the people through the mass media. A reporter may come to know about something fishy by chance or from his or her regular news sources. And then sets out to dig deep into it to emerge with the facts and evidences and expsoe the corruption or misdeeds of people of influence and power. For example – a reporter may find that a few families or persons have become highly rich leading an extravagant life without any visible source of income at all. The reporter then investigates into it discreetly and finds that the people are involved in some dishonest practices earning a lot of unaccounted money.

D

1) To become successful, a journalist must be always very objective and authentic in his facts and figures which he or she intends to present to the audiences through the newspaper or TV channel or Radio channel. Besides, a journalist must try one's best to report about an event, activity or happening with the minimum gap of time between its happening and presentation to the people.

2) While preparing a news report one must always make sure that the most important facts and figures are presented in the first half of the write up and other less important items in the lower half of the item. Besides, one must be extremely careful about the authenticity of the facts and figures presented in the news story so that no confusion or misleading situation is created on account of the news item.

C)

1) Reporting beat means a specific area or cell to which a reporter is assigned on a regular basis for reporting news of and from that area. It may be an organization, an individual, an institution, a political party, a ministry or government department etc. That reporter will devote the duty time only to that area and nothing else. This helps in specialization as well as getting to know their personal news sources much more closely.

D)

1) Background research means searching for information about a person (maybe a celebrity), an event, an activity or a happening etc. so that an interesting a complete news story with the right context or a feature can be written about the person or the event. When a reporter or a journalist is asked to conduct an interview with a celebrity and if this exercise is done adequately, then the interview can be made much more lively for the audiences and readers by including usually unknown interesting aspects of the life history of the person. Even for general entertainment programmes, it is always better to do adequate search of background information so that a better programme can be made for entertaining the audiences. This is background research.



2.10 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

1. What is Reporting?
2. What is Interpretative Reporting?
3. What is Investigative Reporting?
4. What do you understand by the term Reporting Beats? Why is it important in the field of journalism?
5. What is background research? Why is it important for mass media?