GJMC S2 01

JOURNALISM

JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

SEMESTER II

BLOCK - 1

KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY
Patgaon, Rani Gate, Guwahati – 781017

Subject Experts

1. Professor K.V. Nagaraj, Department of Mass Communication, Mizoram University
2. Professor Abhijit Bora, Head, Department of Mass Communication & Journalism, Tezpur University
3. Dr. Ankuran Dutta, Associate Professor & Head, Department of Communication & Journalism, Gauhati University
4. Dr. Kh. Kabi, Associate Professor & Head, Department of Mass Communication, Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh

Course Co-ordinators

Dr. Trisha Dowerah Baruah and Dr. Juri Hazarika, Bhupen Hazarika School of Mass Communication, KKHSOU

SLM Preparation Team

Units	Contributors
1, 2, 3, 6	Dr. Trisha Dowerah Baruah
4	Prof. Abhijit Bora
5, 7	Ms. Niharika Buragohain, Assistant Professor, Department of Mass Communication, Sikkim University & Dr. Trisha Dowerah Baruah

Editorial Team

Content (English Version)	:	Prof. Mrinal Chatterjee, Indian Institute of Mass Communication, Dhenkanal, Odhisha
Language (English Version)	:	Sawpon Dowerah, Academic Officer (Retd.), SEBA & presently, Rector, Icon Academy
Structure, Format & Graphics	:	Dr. Trisha Dowerah Baruah & Dr. Juri Hazarika, KKHSOU

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City Office : Housefed Complex, Dispur, Guwahati – 781006

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DETAILED SYLLABUS

JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

SEMESTER II

BLOCK – 1

JOURNALISM

Page No.

Unit – 1 : CONCEPT OF JOURNALISM **5-16**

Concept of journalism, Origin of journalism : The early years, Objectives of journalism, Role of journalism in society, Elements of journalism

Unit – 2 : THE MAKING OF A GOOD JOURNALIST **17-29**

Meaning of a 'journalist', What makes a good journalist?, Role and responsibilities of journalists, Rights of journalists

Unit – 3: TYPES OF JOURNALISM 30-48

Types of journalism- Types of journalism based on the use of different platforms, Types of journalism based on the writing style, Types of journalism based on the style of presentation, Journalism as a profession

Unit – 4 : ROLE OF JOURNALISM IN A DEMOCRACY **49-67**

Freedom of press, Embedded journalism, Press freedom at International level, Press freedom at National level, Press freedom at Regional level

Unit – 5: NEWS 68-79

Concept and definition of news, Sources of news, Objectivity and authenticity of news

Unit – 6 : TYPES OF NEWS **80-90**

Types of news, Principles of news stories, Qualities of a good news story

Unit – 7 : NEWS VALUES **91-101**

News values

COURSE INTRODUCTION

Journalism is the first course of the second semester programme of Journalism and Mass Communication. This course has been divided into two blocks, with first block containing seven units and the second block consisting of eight units. It will be your doorway to the exciting and challenging world of Journalism. There is a practical based unit in the second block whereby you have to conduct an interview of an eminent personality and submit a report on it (with a proper transcript). Marks will be awarded based on the originality and relevance of the report. Various concepts, themes and sub-themes have been discussed in a detailed and simple, comprehensive language so that you do not find any difficulty in understanding them. We expect you to gain a thorough and comprehensive idea about Journalism after completion of this course.

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

This is the first block of the course on 'Introduction to Mass Communication'. A brief over view of the seven units of the first block has been given below-

Unit – 1 : CONCEPT OF JOURNALISM

This is the first unit of the course on 'Journalism'. This unit gives an overview of the concept of journalism, its origin, objectives of journalism, role of journalism in society and the different elements of journalism

Unit – 2 : THE MAKING OF A GOOD JOURNALIST

'The making of a good journalist' is the second unit of the course on 'Journalism'. This unit will help you in understanding who a journalist is and discuss the role and responsibilities of journalists. This unit will also throw light on the rights of journalists.

Unit – 3 : TYPES OF JOURNALISM

This unit introduces you to the different types of journalism based on the use of different platforms, writing style and the style of presentation. It also discusses how journalism as a profession has come up in recent years.

Unit – 4 : ROLE OF JOURNALISM IN A DEMOCRACY

This unit describes the concept of the freedom of press at international level, national level and regional level. The unit also brings forth the concept of embedded journalism and the issue related to democracy, media and public sphere.

Unit – 5 : NEWS

This unit will provide you a definition of news, explain the different sources of news and discuss the objectivity and authenticity of news.

Unit – 6 : TYPES OF NEWS

This unit will discuss the different types of news, principles of news stories and the qualities of a good news story.

Unit – 7 : NEWS VALUES

This unit will analyse the different news values like timeliness, importance, conflict, proximity, prominence, impact or consequence, progress, disaster, human interest, currency, novelty, usefulness and educational value.

While going through this course, you will come across some along-side boxes, which are put on the left side or right side of the text. These boxes will explain you the meaning of some words and concepts within the text. Apart from this, there will be some broad and short questions which have been included under 'Activity' and 'Check Your Progress' in every unit. Activities will increase your thinking capacity because questions put under 'Activity' section are not directly derived from text. Answers to the short questions have been put under the section 'Answers to Check Your Progress'. Besides, a few text-related questions have been put under the section 'Model Questions'. These questions will help to draw your attention on the probable topics for the examination so that you can prepare for the examination with confidence.

UNIT 1: CONCEPT OF JOURNALISM

UNIT STRUCTURE

1.1 Learning Objectives
1.2 Introduction
1.3 Concept of Journalism
1.4 Origin of Journalism : The early years
1.5 Objectives of Journalism
1.6 Role of Journalism in society
1.7 Elements of Journalism
1.8 Let us Sum up
1.9 Further Reading
1.10 Answers to Check Your Progress
1.11 Model Questions

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to –

- understand the concept of Journalism
- trace the early history of Journalism
- state the objectives of Journalism
- define a journalist and state the qualities of a journalist

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This is the first unit of the paper on 'Journalism'. In the earlier paper we gave you an idea of the world of mass communication along with the different theories and models. In this unit, you will be able to get an idea of what journalism is all about. You will also be acquainted with the history of journalism in the early years as well as describe the different qualities of a journalist.

1.3 CONCEPT OF JOURNALISM

Journalism as a craft, a profession and even as a trade or business is said to be over two centuries old. It was made possible by the convergence of a number of technologies as well as several social, political and economic developments. Invention of the printing press and the growth of the Railways resulted in the development of large-scale printing and distribution of print material. As a craft, journalism entails specialization in one specific area like editorial, design or printing. For example, in case of reporters and sub-editors their body of work revolves around writing to a deadline, adhering to routines in the workplace while at the same time respecting the division of labour in the newsroom and the printing press.

As a profession, journalism in India till date does not need someone to have specialized educational qualification and training. There is no such bar to anyone entering the profession irrespective of one's educational background or professional experience. Moreover, journalism has no distinct body of knowledge that defines the profession and marks its relationship with its clients (readers, advertisers, advertising agencies, public relations officials etc.) Now the question that arises is : What is journalism? The words 'journalist', 'journal' and 'journalism' have been derived from the French 'journal' which in turn comes from the Latin term 'diurnalis' or 'daily'. The 'Acta Diurna', a handwritten bulletin that was put up daily in the Forum, the main public square in Rome some time in 59 B.C. can be considered to be the world's first newspaper. In due course of time, pamphlets, tracts, reviews, periodicals, news sheets and letters came to be known as 'newspapers'. People who were responsible for writing them were known as 'news writers' or 'essayists', 'scribes' and later journalists. The Mughal Rulers in India made use of 'vaquia-navis' and 'confianavis' as public and secret news-writers to record once a week in a 'vaquia' (a sort of gazette or mercury) the main events of importance in the empire. These news letters were read out to the king every evening by the women of the court.

Ever since then, journalism has come a long way. Journalism is thus, concerned with the collection and dissemination of news through the print media as well as the electronic media. According to Webster's Third International Dictionary, journalism means 'the collection and editing of

material of current interest for presentation, publication or broadcast'. This involves different areas of work like reporting, writing, editing, photographing or broadcasting news items. On the basis of the use of media, it is generally classified into two – print and electronic journalism. Print journalism includes newspapers, magazines and journals. Electronic journalism includes working for radio, television and the web. Thus, journalism means the communication of information regarding the events of the day through written words, sounds or pictures. The purpose of journalism is to inform and interpret, educate and enlighten. The person who writes for or conducts a newspaper or a magazine is known as a journalist.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1: Define journalism.

_____

_____

Q.2: Which is considered to be the world's first newspaper?

_____

_____

1.4 ORIGIN OF JOURNALISM: THE EARLY YEARS

The early history of journalism is related to the development of the printing press. The Chinese were credited for the invention of the art of printing who used movable types for the printing press. They were also the first people to manufacture paper and print the first book in 868 AD. Gradually the knowledge of the art of printing spread to the West. The Chinese had developed the movable types between 9th and 10th centuries. But it was not until the 14th century that the movable type was introduced in Europe. In the 15th century, Johannes Gutenberg, a goldsmith from Mainz, Germany developed the movable type printing press. He also invented a suitable ink for the metal type which replaced wooden blocks. In 1456, Gutenberg printed nearly 300 copies of the Bible. Gradually the printing presses were established in different countries of the world. In 1476, Caxton, England's first printer who had learnt the art of printing in Cologne set up a press in

Westminster. He also printed books in English language which previously used to be printed in Latin.

In the ancient and early medieval times, bulletins, news pamphlets and other propaganda materials used to be pasted on the walls. Very often the royal proclamations or edicts were also pasted on the walls or inscribed on the stones. The kings used to get written reports from their agents. Newsletters used to be send by writers to persons who used to reside far away from the capital. In India such type of news writing was prevalent during the Mughal regime.

In the middle of the 16th century, the morning newspaper took shape. The trading houses published news-books and then newsletters. Usually these newsbooks contained news of political and economic interest. In 1560, serial numbered news-sheets started to appear in some towns of Germany and Switzerland. In 1609 two news-sheets, viz. Avisa from Germany and Relations from Strasbourg started publishing regularly. By 1618 weekly newspapers started and were soon published in other languages like English, French, Dutch and German from Amsterdam in Holland. By 1621, a single news-sheet called a Coranto was published in English. America's first newspaper, 'Publick Occurrences Both Forreign and Domestick' was started on 20th September, 1660 in Boston under publisher Benjamin Harrison. But this newspaper was soon forced to cease publication for offending authorities. By 1660, weekly publication of news-sheets had been well established in the UK. In 1665, Oxford Gazette which later on became London Gazette made its appearance. However the first daily newspaper, 'The Daily Courant' made its appearance in England only in 1720. While numerous newspapers were organs of the Federalist or Republican political parties, few attempted to appeal to the average person. The first daily newspaper, 'The Pennsylvania Evening Post' started in May 1783 lasted a month followed by some other newspapers like 'The Pennsylvania Packet' and 'Daily Advertiser', the 'New York Morning Post' and the 'New York Daily Advertiser'.

Very soon newspapers started making their presence felt in different countries of the world including India. Though the printing press was introduced in India in 1556 AD in Goa, the first newspaper was printed in 1780 in Calcutta (now Kolkata) The credit for bringing out the first newspaper in India goes to James Augustus Hickey, an Irishman who started the 'Bengal Gazette or Calcutta General Advertiser at Kolkata on 29 January 1780. This

two sheet newspaper specialized in the exposure of the stories regarding the private lives of the servants of the East India Company. Messink and Reed started the second newspaper entitled'India Gazette'. Very soon other newspapers followed suit. Calcutta Gazette (1784), Madras Courier (1785), Bombay Herald (1789) were some of the English newspapers that had a wide readership in India. We shall discuss the history of the Indian press in detail in the third course of the BA programme in the paper "History of Media'.

The period 1880-1920 was marked by the industrialization of the press. Industrial growth coupled with an improved printing technology and widespread public education combined for the development of some of the major newspapers of the world especially in the US. During this period Joseph Pulitzer laid the foundation of 'New York World' which featured illustrations and make-up that were quite similar to newspapers in the 1970s. At the same time, William Randolph Hearst, a young Harvard student and scion of a wealthy California mine and ranch tycoon, purchased the New York Journal in order to compete with Pulitzer in the nation's biggest market. Along with the development of large newspapers, there was also a growth in the wire services in different parts of the world. Some of the important news agencies were Havas (1832), Agence France Presse (1835), Associated Press (1848) and Reuters (1851).

Post Second World War, the growth in the development of electronic media specially radio and television was at its peak. Television in experimental stages since the 1920s became commercially available in 1948 and by the mid 1950s most of the homes in the US boasted of a television set. With the development of more and more sophisticated techniques of printing, newspapers were published in large numbers in the shortest possible time. In India, radio made its entry in the 1920s and television in 1959.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.3: Who developed the movable type printing press?

_____

_____

Q.4: What kind of stories were covered in the Bengal Gazette ?

_____

_____

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF JOURNALISM

The main purpose of journalism is to provide citizens with accurate and reliable information they need to function in a free society. This encompasses myriad roles- helping define community, creating a common medium of language and common knowledge, identifying the goals of community, serving as a watchdog of the society and lending a voice to the voiceless.

Journalists, over the years, have developed nine core principles which can be categorized as the main objectives of journalism. These have been illustrated below :-

a. ***Informed Citizenry :*** The primary purpose of journalism is to ensure a well-informed citizenary for our social and political structure. A well informed citizen will result in a more democratic society. Different media seeks to inform the people about the events that take place every day in different parts of the world. Now, news can be of two types-hard and soft news. Hard news is based on facts and revolves around issues like theft, arson, accidents, murder etc. Soft news basically consists of human interest stories which tug at the emotional strings of human beings.

b. ***Informed media :*** Another important objective of media is to provide knowledge about all aspects of media. It speaks about new developments in the field of technology and hones writing skills that produce publications for real audience.

c. ***Educate the masses :*** Apart from informing the general public, media also has a unique role of educating the readers or listeners. It is usually seen that print media, especially newspapers carry a series of articles by eminent writers every week which focuses on different subjects. Such write-ups not only provide a wide array of information to the people, but it also helps them to understand the problem or issue from the viewpoint of the writer. Editorials are also another medium which go a long way in educating the readers on current subjects. Letters to editors also provide food for thought. Likewise, electronic media also organizes certain programmes like panel discussion to draw the attention of the viewers towards current issues.There are brain storming sessions in which experts

communicate with the special audience invited by the news channels. Public Broadcasting services like AIR and Doordarshan broadcast educational programmes for the benefit of the listeners and viewers.

d. ***Provide entertainment to the masses :*** Print and electronic media have another important objective, that of providing entertainment to the people. Newspapers for instance publish certain articles which are meant to entertain the readers. Most of the newspapers even have certain cartoons which are drawn by renowned cartoonists on satirical issues. Radio entertains its readers by way of broadcasting songs and skits while television provides entertainment to its viewers by providing serials, music channels and other travel and living channels.

e. ***Focus on writing/reading on people's issues :*** Journalism lays emphasis on bringing out issues inherent in the society and bearing relevance to the problems faced by the masses.

f. ***Promotion of multi-perspective approach :*** Journalism tries to promote values and ideology of the profession with a purpose to project a multi-perspective approach. It informs citizens about the country's political diversity, the politically relevant activities and ideas of their fellow citizens. In order to achieve this objective to the fullest extent, journalists need to be multiperspectival, i.e., they need to encompass all the important viewpoints from people with different values, interests and income.

1.6 ROLE OF JOURNALISM IN SOCIETY

Journalism is often said to be the fourth estate of democracy. In a democratic set-up there are three important organs of a government. They are the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary. These three are known as the three pillars of democracy. The fourth pillar is the Free Press which works as a watch dog for the government. It alerts the makers and executers of laws and educates the public about these laws. If any of the democratic pillars are weak, then the entire structure will collapse. So, it is necessary that all the four pillars remain strong and vibrant.

Journalism plays a prominent role in the society. As modern journalism took its shape in the later part of the 1920s, writer Walter Lippmann and American philosopher John Dewey put forward their own views on the role of journalism in the society. Their differing philosophies still characterize a debate about the role journalism plays in the society.

Lippmann was of the view that journalism acted as a mediator or translator between the public and policy-making elites. Journalists used to listen to the lectures delivered by the elites, record it and then pass it on to the public for their consumption. The main reason behind this was that the public were not in a position to interpret the growing and complex flurry of information present in the society. As such, there emerged the services of an intermediary to filter the news. Moreover, the general public were too preoccupied with their daily lives leaving them less or no time at all to debate and deliberate on issues concerning public policy. According to Lippmann, the journalists played a very important role-that of informing the public about the activities of the elites who in turn would affect the decision making of the elite with their vote.

On the other hand, Dewey believed that the public were not only capable of understanding the issues that were created by the elite, but decisions must also be made in the public forum after discussion and debate. The main advantage of such discussions is that it would bring forth the best ideas out in the public forum. Unlike Lippmann, the role of the journalist in case of Dewey is slightly different. He believed that journalists should take in the information, then weigh the consequences of the policies being enacted by the elites on the public. This idea is most commonly reflected in a new area of journalism known as 'community journalism'. In this form of journalism, journalists are able to engage citizens and the experts in the proposition and generation of content. Dewey's idea stems from the fact that shared knowledge has a wider appeal in comparison to a single individual's knowledge. In other words, Dewey thought that debates and discussions lie at the heart of democracy whereby the journalists serve as watchdogs of the government and other businesses, enabling people to make informed decisions on the issues of the time.

Thus, summing up, journalism is that specific area which makes use of different forms of media to influence and control the society, to express values, to work as an arena, to create benchmarks and to act as popular

tools for the purpose of entertainment. Media are the primary modes of transmission as well as the sources of all sets of information. They produce and disseminate such information as, is required by most of the institutions in the social sphere. The idea of working as an arena was highlighted by McQuail who said that media is an arena where public affairs are handled and executed at the national and international level. The dynamic cultures and values of societies are made , stored and expressed through the medium of media. Media also have high entertainment value because of their dependence on electronic communication technologies and gadgets.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.5: What is the main purpose of journalism?

_____

_____

Q.6: Which is known as the fourth estate of democracy?

_____

_____

1.7 ELEMENTS OF JOURNALISM

According to Bill Kovach and Tom Rosensteil, there are nine elements of journalism as outlined in their book, 'Elements of Journalism'. In order for journalists to fulfill their duty of providing the people with the information they need to be free and self-governing, they must follow the following guidelines-

- ❖ Journalism's first obligation is to tell the truth
- ❖ Its first loyalty is to the citizens
- ❖ Its essence is discipline of verification
- ❖ Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover
- ❖ It must serve as an independent monitor of power
- ❖ It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise
- ❖ It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant
- ❖ It must keep the news comprehensive and proportional
- ❖ Its practitioners must be allowed to exercise their personal conscience



1.8 LET US SUM UP

A careful analysis of this unit will bring to fore the following points-

- The words 'journalist', 'journal' and 'journalism' have been derived from the French 'journal' which in turn comes from the Latin term 'diurnalis' or 'daily'.
- The 'Acta Diurna', a handwritten bulletin that was put up daily in the Forum, the main public square in Rome can be considered to be the world's first newspaper.
- The Mughal Rulers in India made use of 'vaquia-navis' and 'confianavis' as public and secret news-writers to record once a week in a 'vaquia' (a sort of gazette or mercury) the main events of importance in the empire. These news letters were read out to the king every evening by the women of the court.
- Journalism is concerned with the collection and dissemination of news through the print media as well as the electronic media.
- The history of journalism is related to the developments of printing press.
- In the 15th century, Johannes Gutenberg, a goldsmith from Mainz, Germany developed the movable type printing press. He also invented a suitable ink for the metal type which replaced wooden blocks.
- In 1609 two news-sheets, viz. Avisa from Germany and Relations from Strasbourg started publishing regularly.
- America's first newspaper, 'Publick Occurrences Both Forreign and Domestick' was started on 20th September, 1660 in Boston under publisher Benjamin Harrison.
- The first daily newspaper, The Daily Courant made its appearance in England only in 1720.
- The credit for bringing out the first newspaper in India goes to James Augustus Hickey, an Englishman. He started the first English newspaper 'Bengal Gazette or Calcutta General Advertiser at Kolkata in 1780.
- The main purpose of journalism is to provide citizens with accurate and reliable information they need to function in a free society. This encompasses myriad roles- helping define community, creating a common medium of language and common knowledge, identifying the goals of community, serving as a watchdog of the society and lending a voice to the voiceless.

- Journalism is often said to be the fourth estate of democracy.



1.9 FURTHER READING

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1.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No 1 : Journalism is concerned with the collection and dissemination of news through the print media as well as the electronic media. According to Webster's Third International Dictionary, journalism means 'the collection and editing of material of current interest for presentation, publication or broadcast'. This involves different areas of work like reporting, writing, editing, photographing or broadcasting news items.

Ans to Q. No 2 : The 'Acta Diurna', a handwritten bulletin that was put up daily in the Forum, the main public square in Rome can be considered to be the world's first newspaper

Ans to Q. No 3 : In the 15th century, Johannes Gutenberg, a goldsmith from Mainz, Germany developed the movable type printing press.

Ans to Q. No 4 : The Bengal Gazette consisted of two sheets only and it specialized in the exposure of the stories regarding the private lives of the servants of the East India Company.

Ans to Q. No 5 : The main purpose of journalism is to provide citizens with accurate and reliable information they need to function in a free society.

This encompasses myriad roles- helping define community, creating a common medium of language and common knowledge, identifying the goals of community, serving as a watch-dog of the society and lending a voice to the voiceless.

Ans to Q. No 6 : Free Press



1.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions

Q.1 : What do you mean by journalism?

Q.2 : What are the different types of journalism based on use of media?

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

Q.1: What is the role of journalism in the society? What views have been espoused by Lippmann and Dewey in this regard?

Q.2: What are the elements of journalism?

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

Q.1 : Trace the early years in the history of journalism.

Q.2 : Has the growth of print journalism being shadowed by the rise in electronic media? Justify your answer with the help of examples.

Q.3 : What are the basic objectives of journalism? What role does it play in a democratic country like India?

* * * * *

UNIT 2 : THE MAKING OF A GOOD JOURNALIST

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 Learning Objectives
2.2 Introduction
2.3 Meaning of a 'Journalist'
2.4 What makes a Good Journalist?
2.5 Role and responsibilities of Journalists
2.6 Rights of Journalists
2.7 Let us Sum up
2.8 Further Reading
2.9 Answers to Check Your Progress
2.10 Model Questions

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- define who a journalist is
- discuss the role and responsibilities of a journalist
- analyse the rights of journalists

2.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, we discussed the concept of journalism, its objectives and role in the society. In this unit, we shall discuss the roles and responsibilities of a journalist, as well as analyse the rights of journalists.

2.3. MEANING OF A JOURNALIST

A question that often comes to our mind is who is a journalist? A journalist is someone who mainly performs two functions- reporting of news

and offering interpretation and opinion based on the news. A journalist may also write an account that is both entertaining and newsworthy. In fact, a journalist is a person who practices journalism, the gathering and dissemination of information about current events, trends, issues and people. Depending on the context, the term journalist also includes reporters, photographers, and editors.

Irrespective of the medium, the term journalist carries a connotation of expectation of professionalism in reporting with consideration for truth, fairness, balance, decency and ethics even though standards can vary from organization to organization. The explosion of modern media has given rise to a new bunch of journalists who are not only well adept in their own fields but are also able to multi-task. A journalist is considered to be a collator and disseminator of information. He or she has to gather facts about any story, decide which of those to include in the story and which to omit, how to structure the story and what are the proper words that must be used to prepare a report.

The journalistic writing is a contemporary report of the changing scene in the society. Such form of writing is basically intended to inform the readers about the events that are taking place around them. Some journalistic writings can create a big impact in the society by focusing on issues of national or local importance. Some of the reports on communal riots, rising prices or deteriorating crime situation can build up public opinion leading to debates and discussion.

A journalist enjoys the stimulation of being close to events and the knowledge that his/her efforts can help in shaping the future of a country. In a way the journalist is communicating the developments of the day to an audience whose lives have been affected by the events which he or she discusses in his/her dispatches. Television and radio journalist communicates the news of the contemporary events with the help of electronic devices.

At present, journalism has become a highly organized activity. It is a dynamic profession which moves with the times. These days a journalist needs to multi-task. He or she has to have the technical knowledge of writing and editing using different software on computer. He/she also needs to know how to operate a camera, record an event, edit the footages using simple software tools; and also how to send it through Internet. A journalist must

have the ability to convey the news and views to the public in a clear and concise language.

Thus, journalists are seen as people who not only bring the world's happenings to the people but also as professionals who can delve into issues and events and put them in perspective for the readers.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1 : Who is a journalist?

_____

_____

2.4 WHAT MAKES A GOOD JOURNALIST?

A good education, good health, considerable patience and determination– these are the essential attributes that are shared by journalism with other professions. Apart from possessing these endowments, a journalist must have that instinct of discreet value for information, which we commonly express as a 'nose for news'. A good journalist must also be able to estimate the comparative value of news. A capable journalist will know how to apportion to each item of news in a newspaper the right prominence and length without allowing his or her own feelings and interest to run away with him or her.

An important role of a journalist in a democracy is to act as a buffer between the government and the public. It is a two-way channel. The reporter can explain government decisions and actions to the public and pass the public view back to the government. As such, a journalist needs to cultivate certain qualities in order to make a mark for himself/herself in the world of journalism.

The personal attributes that are usually associated with journalists can be likened to aptitude tests since they are indicators of abilities that can be developed and refined through classroom studies and at work in the journalistic field. Let us look at some of the specific qualities that make a good journalist -

a. **Curiosity**

A reporter or an editor must always have an inquisitive bent of mind which would go a long way in reporting on different issues. The person

who instinctively keeps on asking questions and wondering why things are happening has an attribute that is vital for daily life use in the field of journalism. Scepticism, positively questioning things, should never be mistaken for cynicism or negative distrust and disbelief even in realities. A good journalist while unearthing facts will be able to answer the questions or doubts that are raised by the reader's subconscious curiosity.

b. **A sense of fairness and responsibility**

A journalist is that person who can view the various sides of a question and present the facts with fairness and responsibility. A journalist must not be swayed by biases and must have the capability to be fair while on the job.

c. **Team spirit**

Journalists are required to work in a team in media organizations. Therefore a good journalist needs to be a team player. It means that each staff member of any media organization diligently performs his or her assignments with the skill that he/she commands, and also helps fellow workers.

d. **Courageous**

Journalists need to be courageous in certain situations. This is especially true in case of disaster and conflict reporting. Very often reporters are sent to disaster ravaged or conflict affected places to give a first-hand account of the ground situation. Under such situations, the reporters must be strong both physically and mentally and report the events in the face of difficulty. Every year, many reporters and other media assistants (drivers, translators, technicians,etc.) are killed world wide while doing their job or for the stories they wrote. Many of you might be aware of Daniel Pearl who used to work with Wall Street Journal. He was kidnapped and later murdered by terrorists in January 2002 when he was in Pakistan investigating the case of Richard Reid, the shoe bomber, and alleged links between Al Qaeda and Pakistani Intelligence agency ISI. He was on his way to interview a radical Islamic leader Mubarak Ali Shah Gilani when he was kidnapped.

e. **Interest**

A successful journalist is one who has an interest in the work culture. He or she must also have a knack for keeping abreast with news. This

would enable the journalist to learn what the field is all about and develop the skills that are necessary especially in the writing and editing of news. It would also help the journalists to be adept in page make-up, writing an eye catching headline and proper usage of pictures.

f. **Creative**

A journalist is also expected to be creative while using language in an original manner or thinking of new ways of manipulating pictures and sounds. It can also mean finding creative ways of covering stories.

g. **Perseverance**

A good journalist needs to have perseverance in order to be successful in the field of journalism. Without perseverance, a news journalist will never uncover anything but the most run-of –the-mill stories. A journalist will be able to prepare a valid news report only if he or she makes an effort to unearth the facts of the story.

h. **Sense of empathy**

Journalists must be able to go, almost instinctively, much further and have understanding of other people's aspirations, fears, hopes, needs and feelings. Even when they are on field reporting for different news and views, they must respect other people's feelings and must not report on any such item that might incite the feelings of the common man.

i. **Ability to explain ideas**

The journalist whose curious mind seeks more information must also be able to explain concepts clearly and concisely to his/her audience. The journalist sometimes acts as a translator who takes difficult and sometimes even abstract ideas to explain in a lucid manner to the readers.

j. **Objectivity**

A good journalist leaves personal views and prejudices at the newsroom door. The reporter's duty to society is to inform and not to impose on the readers or viewers his/her opinion.

k. **An aptitude for spelling and punctuation**

It is pretty obvious that words are the journalist's tools. Whatever medium the journalist may use , he/she needs to be able to express ideas and information in writing. So, a grammatically correct, simple and lucid writing style is a basic requirement. A good journalist must

be able to enjoy and understand the language in which he or she writes a story. Knowledge of basic punctuation and the wisdom to consult a dictionary whenever in doubt are essentials for the journalist.

l. **Competitive**

Journalists need to be competitive in order to excel in the fast paced life of news gathering and reporting.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.2 : Why is a journalist required to be a team player in order to succeed in the profession?

_____

_____

Q.3 : Do journalists need to have a sense of empathy while reporting?

_____

_____

2.5 ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF JOURNALISTS

A journalist has to shoulder a great deal of responsibility in the field of journalism and also has a specific role to perform. Let us first analyse the role of the journalists under the following points-

a. **To make people aware of the contemporary world :**

An important role of the journalists is to make people aware of the current and latest news and issues. They try to inform the people about the current political, economic and social trends. The journalists write on such issues and through their reports and writings, they enlighten the society.

b. **To inform and educate :**

Journalists cover a wide range of topics ranging from economy, science, global polity to health and technology. They not only write as a part of their professional duty but in a way they inform and educate those

readers and viewers who are keen to learn more about such topics and events. These days, print, electronic and the rapidly expanding online media cover a wide range of topics which help people in acquiring knowledge and information in different fields. The specialty of online media is that the news is required to be updated in this medium almost in real time, as the event is happening.

c. **To entertain the masses :**

Journalists who work in the fields of cinema, music and other areas of entertainment report on such issues. It would be wrong to say that people are not interested to know about the private lives of the celebrities and the usual gossip associated with such reports. The journalists who report such events also need to have an idea about the working of the entertainment and media industry. It is worth mentioning here that television journalists are more well equipped to handle such issues in the sense that their cameramen cover the events without much hassles. Moreover the availability of a number of online sources have made it quite easy for the readers and viewers to view the content online.

d. **To enable people to make right opinions and decisions :**

Sometimes people tend to be carried away by the emotional content of any news. Journalists help people in making their own but right opinions. Print media journalists as well as television journalists keep in touch with their audiences through the different communication channels. They enquire about the burning topics which are then addressed by them in the form of articles, chat shows and other programmes. The audiences are asked to send their responses to typical subject specific topics that are being discussed. Their responses pour into the television studio or editorial office of print media organization through SMS messages, fax messages, telephone calls and letters. In a way, the media organizations involved the masses in the process of news making. Journalists also inform people what their governments are doing for them and make them aware of their rights and duties. They, in fact, educate the people to fight against exploitation and social discrimination.

e. **To sensitize the people about burning issues :**

Journalists inform the people about the burning topics that have been gaining grounds worldwide. They, by virtue of their knowledge about polity and society can guide the masses through their messages and

content in the form of editorials, guest columns, routine columns and features in newspapers and magazines. For example, Tavleen Singh has been writing about issues of national importance in India Today magazine. As far as electronic media is concerned, 'Apni Baat' (DD) and 'We the People' (NDTV) are some of the popular programmes to address some important issues involving the common people.

Journalists also have to shoulder a lot of responsibilities in discharging their duties. Let us analyse the responsibilities of the journalists under the following points-

a. **Responsibility towards the firm/organisation**

Journalists who work for the private and public sector firms are responsible to their respective firms and organizations. They are bound by contract to not disclose any information or news to the competitors of their firms in exchange of money or other materialistic assets. Loyalty towards one's organization will determine a journalists' success in that particular organization.

b. **News gathering**

One of the important responsibilities of a journalist is collection of news or data. And for the purpose, the journalists should rely on primary data and not necessarily on secondary data. As far as the primary data is concerned, the journalist must make an effort to collect the data personally by using his/her judgement and an inquisitive bent of mind.

c. **Accurate processing of data**

Journalists must have the capability to accurately and correctly process the requisite data needed for preparing news reports. For example, during the time of elections, a journalist must possess basic mathematical/statistical skills to collect accurate figures. Moreover, he or she must be able to interpret the data and prepare a detailed report on it. If need be he or she must be able to talk to business honchos and politicians in order to unearth any relevant data or information. While covering live events, they must be able to collect and analyse data at high speed.

d. **Skills in handling equipments**

The journalist must be a 'Jack of all trades'. He or she is responsible for handling and operating the electronic equipments under his/her

control. As has already been discussed before, a journalist must know how to operate cameras, laptop, sound recorder etc. which are commonly used for recording news and events. This is specially useful for the news personnel employed in electronic media organizations. Most of the devices that are used nowadays are based on digital technologies. As such, journalists are required to be well versed with such technologies and must know how to store and maintain digital memory cards, DATs, CD-ROMs, mini disks, batteries etc.

e. **Leading a team of co-workers**

A journalist must also be able to lead a team of investigators, cameramen and junior reporters while undergoing reporting or covering any event. He or she must lead from the front and must not back out in case of crisis situations. However, this does not mean that a journalist must try to act like a boss and keep them under his thumb. But in reality, a journalist is expected to minimize friction among those who are under him and also those with whom he/she is working in close association. The efforts of the team should always be directed towards one goal, that is, collection of data or gathering of news that the team is going to cover.

f. **Respect for all**

It is the responsibility of the journalist to not to dispatch false or coloured messages or news which might incite anger in the minds of the common masses. In fact, one must not play with the sentiments of any community and should not object to the living norms or styles of the people being scrutinized by him/her. Instead there must be mutual respect for different castes and communities and that must be reflected in the news reports.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.4 : Journalists also have an important esponsibility towards the media organization in which they work. What does it mean?

_____

_____

2.6 RIGHTS OF JOURNALISTS

Different governments in different countries have varying policies and practices towards journalists, which control what they can research, write and publish.Some of the Western governments do relatively little to restrict press rights and freedoms while other nations have strict restrictions in place regarding the freedom of the press. Journalists in many nations have enjoyed some privileges which are otherwise not enjoyed by members of the general public, including better access to public events, crime scenes and press conferences. Journalists can avail of such privileges because of the perceived power of the press to turn public opinion for or against governments, their officials and policies. In some nations, journalists are directly employed, controlled or censored by their governments. In other nations, governments who often claim to guarantee press rights actually intimidate journalists with threats of arrest, destruction or seizure of property, torture or murder. Journalists who are engaged in conflict reporting and cover conflict areas often give up any expectation of protection by government. Here we shall discuss the rights of journalists in the context of three areas as given below-

Rights of Journalists Vs those of Private Citizens and Organisations :

Just like private citizens, journalists too are entitled to similar powers and privileges. However, this power is limited by the citizens' right to privacy. The right to privacy of a private citizen may be reduced or lost if the citizen is thrust into the public eye either by their own actions or because they are involved in a public event. Very often journalists are also at the receiving end of the citizens whenever lawsuits are filed against the journalists for publishing damaging untruths about them with malicious disregard for the truth. Libel or defamation lawsuits can sometimes become topic of conflicts between the journalists' rights to publish versus the citizen's right to privacy. Some of the journalists are of the opinion that such lawsuits that are brought against them or against news organizations are meant to stifle their voices with the threat of further expensive legal proceedings even if plaintiffs cannot prove their cases. This is commonly referred to as Chilling effect.

***Right to Protect Confidentiality of Sources* :**

Very often journalists have to protect the confidentiality of the news

sources. This is basically done to keep the identity of the sources under wraps for fear of being exposed to danger (to life). This comes under an extension of the freedom of the press giving journalists a legal protection to keep the identity of the source private even when demanded by police or prosecutors. This is because withholding of sources can land journalists in contempt of court or in jail.

This scope of rights granted to journalists varies from country to country. For example, in the United Kingdom, the government has more legal rights to protect what it considers sensitive information, and to force journalists to reveal the sources of leaked information than the United States.

Right of access to government information :

Journalists also depend on the rights granted by the government to the public and, by extension, to the press, for access to information held by the government. These rights also vary from nation to nation and in the United States from state to state. Some states have more open policies for making information available and some states have acted in the last decade to broaden those rights.

We shall discuss in detail the ethical aspects related to the field of journalism in the paper 'Media Laws & Ethics' in the fourth semester of the BA in Journalism and Mass Communication.



2.7 LET US SUM UP

- A journalist is someone who mainly performs two functions- reporting of news and offering interpretation and opinion based on the news.
- The term journalist carries a connotation of expectation of professionalism in reporting with consideration for truth, fairness, balance, decency and ethics even though standards can vary from organization to organization.
- A good education, good health, considerable patience and determination – these are the essential attributes that are shared by journalism with other professions.
- A good journalist must also be able to estimate the comparative value of news. A capable journalist will know how to apportion to each item of news in a newspaper the right prominence and length without allowing

his or her own feelings and interest to run away with him or her.

- An important role of a journalist in a democracy is to act as a buffer between the government and the public.
- Just like private citizens, journalists too are entitled to similar powers and privileges.
- Journalists in many nations have enjoyed some privileges which are otherwise not enjoyed by members of the general public, including better access to public events, crime scenes and press conferences. Journalists can avail of such privileges because of the perceived power of the press to turn public opinion for or against governments, their officials and policies.



2.8 FURTHER READING

1. Aggarwal, Vir Bala, Gupta V.S. (2002) Handbook of Journalism and Mass Communication. New Delhi : Concept Publishing Company
2. Chaudhary, J.C (2007) Introduction to Journalism and Mass Communication. New Delhi : Authors Press
3. Menon, P.K (2005) Practical Journalism. Jaipur : Aavishkar Publishers, Distributors
4. Pant, N.C (2002) Modern Journalism, Principles and Practice. New Delhi : Kanishka Publishers & Distributors
5. Harcup, Tony (2007) Journalism, Principles and Practice. New Delhi : Vistaar Publications



2.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 : A journalist is someone who mainly performs two functions- reporting of news and offering interpretation and opinion based on the news. The term 'journalist' includes the reporters, writers and columnists who work for newspapers, news agencies, news magazines and other magazines that are devoted largely to public affairs.

Ans to Q. No. 2 : Journalists must work together on a newspaper or any other news medium .While working in a team , they give the audience news of many dimensions and prospective. Team player means that each staff

member of any media organization diligently performs his or her assignments and skill and also provide the necessary expertise and help to their fellow workers. In fact, they must report about their daily activities to their seniors and keep them abreast of the latest developments.

Ans to Q. No. 3 : Journalists must be able to go , almost instinctively, much further and have understanding of other people's aspirations, fears, hopes, needs and feelings. Even when they are on field reporting for different news and views , they must respect other people's feelings and must not report on any such item that might incite the feelings of the common man.

Ans to Q. No. 4 : Journalists who work for the private and public sector firms are responsible to their respective firms and organizations. They are bound by contract to not disclose any information or news to the competitors of their firms in exchange of money or other materialistic assets. Loyalty towards one's organization will determine a journalists' success in that particular organization.



2.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions

Q.1 : Does one need to have proper training to be a journalist? Why?

Q.2 : Who is a journalist? What are the qualities of a good journalist?

Q.3 : Do the journalists maintain objectivity while reporting news? Explain.

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

Q.1 : What role does a journalist play in the society?

Q.2 : What do you mean by rights of journalists? Are their rights same as those of the private citizens?

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

Q.1 : What are the personal attributes that are usually associated with journalists?

Q.2 : What are the roles and responsibilities of a journalist?

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UNIT 3 : TYPES OF JOURNALISM

3.1 Learning Objectives
3.2 Introduction
3.3 Types of Journalism
    3.3.1 Types of Journalism based on the use of different platforms
    3.3.2 Types of Journalism based on the writing style
    3.3.3 Types of Journalism based on the style of presentation
3.4 Journalism as a profession
3.5 Let us Sum up
3.6 Further Reading
3.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
3.8 Model Questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- understand the different types of Journalism
- study some of the specialized branches of Journalism
- analyse the different fields of Journalism

3.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, you have learnt about who a journalist is and what are the essential attributes that makes a good journalist. By now, you must have gained some knowledge on what are the roles and responsibilities of a journalist along with the rights of the journalists. In this unit, you will learn about the different types of joiurnalism based on three factors- types of journalism based on the use of different platforms, types of journalism based on the writing style and types of journalism based on the style of presentation. We have tried to focus on various types of journalism for enriching your knowledge. However, we have covered only a few areas of journalism here. You will be introduced to other complex forms of journalism in your Master Degree programme.

3.3 TYPES OF JOURNALISM

Journalism is basically a discipline of gathering, writing and reporting news and more broadly it includes the process of editing and presenting the news articles. Journalism has always been regarded as a unique profession. It has been called a pillar of democracy, the eyes and ears of the world and the arbiter of common opinion. Within the realm of journalism, journalists are the communicators of news and facilitators of the process of understanding in the public mind.

Usually we classify journalism based on certain factors. In this unit, we have tried to classify journalism based on three different aspects- types of journalism based on the use of different platforms, types of journalism based on the writing style and types of journalism based on the style of presentation.

3.3.1 Types of Journalism based on the use of different media platforms

a. Print journalism

Print journalism is the practice of investigation and reporting of events in newspaper or in other printed form to a broad audience. The aim of print journalism is to inform the intended audience and also cover cultural aspects of society such as arts and entertainment. Print journalism can be split into several categories like newspapers, news magazines, general interest magazines, trade magazines, hobby magazines, newsletters, private publications, online news pages and others. Each genre have their own requirements for researching and writing reports. News reports are usually written in the inverted pyramid style although this particular style is used more for straight or hard news reports rather than features. Feature stories are written in a looser style that usually depends on the subject matter of the report and in general granted more space. Articles that are published in news magazines and general interest magazines does not follow the inverted pyramid style. Trade publications are more news oriented while hobby publications are more feature oriented.

b. Broadcast journalism

Broadcast journalism is that field of journalism whereby news and other information are "broadcast" by way of electronic means . Some of the

methods of broadcast journalism include radio (via air, cable, and Internet), television (via air, cable, and Internet), and more recently, the World Wide Web. Such forms of media disperse pictures (static and moving), visual text and/or sounds. Radio and television journalists have to be always on their toes for the purpose of collection of news and present them fairly and accurately. Television journalists rely on visual information to illustrate and characterize their reporting, including on-camera interviews with people involved in the story, shots of the scene where the story took place and graphics usually produced at the station to frame the story.

c. Online (cyber) journalism :

It is that form of journalism where the reporting and editing takes place through online media. The speed at which news can be accessed and disseminated via the web has greatly increased the quantity and variety of news reports available to the web user. Most of the print media houses have branched into the field of online journalism with electronic edition of newspapers and magazines gaining grounds. The websites of the different online newspapers or magazines offer videos, podcasts, blogs and slide-shows for the benefit of the viewers. The growth in the number of blogs as a source of news has changed the face of journalism. Blogs can create news as well as report it, and blur the dividing line between news and opinion.

3.3.2 Types of Journalism based on the writing style

a. Objective journalism :

Objective journalism refers to the plain presentation of facts as they have happened. Objective reporting does not involve contextualizing, backgrounding, analyzing or opinionating. Here the reporter only reports what he has seen or observed without any kind of subjective inputs.

The following points can well summarize the concept of objective reporting or journalism :

- Balance and even-handedness in presenting different sides of an issue
- Accuracy and realism in reporting
- Presenting all the main and 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 which flourished after the season's first showers, was the cause of the deaths.

b. Interpretative journalism

This form of journalism tries to interpret the news, policies and programmes of the government. Media interprets the policies of the government and discusses its good or bad effects on the society. Write-ups on such issues are published in newspaper columns while radio and television hold discussions by inviting eminent panelists during live programmes. Thus, interpretative journalism plays an important role in educating the masses about different issues.

Interpretative reporting combines facts with interpretation. Many a time the reporter has to interpret certain events to enable the readers to have a better understanding of the events. It means providing background

information relating to a particular incident or happening. Apart from the facts gathered from the field, the reporter, sometimes, needs to make the news more illuminating by providing background information so that the readers can appreciate the facts better and understand the issues involved in proper perspective. As such, the reporter delves into the reasons and meanings of a certain development and gives information along with an interpretation of its significance.

The entire event may not unfold in a day. It is a continuous process and often one event leads to another. Sometimes the occurrence of an event is judged on the basis of some preceding events. The reporter interprets the event by putting it in the proper context of a past event leading to the present happening or a course of action. Such contextualization adds more insight into events and the reporter is expected to keep track of all the events of the past and the present so as to be able to forecast the future. Thus, interpretative reporting brings out the hidden significance of an event and separates truth from falsehood.

Let us go through an example to clarify this point. 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 inevitable.

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 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.

c. Investigative journalism

When a news reporter has to dig deeply beyond what is stated in the hard news in order to find out the exact facts of an event, or, in short, investigates beyond what meets the naked eye, then it is called investigative report in

any happening. Investigative journalism is in-depth and involves long-term research and reporting. It reveals information not known to the public and which others want to keep secret. Mostly investigation is done in case of major happening or when larger public concern is involved or in matters that involve public figures or celebrities. In any kind of reporting, the reporter does some sort of investigation to dig out information which otherwise is not available. Without preliminary investigation the reporter cannot make a sound copy or report. However, in case of some stories, especially relating to certain scams or misappropriation of public money, the reporter has to investigate properly to get the relevant information in order to come out with a good copy. Also, in such cases, information is difficult to come by and the reporter has to invest both time and energy to dig out facts.

Renowned American journalist Robert Parry says, “Investigative reporting is to journalism what theoretical research is to science, having the potential to present new realities and shatter old paradigms – how people see and understand the world around them – which, in turn, can transform politics.”

True enough, the significance of investigative journalism in today’s world is great. The unearthing of a dramatic set of new facts can overcome long-maintained lies, can expose deceptive leaders and shake a corrupt government to its foundation. Done right, investigative journalism is a huge threat to powerful elites trying to manipulate a population. Modern journalism, despite its many anomalies, is considered the most effective monitor and upholder of democratic values. And investigative reporting is certainly the most powerful instrument to fulfill this obligation. Investigative reporting believes in the watchdog role of the media and focuses on the accountability of institutions and individuals wielding power.

The seeds of investigative journalism in India were sown by Arun Shourie, after he was appointed as the executive editor of The Indian Express in 1979. He was well known to have introduced a new style of aggressive, independent investigative journalism in our country. In a series of remarkable exposes, Shourie and the Indian Express uncovered corruption in the highest echelons of the government and exposed several major scandals.
This kind of reporting is now-a-days seen more frequently in the audio-visual

medium than in the print medium, particularly in the form of **sting operations** carried out by undercover reporters.

One, however, has to exercise great caution while engaging in investigative journalism. One of the most important requirements of this type of journalism is that the effort has to be determined, patient, careful and fair. It is also important for investigative reporters to maintain a high level of ethical conduct. Or else investigative journalism can do more harm than good. They should seek the truth and report it as fully as possible. Investigation should be done with the intent to catalyse reforms and never with malicious intent. If it is done only to create sensation or to get hold of a scoop or simply to defame anyone, then it can greatly endanger journalistic credibility.

As well-known freelance journalist and media educationist Arun Sadhu puts it, "For investigative reporting to flourish, what is required is: an independent and pluralistic media which is fearless, committed to democracy and universal human values; journalists with commitment who can identify problems and have the grit, perseverance, patience and skills to do research, and owners and editors professionally non-partisan and without vested interests."

It also involves a great deal of risk as one may have to face dangerous situations, and go to dangerous places in order to get to the heart of the story – terrorist camps, brothels, war scenes, jungles and at times even engage in illegal activities and suffer the consequences.

A reporter may have to take recourse to deception, hidden camera and **entrapment** also to uncover facts. Here, mention may be made of the portal tehelka.com which ushered in a new era of investigative journalism in India by the use of sting operations for the first time in 2000. It broke new grounds when by meticulous probing, the portal uncovered the corruption in cricket and India's defence establishment. The use of secret cameras to record illegal deals and the consequent exposure brought down the reputation of even those players who played as captain for the country. Though it brought down the celebrities from their pedestals and, in the process, dismayed millions of cricket lovers, it showed the extent of the rot prevailing in the sport.

When Tehelka exposed the level of corruption in the defence establishment, talking to politicians, army officers and some fixers of arms deals, it shocked the public. The visuals of party leaders, and senior army officers eager to

take bribes from a fictitious company, whose antecedents were not even verified created a storm in Parliament. An inquiry commission was set up to probe the charges levelled by the portal, which was asked to submit all the evidence it had to the retired judge heading the commission.

Another such instance is the 'Operation Duryodhan', a sting operation lasting nine months carried out by the news channel AAJ-TAK and investigative portal Cobrapost in 2005. It captured on camera eleven members of the Parliament of India accepting money to table questions on the floor of the Parliament. This was the first such sting operation in the history of the Republic of India, and all the members were expelled from the parliament. Ten of them belonged to 14th Lok Sabha while one was from the Rajya Sabha.

Another important sting operation which deserves mention is Aaj Tak's expose of bribe-taking by several personnel of Tihar Jail in 2005. The Aaj Tak expose revealed how in violation of the Jail Manual, unauthorised persons could easily gain admission into the high-security prison; information could be obtained about the inmates and money and other goods could be passed on to them. It just showed "how easy it was for inmates to obtain various favours and what makes the stay in Tihar Jail one of the most comfortable prison experiences anywhere in the world".

Consequent to the expose, two Deputy Superintendents, four Assistant Superintendents, three Head Warders and four Warders of Tihar Jail were suspended and the entire jail went through a massive security overhaul.

3.3.3 Types of Journalism based on the style of presentation

a. Science journalism

Science journalism is a relatively new branch of journalism in which journalists' reporting conveys information on science topics to the public. Science journalism is a branch of journalism that uses the art of reporting to convey information about science topics to a public forum. A science journalist (or science writer) is a journalist who specializes in writing about science topics, and thus practices science journalism, or popular science. Science journalists are responsible for choosing those news stories which have wider appeal and is expected to bring about scientific temperament in the

minds of the common masses. They must have the capability to express their ideas in simple language and to avoid technical jargon as far as possible.

b. Sports journalism

Sports journalism covers different aspect of sports related news. Over the years, people's interests in sports has increased manifold. This could be attributed to the popularization of different international and national games and the lucrative career associated with the world of sports. The rise in the popularization of sports in Western culture has justified the attention of journalists to not just the competitive events in sports ,but also to athletes and the business of sports. Just like other fields of journalism, in sports journalism also, emphasis is given on accuracy and underlying fairness.

c. Gonzo journalism

This type of journalism has been popularized by the American writer Hunter S. Thompson which is characterized by its punchy style, rough language and ostensible disregard for conventional journalistic writing forms and customs. Gonzo journalism attempts to present a multi-disciplinary perspective on a particular story, drawing from popular culture, sports, political, philosophical and literary sources. Magazines like Rolling Stone makes use of this format of journalism.

d. Celebrity or People journalism

Celebrity or People journalism focuses on the personal lives of the celebrities working in the entertainment industry as well as people who seek attention and do something newsworthy. Celebrity journalism has become the focus of national tabloid newspapers like the National Enquirer and magazines like People and Us Weekly, syndicated television shows like Entertainment Tonight, Inside Edition etc. This form of journalism covers news reports on the lives of the famous people and some exclusive photographs for which hefty amounts are paid for the purpose of publication.

e. Convergence journalism

This is an important form of journalism which combines different forms of journalism like print, photographic and video into one piece or group of pieces. News channels like CNN follows this form of journalism.

f. Development journalism

Development journalism is that form of journalism which focuses on the development issues. Development communication plays an important role in ameliorating the life of people living in rural and urban areas. The media tries to inform the people about the different issues and the schemes launched by the government for the benefit of the people. Such reporting of issues which throws on the developmental aspects of the society is known as development journalism.

Development reporting or journalism is a concept which is gaining much importance in the recent times. Development reporting refers to reporting of development related issues. Now development reporting refers not just to reporting development, but also the lack of it, i.e., underdevelopment.

You must be definitely aware of so many developmental efforts, activities and experiments going on all around the society in near and distant places. Being aware of these developments is not merely enough. The goals of development communication will be served adequately only when these happenings are reported in the media. This will ensure that innumerable number of people or masses come to know about them. At this moment you should remember that media is a magic multiplier or force multiplier which multiplies all our efforts – whether negative or positive alike.

Let us illustrate this with an example. A few years back you may have come across a news item in the newspapers about how a group of marginal ginger farmers were united to form a cooperative marketing agency in a district of Assam. The objective was to bypass the exploitations of the middlemen in the buying and selling process of ginger in the actual market. This scheme was effectively implemented with active supervision of the deputy commissioner of the district in which the farmers were immensely benefited. They were also able to improve their living standard from those monetary gains and the amount of 'confidence' of being able to achieve something really positive.

Now, only when this news item or story would be known to the masses or the maximum number of people possible it will yield a broad result. That is, it is a good sign and development that a specific groups of farmers have

been able to achieve such a feat in a remote place of the country or the state. If we would like to extend these benefits to more and more people in the society among the underprivileged and illiterate sections there will be far more benefits.

This is because as more and more people will come to know about it they will feel encouraged and develop a certain kind of confidence to try to enact a similar experiment with such a project and gain desirable benefits in the end.

Let us consider another example. Several years back, a group of about a hundred self-help groups (SHGs) united themselves under an umbrella organization and took a loan of a big amount from a nationalized bank's branch in a district of Assam. These SHGs were so punctual and prompt in repaying their loan amounts that the bank management was highly impressed with them and they offered more loans to the groups even without their asking for it.

No only this. A few years back there was a news item in the media that the village panchayat in a rural locality in Kerala had suspended the licence of a major cold drink bottling company.This was because the company's daily consumption of water resources was much more than it was actually allowed to consume or use. Later on, the company had to give an undertaking for not exploiting the groundwater more than what it was allowed to do.

This was a major achievement of the village or rural populace of that area against a big multinational company which should be quite encouraging for anyone else fighting such a problem or issue at any place of the country. This is developmental news and such news items should be focused more than anything else – the routine stories or news items.

Now, if this development news item could be repeated in the media across the state or nation more and more people will feel encouraged and confident of trying such an experiment.

This is why we should make it a point to highlight these type of news items and stories more than anything else in the media. Because developmental

experiments and examples could be repeated for the greater benefit of the larger masses of the society.

g. Photo journalism

Photo journalism is an essential component of print media journalism. A photo journalist is an indispensable person for any newspaper organization. It is often said that 'a picture is worth a thousand words'. So, a photograph not only supports the news story but also makes the newspaper colourful and attractive. It creates a powerful impact on the minds of the readers. However, the work of a photo journalist is not an easy one. A lot of hard work goes into the development of a perfect photograph. The time spent from the time a picture is taken to the cropping stage is indeed a difficult one. A photographic journalist should have strong photographic skill along with presence of mind, courage and aggressiveness. It is expected that the photo journalist must have ample knowledge about the working of digital technology in order to succeed in this field.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1 : What is online journalism?

_____

_____

Q.2 : Do you consider sting operations to be a form of investigative journalism?

_____

_____

Q.3 : What is objective journalism?

_____

_____

Q.4 : Do you consider photo journalism to be an essential part of print media journalism? Why?

_____

_____

3.4 JOURNALISM AS A PROFESSION

From the professional point of view, journalism has grown by leaps and bounds. These days different fields of journalism offer different opportunities for people to showcase their talents . The career of a journalist is very interesting and full of vast opportunities. Of late, it has been gaining much importance and prestige in the modern society. An increase in the circulation of newspapers and magazines have opened the doors for young men and women to join different fields of journalism.

The career of a journalist demands a wide range of qualities and skills. Journalists have to work hard to reach the top of the brass and that cannot be mastered within a single day. He or she should possess a flair for writing, sound judgement, personal integrity, yearning for facts and knowledge of all branches of journalism. Broadly speaking, we have three important fields of journalism that have a good number of people working in different areas.

a. Print media journalism

This form of journalism presents information through newspapers, magazines and books. Staff correspondents, special correspondents, news editors, chief editors, political commentators, cartoonists, columnists, feature writers, content writers etc. are some of the professionals of this particular stream. These people , who are selected based on their experience and skill have amazing abilities to analyse political, economic and social situations prevailing in a region, nation or the globe. People who are engaged in this field must have the ability to weave magic through their writings and attract the attention of the readers. They are also expected to have contacts with politicians, media barons, editors of newspapers and those who are associated with the press production.

Those who work in the editorial department need a strong sense of curiosity about their fellow beings and a sympathy for them. They are also required to have a good command over English, an interest in politics and government, a nose for news, a desire to know why things happen, a high respect for accuracy and an aptitude for personal communication with other people in order to obtain news from them. Nowadays newspaper organizations are on the lookout for those people who have at least completed their graduation.

Reporting and desk-work are two main divisions of newsroom work. Reporting includes gathering and writing news and feature stories. Desk-work includes the preparation for printing of the writing material and photographs submitted by the reporters, photographers and news agencies.

b. Radio journalism

This field of journalism works for broadcasting news and various information through an important medium of mass communication-radio. People who work in this area are usually known as radio journalists. Radio journalists are mainly responsible for collecting news from distant places and conduct an interview of any eminent person. If need be, they may collect data from masses as well. They are also supported by various agencies like Univarta, Bhasha, Reuters, the UNI, PTI etc. who provide them with news and information. Not only are they experts in the collection of news, but they also have the necessary skill and expertise with the operation of sound recording equipment, microphones and public address systems.

The radio journalists write their features or news clips which are then given to the editorial staff for the purpose of editing. The edited portions are then handed over to the radio announcers. However, many senior journalists are experienced enough to bypass the stage of editing and dissection of their news stories or comments. These days radio journalists have to multitask-must be fully conversant with digital data recording (including voice dictation and recording), operating the net, audio systems and computers.

c. Television journalism

Television journalism is one of the prominent fields of journalism which attracts a lot of people to get employed in different specialized areas. With the passage of time, the importance of this kind of journalism is increasing with every passing day probably due to the glamour quotient attached to it. The eagerness to be in front and behind the camera has led to a number of people to join this field of journalism. The easy availability of a vast number of channels has made it an enthralling medium audiovisual medium. Today, a TV journalist has to possess a pleasing personality, deep rich voice, good command over language and an ability to extract the news or information from the person being interviewed. Television journalism also includes recording of music or dance shows and offering the services of an anchor.

d. Internet journalism

Internet has become an inseparable medium for thousands of people specially those who are always on the move. With the growing importance of internet, internet journalism is spreading its feet in all fields to collect data and information for the general public. Some of the professional working in this stream includes web masters, multimedia specialist, HTML and XHTML programmers, java specialists and other professionals who create and modify advertisements for net along with creating different websites. In fact, we can define an internet journalist as someone who creates messages to be displayed on websites that are to be read, viewed or listened to by a large audience. They also create multimedia clips, movies, banners, hypermedia links and text that are displayed on these websites. These days, most of the newspapers have forayed into the field of e-journalism whereby internet edition of newspapers are available for the masses. These newspapers are much popular than the printed versions because of the news which is updated every now and then for the benefit of the readers and viewers. Content writers are appointed who can also be called as internet journalists to look after the news content.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.5 : What are the different categories of people that are engaged in print media journalism?

_____

_____



3.6 LET US SUM UP

We can sum up the following different types of joirnalism after carefully analyzing the unit-

- Journalism is basically a discipline of gathering, writing and reporting news and more broadly it includes the process of editing and presenting the news articles.
- Print journalism is the practice of investigation and reporting of events in newspaper or in other printed form to a broad audience. The aim

of print journalism is to inform the intended audience and also covers cultural aspects of society such as arts and entertainment.

- Broadcast journalism is that field of journalism whereby news and other information are 'broadcast' by way of electronic means.
- online journalism is that form of journalism where the reporting and editing takes place through online media.
- Objective journalism refers to the plain presentation of facts as they have happened. It does not involve cintextualizing, back grounding, analyzing or opinionating.
- Interpretative journalism tries to interpret the news, policies and programmes of the government.
- Investigative journalism is in-depth and involves long-term research and reporting. It reveals information not known to the public and which others want to keep secret.
- Science journalism is a relatively new branch of journalism in which journalists' reporting conveys information on science topics to the public.
- Convergence journalism is an important form of journalism which combines different forms of journalism like print, photographic and video into one piece or group of pieces.
- Development journalism is that form of journalism which focuses on the development issues.
- There are four important fields of journalism that have a good number of people working in different areas – print, radio, television and internet.



3.7 FURTHER READING

1. Chaudhary, J.C (2007) Introduction to Journalism and Mass Communication. New Delhi : Authors Press
2. Menon, P.K (2005) Practical Journalism. Jaipur : Aavishkar Publishers, Distributors
3. Pant, N.C (2002) Modern Journalism, Principles and Practice. New Delhi : Kanishka Publishers, Distributors
4. Syed, M.H (2006) Career in Journalism. New Delhi : Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd.

3.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q.No 1 : It is that form of journalism where the reporting and editing takes place through online media.

Ans to Q.No 2 : Yes, sting operations can be said to be a form of investigative journalism. This is because sting operations involve in-depth and involves long-term research and reporting. It reveals information not known to the public and which others want to keep secret.

Ans to Q.No 3 : Objective journalism refers to the plain presentation of facts as they have happened. Objective reporting does not involve contextualizing, back grounding, analyzing or opinionating. Here the reporter only reports what he has seen or observed without any kind of subjective inputs.

Ans to Q No 4 : Yes, I consider photo journalism to be an essential component of print media journalism. A photo journalist is an indispensable person for any newspaper organization. It is s often said that a 'Picture is worth a thousand words'. So, a photograph not only supports the news story but also makes the newspaper colourful and attractive. It creates a powerful impact on the minds of the readers. However, the work of a photo journalist is not an easy one

Ans to Q.No 5 : Staff correspondents, special correspondents, news editors, chief editors, political commentators, cartoonists, columnists, , feature writers, content writers etc. are some of the categories of people engaged in the field of print media journalism.

3.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions

Q.1 : What is broadcast journalism? What are its major advantages over print media journalism?

Q.2 : What is gonzo journalism?

Q.3 : Who is a science journalist?

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

Q.1 : What is the difference between investigative and interpretative reporting? Explain with the help of examples.

Q.2 : What is online journalism? Do the journalists working in this area need to be cautious for cyber attacks or cyber bullying? Explain.

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

Q.1 : How has journalism as a profession evolved over the last several years?

Q.2 : What is development reporting? Critically examine how can this form of reporting contribute towards development specially in the rural areas.

* * * * *

UNIT 4 : ROLE OF JOURNALISM IN A DEMOCRACY

4.1 Learning Objectives
4.2 Introduction
4.3 Freedom of press
    4.3.1 Embedded Journalism
    4.3.2 Press freedom at International level
    4.3.3 Press freedom at National level
    4.3.4. Press freedom at Regional Level
4.4 Democracy, Media and the Public sphere
4.5 Let us Sum up
4.6 Further Reading
4.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
4.8 Model Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This unit attempts to make you well-conversant with the concepts of ---

- the role of journalism in a democracy
- freedom of expression
- freedom of expression at International, National and Regional levels of Democracy
- relationship between media and masses in the public sphere

4.2 INTRODUCTION

"Quality journalism enables citizens to make informed decisions about their society's development. It also works to expose injustice, corruption, and the abuse of power. For this, journalism must be able to thrive, in an enabling environment in which they can work independently and without undue interference and in conditions of safety"

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO in her message on the occasion of the World Press Freedom Day (May 3) in 2015 outlined the importance of freedom of expression: "This is the day when we raise the flag

for freedom of expression, online and offline, stand up for the safety of journalists and combat impunity across the world,we make our voices heard so that every woman and man can speak out, so that all may be empowered through access to information. These rights are essential for human dignity -- they are also vital for all other rights, for good governance, democracy and the rule of law, for inclusive and sustainable development.This is why UNESCO is acting across the world -- to protect freedom of expression and support media development, to enhance the safety of journalists, spearheading the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, to bolster freedom of expression today and tomorrow, as we set a new global sustainable development agenda",

Media in any society all over the world is expected to be a true reflection of aspirations and the general status of its development in that society. Media is an open platform where any and every issue of importance for a society should be brought up for intense debates and discussions about the pros and cons among the parties concerned. This would result in allowing the masses - who are usually not uniformly intellectual and aware of many issues concerning them - to make an 'informed decision' whenever there is a crisis in the very society to which they belong. Hence, freedom of expression and media are of crucial significance for a society anywhere in the world, more so for those based on democratic principles without any doubt.

4.3 FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations Organization (UNO) says that 'freedom of expression' is the right of every individual to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. At the beginning itself, it is important to explain why this freedom is important from the point of view of an individual, the state and the society.

This is a fundamental human right encompassing the right to express your mind freely on important issues in society, access information and hold the powers that be to account. This freedom plays a vital role in the healthy development process of any society.

In the human society, better judgments and decisions can be taken only

after detailed discussions on the pros and cons of any issue are carried out for which freedom of expression is so important. Along with it, the concept of 'informed choice' and expression is also highly important. That is, a human being, irrespective of any caste, creed, economic status, social hierarchy etc. must have access to any bit of information which may help him or her in making a decision in life for any activity ever.

Media can be compared to an 'informal university' where any and every issue of importance – whether considered major or minor - is discussed with all the aspects to it properly taken up so that the people get the benefit of knowing both sides of the coin. Based on this understanding, one should be able to take a decision regarding an issue.

Again, whenever a person is fully convinced about any new or unusual development which needs to be informed to the public, he/she should be able to do so without any barrier. In simple words, the matter should be brought to the public sphere or domain so that discussions follow in an adequate manner.

In practice, however, this fundamental human right is frequently restricted through tactics that include censorship, restrictive press legislation, and harassment of journalists, bloggers and others who voice their opinions.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1: What is the importance of freedom of the press for a democracy?

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_____

4.3.1 Embedded Journalism

A study on freedom of the press, would not be complete if the concept of 'Embedded Journalism' is not discussed at all. Embedded journalism refers to news reporters being attached to military units involved in armed conflicts. While the term could be applied to many historical interactions between journalists and military personnel, it first came to be used in the media coverage of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The US military establishment offered the journalists all the facilities - accommodation at their soldiers'

camps or bases and logistical help like transport to the war zone with their soldiers and facilities for transmission of news on a real time basis with military communication equipment. Even though no specific directive would be given to the journalists for 'any favourable' reporting about the events, yet when the media persons are using full hospitality of the Allied Forces it is quite usual to suspect that their reporting would be 'tilted' to some extent towards their hosts rather than being absolutely objective. That is why the Al Jazeera news channel became so popular at that time as the global audience believed that this channel was much more objective than those enjoying the facilities of the Allied Forces.

4.3.2 Press Freedom at International level

Though press freedom is of vital importance for the overall development of human beings, yet in many countries across the world it is violated to a big extent. In this regard, a few international organizations carry out regular annual surveys to find out the index of freedom of the press around the world which offers a reliable reflection about the status of press freedom the world over. These organizations include Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF), Freedom House (USA), Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) among others.

Press freedom index at the global level presents a picture which has a lot of diversity to say the least. This is because on one side there are countries which have been classified as enjoying a 'Free' press with others as 'Partly Free' followed by those with a status of 'Not Free' at all among the 199 countries and territories across the world as informed by independent watchdogs of freedom of press.

The gravity of the situation can be understood from the fact that during the two decades since 1992, almost 1300 Journalists have been killed in different countries (Freedom House).This organization assesses 199 countries and territories across the world and assigns a score in which less score means better situation and more score means negative picture. The evaluation of 2014 shows that countries like Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Finland, The Netherlands, and Denmark top the list with minimum score (10 / 11). Their classification of countries is in three categories – free (score of up to 30), partly free (score of 60) and not free (score beyond 61).

Another organization CPJ has identified 20 deadliest countries in this regard led by Iraq that includes those like Brazil, Pakistan, India, Russia, and Bangladesh among others.

Freedom of the Press 2015, the latest edition of an annual report published by Freedom House since 1980, found that global press freedom declined in 2014 to its lowest point in more than 10 years. The rate of decline also accelerated drastically, with the global average score suffering its largest one-year drop in a decade. The share of the world's population that enjoys a Freepress stood at 14 percent, meaning only one in seven people live in countries where coverage of political news is robust, the safety of journalists is guaranteed, state intrusion in media affairs is minimal, and the press is not subject to onerous legal or economic pressures.

The steepest decline worldwide relate to two factors. First the passage and use of restrictive laws against the press - often on national security grounds. And the ability of local and foreign journalists to physically access and report freely from a given country, including protest sites and conflict areas.Ironically, at a time of seemingly unlimited access to information and new methods of content delivery, more and more areas of the world are becoming virtually inaccessible to journalists.

The 18 countries and territories showing decline represented a politically diverse cross-section—including Greece, Hong Kong, Iceland, Serbia, and South Africa—indicating that the global deterioration in press freedom is not limited to autocracies or war zones. Also featured among the major backsliders were Algeria, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Honduras, Libya,South Sudan, and Thailand.

The Global Picture in 2014 of the 199 countries and territories assessed for 2014 (two new territory reports, Crimea and Somaliland,were added), a total of 63 (32 percent) were rated Free, 71 (36 percent) were rated Partly Free,and 65 (32 per cent) were rated 'Not Free'. This balance marks a shift toward the 'Partly Free' category compared with the edition covering 2013, which featured 63 Free, 68 Partly Free, and 66 Not Free countries and territories. The report found that 14 percent of the world's inhabitants lived in countries with a Free Press, while 42 percent had a Partly Free press and 44 percent lived in Not Free environments. The population figures are significantly affected by two countries—China, with a Not Free status, and India, with a Partly Free status—that together account for over a third of the

world's more than seven billion people. The percentage of those enjoying a Free media in 2014 remained at its lowest level since 1996, when Freedom House began incorporating population data into the findings of the report.After a multi-year decline in the global average score it was interrupted by an improvement in 2011.

There was a further decline of 0.74 points for 2014,bringing the figure to its lowest level since 1999 and marking the greatest year-on-year decline since 2005.All regions except sub-Saharan Africa, whose average score improved slightly, experienced declines of varying degrees, with the Middle East and North Africa showing the largest net decline. (www.freedomhouse.org).

4.3.3 Press Freedom at National level

Colonial rule in India was marked by the absence of freedom of press. During freedom struggle, many a times, steep fines were imposed on press owners, editors for publishing contents through newspapers, magazines, books which were considered seditious or declared as going against the British government. However, it is commendable that the media in the country never bowed down to those tactics and continued with their struggle over the decades till the goal of Independence was achieved in 1947.

Post-independence, freedom of the press in India is provided by the Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution which reads: "all citizens shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression"; it is also common knowledge that this fundamental right is not absolute. This is because the immediately following Article 19 (2) says "nothing prevents the State from making any law in the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State […] public order, decency or morality, or in relation to […] defamation or incitement to an offence."

So, like any other freedom this one also is not absolute. Article 19(2) of the Indian Constitution lays some restrictions in the name of 'reasonable restricts'

According to Justice (retd) Markandeya Katju, former Chairman of Press Council of India and judge of Supreme Court of India, "for a proper functioning of democracy it is essential that citizens are kept informed about news from various parts of the country and even abroad, because only then can

they form rational opinions. A citizen surely cannot be expected personally to gather news to enable him or her to form such opinions. Hence, the media play an important role in a democracy and serve as an agency of the people to gather news for them. It is for this reason that freedom of the press has been emphasized in all democratic countries, while it was not permitted in feudal or totalitarian regimes. Also, the importance of freedom of press lies in the fact that for most citizens the prospect of personal familiarity with newsworthy events is unrealistic. In seeking out news, the media therefore act for the public at large. It is the means by which people receive free flow of information and ideas, which is essential for intelligent self-governance, that is, democracy." (The Hindu, 2013).

Media in our country in general has been contributing in an effective and constructive manner since its inception in the British era. This despite prohibitory, discriminatory and suppressive laws like Indian Press Act, Vernacular Press Act, Official Secrets Act which were basically aimed at not allowing the press to function in an independent manner and thereby not allow information and awareness about freedom struggle agenda to percolate down to the masses at large.

During this period many newspapers were forced to stop publishing as their printing presses were seized by the government as penalty and also jail terms were given to many of the owners, publishers and editors for the same purpose. Yet, the struggle never relented and the press held its ground firmly against all odds. This was a commendable achievement.

Continuing with the same zeal and energy, our media have been carrying out its role as a disseminator of meaningful public information and news with a high credibility. Also, it must be said that even after Independence, in spite of facing a lot of opposition and physical, mental threats from many quarters including the state and otherwise, our media fraternity have maintained its stand for freedom of expression throughout all these decades, rather than lowering its dignity in front of them.

However, during the infamous National Emergency period of 1975-77, the Indian press experienced the most brutal attack on its freedom in the post-Independence era. During this period, in an effort to muzzle the press from spilling the beans about the strong arm tactics of the then Union government at Delhi, it was made mandatory that every registered newspaper, magazine must publish only those news items which were

approved by a specifically-designated Censor Officer at each state capital, usually belonging to the state's Directorate of Information and Public Relations and those from Ministry of Information & Broadcasting at Delhi and other places with its office.

Hence, everyday all the newspapers had to send their final list of news items to this officer who would certify which news items could be published and which not. While a strong general discontent was brewing among the media across the country, protests were done in different modes.

Some of the newspapers used to publish their pages blank (for those positions where news items were censored) while some others published blank editorials as a reflection of protest against the prohibition.

Even the Press Council of India was disbanded only to be reconstituted later in 1978.

Further, the record of the state on its part in preserving freedom of expression has not been so transparent. This is reflected to some extent in an article titled 'Little reason to restrict the freedom of speech' by a retired professor of English and a well-known literary and cultural critic from Karnataka, CN Ramachandran in The Hindu (September 26, 2013). It says, "Governments have ritually abused the latitude granted by the Indian Penal Code and the Constitution to harass, intimidate and arrest scores of writers, journalists and artists. It is common knowledge that Article 19 (1) (a) of the Indian Constitution lays down that "all citizens shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression. What is not common knowledge is that this fundamental right has almost been eroded completely. The extensive Constitutional amendments carried out in 1972 replaced section 153 of the Indian Penal Code with sections 153 A and 153 B. These newly added sections are so extensive that today, as the increasing court cases establish, "the right to freedom of speech and expression" has almost been nullified.

Press Council of India :

The Press Council of India (PCI) was first set up in 1966 by the Parliament on the recommendations of the First Press Commission with the objective of preserving freedom of the press and of maintaining and improving the standards of press in India. The present Council functions under the Press Council Act, 1978. It is a statutory, quasi judicial authority

functioning as a watchdog of the press, for the press and by the press. It adjudicates the complaints against and by the press for violation of ethics and freedom of the press respectively.

The PCI is headed by a Chairman, who has by convention, been a retired judge of the Supreme Court of India. It comprises 28 other members of whom 20 represent the press,five members are nominated from the two Houses of Parliament and three represent cultural, literary and legal fields as nominees of the Sahitya Academy, University Grants Commission and the Bar Council of India. The members representing the press are nominated by the press organizations, news agencies recognized and notified by the Council as all India bodies of categories such as editors, working journalists and owners and managers of newspaper and news agencies. The members serve on the Council for a term of three years. A retiring member shall be eligible for re-nomination for not more than one term.

The Council is funded by the revenue collected by it as fee levied on the registered newspapers in the country on the basis of their circulation. No fee is levied on newspapers with circulation less than 5000 copies. The deficit is made good by way of grant by the Government of India.

The Council serves two useful purposes. It sees:

a. that any abuse of press freedom does not pass without anybody noticing it or raising a finger of protest, and
b. that the press should not in its own interest indulge in scurrilous or other objectionable writings– such as those considered below the level of recognized standards of journalistic ethics.

However, PCI has been criticized for being an organization without any real power. The argument is: since it does not have any punitive power (many call it ‘a toothless tiger) it fails to serve any real purpose. There have been counter arguments to this charge. Another point that is often discussed relate to its jurisdiction, which has so far been limited to only to the print media. Meanwhile Television, Radio and Internet have become significant players in the media domain. So, there has been an active demand from this body as well as other parties concerned for re-designating it as Media Council and for bringing all the media under its jurisdiction. This has not happened till mid-2016.

However, in its own domain, PCI has been quite active throughout all these years taking necessary action including suo motto whenever necessary

and sending its teams for spot verification and trial of complaints received.

Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)

In the domain of freedom of expression of our country, CBFC is an important agency in focus over the decades. This is because any film can be exhibited in public in India only after it is certified by CBFC.

This is a statutory body under Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB), regulating the public exhibition of films. This is under the provisions of the Cinematograph Act, 1952 and the provisions of The Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 1983, as well as the guidelines adopted by the government under section 5(B).

At present there are provisions for four categories which are –

U – Unrestricted Public Exhibition,

U/A – Unrestricted Public Exhibition – but with word of caution that parental discretion required for children below 12 years of age

A – Restricted to adults

S – Restricted to any special class of persons

All films including Indian feature and short films and imported short films, video and CD versions are to be certified by this agency. The Board, consists of non-official members and a Chairman (all of whom are appointed by Central Government) and functions with headquarters at Mumbai. It has nine Regional offices, one each at Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Thiruvananthapuram, Hyderabad, New Delhi, Cuttack and Guwahati. The Regional Offices are assisted in the examination of films by Advisory Panels. The members of the panels are nominated by Central Government by drawing people from different walks of life for a period of 2 years.

The Board has been criticized by many for major discrepancies in certifying films for public showing over the years.

4.3.4 Press Freedom at Regional level

Press freedom in North Eastern Region (NER: is a group of eight states that includes – Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim) presents a mixed situation that varies from state to state in a big way. For example, while the situation is somewhat better in Tripura and Mizoram it is not so in other states of the region including Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and more particularly Manipur. A common factor

in several of the states of the region is the presence of many secessionist groups and their splinter groups that create lot of trouble for media persons in discharging their duties in an effective way.

Assam : Among the states of the region, Assam enjoys the most robust media scenario. The state has a good number of dailies, weeklies, and fortnightlies in different languages led by Assamese followed by English, Bengali, Hindi and others along with six TV channels offering both news and entertainment. However, from time to time, there have been incidents of killing of journalists in addition to attempts on life on many other occasions and assaults for various reasons. The major cause of concern here is that majority of these cases are yet to be solved. This can be interpreted also as lack of interest by the parties concerned in this regard.

Manipur : The problem of insurgency-led harassment to media persons is too visible in this state as many groups are active here who try to use the media for their publicity. The media is caught between the devil and the deep sea as the security forces on their own pressurize the media not to publish hand-out materials from the secessionist groups. It is common to hear news about such spats of the media in this state with militant groups on one hand and also with the security forces resulting in boycott of programmes and at times suspension of publication of newspapers. In case of films, because of a stiff ban by the secessionist groups on showing of any film except those in Manipuri language, no film of any other language can be exhibited there.

Arunachal Pradesh : While the media scenario of this state is not that vibrant, yet there have been a few instances of shooting of journalists for settling personal and political scores.

Nagaland : A state with presence of militancy, there are several newspapers which are in circulation with not much of a trouble on an overall assessment.

Meghalaya and Mizoram do not show much signs of threats and attacks on freedom of expression and enjoy a media presence which is otherwise offering good service to the people.

Tripura under the present government enjoys a stable media freedom with around 60 newspapers, mostly in Bengali with just a few in other languages like Kokborok with militancy almost not in existence nowadays.

Sikkim which is a small peaceful state with a smaller population (little

more than 6,00,000) and a few newspapers with a limited circulation enjoys a good media environment with not much interference in the freedom of expression from any quarters.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.2 : What is the status of press freedom at international, national and regional levels?

_____

_____

Q.3: What do you mean by Embedded Journalism?

_____

_____

Q.4 : Is the PCI living up to the expectations?

_____

_____

4.4 DEMOCRACY, MEDIA AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE

"The public sphere is . . . a metaphorical term used to describe the virtual space where people can interact. . . . The World Wide Web, for example, is not actually a web; cyberspace is not a space; and so with the public sphere. It's the virtual space where the citizens of a country exchange ideas and discuss issues, in order to reach agreement about 'matters of general interest' (Jürgen Habermas, 1997: 105). . . .

"The public sphere is . . . a metaphor which keeps us focused on the distinction between individual, personal forms of representation - over which we have a large degree of control - and shared, consensual representations--which are never exactly what we would like to see precisely because they are shared (public). It's a liberal model which sees the individual human being as having an important input into the formation of the general will--as opposed to totalitarian or Marxist models, which see the state as ultimately powerful in deciding what people think."(Alan McKee, The Public Sphere: An Introduction. Cambridge Univ. Press, 2005)

"The Press is the best instrument for enlightening the mind of man, and improving him as a rational, moral and social being," Thomas Jefferson, former President of the USA (1801-09).

In an earlier reference, media or the press is termed as an informal university where anything and everything of importance should be discussed for benefit of the masses or the public. In other words, media is entrusted with the responsibility of educating the public on various issues of importance. This is a life-long learning process that includes also those people who cannot afford to enroll themselves in a formal educational institution for various factors.

Here we need to recall the famous Agenda-Setting function of the media. In choosing and displaying news, editors, newsroom staff, and broadcasters play an important part in shaping political reality. Readers learn not only about a given issue, but also how much importance to attach to that issue from the amount of information in a news story and its position. In reflecting what candidates are saying during a campaign, the mass media may well determine the important issues—that is, the media may set the "agenda" of the campaign. (McCombs, Shaw, 1972).

The Centre for Democracy and Governance of the U.S. Agency for International Development (1999) says that - access to information is essential to the health of democracy for at least two reasons. First, it ensures that citizens make responsible, informed choices rather than acting out of ignorance or misinformation. Second, information serves a "checking function" by ensuring that elected representatives uphold their oaths of office and carry out the wishes of those who elected them.

In some societies, an antagonistic relationship between media and government represents a vital and healthy element of fully functioning democracies. In post-conflict or ethnically- homogenous societies such a conflictual, tension-ridden relationship may not be appropriate, but the role of the press to disseminate information as a way of mediating between the state and all facets of civil society remains critical. Access to entry, to means of production and distribution, to information, and for different viewpoints is essential to a free media

In simple words, it translates to the fact that media acts as the guiding force in making people decide about what to think of, adopt and practice in their life whenever any new development arises in the society.

The duties and responsibilities of the media are confined not only to informing the people about news and views. It also includes making people aware of newer developments and issues in the society in an adequate manner so that people can make an 'informed decision'. That is, one can decide effectively what to support or adopt and what not ,only after listening to and going over all the arguments for and against all these developments.

That is why, the significance of the media is so vital in a democratic society anywhere in the world.

The media have tremendous power to influence our nation's political discourse. A free and open media is essential to a healthy democracy. So Common Cause works on multiple fronts for media reforms that include a free, open and accessible Internet for all, slowing media consolidation and transparency. (Common Cause, USA)



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.5 : What is the role of media in a public sphere?



4.5 LET US SUM UP

In the above discussions, we have learnt that ---

- Existence of a vibrant and active Press or media is of utmost importance for success of a democracy anywhere in the world.
- Media is an informal university and platform where any every issue concerning the society can be discussed thoroughly for presenting to the masses the pros and cons of each issue so that people can take an informed decision
- The scenario of freedom of expression and press is drastically diverse in various parts of the world with highly free to not free at all
- In our country, it is a mixed situation with many instances of harassment of media persons
- The national emergency period of 1975 was a dark chapter in the history of press freedom of the country

- Embedded journalism is criticized by many persons concerned as a biased manner of journalism
- CBFC which certifies films to be publicly exhibited in India is thought to be an agency of restricting freedom of the press through its mandate.
- PCI is doing a good job though it is handicapped by the fact that the vast electronic media world is not under its jurisdiction till date.
- Media sets the agenda in the public sphere so that people can engage in discussions and arrive at logical conclusions about anything in their life.



4.6 FURTHER READING

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4.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q.No 1 : Media or press is an open platform or an informal university that offers adequate scope for discussions and public debates on any and

every issue which may concern the society at any moment of time. The advantage in this function is that masses can come to know about various pros and cons of all the issues being taken up by the media with opinions from people with relevant experience and analytical capability. This facilitates the masses, and in turn the society in the decision making process for anything involving their private or also social and national life. However, while performing this function, it must be a precondition that the general atmosphere in that particular society or country has to be absolutely free from media's point of view. This is needed so that discussions can be frank and open without suppression of any vital information from any quarter. And no threat of repercussions for revealing positive and negative aspects of any issue from any side including the government.A democracy in the true sense of the term would survive successfully only under such a situation. The importance also lies in the fact that only an environment of free and open discussion on any issue and development can in reality bring out all the negative and positive aspects of it. Hence, even though there may arise differences of opinions it can't be considered as impossible to resolve. Only such a free atmosphere for the press would facilitate making everyone informed to the proper extent than anything else.

Ans to Q No 2 : The status of press freedom at international, national and regional levels presents a highly contrasting scenario. At international level, there are countries categorized as 'fully free' followed by those 'partly free' and at the third category is of those 'not free' at all. A good number of countries in the western developed belt – north and west Europe, North America (mainly Canada and USA) are free. The second category includes countries like ours, Pakistan, Brazil etc. with a mixed atmosphere without a tilt heavily either way. In the third category are countries in 'developing nations' status in Africa, several in Asia (Gulf, North Korea), South America among others. This is why during the last about two decades' time almost 1200 journalists have been killed while performing their duties. We very well know about Daniel Pearl, Parag Das, Kamala Saikia among many others who had to make the supreme sacrifice simply for carrying out their assigned duties with due responsibilities. At the national level also it is not so ideal with lots of threats, assaults aimed at the media community. The situation at the regional level is also hardly better, specially with those states having presence of insurgent groups, Maoists where the scribes' community is

also targeted by the security forces of the state. Yet, it must be said that the media community has been carrying out a relentless struggle living up to its expectations across all these regions despite all the threats and assaults till date.

Ans to Q No 3 : This is somewhat of a newer development starting with the second Gulf war between the Allied Forces and Iraq. The Allied Forces led by the US military brought out this concept of inviting and accommodating the journalists on duty for reporting the war in the facilities of the Forces at the battlefront. The idea was that it would facilitate the media persons in discharging their duties under a hostile environment when a full-fledged war is on. And many media organizations happily accepted the proposal and journalists were let to enjoy the hospitality at the battleground for reporting from 'ground zero' about the much-publicized war. Also the community did not face any problem of accommodation, transmission of their stories and security at the camps were also up to the mark going by whatever could be provided at a battle field. This was an advantageous arrangement for the scribes. Yet it is also heavily criticized by quarters concerned on the ground that after accepting such a hospitality it would be difficult not to have a 'bias' about the hosts while reporting about the war. This is because the scribes should not show any direct or indirect bias about either side. It is also said that this was a the reason why most of the reporting on this war were tilted in the views against the Iraqi forces. Further, Al Zajeera TV channel came to focus around this time for its unbiased reporting and offering a counter view of those news items published or broadcast by those enjoying the Allied Forces' hospitality.

Ansto Q No 4 : The Press Council of India (PCI) is mandated with the enormous responsibility of preserving the freedom of the press and maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers and news agencies of the country(Press Council Act, 1978). It seems to be living up to the expectations during the decades of its existence till date. It has been regularly carrying out its duties by seriously adjudicating complaints of harassment of media persons as well as improvement of standard of the media's functioning as a whole. Though it usually decides specific complaints filed with it, the provision of suo motto action taking based on the merit of the case is also exercised time and again whenever necessary even if no complaint is received by the body. There is no denying of the fact that there

is a certain amount of limitation of its field of area because of the Act's provision of its jurisdiction confined only to the print media sector so far as during the initial years after Independence here was no electronic media to speak of. As the electronic media news outlets – TV, Radio news, new media are out of its jurisdiction, there is a practical problem in performing its duties to the fullest under the circumstances. There has been a constant demand for inclusion of the electronic and new media under its command for a better situation in this regard. This would take at least some time yet to be implemented in an effective manner. Further, the quasi judicial status of this body is also an issue of concern because it can't award a punishment that may be considered harsh enough to deter future violations by the parties concerned. The present provision of fines and apologies are not at all strong enough to make the parties concerned to have remorse and thereby pledge not to repeat any such violations in future.

Ansto Q.No 5 : The role of the media in public sphere is of utmost importance for any democratic nation. This is because media is the most effective and convenient tool for informing the masses about anything on the earth. The people or the masses are a heterogenous lot with different levels of understanding of matters of significance. They need to be informed about various issues with the accompanying pros and cons so that they can take a wise decision whenever it becomes necessary for doing so. Thus, a vibrant and active media acts as a medium between sources of information and the masses so that the balance of information can be maintained. Nowadays, it is a common saying that 'information is power'. Its meaning is that these days knowledge and an upper hand advantage above anyone else is gained only from the possession of relevant information. This, if restricted would be of help to only a few persons or groups rather than for the whole of the society. Thus, being the watchdog and conscience keeper of the society in a democratic set up, media must work relentlessly and without discrimination to inform the public of anything and everything happening everywhere. More particularly, the other pillars of the state – government, executive, judiciary, legislature. Besides, media is the agency which can bring about transparency in all the spheres of life by constantly keeping an eye on all activities and dutifully presenting the same to the masses so that the democratic process can be sustained over time.



4.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very short questions

Q.1 : Do you consider freedom of expression as a fundamental human right ? Why ?

Q.2 : Can media be compared to an informal university? Why?

Q.3 : Name some of the international organizations that carry out regular annual surveys to find out the index of freedom of press around the world.

Q.4 : When was the PCI first set up? What is its main function?

Q.5 : What are the different categories of certification as provided under CBFC?

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

Q.1 : Discuss how media or the press help in keeping alive the democratic system in a country ?

Q.2 : What are the implications of restricting freedom of the press in any society around the world ?

Q.3 : Why is 'embedded journalism' criticized by quarters concerned ?

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

Q.1 : Why is there such a big diversity in the status of freedom of expression at global, national and also regional levels ?

Q.2 : Critically assess the role of Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC).

Q.3 : How is the Press Council of India discharging its responsibilities ?

Q.4 : How does the media perform its agenda-setting duties in the society ?

* * * * *

UNIT 5: NEWS

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives
5.2 Introduction
5.3 Concept and definition of news
5.4 Sources of news
5.5 Objectivity and authenticity of news
5.6 Let us Sum up
5.7 Further Reading
5.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
5.9 Model Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

A thorough evaluation of the unit will bring to light the-

- concept and definition of news
- different sources of news

5.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous units we have learnt about the role of journalism in a democratic set-up with special focus on freedom of the press at international, national and regional levels. We also learnt about Press Council of India and Central Board of Film Certification.

In this unit, you shall be introduced to the concept of news and the different sources of news.

With the boom of the news media viz. newspapers, news channels and news portals, news has become an important part of our daily lives. The term news must be familiar to all of you. But as a student of Mass Communication, your understanding of the term 'News' has to be deeper and more comprehensive than what the common man understands by this term.

In this unit you will learn about news not just from the point of view of a layman, but from the point of view of a journalist. We hope, after going through this unit, you will be able to have the basic concepts of news clear to your mind. So let us concentrate on the sections given below.

5.3 CONCEPT AND DEFINITION OF NEWS

Concept of news :

"When a dog bites a man, that's not news. But when a man bites a dog this is a news"- this famous dictum was uttered by John B. Bogart who was the city editor of the New York Sun more than a century ago. It still stands true to certain extent because news is often the account of something rare or out of the ordinary.

News is probably one of the most commonly used terminologies in our day to day lives. All of us invariably use this term quite often while talking to our friends, families, relatives and other people, without perhaps, knowing what actually constitute news. Innumerable activities and events are happening simultaneously round the clock across the world. But have you ever thought why the news bulletin of the day carries only a handful of the events or activities that have taken place during the day, which we call as news? Have you ever tried to understand why out of the hundreds only a few items find a place in the newspaper that you read every day and you invariably call them news? What about the rest of the happenings that fail to make it to the news media?

In a country of a billion plus people like India, why is your television channel obsessed with only a few faces, probably a few politicians, a few film stars, models, scientists, bureaucrats, etc. Why do only a few people and events get reported and not the rest? Why don't the media inform us about every little detail of whatever is happening at any place in the world and at any point of time as part of its responsibilities? Well, in journalistic parlance the word "news" has certain connotations. All events, incidents, activities or happenings around the world cannot qualify as news. In order to call something news there has to be certain elements present in that event or activity or incident. Therefore, let

us first understand what can be called news.

Definition of news :

It has been impossible to formulate one common and all encompassing definition of news which is universally acceptable. This is because the meaning and scope of news has been changing with the passage of time and also differs according to the political structure of the state.

Perhaps, the simplest way to define news is that, news is all that is happening around us in the different directions, north-east-west-south, and together all these make news.However, if one is to believe this statement then he or she will have to maintain that every incident happening in our society, no matter how big or small or whether emanating from a renowned person or common men, must be considered as news. Yet, when we see the different news media, we can probably question the validity of this statement. Therefore, we need to reconsider this statement and modify it by saying that -

News is something new, something relevant and important, something immediate or something unusual happening in our world that concern us or our society in some way or the other. In fact,a news is report of a recent or current event or an information published in a newspaper or other periodicals. Now does this explain all the doubts creeping in your minds? There should be something fresh or new about the event like a discovery, an invention, an innovation, a new project taken by the government for the upliftment of people, an impending danger, a natural disaster, an accident, a crime taking place in the society and so on and so forth. They always make good **news stories**. A new fashion in vogue,announcement of new products in the market, a change in habit or in taste of people of the society, etc are also news as they signify changing trends, eventually making them relevant for larger segments of the society.

In fact, everything can be called 'news' provided it holds immense value for or affects the lives of larger masses. An unusual event like the records of the Guinness Book may also qualify for news. The actions and activities of members of Parliament or Legislative Assemblies is also of concern to people as they are people's representatives conferred with the power to rule and guide the masses.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines news as 'the report or account

of recent events or occurrences, brought or coming to one as new information, new occurrences as a subject of report or talk.

Therefore, having discussed all these we can draw a conclusion by defining news as information about an event that happens in the society, which affects the lives of the people or has the tendency to affect the lives of the people, directly or indirectly, or has immediate value for larger segments of the society.

However, what we have discussed so far are only some of the characteristics of news. Apart from these, there are some other qualities as well, by which we can identify news. In journalistic parlance these qualities are called News Values.

We shall discuss in detail the different news values in Unit -7 of this course.



LET US KNOW

Some Interesting Definitions and Quotes

- 'NEWS is what interests a good newspaperman.'
  - Geraid Johnson, The Sun, Baltimore
- 'News is the timely report of events, facts and opinions that interests a significant number of people' –William L.Rivers
- 'News is something someone somewhere wants suppressed. All the rest is advertising.' - William Randolph



ACTIVITY 5.1

1. Think of 10 major news items that were covered by the media in the past two days and identify which news value or values were found in each of these news items. Note down which news value was found in the maximum number of news items.
2. Open today's newspaper and go through the news items on the first page. Identify the news items having the following news values. Name the news value which is common to all the news items on the first page.
   1) Timeliness
   2) Conflict
   3) Prominence
   4) Importance
   5) Impact



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1 : What is news?

_____

_____

5.4 SOURCES OF NEWS

Source in journalistic parlance, means the contacts or the people from whom the reporter receives valuable information for news. It is impossible for a reporter to keep track of every activity or happening in and around him and also collect the information for reporting in the media. In such a situation the reporter has to rely on people outside the periphery of the media organization he/she is working for to retrieve information. These people supply information and facts about events to the reporter, which is otherwise impossible for the reporter to dig out. Normally the reporters have reliable people at different places like the government or other offices, hospitals, municipal body offices, state secretariats, assemblies, Deputy Commissioner's office, police headquarters, educational institutes and so on and so forth. The sources may range from politicians, government officials, Public Relations Officers, police personnel to even the peons or other junior employees of different organizations.

Sources can be of different types – primary or secondary, official or unofficial. When the news organisation's own set of reporters or correspondents collect the news from the sources or go to the spot and cover the event, then the news can be said to have come from primary sources. On the other hand, news coming in from news agencies can be said to be coming from secondary sources. Sometimes broadcast media use newspaper reports also as sources of information to supplement their own information or the print media may supplement their information about an event with what has been shown in the broadcast media. In such cases the print media becomes a secondary source of information for the broadcast media and vice-versa.

Let us look at some of the examples of primary and secondary sources-

Primary sources	Secondary sources
Eyewitnesses	Archives
Perpetrators, survivors and victims	Internet
Official sources/spokespeople	Books
Experts	Newspapers and other media
Activists and NGOs	Official records, reports and documents
	Press Releases

When the media receives information directly from the organization in the form of official **briefing, press release, press note, press communiqué, handout** etc, then we say that the news has come from official sources. (You will learn about all these terms in detail in your course on Public Relations). On the other hand, if the news is received from the **grapevine**, and is not confirmed by any official source and the source cannot be disclosed then the source is said to be unofficial.

Interview is a good source of digging a news story from a newsworthy person. A lot depends on the ability of the interviewer to conduct a successful interview. The interviewer might find some people to be very communicative while at times others might be reluctant to open up. Anonymous sources may also provide the core of a story, background information or just a tip-off. Whatever the value or amount of information, one must handle requests for anonymity with great care.

Sources are not built in a day or two. It takes time to develop sources, bring them to your confidence and elicit correct response in the time of need. With experience and time these sources are built. And with time the network of sources also widens. It is said that a reporter is known by the volume of sources he keeps. Sources are considered to be the reporter's prized possessions. Therefore, it becomes extremely important for the reporter to maintain a good vibe and rapport with the network of sources he or she has.

However,it is important to mention here that the reporter should be careful while building contacts. In the pursuit of developing a strong chain of sources the reporter should not forget that the sources should be reliable ones. They should be able to provide you authentic information. There should not be any malice or personal bias acting behind the sources, willingness of the

sources to share information with the reporter.

Another important aspect is that the sources are for keeps, not for destroying after he or she has given a piece of information to the reporter. So the reporter should be able to keep them in good faith and shoulder their responsibilities in the truest possible manner. This, in turn would take the reporter a long way in future.

How to Judge Source Credibility :

Previous Reliability : Past track record goes a long way to show if a source is reliable or not. If he has been a good source earlier, he has good chance of being a reliable source now.

Confirmability : If the information which has been passed on by the source can be confirmed by other sources then the source can be said to be credible.

Proximity : The proximity of the source to the place of event determines the credibility of the source to a certain extent. The more proximate he is to the event, greater is his credibility as a source.

Motive : The credibility of a source can also be judged from his motive of passing on the information. A source may pass on wrong information in order to fulfil his own selfish motives. As such it is advisable to find out the motive.

Contextuality : The credibility of the source also depends on the contextuality of the information. If it fits into the context in which it has been said, then it is credible or else the credibility of the source is questionable.

Believability : Believability of the information also determines the credibility of the source. The information that the source passes on must be believable and as such must seem possible to happen.



LET US KNOW

Key points about official sources –

- They represent social institutions
- They have power and knowledge
- The more senior the official source, the more likely he/she is to be believed
- Official sources will usually give you the official line which is only one side of the story
- An official source is just one of the sources for your story- you cannot rely on only official sources



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.3 : What is news source? Why is it important to have a good network of reliable sources?

_____

_____

Q.4 : What are the criteria by which one can judge source credibility?

_____

_____

5.5 OBJECTIVITY AND AUTHENTICITY OF NEWS

Journalism is a profession of news and news is a serious business. News persons, therefore, are required to present facts as they happen without tampering or adding any personal views or opinions. News means factual presentation of information without being judgmental. Objectivity is of prime importance in journalism. Objectivity in reporting and objectivity in news presentation is a virtue that every professional in this field should strive to achieve. One needs to remain cautious and well guarded against any kind of personal bias or opinions that might creep in while dealing with news.

The reporter has to remain more objective while reporting. Because when an incident occurs, it is the reporter who is sent first to the field to collect information. He not only gathers first hand information at the field, but also interviews people who have probably witnessed the incident and investigates by going deeper into the event in the pursuit of unearthing any hidden facts.

Therefore, it is expected that the reporter does not tamper with facts and figures and also remains cautious against biased opinions of the interviewees. He or she should not, at any cost, let his/her personal opinion to be reflected in the report.

There are specific columns in the newspaper such as the **editorial page** where comments or views of writers find place. If the reporter wants to give any personal judgment on any event he or she can very well write an opinionated piece for the editorial page. The reporter should not inter-mix

news and views while making his report. If the reporter deviates, ethically, from his objectivity, the image of the newspaper gets diluted. Therefore, the reporter should strive to attain complete objectivity in reporting.

However, it may not always be possible for the reporter to remain absolutely unbiased or objective. As a human being, the reporter is vulnerable to various kinds of emotional as well as professional hazards, and can easily fall victim to subjectivity. And more often than not the reporter's personal opinion or bias is reflected in the newspaper. On some such occasions, the reporter's authenticity and even the reputation of the entire newspaper might be at stake. Nevertheless, the reporter should, as much as possible, try to achieve objectivity in his work.

Sometimes it may happen that when the reporter is investigating a particular happening and requires views of other people who may have been witness to that particular incident, the other person may try to pass his own judgment. In such cases the reporter should always check and cross check information, probably verify it from other sources so that the readers receive the truth and only the truth. Thus, objectivity is maintained at any cost.

Being objective also helps in being authentic. Facts are supposed to be authentic information. If the reporter, or for that matter any person in the news business, strives to achieve maximum objectivity, then this, in turn, also helps in being authentic as far as information is concerned. Facts are sacred in journalism. So the journalist should not try to dilute it by mixing it with personal opinions.

In today's era of profit driven media, there is an increasing tendency of the media organizations to try and influence the presentation of facts or news. The owners of the media houses always look at profit while dealing with news. They do not want to sacrifice their sources of profit generators by writing against them, even if they have proper proof of their involvement in any kind of mischievous activities. The media organizations may also have a favoured brigade of people in the society, whom they do not want to offend at any cost, crucifying the concept of objectivity. On the other hand, the news organizations may also attempt to nullify the image of the people who do not come under their good book by writing maliciously against them.

This kind of action on the part of the organizations sends a very bad message across to the people and in the long run there is every possibility of losing faith in the society.

Therefore, objectivity and authenticity are the virtues that every media organizations and also the professionals working in this field should try to achieve if they are looking for long time sustenance in the field.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.5 : What do you mean by objectivity in news?

_____

_____

_____

Q.6 : How can the authenticity of a news item be ascertained? In a media house, whose responsibility is to ensure that the news which are carried are authentic?

_____

_____

_____



5.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have been introduced to the basic concepts of news. Let us quickly recapitulate these concepts once again.

- News is a true account of events, happenings and incident. News is something which has an immediate value for the larger segment of the society.
- News is something new, something relevant and important, something immediate or something unusual happening in our world that concern us or our society in some way or the other. In fact, a news is report of a recent or current event or an information published in a newspaper or other periodicals.
- There are some basic qualities by which we can identify news. They include prominence, proximity, disaster, progress, impact, importance etc.
- A news report should have six basic elements-who, what, when, why, where and how, popularly called 5 W's and 1 H.

- News sources can be primary or secondary, official or unofficial.
- Objectivity in reporting and objectivity in news presentation is a virtue that every professional in this field should strive to achieve. One needs to remain cautious and well guarded against any kind of personal bias or opinions that might creep in while dealing with news.



5.7 FURTHER READING

1. Aggarwal, Vir Bala (2006). Essentials of Practical Journalism. New Delhi : Concept Publishing Company
2. Kamath, M.V (2006). Journalist's Handbook. New Delhi :Vikas Publishing House
3. Lorenz, Alfred Lawrence, Vivian, John (2006). News, Reporting and Editing .New Delhi : Dorling Kindersley Pvt. Ltd.



5.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 : News is information about an event that happens in the society, which affects the lives of the people or has the tendency to affect the lives of the people, directly or indirectly, or has immediate value for the people at large.

Ans to Q. No. 2 : News values are the qualities by the presence of which an event qualifies as news. They are the basic characteristics of any news item.

Ans to Q. No. 3 : News source means the contacts or the sources from which a news reporter gets valuable information for news.

It is important for a reporter to have a good network of reliable sources because news can happen anywhere, but it is not possible for a reporter to be present at all places at all times. Moreover, it may not be possible for the reporter to have direct access to all places. So reporters usually build up some contacts in important places like government. departments, secretariat, court, police stations, hospitals etc so that they can regularly get information about what is happening there.

Ans to Q. No. 4 : The different criteria by which one can judge source credibility are- previous reliability, conformability, proximity, motive, contenterability and believe ability.

Ans to Q.No 5 : In news, objectivity is presentation of news as it has happened without the addition of any colour or personal opinion to it, so that the audience is left to form their opinion and an opinion is not imposed on the audience.

Ans to Q. No 6 : Authenticity of a news item can be ascertained in the following ways-

- Collecting first hand information instead of relying on rumours.
- Taking the information from reliable and credible source only.
- Checking and cross- checking the given information with other sources also.

In a media house, the entire news team is responsible for ensuring the authenticity of the news. It includes the reporter, the sub-editor, the editor and in case of radio and TV, the news producer and to a certain extent the news presenters also have to bear a part of the responsibility.



5.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions

Q.1: What do you mean by news?

Q.2: What are the different sources of news?

Q.3: What do you mean by objectivity in news reporting?

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

Q.1: Why is it necessary to check the credibility of news sources?

Q.2: How does proximity of news sources determine the credibility of news sources?

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

Q.1: "When a dog bites a man it is not news, when a man bites a dog it is news" – discuss.

Q.2: What do you mean by the sources of news? Briefly discuss various sources of news.

Q.3: What is the importance of objectivity and authenticity in news?

* * * * *

UNIT 6 : TYPES OF NEWS

6.1 Learning Objectives
6.2 Introduction
6.3 Types of news
6.4 Principles of news stories
6.5 Qualities of a good news story
6.6 Let us Sum up
6.7 Further Reading
6.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
6.9 Model Questions

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- explain the different types of news
- discuss the principles of news stories
- analyse the qualities of a good news story

6.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, we discussed the concept and the sources of news along with the importance of objectivity and authenticity of news. In this unit we shall discuss the types of news, principles of news stories and the qualities of a good news story.

6.3 TYPES OF NEWS

Having discussed the characteristics of news, let us now understand the different types of news found in the news media. News is basically of two types-Hard News and Soft News.

1. Hard News : Hard new generally refers to up-to-the-minute news and events that are reported immediately, while soft news is background

information or human-interest stories. A hard news story takes a factual approach: What happened? Who was involved? Where and when did it happen? Why?

Politics, war, economics and crime used to be considered hard news, while arts, entertainment and lifestyles were considered soft news. But increasingly, the lines are beginning to blur.

Hard news usually attempts to answer the basic 5 'W's and 1 'H' questions. These are :

- Who – the people in the story
- What- the events or actions that prompted the story
- When – the time period
- Where- the physical location
- Why – comment on the reasons
- How- further information on how the event took place

Normally, a standard technique is followed while writing hard news. In case of print media, the inverted pyramid style is followed, i.e., the most important information is placed towards the beginning of the story and the less important ones are placed thereafter. In the broadcast media, the less important information is simply left out. Instead broadcast reporting follows a square format. The information level stays about the same throughout the story.

The hard news writing style is usually followed while writing news about important public events, government actions, international events, economic and social affairs, crime, science and technology, environment etc.

For instance, if a fire breaks out in any part of Guwahati causing considerable damage to the property of the dwellers, including human lives, the information about this unprecedented devastation needs to be given immediately. Or when a bomb blast takes place, the news about it would be immediately flashed in the news media in the form of hard news stating the facts like where it happened, casualty, action taken etc. These two are examples of hard news.

Usually there are three types of coverage that falls under hard news- **spot coverage, depth coverage and enterprise coverage.**

In today's parlance hard news is also called spot news or breaking news,

because the news organizations break out the news as soon as it happens, without delaying. Examples of spot news stories include plane crashes, assassinations, fires, elections and trial verdicts. Some of the essential features of spot news are-

- Lead-off sentences are event based, telling the most significant or interesting development. Lesser known facts follow suit.
- Witnesses and expert sources are cited.
- Coverage reacts to events, which could be something related to a natural event or a scheduled event like a press conference.
- Information for spot news stories is gathered and written against a deadline.
- Coverage of different events is competitive as reporters from numerous news organizations simultaneously cover the same event.

Depth coverage is also a form of hard news but it goes beyond spot developments. While spot news focuses on events, depth coverage is concerned with providing details and explanation of broad phenomena. Some of the characteristics of depth coverage are –

- Journalists rely on their curiosity and enterprise to decide what to cover rather than letting sources or events set their agenda.
- The entire process of gathering news and information is an extensive one
- Since depth coverage is proactive, with journalists deciding what to pursue, stories basically take the form of scoops that most of the competitors don't have
- Since such form of news reporting does not involve deadlines, depth news stories are fine-tuned and show advanced writing skills.

There is another form of coverage known as enterprise coverage. This form of coverage of news events is possible because of the enterprising ability of a few persons who would take necessary steps in order to extract information beforehand. For example, Reuters, the British news service exhibited enterprise in setting up satellite transmission facilities that gave it an edge in covering the dramatic ousting of Communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe in 1990. CNN also led an early coverage of the coalition war against Iraq in 1991 because months earlier it arranged for backup communication systems in case regular lines went down.

2. Soft News : Soft news is about things that people instinctively want to know as opposed to things they feel duty-bound to know. Stories whose purpose is more to entertain or educate than to inform are known as soft news. Soft news was originally synonymous with feature stories placed in newspapers or television newscasts for human interest, the concept expanded to include a wide range of media outlets that present more personality-centred stories.

Features usually fall under this category. Features typically rely on human interest for their news value. They appeal to people's curiosity, sympathy, skepticism or amazement. The techniques that are used for reporting of features are varied. In the print media, features seldom follow the inverted pyramid pattern. The main point of the feature is often withheld till the very end. A broadcast feature uses a variety of formats. Humorous leads and delaying the main point until the end work well. Other times a simple narrative structure that is used in everyday story telling proves to be quite effective.

Reactions and views are included in soft news apart from the plain facts. Stories that deal with human interest angles can rightly be termed as soft news. Soft news mostly emanates from the hard news. Normally the **follow up stories** of a major event, highlighting the angles not covered in the hard news items, mostly the human interest angle are such type of news.

The idea of such news stories is to arouse curiosity among the readers or viewers and heighten emotional appeal by presenting it in an interesting manner. Therefore the conventional news writing formula is not applied while dealing with soft news stories. The writer has the liberty to be extremely innovative and create an item that would attract as many readers as possible and at the same time create an impact in the minds of the people.

Let us take the example of a plane crash, say, in India. The media would definitely cover the event with due emphasis on the number of deaths, time, place and a narration of how the crash may have taken place and, if possible, also highlighting the cause of the crash. All this information will be immediately covered in the form of hard news. However, as the days progress, a newer set of information may surface and reach the hands of a reporter working on the story. After investigating on the incident the reporter may find out there was a child of, say 3 years, who was traveling with his parents, and the child has survived the crash and could escape with minor injuries. Such news will be covered as soft news.

Some tabloids specialize in frivolous soft news – bizarre, odd, novel, offbeat, crazy stuff etc. which are interesting but of only transitory value. For instance, they sometimes carry news surrounding celebrity gossip stories which can be tantalizing but rarely are they important.

Renowned media scholar, Wilbur Schramm said that soft news gives the audience an immediate reward as compared to hard news where the reward comes later. However, this view of Wilbur Schramm lacks universal applicability.

Balancing hard and soft news

Most of the newsrooms seek a balance of hard and soft news. This balance is based on how they see their role in the community and how they perceive their audience's needs and interests. Broadcasting stations are loaded with hard news programmes in the morning and evening when people look for wrap-ups on what has happened overnight or during the day. Radio news which emphasizes immediacy, lends itself to hard news.

Morning newspapers emphasize on hard news stories because they generally have to report the previous day's events with their deadlines the night before. Evening newspapers on the other hand tend to focus mostly on soft news stories.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1: What is the difference between hard news and soft news?

Q.2: What are the other terms by which hard news is also known?

Q.3: What are the 5 Ws and 1 H?

Q.4: What are the different types of coverage that falls under hard news?



ACTIVITY- 6.1

1) Using a copy of your local newspaper find examples of soft and hard news stories by standards suitable for readers in your community

2) Collect material for as many fresh human –interest stories as you can. Select the best among them and prepare them as they should appear in a newspaper

6.4 PRINCIPLES OF NEWS STORIES

There is a certain rule that needs to be followed while writing news stories. Writing for news, includes various styles with respect to ethics. News writing is an important skill and it depends on the journalistic skills of the reporter or journalist who is preparing a news story. The principles that need to be followed while writing news are as follows;

1. Lead Writing

Lead writing is probably the most important part. It should be written in an attractive manner to catch the attention of the reader. By reading the lead paragraph the reader should find the basic who, what, where, when of a story. In short, if the reader does not have the time to read the entire article, the lead should give them a summary of the story. This type of lead writing is called 'Summary Lead'. Usually it is used to write hard news. There are other types of leads too.

2. Interviewing

The subject of the news story should be researched thoroughly before being written. If there is any interview required to be put in the news story it must be handled carefully.

3. Quotes

Using quotes is one of the essential parts of news writing. It is important not to simply tell the reader what has happened, but to illuminate the facts by providing quotes from multiple sources, including witnesses and experts on the subject of your article.

4. Headlines

The headline of a story needs to capture the attention of a reader as well as to reveal the substance of the news story. The first thing we do when we

pick up a newspaper is to scan the headlines. The headline of a news story needs to be concise, specific and informative. It should be attractive and eye-catching.

5. Ethics

Following ethics plays a significant role in writing a news story. The Journalistic codes of ethics should be strictly followed while writing news stories. The news story should be accurate, objective and non-biased.

6.5 QUALITIES OF A GOOD NEWS STORY

In order to recognize a good story, you need to have good 'news sense'. Lynette Sheridan Burns in her book *'Understanding Journalism'* (Sage Publications, London, 2010,p.53) writes:

'News sense is recognizing the potential news value in facts that might by themselves seem unimportant and selecting the parts that will interest people. It is finding ways to bring the audience into the story. It is making connections between facts and events and predicting the ways an audience will react'.

We are often bombarded by events and information all the time. Having news sense means that you can make quick decisions about what stories to follow and which stories to ignore.

If you open any newspaper or magazine, you will come across many different stories which have been written either in the form of hard news, soft news, feature or article. What the reader wants when he or she opens the paper is to find out what is going on in the world. In order that the reader may get the facts of the story without much thought, they must be presented clearly, forcefully and concisely. However, in order to be recognized as a good news story, it must have the following features as given below-

a. ***A good news story begins with a strong and attention getting headline.***

An eye catching headline will definitely be able to draw the attention of the readers who would feel obliged to read the articles /feature or any other news story. A poorly constructed headline would not draw much attention. The ability to write good, appropriate and catchy headlines is certainly a valuable skill for an editor. However, headline writing is not merely about using the right words in the right order to

frame the sentence . It is also about the physical placement of the headline on the page in the story and distribution of the constituent words, attributing it with the proper length, font, font size etc, keeping in mind certain factors like the type of the story , relative importance of the story compared to other stories, the space the story has occupied etc. Thus, a good headline should be accurate, clear, grammatically correct, strong, active, fresh and immediate.

b. ***A good news story has an informative lead***

By informative lead we mean that the lead answers most or all of the 5 Ws and 1 H. In other words, if a news report provides answers to five Ws (what, where, when, why, who) and one H (how), then it is said to be a perfect news item. However, it is expected that the answers to these six questions should be provided in the lead itself. This is because people seldom get the desired time to go through the entire article or report. So, they prefer to read the lead which provides them an array of information.

c. ***Presents the information in order of importance***

A good news story presents the information in order of importance starting with the most important and ending with the least important (which includes the background information). This is akin to the inverted pyramid style of news writing whereby the most important parts of news are placed at the top paragraph followed by the least important information in the later paragraphs.

d. ***Uses short paragraphs***

A good news story is characterized by the use of short paragraphs. This is because short and concise paragraphs enable the readers to get a quick overview of the news story within the shortest possible time.

e. ***Objective in nature***

A good news story is distinct from other news report in terms of its objectivity in news reporting. By objective reporting, we mean to say that journalists seek to present the news in an objective way without reflecting any corporate or personal bias. There is a balance and even-handedness in presenting different sides of an issue. According to the objectivity norm, the journalists' job consists of reporting something called 'news' without commenting on it, slanting it or shaping its formulation in any way.

f. ***Includes quotations from people involved in the issue or event***
A good news report tries to incorporate the quotes (called bytes in Television parlance) given by the people who might have been involved in any issue or event. This enhances the importance of the story as it puts forward the outline of the story from the perspective of the people or witnesses.

g. ***Uses first and last names when first introducing the people involved***
A good news report makes use of the first and last names while introducing the people involved and then uses their last names only (except in special cases)

h. ***Uses language that is easy for most readers to understand***
A good news report uses language that is easily understandable by the readers. If a news report makes use of ambiguous words, then the readers will not be able to judge the news and put forward their viewpoints.

i. ***A good news report is free from spelling mistakes and grammatical errors***
One can distinguish a good news report from a poorly written one by way of language presentation. A good news report is usually devoid of grammatical and other spelling mistakes including punctuation marks. This is because if the report is interspersed by such mistakes then it takes away the beauty of news reading.

j. ***Has specific detail***
A good news report provides a detail account of the events that might have taken place while reporting an event.



6.6 LET US SUM UP

Let us summarise some of the important points of this unit in the following way-

- Hard news is a news item which states plain, simple facts as it has happened. It usually answers the basic questions of 5W's and 1H.
- Normally, a standard technique is followed while writing hard news. In case of print media, the inverted pyramid style is followed, i.e., the

most important information is placed towards the beginning of the story and the less important ones are placed thereafter. In the broadcast media, the less important information is simply left out. Instead broadcast reporting follows a square format.

- Usually there are three types of coverage that falls under hard news- *spot coverage, depth coverage and enterprise coverage.*
- In today's parlance hard news is also called spot news or breaking news, because the news organizations break out the news as soon as it happens, without delaying.
- *Depth coverage* is also a form of hard news but it goes beyond spot developments. While spot news focuses on events, depth coverage is concerned with providing detail and explanation of broad phenomena.
- Soft news is about things that people instinctively want to know as opposed to things they feel duty-bound to know. Stories whose purpose is more to entertain than to inform are known as soft news.
- The headline of a story needs to capture the attention of a reader as well as to reveal the substance of the news story.
- The Journalistic codes of ethics should be strictly followed while writing news stories. The news story should be accurate, objective and non-biased.



6.7 FURTHER READING

1. Aggarwal, Vir Bala (2006). Essentials of Practical Journalism. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company
2. Kamath, M.V (2013).Professional Journalism. Noida: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd
3. Lorenz, Alfred Lawrence & Vivian, John (2006). News, Reporting and Writing. New Delhi: Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd.



6.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No 1 : A news item which states plain, simple facts as it has happened. It usually answers the basic questions of 5W's and 1 H. On

the other hand, reactions and views are included in soft news apart from the plain facts. Features, editorials, articles, etc fall under the category of soft news. Human interest is an important concern in soft news.

Ans to Q.No 2 : Spot news or breaking news.

Ans to Q. No 3 : The 5 Ws are Who, What, Where, When, Why and 1 H is How?

Ans to Q. No 4 : Spot coverage, depth coverage and enterprise coverage.



6.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very short questions

Q.1: Define the terms- spot coverage, depth coverage and enterprise coverage.

Q.2: Why must a good news story have an informative lead?

Q.3: What is the significance of 5 Ws and 1 H?

Q.4: Why is it important for news to be objective in nature?

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

Q.1: Do the news organizations need to balance hard and soft news? Why?

Q.2: Which style of writing is mostly followed in print and broadcast media?

Q.3: What are the basic differences between hard news and soft news?

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

Q. 1: What are the principles of news stories?

Q.2: What are the qualities of a good news story?

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UNIT 7: NEWS VALUES

7.1 Learning Objectives
7.2 Introduction
7.3 News values
7.4 Let us Sum up
7.5 Further Reading
7.6 Answers to Check Your Progress
7.7 Model Questions

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This unit will enable you to-

- define what is ‘news value’
- know what are the constructs of news value

7.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, you were introduced to the concept of hard and soft news and the differences between them. You were also given a brief overview of the basic principles of news story along with the qualities of a good news story. In this unit, you will learn about the news values.

7.3 NEWS VALUES

News values are the characteristics of news. As mentioned earlier they are the qualities by which events qualify as news.

News values (sometimes called **news criteria)** determine how much prominence a news story is given by a media outlet, and the attention it is given by the audience. A. Boyd(Boyd, A. (1994) Broadcast Journalism, Techniques of Radio and TV News. Oxford: Focal.)states that: "News journalism has a broadly agreed set of values, often referred to as 'newsworthiness'..."News values are not universal and can vary widely between different cultures.

It is expected that all journalists regardless of whether they are involved in on-the-field reporting or placed at the **news desk**, have a clear idea about the values that constitute news. Therefore, let us now try to understand the characteristics of news one by one.

Timeliness

News essentially has to be new, recent, on time. Old news is stale and, therefore, of little value. Timeliness, however, is defined by the publication cycle of the news medium in which the information will appear.

- For a weekly news magazine, events that happened during the previous week are timely.
- For a daily newspaper, however, events that happened during the 24 hours since the last edition of the paper are timely.
- For the broadcast media, events that happened during the past few hours up to the last half hour are timely.

A timely presentation of events and happenings is a consideration that every newsman strives to achieve. Otherwise news loses its freshness and essence. Readers do not find it interesting to read stale news. Therefore, it is said that news is the most perishable commodity in the world. And that is the reason why the happenings of the day, including the major events taking place in the evening and late at night, will find a definite place in the morning newspaper.

This concern for immediacy has become more prominent in today's era of evolving technology. The 24x7 television has reduced this time gap to an unbelievable 'news as it is happening now' situation. The viewersnow expect to watch the unfolding of events taking place even at far flung places of the world the moment they break on their television screen. The online newspapers also keep on updating information or the content of the paper as and when events break and simultaneously more and more information keeps on pouring in throughout the day adding more highlights and insights into a single event. Now-a-days news updates can be received through SMS and social media also.

Importance

Significant events that hold importance for the masses must be considered as news. Any important event like the presentation of railway

or general budget at the Parliament or in the State Assemblies, announcement of any kind of development project by the government, visits of Foreign ministers to our country or vice versa, a military threat by the neighboring countries, crime related stories etc. are all important events, information about which needs to be delivered immediately to the people.

The news story which has been given below shows that important projects have been taken up for the development of the State.

Gadkari lays foundations of NH projects in State

Guwahati, Feb 27 : Union Minister for Road Transport, highways and Shipping Nitin Jairam Gadkari today laid the foundation stones of two bridge projects, one connecting Jorhat and North Lakhimpur via river island Majuli, and another connecting Lakhimpur and Sivasagar districts via Desangmukh. He also laid the foundation stone of four-laning of NH-37 at Moran in Dibrugarh district.

Conflict

Conflicts take place in every society. When a society comprises multiple ideologies, multiple organs, innumerable ethnic communities, multiple languages, geographical terrains etc. then conflicts are bound to happen. The entire North east region, including Assam, is a testimony to conflicts of different nature and magnitude plugging at different points of time fuelled by innumerable reasons. Nuclear war, terrorist activities, communal clashes, political turmoil, struggles for identities have become cause of concern for every society the world over and there have been excessive reporting about such incidents in every news media. Reports about such happenings are widely covered by local as well as national media because they are news worthy and arouse heightened emotions among masses. One, however, needs to exercise a lot of caution and restraint while reporting conflict as some of the issues which have led to the conflict could be very sensitive. Media reports portraying the incident in an improper way can flare up the situation and cause further damage. At times the media also has to hold back from revealing certain information in order to help maintain peace and harmony.

Proximity

Similar to relevance the local news is always interesting for the masses, irrespective of where they stay. When a local event is featured in the newspapers or electronic media news bulletins, the readers find it engrossing because local events affect their immediate life and surroundings – weather, events, traffic, communication, market, health facility etc. It is a general tendency of people to remain abreast with what is happening in their locality, in their local markets, in their neighbourhood and with the local people. That is the reason why all the newspapers devote a considerable amount of space for regional affairs. Also, to capitalize on the readership base, there has been a tendency of all the big national newspapers, in the past couple of years, to have local editions in probably every state of the country to cater to the needs and interests of the people of that particular state. Proximity, however, means more than a simple measure of distance. Psychological proximity is also important. So, if, say, an Indian is awarded or gains recognition in a foreign country, it makes important news for us.

The following news story focuses on Tezpur University being awarded the Best Central University in India which was published in The Assam Tribune on 27th February, 2016. People of Assam will relate to the news story because a University from the State has been given this prestigious honour.

Best central varsity award for Tezpur University

Tezpur, Feb 27 : Tezpur University has been awarded the prestigious 'Best Central University Award' by the Union Human Resource Development Ministry.

Dr. Rajib Kumar Doley, Director, Inclusive Development, Tezpur University in a telephonic conversation told this correspondent here that as stated by the HRD Ministry, Tezpur University from among the frontline central universities in India, has been able to achieve the honour, reflecting the dignity of Tezpur as well as the sacrifices of the martyrs of the six year long Assam Agitation, as a fruition of which it came into being.

Prominence

Prominent persons, prominent events and prominent places always make news. You must have always been wondering as to why you always see the same faces — same politicians, same celebrities or the same places making inroads into the newspaper space and bulletin time. Popular politicians, popular film stars, sports persons, celebrities, socialites—they always make news. This is because the readers or the viewers adore them and want to know more about them, about their life styles, their likes and dislikes. They are the role models for many and hence, when their activities are covered by the media it is bound to draw the attention. Political bigwigs like the President, the Prime Minister, the Leaders of different political parties, spiritual gurus, sports persons, film stars, business barons etc, are always in the news.

Sometime, even prominent places make news. Like the metros of India-Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and other major cities of India and abroad, make news. The events happening in these places are matters of concern for many and, hence, they raise curiosity. Prominent events like International Trade Fairs, Expos, Fashion shows, film festivals, international summits and conferences etc also make news.

Impact or Consequence

The kind of impact an event is going to have on the minds of the people is also another characteristic of news. An event that causes or is capable of causing a great sequence of events affecting many persons is obviously newsworthy. Massive disasters, earthquake, floods, natural calamities, political debacles, economic turmoil, major accidents, crashes, inflation, hike of fuel prices, political party coming to or moving out of power, union budget, reservation or any shift in policy etc are all able to create greater impact on the lives of the common people. Similarly, consequence may measure disaster or progress. A fire that destroys a private dwelling is of small consequence in comparison to tsunami which killed thousands of lives in the coastal regions of India recently. When news about such incidents appear in the newspaper pages people become emotionally aroused and such incidents affects the lives of the people in more ways than one. Let us cite an example of a news item which appeared in 'The Sentinel' on 20th May, 2016 . As

indicated in the box given below, focus has been given on the thumping win by the BJP over the Congress at the recently held elections in Assam, thus clearing the decks for Sarbananda Sonowal to be the next CM of Assam.

Sonowal to take oath as CM on May 24

Guwahati, May 20 : BJP leader Sarbananda Sonowal will on Tuesday take oath as Assam's new Chief Minister at a function to be attended also be Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP president Amit Shah, besides CMs of some ten NDA-ruled states and central ministers.

The BJP has invited all the chief ministers of states ruled by the BJP and its allies as well as chief ministers of all the northeastern states to the event.

The function will be held at the Veterinary College ground at Khanapara area here. Modi is expected to address the meeting.

Progress

Information relating to a country's development and prosperity always makes news. Every society has problems and issues that need to be highlighted by the media. Such information is always newsworthy. Therefore, success stories of individual or the society, victories and progress- they all make news.

Disaster

Any kind of disaster makes news. Disasters like earthquakes, flood, fire, erosions, volcanic eruptions, cyclones, etc. make news as such occurrences affect the lives of the majority. When such incidents occur they take away human lives, damages property and break the ecological balance. Such incidents stir the emotions of the larger segments of the society. The following news story was reported in 'The Sentinel' on 18th May, 2016 emphasizing on the torrential rain that triggered landlines in the North eastern region of India.

11 killed in landslides

Guwahati, May 18 : Torrential rains and landslides have once again disrupted rail services in Southern Assam, Tripura, Manipur and Mizoram , officials said on Wednesday.

Ten people were killed in landslides in Karimganj and Hailakandi districts in Barak valley in Assam due to heavy rains.

Five members of a family were killed in a landslide at Suneicherra in Karimganj district in the wee hours. The landslide, triggered by incessant rains, buried a house on the edge of a hill, killing five people from the same family, superintendent of police PR Kar said.

Human Interest :

These are stories that arouse some emotions in the audience - stories that are motivating, uplifting or ironic, bizarre, or dramatic. These items concern ordinary people who find themselves in circumstances with which the audience can identify.Human interest stories tug at the emotions of human beings. As such they make good news item. Let us cite an example of a human interest story. A baby girl from Pakistan was diagnosed with congenital heart condition which needed to be operated. However, the requisite facilities were not available in Pakistan. The girls' parents got in touch with the Rotary club of Delhi who decided to sponsor their trip and subsequently the baby's treatment at the Apollo Hospitals in New Delhi. The baby girl made a speedy recovery after undergoing the heart surgery. On their return to Pakistan, the family offered their gratitude and heartfelt thanks to the Rotary Club and the hospital fraternity for giving them the 'Gift of Life'.

Currency

News is about current events. So, current events will hog limelight rather than that news which might have taken place sometime back.

Novelty

Stories that are unique, something that is new or unusual make news. For instance, when a couple got married underwater, it created news. Similarly Guinness world record events make news.

Usefulness

Sometimes certain news stories help the public in various ways. For example, you must have noticed that sometimes during bad weather conditions, weather forecasters warn fishermen to not to venture out into the sea.Newspapers gives the phone numbers of police stations, hospitals, ambulances etc. for assistance and help.

Educational value

News also has an educational value. These days, in almost all newspapers you can find columns about educational and job opportunities. These guide you about different educational courses, career options available, opportunities for higher studies etc. These news items help you become more knowledgeable. For example, 'Times Ascent' is a supplemental news copy carried by The Times of India which focuses on job openings.

News values can be applied to human rights stories too. Awareness of human rights has benefits for journalists. Linking events to human rights standards can make the story more newsworthy.

Thus, we can say that news values are qualities that make information newsworthy. They are what the media have come to believe will attract interest and audiences.



ACTIVITY 7.1

Take any day's paper and identify news items coming under different news values. While preparing the list of the news items make sure to explain why that particular news story exhibit a particular newsworthiness.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1: Why newsmen have to give emphasis on timely presentation of news?

_____

_____

Q.2: Can 'impact' be considered as a characteristic of news?

_____

_____

Q.3: What are human interest stories?

_____

_____

Q.4: Which news stories are said to possess 'novelty' news value?

_____

_____



7.4 LET US SUM UP

A careful analysis of this unit summarises the following points-

- News values are the characteristics of news. They are the qualities by which events qualify as news.
- News essentially has to be new, recent, on time. Old news is stale news and, therefore, of no value. Timeliness, however, is defined by the publication cycle of the news medium in which the information will appear.
- Significant events that hold importance for the masses must be considered as news.
- Prominent persons, prominent events and prominent places always make news.
- The kind of impact an event is going to have on the minds of the people is also another characteristic of news.

- Information relating to a country's development and prosperity always makes news.
- These are stories that arouse some emotions in the audience - stories that are ironic, bizarre, uplifting or dramatic. These items concern ordinary people who find themselves in circumstances with which the audience can identify. Human interest stories tug at the emotions of human beings. As such they make good news item.
- Stories that are unique, something that is new or unusual make news.



7.5 FURTHER READING

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7.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1: Newsmen must give emphasis on timely presentation of events and happenings. Otherwise news loses its credibility and essence. Moreover, readers also do not find it interesting to read stale news.

Ans to Q. No. 2: The kind of impact an event will have on the minds of the people can be considered as a characteristic of news. This is because an event that causes or is capable of causing a great sequence of events affecting many persons is said to be newsworthy.

Ans to Q. No. 3: Human interest stories are stories that arouse some emotions in the audience - stories that are ironic, bizarre, uplifting or dramatic. These items concern ordinary people who find themselves in circumstances with which the audience can identify.

Ans to Q. No. 4: Those news stories that are unique, something that is new or unusual are said to possess 'novelty' news value.



7.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very short questions.

Q.1: What are news values? Why are they important?

Q.2: What events are most worth reporting and why?

B. **Short Questions** (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q.1: What is the essence of human interest stories?

C. **Long Questions** (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q.1: What are news values? How do knowing news values help to enhance the quality of news?

* * * * *



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