English Media in China: an Analysis of China Daily's Coverage of Tiananmen Square Crackdown and Beijing Olympics

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled **"English Media in China: An Analysis of China Daily's Coverage of Tiananmen Square Crackdown and Beijing Olympics"** submitted by me for the award of the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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Acknowledgements

Contents

Abbreviations:

ANOC: Association of National Olympic Committees

AQSIQ: General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine

BOCOG: Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad

BOAP: Beijing Olympic Action Plan

CASS: The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

CPC: Communist Party of China

CCTV: China Central Television

CNNIC: The China Internet Network Information Center

CPD: Central Publicity Department

CPPCC: Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference

CRH: construction of the railway high-speed

DOP: Department of Propaganda

FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation

FDI: Foreign Direct Investment

FYP: Five-Year Plan

GDP: gross domestic product

GLF: Great Leap Forward

ICTs: Information &Communication Technologies

IOC: International Olympics Committee

IPR: Intellectual Property Rights

KMT: Kuomintang

MOCA: Ministry of Civil Affairs

MPS: Ministry of Public Security

MPC: Main Press Centre

NCAC: National Copyright Administration of China

NGOs: Environmental Nongovernmental Organisations

NOC: National Olympic Committees

NPC: National People's Congress

PLA: People's Liberation Army

PRC: People's Republic of China

PX: paraxylene

SARFT: State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television

SARS: Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome

SEC: State Education Commission

SOEs: State-Owned Enterprises

TNC: Trans National Cooperation

USOC: United States Olympic Committee

WHO: World Health Organization

WTO: World Trade Organization

Chapter I

Introduction

The English media in China has come a long way in its evolution since the 1980s. Major transformation in the media is also the result of the reform and opening up of the Chinese economy introduced in the 1980s by the Chinese government. English media's evolution is closely linked to the overall changes in the Chinese media landscape. This is the phase when there was a massive rise in the number of publications. After the introduction of the economic reforms the number of publications in China increased from 200 to 1600 and soon reached 2200. Such increase was also witnessed in the other popular elements of mass media, including electronic and print media. Subsequently, Internet has changed the way Chinese media operates and the way it connects with its global counterparts.

Like in other sectors of life and work, 1980s saw extensive amount of debate on the nature and role of media in China. It was also a period when media jostled for its independent space, as ideas of accountability, transparency and public opinion began to be debated in the context of media role. The idea of "socialist freedom of the press" was another important issue then (see Huang and Yu, 1997 for more).Chinese media also started using newer techniques like people's comment and surveys and opinion polls in this period. Professionalism was accompanied by outwardly approach and people's participation.

Media's role in the political process in the first phase of reforms and opening up culminated in the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre where numerous Chinese journalists were also part of the crowds searching for accountability and democracy. Media participants reportedly raised slogans like 'We want to tell the truth', 'Don't force us to lie' and 'We want press freedom' (Huang and Yu, 1997).

From 1989 till the famous southern tour of Deng Xiaoping, media underwent the same stage of control like other aspects of life in China. Press freedom was not in view and control was supreme. In the subsequent period, commercialization and structural transformation have been the defining features of media in China. It can be argued that all other developments have taken place around these two tenets. The tide of media commercialization has also triggered a steady rise of diversity and pluralism,

increasing the emphasis on the management and wider adoption of new communication technologies.

Today, media in China walks two line; one that of supporting the party position and the other that of being economically profitable. Accountability towards investments necessitates profitability and technological changes increase the forces of individualization and the privatization of media use by creating new communication networks. These encourage market driven content and high speed delivery of that content. This creates insecurities for the traditional political set up. At the same time the government is tightening its control over the media.

What is critically significant in the evolution of Chinese media in the last two decades is that it exhibits a dual nature. On the one hand, tremendous and remarkable changes have been witnessed as the media developed in a more pluralist, market oriented and democratic direction. On the other hand, it has been subjected to the CPC's control to the extent that it can be described as its "mouth, eyes and ears". As a result, the English media in China today is moving like a pendulum between two extremes. One extreme has the media playing the role of the mouthpiece and official propaganda organ of the Party and Government and the other extreme is the media's desire to become the representative voice of the masses. Thus, the Chinese media is currently in a major occupational flux. In addition to this, the media has become increasingly active with the introduction of the internet and other new modes of communication and the spread of information has become highly rapid. With almost 688 million internet users in China today, the government is finding it highly difficult to control the flow of information. It is because of this that the debates about the development of a civil society and public sphere in China are gaining momentum. Increasingly news which the Chinese government would have attempted to control and suppress are finding ways of getting reported, like the Zhejiang rail accident of 2011, the Wukan 'Uprising' of 2011 and also the spread of the SARS epidemic. All these events were covered in the media due to the spread of the internet and mobile phones.

These trends can be witnessed even in the English media in China today. As the English media is an integral part of the Chinese media, almost all the processes present in the latter can be observed in the former.

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Review of Literature:

Most of the literature available on this topic deals with a number of aspects related to the changes within the media in China. Three major themes emerge from the existing literature on media in China.

- The first theme is concerned with the relation between the *party and the media*.

- The second theme relates to the *changes within the Chinese media due to globalization and the new technological developments*.

- The third theme is about the *freedom of press and the role of media in Chinese society*.

A number of authors discuss the first theme in detail. They focus on the nature of the relation between the party and the media. Some of them are Yuezhi Zhao, "Media, Market and Democracy in China: Between Party Line and the Bottom Line" (1998), Chin Chuan-Lee 'Voices of China: The Interplay of Politics and Journalism' (1990), Yu Huang and Xu Xu (1997) *"Towards Media Democratization: The Chinese Experience and A Critique of the Neo-Authoritarian Model"*, Chin Chuan-Lee (1990) '*Voices of China: The Interplay of Politics and Journalism*' and "*Ambiguities and Contradictions: Issues in China's Changing Political Communication*" (1994), Barrett L. McCormick *"Recent Trends in Mainland China's Media: Political Implications of Commercialization"* (2003), He Qinglian "*Media Control in China*" (2004) and Guogang Wu, *"Command Communication: The Politics of Editorial Formulation in the People's Daily"* (1994).

Party and the Media:

The major thrust of these works is on the rapid transformation of a solely ideologically motivated party-state media into a consumer-conscious commodity industry even as it follows the party line. They argue that it is about the delicate balance between media commercialization and the Party's determination to retain its traditionally high degree of control over the media. Commercialization does not necessarily mean liberalization but commercialization of the media in China has definitely allowed some room for experimentation. However, in the face of a crisis, the media has always towed the Party line. The fundamental question that is raised is

whether the commodification of Chinese communications will lead towards a truly democratic media or one that continues to allow the party control over it. These works have also covered several other aspects and transitions such as media reforms in China, the political economy of Chinese media, the major areas of journalistic discontent, the dilemma of centricity and internationalism in China. Chin Chuan-Lee in particular captures this change very well. Lee points out that while Mao ensured that State influence and radical revolutionary ideology pervaded every domain of social life, Deng Xiaoping made it less intrusive under his leadership. He also states that the post-Mao regimes' relative de-emphasis of ideology has made it possible for various cultural genres, livelier media entertainment and other less ideologically loaded materials to flourish. He also points out that, while Mao repeatedly launched mass mobilization campaigns to pursue his ideological vision as well as to bolster his power, his successors have encouraged the media "to focus on promoting economic modernization instead of class struggle", thereby leaving China "far less totalistic in the ideological arena". Lee also notes that "growing diversity in overall media structure and content coverage is gradually stripping away the ideological straitjacket imposed by the CPC."

Another important aspect is the viability of the 'neo-authoritarian model to discuss and define the changes within the Chinese media. The changes that have been unfolding in the post-Mao era in the realm of the media are outside the control of the party dictatorship to a certain extent. However, democracy will take a long time to come to China if the Neo-Authoritarian model persists. One of the drawbacks with these scholars is that they have not discussed how the limited freedom of the media can lead to a truly active civil society or a democratic society in China and the fundamental changes that need to occur in China for this to happen.

Another primary debate under the broad rubric of this theme is that the Central government controls the media by means of political power and a series of top-down coercive policies. There have been a number of events that highlight the ways in which the government has exercised its coercive means of control. For instance, on July 17, 2001 after the mining accident in Nandan, Guangxi Autonomous Region, in which 81 people died, the local government made several attempts to punish people who spoke to the journalist. But when a few journalists managed to gain access to the area and showed the photographs to the local government

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authorities, the authorities claimed that they were fake/doctored and that no such incident had even occurred. Similar efforts were made in the case of the Nanjing poisoning case and in the case of labour uprising in Liaoyang. More often than not the journalists who fought for such causes ended up in jail under one pretext or the other.

Some of the case studies conducted by major media organisations also deal with this theme. One important case study examines the reform era and the impact of reforms on *People's Daily*. Within the well-organized Communist propaganda apparatus, the Chinese mass media has shaped its command communication systems, assuming the traditional "transmission belt" role. Due to this, political control and professionalism are always in conflict. Command communication is usually efficient for propagating the policies of the leaders, but it strongly restricts the creativeness of commentators and narrows down the informative basis of the newspaper. Some of these scholars have also asserted that within changes in the economic domain of the society, the Party will face more and more problems in its attempts to control the media.

The impact of commercialization has also been discussed. While the initial writings, right after the beginning of commercialization, demonstrated that these changes would challenge the Party's control of the media, more recent literature highlights that the Party has successfully managed to find ways and means to control the media and minimize the impact of these changes.

Changes within the Chinese media due to Globalization and the new technological developments:

The following authors delineate the second major theme of the impact of globalization and technological development on Chinese media. They are Daniel C. Lynch (1999) "After the Propaganda State: Media, Politics and Thought Work in Reformed China", Chin Chuan-Lee (2003) "Chinese Media, Global Contexts" and Junhao Hong, (1994) **"The Resurrection of Advertising in China: Developments, Problems, and Trends".**

These works highlight the transformation of China's propaganda system into a media industry. What is looked at are the three important catalysts of change namely, commercialization, globalization and pluralisation. Commercialization results

in part from central and local governments' financial exigencies and has created a highly profitable state-owned media enterprise. The institutional changes in China's media are also critically important to PRC politics. The media being more open and active provides the disgruntled masses an outlet to vent out their frustrations and anger. At times such outlets prevent the build-up of any major mass movement which can question the authority of the Chinese government to rule. Another important theme that is highlighted is that the loss of the party's control over the media does not amount to democracy. Other areas that are covered under this theme are issues of globalization and the new technological developments that have occurred within the Chinese media and their impact on the overall debate of control of the state on the media. The most important aspect is the introduction of advertising and the changes resulting from that. What one concludes is that the major impetus for the move towards diversity was the gradual withdrawal of the state subsidies to media and the corresponding emergence of advertising as a source of primary financial autonomy.

Freedom of Press and the role of media in Chinese Society:

A number of authors look at the freedom of press and the role of media in the Chinese society. Some of them are Chin Chuan Lee "Power, Money and Media: Communication Patterns and Bureaucratic Control in Cultural China" (2001), Orville Schelle "*Maoism Vs Media in the Marketplace*" (2001), Judy Polubaum in "*China's Media: Between Politics and the Market*" (2001), Sun Wusan and Huang Yu in "*The Effects of Media Behavior on Modernisation of Ideas – The Case of China*", (1997), Kevin Lathan *"Nothing but the Truth: News Media, Power and Hegemony in South China"* (2000) and Guobin Yang *"The Co-Evolution of the Internet and Civil Society in China"* (2003).

The authors emphasize the importance of the liberal perspective in examining the contending forces of state and market in the reconstitution of media sources and their function in society. They support media liberalization even when they critically examine the extent to which societal liberalization is an insufficient condition for democracy. They are thus critical of those who champion economic reforms as the primary condition for the evolution of democracy in China. Moreover, the system of censorship in China which was adopted from Stalinist Russia in the 1950s worked primarily through the party branches located in every media outlet. However, as

China is fragmenting into a number of self-sufficient regional units, these controls get more and more problematic. The conclusion these scholars arrive at is that the channels of censorship have weakened because the very officials that are entrusted with the task of looking into censorship are the ones who have major stakes in the financial profitability of the media houses and thus at times they turn a blind eye to the kind of news articles being published.

Critical Gaps in the Literature:

Though the literature available on English media in China covers a wide range of issues related to the media, there are a number of areas that have not been covered in detail. The first such area that can be stated is one relating to the creation of new constituencies by the media in the post - reform period. In China, Internet can meet the people's need for personal expression and public participation far better than conventional media. This has been seen in the recent years as Chinese people are using the Internet to know what is happening in the world and what the world is thinking about China. This has also become a source through which people express their anger regarding certain policies of the government.

The second is the creation of a link between local debates and global debates. The media after the introduction of advertising has to compete for revenue and is not financially depended on the government. In spite of this change the media is used by the Chinese government as a propaganda tool. As the media fights for generating revenue and gaining financing in the open market, what it rights and promotes are commercial in nature. As a result, a number of media houses fight for the same available revenue and thus there are a number of versions of ideas and stories present in the market. This has been argued by Kevin Latham (2000). He writes,

> "Media products have also become commodities of the open market driven by commercialization. There are contending, overlapping and contradictory "regimes" of truth and social legitimation. These "regimes" relate to commercialization, the professional values of journalists, the perception of the truth associated with freedom of the press, or lack of censorship, and the proliferation of external sources of news as China makes the transition from a planned economy to a socialist market economy. It is argued that all these regimes of truth, authentication and legitimation discursively coexist in China despite their incompatibilities. That is, people appeal to or refute such truths in different situations as they negotiate the mediated realities of their daily lives. Yet, the

understanding of news media practices reveals the ways in which the party's hegemony may be becoming increasingly fragile" (2000).

Definition, Rationale and Scope of the Study:

One can define English Media in China as the mass media which is published in the English Language in China. After a detailed study of the available literature on the topic, the question that arises is that there is very little literature that actually deals with the aspect which highlights the dichotomy within the English media in China itself. Though the Chinese media is highly controlled, one cannot deny that the media is becoming critical of the government. Within the domestic arena, it is desperately trying to make space for itself and is working towards undermining the Party by reporting instances that its claims are not political but social in nature. As a result, it is facilitating considerable social transformation in Chinese society. The study will compare and contrast the coverage of various events such as the Tiananmen Square Massacre and the Beijing Olympics of 2008 in the *China Daily*. These two specific issues have been selected due to the fact that they represent two very different aspects. The Tiananmen Square Crackdowns a political issue and the Beijing Olympics is an international issue. Another essential difference is that the China of 1989 is very different from the China of 2008. The 1989 Tiananmen Square Crackdown highlighted the domestic turmoil in the Chinese society and the way the leadership at that time reacted to it. It was also a phase when China was isolated by the international community. However, the 2008 Beijing Olympics is when China portrays its achievements to the global community. It was an event where the Chinese government showcased its success in transforming a backward agrarian society into a major economic driving force. China had moved from being the sole bearer of Communism to being at ease with the global order. Thus these will help in studying the evolution of the English Media from these two trajectories.

Research Questions:

The study makes an attempt to answer the following questions:

(i) What is the nature of the role that the English media has been playing in China since 1989?

(ii) What is the impact of opening up and globalization on English media and what have been the new constituencies that the media is creating?

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(iii)Do English newspapers like *China Daily* reflect the variety of debates that exist within China?

(iv)What has been the response of the Party/State towards the increasing level of independence asserted by the media today?

(v) Can the English media in China help in the democratization process?

(vi)What has been the role of the English media in promoting civil society?

Hypotheses:

(i) The English media in China has matured during the reform period by initiating a process of redefining its role.

(ii) The changes within the media have helped in creating a space for interaction between the state and society in China and are also restructuring the relationship between the Party and the people.

(iii)English media (*China Daily*) has emerged as an important arena providing scope for an effective interface between the local debates within China and the global debates.

Research Methods:

The research uses the Habermasian model of Public sphere and the Critical Theory debates on discourse to understand the changes in the relationship of the Party and Media in China. Jurgen Habermas defined the public sphere as a virtual or imaginary community which does not necessarily exist in any identifiable space. In its ideal form, the public sphere is "made up of private people gathered together as a public and articulating the needs of society with the state". Through acts of assembly and dialogue, the public sphere generates opinions and attitudes which serve to affirm or challenge--therefore, to guide--the affairs of state. In ideal terms, the public sphere is the source of public opinion needed to "legitimate authority in any functioning democracy". Habermas develops the normative notion of the public sphere as a part of social life where citizens exchange views on matters of importance for the common good. This public sphere comes into being when people gather to discuss issues of political concern. Habermas emphasizes the critical role of media in the public sphere, distinguishing between the early press which highlighted political controversy and the

more recent development of media that commodities news. He outlines the development of newspapers in the early 17th century, commenting that the press "was for the first time established as a genuinely critical organ of a public engaged in critical political debate: as the fourth estate". The main criticism to using this model in respect to China can be the lack of Democracy. But the recent changes in the media in China and the increased level of competition for open market space and advertisements have led to an increase in the commodification of news. Habermas also discusses a virtual Public Sphere, not necessarily a concrete Public Sphere, and the media reforms in China today have definitely given shape to a virtual Public Sphere which, at a few levels, is undermining the control of the Party.

The study uses the change in the media's opinion and articulation of events and issues as the dependent variable and the changes in the economic policies (like the introduction of advertisements and the withdrawal of subsidies) as independent variables.

Chapterization:

The first chapter highlights the topic in context and also looks at the factors behind the issue and discusses the drivers of the media reform, rationale as well as the hypotheses of the study.

The second chapter analyzes a number of Chinese as well as global debates on the media, particularly in the era of globalization. It also locates the discussion within the broad framework of the Public Sphere and civil society debates of Jurgen Habermas. The chapter focuses on Critical Theory debates in International studies. This chapter works towards locating the English media in China in particular and in communist states in general. It also examines the characteristic features of the emerging civil society and public sphere in China today.

The role of reform, propaganda, globalization and technological developments in the post-Mao period, and the factors that have helped shape English media in China form part of the third chapter. It also discusses the extent to which globalization worked in moulding the English media in China and the areas in which these changes are most visible. It also highlights the reaction of the Party towards the changes in the Chinese media as a result of globalization. This chapter also looks at

the changes in the English media after the introduction of advertising and Internet in China.

In chapter four, the role played by Chinese domestic media during and after the Tiananmen Square Crackdown is examined. The Chapter discusses in-depth the developments within Chinese society and politics during the Tiananmen Square Crackdown. It brings forth the role of the Chinese domestic media during this incident. It also discusses the role played by journalists and students in extending media freedom in China and how the situation reversed in the aftermath of the Crackdown. The chapter also looks at the reporting and the discussions that took place in the international media that was present in China during the Incident. It also debates the ways in which the Chinese government has worked towards controlling the discourse about the Tiananmen incident and the reasons behind these actions.

Chapter five delineates in detail the ways in which the Chinese media had portrayed development, achievement and rise of the Chinese state, economy and society in the backdrop of the Beijing Olympics. It also discusses both the domestic and international dimensions which were debated by the Chinese media in detail besides the domestic as well as global reactions vis-à-vis these developments and incidents.

The most important debates that centered around the changes in the media in China today are discussed in chapter six. It also looks at the ways in which these changes in the media landscape of China have helped in fostering an active civil society and democracy in China. It also analyses the various actors within Chinese society that have played a crucial role in this development.

Chapter seven summarizes some of the major findings of the research. It makes an attempt to assess the current trends in China with an eye on the future.

Chapter II

Media: A Theoretical Debate

Introduction:

In the age of modern communication technologies like the television, the Internet and mobile phones, media has become a part of our everyday life. The simplest definition of media, as per the Merriam dictionary is, "the system and organizations of communication through which information is spread to a large number of people". Today media can be divided into a number of new segments like mass media, social media, digital media, print media etc. Mass media, as defined by Spitulnik, consists of magazines and popular literature and they are influenced economically as well as politically, with a strong role of science and technology and language (Spitulnik, 1993:293).

The role of media varies according to the political environment of the country. How media functions in a democratic set up is quite different from how it functions in a communist or authoritarian setup. The definition and role of media in a Communist State is very different from general (Western) understanding. In a Communist State, media is expected to act as the 'mouthpiece' of the government. It is generally regarded as a tool to extend the ideas and policies of the government. Thus, it is not allowed to be free and critical of the government. It usually plays a crucial role in government organizations and is regarded as a very essential government organ. It is the media which extends the policies and ideas of the government to the people. As argued by Keping Yu, "In Chinese communist history, there was no concept of 'people's right to know' let alone the concept of informed citizenship" (Yu, 2009: 9).

This chapter makes an attempt to define media in general and also discuss the role of globalization in the changing role of media. It will endeavour to discuss the impact that increased globalization has had on media in general and particularly in China. It will also look at the debates surrounding media and civil society, and the public sphere. The chapter discusses the debates highlighting how the media exercises power on society and politics and how it can mould and direct debate. It will also try

and discuss the differences between media in a Communist State vis-à-vis a Democratic State.

Conceptualizing Media:

The most summarised definition of media is by Bogart who states that, "Media are instruments" (Bogart, 1998:11). Goode summarizes the development of press and media as argued by Habermas by stating that, "two supply-side drivers were critically important for the growth of the press. First, news had become a commodity and there were economies of scale to be harnessed by producing news for expanded readerships. Second, state authorities rapidly cottoned on to the power of the printed word" (Goode, 2005: 6).

The type and role of media have been evolving for the last few centuries. Since the introduction of the printing press, there has been a formal evolution of media. The emergence and dissemination of new technologies expanded the media audience. A major boost was seen in the 1980s when the photocopy machines, home video cameras and mix tapes emerged in addition to home computers. With the decrease in the cost of computers and internet by 2000, the spread of information became faster and cheaper (Mandiberg in Mandiberg, 2012: 1–10). A very important function of mass media is that of selecting and framing messages (Fortunato and Martin, 2016: 129). From its initial role of being used for spreading news and information, today media plays the crucial role of forming and shaping political, economic as well as cultural views. Media today is a necessary tool used by governments for spread of ideas and political viewpoints while it is also used by the economic and commercial sector to influence the people with the use of advertising and other means. Thus media is a part of both our personal as well as political lives. In the words of Herman and Chomsky (1988), "The mass media serve as a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general populace. It is their function to amuse, entertain, and inform, and to inculcate individuals with the values, beliefs, and codes of behavior that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society. In a world of concentrated wealth and major conflicts of class interest, to fulfill this role requires systematic propaganda".

Media today is defined and divided into a number of categories and types. Media can be divided into categories like traditional media and social media. Television, radio, newspapers, magazines, newsletters, and other print publications form a part of the traditional media while the digital, computerized, or networked information and communication technologies like facebook, email, twitter etc. form part of the social media or digital media (eff.org, 2009). Daniel further breaks down the definition of social media. He states that "The "social" part: refers to interacting with other people by sharing information with them and receiving information from them; while the "media" part: refers to an instrument of communication, like the internet (while TV, radio and newspapers are examples of more traditional forms of media)" (Nations, 2016).

Chomsky argues that different media do different things. Things like soap operas; movies etc. are targeted at the mass audience. There is another type of media called the elite media, which plays a crucial role of agenda setting. Elite media primarily comprise of major media houses with the capability to influence the general trend of agenda setting in the mass media. They have a more targeted audience and "they are actually involved in the political system in an ongoing fashion" and also influence the way people think (Chomsky, 1997: 1).

The new or digital media is also changing the way people participate in the political space. As argued by some scholars, "the contemporary, new media era lowers the cost of accessibility to political information thereby making it more likely that people are willing and able to invest themselves politically (Carlisle and Pat, 2013: 884). In the words of Zaller:

> "In the old days, political disagreements were settled in backroom deals among party big shots. As majority leader of the Senate in the 1950s, Johnson achieved national fame as master of this brand of insider politics. But in the new environment, disagreements are fought out in the mass media and settled in the court of public opinion. The weapons of combat are press conferences, photo opportunities, news releases, leaks to the press, and "spin." When the stakes are especially high, TV and radio advertisements may be used. Politicians still make backroom deals, but only after their relative strength has been established in the public game of 'media politics'." (Zaller, 1999: 1-1).

It would not be far-fetched to suggest that modern day media plays a highly influential role in society today. It has the power to prioritize issues and debates and can also successfully impact political outcomes. Media is also a very crucial link between and among people and power. It is also an important link between the people in power and citizens. It is through media that people can express their grievances and problems and hope that the government addresses them.

Media and Globalization:

Globalization is not a new concept. A lot of scholars have argued that globalization did exist from ancient times. Globalization is a new "term" which is used to describe an old process of practice in movement of people, goods and ideas (Yale Global Online, 2009). Maryam Kheeshadeh (2012) highlights that there are two most prominent historical phases of globalization. They are the Archaid Period and the Islamic and Mongol Era. As argued by Ambirajan, globalization covers almost every aspect of human life (S. Ambirajan,2000: 2142). In the words of Jagdish Bhagwati (2004: 3), "Economic globalization constitutes integration of national economies into international economy through trade, direct foreign investment (by corporations and multinationals), short term capital flows, international flows of workers and humanity generally and flow of technology" .

Though this is a general definition of globalization, an attempt to describe it in a comprehensive manner is very difficult. Various attempts have been made to explain and define the phenomenon of globalization but it has not proved to be effective. With the onset of 'globalization', a number of aspects in the international order have undergone major changes. The current phase of globalization is a result of government policies which have resulted in the opening up of markets and industries and introduction of free markets. The financial crisis which engulfed the world in 2008 clearly highlighted the extent to which the economies of the world are integrated and that there is no way that one country can be totally immune to the problems which another country is facing. This has also had its impact in the political sphere. The more countries are integrated, the more their politics and economies are getting intertwined as well. This is very true with regard to the developments in China.

Globalization can also be defined as "a shift from two-dimensional Euclidian with its centers and peripheries and sharp boundaries, to a multidimensional global

space with unbounding, often discontinuous and interpenetrating sub-spaces" (Kearney, 1995: 547-565). In addition to this, Globalization on one level provides the multinationals and the business owners with large powers while on the other hand it also provides significant resources and opportunities to the marginalized sections of the society. It also "gives power to groups and individuals who were previously left out of the democratic dialogue and terrain of political struggle" (Kellner, 2002: 285-305). Kellner further argues that "such potentially positive effects of globalization include increased access to education for individuals excluded from entry to culture and knowledge and the possible opportunity for oppositional individuals and groups to participate in global culture and politics through access to global communication and media networks and to circulate local struggles and oppositional ideas through these media" (Kellner, 2002: 293).Joseph Stiglitz (2002: 4) also asserts that even though exploitative, globalization has helped people in accessing information and knowledge with the use of internet and it has reduced the level of seclusion. It is these contacts and links which help in the anti-globalization protests as well.

This is referred to as "Globalization from below". There are a number of positive outcomes of globalization as well. It can lead to the extension of education to the people who were earlier not incorporated in to the mainstream cultural and educational discourses. It can also help the under-privileged sections of the society to express their discontent through increase in access to media and other communication technologies (Kellner, 2002: 293).Stiglitz also highlights that globalization has a number of positives like, expanding international trade, increase life expectancy, increase in literacy, foreign aid, etc. (Stiglitz, 2002 : 4-5).

It is a widely shared perception that globalization generally leads to de-politicization of publics, the decline of the nation-state, and the end of traditional politics (Boggs, 2000, cited in Kellner, 2002: 293). Democracy and globalization have a complex relationship. While powerful economic forces promote and benefit from globalization, thus harming democratic processes, there are also possibilities for bottom up processes that encourage participation and peaceful protests. As Kellner, (2002: 293) argues, "Globalization involves both a disorganization and reorganization of capitalism, a tremendous restructuring process, which creates openings for progressive social change and intervention. In a more fluid and open economic and

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political system, oppositional forces can gain concessions, win victories, and effect progressive changes".

Stiglitz debates that, "Globalization, as we have noted, has several distinct elements: (a) trade; (b) foreign direct investment; (c) short-term capital flows; (d) knowledge; and (e) movements of labour" (Stiglitz, 2003: 510). Stiglitz also argues that globalization tends to impact and influence different groups indiverse ways (Stilgliz, 2003: 507). He further asserts that, "The global financial crisis and its aftermath brought home the darker side of globalization, and reminded those who had forgotten that capitalism, throughout its more than two hundred years history, has been plagued with wild fluctuations, that it is hardly a self-regulating system, and that, especially in its early days, there were many who seemed not to benefit from its fruits" (Stigliz, 2003: 508).

Globalization can also be defined as, "a process (or a set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions – assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact – generating transcontinental or inter-regional flows of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power"(Held cited in Held, 2000: 55). As discussed in *Understanding the Media* by Eoin Devereux, the main features of globalization can be summarized under the following points:

1 The growing level of connectedness between individuals, societies and nation states at a global level.

2 The reduction in the distance between individuals, societies and nation states in terms of both time and space facilitated by technological developments such as the Internet and other media. These are usually referred to as Information &Communication Technologies (ICTs).

3 The development of ICTs has not only resulted in major changes in the workings of the mass media but also allowed for the rapid transfer of information, knowledge and capital.

4 Increased awareness of global phenomena in people's (local) lives.

5 The globalization of culture and economic activity as a direct result of the activities of powerful transnational capitalist organizations.

6 It tends to assume a decrease in the significance of other kinds of identities such as the ethnic, the local, the regional or the national in people's everyday lives.

7 Globalization has increased the possibility of greater re-exivity amongst social actors. It offers the potential to human beings to become more critical of their immediate environment by allowing them to compare their experiences with those living in other societies or under different political arrangements.

Media activities such as watching satellite television news or surfing the Internet offer the potential for this kind of reflexivity in an unprecedented way. Thus the internet has come to play a crucial role in affecting the way the people think and respond to various events and developments. It also helps in bringing the news and information faster to the general people. In China also the internet is used by the general masses to gain information and news which the Chinese government censors. Thus it is no surprise that the Chinese government has always been worried about the way the internet can affect its rule and control the Chinese media in general. The restrictions imposed by the Chinese authorities in 2001 and again in 2002 on Internet usage is a concrete example of how powerful interests in that country are fearful of the way the Chinese people may react to certain news and events. China is not alone in the regard. There are many precedents of governments attempting to censor media content such as newspapers, radio or books. Critics of globalization argue that it has resulted in even more exploitation of the Third World. Those whom journalist John Pilger (2002) terms "the new rulers of the world" exploit both the raw materials and the labour power of the world's poorest people in order to feed consumer demand in the West (Devereux, 2007: 48).

Thus, the prevalent argument has been that even though globalization helps in improving the economic situation of countries in the short term, in the long run the inequality of relations among nations leads to exploitation of the weaker one. But globalization should not be viewed as essentially bad. Even though it does lead to exploitation of the weaker and poorer it also benefits a large section of the society. What needs to be done for globalizations to be beneficial is that the international institutions should work towards countering its exploitative nature. Stiglitz argues that

even though globalization has its problems it also has benefits. According to him, "…globalization can be reshaped to realize its potential for good and…..the international economic institutions can be reshaped in ways that will ensure that this is accomplished" (Stiglitz, 2002: 214-215).

Globalization has transformed the way the world is today. It has increased the degree of connectivity and interdependence. It has also transformed the way people think and perceive things. Globalization has also helped in improving the income capacity and lifestyle of the people. However, in spite of these benefits there has been a rise in the intensity of "discontent" with globalization. This is because globalization has also negatively affected a large section of people. Stiglitz asserts that globalization has helped in strengthening global movements as well as civil societies. However, it has also undermined cultures and democracies which has adversely affected people (Stiglitz, 2002: 248-249).

Thus globalization as a force has potential for both being a positive and a negative influence. Globalization also impacts all aspects of our daily lives. With increasing inter-connectivity and inter-dependence, globalization influences every basic form of our lives, from what we eat, wear and watch. It also greatly influences what kind of information people have access to today, thus shaping ideologies as well as providing impetus to protests and people movements. With increased inter-connectivity and easy flow of information more and more information is generally available to the people. Globalization helps people access support for their ideas and viewpoints. Moreover, the ease of flow of ideas makes it further easy for people to discuss their views with like-minded people and thus gain support for their own agendas. Globalization makes it easy for people to have access to like minded people and also look for similar ideologies. Thus it makes it easy for protestors to find more supporters.

Impact of Globalization on Media:

Globalization has affected the media in significant ways. The media sector is one of the most prominent facilitators of globalization. With the onset of globalization, media today can spread ideas and information to places which were not within its reach a few centuries back (Kheeshadeh,2007: 1750). The inter-connectivity of globalized economy helps the media extend its influence beyond physical

geographical boundaries. It is stated that 'the role of telecommunication is critical to globalized production strategies'. Further, 'the globalization of the media sector is a powerful agent in the transformation of the social, cultural and political structures' (Siochru, 2004). As argued by Shah, with the help of globalization, the media today can spread information and news to places where it was difficult to do this in the past, and it can also work towards spreading democratic values. However, it can also be used for the spread of ideas of specific dominant groups and interests (Shah, 2012).

As argued by Kellner**,** "the term "globalization" is often used as a code word that stands for a tremendous diversity of issues and problems and serves as a front for a variety of theoretical and political positions. While it can function as a legitimating ideology to cover and sanitize ugly realities, a critical globalization theory can inflect the discourse to point precisely to these deplorable phenomena and can elucidate a series of contemporary problems and conflicts. In view of the different concepts and functions of globalization discourse, it is important to note that the concept of globalization is a theoretical construct that varies according to the assumptions and commitments of the theory in question" (Kellner, 2002: 300-301).

He further concludes that,

"a critical theory of globalization presents globalization as a product of capitalism and democracy, as a set of forces imposed from above in conjunction with resistance from below. In this optic, globalization generates new conflicts, new struggles, and new crises, which can be seen in part as resistance to capitalist logic. In the light of the neo-liberal projects to dismantle the welfare state, colonize the public sphere, and control globalization, it is up to citizens and activists to create new public spheres, politics, and pedagogies, to use the new technologies to discuss what kinds of society people today want, and to oppose the society against which people resist and struggle. This involves, minimally, demands for more education, health care, welfare, and benefits from the state and a struggle to create a more democratic and egalitarian society. But one cannot expect that generous corporations and a beneficent state are going to make available to citizens the bounties and benefits of the globalized new information economy. Rather, it is up to individuals and groups to promote democratization and progressive social change" (Kellner, 2002: 302).

Globalization has greatly affected the media industry. Media industry has transformed and mutated the fastest in the era of globalization. With newer

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technologies and porous borders, media has benefitted economically and has become a very important political tool. As has been argued in the book *Media Globalization*, the main characteristics of Media globalization can be divided under the following six categories. They are:

1. "The emergence and continued dominance of the global media industry by a small number of transnational media conglomerates.
2. The use of new information and communications technologies by media conglomerates.
3. The increasingly deregulated environment in which these media organizations operate.
4. The globalization of media content has resulted in a greater amount of homogenization and standardization in certain media products produced and distributed by the global media industries.
5. The uneven flow of information and communication products within the global system and the different levels of access that global citizens have to global networks of communication.
6. Media globalization is inextricably linked with the promotion of the ideology of consumerism and is therefore bound up with the capitalist project" (Devereux, 2007:54).

Media is one of the fastest modes for transferring ideas. With globalization, the access to other media outlets has increased and this has strengthened the flow of information too. In the last two decades there has been an increase in the intensity of media globalization. One major aspect of globalization of media as argued by Ward is, "globalization of media implies the development of a global media ethics. Global media ethics seek to articulate and critique the responsibilities of the new media which is now global in content, reach and impact" (Ward in Rao and Wasserman, 2015: 39). The primary aspect of this change has been the increase in the porousness of the borders with respect to media inputs. Other aspects have been 'the growth of media Trans National Cooperations (TNCs). The tendency towards centralization of media control, and the spread and intensification of commercialization' (Herman and McChesney cited in Held and McGrew, 2000: 225). This highlights that modes of media communication are ever changing and are directly linked with the level of technological development of the said time. Thus, one can say that technology development and discovery has a very direct link with the type of media used at any given time by a society. The technological standard and level of society also directly determine the structure of media in use.

China and Globalization:

The Chinese economy was opened to the outside world in 1978. This was the year when Deng Xiaoping decided to let the Chinese economy function semi-independently. Today the Chinese economy is greatly integrated with the world economy. China is one of the largest trading partners with most of the countries. In the words of Lehmacher (2016), "China has benefited significantly from globalization. Over the last few decades, it has invested in enhancing its capabilities and built economic links with many countries. It is seen as an important overseas partner and investor". In addition, it has also helped China gain access to newer and cleaner technologies which in turn have helped in its economic growth. Overall, globalization has helped China move from an underdeveloped agrarian society and economy to become one of the fastest growing economies of the world today. The most important landmark event which paved the way for the economic globalization of China was its entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO). China's entry into the WTO was regarded as an essential tool for economic growth.

Government controls were still present, but the novelty was that market forces were allowed to work independently to a certain extent. This strategy helped build the economic framework for the years to come. With the passage of time, there has been a decline in the ideological bonding shared by the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese people. A number of scholars have argued that it is the economic growth and stability which provides the CPC with the legitimacy to rule. Chinese people are not ideologically bonded with the CPC. This has also led to the fact that there has been erosion in the legitimacy on the grounds of technology. The level and pace of economic development is the only basis on which the CPC is claiming to be the legitimate ruling party of the Chinese people. The party members are also aware of the fact that a decline in the level of economic growth will aggravate the degree of unemployment and may prove to be problematic for the CPC. Sustaining economic growth is a major factor driving the policies of the CPC. However, even today having a Party membership is seen as a major career stepping stone. A Party membership helps in gaining access to a large pool of facilities and resources.

However, the above argument is debated and countered by Vivienne Shue. She opines that this conclusion is overly simplistic. She states that "economic success alone is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition of political legitimacy" (Gries and Rosen, 2010: 12). She further expounds that the CPC's primary grounds to claim legitimacy is its capacity to maintain social peace and stability, which in turn also leads to economic growth.

With the onset of the current phase of globalization, a large number of areas in the Chinese economy underwent major changes. There was a major boost in the movement from public to the private sector and profitability was prioritised. One expected a similar change in the media sector but this did not happen. The primary reason behind this was the fact that the media holds an important position in the functioning of the CPC. Under the Leninist model of regime it is regarded as the 'mouth piece of the party'. Thus any ambition of a free shift in the way the media functioned is still debatable. According to Joseph Man Chan "media is regarded as an important part of the ideological apparatus that is indispensable for legitimating the party state, indoctrinating the public and coordinating campaigns. The downfall of Communism in Central and Eastern Europe has further strengthened this belief in the CPC" (Chan cited in Lee, 2003: 159). It is because of this belief that the CPC has not been comfortable with the changes underway in the Chinese media. The CPC has learnt its lesson that in order to continue its grip on power, media control will play a very crucial role. The reforms of the 1989 have introduced a number of unexpected changes in the Chinese media sector which make the CPC highly uncomfortable.

The reforms which were introduced in the 1980s in the economic sphere led to a number of changes within the Chinese society. The Chinese society became more prosperous and thus general standard of living improved. The Chinese government also moved a large section of its population out of poverty. However, these reforms also resulted in the widening of the income inequalities and the gap between the haves and the have-nots multiplied. It also led to some increase in the media freedom. The intensity of the government control over the media eased with the reform and opening up. Internet played a very crucial role in this process. The government was prepared for some of these changes, while others were totally unexpected. The increase in the number of mass protests has continued to worry the Chinese government. According to Chin-Chuan Lee, these reforms "chipped away at the previous absolutism of the

command economy, command politics and command culture" (Lee cited in Lee, 1990: 4). The changes within the media which were a result of the reforms have affected the Chinese government most strongly as it attacks the 'command structure' of the Chinese State. Media is expected to follow the dictates of the government and not work towards countering or questioning it. He further argues that mass media is regarded as a servant of the party or the state but not of the people (Lee cited in Lee, 1990: 4).

A prominent side effect of the increased economic growth has been the rise in the number of mass protests. These protests have also become an important way in which the concerned people attempt to gain attention of the Chinese leadership. The party cadre are generally oriented to work towards economic development and as a result the methods which they employ do not go down well among the people. This has intensified the level of discontent against the party cadre. Thus protests have become a major form of 'civil society' in China today. This is one place where the people get together and are able to discuss and express their grievances vis-à-vis the CPC. Public protests have been consistently increasing and are also seen as a major source of concern for the CPC.

Civil Society and Public Sphere Debates:

Civil society formed a major core of the political science debates in Western political theory from the early 17th century. The central theme of this debate appears to be the existence of social associations not dominated by the state and capable of affecting official policy (Rankin, 1993: 159). There are a number of factors which go into building the structure of civil society. They are, private individual groups, property rights, means and places of communications for forming and freely expressing public opinion, institutions and processes for individual and group political participation, legal guarantees of all the above mentioned rights, institutions and activities and in addition to all these, constitutional limits on state power. Thus, one can say that the term civil society needs a whole set of other attributes to exist in order for it to be an effective subset of the society.

The discussion of civil society today generally revolves around Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), social movements, human rights and other aspects which have the connotation that the existence of these will lead to the world

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being a better place and thus make the life of large number of people more humane and make the world a little more just. The literature on civil society is rich and there are a number of definitions and arguments which are used to discuss and debate this term. The following section will highlight these debates with an eye on the existence or the non-existence of a civil society in China. Civil society deliberations centre essentially on the issue of when and how China can become democratic. The debate about the existence of civil society in China has been around since the time Hegel defined China as a state without a society. He defined civil society as:

> 'Civil society is the [stage of] difference which intervenes between the family and the state, even if its full development occurs later than that of the state; for as difference, it presupposes the state, which it must have before it as a self-sufficient entity in order to subsist itself … In civil society, each individual is his own end, and all else means nothing to him. But he cannot accomplish the full extent of his ends without reference to others; these others are therefore means to the end of the particular [person]. But through its reference to others, the particular end takes on the form of universality, and gains satisfaction by simultaneously satisfying the welfare of others. Since particularity is tied to the condition of universality, the whole [of civil society] is the sphere of mediation in which all individual characteristics, all aptitudes, and all accidents of birth and fortune are liberated, and where the waves of all passions surge forth, governed only by the reason which shines through them' (Hegel, 1991: 220-221).

Thus, Hegel asserts that such a condition is not present in China, thus arguing that China should be regarded as a state which lacks a proper and functioning civil society.

According to Tai, "Marx's idea of civil society began with his criticism of what he perceived as flaws and inconsistencies in Hegel's concept of civil society. Marx's critical examination of Hegel's political philosophy led him to believe that the political state represents not universal but particular interests" (Tai, 2006: 10-11).

An all-inclusive definition of civil society is that it is a "complex and dynamic ensemble of legally protected non-governmental institutions that tend to be non-violent, self-organizing, self-reflexive, and permanently in tension with each other and with the state institutions that 'frame, constrict and enable their activities'" (Keane cited by Goetze in Yongnian and Fewsmith, 2008: 37).Individual is the basic

unit of civil society. John Hall defines civil society as: "civil society must depend upon the ability to escape any particular cage; membership of autonomous groups needs to be both voluntary and overlapping if society is to become civil" (Hall cited by Goetze, in Yongnian and Fewsmith, 2008: 38).

In Western discourse, the meaning which has been assigned to the term 'civil society' is quite complex. Scholars at various times and places have attempted to define this word depending on the way they were trying to analyze this term. Thus, in order to start a debate around the existence and meaning of civil society, one needs to look at the various definitions which have been assigned to it. For example, David Held argues, "civil society retains a distinctive character to the extent that it is made up of areas of social life – the domestic world, the economic sphere, cultural activities and political interaction – which are organized by private or voluntary arrangements between individuals and groups outside the direct control of the state" (Held cited by Metzger in Kaviraj and Khilnani, 2001: 206).

This is regarded as the sociological definition of civil society. In addition to this, as stated by Habermas, there is also a need to have an active 'public sphere' for civil society to function adequately. The other definition can be regarded as the 'normative, political definition'. According to this definition, 'public sphere needs to be strengthened at the cost of the state' (Wakeman cited by Metzger in Kaviraj and Khilnani, 2001:206). The third definition which has been discussed by Kaviraj and Khilnani is given by St. Augustine. It states that civil society is "an assemblage (of men) associated by a common acknowledgment of right and by a community of interests" (Metzgar cited by Kaviraj and Khilnani, 2001:206).

In general, the debate around concepts of 'civil society' and the 'public sphere' is an ongoing one. In the past two decades there has been an increase in the level of discussion that is centeredon the question of whether China will ever have a full-fledged 'civil society' and 'public sphere'. The interesting aspect here is that the primary parameter on which these themes are judged are highly Western in their specific characteristics. But one also needs to keep in mind that 'civil societies' did not develop along the same set path even in Western countries, and thus it is unjust to expect China to follow the same trajectory.

According to Brook and Frolic, "the Western concept of civil-society has its own precise history and intellectual context of formation. It emerged in the eighteenth century in Europe at a time when a new relationship between society and the state was evolving, as those controlling capitalist production were seeking access to political power. Their demand for a voice in affairs of state constituted a space between the closed realms of business and family and the larger realm of state. In that space, public sphere took form in which members of the bourgeoisie and their allies negotiated a shared identity and common political purpose" (Brook and Frolic cited in Brook and Frolic, 1997: 8-9).

On the other hand, the term 'public sphere' does not carry such a vast debate or so many additional attributes. Thus this can be understood as being more adaptable to the other parts of the world as well. The term basically derives from Jurgen 's interpretative analysis of the historical origins and subsequent transformations of the bourgeois public spheres in England, France and Germany (Habermas, 1989).To quote Habermas, "'the public sphere' we mean first of all a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all citizens. A portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation in which private individuals assemble to form a public body" (Habermas cited in Livingstone and Lunt, 1994).For Habermas for a public sphere to be functioning fully it has to be a "rational-critical discourse-everyone is an equal participant and the supreme communication skill is the power of argument" (Soules, 2007).

The major emphasis here is on rational public debate. But the way Habermas uses the term 'public' it may denote a large number of things ranging from the State, civic associations and activities outside state, consensual or broadly held opinions and values, publicity to project status or aura, openness and common availability or existence or pursuit of some general good (Rowe, 1990: 309-319).

Habermas (1991: 3) argues that the public sphere was "specifically a part of "civil society" which at the same time established itself as the realm of commodity exchange and social labour governed by its own laws". Habermas used the term 'public sphere' in two different ways. One can be termed very specific while the other general. First, he uses the term as a reference to the bourgeoisie's public sphere. By this he is referring to the phenomenon which began in the late 17th century in England

and in the late 18th century in France and led to the rise of the market economy, capitalism and the bourgeoisie. This can be defined as the 'liberal public sphere'. On the other hand he discusses a more general public sphere, which he defines as the 'plebian public sphere'. These were the sections which were used by Habermas to build his 'public sphere of the bourgeois society'. What he is hinting at here is that these two variants form the basis of a public sphere but each also has a very distinct type of relationship between the state and the society (Huang, 1993: 217). He goes on to describe the bourgeois public sphere as "the bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people coming together as a public: they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publically relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labour" (Huang, 1993: 218).

Habermas also states that the process of formation of public sphere was 'eroded by the simultaneous process of "stateification" and "societalization" (Huang, 1993: 218). He also concludes that public sphere develops in the space between state and society which may be charged with tension (Huang, 1993: 219).Catherine Goetze in "Whose civil society is it anyways?" divides the definitions of civil society under two major headings in order to make the discussion more explanatory; the first section she terms as republican-liberal-democratic model and the second as hegemony model. Under the first section, she states that 'the republican-liberal-democratic model of civil society is by no means a coherent body of theoretical thought'. She also argues that Habermas and other republicans primarily visualize the civil society not necessarily in opposition to the state, but they consider this relationship as one of interdependence. Civil society plays the part of the counterweight to the structures of state and the market forces (Goetze cited in Yongnian and Fewsmith, 2008: 37-38). According to her, this is the sphere where the people discuss and deliberate upon the state policies. This is the area where the community of individuals dwells on the other viable options and also criticizes the undertakings and actions of the state. As a result it is the arena where alternatives are also provided to the state as the result of debate (Goetze cited in Yongnian and Fewsmith, 2008: 40).

The second section according to her is the hegemony model. Under this section she elaborates on the political thought of Antonio Gramsci. She expands on

his primary assumption that 'civil society actually reproduces the political and economic system in its exploitative form'.

Arato and Cohen's perspective on Gramscian concept of civil society is that:

> "the idea that runs through these (Gramsci's) attempts at a definition [of civil society] is that the reproduction of the existing system outside the economic "base" occurs through a combination of two practices – hegemony and domination, consent and coercion – that in turn operate through two institutional frameworks: the social and political associations and cultural institutions of civil society, and the legal bureaucratic, police, and military apparatus of the state and political society" (Arato and Cohen cited by Goetze in Yongnian and Fewsmith, 2008: 40).

According to Goetze the main difference between these two definitions of civil society is that the Hegemony model takes into account the existence of power structures within the society. To quote Goetze:

> "The key difference between hegemony and republican model is the assumption that civil society is not separate from the state and the market but is fundamentally shaped by it and that it reflects the power structures that emanate from the capitalist economy and the bourgeois state. The hegemony model believes that the civil society itself is internally characterized and structured by power" (Goetze cited in Yongnian and Fewsmith, 2008: 40).

In the words of Habermas (1991: 19), "Civil society came into existence as the corollary of a depersonalized state authority". Habermas also discusses the role of the print media in expanding the scope of market economies. As economic activities increase, they lead to an expansion of newsletters and other means of communication for the merchants. With the passage of time, these newsletters also published things which were not specifically focused on trade and price informations (Calhoun in Appleby, 524).

The discussion of civil society will be incomplete without any discussion of the ideas propagated by Partha Chatterjee. He argues that it is "...useful to retain the term civil society for those characteristic institutions of modern associational life originating in Western societies that are based on equality, autonomy, freedom of entry and exit, contract, deliberative procedures of decision making, recognized rights and duties of members, and other such principles" (1998:60). However, Chatterjee

(1998: 61) argues that the term 'political society' is more useful in describing the space between civil society and state. He also argues that the development trajectory of civil society institutions is different in countries which were colonised. He defines civil society for colonised countries as, "those institutions of modern associational life set up by nationalistic elites in the era of colonial modernity, though often as part of their anti-colonial struggle" (Chatterjee, 1998: 62).

Thus one can conclude that there cannot be one definition of civil society which fits all situations and countries. Every country and political system has developed its own model with respect to civil society and public sphere. In the words of Sanjeeb Mukherjee, "today the predominant view of civil society is that of a citizen's social space, which is independent of the state; an autonomous space from where citizens keep watch on the state or do whatever they want to do independently of the state" (Mukherjee, 2010: 58). Mukherjee also highlights some important characteristics of a bourgeois civil society:

- Civil society as an autonomous space, which is independent of the state and government.
- The free and equal, rational and atomic individual as the constituting member of civil society.
- Civil society as a discursive space conducted in the language of reason, restraint, non-violence and politeness. In other words, it is not an uncivil space. (Mukherjee, 2010: 59).

History and political evolution play a very crucial role in shaping the structure of civil society in any country. Thus it would be not entirely wrong to conclude that there is no one single definition of civil society or public sphere which fits all countries and societies. The trajectory and development of a country over the years shapes the way its civil society and public sphere evolve. Every country will have some of its own contribution towards its indigenous civil society and public sphere.

Civil Society and Public Sphere in China:

Based on these theoretical debates a few scholars argue that there was a 'public sphere' which was active in China in the late imperial period. But the point of difference here is that the so called public spheres of late imperial China in all their capabilities did not have any impact on the national policies. They were very local in their characteristics. Secondly, though it was connected to the rise of commerce and a commodity economy, it did not lead to the rise of capitalism and thus not to a bourgeoisie as opposed to a hybrid gentry merchant elite. Management rather than public discussion was its central characteristic. Elites did not make any attempts to challenge the state power. And thus due to a lack of open public discourse, the Chinese sphere was not theoretically defined (Rankin, 1993: 162-163). The definition of civil society, according to John Locke, would be "the state liked" (Dunn cited in Kaviraj and Khinani, 2001: 57). In the Chinese context, the idea of civil society is a complicated one. When one looks at the writings of Confucius, the striking feature is one where he preaches that 'one should not discuss the affairs of an office one does not hold' (Analects of Confucius, 1989).However, Rankin also argues that with the passage of time the public sphere, "was slowly growing in size, institutional complexity, and autonomy. It remained within the existing political system, but elite initiatives were widening" (Rankin, 1993: 169). Thus it was no surprise that Sun yat-sen was able to organize and lead an anti-dynastic movement and establish a Republic in 1912.

In addition to this, with the founding of the Communist State, the idea of the civil society as understood in the West became non-existent. The Chinese state has been an authoritarian state and as a result there has been no freedom for the functioning of a civil society. As a consequence there has been no fully functional civil society in the China till the economic opening of the Chinese society in 1978.During the 1940s Mao had accepted the opening up of NGOs in order to fight the Japanese invasions; however after coming to power he labelled the existing NGOs as "feudalistic" and "reactionary". He also banned the organization of any NGOs. (Zhang Ye, 2003: 3-5). The hundred flowers campaign can also be regarded as a momentary shift in Mao's policy. However, it did not lead to the development of any structured civil society or public sphere. It was rather used by the Chinese leadership to build criticism against certain sections of the elite. Thus it functioned within the

space provided by Mao. Media and other forums where the discussion and debates could happen were fully controlled by the Communist Party.

The argument by Habermas that 'conversation' among people is also an important component of public sphere is vital for understanding the evolving public sphere in China today. Habermas (1974) departs from the traditional understanding of a public sphere when he argues that "a portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation where private individuals assemble to form a public body". But while stressing the need for an ideal speech situation, Habermas states the following requirements (Crawley, 1982: 143):

- "adequate opportunity for people to speak,
- adequate opportunity to challenge the rules or the topic of discussion,
- adequate opportunity to acquire the skills of discourse (including those of the media), and
- adequate opportunity to be free of violence and other forms of coercion."

Discussing the above mentioned requirements one can conclude that the Chinese situation is far from becoming an active public sphere. The Chinese government is still in full control of what the people discuss and report on while there is always the fear of government reaction in the form of coercion and violence. Even though there has been a rise in the number of mass incidents and people's protests in China, the degree to which they succeed depends on the CPC.

With this background one of the major arguments with respect to civil society in China is presented by B. Michael Frolic. He terms the Chinese civil society as "state-led civil society" (Frolic cited in Brook and Frolic, 1997: 48). According to him the study of civil society in China is a very recent development. They emerged as a result of the Tiananmen Square Crackdown and the events in Eastern Europe (Frolic cited in Brook and Frolic, 1997: 60). The downfall of the Communist States of Eastern Europe compelled the CPC look for ways to consolidate its rule and also forced it to study the reasons for such developments in the Eastern Europe. One can say that the Chinese government has worked very hard to understand the faults of the other Communist States and rectify the same. It has been very firm on the view that political freedom will lead to problems and has thus till date been working towards extending economic freedom and peace and stability in the society.

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He further asserts that, "In looking for the emergence of civil society, we can make three assumptions: that there is a Western/Chinese mix of values and ideology that is producing a Chinese variant of civil society, that disengagement from authoritarian Leninist structures and norms will be slower than expected, and that nascent civil society should not be confused with imminent democratization of China" (Frolic cited in Brook and Frolic, 1997: 49). He also asserts that civil society is needed by the Chinese government to rule more efficiently while it also provides space for Chinese citizens to safeguard themselves vis-à-vis the State and the changing society and political social environment (Frolic cited in Brook and Frolic, 1997: 53-54).Civil society (in whatever nascent form) in China today helps the government in countering the general grievances of the people. It provides the Chinese people with an outlet of their views and also helps the government to be able to successfully monitor. It helps the Chinese government to manage major problems without the situation getting out of control, as the CPC is not ready to face another situation like the Tiananmen Square Crackdown.

Two types of civil society are present in China today, first, which fits with the normal perception of civil society where political power is limited, strengthening the rights of individuals and autonomous groups etc., the second is the 'State led civil society' (Frolic cited in Brook and Frolic, 1997: 56). Frolic describes 'state-led civil society' as one where, "new associations and groups are not against the state but a part of it; they serve as training grounds for the development of civic consciousness; they function as intermediaries between state and society; state-led civil society is not driven with conflict between its civil society components and state; and mutual perception of strength and weakness plays a key role" (Frolic cited in Brook and Frolic, 1997: 58).

However, Brook and Frolic, argue that the Chinese case should be viewed in exception keeping in view its history, massive size and its pledge towards the Leninist-Marxist ideology, "civil society does not easily fit the Chinese case" (Brook and Frolic cited in Brook and Frolic, 1997: 58).

There have been discussions regarding the development of a nascent civil society in China after the introduction of reform and opening up. But the best description for this is 'state-led civil society'. The Chinese government still enjoys

extensive control over the extent to which civil society and autonomous organizations can bloom and survive in China. This is also because even though the Chinese government has withdrawn control in the economic sphere it is not ready to let go off control in the political domain. The experience of the downfall of Communist States in the Eastern Europe and primarily of Soviet Union is a major learning basis for the CPC. The CPC still thinks that these societies were not ready to handle political freedom and thus the government faced the fate of extending too much political freedom too soon. CPC is firm in its belief that economic freedom and peace and stability in the society are a major driving forces for helping the CPC to stay in power. If the societies are prosperous and developing there will be less reason for the people to demand political freedom. Thus the Chinese civil society is 'state-led-civil society'. What can be discussed here and to what extent it can be discussed is still decided and allowed by the Chinese government.

Critical Theory Debates:

One of the biggest challenges with respect to critical theory is attempting to define it. There is no one definition for critical theory. It can be argued that critical theory can be understood as "an historically applied logic of analysis rather than a fixed theoretical or empirical content" and "Critical theory is concerned with contradictions between ideology and reality" (Antonio, 1991: 330-331).

Critical theory forms a very important base for understanding media. A key element of critical theory is that it is a broad approach to challenging and destabilizing established knowledge" (Changing Minds).

The primary focus of critical theorists is to "develop a critical perspective in discussion of all social practices" (Held, 1980:16). According to Erik Kit-wai Ma,

> "In critical media theories, the media are seen as ideological agents reproducing dominant social relations. Critical culturalists stress the hegemonic articulation, despite active negotiation, between the media and dominant economic and especially ideological processes, whereas critical materialists stress the moments of determination of the media by the political economy. In contrast, liberalists argue that market competition promotes diversity and checks state power in a media forum where different social parties and agents are free to express themselves" (Ma cited in Curran and Park, 2000: 21).

Media and Power:

Power is an important element in defining and changing the discourses in society. In the words of Fuchs, power is a complex concept as it has a major role in deciding who controls and influences the society and also as to who is in a position to take important decisions (Fuchs, 2014).This has been further emphasised by Martin. He states that, "the mass media not only tell people what to think about, but they are a powerful determinant of the relative importance of the issues they choose to discuss" (Martin, 1976: 125).Media or the Fourth Estate is regarded as an important tool in the process of exercising power and control. Media penetrates the lives of the masses in numerable ways than can be imagined. In today's world it affects the choices of the people in the form of what to eat and what to wear. Media thus also influences the people when it comes to political choices. Thus any party or person interested in staying in power needs to know how to use the tool of media in effective way. Leo Bogart argues that, "Media power is political power" (Bogart cited in Dennis and Snyder, 1998: 5). When argued from the "liberal tradition the media became free, switched their allegiance from government to the people, and served democracy" (Curran, 2002: 8). Curran argued that, "the emergence of new power centre, linked to the development of a new channel of communication, tends to increase tensions within the overall structure of power" (Curran, 2002: 65). He further argues that "globalization is giving rise to a more diverse communications system" (Curran, 2002: 173). In the words of Clay Shirky (2011:3), "...social media have become a coordinating tools for nearly all of the world's political movements...".However, Spitulnik (1993: 295)argues that critical and Marxist theories focus on the power of the mass media by the yardstick of its capacity to serve the interests of the people in power or the ruling bodies.

The power of mass media is also important aspect since media has the capacity to influence people's "ways of seeing and interpreting the world, ways that ultimately shape their existence and participation within a given society" (Spitulnik, 1993:294). This argument is further strengthened in the words of Martin. He asserts that "This agenda-setting power of the press is directive rather than reactive. The press does not merely reflect developments which also influence the general public in the same way. The press actually picks certain issues to play up at times that do not necessarily parallel the significance of those events" (Martin, 1976: 130). David

Miller has also explained that the media can be used to promote 'dominant ideologies' and it can also "help to convince elements of the public of states of affairs and evaluations of them which are thoroughly ideological, even where this is not in their own interests" (Miller, 2002: 259).Such arguments give impetus to the ideas that media exercises power by exploiting its position of being able to influence the choices and decisions of the people. As Shah argues that a large section of the people get their information regarding developments in the world through the media and thus it is important that mainstream media is impartial and precise (Shah, 2012).

A number of scholars have attempted to understand and study the scope of the power exercised by media on general public and elites. Scholars like Teun A. van Dijk have argued that the masses are generally the one which consume the ideas of the media, while the elites help in formulating them. He also discusses the role of gender, class and ethnic issues in the overall formulation of news (Djik). In the words of Denis McQuail, the power of the mass media is generally used and exploited by people who are interested in assuming political and economic power (McQuail: 21). McQuail further adds that, "control over mass media offers several important opportunities" (McQuail: 21).This also is expressed in the capacity of the media to play the role of agenda setting. Agenda setting is described by Cook, Tyler, Goetz, Gordon, Protess, Leff and Molotch as:

> "The "agenda-setting capacity" of the mass media implies a causal connection between a temporal sequence of events: first, news media reporting occurs; second, these presentations influence perceptions of issue importance. The assumption is that these changed priorities will themselves influence policy choices. The ideal research design to test causal hypotheses about the agenda-setting capacity of the press is an orthodox protest-post-test experimental design utilizing a control group which has not been exposed to the media event" (Cook, Tyler, Goetz, Gordon, Protess, Leff and Molotch, 1983: 17).

Herman and Chomsky also argue that, "In sum, a propaganda approach to media coverage suggests a systematic and highly political dichotomization in news coverage based on serviceability to important domestic power interests. This should be observable in dichotomized choices of story and in the volume and quality of

coverage… such dichotomization in the mass media is massive and systematic: not only are choices for publicity and suppression comprehensible in terms of system advantage, but the modes of handling favoured and inconvenient materials (placement, tone, context, fullness of treatment) differ in ways that serve political ends" (Herman and Chomsky, 1988).Such arguments emphasize the point that controlling the media is an important tool in the process of generating power to influence the society.

Thus it is clear why governments and large business houses have worked hard towards controlling and manipulating media. Media is a major source of transferring information, propaganda as well as cultural viewpoints. As a result countries with stronger and influential media are the ones which have stronger cultural impacts on other societies. Thus cultural hegemony is an important aspect of strong media.

Media in Democratic States:

Media in democratic countries play a different role as compared to the Media in communist states. The general understanding of media in a democratic country is that of 'watchdog'. It is expected to be the voice of the people. Media provides a platform where people can express and discuss their day to day opinions about important political, economic and social issues. It is also an important tool which governments in democracies use in order to gauge the mood and temperament of the masses, especially during elections. Anthony Mughan and Richard Gunther describe media as the "connective tissue of democracy" (Mughan and Gunther cited in Mughan and Gunther, 2000:1).They further state that the media has proved to be central to the relationship between the "governed and the governors" in all political forms (Mughan and Gunther cited in Mughan and Gunther, 2000: 3).A similar argument has been extended by MohammadHafiz. He asserts that the role of media is very crucial in moulding a healthy democracy as it is the media which informs us about the global developments and it can be regarded as a mirror "which shows us or strives to show us the bare truth and harsh realities of life" (Hafiz, 2011). The importance of media in democracy can be gauged from the argument that, "The means by which information moves around leadership and constituents, from one

activist group to another, through enforcement agencies, and back to the public all are part of the hallmarks of a working democracy" (Fortunato and. Martin,2016: 131).

Anthony Mughan and Richard Gunther also claim that there are two very important features of media role in democracies which are essential to control the government power. One is the access to free press by constitutional means and guarantee. The second is that the media is free from direct political control of any sort and is allowed to grow (Mughan and Gunther cited in Mughan and Gunther, 2000: 4-5). C Edwin Baker argues that free press is crucial for democracy (Baker, 2004).

According to Schudson,

> "there are seven goals that a media system within a democracy can aspire to. He claims the media should: 1) Provide citizens fair and full information so that they can make sound decisions as citizens. 2) Provide coherent frameworks to help citizens comprehend the complex political universe. They should analyze and interpret politics in ways that enable citizens to understand and to act. 3) Serve as common carriers of the perspectives of the varied groups in society. 4) Provide the quantity and quality of news that people want; that is, the market should be the criterion for the production of news. 5) Represent the public and speak for and to the public interest in order to hold government accountable. 6) Evoke empathy and provide deep understanding so that citizens at large can appreciate the situation of other human beings in the world and so elites can come to know and understand the situation of other human beings, notably non-elites, and learn compassion for them. 7) Provide a forum for dialogue among citizens that not only informs democratic decision making but is, as a process, an element in it" (Schudson cited in Fortunato and Martin, 2016: 132).

However, a counterview is presented by Leo Bogart. He argues that, "A sober look at how media works in today's world suggest that they remain vulnerable to manipulation – by political authorities motivated by ideological zeal or crude self-interest, or by economic forces that limit their resources, their variety and their integrity. They are not inevitably an agent of democracy" (Bogart cited in Dennis and Snyder, 1998: 3).

The new form of media is also playing a very important role in shaping the way democratic politics works. With the introduction of internet and the onset of the social media, politics has become a part of day to day lives of people. Polonski argues, "The internet has rewired civil society, propelling collective action into a

radically new dimension. Democracy is now not only exercised at the ballot box, but lived and experienced online on a day-to-day basis" (Polonski, 2016).As Chomsky argues, "Propaganda is to a democracy what the bludgeon is to a totalitarian state" (Chomsky, 2002: 14).Thus one can say that even though the media in democratic countries are expected to play a free and independent role, it is far from true. Given their reach and use as an important political tool, media is being manipulated in democracies by people in power.

Media in Communist States:

It is generally regarded that two men played a very prominent role in defining the role of media in communist states. Both Marx and Lenin have theorized the ways the media should function in a communist state. Marx's views on media have been discussed by a number of scholars. According to McNair, "Marx viewed media as potential devices with which the proletariat would overcome its isolation and create a communist society. On the other hand Lenin gave media an important role in the organization of the society. He believed that the media were 'not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator but also a collective organizer" (McNair, 1991: 9-13).McNair further argues,

> "Marx's contribution to the development of the contemporary Soviet media apparatus was twofold. First, and in collaboration with his colleague Friedrich Engels, he constructed the theory of historical materialism. Elevated to the status of a scientific worldview, historical materialism and its philosophical corollary, dialectical materialism, underpin the functioning of all Soviet institutions, including the mass media. Secondly, in applying historical materialism to the world in which he lived, Marx pioneered the establishment of 'communist' media organs, providing early models for later generations of Marxists in Russia and elsewhere to follow" (McNair, 1991: 7).

In the Soviet Union, "the media were to direct public opinion toward party-established objectives and to exclude discordant messages" (Remington, 1981: 810). While discussing the Soviet Union, Remington further argues that, "to review, the patterns of public communication in the USSR are explained by both social and political factors. Since Stalin, the media have come to play a greater part in publicizing competing views and even in consensus formation around ideologically neutralized issues. However, the party continues to dominate communication in the media through positive and negative controls" (Remington, 1981: 816-817).

During the Communist period the media performed the role of the spokesperson of the ruling party and was basically used for political propaganda and other functions. The media houses were owned by the state organizations. Lenin described the idea of freedom for the journalists a "bourgeois myth" (McNair, 1991: 16).A very prominent example here is the Soviet Union's approach to media practice. This can be described with the help of the following points:

- Mass media should not be privately-owned

- Mass media should serve the working class, and thus be subject to the agencies of the working class, primarily the communist Party.

- Mass media should serve positive functions in society, in the education, socialization, and mobilization towards socialism.

- Mass media should provide a complete and accurate representation of objective reality, according to Marxist-Leninist principles.

- Mass media, because they are part of the political and educational structure of the state, are subject to censorship of anti-societal publications (Smith cited in Ferguson, 1998: 171).

Media systems in communist countries like Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic underwent major transformations especially after 1989 (Gulyas, 2003: 81). After the downfall of the communist regimes in the Eastern European countries there was an increase in the number of publications in the print media.

What sets the CPC apart when compared to other communist regimes in the Eastern European states is the fact that it was never viewed as an outsider. The communist regimes in the Eastern European states were set up by the Soviet Union and as a result of this they lacked legitimacy in the eyes of the people (Dickson cited in Gries and Rosen, 2010: 25) It is this difference coupled with the economic growth and control over the political sphere by the CPC which has helped it in sustaining itself in power till date. In the words of Creemers, "In short, in contrast to the liberal notion which holds that governments are not entitled to limit the liberty of expression unless compelled to do so to prevent harm to other individuals, the Chinese view is teleological" (Creemers cited in Rawnsley and Rawnsley, 2015: 53). The Chinese have worked towards moulding the use and purpose of the media for the end which the CPC attempts to achieve.

A similar argument has been put forth by Shambaugh. He reasons that, "…CPC has put considerable emphasis on expanding the economy and improving the standard of living, embracing globalization and integrating with the international economic community, maintaining tight control over the security services, keeping a watchful eye on NGOs, maintaining control over the media, being flexible in its ideology, retiring and rotating political elites, being somewhat careful to avoid repressing the intelligentsia, expanding party membership to include newly emergent social classes, and reinvigorating local party cells and committees" (Shambaugh, 2008: 292).

Summary:

Media plays a very important and critical role in society and politics today. It is also an integral part of a political system. It has also transformed a great deal from being traditional media to digital media which helps in spreading news and information in faster and more effective ways. Globalization and new technologies have also played a key role in transforming the function and characteristics of media. With increasingly porous boundaries, it is becoming easier to exchange news and information.

Globalization has transformed the way media functions in any given government setup. The new era of globalization is one where there is increased networking between the countries and between people and thus it is eroding the extensive control which the governments have had on media in the past. This control is also being challenged with the introduction of the Internet and other digital platforms. To understand the ongoing changes in the media, there is a need to look at critical theory debates. Critical theory juxtaposes the developments and the role which the media is expected to play in any society. Power as a notion and theory also helps us in understanding the clout which media enjoys in any society. As the fourth estate, media is a very powerful pillar of governance and can be exploited by people in authority to strengthen their agenda. Thus media can be used as a political tool.

Civil Society and the Public Sphere are important yardsticks to measure the degree of freedom and active debate that takes place in any society. With a study of the available definitions of Civil Society and Public Sphere, one can argue that there is no one idea that can successfully describe the situation in all the countries. Every

country has had its own development model and thus has its own unique characteristics.

In the Chinese context the reform and opening up which were introduced in 1980s and economic globalization have provided fresh impetus to the debates surrounding media and the rise of civil society and the public sphere in China. The nature of media changed drastically in China with economic reform. The introduction of Internet also changed the media landscape in China. There have been a number of views presented in this regard. Even though in the reform period there has been an increase in the number of protests in which the Chinese people participate voluntarily, governmental control is still omnipresent. The Chinese government is still trying to maintain its control over the media as it understands that it is an important tool of propaganda. Media control is a crucial aspect of the Chinese authoritarian government. Even in the age of globalization media control in China is very strong.

These changes and developments lead to the question of the evolution of civil society and public sphere in China. An active media space is an essential requirement for the rise of civil society and public sphere. The Western definition of civil society does not do justice to the very nascent civil society and public sphere in China. However, it would be very wrong to totally ignore the budding civil society and public sphere in China which is the result of the introduction of globalization and changes in the Chinese media. Even though media is weak as of now, as it becomes stronger and freer, it will be able to boost the role of the civil society and public sphere in China.

To understand the differences in the role and expectation from media in different political environments, the chapter also has a section which looks at the basic functions of media in a democratic countries vis-à-vis communist countries. This analysis highlights the way the political structures use and exploit the media for their benefits. In both the structures (democratic as well as communist) the governments use the media to expand their political goals and agenda. This also reinforces the idea that media in any society and political structure is a very important political tool and thus plays a very crucial role in overall political functioning.

Chapter III

English Media in the Reform Period: Changing Trends

Introduction:

Media in a communist state is supposed to be the mouthpiece of the ruling party. The idea of media freedom is not present in a communist structure. Similar role is expected of the Chinese media as well. However, with the introduction of reform and opening up there was major transformation in the media landscape in China. After the establishment of the Chinese communist rule, the Chinese media played the role of the mouthpiece of the party. It was expected to promote the views and opinions of the party. The media has always been used to promote the ideas of the CPC with respect to domestic as well the foreign policy of the Chinese government. With such role expected by the media the space was private media was lacking in China. Media was used primarily to foster the need for propaganda.[1] The people read and listened to the media as a means to get information regarding the developments of the party policy; the media's role as understood in a democratic sense, as a space for voicing people's perspectives was not there in China as the media was used as a one way tool and the Party hierarchy, from village upwards, communicated between the grassroots of the Chinese society and the top echelons of leadership of the CPC.

As per the Party's understanding media reforms will happen as and when it is comfortable with the idea. According to the *Global Times*, "China's media development needs reform. But media reform should be in line with China's politics. We must actively and bravely promote media reform, but meanwhile, avoid radical reform that is out of step with political development and China's reforms as a whole" (Global Times, 2013). In addition to this, the CPC has also insisted that its control over the media is "unshakable" (Richburg, 2013). The CPC had established the Department of Propaganda as early as in the year 1920 (Zhang, 2003: 46). The situation is aptly highlighted by David Bandurski when he argues that "press control

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[1]Propaganda, simply put, is the manipulation of public opinion. It is generally carried out through media that is capable of reaching a large amount of people and effectively persuading them for or against a cause. (For information visit, 'What is Propaganda?' At http://library.thinkquest.org/C0111500/whatis.htm Accessed on August 20, 2011)

is an essential element of political life in China and it is also real and immediate"
(Bandurski in Weston and Jensen, 2012: 29).

There were major transformations after Deng Xiaoping came to power. The opening up of the Chinese economy was significant in more than one ways. It was for the first time that a socialist state had embraced capitalism with ideological approval. The effects of that policy are there for all to see. Chinese society also underwent substantial transformation as a result and it has transformed the nature of the state-society relations in China. As seen recently, media will play an increasing role in the changing state-society relationship in China.

The chapter discusses the ways in which the English media in China has been transformed as a result of the economic reforms introduced by the Chinese government. It highlights the various developments in Chinese media with the introduction of advertising and globalization of the Chinese media and also looks at the impact which the introduction of internet has had on the Chinese English media. It also brings forth the development of investigative journalism in China and addresses the role of reforming propaganda globalization and the technological developments in the post-Mao period that have helped in shaping the English media in China. This chapter will look at how far globalization has worked in moulding the English media in China and what have been the primary areas in which this aspect can be seen. It will look into the reaction of the party towards these changes. This chapter will also focus on the changes in the English media after the introduction of Internet in China.

Developments in the Chinese media:

The history of Chinese media is as old as the Chinese civilization. With the introduction of paper and printing, media gained new momentum. Two scientists, Cai Lun, who invented paper making, and Bi Sheng, who invented movable type of printing, played a very crucial role in the evolution of Chinese media. It is reported that during the Northern Song period (960-1127) there was a bookshop street in China. Soon newspapers also appeared in China (Media in China: 74-77). However, the first newspaper was a Portuguese language paper published in Macao in 1822 and the first Chinese language newspaper was published in 1872 called Shen Bao (People's Daily, 2006).It is generally argued that modern journalism was introduced in China in 1800 primarily by foreigners and protestant missionaries. It was during the

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1919 May Fourth Movement that books on journalism were published in Chinese. However, after the establishment of Nationalist government under Chiang Kai-shek in 1927, the media was put under direct control of the government and was asked to follow the Kuomintang (KMT) doctrine (Scotton and Hachten, 2010: 20).

The post liberation evolution of the Chinese media can be divided into four stages for better understanding. The first phase was from the establishment of the PRC in 1949 to 1966. With the establishment of the PRC, the Chinese media industry witnessed a boom. In the year 1956, around 28,773 books were published, and film production units reached to 20,363 in 1965. The first television station appeared in China in 1958. However, "political propagation had always been the major driver" (Media in China: 82-83). The second phase is of the Cultural Revolution era during which the media industry suffered major setback. The third phase is from the introduction of reform and opening up in 1978 till 1989. The fourth and latest phase began in 1989 after the Tiananmen Square student movement and suppression (Scotton and Hachten, 2010: 21). The importance of this categorisation and the developments therein are discussed below in more detail.

The introduction of reform and opening up of the Chinese economy under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping had a major impact on the Chinese media landscape. When Deng Xiaoping announced the reforms, China had around 764 newspapers with an annual circulation of 13.1 billion (*People's Daily*, 2006b).The Chinese English media which was completely controlled by the CPC underwent some major transformation as a result of the economic reforms. In the December of 1979 the Chinese Publishers Association was established (Press Reference, n.d.).With the introduction of economic reforms the Chinese government withdrew the existing subsidies provided to the media houses in the 1970s. With time, even advertising was allowed and thus the media had to earn for its own. As has been argued by Yu Huang and Xu Yu, "The process of post-Mao Chinese model of economic reform is unique in many significant ways. In this model Deng Xiaoping adopted an open door policy and market liberalization, which has sowed the seeds of party- state destruction, though this thing should be taken as an effect which was unintended. Chinese communist power has retreated, slowly but steadily from society, as a consequence of this radical socio-economic reform movement". (Yu and Yu, 1997).

In the recent years social pressure for further fundamental changes within society and state apparatus has gained momentum. However, since this transition is still unfolding, the outcome can only be guessed and debated upon. Every aspect of the People's Republic of China (PRC) has undergone change but one of the most prominent transformations within China has occurred in the way in which the Chinese media functions today. On the other hand as Schell has argued ""Letting go" (fang) in the economic realm and "tightening up' (shou) in the political realm has created a cognitive dissonance and a dialectical tension that makes changes within Chinese media both exciting and uncertain. It is possible that China's increasingly market driven media will ultimately collide with its resistant Leninist state in a politically tectonic way. China's system of media control, which was originally adopted from Stalinist Russia, works through "Party branches" located in every media outlet" (cited in Dennis and Snyder, 1998: 35-36).This system of control continues even today.

The number of registered newspapers was less than 200 in the 1970s, however, with the reform and opening up there was a major surge in the newspaper industry. By the year 2005 the total number of newspapers published in China had reached 2200 (Facts and Details, 2011). There has been an almost equal leap in the other sectors of the media – television, radio, magazine etc. In the same time frame the counties and cities in China started to set up their own independent television channels. By the end of 2007 there were 287 television channels in China (China Today, 2011). Apart from these, the introduction of Internet has brought the media closer to the rest of the world. According to The China Internet Network Information Center, (CNNIC) published results of the survey, "the Survey Report on Blogs in China 2007" in December 2007. According to this survey, by the end of November 2007, the number of blog spaces had reached 72.82 million in China, and was reaching one fourth of the total netizens. This indicates the rapid growth of the blog market in China. This means that one out of four netizens writes blogs. Also, the active blog writers have taken up 36% of the total blog writers, approximately 17 million, and the number of valid blog spaces of the active blog users is 28.75 million (CNNIC, 2007).

According to a report titled *China: 2013*, "the total and daily circulation of China's daily newspapers have taken the leading position in the world, with a total circulation of nearly 50 billion copies and average circulation per day over 100

million copies" (China: 2013, 2013: 223). The report also states that with regard to publishing China moved from being a "book desert to a book ocean" (China: 2013: 225). By 2011, a total of 1928 newspapers were being published in China (Media in China: 86). This highlights the pace with which publishing of magazines and newspapers gained momentum in the reform period.

The 1980s were remarkable because it was in this period that the debate over Press Reform deepened in China. According to Huang and Xu, "the debates over new concepts such as socialist freedom of the press, institutional transformation of the media, and supervision by public opinion, open media systems and political transparency intensified during this phase." They further argue that, "opinion polling developed rapidly, media decentralization accelerated and media professionalism was progressively more honoured and practiced" (Huang and Yu, 1997). On the other hand, Lee states that the "cry for a more free and independent press in China had never been so explicit as during this phase, which culminated in the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre when thousands of Chinese journalists shouted slogans such as '*We want to tell the truth*', '*Don't force us to lie*' and '*We want press freedom*'" (Lee, 2007).

Following the violent suppression of the pro-democracy movement, the period until 1992 represented a return to the old communist system. The media became less vocal following the repression and was once again silent as far as expressing public opinion was concerned. The political fallout of the military crackdown crippled any move towards Press Freedom. In the period after 1992 Deng Xiaoping was able to gain control of the party by successfully ousting the hard-line faction, led by Chen Yun. Thus Deng Xiaoping was able to fully drive the course of the 14th Party Congress and adopted the goal of the creation of a 'socialist market economy' by the year 2000 (Tyler, 1997).However, at the same time, the media underwent structural changes on management front as has been argued by Bhandari and Gang "…the period after 1992 can be described as one of commercialization and structural transformation. The commercialization of the Chinese media further gained momentum after 2000. This was primarily because of the fact that the Chinese government opened the domestic media market for the international newspapers and media houses" (cited in Shirk, 2011: 38-39). The outcomes of this are still debateable.

The changes are still unfolding and the real transformations will be apparent only in the future.

Polubaum states that the changes in the media may not lead to immediate transformations in the ideological spheres, but it would first affect the more mundane and material life. These new communications technologies are likely to bring significant changes to the ways Chinese live, learn and work (Polubaum, 2001: 277).Similar arguments have been put forth by Sun and Chio. They state that, "media institutions in China, a key domain of ideological and political control yet subject to vagaries of market forces, live out such contradictions and struggles on a daily basis. More importantly, such contradictions, struggles and divergences are either negotiated on spatial terms, or they have spatial implications (Sun and Chio, 2012:22). These changes are increasingly apparent in Chinese society today.

Thus the introduction of economic reforms played the role of a catalyst for change in the media sphere as well. Even though the CPC may not have expected such changes to occur once the economic sphere was opened, it had major influence on almost all sections of the Chinese society and the media was not spared. The more China opened and integrated with the world economically, the more its media landscape became vibrant and assertive for change. Economic reforms were also responsible for the introduction of new media technologies like the internet and mobile phones to China; and these technologies play a very crucial role in shaping the direction of the Chinese media growth and transformation. With the introduction advertising and new technologies the Chinese media landscape became more vibrant. There was an increase in the number of newspapers and television channels. The media also became more active and started to look for stories beyond the ones which were allowed by the CPC. Economic reforms made the Chinese media more financially independent and assertive, something which the CPC was not ready to handle. With these changes the media was also becoming critical of the Chinese government and its policies.

Another essential development in the media sphere as a result of the economic reforms has been the rise of the generation of bloggers and writers who do not have to depend on the CPC for a living (Veg, 2015: 205). These bloggers are completely different from the way the traditional Chinese journalists and media houses worked. They are independent and are not directly linked to the Party and thus

have the space to counter and question the official media discourses in China. As they are not answerable (technically as they do not work for any media or publishing house) they are able to write and report on a wide range of issues and events. Such bloggers fully showcase the extent of transformation which the Chinese media has witnessed with the introduction of reforms and opening up of the Chinese economy. They are becoming a very important voice in changing the media discourse and are regarded as a very influential force in Chinese society.

Introduction of Advertising:

As the economic reforms strengthened, the government substantially withdrew the subsidies that the state run media enjoyed before. This development is a key factor in commercializing the Chinese media. As the resources dwindled, media houses were forced to look for alternative options for earning. The most prominent amongst this was the use of advertising. Advertising was seen as a taboo until then. But this belief underwent a drastic change and the first advertisement under the CPC happened in 1979 on a radio channel (Buke, 93). And the first advertisement which was aired on Chinese television was in Shanghai in 1979 (Randi Miller, 2010). The monetary importance of revenue can be evaluated from the following statistics. In the period from 1979 to 1992, advertising revenue for Shanghai TV climbed from 0.49 million RMB to 170 million RMB. Within a decade the advertising industry became the fastest growing industry (Weber, 2002: 61).

There was a major problem that was faced by the Chinese government when it attempted to adopt advertising. As Stross argues, the, "Chinese state provided a basic reason why advertising should be encouraged. They stated that advertising was as important in a socialist economy as it was in a capitalist one because it helped to connect the producers to the consumers. To stress this point the Chinese government argued consistently during the 1990s that China needed advertising to be scientific and modern, and to operate in economy efficiently as this will help China catch up with the capitalist countries" (Stross, 1990: 488-489). To further strengthen the argument one can quote Hong. He argues that, "advertising is considered as an efficient form of communication and it is also accepted as an important method of influencing both domestic as well as international trade and economic and cultural development" (Hong, 1994: 329).

Hong has also identified five factors which have helped in the rapid growth of the advertising industry in China. First factor was the increased pace of the economic development. The second factor identified by him is the decentralization of economic structures and an increased reliance on market forces to guide production which was a natural outcome of the economic reform. The third factor was the increase of foreign companies coming to China. This was accompanied by an increase in the number of joint ventures and also an increase in imports. The fourth factor has been a change in the Chinese people's consumption habits and other goals. Lastly he states that the fifth factor is the commercialization of Chinese media (Hong, 1994: 330-334). The major transformations which were to sweep the Chinese media structure as a result of the introduction of advertising were made clear when *Beijing Daily*, which is the state owned, hard-line Party publication, sold its front page to a foreign company for advertisements for a sum of $50,000 (Hong, 1994: 334).

Advertising and competition brought in analytical and investigative journalism in China. This also pushed the media to catchy headlines away from propaganda material. The stories had to be appealing if papers were to sell. This was the first time when the Chinese media got involved in analytical journalism. Moving away from just reporting what the government wanted them to report, they started to carve out a niche for themselves by attempting to report what the people wanted to hear. Burgh argues, "the immediate reason for content change is that institutional and economic developments have made possible, indeed essential, a new responsiveness to audiences" (Burgh, 2003: 803). Even then there are limits to privatisation as the amount of private ownership in the newspapers is still capped at 49% of the total share. The level of governmental control appears to be weakening. This is happening as the journalists and the editors have learnt to look for ways and means to dodge government commands and report what they think affects the people; an act which does not have a precedent in Chinese history.

One of the major requirements of media organizations is that they must support party and government positions and simultaneously also become modern industrial enterprises capable of competing. This appears to be the obvious outcome of the implicit endorsement of external investment in the media. In addition, technological and market forces are making the place and role of Chinese media vis-à-vis society much more complex. Growth in technological sector has led to increased

individualization and privatization of media. This is because the newer technologies are able to give birth to new communication networks which successfully over work out of the traditional boundaries like place, class and culture. At the same time the government is tightening its control over the media in terms of the content focus and quality. According to Ma, "the general pattern is that the media at the national level are closely censored, whereas local and provincial media enjoy a higher degree of autonomy. Controls over less official media and the dissemination of non-political information are relaxed, whereas the state still maintains tight control over political news. In the case of China, state control predominates, although the media is gaining some autonomy in dealing with non-political affairs and business operations" (Ma cited in Curran and Park, 2000: 18).

However, when one argues about the transformations in the nature of Chinese media, the answers are quite different. According to Huang and Yu "what is critically significant in the evolution of Chinese media in the last two decades is that it exhibited a dual nature. On the one hand, tremendous and remarkable changes have been witnessed as the media developed in a more pluralist, market oriented and more democratic direction" (Huang and Yu, 1997). On the other hand, it has been subjected to CPC's control to the extent that it can be described as its "mouth, eyes and ears". As a result, media in China today is moving like a pendulum between two extremes. One is to play the role of the mouthpiece and official propaganda organ of the Party and Government and the other is the desire to become the representative voice of the masses. In reforms era, this sort of balancing act is as inevitable for Chinese media as for any other agency.

The Chinese media is constantly transforming itself and redefining its characteristics. The general understanding and expectation of media in China has been to work towards the promotion of governmental policies. Today the Chinese media is working towards becoming the voice of the people and is looking forward to fairer reporting incidents and developments which directly affect the masses. Thus, one can say that they are reversing the traditional understanding of media in a communist state. As Ma has argued that at times the media confidently ignores to follow the orders from the leaders and thus helps in giving space to articles and reports which would have been otherwise not possible. But these attempts to override the orders are generally met with harsh punishments. As Ma says,

"Here the dialectic of autonomy and control is evident at the heart of media production, and media workers deal with intense contradiction by improvising. The expanded media spaces mentioned above are restricted to apolitical and consumerist contents. This uneven liberalization of the Chinese media can be related to Deng Xiao Ping's philosophy of pragmatism, which privileges improvisation over dogmatism" (Ma cited in Curran and Park, 2000: 19).

The SARS outbreak and the Sichuan earthquake where instances when the Chinese media initially followed the Chinese government's approach, (Carnegie, 2003). However, when they realized that such approach is not helping the larger cause of the Chinese people, the Chinese media changed its reporting. It started to report about the events and as a result went against the Chinese government. An act which is not allowed in a communist structure. The Chinese media was directed to follow the party and paint a positive picture of the existing situation. After the SARS crisis was over the Chinese media was brought back under the control of the party. The media control structures were used in full force (Los Angeles Times, 2008). Such events only add to the argument that the freedom of media in China is still dependent on the party. Whenever the party feels that the media is going too out of control it can decide to increase the command over the media.

Chinese Media and Globalization:

In the Post-Tiananmen era, the Chinese media is struggling between the crosscurrents of nationalism and globalization, due to increasing market dependence as discussed above but also due to forces of globalization. "The impact of globalization is indirect and contingent. Introducing new media technologies such as television and the internet transforms the flow of information, partly because of the intrinsic characteristics of the technologies, but even more because they are embedded in new institutions reflecting the spirit of new times"(Cormick and Liu in Lee, 2003, 136).Schell argues that, "The flow of media content across China's borders is significant more because it offers Chinese audiences more resources for constructing arguments and identities than because of seductive "Western values" woven into imported media"(Schell cited in Dennis and Snyder, 1998: 35-36). "The diffusion of media business models particularly media firms dependent on advertising revenues has given rise to a commercial culture that is often apolitical but which may nonetheless undermine the traditional relationship between political authorities and the public. Scholars have argued that globalization has also increased the quantity of

information that is today available to the Chinese people" (McCormick and Liu cited in Chin-chuan, 2003: 136).

One of the most prominent events which pushed China on the path of globalization was its entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO). China joined the WTO in 2001. Today China is one of the most globally interconnected economies in the world. This event not only affected the Chinese economy but also had a very prominent influence on the Chinese media sector. Zhengrong Hu argues that the accession to WTO increasingly complicated the process of change and transformation within the Chinese media structure (Hu, 2003: 20). Another important landmark development in this regard was the Chinese government announcement in 2009 of a "going out" policy with a budget of 6 billion dollars and a few chosen media houses. This was done to promote the Chinese viewpoint (Hu and Ji, 2012: 33). This was primarily aimed to help in promoting Chinese soft power and the discourse of peaceful rise. In addition to this, the Chinese government also established the China Xinhua News Network Corporation with an investment of 9 billion dollars in order to distribute Chinese news programmes globally (Lee, Chin-chuan, Yao, Chang, Lin and Shen, 2014: 46).

However, another important influence of globalization is that it also helps in reducing the control of any authoritarian government on media (Lee, Rawnsley and Rawnsley, 2014, 131). In China too, globalization affected almost all formats of media. Some scholars have argued that with globalization, the Chinese domestic media market may be forced to accept rules which are assigned by the international media market and not the local government (Lindoff, Hakan and Rydholm, Lena, 2003: 22). After its entry into the WTO, a number of international media houses were also very keen to enter the Chinese market because China is one of the largest markets in terms of number of people (Sparks, 2003: 94).

The Chinese government started allowing more international news channels and movies to be showcased it China. As per a requirement to join the WTO, the Chinese government changed or reformed a total of 2300 national laws (Yong, 2011). As argued by the report *China: 2013*,

> "The latest trend in China's media industry is to form intermediate and transregional media operating on multiple patterns. In 2001 the government set a goal of establishing transregional multimedia news groups,

and instituted detailed regulations on fund-raising, foreign cooperation and trans-media expansion to this end" (China: 2013: 222).

The report also states that as per the Chinese commitment to the WTO in May 2003, the Chinese General Administration of Press and Publication publicised its Administrative Measures for Foreign-invested Book, Newspaper and Periodical Distribution Enterprises. This has permitted the foreign investors to be able to retail since May 1, 2003 and also do wholesale since December 1, 2004. However, for this they still need the prior approval of the General Administration of Press and Publication (China: 2013, 227).

But one should also be aware of the fact that till date the Chinese government is comfortable with the notion of economic globalization. With globalization and change in the subsidies in China, the media started to play a very crucial role in economic development. It proved to be a very strong tool used by the Chinese government to exploit the benefits of economic reform and globalization. The Chinese government had allowed the introduction of internet as it was a very important tool in strengthening the economic reforms of China. With globalization a large number of foreign media houses have also opened their offices in China in partnership with the Chinese media houses. Such efforts also helped in bringing substantial foreign investment into China and in return helped the Chinese economy. However, this freedom has not been extended to the political area. Even after globalization the Chinese political structure remains greatly controlled and under the tight grip of the CPC. Today the media in China has freedom to discuss issues related to economy. But when it comes to political issues and events the government still exercises very tight control.

Internet and Changes in the Chinese Media:

The internet was introduced to China in the 1990s.The introduction of internet in China has played a significant role in transforming the media landscape. This new media technology has transformed the way the Chinese media functions and also responds to the situations today. The decision for the introduction of internet in China had no political rooting. The Chinese government decided to introduce the internet primarily because of the fact that it was seen as an important tool for economic development. According to the Media in China, "the Internet has become a

new force in information communications in China, on the strength of its popularity, and its average psychographic profile of the young and educated, which suited much of market demand" (Media in China**:**107). A similar argument has been put forth by Liu (2011: 52), "Chinese government's unyielding control of the Internet has to do with the fact that from the very beginning, the technology has been viewed as a driving force for China's national economic development, rather than citizens' civil participation and democratization". The first online advertisement was introduced in China in 1997 and the revenues reached around 1 billion Yuan in 2003 (Media in China**:** 109). Since then the revenues and the volume of online advertising has witnessed a consistent increase. In 2010, it was reported that the Internet's share was around 30 billion Yuan of the total advertising expenditure (Media in China: 109).

Other scholars have argued on similar lines. For example, Warf and Grimes opine that, "libertarian supporters of the internet argue that the medium is a universal space allowing access to unaltered flows of information, that it lacks established hierarchies of power and that it is 'a raucous and highly democratic world with no overlords or gatekeeper" (War and Grimes cited in Abbot, 2001: 99). However Hom, Tai and Nicolas debate that, "the Internet is proving itself a force for change in China as in the rest of the world. But alliances between Internet technologists, human rights activists, corporations, multilateral bodies, governments and ordinary citizens are crucial to ensure that these changes will work to the improvement of human rights and well-being for all Chinese people" (Hom, Tai and Nicholas: 2004).On the other hand, Yang (2009: 19) has argued it would be farfetched to say that the "internet, like the telephone, may not directly lead us to a more just and equal society".

Chinese Society and Internet:

The overall impact of the internet on society as large and diverse as China merits discussion. The introduction of the Internet can be regarded as a major watershed decision by the Chinese government which has had unexpected and deep effects on Chinese society. The major impact of the introduction of the internet has been felt by Chinese society. The Internet has transformed the pre-economic reform image of the Chinese society. Today Chinese society is more connected and more aware of the developments globally as well as domestically because of the internet. Cullen and Choy (1999) argue,

"The impact of internet on all spheres of life political, commercial and social has been very significant. The impact is growing still at a very extraordinary rate and few are game to predict where these developments will lead. This is a rather special sort of information revolution. Unlike radio and television, the internet combines remarkable changes in mass communications and in people to people communications as well. Internet provides this in far less expensive ways than its competitors. It is also now clear that modern trade and commerce must all get linked with this system. For a country like China, which gives immense importance to modernization, the allure of internet is immense".

As was stated by Professor Xu, "the impact of the Internet has been like a "nuclear bomb" that has led to an "information explosion". The Internet has changed everything, whether it's at work, at home, in business, at leisure, or even in the car" (Jules Quartly, 2010).These arguments highlight the degree of influence which the Internet has had on Chinese society, from politically important (the flow of information and news) to absolutely mundane as shopping and gaming.

According to, Foster and Goodman (2000: 12), "In 1995, with the Chinese Internet rapidly expanding in a decentralized manner, Chinese leaders started discussing the Internet in earnest. China's leaders had to choose a range of options running anywhere from cutting China completely off from the Internet to allowing unrestricted growth. The Chinese State Council allowed the growth of the Internet but imposed hierarchical controls on all the organizations involved with it". In June 2010 the Chinese government published a white paper on internet in China. It is titled "White Paper on Internet in China". It is the first white paper published by the Chinese government on this issue. According to this white paper, "The Chinese government fully understands the Internet's irreplaceable role in accelerating the development of the national economy, pushing forward scientific and technological advancement, and expediting the informational transformation of social services, and places emphasis on and actively supports Internet development and application" (White Paper on Internet in China, 2010). However, this white paper also made clear that the Chinese government was not keen to extend full freedom to the internet in any forceable future. The white paper asserts that the Chinese government will help in the overall administering of the internet according to the Chinese domestic environment (White Paper on Internet in China, 2010). The white paper concluded that the internet will be under the full control of the CPC.

The Internet has also become an important part of the Chinese society today as the general people have come to trust the information available online more than what the CPC promotes. According to the *China: 2013* report, "with its increasing popularization, the Internet is becoming a major channel for Chinese citizens to exercise their right to know, to participate, to express and to supervise (China: 2013, 2013: 222-223).There is a general sense of 'not believing' government information as it is perceived to be not true. While the information available online is regarded as more 'true' and 'correct'. The Internet is thus seen as fair and devoid of propaganda and the primary place to go to for news and information. It is also the place where the people express discontent and criticism of the government and its policies. This is also because it is easily accessible by the people and thus helps them provide a platform to talk about things. With the presence of stricter policies against forming of groups and parties, the Internet is the place where people with similar issues can discuss them. However such actions are not totally free as the Chinese government has ways to employ means to control and block some of these views and online groups, though they are tougher to control.

Chinese Media and Internet:

The introduction of internet has had the most dramatic impact on the Chinese media. The number of people using the internet in China in 2011 was approximately around 485 million (Rooney, 2011) while this number grew to 731 million in 2016 (the total increase (South China Morning Post, 2017). The number will increase further if we add Hong Kong to the count. The Chinese government has realized the level of impact this change will have on its control of the politics and has thus very thoughtfully introduced a number of filtering points. The government is consistently monitoring and controlling the degree and also the kind of information which flows through the internet in China today. However, even though the Chinese government has been quite efficient and controlling the internet the Chinese people have found novel ways to go around the 'great Chinese firewall' (Fallows, 2011). According to Hatamato, "the Chinese government relies on strict restrictions of the Internet and media to help filter the type of content that is available to the country's citizens" (Hatamato, 2011). On the other hand Chan argues that, "the immediacy and fluidity of the internet have made it more tempting for the webpages to compete by speed and to take a more callous approach to news making. To break news and to reproduce news

which has been reported elsewhere has become part of websites' instincts. He further states that administrative boundaries dwindle in importance in cyberspace" (China cited in Chin-chuan, 2003: 170). The types of issues which the internet deals with further emphasize the fact that there is a change in the topics which now form the core of the people's grievances. As Yang highlights, the range of issues which people are protesting cover areas like consumer rights, land rights, property rights, popular nationalism, animal rights, pension, pollution, migrant labour, HIV AIDS etc. The defence of personal rights and interests and the expression and assertion of new identities are central concerns of new citizen activism" (Yang, 2009: 26-27).

The attraction of the large Chinese market and profits have helped the Chines government in convincing a number of international internet companies to follow the Chinese government's line of media control and censorship. However, some internet companies were not convinced by this attitude of the Chinese government. The most prominent example of this is the 2010Google and the CPC fallout. (Pei, 2010). China today is the house of the largest internet users. Such growth in the number of internet users has also been the catalyst to the development of indigenous internet platforms. These platforms have helped the Chinese people in being sync with the international and national developments. However, there has been some change with respect to this aspect as the Chinese government announced that keeping in mind the importance of the media sector, the Chinese government will as always guarantee the legitimate rights of foreign news organizations and their reporters and provide convenience for their reporting work in the country, according to a *China Daily* report (*China Daily*, 2011).

According to Yang, "the Internet began to develop in China in the mid-1990s, at a time when a civil society was already emerging. Ever since, this emerging civil society has provided favorable conditions for diffusion of the Internet. First, existing and dormant citizen groups and networks provide a social basis for using the Internet. The interactive nature of the Internet means that for it to be used and popularized, a basic level of online social interactions is necessary. Interactions may take place among total strangers, as is common in chat rooms and bulletin boards. Formal and informal social groups provide networks for online interactions to occur. Examples include professional groups, alumni networks, and other social groups based on some kind of pre-existing identities. Yang in his book discusses a case study of the younger

and educated section of the Chinese youth. He looks at ways in which this aspect is used to form stronger bonding on the internet (Yang, 2003: 414). He further states that, "The Internet's unique multiplicative capacity, combining "link, search, interact, and helps to meet the needs of the educated youth generation well" (Yang, 2003: 419).

Thus today in China the internet works as an important tool used by the youth and masses to express grievances as well as discuss problems and criticisms of the government and leaders. Therefore, in recent years the internet has also worked as an essential 'safety valve' for the Chinese government. It is a place where the citizens can discuss their problems. However, it has also proved to be a very strong tool in the hands of the people who have been looking for some form of protests and change. In a number of large protests, the internet has played a very crucial role in mobilizing people and pressuring the government into giving in to the demands of the people. Thus the internet has changed the way the Chinese people protest today.

International News and Internet in China:

The Internet changed the nature of Chinese people's engagement with and understanding of the world. Chinese people have more access to international events than they ever had in the past. News and images of developments like the Jasmine Revolution in West Asia reached the people in spite of the CPC working too hard to control the information through the internet. In order to control the flow of information about the Jasmine Revolution, the Chinese government had banned the search of for 'jasmine' online. People were not able to send text messages with the word jasmine in it. People were prohibited from buying and carrying jasmine flowers. Such ban and surveillance greatly affected the Chinese tea makers (Jacobs and Ansfield, 2011).

The Chinese government is uncertain about the impact of global exposure on its citizens. A demand for political change and electoral democracy is perhaps the biggest fear of the CPC. Therefore the government seeks to prevent any 'large scale distribution of information that may lead to collective action' (Qiang cited in Shirk, 2011: 209). Regularly, global new channels' broadcast in China goes blank, even when it is already delayed when a news critical of Beijing is being broadcast. In spite of such control by the government, there has been a major increase in the level of

'online activism', especially between 2000 and 2010 (Yang, 2009: 227). There are a number of definitions and criteria which go into defining 'online activism'. Yang has defined it as, "contentious activities associated with the use of internet and other new communications technologies. It can be any form of internet-based collective action that promotes, contests and resists change" (Yang, 2009: 3). He further states, "Online activism in China covers all probable issues and ranges from consumer rights to sexual orientation, protests against harms inflicted on vulnerable individuals and disadvantaged groups to the expression and assertion of new lifestyles and identities. There is no real difference between material and non-material concerns" (Yang, 2009: 3-4).Because of this role of Internet, the Chinese people have access to international developments faster and it is becoming tougher for the Chinese government to monitor. According to Shirk, "the Chinese news sites post breaking news from the International media almost instantaneously, much faster than the print and television sources, which have to consult the Party watchdogs first" (Shirk, 2007: 82). The Chinese government has always been sensitive about negative reporting about Human Rights violations in China and other issues and was not comfortable with the domestic audience gaining access to these. But today with the rise in the number of internet users, it is becoming difficult for the Chinese government to monitor these issues. On the other hand censoring of domestic concerns is also becoming problematic for the Chinese government as generally they get reported by the International Media and the internet makes it easy for Chinese people to access them.

Internet as a Means of Expression:

Interactive chatting option present another set of challenge and they are prevalent on most of the webpages and extremely popular among Chinese netizens. Even though the government still has filters searches on topics like Tibet, Tiananmen, that it considers sensitive, new ways have been found to overstep this blockade. This is also why the government currently encourages the people to express their grievances through the internet and other means. While the government understands the impact of the internet on people and on public opinion, it has become more relaxed about the views people express through the internet so long as these remain safety valves and do not become platforms for actions on the ground. In the same spirit, in 2007 President Hu Jintao stated that the party should try and "actively and creatively nurture a healthy online culture" which meets the demand of the Chinese

people (People' Daily Online, 2007). It can be safe to say that the Chinese government prefers internet and its chatrooms to the extent that it takes protest off the streets and to the extent that the protests don't challenge the legitimacy of the party rule.

Government controls on the subject and nature of discussion are pervasive and media's role as a liberator has its own limits. Media may be however, the latest developments have shown that the changes within the media structure have complicated the relationship between the party and the society. At least when it comes to the social aspect and to the areas which affect the day to day life of the people, the media in China has decided to be more independent and play the role of people's voice. This role also supports the party as it amounts criticising local governance issues and not target Beijing or the party legitimacy. Online activism is a reflection of other engagement in the society and also has some unique features of its own (Yang, 2009: 31).

The way the newer technologies have helped the people in overriding the control of the Chinese government was quite obvious in the aftermath of the High speed rail accident in the Zhejiang province on July 23, 2011 (CBC News, 2011). Even when the government tried to control the information, mobile phones helped in sharing the pictures of the accident. The government's first response was to cover the incident and any reporting about it. However, because of the internet the information leaked and the government had to acknowledge the events and order an inquiry. The internet played a very important role in this overall development. The primary actor that has been active in forcing the government to secede to the demands of the people has been the internet. Such incident was never seen in the Chinese media history. However, such events also make the media more accountable and accurate while forcing it to be timely in its reporting too. While this is a global trend, Chinese media is also facing these issues and has to vie for its space. Such developments are affecting both the domestic as well as the foreign policy areas. As was reported by *People's Daily*, "more and more ordinary Chinese are participating in government decision-making and legislation via the Internet because it is convenient, efficient and cheap" (People's Daily, 2002). A similar role of the internet was played in protests

like the Xiamen Protest[2], The Shifang Protest[3], The Dalian Protest[4], The Ningbo Protest[5] and The Qidong Protest[6] (Grano cited in Dong, Kriesi and Kübler, 2015: 87-93).

Domestic stability in China depends on the people's perception of the CPC's capacity to continue ruling. It is highly dependent on how the people in China view the CPC as a party worthy to continue ruling. Communist ideology no longer plays a very important role in the overall credibility of the CPC. The party has to undertake ways and means to be able to monitor and control the public opinion in its favour. As a result any development of negative opinions is a prominent problem for the CPC as it may question its legitimacy to rule. Nationalism plays a very crucial role and the CPC has to constantly work towards managing these feelings. Foreign policy is a major testing ground and when it comes to issues related to Japan and the United States, the people's opinions are highly nationalistic. This dictates the CPC public stand towards these issues. Thus the people's opinion plays a very crucial role in directing the Chinese foreign policy. The CPC in the age of internet and blogs understands that it needs to provide space for the popular public opinions. The Chinese government also studies the ongoing debates in the online platforms hoping to gauge the popular public sentiments. As has been argued by Ma,

> "the internet, however, has changed the nature of public discourse and Chinese citizens' relationship with the government. It promotes pluralism in public opinion, which has certainly affected state policies in China. But as recent developments have shown, the state often has trouble taming the expanded online space for public opinion. The technological revolution isn't likely to beget a political revolution in China, but an evolution in political governance is occurring as a once omnipotent state grapples with the advancement of a more contentious society" (Ma, 2009).

On the contrary, the argument by Herold and Marolt is that, "the main reason for the development of this Internet 'with Chinese characteristics' is the strong

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[2]The protest happened in the year 2007. A large number of people protested against the construction of a paraxylene (PX) (a benzene-based chemical). PX is highly poisonous. Journalists played a crucial role in the relaocation of the plant out of Xiamen.
[3]The protest happened in the year 2012. The major protest led to the postponing of construction of a molybdenum copper plant, as heavy metal plants are regarded as highly polluting.
[4]In the eyar 2014 there was a major protest against the PX plant.
[5]This protest was against a petrochemical plant in the year 2012. People feared major problems to their health from the petrochemical plant.
[6]This protest also took place in the year 2012. People protested against the construction of a waste water pipeline. The pipeline would have dumbed industrial waste into the sea.

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involvement of the Chinese government in online China. Government officials issue regulations, censor information, limit the expression of online opinion, make it difficult for Chinese netizens to engage with the non-Chinese Internet, attempt to influence online opinion, etc. The state is far more (openly) involved in online China than governments in America or Europe are with the non-Chinese Internet" (David Kurt Herold and Peter Marolt, 2011: 200). As argued by Manuel Castells, "electronic media have become the new space of politics in the twenty-first century, and the battles fought within or over these new media will play a crucial role in shaping state-citizen relationships" (Castells cited in Dong, Kriesi and Kübler, 2015: 11).

Thus today the tussle which the Chinese citizen and the CPC engage in with respect to the media sphere will have a defining outcome with respect to the future of the CPC. This tussle will be a major phase in giving rise to new media and new society in China. It will also play an important role in changing the way the CPC works and it may pave the way for changing Party and society relations. According to a *Xinhua* report, "the open-minded attitude and tolerance towards dissenting opinions showcases China's confidence of bettering its governance. Nevertheless, a regular and effective system linking governance to new media is yet to come. Convenient as it seems, the Internet, like newspapers and television, is no more than a medium. When netizens' outcry indicates possible problems like corruption, there is no formal system in place to have those concerns investigated. The country needs formal procedures to monitor online information and carry out investigations accordingly" (Yuanfeng and Yimin, 2009). Even though the Chinese government is adapting to the changes ushered in by the media and the internet there is an ongoing tussle. The government's first reaction is to control and censor while the people push for extra freedom. When the information reaches the public domain and there is dissent the Chinese government pushes for resolution. However the absence of legal structure to formally address and resolve the grievances makes the task of the Chinese government every more difficult. The best alternative that the Chinese government uses is to attempt to curb and monitor further information which may lead to dissent.

Examples of investigative journalism:

Investigative journalism is a major aspect of Chinese media landscape today. With the introduction of internet and other new media technologies, a large number of journalists are resorting to this technique in order to fulfil their journalistic

aspirations. Journalism in China took investigative trend beginning in the mid-1990s. (For example see Burgh, 2003: 801). He further argues that, "no negative reporting was permitted, even reporting on a traffic accident was forbidden, until the taboo was broken around 1980" (Burgh, 2003: 802). According to Ma, "these changes have resulted in the decentralization, specialization, and multiplication of production and distribution processes, which in turn weaken ideological control and increase operational autonomy. Media organizations are now less dependent on government subsidies and can generate financial support directly from the market. This strengthens their bargaining power with state authorities and substantially increases the income and welfare of media workers. In fact the market helps breed a new generation of journalists, who are given mobile phones and sometimes even cars, and live an enviable lifestyle. Breaking the uniform reward system and installing diversified career paths, the market intensifies competition within and across the media" (Ma cited in Curran and Park, 2000: 21). Polubaum further strengthens this argument by stating that for the Chinese journalists, "certain spheres of investigation remain treacherous, certain issues and individuals remain beyond question or reproach, and certain other topics are presented in a rigidly conformists and strident manner. In addition to this, critical areas of public policy remain largely off-limits for open discussion" (Polubaum, 2001: 269). In the first decade if the twenty first century, the Chinese media had become highly investigative and was able to finance itself. With newer incentives the media began to be more assertive... However, one cannot assume that the media was totally free. Even though it was working towards uncovering 'stories', some people and some issues were out of its reach.

As argued by Tong, "among these, the rise of investigative journalism and its flourishing is the most contradictory element of the Chinese authoritarian media system. The contradiction embodied in the practices of investigative journalism in China comes from a prominent pair of paradoxical factors: the authoritarian nature of the regime that tames and controls the media and the adversarial nature of investigative journalism that rivals the power" (Tong, 2011: 5). In recent years, there has also been an increase in the number of "fringe publications" in China. These are not completely under the control of the state and thus enjoy more freedom than the mainstream media (Sun Yu, 2003).

The most prominent example in this section is the story of Wang Keqin. Wang started working as a propaganda journalist at the age of twenty, in the year 1984. According to Tania Branigan (2010), by 2001 he had a huge bounty on his head thus making him "China's most expensive reporter". This happened after he exposed illegal dealings in local financial markets. Another work of his enraged local officials and this cost him his job. The story of Wang provides a clear perspective on what it means to be an investigative journalist in China. Whenever stories of corruption, bad governance etc. are reported its fallout for the journalists is difficult. The government's reaction to such stories is generally to suspend the reporters or put them under heavy surveillance. In some cases some journalists have lost their jobs and have even been put under house arrest. Even then, there is no shortfall of such works in China today which highlights the fact that today the journalists in China are ready to undertake measures, even at the cost of their jobs, to report what concerns the people. According to Shuli, "there is no legal protection for journalists and any journalist can easily be sued for defamation. Journalists face pressure not only from the government but also from private business interests and corrupt officials" (Shuli cited in Shirk, 2011: 86).

One of the most prominent cases in this respect has been the killing of Sun Zhigang. According to *China Daily*, "Sun Zhigang, an employee at the Guangzhou Daqi Garment Company from Wuhan, capital city of Central China's Hubei Province, was beaten to death by eight patients at a penitentiary hospital just hours after being arrested as a vagrant for not carrying an ID. A total of 12 people guilty of beating young man Sun Zhigang to death received death penalties or terms of imprisonment ranging from three years to life from Guangzhou Municipal Intermediate People's Court" (*China Daily*, 2003). This was made possible only after the media picked up the story and reported this killing. According to *China Digital Times*, "reporters from Nanfang Dushi Bao (Southern Metropolis News), an aggressive daily run by ground-breaking editor Cheng Yizhong, soon discovered an official autopsy report that found Sun had been beaten to death in custody. Though well aware that a story on the autopsy would infuriate local officials, Cheng gave the go-ahead to publish it anyway. The article set off a national scandal that led to important government reforms. But true to the nature of contemporary Chinese society "where emerging free-market forces regularly collide with authoritarian traditions" it also landed Cheng

and three colleagues in prison" (China Digital Times, 2005).This has further been emphasized by scholars who state that, "the Internet and other technologies have potential to serve as a democratizing force—providing more access to information, building a virtual space for community gathering and grassroots development—but these sophisticated technologies (such as biometrics) can also be manipulated into tools for repression, propaganda and enforcing authoritarian control" (Hom, Tai and Nicholas, 2004).

However, a parallel debate states that whatever the media reports is not actually real news or stories. This is highlighted by observation by Shuli when he says that, "the past problem with the Chinese media was that too few dared to publish something 'sharp', which is a news or opinion which was politically sensitive. On the other hand today too many newspapers write things which look 'sharp'" (Shuli cited in Shirk, 2011: 87). Competition to be noticed may be one of the reasons why this is happening.

With the introduction of investigative journalism today in China, there are hoards of news outlets and information and most of the media houses are contesting for sensational news. Though one cannot deny that some of the stories are true and the journalists do undertake major risks to their lives and jobs in order to uncover them, there are an equal number of stories and reports which are published in order to just gain personal benefits. As a result, it is very difficult to conclude which one is true and which one is fabricated. Sometimes journalists also use this medium to settle personal rivalries.

Chinese Government's Control and Reaction to the Changes within the Media:

The general reaction of the Chinese government towards these changes has been one of an increase in the level of control and heavy handedness. This has been clearly argued by Qinglian when he says that, "the Chinese government attempts to control the sources of information. The government also uses the power it wields to control news sources and also restricts people from providing information to journalists as well as the foreign media" (Qinglian, 2004: 11). She has also identified methods by which the Chinese government controls the media. She calls them: (Qinglian, 2004: 12-19).

- Black eyes and blackouts

- Gentle persuasion

- The Blacklist

- Damage Control

- Declaring 'state-secrets'

- The Iron Heel

The Chinese media is regulated by the CPC's Central Publicity Department (CPD) but as there is no detailed work available on the working of the CPD, it is very hard to know the extent to which power is shared among the CPD and local and provincial propaganda departments. Hassid states that the CPD demarcates the boundaries of the acceptable in a deliberately fuzzy manner so that the journalists have to self-censor to a very large extent. He further elaborates that it is this uncertainty of censorship which works in controlling the media (Hassid, 2008: 415). Secondly, most of the editors of top newspapers in China are appointed and removed by the CPD and other CPC organizations and bodies rather than the newspaper itself (Hassid, 2008: 419). As per Ashley Esarey, "it is the senior cadres employed by the Propaganda Department who monitor compliance with the party's ideological position at both central and provisional levels" (Esarey, 2006: 5).

Elizabeth C. Economy says the Chinese government is in a state of "schizophrenia" about media policy as it "goes back and forth, testing the line, knowing they need press freedom--and the information it provides-but worried about opening the door to the type of freedoms that could lead to the regime's downfall" (Economy cited in Bennett, 2011). Though the Chinese government has put in place measures to control the media, the recent trend as argued by Chan is that, "as has been evidenced by Internet, marketization, when coupled with the advent of new technology a strong force may be generated which may prove to be too strong a force for the state to confine within the limiting parameters" (Chan cited in Lee, 2003: 176). However Yang states, "Since 1990s the Chinese state power has become more decentralized and fragmented on one hand and more disciplinary and capillary on the other" (Yang, 2009: 28). Polubaum, on the other hand states that, "with the passage of time, party and government capacities to direct the media will likely weaken further as the competition for audiences and advertising continues to build and barriers to external investment in the most lucrative media sectors begin to dissolve" (Polubaum,

2001: 270). This argument is strengthened as a result of the fact that the Chinese government had asked the police forces of the country to use microblogs and other internet portals to share details about their work and serve the people better, according to *China Daily*. Often, preference is given to publishing stories of police officers' bravery and sacrifice, updates on important cases and tips, on how to avoid telecom frauds and other scams (Yin, 2011). This clearly shows that the Chinese government has come to terms with the mass appeal of the internet and has also realized level of influence it has on people. Thus, it is looking for avenues by which it can use this platform for boosting its own image as well. It has also become essential for the CPC to use this platform for image boosting as the major actors in online discussion on corruption included judges, police officers and government officials (Xiaokun cited in Dong, Kriesi and Kübler, 2015: 39).

But as Zhao argues, "economic liberalization has not been translated into political freedom. The Chinese government has made it clear that it will continue to exercise very tight control over the news media in the short and medium terms. The steps undertaken to achieve this has been by banning publications, jailing dissident journalists and attempting to consolidate control under huge government run conglomerates" (Zhao, 2000: 3-26). Kristof has argued that the Chinese government under the leadership of Hu Jintao has become more authoritarian and there has been an increase in the number of controls (Kristof, 2005). The most prominent example in this respect is the statement by Wang Chen, minister of the State Internet Information Office, which was quoted in *China Daily*. According to him networks like Facebook and Twitter pose new problems for social management. He further argued thateveryoneinvolvedshouldobservethelawandsafeguardthenormsofsocial morality (Cao and Zheng, 2011).

Scholars have also argued that Chinese journalists are expected to understand what the CPC wants and what its priorities are and should therefore avoid reporting issues that the government considers sensitive (Esarey, 2006: 9).They have further argued that, over time, journalists resort to self-censorship in order to avoid repression and also to make sure that they have a job (Esarey, 2006: 10). It has also been seen that the major target of internet censorship is any form of criticism which is directed towards the central leadership and the CPC (Dong, Kriesi and Kübler, 2015: 175).

The Internet "should not be used to jeopardize national or public interest, or the legitimate rights and interests of the other citizens" (Yin and Jinran, 2011). As discussed by Schell, there are two primary reasons because of which the Chinese government is concerned about these developments. First is that the government is concerned about "heretical political ideas leaking into China via the new foreign vector". Second is the fact that the, "government wants to maintain its ability to monopolize all signals entering the country so that it can profit from them by selling commercials itself" (Schell cited in Dennis and Snyder, 1998: 40).Thus the reasons for the heavy control and monitoring of the Chinese internet is both economic as well as political. If the internet gains complete freedom then the Chinese government will not be able to control the ideas which will flow into China. The Chinese government has been facing a large number of mass incidents and protests and internet plays a very crucial role even though it is controlled. So the CPC is worried that if it is given full freedom then the intensity will automatically increase. Secondly, internet also helps in the economic growth and development and the Chinese government is keen to exploit all possible benefits from it.

However, a contrarian perspective is presented by Yang that, "the political domination of the state shapes the form of contention but it cannot prevent it from happening. In the meanwhile, while the power of the state works towards preventing contention, it also adapts to the process. As a result, both power and contention undergo change in the process of interaction" (Yang, 2009: 13).The change in the relationship between the Chinese government and the media is one where politics is still controlled, and even though the changes in media challenge the political authority, they have not managed to fully unsettle it. Today the government and the media work in a "clientelistic relationship" where one grants the other economic benefits and survivability in exchange for loyalty (Wang, 2010: 24).

Even though introduction of economic reforms has changed a number of aspects of the Chinese society, it has still failed to bring any form of 'reform or opening up' in the political sector. As a result, there has been no complete freedom for the media either. Media is essentially a political tool in the hands of the CPC and thus even though technologies like internet and mobile phones are making it tougher for the CPC to control the media completely, it is still working towards maintaining control and influence.

Summary:

The new developments in the media clearly highlight the fact that the Chinese media landscape has undergone a major transformation. The changes which have started to unfold post the opening up of the Chinese economy have transformed the structural relationships within China. The media is becoming a new form of 'voice of the people' while it is supposed to be playing the role of the party mouthpiece. This change may lead to further transformations within the Chinese society. The Chinese government has allowed a number of changes in the economic realm which have a clear bearing on the politics of the Chinese system. The most important amongst these are the changes within the media. The level of openness which the media is witnessing may lead to major transformations in Chinese society. Journalists now want to play the role of the people's representatives and are no longer scared about jeopardizing their jobs when it comes to fulfilling that purpose.

The introduction of advertising and the Internet played a very important role in bringing forth these changes. With globalization and economic reforms, the Chinese media was forced to become economically independent as the Chinese government withdrew its subsidies. This made the Chinese media dependent on the Chinese people as the government was no longer its primary buyer and provider. As people became important there was preference given to stories and events which the Chinese people were interested in and were concerned about. As a result, the Chinese media witnessed a new form of journalism in which Chinese journalists initiated investigative journalism to unfold and report issues which were censored by the Chinese government and perceived to be a threat to the general peace and stability of the society. These investigative stories were a clear breach of the guidelines and redline which the Chinese government sets for the Chinese media. It was because of these changes that the media in China is becoming active and politically relevant. It has extended its scope of reporting from government permitted issues to issues which are relevant for people and society.

The other aspect which comes to the forefront is that the Chinese media is also giving rise to fervours of nationalism in the process. There is a major emphasis on the need for nationalism especially when it comes to foreign policy developments. How far these developments will result in a political transformation is still to be seen.

Will a free media lead to the eventual transformation of China to a democratic country with an active civil society and public sphere or will this lead to development of a semi-democratic and semi-civil society and public sphere (with Chinese characteristics).These developments have brought newer dynamics of the media and society to the forefront and it has made the Chinese media space highly dynamic and lively. The Chinese media is regularly looking for ways to push the limits imposed by the government and to develop ways to counter the censorship. The constant tussle between the rules of the Chinese government and the 'limited rebellion' of the Chinese media is making the Chinese media landscape very interesting and constantly mutating.

Chapter IV

Democracy Movement- Tiananmen Square Crackdown: BEGINNING OF AUTONOMY IN THE MEDIA

Introduction:

The 1989 Democracy Movement is one of the most prominent developments in the recent history of China. The Tiananmen Square Crackdown was the result of the economic reforms and opening up policy which was introduced in the 1980s under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping. With extensive economic development and interaction with the global community, the Chinese society also felt the need to transform. However, the Chinese government was not ready for granting any freedom and liberty in the political as well as the social realms. The demands for democracy and freedom of expression were perceived as a threat to the rule of the CPC. These processes coupled with the changes underway in the then Soviet Union forced the CPC to re-think its strategy.

The immediate phase following the announcement of the reform and opening up of the Chinese economy witnessed a period of media freedom. However, this was short lived and was followed by stricter and harsher media control during and post-Tiananmen Crackdown. Even today the Chinese government is not comfortable with discussing and debating the Tiananmen Square Crackdown.

With this backdrop, this chapter will highlight the developments that led to the Tiananmen Square Crackdown. It will also discuss the reactions of the local Chinese media as well the International/Foreign Media. It will also attempt to discuss how the media in China is trying and linking the debates at the local level with the global level and is thus becoming a part of the international community.

The Chinese government also introduced major changes in the education system in order to prevent any Tiananmen like event occurring in the future. The Tiananmen Square Crackdown not only affected Chinese domestic politics and policies but also had major lasting effects on Chinese foreign policy and foreign relations. It also ushered in a new era in media debates and censorship of domestic

media in China. The chapter has sections which discuss the changes that were underway in the Chinese media sector in the 1980s and also discusses in detail the developments which led to the Tiananmen Square Crackdown. It discusses the methods used by the Chinese government to control the flow of information regarding the developments at the Tiananmen Square during and after the Crackdown. Moreover, it looks at the role which the foreign media played in spreading information about the Tiananmen Square Crackdown. It also discusses in detail how the *China Daily* reported before, during and after the Tiananmen Square Crackdown. The reaction and policies adopted by the Chinese government in order to prevent any similar occurrence from taking place in the future is also highlighted in the chapter.

Media Debates in the 1980s:

Scholars have argued that press control is one of the most fundamental features of authoritarian regimes. The same is true for China as well. The basic understanding about media has been that it is an organ which is to serve the Party in extending its control over the people. As has been argued by Orville Schell, "Throughout the 1980s, journalists waged a constant struggle with the Party over the media's role in Chinese society. The section which believed in reform and liberalization affirmed that China could never become a fully modernized country without codified laws that guaranteed a more independent status for journalists. On the other hand, those who resisted reform and liberalization were fearful that an open press would be the undoing not only of the Communist Party but also of Mao's whole "revolutionary" edifice" (Shambaugh, Schell, 1999: 238).

However, the developments which preceded the Tiananmen Square provided the scope for one of the most open and free journalistic and media reporting which China has ever witnessed. There was a steep rise in the number of evening publications in the mid and late 1980s and thus it is no surprise that the number of books published in 1985 was around 45,000, while television saw a boom in the 1980s and successfully replaced radio in the 1990s (Media in China: 87-100).Junhao Hong asserts that during this time the Chinese media was able to play the role of a facilitator in the process of democratization (Hong, 2002: 1). It was also the time when the media was allowed to question political issues even as it refrained from challenging the central leadership. At the same time, when the CPC felt that things

were getting out of hand, they launched campaigns to control the media, like the 1983 "anti-Western spiritual pollution campaign" which lasted for several months (Hong, 2002: 1-2).

Zhao Ziyang called for media transparency and openness in the speech he delivered at the Thirteenth Party Congress in 1987 (Chan, Qiu, 2002: 34). Schnell (1994: 34) quotes *World Economic Herald*, a Chinese paper as saying, "If the media is free then it can discuss and test various policy options before they are carried out….and correct them before they cause damage". Frank Tan also argues that the developments which preceded the Tiananmen Square Crackdown like the shift from the class struggle to modernization, focus on increased professional training, encouraging questioning, and lesser control on political expression made people believe that "the cost of complaining, criticizing and contradicting orthodoxy was becoming less" (Tan, 1990: 153-154). This phase began in 1978 with the convening of the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, which adopted the Open Door Policy[7], under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping. This policy led to changes in the media policy and a thriving media industry in China (Press Reference, n.d.).In addition, the Chinese Central Propaganda Department in 1979 pushed the media to be more innovative and active. The Propaganda Department increased the flow of information and also wanted the media to work towards helping the party leadership. This phase witnessed a rise in the print media in China. (Nhan, 2008: 39). In the year 1979, the first ever print and television advertising was introduced in China. On January 4, 1979 the first print advertisement was published and on January 28, 1979 the first Television commercial was telecast (Media and Visual Culture in the People's Republic of China A timeline: 1978 to 2008, n.d.). It was in the 1980s that television became widely available to the Chinese people and brought unprecedented contact and also provided a means to connect the large country together with the help of only one device (Erik Kessels, 2014). According to Article 35 of the Constitution of the PRC, which was adopted on December 4, 1982, "citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy

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[7]Deng Xiaoping announced the Open Door Policy in 1978. This policy allowed foreign businesses to invest in China. The southern cities of Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Shantou and Xiamenwere established as Special Economic Zones (SEZs). China needed the foreign capital and technology to move out of the agararian structure. This helped China achieve major growth rates in the 1980s and move a large section of its population out of poverty. It also transformed China into the factory of the world in a few decades. China joined the WTO in 2001 and today it is one of the largest trading partners of the most of the countries.

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freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession and of demonstration"(Press Reference, n.d.).It was in the year 1983 that the Wuhan University introduced its journalism department (Press Reference, n.d.).This phase also witnessed a major rise in the number of press outlets in China from 200 in 1978 to around 1600 in 1988 (Jeffery Wartman, 2007: 3).

Media limits were extended and expanded in the 1970s and 1980s beyond what the Chinese government had initially hoped. This was a result of the introduction of advertising and also allowing decentralization in broadcasting (Akhavan-Majid, 2004: 9). He further argues that, "at many levels, China's non-state actors have not only received tacit approval, but also open cooperation from the party cadres and bureaucratic authorities in their efforts to creatively renegotiate party-state policy" (Akhavan-Majid, 2004: 9). A similar argument has been expressed by Dingxin Zhao. He asserts that, "When China's media underwent reform in the 1980s, Chinese journalists started to introduce such Western journalistic principles as timeliness, objectivity and reliability. The editors of major media outlets obtained more freedom to decide on the news themselves" (Zhao, 2001: 299).

As expressed by Zhang Xiaogang:

"Before Tiananmen, an informal coalition existed between journalists and other forces pursuing market-oriented reform and greater civil liberties. Though the millions of people who have interests in a market economy might not understand the meaning of the freedom of the press, their economic interests were inherently in conflict with intervention of the state. The increasing flow of information, as a necessary condition of the market, in turn fed on the demand for a redefinition of the meanings of society, individual and authority. Journalists welcomed these changes and wanted to earn the expected financial and acclaim from the market place. During the inspiring, though very brief, moment of the mass protests in 1989, Chinese journalists proved as capable as their overseas colleagues in running a free press. Since the crackdown, however, they have been forced to resume serving their old masters at the central propaganda authorities."(Xiaogang, 1993: 196).

Thus, one can say that the Chinese media witnessed one of the freest spaces with respect to reporting during the 1980s. The economic reform and opening up provided the Chinese media with limited economic freedom which was expressed in the stories which were reported. The Chinese media was able to exploit this freedom but only for a very limited time, the events of the Tiananmen Square completely

transformed the government's approach to media and ushered the phase of total media control and censorship. The role which the journalists' played before and during the protests was not to the liking of the Chinese leadership and was not accepted by the CPC as well.

The Tiananmen Square Crackdown:

The Tiananmen Square Crackdown is a major event in Chinese current history. It had major effects on both the domestic and foreign policy of the China. Tiananmen Square is regarded as very important symbol of power. Its location at the centre of Beijing makes its political relevance all that strong. It was been used historically for various protests and also for political movements. It is also regarded as a "symbol of Communist authority" (Laris, 1999).

According to Kallie Szczepanski, "Hu Yaobang was the Secretary of the Communist Party of China from 1980 to 1987. Hu advocated rehabilitation of people persecuted during the Cultural Revolution, greater autonomy for Tibet, rapprochement with Japan, and social and economic reform. As a result, he was forced out of office by the hardliners in January of 1987, and made to offer humiliating public "self-criticisms" for his allegedly bourgeois ideas. One of the charges levelled against Hu was that he had encouraged (or at least allowed) wide-spread student protests in the late 1986. As General Secretary, he refused to crack down on such protests, believing that dissent by the intelligentsia should be tolerated by the Communist government" (Szczepanksi, 2016). During the 1980s, the top leadership of the CPC was divided between the liberals and the authoritarians and the power center kept shifting between these two sections (Schell, 1995: 65).

Prior to the people's protests and gathering, a number of developments pressurized the CPC. For example, publications like the *Shanghai World Economic Herald* and a magazine called *New Enlightenment* published several 'daring' articles which questioned the party's ideological structure. They also advocated radical political as well as economic development and changes (Nathan, 1989).

The Tiananmen Square demonstrations began in April 1989as a peaceful gathering mourning the death of the liberal Chinese leader Hu Yaobang and not as

protests. The initial gathering of students was a small one. The students protesting at the Tiananmen had made seven demands: (Nathan and Link, 2001:34).

(1) affirm as correct Hu Yaobang's views on democracy and freedom; (2) admit that the campaigns against spiritual pollution and bourgeois liberalization had been wrong; (3) publish information on the income of state leaders and their family members; (4)end the ban on privately run newspapers and permit freedom of speech; (5) increase funding for education and raise intellectuals' pay; (6) end restrictions on demonstrations in Beijing; and (7) hold democratic elections to replace government officials who made bad policy decisions.

Some students at Tiananmen also undertook the following oath: "I pledge to use my young life to defend Tiananmen and to defend the republic. My head may be cut off, the blood may flow, but Tiananmen Square must not be lost. I will fight until the last person falls" (Lusted, 2011: 101). Such oaths and pledges highlighted the seriousness of the commitment of the students towards the ongoing protests. Oaths also gave emotional appeal to the overall protests and signified the appeal it had to the students.

The student protests at Tiananmen drew a large number of students from the beginning. It is reported that by April 22, 1989 the number of students present at the Tiananmen Square had risen to 100,000 and the protests lasted for about seven weeks (Hay, 2010: 8). The most prominent demand of the students at the Square was dialogue with the Party (Casserly, 2005: 244). On April 24, the students declared a complete boycott of classes in colleges and universities in Beijing while on April 26 the students established The United Autonomous Association of Beijing University and College Students, a student union body which is not endorsed by the CPC (Kovalio, 1991: 9) and the students demand the recognition of this body on April 27 before any further discussion could take place (Kovalio, 1991: 10). The main slogans undertaken by the Chinese students, especially, Liu Xiaobo, Zhaou Duo, Hou Dejian and Gao Xin were (*World Affai*rs, 1989-1990: 150):

"We have no enemy! Don't poison our wisdom and the democratization of China with hatred and violence!

We all need introspection! Everyone is responsible for China's backwardness!

We are first and foremost citizens!

We are not in search of death – we are looking for real life."

The major demands which were put forward by the students in April 1989 were: (Despande, 1989: 1372).

- Hu Yaobang's contribution should be re-evaluated and his appreciation of the great harmony existing between democracy and freedom should be appreciated. Those who attacked the students and the masses should be severely punished; those responsible should be made to present apologies and compensation to the victims.
- Publication of the law on the press should be sped up, newspapers written by citizens should be authorized and freedom of the press guaranteed.
- State leaders must make public their incomes and inheritance, including those of their family, to the people and to the country as a whole. An inquiry must be held into corruption, with all the details published.
- State leaders implicated in policy errors concerning education should make an official self-criticism in front of the whole people. The education budget must be substantially increased, alongside teachers' wages.
- The campaign against 'bourgeois liberalisation' should be re-evaluated with the total rehabilitation of the citizens who had suffered unwarranted injustices.
- There should be an impartial and truthful assessment of this democratic and patriotic movement.

President and CPC Secretary General Deng Xiaoping had termed the protests as "turmoil "and not a major political or social movement. However, this was challenged by Zhao Ziyang after he returned from North Korea at the end of April. Zhao also made a number of speeches in which he praised the student protests, calling them patriotic and also accepted that their call for removing corruption from Party and government officials was necessary (Liu, 1992: 52).Zhao, however, was in favour of maintaining calm and discussion with the students and also sympathised with the students. It is no surprise that on May 1 he told the politburo, "If the Party does not hold up the banner of democracy in our country, someone else will, and we will lose out. I think we should grab the lead on this and not be pushed along grudgingly" (Pan, 2008: 12).

The presence of large number of students at the Tiananmen Square on May 1, 1989 resulted in no parade being held for the celebration of May Day (Kovalio, 1991:

10). The students gathered at Tiananmen started a hunger strike on May 13, and this gained the support of a number of people (Nathan, 2001: 4). On May 18 Martial Law was imposed in Beijing (Nathan, 2001: 22-23).

The Chinese Government had faced tremendous embarrassment during the visit of Russian President Mikhail Gorbachev because of the ongoing Tiananmen Square Crackdown. This meeting between the two countries, was overshadowed by the ongoing students' protests. The students even had banners in Russian praising Gorbachev as a great leader. However, due to the students' presence at the Tiananmen Square, the Chinese leadership welcomed Gorbachev at the airport and had to welcome him into the Great Hall of People from the back door (Kristof, 1989).

There have also been reports that a large number of students present at the Tiananmen Square had come to Beijing from other parts of the country. As per reports, around 56,888 students had entered Beijing between May 16 and May 19 (Nathan, 2001: 26). This also included students who were not involved in the protests. Reports suggest that around 700 organizations were also involved in the protests between May 15 and 19 (Li, Li and Mark, 2009: 1).

There are reports that the 38th Group Army and twenty-five other group armies were already around Beijing even before the martial law was proclaimed (Schell, 1994: 123). The Government had declared the protest as "turmoil" on April 26 and also implemented "martial law" in various parts of Beijing on May 19 (Li, Li and Mark, 2009: 6). On May 20 Cui Jian, the renowned Chinese rock-and-roll star, sang his famous composition, "Nothing to My Name" in Tiananmen Square to express his support for the students (He, 2014: 170). On May 20 in a meeting held in front of TV cameras, Zhao was able to convince almost 3000 students to end their hunger strike and protests and also promised to take action over the "riot" editorial (Kovalio, 1991: 12).

The term "counter-revolutionaries" was used to define the students' movement on May 25 by Radio Beijing, and on May 30 the statue of the Goddess of Liberty was placed at the Tiananmen Square (Kovalio, 1991: 15). The Beijing University campus also saw posters calling for a multi-party system and attacking the Communist Party (Solinger, 1989: 623).

By June 1, the Chinese government had reinforced restrictions on the Foreign Media in China. On June 2, the students' protesting at the Tiananmen forced the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) unarmed troops to withdraw, but on June 3 the PLA troops shot indiscriminately which resulted in a number of protesters getting killed and the government announcing that the "rebellion has been suppressed" (World Affairs, 1989-1990: 132). The number of people who were killed during the Tiananmen Square Crackdown is still unclear. The Chinese government claimed that about 241 people were killed. However, it is believed that this is not the accurate number. The estimated number is anywhere between 800-4000 people (Szczepanski, 3).Even though the international media did manage to report the ongoing developments at Tiananmen Square, there is still no acknowledgement about the exact number of people who were killed. There is also a lot of debate around the number of people killed during the suppression of the Tiananmen Square Protests. The Chinese Red Cross claims it to be 2600, the Amnesty International has concluded it to be around 1000 while the North Atlantic Treaty Organization asserts it to be around 7000 and the Soviet Union claims the figures to be near 10,000 (Langley, 2009: 17). Thus highlighting the fact that the international community has not acknowledged the figure provided by the Chinese government.

At the end of the Incident, the CPC decided on a new leadership. Zhao Zhiyang and Hu Qili were removed from the new Politburo (Kovalio, 1991: 17). On June 9, 1989, Deng Xiaoping gave a speech titled 'Address to Officers at the Rank of General and above in Command of the Troops Enforcing Martial Law in Beijing'. In his speech he described the student movement as "counter revolutionary rebellion" (Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, Vol. 3).After the suppression of the movement, Zhao was put under house arrest. His references were removed from textbooks and no mention of him in the media was permitted (Pan, 2008: 4).

Thus, a movement which was started by students, journalists and workers for improving the situation in the Chinese society, and which was fundamentally a demand for democracy was brutally suppressed. The students were also demanding increased reforms in intellectual and social fields. They wanted free press, increased funding for education and also asserted that their protests were 'patriotic' and should not be labelled 'counter-revolutionary'. They were also calling for an anti-corruption drive (Jones, 2014). Even though there was no demand or mention of overthrow of the

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Party, the CPC appeared to be highly uncomfortable with the notion of the students' movement and people getting together under a banner which was not authorised by the CPC. The very act of organizing and demanding was perceived to be counter-revolutionary and anti-national.

The events of 1989 completely transformed the relationship between China and the other countries. Most scholars have referred to these developments as a watershed moment in the way the world perceived China. In the backdrop of the Tiananmen Square Crackdown, China witnessed "regressive economic trends in 1989-1990" (Kovalio, 1991: 23).It took the Chinese government a long time to bring back the diplomatic relationships to normal.

In the words of William H. Sun, "In hindsight, the 1989 confrontation between the government and the students in Tiananmen Square can be seen as a showdown between the old Chinese-style secretive politics, which were obviously despicable, and the Western-style performative politics, which were not all that heroic and glorious" (Sun, 1988: 7). The students protesting during 1989 were also calling for more "democratization", following the developments in Soviet Union. It was primarily a call for push for increased democratization of politics and state. However, the Western media present in China wrongly clubbed it with the notion of Western style democracy (Guosheng). One of the major catalysts in the overall Tiananmen Protests was the "Democratic Salon" which was established at the Peking University in May 1988 to celebrate 90 years of the establishment of the University. It was at the sessions of the Democratic Salon that students discussed and debated about various notions and meaning of democracy (Perry& Fuller, 1991: 667).In the words of Liu (1992: 58), "The student protests, with its counter-symbols of democracy and liberty and the students' demand for an end to gerontocracy sharpened the leaders' anxiety. The leaders sought to reduce their anxiety and dissonance through a collective retrospection to the early years of struggle and survival, which in turn legitimated repression in June 1989".

The protesting students and journalists had established important links of communication with the international media as well as the Chinese students studying and living outside China. The students used Fax machines to communicate the developments underway at the Tiananmen Square. In the words of Yan Ma, "The

technologies of dissemination that the Chinese State considered so important for progress set the scene for coalescing nongovernmental organization" (Ma, 2000: 146), thus highlighting the argument that the changes which were being allowed by the Chinese government to gain economic development were also playing a role in helping the people protest against the outcomes of these developmental policies.

Journalists and Tiananmen Square Incident:

The most prominent characteristic of the journalists during the Tiananmen Square crackdown was that apart from students, journalists were the first professional class to join the movement (Earp, 2009). The developments during the Tiananmen Square crackdown and the government response to it totally disillusioned the journalists about the way the Party handled the situation. As discussed by Richard McGregor, "Yang Jisheng had worked his entire life at Xinhua. He started his career in 1967 and retired in 2002. The post-Tiananmen developments totally disillusioned him. He even reported during the developments that, 'the blood of young students washed away all the lies that were in my head'" (McGregor, 2010: 252-253).

Media control was essential for the Chinese government to maintain its hold over the country. However, the developments surrounding the Tiananmen Square episode had totally transformed the situation. As per some scholars, "only in 1989 did most of the party leaders finally realize with a shock the extent to which lost control over media and ideological work could threaten the regime's integrity" (Hong, 2002). Frank Tan adds that it was pretty obvious that the journalists were sympathetic towards the ongoing protests as they were aware of the increasing corruption and also excessive abuse of power by the officials (Tan, 1990: 157).

As has been argued by Lucian Pye, one of the major reasons behind the developments leading up to the Tiananmen Square Crackdown was that the Chinese government attempted to reach the state of Socialism by jumping the step of Capitalism. Secondly, the leaders in China are regarded sacrosanct and unchallengeable. It was this status which made the Chinese leadership comfortable with the idea of using force for maintaining peace and stability (Yee, 1990). For the Chinese leaders what mattered the most in the wake of the Tiananmen protests was the maintenance of peace and stability. They were primarily driven by the need to safeguard their positions in power.

What made the position and actions of the Chinese government controversial and debatable was the presence of international media in Beijing in June 1989. Jacob Kovalio asserts that what sets the Tiananmen Square Crackdown apart from other incidents of protests in China is the presence of foreign media, as they undertook direct reporting of the crackdown, basically highlighting the way the protests were suppressed (Kovalio, 1991: 5-6). This also made it highly difficult for the Chinese government to fully 'suppress' and 'erase' the developments and events of June 1989.

Journalists did play a crucial role in the overall protests and demonstration. They were also a crucial factor in the spread of information and development of the protests at the Tiananmen Square. Most of the media houses were reporting regularly and were also publishing detailed stories about the protests and demonstrations, thus making the journalists and the media an important agent in drawing large scale attention on the demonstrations. As the Chinese government continued to control the other modes of information transmission (phone, new channels) with respect to developments at Tiananmen Square, the journalists primarily resorted to using fax machines for communication. Even though the Chinese government successfully managed to cut satellite communication, they did not focus on controlling fax machines (Ma, 2000: 148-150). This helped in the dissemination of information regarding the developments at the Tiananmen Square within and outside China and helped journalists with regular and updated reporting. Thus the role of new technologies in undermining the control and censorship of the Chinese government was critical for the movement.

China Daily and Tiananmen:

Domestic as well as foreign journalists played a very prominent role in the Tiananmen Square protests. With the increase in the number of journalists joining the protests, the party realized that it had to work towards preventing this section from happening. It has been argued by scholars that the CPC realized that apart from the military, the other organ which it had to tightly control was the media (Schell, 1994: 74). The Chinese newspaper, *World Economic Herald* faced severe crackdown at the hands of the CPC for being too open and 'free' in its reporting. As a response to this, the journalists at the *China Daily* compiled a couplet[8]that was signed by about

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[8] The couplet was:

seventy journalists and telegrammed to Qin Benli who was the editor of the World Economic Herald (Schell, 1994: 75). Such acts only strengthened the CPC resolve towards complete media control.

The following section will look at the month by month reporting of the *China Daily* with respect to the ongoing student protests at the Tiananmen Square and its suppression. It will attempt to highlight the developments and also bring forth the changing position of the *China Daily*, from initially being free in reporting about the Tiananmen Crackdown to later following the line asserted and promoted by the CPC, further highlighting the fact that the CPC did manage to control and monitor the way the Tiananmen Square student protest was reported and viewed by the people.

The following section looks at the events leading to the protests at the Tiananmen Square:

April:

In April 1989 as reported in the *China Daily* on April 28, 1989 a State Council spokesman had proposed a dialogue with tens of thousands of college students who were participating in a peaceful demonstration in Beijing (*China Daily*, 1989). The reporting of the developments continued in detail in the month of May as well. As per a report published on May 1, 1989 in the *China Daily*, the government representatives met with the protesting students. They also accepted that the demands of the students on democracy and corruption control were in line with the government's thinking. Around 45 students representing 16 Beijing universities attended these discussions (*China Daily*, 1989). The intensity of the protests can be gauged from the report in *China Daily* on May 1. A member of the Politburo Standing Committee, Hu Qili, said that there is a need to maintain peace and stability for open-door policy to work. He urged the Chinese workers to maintain stability (*China Daily*, 1989). The developments of May 6 indicate that after the speech by Zhao Zhiyang, a large number of students decided to return to classes. However, some students still felt the need to continue with the ongoing protests. Zhao's speech was perceived as

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"The Truth never dies.
The Herald pioneered ten years of reform.
Men of nobility do not bow to force.
Editor Qin is the most moral example of a whole generation of journalists." (Mandate of Heaven: A New Generation of Entrepreneurs, Dissidents, Bohemians and Technocrats Lays Claim to China's Future" 1994, Little, Brown and Company, UK, p.75)

sincere. The *China Daily* reported, "Zhao called for dialogues with the students and assured them that their demonstrations did not indicate political instability in China" (*China Daily*, 1989). On May 8, the *China Daily* reported that, "(...) the university students who rallied in Tiananmen Square announced the end of their two week long boycott of classes" (*China Daily*, 1989).

However, the intensity of the protests by the students continued to grow throughout the month of May. The *China Daily* quoted one student protestor from People's University on May 17 as saying that, "I will keep on fasting until the government acknowledges that this student demonstration is patriotic and democratic in spirit and agrees to hold substantive dialogue with us" (*China Daily*, 1989). On the same day, around 300 students were reported sick due to continuing hunger strike (*China Daily*, 1989). A student of Nankai University was quoted by *China Daily*. He said that, "All the students in my class are here except one who has been ill" (*China Daily*, 1989). The protests continued with more students joining. By May 19, according to *China Daily*, around 57,000 students had reached Beijing to participate in the ongoing demonstrations while the local governments were working towards persuading the students not to join the protests (*China Daily,* 1989). There were reports that workers also joined the ongoing protests. As per one estimate, production in various factories of Beijing had either been reduced or stopped completely as most of the workers had joined the demonstrations in Tiananmen Square by May 19, 1989 (*China Daily*, 1989). In addition to workers, even prominent journalists had joined the protests. Most of the Beijing newspapers witnessed delayed printing in May as the reporters were working towards collecting the latest information about the students' protests, thus highlighting the support which it gained from the media houses. Discussing the delayed printing of papers, Fan Jingyi, editor in chief of Economic Daily, told *China Daily*, "I have been in the press for 38 years and never has this happened" (*China Daily*, 1989).

The protests also had direct effect on the day to day functioning of banks and other organizations as reported by the *China Daily*. Traffic was suspended after the declaration of Martial Law in Beijing in May. The largest commercial bank in Beijing, the Industrial and Commercial Bank had to be closed for a day (*China Daily*, 1989). In addition, traffic was also affected gravely due to the large number of barricades. People were forced to travel by bicycles or by foot (*China Daily*, 1989).

The Chinese Railway Department urged students to leave the capital by providing them free rides. It was reported that by May 23 around 17,000 students had left the city. However, around 70,000 were still in the capital and participating in the demonstrations (*China Daily,* 1989). As argued by Jean Conley and Stephan Tripoli, "For a brief period, the *China Daily* provided more extensive coverage of the demonstrations before the declaration of the martial law on 20 May led to the re-establishment of a clear Party line" (*China Daily,* 1989).

The following section discusses *China Daily's* reporting of the Crackdown of the Tiananmen Square Protests.

By June it was clear that there was no solution in sight for the ongoing demonstrations. The *China Daily* continued to report on the developments at the Tiananmen Square. On June 2, the *China Daily* quoted an official attending the working conference organized by the State Education Commission (SEC). He urged the students to return to their classes as a large section of them were missing classes since April in support of the protests at the Tiananmen Square (*China Daily*, 1989). On the same day, the *China Daily* also published a statement by Ding Weijun, the spokesperson of Chinese government. Ding said, "Foreign journalists are not permitted to report on, photograph or videotape troops enforcing martial law without the prior approval of the municipal government" (*China Daily*, 1989).

With regard to the ongoing martial law, on June 5, *China Daily* published a notice issued by the headquarters of the troops which were sent to Beijing to enforce martial law. The notice read, "The situation in Beijing at present is very serious. More serious riots can occur at any time. From now on, please do not come onto the streets and do not go to Tiananmen" (*China Daily*, 1989). This report was published after the suppression of protest at the Tiananmen by the PLA. To assert that the situation in in Beijing was completely normal, despite the martial law, a news report in *China Daily* discussed the number of tourists visiting Beijing. The report said that even though the tourists were not able to visit the Forbidden City due to the imposition of martial law, there was no danger to their personal safety. However, there was a decline in the number of foreign tourists visiting Beijing since April 1989 (*China Daily*, 1989). On June 9 there were reports that some people had attempted to burn a passenger train which was coming from Beijing to Shanghai. As a response to this, the State Council

issued decree that stated, "No one is allowed to create obstacles on the railways, block trains, board trains without tickets or cause trouble in the stations. Those who violate these rules will be severely punished, and the government and security departments concerned may take all measures necessary to remove the obstacles and seize the offenders" (*China Daily*, 1989).

Moving forward to June 13, *China Daily* published an article in which it criticized people who were indulging in spreading rumours and wrong information regarding the Tiananmen Square. Along similar lines, Xiao Bin, who worked as a salesman with the Dalian Aluminium Window Factory, was arrested. He had said on television that, "the PLA soldiers killed more than 20,000 people in Tiananmen Square" (*China Daily*, 1989). *China Daily* also reported that around 400 people were arrested following the developments in the Tiananmen Square. However, the city was still under the effect of the suppression and was trying to move towards normalcy. Around 4,800 secondary schools of Beijing and 174 public bus routes were re-starting and getting back to normal. Other things like the subways, hospitals and tourism were all working towards getting back to operating at the pre-student demonstrations phase (*China Daily*, 1989). On June 14, after being closed for almost a month, the Forbidden City was opened for international and local tourists (*China Daily,* 1989) and the Beijing city hotel owners met on June 20 and discussed ways to restart the business which was affected from the month-long student demonstrations (*China Daily*, 1989). There were also reports in *China Daily* which highlighted the fact that none of the international conferences which were scheduled to take place in Beijing were cancelled, though they were moved ahead to September or October (*China Daily*, 1989). In similar reports, the paper also reported that the first ever Beijing International Fair which was scheduled for July 1989 was to continue as planned (*China Daily,* 1989).

An article on June 17 in *China Daily* praised the efforts and actions of the Chinese government towards restoring peace and stability in China and suppressing the students' movement. The article asserted that the Chinese people had shown faith in the Chinese government and had stood firm in the face of foreign and anti-China actions of others. The Chinese people had expressed full faith in the four decades of socialists system and the decade old reform programme undertaken under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping (*China Daily*, 1989). In another effort to maintain peace

and stability in China, the Chinese government banned foreign media houses from reporting. The Chinese government called the reporting of the foreign media houses as 'rumormongering'. This highlights the ever asserted fact that the Chinese government was very uncomfortable with the foreign media houses being present in Beijing during the unrest and took every measure possible to control the outflow of news about the students' protests and subsequent suppression by the PLA (*China Daily*, 1989).

The CPC was to complete 68 years of establishment on July 1, 1989. On this occasion, *China Daily* published an article which discussed the way the Party has managed to maintain itself in power and also the stability and peace of the society. The article argued, "The suppression of the Beijing riot, conclusion of last week's Party meeting and restoration of law and order are in fact a veto on the attempt to negate the traditions and the goal of the Chinese revolution" (*China Daily*, 1989). Thus, it can be seen that what was called a demonstration in April was labelled as a riot by July 1989.

This last section highlights the discussions in *China Daily* after the Tiananmen Square Crackdown:

Post the military crackdown of the Tiananmen Square Protests, there was a major lull and gap in the follow up reporting of the Tiananmen Square Crackdown. However, the most prominent news of the month of July with respect to the protest was the opening of the First Beijing International Fair. According to *China Daily*, "This is the first large-scale foreign trade activity held in China since the unrest" (*China Daily*, 1989). With respect to the foreign media and reporting of the student demonstration and suppression, the newly elected member of the Party Central Committee Politburo, Li Ruihaan said that foreign reporting was not accurate and added that, "Those involved in the organization and instigating turmoil and counter-revolutionary rebellion were aiming at getting rid of the four cardinal principles which constitute the foundation of socialism" (*China Daily*, 1989). By July end, *China Daily* carried an article which discussed how the students studying abroad were disconnected with the realities of the students' movement in Beijing. It argued that the students studying abroad sympathized with the protesting students without realizing their true focus. It also criticized the foreign governments giving shelter to students

who did not want to return to China. It argued that, "Under the firm leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, China is now resuming its steady development and practice of its set policies. Corruption will be reduced. Democracy will grow. Chinese students and scholars now working abroad will realize that their future in their native land will be as bright as ever" (*China Daily*, 1989).

Similar reporting continued in the month of August 1989 as well. On August 5, about 1000 executives who worked in the tourism industry met in Beijing to discuss ways to improve the situation in Beijing. Even though Beijing had witnessed increase in tourism in the first four months of 1989, after April and the suppression of student protests in June had resulted in a drastic decline in the number of tourists coming to Beijing. They also discussed ways to attract domestic tourists (*China Daily*, 1989).

After analysing the reports in *China Daily* in this period, one can conclude that its approach to the story of Tiananmen Square underwent a lot of change; while it began with factual reportage, eventually its tone changed drastically. Initial reporting was very detailed, however by the time the martial law was imposed, it started following the government's orders. The reports were more from the point of view of the government than the students and protestors. This example highlights the way in which the Chinese government successfully managed to control reporting and information-spreading about the ongoing demonstrations.

Creating the Myth of Tiananmen:

An important aspect of the entire Tiananmen story and Chinese government's response to the protests has been the ongoing attempts to 'rubbish' the stories of any such thing having taken place and call it the creation of Western media. The Chinese media, like *China Daily*, carried an article titled 'Tiananmen massacre a myth' (*China Daily*, 2011a). The article goes on to conclude that, "Tiananmen remains the classic example of the shallowness and bias in most Western media reporting, and of governmental black information operations seeking to control those media. China is too important to be a victim of this nonsense" (*China Daily*, 2011a).Such media reports also feed into the nationalistic drive which is attached to any discussion about Tiananmen Crackdown. The international media's attention towards this event is viewed as global agenda towards hurting Chinese sentiments and attempts to muddle

into Chinese domestic affairs. However, the need for stability and peace, the central agenda and desire of the CPC is what drives the agenda of the Chinese media. Any attempt to counter the government's discourse on the Tiananmen Square is viewed as disturbing the existing peace and stability of the Chinese nation. Questioning the official discourse on Tiananmen equals to questioning the supremacy of the CPC and the central leadership. The Chinese government also undertook massive campaigns to develop the theory that the Tiananmen Square demonstrations were a Western conspiracy in order to divide and break China. Thus today the "memory of Tiananmen has become a highly contested field" (He, 2014: 16-17). Jacob Kovalio argues that, "The PLA became the heart of a massive propaganda campaign orchestrated by the Party and aimed at eradicating the political impact and memory of the Democracy movement in Tiananmen Square" (Kovalio, 1991: 16). Even today the events of the Tiananmen Square 1989 receive no mention in the Chinese textbooks (Beam, 2009).

Such reports and arguments highlight the 'soft-belly' of the Chinese government vis-à-vis Tiananmen Square Crackdown. The Chinese government is not comfortable accepting exactly what had happened in 1989. Most of the government's arguments are still based on the point that it was primarily a Western conspiracy to disturb the peace and stability of China and also to hamper its economic development. Even today the government is not ready to accept that the problems which were generated due to decade long economic reform and opening up had given rise to these protests, and it has stood firm to its point of Tiananmen being a Western conspiracy against the Chinese government.

Thus, Tiananmen is a 'myth' for the Chinese people, in the sense that though the event and developments were reported by the Chinese media during 1989, the government distances itself from the actual reality and undertakes refuge in calling it an international conspiracy, claiming that the students were instigated by the West or were working for foreign governments. The degree of discomfort faced by the Chinese government towards the Tiananmen Square Crackdown is obvious from the fact that every year around the anniversary of the event (June 3-4), Chinese censorship is generally in hyper mode. There is an increase in censorship and monitoring of the media for any mention or discussion of Tiananmen thus working towards maintaining the myth.

Western Media and Tiananmen:

The Tiananmen Square protests gained considerable international support also through the use of international media. The Western media has regularly reported on the Tiananmen Square Crackdown. The students protesting at Tiananmen Square used signs in English as well as French, thus strengthening the fact that they perceived the international media as an important ally (Hertsgaard, 2016).

The BBC reported on June 4, 1989 that the government had fired at civilians and several hundred were killed by the Chinese army. It added that students were protesting at the Tiananmen Square for the last seven weeks and a large number of people had joined their protests as well. They were demanding democratic changes (BBC, 1989). As per a CBC report, protestors at the Tiananmen Square safeguarded foreign journalists during the firing in hopes that their story will be told to the world (CBC Digital, 1989).Every year the foreign media reports on the events which occurred in China in 1989 and highlights the extent to which the Chinese government suppresses information. "After the surge in the Western TV drama production in the 1980s, "foreign media have been targeted as an object of sustained control efforts" (Scharping, 2007: 109).

The *Los Angeles Times* also reported about the incidents in detail. The situation of May 24, 1989 was described as, "Although a variety of unenforceable martial-law restrictions on foreign correspondents remain technically in effect-- including an official ban on photographing or videotaping demonstrations--Chinese authorities Tuesday (May 30, 1989) allowed foreign television crews to resume satellite transmissions. American viewers were able to see live telecasts from Beijing on Tuesday (May 30, 1989) morning for the first time since Friday evening (May 26, 1989)" (Holley, 1989).*The Newsweek* quoted a worker discussing the student movement and the government's reaction. According to the worker, "First they said the students were patriots, now they are 'bad elements' and 'rioters,'….. "I don't know myself what happened, but I know the government is lying" (Newsweek, 2015).

The presence of international media on the scene of the ongoing protests resulted in spreading of information which was being controlled by the Chinese government. As the foreign media was free to report as compared to the Chinese domestic media, they were the source of authentic information of what was happening

in reality. This was especially true after martial law was imposed in Beijing, as domestic media was highly paralysed after being censored.

However, the alternate view about the free western media reporting is that the Western media undertook heavy editing of the coverage of the events post the crackdown, while before and during the incident, the presence of Western media made Tiananmen Square the "theatre for world audience" resulting in a desire among the students to be part of the limelight at the cost of the wellbeing of the other fellow students and workers (Sun, 1997: 7).The heavy censoring of the domestic media made it difficult for it to report about the developments at Tiananmen Square. As a result, the only available source about the Tiananmen Square Crackdown was the international, especially the Western media.

Current Reporting about the Incident:

The Western Media played a crucial role in reporting about events of the Tiananmen Square Massacre when the Chinese domestic media was being controlled and monitored. Even today the situation remains the same. The Chinese media is still highly monitored and controlled over the reporting of Tiananmen while it is more free Western media which reports on the anniversaries of the massacre. For example, when in October 2016, the Chinese government released the factory worker Miao Deshun imprisoned and called a traitor during the Tiananmen Square not much was reported in the domestic media. Clearly, the Chinese government still exercises a very strong control over the kind of information which is released about the Tiananmen Square Crackdown. In June 2014, the Chinese government had arrested and detained around 50 people who were related to the people involved in the Tiananmen Square movement of 1989, thus highlighting the insecurity and fear which the Chinese government feels (Anderlini, 2014). Even in 2012, the Chinese government was more comfortable controlling the memories related to the Tiananmen Square Crackdown and was not ready to discuss and debate the factors which led to the incident (Grammaticas, 2012).

Chinese Media Post-Tiananmen Incident:

After the suppression of the students protests in Tiananmen, the Chinese government "accused the Chinese media of bourgeois activity, of reflecting public

opinion, providing false information, and putting too much focus on entertainment. Press freedom was abolished and the door closed on political freedom" (Scotton and Hachten, 2010: 21).The domestic media was the first target of the 'rectification' efforts introduced by the Chinese government in the post - June 4, 1989 period (Tan, 1990: 168). The 1990s witnessed one of the darkest periods for media freedom and the democratization process in China as, "the Party mandated that the fundamental functions of the media must be first to guide society and public to follow the Party's direction and, second, mainly to praise 'good things' instead of exposing and criticising 'bad things'" (Hong, 2002: 3).

After the 1989 Incident, Hu Yaobang's name was rarely mentioned by the Chinese media. In addition, even today references to the Tiananmen Square are rarely seen in the Chinese media. In the words of Zheng Wang, "Unfortunately, for the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, a major event that changed the country's direction, one won't find any discussion or reflection in the Chinese media" (Wang, 2014). Most of the prominent editors of newspapers were removed, while the Propaganda officers of the PLA took control of the Chinese media outlets. Two anchors of the CCTV and the editor-in-chief and director of the *People's Daily* were removed from their respective posts and the *World Economic Herald* which was published from Shanghai was banned in April 1989 and was officially closed in April 1990 (He, 2014: 19-20). Moreover, a number of Chinese intellectuals and writers also left the country after the military crackdown (He, 2014: 26).

In addition to this, in Provisional Regulations on Newspaper Management announced in 1990, it was stated that proposals to publish newspapers must be approved by the State Press and Publications Administration (SPPA) and in 1994 The Propaganda Department of China circulated a list of six No's. These included, "no private media ownership, no shareholding of media organizations, no joint ventures with foreign companies, no discussion of the commodity nature of news, no discussion of a press law, and no openness for foreign satellite television" (Press Reference, n.d.).

Even today, the Chinese government is not comfortable with the idea of Chinese media reporting or even mentioning the Tiananmen Square Crackdown. In the internet era, such efforts are proving to be highly difficult. Most of the online

searches for the Tiananmen Square, June 3 or June 4, etc. are heavily blocked or censored during the anniversary of the event.[9]In 2014, Tania Branigan reported in the *The Guardian* on the 25th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Incident. She argued that there were extensive detentions and house arrests while the services of Google were disrupted and warnings were issued to foreign journalists (Branigan, 2014a). Before the anniversary of the Incident, the Chinese government restricts and bans the search of a number of words on its largest search engine sina.com among other platforms. Words like "today", "special day" and any numerical combination of June 4, 1989 are strictly banned (Kaiman, 2013). Nearing the anniversary, the Chinese government also blocks searches for words like "candlelight" (Cheung, 2014). Today, the Chinese watchdogs of social media have the ability to manage and remove content within a minute of it being posted. Such is the level of surveillance and censorship.

Such efforts clearly highlight the insecurity which the Chinese government feels. The 1989 Tiananmen protests and the eventual crackdown of the protesting students was one of the most pertinent oppositions to the Party leadership. Though primarily driven by domestic and economic concerns, the protests coincided with the downfall of Communist regimes globally. The end of Communism appeared inevitable. The Chinese government was quite sensitive towards these global developments and thus saw the domestic protests as an existential threat. It was essential for the CPC to appear strong and united in the face of such a major incident. Even today the CPC has stood firm to the central leadership's action in the face of the Tiananmen turmoil. As argued by Bao, "Chinese censorship is an act of wilful social engineering. In disregarding or distorting social, historical and scientific facts, it encourages ignorance and prejudice" (Pu, 2015). Even after 27 years, the Chinese government is worried and careful during the anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Crackdown. It is not sure that it can successfully dodge another such event. "The events of 1989 are one of the biggest taboos in contemporary China, with the day's

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[9]Closer to the anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Crackdown, the Chinese government censors a long list of words. Words like Tiananmen, June 3, June 4, etc. are anyways blocked. According to the Business Insider, the list of words include: Big yellow duck , Tank Man, Shanghai index ,63 + 1, Candle, Today, Square, Mourn, When spring becomes summer, That year, Special day, Pillar of shame, Victoria Park, Black shirt, Redress, Take tothe streets, Against bureaucratic profiteering, Suppress, Tank   etc. available   at   http://www.businessinsider.in/China-Bans-These-Weird-Words-From-Search-Engines-Because-Of-Tiananmen-Square/articleshow/36012992.cms

bloodshed usually referred to simply as an "incident" in official media and government reports, and censors banning even indirect references" (Graham-Harrison, 2015).

Most of the protestors had fled to Hong Kong which was a British colony at that time. Hong Kong also had a museum dedicated to the Tiananmen Crackdown. But in recent times it has been facing a strong opposition from the building cooperation. In July 2016, the museum had to be shut down, and museum authorities are currently looking for another place to relocate to. This brings to the forefront the clout of the Chinese government, its control over present Hong Kong and its relentless attempts to control any memory of the Tiananmen Square Crackdown (Ramzy, 2016).These controls have had a major impact on Chinese society. Even today, as argued by Pan, "without a free press or independent courts, workers had nowhere to take complaints against employers who refused to pay them or exposed them to health hazards" (Pan, 2008: 118). This clearly brings forth the plight faced by the Chinese people. With no free media and the relentless efforts of the government to control it, there was no major outlet for people's voices and concerns.

International Reactions to the Tiananmen Square Crackdown:

The Tiananmen Square Crackdown had an immediate and major impact on Chinese foreign relations. The United States and its allies imposed a number of economic and diplomatic sanctions against China, though the degree and type varied from country to country (Harding, 1990: 5). The United States decided to suspend all "government-to-government sales and commercial exports of weapons to China and private military exports" (EIR, 1989: 30). In addition, the United States with the European Union placed an arms embargo on China, which prevented any kind of sales and purchases of military and defence equipment. All countries which were members of the EU at that time were obliged to follow the embargo and the countries which joined later have also abided by this rule (Bräuner, Bromley and Duchâtel, 2015: 15).The Tiananmen Square also affected trade relations between US and China, especially the question of granting the most-favored-nation status to China (Milestones, 1989-1992).Larson and Shevchenko argue that the incidents of the Tiananmen Square placed China on "the wrong side of history" (Larson and Shevchenko, 2010: 76).

However, Russia took a different direction and asserted that whatever happened during the May-June 1989 was an internal matter of China and countries should not try and influence opinion on it. The Russian media argued that the use of force was a necessary but harsh measure to maintain the peace and stability of the country (EIR, 1989: 30).Some scholars have also argued that the coup which overthrew Gorbachev was in some form inspired by the Chinese government's action at the Tiananmen Square (Christopher Miller, 2014).

The Japanese reaction to the Tiananmen Square Crackdown was one of caution and watchfulness. This was precisely because Japan was hopeful of ongoing economic growth and peace in the region. The Tiananmen Square Crackdown highlighted the fragility of the region. Kesavan argues that, "The political crisis in China occurred at a time when Japanese companies were poised for a big move and it created uncertainty among Japanese businessmen…however, politically it just had a marginal effect on Japanese domestic politics" (Kesavan, 1990: 677-679). However, the Japanese government suspended major foreign aid to the Chinese government as a reaction to the Tiananmen Square Crackdown but they were resumed in July 1990. (Katada, 2001: 39-45).

China and South Korea were in the process of negotiating the establishment of trade offices when the Tiananmen Square Crackdown occurred. As a result, the pending negotiations and discussions were suspended in June 1989 (Byong-Moo, 1991: 41). China and South Korea established diplomatic relations in the year 1992 (Global Security, n.d.).

The Indian response to the ongoing Tiananmen Protest was less confrontational. The then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, with the help of government control on the media, managed to prevent the news of the protests from spreading. India decided to not take part in the domestic problems of China (Raja Mohan, 2009).

The general reaction amongst the international community was one of shock. The use of force by the Chinese government against its own people was not something which the world expected. It greatly strengthened the belief that the CPC can go to any extent to preserve its power. China faced major diplomatic set-back in the wake of the Tiananmen Square Crackdown. A large number of countries stopped

their ongoing bilateral and diplomatic relations, like Japan, South Korea etc... There was a massive anti-China sentiment among the American citizens as well. Thus the Chinese government not only suffered image loss at home but also globally. October 1, 1989, which marked the 40th anniversary of the founding of the PRC, the celebrations held at the Tiananmen Square were boycotted by the diplomats of the Western countries while the Eastern countries sent only low level diplomats (Cox, 1989-90: 133).

Impact of Tiananmen Square on Media:

The Tiananmen Square Movement had a colossal impact on the CPC. It was one of the major expressions of protest and discontent among the Chinese masses after the Chinese government had introduced the economic reforms and opening up policy. In the backdrop of the students protests, the fissures and divisions within the leaders of the CPC also came to the forefront. One of the major impacts on the CPC was that two of the leaders, Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, who were chosen to be Deng Xiaoping's successor were removed from the post and Jiang Zemin who was not even in the race for the top position was finally brought into do some damage control thereby highlighting the fact that Deng Xiaoping was still in control of the Party and wanted someone who will follow in his footsteps as the next successor. In the words of Rowena Xiaoqing He, "The 1989 Tiananmen Movement, known in Chinese simply as 'Liu Si' (June Fourth), was the most serious conflict between the Communist regime and the Chinese people since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949" (He, 2014: 13). She argues that it is necessary to understand and study the 1989 uprising in order to fully grasp the China of today (He, 2014, 14). She further adds, "June 4, as a watershed in history, marks the transition of Chinese society from a time of idealism to a period of prolonged and endemic cynicism, producing a generation that cannot even imagine a society whose youth would be willing to make sacrifices on behalf of their ideals" (He, 2014: 169). However, the generation that participated in the demonstrations was also a result of a period which were born at the end of the totalitarian control of Mao and beginning of reforms under Deng. As a result of this dichotomy they were perceived as contradictory in their own way (He, 2014: 169). Similar sentiment is asserted by John K. Fairbank. He argues, "Behind the Tiananmen massacre of June 1989 lies the continuing modern conflict between the two wings of China's political elite—the

power-holders over the Party and army, on the one hand, and the intellectuals and student trainees for government service on the other hand. The tragedy was that the aged power-holders were stuck in the tradition of imperial autocracy, while the young students were modern-minded patriots" (Fairbank, 1989). Bell argues that the people also had a sense that there was not going to be any significant change in the political arena and that the internal fight within the Communist Party will only lead to a tragic end to the ongoing developments at the Tiananmen Square (Bell, 2014).Pan argues that, "the workers had internalized the lesson of the Tiananmen massacre. Everybody knew that the party would quickly crush a direct challenge to its authority, and nobody wanted to go to prison. "People were too afraid" (Pan, 2008: 132).In the words of Yang Jisheng, veteran journalist and Party historian, the onset of economic reforms had started to affect the basic principles of the Communist Party rule. After the Cultural Revolution, there was a rise in liberal thoughts and democracy which was a direct challenge to the idea of One Party rule. There was also an increase in the demands for rule of law (South China Morning Post, 2014). These demands and changes put pressure on the classical ideas of rule of the CPC and also challenged the idea of not introducing reforms in the political sphere. The Tiananmen Square Crackdown was a major reminder that politics and economic are not watertight compartments and changes in one will bring about some change and transformation in the other.

However, it was not only the leadership which showed difference in opinion and positions. Even the students protesting at the Tiananmen Square had diverse ideas and goals. A similar argument has been extended by Peter Li, Marjorie H. Li and Steven Mark. They also assert the existing contradiction as a major characteristic of the Tiananmen Square protestors. They argue that the protestors at the Tiananmen Square were a "volatile" mix of opposing ideas of old and new, old and young, between authoritarianism of the old and the individualistic ideals of the younger generation in China (Li, Li and Mark, 2009: 2). The people who were protesting came from all walks of Chinese society. Though the protests began as a student's gathering, with time workers, teachers, journalists' etc. people from different professions and ages joined the protests to express their problems and concerns with the increasing corruption and income inequalities in China. They all used the same platform in the hope that their voices will be heard by the government.

One of the major factors behind the protest was the increasing corruption and abuse of power by the CPC leaders at all levels. The economic reforms had further intensified this grievance among the people, especially students and workers. That was the decade when the state's iron bowl was gradually disappearing but the opportunities of the market economy were not yet evident. In addition, cronyism of the party was taking away whatever that was available, or so was felt by the people who supported the protests. James Conachy has described the developments of 1989 as "(something that)… expressed the long pent-up discontent and hatred of a corrupt Stalinist bureaucracy that for 40 years had betrayed the hopes of the Chinese people for a truly just society, and for over a decade had been imposing a market economy on China, giving rise to unprecedented inequality and a burgeoning new capitalist elite" (Conachy, 1999). In the words of Liu, the repression of the protests at Tiananmen eased some of the anxieties of the Party, however, the changes within the society and economy which led to the protests remained unchanged and thus the effects of the suppression were only temporary (Liu, 1992: 58).The Tiananmen Square Crackdown made the CPC realise that there is a need to relook and rework on the development programme. The massive economic reforms had generated economic prosperity but were also responsible for a number of problems within the society. People were facing inequality and corruption on a daily basis. This was building disillusionment amongst the people towards the CPC. The general feeling was that the CPC was not able to understand the problems which the Chinese people were facing.

After the suppression of the June 4th protests at the Tiananmen Square, the Chinese government undertook massive steps to prevent any similar outcome in the future. It employed techniques like giving preference to model personalities of the pre-Cultural Revolution phase, changing the education curriculum to more traditional and classical Marxist textbooks in lieu of textbooks introduced in the 1980s, increasing military training, gaining an increased control over the job system, and increasing the quantity of political courses in the existing curriculum (Rosen, 1993: 310). According to Wang, the major focus of the patriotic education campaign was to make the younger generations aware about the humiliations and exploitations faced by China in the past by the Western countries and Japan. It also worked towards strengthening the idea that the Communist Revolution and rule of the CPC helped China get over this discrimination and also gain independence in the true sense

(Wang, 2008: 788-789). As argued by Anderlini, "in the wake of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre and the fall of the Soviet Union, China's leaders concluded that the Communist party needed to improve its '*thought work*', And thus they launched a new "patriotic education" campaign that continues to this day" (Andrelini, 2012).The CPC had moved back to the idea of following "semi Maoism" in the phase after the Tiananmen Protests of June 1989 (Kovalio, 1991: 19).

In an article published in the *China Daily*2012, it was argued that patriotic education was important for China. As argued by the author, "Patriotic education is at the core of a country's strategy to realize its goals. To build a better country, citizens have to love and be faithful to their history and culture, for it enhances their spirit to fight for the country. After the foundation of the People's Republic of China, the government made patriotic education an effective means to integrate resources and create consensus" (Yantao, 2012). With the help of the patriotic education campaign, the Chinese government again started talking about the idea of "national humiliation" and the role of the CPC in countering it.

Summary:

The students who were protesting at the Tiananmen Square in 1989 were doing so for a better and democratic China, a dream that is still far from being achieved. The irony of the situation is that even though Chinese media houses like the *China Daily*chronicled the event, the government still distanced itself from it calling it a Western conspiracy. The notion of a Western conspiracy is easily used by the Chinese government because it fits in line with the narrative about the Opium Wars and the Unequal Treaties, that historically China has been destabilised by external powers with supports from anti-nationals from inside. The CPC has been banking on nationalistic feelings in the post-ideological era and in order to cover its shortcomings and non-performance. After the Tiananmen Crackdown, the Chinese government used the ideas of National Humiliation to regain support and trust of the Chinese people by reiterating its role in reinstating Chinese honour and identity in the aftermath of the difficult period of exploitation and plunder of its national wealth. It is also enmeshed in the idea of *China Dream* project and the bicentennial targets set by President Xi Jinping.

The students' movement had taken the government by surprise and had resulted in major fractions within the CPC leadership and structure, highlighting the intensity of the protests. The large numbers of students, journalists and workers who participated in the protests were hoping for democratisation and accountability, an idea which is still largely elusive. Today the Chinese can enjoy economic freedom but are far from attaining any political freedom. The CPC still believes and argues that the Chinese society is not ready to accept political freedom and needs the government to control and manage important aspects of the economy as well as society.

The 1989 events triggered major debate and deliberation in the Chinese media. The Chinese media did witness the highest degree of freedom while reporting about the developments of the Tiananmen Square. However, even this was short lived and one of the major calamities of the government policies post-Tiananmen has been in tightening control over the media. Since then the media has never been allowed to be free and unbiased in its reporting in matters political.

The issues of democracy, corruption, inequality, and unemployment still affect the Chinese society and even today there are a large number of protests because of these. However, the calls for democracy have become highly marginalized after the brutal suppression of similar demands by the students' at Tiananmen in 1989. The idea of fighting corruption promoted by the students at the Tiananmen is something similar to what Xi Jinping is attempting to achieve with his anti-corruption drives. However, Matt Schiavenza argues that "It is difficult to dispute the fact that, 25 years after overcoming an existential threat, the Chinese Communist Party enjoys a legitimacy and stability that seemed impossible in the aftermath of Tiananmen Square" (Schiavenza, 2014).[10] It appears that CPC is willing to undertake changes that stop short of calling its existence into question, which is how it approached Tiananmen protests, the Falun gong movement and the question of its minority people's rights in more recent times. It treats matters of corruption and abuse of power as aberrations and will continue to project that the party's interests are indeed aligned with that of the people.

Fears of recurrence of Tiananmen episode has led to increasing control of the media and political domain by the CPC even while economic reforms and the opening up process continued. The general belief among the CPC leaders has been that until economic growth continues and brings in prosperity and improved living standards for the Chinese people, the demand for political freedom can be controlled. The CPC has successfully managed to extend and perfect the economic growth model with Chinese Characteristics. Thus, even though there have been protests and demands for change, none of these are comparable to the scale of protests of Tiananmen. The lesson which the CPC gathered and the commitment it showed towards controlling the protest at any cost has changed the way the Chinese people as well as the world viewed the CPC. It made it clear that it was not ready to give up on power and had learned from the mistakes of the other Communist Countries like the Soviet Union which extended political freedom before they gained any substantial economic power. Even domestically the CPC has managed to prevent the growth of any genuine political alternative.

Chapter V

BEIJING OLYMPICS: THE SUCCESS OF PROJECTION

Introduction:

The Beijing Olympics of 2008 was one of the most prominent events which the Chinese government used quite effectively to showcase its achievements. It was the time when the CPC wanted to bring to the world the fact that it had made major progress with regard to infrastructure and other aspects of growth. However, even at the time when China was supposed to be open for the outside world during the Olympics, the media did not enjoy equal freedom. It was rather a time of increased media control and suppression. Prior to and during the Olympics, the Chinese government had undertaken major steps to portray a certain kind of image of China to the outside world. So even at a time when the world thought that the foreign media present in China as well as the Chinese media are reporting on the real situation in China, the truth is far from true. What the Chinese media reported was far from the reality; rather, it was a time when propaganda was at its maximum, as the Chinese government was highly concerned about the image of the country as well as the CPC. However, it was also a time when the international attention was greatly focused on the level of media censorship existing within China.

Thus the time of Beijing Olympics is central to assess the level of control which the Chinese government exercises on media and also to understand how important media control for the Chinese government is. The situation during the Beijing Olympics was highly complicated for the Chinese government as it had made a commitment to the international community that it would help in free coverage of the Olympics games.

As per media reports, Kevan Gosper, a senior member of the International Olympics Committee (IOC) had stated that during the Beijing Olympics "the only uncensored websites that journalists at the event had access to were those related to "Olympic competitions" (Batty, 2008). Other reports citing the 21 Rules for the Beijing Olympics stated, "Refrain from publishing comment pieces at odds with the official propaganda line of the Chinese delegation" (The Telegraph, 2008). The Chinese government had released a set of guidelines for foreign press reporting within China during the Beijing Olympics (Guidelines). In addition, according to the Foreign

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Correspondents Club of China, foreign journalists have reported more than 230 cases of harassment, obstruction, and detention since the new laws were enacted (Bhattacharji, 2008).

This chapter discusses the major facets of the Beijing Olympics in the Chinese English Media with a major focus on pre-Olympics, Olympics and post-Olympics coverage. It discusses the themes related to the Beijing Olympics which were discussed by the English media. The discussion is based on a detailed study of the *China Daily* during the year 2008.

State and Olympics:

Olympic Games have been used historically as a means to highlight the growth and international standing that a country enjoys. Before China, countries like Japan and South Korea have used the Olympics as an event to improve their international standing and to showcase to the world the level of growth they have achieved. China was no different. After decades of reform and opening up, and incidents like the Tiananmen Square protests and suppression, this was one important occasion through which Beijing wanted to highlight its modernization and equality vis-à-vis the developed countries. It was also an opportunity which China could use to undo its image of a backward and poor country. Thus the Beijing Olympics was an important event in the Chinese scheme of things to gain a positive international image. In the words of Jianping Ni, "there is little dispute that power in the international arena is derived, in part, from a nation's ability to project an image that presents its military, economic, political, or cultural importance in a favorable or powerful light. And whether one calls them mega-events or global media events, hosting Beijing Olympics is one of several strategies used by the Chinese governments for image enhancement on a global stage" (Jianping, 2008). As has been argued by Economy and Segal, "[the Beijing Olympics] domestically provided an opportunity for the Chinese government to demonstrate the Communist Party's competence and affirm the country's status as a major power on equal footing with the West" (Economy and Segal, 2008: 47).

However, it cannot be denied that the Olympics have always been used as a political tool as well. Since the beginning of the games the Olympics have faced a number of political pressures time and again. A few of these examples are the

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American boycott of the 1980 Moscow Games and the Russian boycott of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics (Cha, 2008: 106). In the words of Jacques deLisle, "the Beijing Olympics were to mark China's redemption, most immediately from the embarrassment of being denied the ardently sought 2000 Games [and] more significantly from the opprobrium that accompanied the brutal crackdown of the Tiananmen Democracy Movement in 1989" (deLisle, 2009: 181). This argument can be further emphasized by the statement of an official of the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympics Games (BOCOG). The official states, "The fact that China received the right to host the games means winning the respect, trust and favour of the international community" (Callick, 2009: 182). The *People's Daily* had also stated that the fact that China was chosen to host the Olympics was "tightly connected" with the country's "rapid development and modernization" (deLisle, 2009: 183). The Beijing Olympics action plan had identified three areas of development. The areas were Green Olympics, High-tech Olympics, and People's Olympics (Milillo, 3).

For a smooth conduct of the games, avoiding disruptions and protests was a key priority for China. Towards this end, the government was extensively prepared by way of establishing a massive monitoring mechanism and widespread deployment of police across the capital city and beyond. The government was focussed on avoiding any kind of disruption as the successful conduct of the games was essential for the overall Chinese image. The government did not want to compromise on any front which may lead to creation of hurdles in the smooth execution of the games. In the words of Jacques deLisle, the Beijing Olympics helped the Chinese government achieve its primary ambition of portraying and showcasing the development and prosperity which China had managed to gain. In addition, it also displayed China as a country which was primarily in sync with the international order created by the Western countries (deLisle, 2009: 180).

Propaganda plays a very crucial role in the Chinese political system. Elizabeth Economy has also claimed that the Chinese government is in a state of "schizophrenia" about media policy (Zissis and Bhattacharji, 2010). Scholars have highlighted that the Chinese propaganda is of two types. It focused primarily on the domestic population but also aimed to influence the international community. It has been further divided into sub types consisting of political propaganda, economic

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propaganda, cultural propaganda and social propaganda (Brady, 2009: 9). In the case of the Beijing Olympics, scholars have argued that, "the Beijing Olympics was from the onset the center of an "information campaign of the century" launched by the Chinese government" (Wang, Guo and Shen, 2011: 428).

The successful games were also necessary for Chinese government as it wanted to make a good impression on the global order with the sole ambition to also undo the tarnish which resulted from the 1989 Tiananmen Square Crackdown (Cha, 2008: 107). Beijing also undertook an unprecedented exercise in infrastructure up gradation leading to the games by constructing new airport terminal, expansion of the subway network and building of state of the art facilities for the games (Economy and Segal, 2008: 48). It was also reasoned that the hosting of the Olympics was one of the most massive media scrutinise which the Chinese government would be facing as it was expected that there would be a large number of journalists as well as tourists who would visit China during the games. It was reported that around 26,000 press passes were to be issued and the expected number of tourists was to be around 500,000 (Cha, 2008: 109).

However, it has been argued that the Olympics primarily created two-pronged pressure for political change, tactical as well as ideational (Cha, 2008: 108). The large number of international media personnel present in China further added to the pressure. The Chinese government was also asked to remove control on the internet for better reporting by foreign journalists. It was one of the rare occasions when the Chinese government lifted its control over the internet (even if the lift was only partial). For a very short span of time the international and Chinese journalists had full access to the internet and the level of censorship employed by the Chinese government was heavily reduced. The journalists both foreign and domestic could travel across the country and could also report on issues which they deemed important without any government interference. The Chinese government accepted these demands for free internet also to help boost the image of the Chinese government internationally.

Media and Beijing Olympics:

Chinese Media and Beijing Olympics

The Chinese media reported the Olympics to be a success. It was one of the greatest achievements of China. *Xinhua* reported that, "The Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, which ended on Sunday, has been hailed by media across the world as a huge success" (Xinhua, 2008a).

According to Blecher, before the 2008 Olympics, the Chinese government employed a new approach towards the media, one where it was comfortable in managing in contrast to suppressing the news and information (Blecher, 2009: 81) Even though the presence of international media in China was regarded as revolutionary, the Chinese government had clarified its stand with regard to media freedom and reporting when it announced that "there will be no live telecast from the Tiananmen Square" (Hoberman, 2008: 24). However the Chinese government in order to gain positive international positioning lifted the ban on foreign magazines and newspapers in China in the months leading to the games (Cha, 2008: 113).

There were also reports in the media regarding the efforts undertaken by the Chinese government to improve the behaviour of the people prior to the Olympics. As per a *China Daily* report, "Beijing authorities kicked off a campaign to correct local residents' uncivil behaviors. They were taught about the Olympic Games, audience etiquette, occupational protocols and everyday behaviors" (*China Daily*, 2006). *China Daily* had also reported that the Chinese government was planning to recruit some 100,000 volunteers constituting of high school and college students to help during the Olympics (*China Daily*, 2005).

The Chinese government also set up huge clocks at the Tiananmen Square which marked a countdown to the Games like when Hong Kong and Macau were to re-join the mainland. The Chinese government also often compared the hosting of Olympics with achievements like the entry into the World Trade Centre (WTO), China's first manned mission, managing the international financial crisis and also coping with the earthquake in Sichuan (deLisle, 2009: 182).

Prior to the Olympics, *China Daily* had quoted the Egyptian Foreign Minister, Ahmed Abul Gheit as praising the Beijing Olympics stating how Egypt was

happy for this event and that it meant a great deal for China as well as the international community (*China Daily*, 2008a). In April 2008, *China Daily* had reported that the Oman Ambassador to China had congratulated the *China Daily* on "publishing this "Olympic special" to mark the start of the Torch Relay for the 2008 Beijing Olympics" (*China Daily*, 2008b).

In a response to the international media and to showcase the confidence which the Chinese government enjoyed in its preparations for the Olympics, the People's Daily published an article titled *Negative reporting of Beijing Olympics to end in failure* on March 6, 2008.[11] It quoted Zhao Qizheng, former head of the Information Office of the State Council arguing that, "the negative reporting about Beijing Olympics by some overseas media is destined to prove wrong" (*People's Daily*, 2008). The article further discussed that the international media and people had been trying to politicize the event and also trying to pressure China to undergo political transformation (*People's Daily*, 2008b).According to the report *Media in China*, "the media coverage of the 2008 Beijing Olympics Games was an illustration of social integration. As the entire Chinese media community committed itself in the reporting, local media paid special attention to provincial or regional athletes, which increased and reflected regional cultural consciousness. On the other hand, China's national identity was also fully expressed by the news coverage" (Media in China: 118).The solidarity that the Chinese people showcased towards the Olympics was highlighted by an article stating that the Hui ethnic people of China also cheered the Olympic torch as it passed through the Wuzhong district (Shanshan, 2008).

International Media and Beijing Olympics:

At the same time the international media had started reporting the Olympics and the issues pertaining to its preparations. As argued by Patrick Goodenough, "in response to media reports that some 14,900 people were relocated since 2001 by the Olympic venue preparations, in some cases forcibly, BOCOG organizers hastily organized a press briefing to state that all residents have been given compensation,

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[11]The international media's reporting on the Tibetan protests and the suppression by the Chinese government was perceived as negative by the Chinese media. The international media was also highly critical about the Chinese involvement in Sudan. It was also reporting about the levels of high air pollution in China and how that may hamper the success of the Olympics. Any reports in the international media which appeared to be questioning the Chinese ability to conduct a successful Olympics was viewed as negative by the Chinese media.

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vocational training, and replacement residences that were better than their prior homes" (Goodenough, 2008).

According to reports by Nielsen Company, the Beijing Olympics was one of the most viewed games globally. The data was compiled from information gathered from countries like China, Brazil, the United States, South Africa, Italy and Australia. Beijing Olympics had gained more viewership than the Athens and Sydney Olympics respectively. They reported that, "A record 4.4 billion people, about two-thirds of the world's population, watched the Beijing Olympic events from August 8 to 17, making the Games the most watched in history" (Xinhua, 2008b).

In another interesting report by the Salzburg Academy on Media & Global Change, during the Olympics, "most of the world's coverage of China was overwhelmingly either positive or neutral in tone" (Merrill, 2008).

The New York Times reported that according to the International Olympic Committee, "[Olympics] also brought many tangible and intangible benefits to China, especially in terms of public infrastructure improvements. While some of the positive benefits were immediately apparent, others will emerge with time" (Thomas, 2008). However before the Olympics it had also reported that the Chinese government had spent around 130 million dollars restoring old buildings and temples while it was also working towards covering major portions of the city where the poor lived in order to show a cleaner and prosperous China (Hooker, 2008). The paper also discussed Chinese presence and role in Darfur (Kristof, 2008). The International Media also covered reports regarding the lifting of the ban and restrictions on the internet before the games. A number of websites like the BBC Chinese language website and Amnesty International were accessible in China (Spencer, 2008). Thus, one of the main topics discussed in detail was the restrictions posed by the Chinese government on the international media. Media freedom has always been an important issue with respect to China and during the Olympics the limits which the Chinese government posed on internet access for the foreign journalists became an important point of discussion and criticism.

With respect to the controlling of pollution prior to the Olympics, the International Olympics Committee chief Jacques Rogge was quoted in *The Guardian* where he said, "I think, objectively, we can say that the Chinese authorities have done

everything that is feasible and humanly possible to solve the situation or to address the situation" (Stewart, 2008). Pollution was one of the most widely covered issues by the International media before, during as well as after the Beijing Olympics. A number of articles were published in wide ranging newspapers and magazines discussing the efforts undertaken by the Chinese government to curb the pollution and whether these will prove to be feasible and effective.

However there were also reports in the international media criticizing the clamp down on Human Rights Activists in China. According to an article in CNN, "Although a unified China is the image that country's government is eager to portray, many human rights groups allege that China has orchestrated a massive cover-up" (Hadad, 2008).It would not be far-fetched to say that one of the most widely discussed topics in the International media was China's preparations for the Olympics. It was one of the rare opportunities for the global media to be present in China and report on its developments.

China Daily's coverage of the Beijing Olympics:

The following section attempts to discuss the reporting of Olympics and related issues in the *China Daily* in the year 2008. The discussion is divided into three sections: *Pre-Olympics, Olympics and Post-Olympics*.

Pre-Olympics:

The major points of discussion related to the Olympics during the pre-Olympics period in the *China Daily* were: Economic benefits of the Olympics, Environmental Issues, and the Darfur Issue.

Chinese Economy:

The positive impact which the Olympics games were expected to have on the Chinese economy was a primary topic of discussion in the *China Daily*. The paper discussed this issue extensively and in detail. The paper discussed in an article stating that the Shanghai Index was benefiting as a result of 'Olympic concept stocks'. These companies were the ones which were expected to make profits as a result of the Olympics. As per the *China Daily*, "Analysts said Olympics-concept companies are expected to become a major investment focus this year" (Jing, 2008). It also reported

on the Beijing Olympics as a very important push for development and modernization of Beijing. The Olympics were being portrayed and dubbed as the "Great Leap Forward" (Nilsson, 2008).

The idea of China as a 'superpower' was also discussed and it argued that the Chinese people do not perceive China as a superpower. It reached this conclusion on the basis of a survey. The said survey revealed that in spite of the fact that China had managed to achieve a number of things in the past year in addition to sound and stable economic growth, the Chinese people did not regard China as a super power (Zhuoqiong, 2008).

Preparations for the Olympics

The paper published a large number of articles discussing the efforts which the Chinese government undertook towards preparing Beijing for a successful completion of the Olympics. Developments were discussed and reported almost on a daily basis. The following paragraphs highlight these reports in detail.

As reported by the *China Daily*, the first rehearsal for the Beijing Olympics was scheduled for June 10 at the Bird's Nest (Lei, 2008a). The paper also reported on the efforts undertaken by the Chinese government towards improving the aviation sector. The Chinese government had even issued an "ultimatum" to the domestic aviation industry that they need to work towards improving their flights and other services prior to the beginning of the Olympics. According to a Chinese official, "Airlines face tough penalties including two-year expansion bans if they fail to meet the new punctuality and passenger satisfaction requirements" (Xin, 2008a).

Food quality was an important factor which was being debated by the international as well as the domestic media. The food quality as a concern for foreign athletes was highlighted. The international community was very critical of contamination and poor quality checks in China as published in various reports. . As a result, the *China Daily* did extensive reporting on efforts undertaken by the Chinese government towards providing 'high quality' food for the participants. *China Daily* reported that China is working hard towards providing safe and good quality food. The paper quoted Pu Changcheng vice-minister of the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ). Pu said that, "Please rest

assured. The Chinese government will do everything necessary to ensure safe food for the Games" (Zhu, 2008a). As a response to the United States stating that the team plans to prepare is own meal, China reiterated that the food to be provided during Olympics was "safe" (Zhu, 2008b). To add to the Chinese claims, the paper reported the statement made by the United States Olympic Committee arguing that they have full confidence in the quality of the food to be provided at the Beijing Games (*China Daily*, 2008c). The Chinese government made a strong promise about ensuring the quality of the food to be served in the Games Village (Zhu, 2008c). Li Changjiang, director of the AQSIQ was quoted saying, "The safety of Olympic food is our top priority" (Zhu, 2008d). These discussions show that the Chinese government had to undertake strong measures to ensure that the quality of food served during the Olympics was acceptable to the international participants. These were due to the fact that China was facing a number of incidents where it was reported that tampered or harmful substances were used by manufacturers for making profit. There was a major scandal in China in 2008 when milk products were found to be tainted by melamine. These adulterated milk products and baby milk affected around 1200 babies. Some of them suffered major kidney failures (Waldmeir, 2008).Thus, Olympics was also an exercise in administrative efficiency and image building for China.

In order to provide good quality food and deal with these criticisms, the Chinese government had appointed 24 hour supervision at the venues where the food was being prepared. The *China Daily* quoted a senior Chinese official who said that, "Quality inspectors are on round-the-clock duty at each of the 148 plants chosen to supply food for athletes and officials taking part in the Olympics to ensure their safety" (Zhu, 2008e).

The security aspect with respect to the Beijing Olympics was also reported. The *China Daily* reported on the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) chief's praise for the security set up of the Beijing Olympics. Robert Mueller was quoted by the paper. He said that, "I was impressed by the thoroughness of the preparations and the professionalism that has been put in to provide security at the Games" (Xiaokun, 2008).

The opening of the Water Cube which was one of the venues of the Olympics was reported extensively by the Chinese media. The paper highlighted the sense of

pride and happiness which the Chinese people showcased (Cui, 2008a).The Chinese government was undertaking efforts to prepare the Beijing citizens to be more compatible with the Olympics Games. There were reports that the government was asking the people to not spit or litter. The *China Daily* quoted Zhang Huiguang, director of the capital ethic development committee. He argued, "This trend of motivating people to change their habits is a result of patriotism and widespread participation in preparing for the Olympic Games" (Zhuoqiong, 2008a).

The Chinese government was undertaking a number of projects and developments domestically to allow for smooth Olympics. One of such projects was the undisturbed supply of water to Beijing. To ensure this, the Chinese government had decided to get water from four reservoirs in Hebei province. This news was also used to praise the overall planning of the Chinese government with respect to smooth water supply especially the South-to-North water diversion project (*China Daily*, 2008d).

The Chinese media also used the Olympics and the constructions underway for the events as points of discussion highlighting the government's commitment towards betterment of the life of the Chinese people. One example of this was reported in the *China Daily* as the construction of the railway high-speed bullet train to get from Jinan to Qingdao, host city of 2008 Olympic sailing competition which was completed five years prior to the scheduled time frame (Zhao, 2008a).

There was a great emphasis on the reactions of the foreign media present in China with respect to the preparations and work done towards successful completion of the Olympics. The *China Daily* reported that, "Foreign reporters were impressed by Olympic co-host city Qingdao and praised its Olympic preparation work during a visit there this week" (*China Daily*, 2008e).

With respect to the ongoing preparations for safety during the Beijing Olympics *China Daily* reported, "The police and military, and emergency response departments, including medical staff, yesterday tested their ability to handle major terrorist attacks during the Beijing Olympic Games" (Zhu, 2008f). To add to this, the Chinese authorities were also employing an anti-terrorism expert as the executive vice-minister of public security as an effort to ensure safe Olympics (Zhu, 2008g). Around 100,000 security personnel were put on high-alert to prevent any major

hurdle, especially any kind of terrorist attack, prior or during the Beijing Olympics. To further strengthen the security situation, "Beijing has 150,000 security personnel and more than 290,000 volunteers patrolling the city in a bid to ensure security"(*China Daily*, 2008f).According to reports, the Chinese government also tightened security at the subway stations as an effort to provide for safe games (Bo, 2008).

The Beijing Olympics were showcased as an important point in the overall development and growth of Beijing. It was argued that the development projects undertaken for the Olympics would help in improving the quality of the life in the city in the long term (Qian, 2008). In addition *China Daily* even quoted Artemis Ignatiou, official choreographer for the Beijing Olympic Games lighting ceremony saying that she "expects the Beijing Olympics to be the best ever" (Qian, 2008).

In June 2008, while stating the level of preparedness for the Beijing Olympics, the then President Hu Jintao stated that, "China was basically ready for the Games" (*China Daily*, 2008g). In June the Chinese government also announced the successful completion of construction all 37 venues for the Beijing Olympics (Lei, 2008b). The Beijing authorities also decided on a number of aspects which they had to address to ensure a successful Olympics. As per *China Daily* the areas were identified as: Sightseeing buses, Public toilets, Peking Opera, Train Services, 26 cultural squares, less cars on the road and Chinese lanterns show (Xie, 2008a).

These reports highlight the argument that the Chinese government was leaving no stone un-turned in its efforts to make the Beijing Olympics a landmark event in Chinese history. It was one of the rare opportunities when China was able to showcase its capabilities and developments to the international community.

Pollution and Environment

Prior to the Olympics, the degree of pollution in Beijing was a major cause of concern. It is also an area where the Chinese government had made extensive promises to improve the situation. Controlling air pollution was a major task which the Chinese government had to complete for the Beijing Olympics to be a success. The paper covered this issue extensively and reported the developments in detail. It was also a major concern for the Chinese government as a number of foreign athletes

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had expressed uncertainty about attending the Beijing Olympics due to the poor air quality which could affect their health. The acting mayor of Beijing, Guo Jinlong was quoted by *China Daily* arguing that, "cutting emissions and curbing pollution are among the Beijing municipal government's agenda this year as part of preparations for the Olympics" (Zhu, 2008h).

In March *China Daily* quoted the IOC report stating that it was expected that by August the air quality in Beijing would be of acceptable quality. This was concluded after a study by its medical commission (Cui, 2008b). The Chinese government also announced a ban on smoking in public places in Beijing from May 2008 in order to maintain the air quality of the city (Cui, 2008c).

In April *China Daily* reported on the air quality index of Beijing. It argued based on a poll that about 60 percent of the people stated that the air quality had improved as compared to 53 percent in the year 2006. This was with respect to the fact that the Olympic Committee as well as some athletes had stated the air quality situation in Beijing as a factor in their decision to skip the Olympics (Zhang, 2008a). It also carried a response to the Wall Street Journal article which claimed that China was fudging the air quality reports by moving the air quality monitors from the city of Beijing to other places. As a response to this, the paper quoted Yu Xiaoxuan, BOCOG's environmental director stating that "Beijing's air pollution monitoring stations in the downtown area remain where they were" (*China Daily*, 2008h).

In order to improve and maintain the air quality in Beijing, the municipal government had announced that work at construction sites in Beijing were to be stopped during the Olympic and Paralympic Games. There were a number of other measures also announced to help fulfil the promise made by the Chinese government. The measures included among others, the relocation of coal burning industries and the allocation of days announced for even and odd numbered cars and taxis. In addition, outdoor spray painting was also forbidden in the city (Lei, 2008c). The closure of industries was seen as affecting the overall growth of the economy. However there were media reports suggesting that this would not be affecting the Beijing's economic growth significantly (*China Daily*, 2008h).

While discussing the celebrations of the Olympics, the *China Daily* reported that the fireworks which were planned to be lighting the Beijing sky on the night of

the Olympic ceremony will not pollute the air. This was achieved with the help of advanced pyrotechnics. The Chinese government was undertaking efforts to successfully host "clean and green games". The paper quoted Yang Chunyi on the use of firecrackers. He said, "The whole process will not generate strong and smelly smoke" (Jiao, 2008). In the same context the *China Daily* reported about the greening of the Beishan Mountain (Cui, 2008d). In addition, the Chinese government had undertaken major efforts of re-routing around 1900 buses and trucks and other vehicles in order keep the Beijing air clean (Xin, 2008b). The 'greening' of Beijing was another important aspect discussed by *China Daily*. As per one article, the Chinese government had decided to open a green park next to the Bird's Nest after the Olympics got over. This park was meant to help in improving the quality of air in Beijing (Cui, 2008e).

The paper further debated against the western bias with respect to the Chinese environmental problems. It argued in an article that in spite of the fact that China had worked to clear and manage its environmental problems, it was not being reported by the western media. This was primarily because of the fact that the western media and scholars still carried a strong bias against the Chinese growth story (Whiteley, 2008).

According to the *China Daily*, Beijing Capital International Airport had expected to receive in excess of 60,000 Olympic and Paralympic Games officials, athletes and journalists" (Xin, 2008c). The civic and transport infrastructure's preparedness for their smooth transit was one of the focal areas of the coverage. The Chinese government had also announced that there would be 32 new bus routes starting in July 2008 for Beijing city. This was aimed to improve the level of public transport in the city (Zhu, 2008i). The government had also planned to use around 500 vehicles powered by batteries, electricity and mixed fuel to provide transport in the Olympic and the Paralympic village and this move aimed to reduce carbon dioxide discharge by 2,510 tons (Aoxue and Haizhou, 2008). In addition, the venues for the Olympics were also constructed with the help of "clean energy and power saving technologies" as reported by the *China Daily* (*China Daily*, 2008i). The newspaper also quoted IOC's Olympic Games' executive director Gilbert Felli stating that the air quality in Beijing had improved and he was satisfied with the efforts put forth by the Chinese government towards the preparation of the Games (*China Daily*, 2008j). To maintain the air quality, the Chinese government had also decided that if it felt that

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the air quality was deteriorating, it was planning to remove additional vehicles from Beijing roads in addition to stalling ongoing constructions (Cui, 2008f). To further boost the claims made by the Chinese government, the *China Daily* quoted Greenpeace which had announced that, "Greenpeace, in an assessment of the 2008 Olympic Games, said Beijing had met most of its environmental commitments" (Cui, 2008g).However, the setting of the haze in Beijing prior to the Games did raise questions about the air quality. The city officials stated that this was primarily due to the dry spell which the city faced. With the onset of cooler days this problem would be solved. Haze did not mean that the air quality was bad in the city (Cui, 2008h).

The efforts put forth by the Chinese government to ensure better air quality in Beijing also led to speculations about the number of cars which the Chinese officials owned. An article published in the *China Daily* argued that, "Therefore, it is strongly advisable that we seize the good opportunity offered by the Olympic Games to assess the benefits and losses of reducing government cars. The central government departments should start it before others. By cutting the number of cars they own, they could save quite some money for better use" (Haojun, 2008).

China and International Community/Darfur

Beijing Olympics also was a time when Chinese foreign policy and diplomacy was being subjected to extensive criticism and pressure by the western media. The international community used the Olympics to express its concerns especially with regard to China-Sudan relations. The issue over Chinese arms sale to Sudan was a major point of contention. The international community expected China to exploit its close relations with the Sudanese government and help in some form of resolution to the ongoing problems in Darfur. However, the stand of non-interference adopted by the Chinese government was heavily criticised by the global community. There were a number of reports which were attempted to clear the Chinese stand on the issue.

In order to counter the extensive global criticism, *China Daily* published a number of articles highlighting the positive and constructive role which China was playing in the region (Wenping, 2008).With respect to international criticism based on Chinese role in Darfur and Beijing Olympics, the Chinese government urged the international community to not 'politicize the Olympic Games'. *China Daily* quoted

Liu Guijin, Chinese special envoy for African affairs. He argued rejected the Western media reports as being baseless and argued against the politicization of the Olympic Games. (*China Daily*, 2008k).

The general argument of the media with respect to the upcoming Olympic Games was one of optimism. *China Daily* argued in one of its articles that the Olympics would prove to be a positive boost to China's relations with the international community. It would help positively in China's diplomatic endevours. The presence of foreigners in China was regarded as a very positive factor (Qin, 2008a).

The decision of the United States President George Bush to attend the Olympic Opening Ceremony despite the call for boycott was reported by *China Daily*. The article stated that President Bush had argued that there was no change in his plan to attend the ceremony and he was not keen on using the Olympics as a tool or reason to criticize China (Zhang and Xiaokun, 2008). In addition, the withdrawal of Steven Spielberg as the artist adviser for the Beijing Games was also reported. The IOC President Jacques Rogge was reported as stating that this development would not affect the Games, and Olympics should be regarded as a sporting event and not a political tool (*China Daily*, 2008l). He further argued that boycotts would not affect the Beijing Games from being a success (Cui, 2008i). *China Daily* reported on a survey conducted by *the Guardian* arguing that the majority of the British people were in support of the Beijing Olympics, and they were not in favour of any kind of boycott of the Games (*China Daily*, 2008m).

The withdrawal of Steven Spielberg was based on Chinese involvement in Darfur. However, the general perception was that the major reason behind the boycott by Steven Spielberg was the western media bias with respect to China. There was a general tendency in the western media to not report positively about developments and changes underway in China (Sommer, 2008a).In order to extend a clarification, the *China Daily* reported on statements made by Chinese ambassador to Sudan, Li Chengwen. Li argued that, "The Chinese government has been working closely with the UN to end the crisis in Sudan's western region of Darfur through political means" (*China Daily*, 2008n). It argued that China was not keen on interfering with the domestic issues of other countries as China respected the sovereignty of other

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countries and was not like the United States (and its interventionist policies). *China Daily* also quoted China's special representative to Darfur as saying that, "The international community should not overestimate China's influence over the Darfur issue, but pursue a holistic approach to resolving the problem" (Zhang, 2008b). Thus, there were some publications that argued against China's ability to use its influence to change things in Sudan (Sommer, 2008b).

The paper also reported the telephonic discussion between Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown regarding this issue. *China Daily* (2008o) reported that Wen stated that China was keen on helping Sudan reach peace and stability and that China was willing to work with the United Nations, African Union and the Sudanese government to reach an acceptable solution. Further clarifying its stand on the Darfur issue, *China Daily* reported on the London visit of a senior Chinese diplomat, Liu Guijin. The article stated, "China was the first nation outside Africa to send peacekeepers to Darfur and the first and biggest development aid provider to the region" (*China Daily*, 2008p). Liu Guijin also urged the rebel groups in Darfur to agree to talks and also urged the countries which had influence over these groups to "pressure them to return to negotiations with the Sudanese government" (Su, 2008a). He also stated that China was not keen on linking any political aspect with respect to humanitarian aid (Su, 2008b). In a meeting with the Sudanese President Omer al-Bashir, Liu Guijin argued for an early solution to the ongoing violence in Sudan (Su, 2008c).

In response to the international media and scholars' criticism, the Chinese government's interaction and behaviour with respect to Darfur was also covered by *China Daily*. One of the articles on this subject attempted to discuss that Chinese business relations with Sudan were not responsible for the violent situation in the country and China should not be blamed for conducting business. The article urged that, "the western region of Sudan has made headlines in the world and has somehow been linked to the Beijing Olympics" (Su, 2008d). With respect to Darfur issue and the alleged Chinese role, *China Daily* quoted Vice-President Xi Jinping arguing that Beijing was in favour of a positive and peaceful solution to the ongoing conflict in Sudan (Qin, 2008b).

These reports clearly highlight the fact that the Chinese government was under major scrutiny because of its relations with Sudan and it also brings forth the point that prior to the Olympics, the Chinese government undertook a number of steps in order to reduce international criticism.

Foreign Media in China:

One major concern for the international media reporting about the Beijing Olympics was the intense internet control in China. The Chinese government had promised that it would stop its internet control in order to help the international media to report freely during the Olympics. To prove its commitment prior to the Olympics, the Chinese government had shown great adaptability in allowing foreign journalists based in Beijing to report on the annual National People's Congress (NPC) and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) meetings. These meetings are generally closed door and international media is not allowed to attend them. Only a select few from the domestic media are allowed to attend such prominent meetings. Thus it was a major step taken by the Chinese government to show its commitment to the foreign media present in China for the Beijing Olympics. As per *China Daily*, the Chinese government had made special arrangements to help the media report on the meetings (Xu, 2008).Efforts had been taken by the Chinese government to help in creating a better reporting environment for the foreign journalists present in China for the Olympics (Xiaoyang, 2008). It was assured that foreign journalists were welcome in Beijing would be free to report on the Olympics without any hurdle. As argued by a top official from the BOCOG, "Foreign journalists are "very welcome" in the capital and they have nothing to worry about regarding their work in the country" (Tan, 2008a).

In addition to this, the IOC press commissioner Kevan Gosper was quoted by the *China Daily* as praising the work done by China with regard to the press. Gosper was quoted by the paper saying that, "I just see communications and the freedom to have views continuing to change for the better in China" (Cui, 2008j). The *China Daily* discussed the preparedness and openness of the Chinese government in helping in reporting about the Olympics. 30 journalists visited the Mount Qomolangma media center in April. This was to be the point from which the journalists were scheduled to

report on the ascent of Olympic torch to the world's highest peak (*China Daily*, 2008q).

With respect to the freedom of media, the *China Daily* had reported that Jiang Xiaoyu, executive vice-president of the BOCOG had argued that there was a need for better media reporting and access. She was quoted as saying, "We will attach great importance to the media reporting work, and provide one-stop service to better cover the Beijing Olympics" (Yu and Wanxian, 2008).

The *China Daily* also discussed the quality of the Main Press Centre (MPC) prepared for the Beijing Olympics. The paper quoted Richard Palfreyman, press chief of the 2000 Sydney Games, media advisor to the 2004 Athens Games and MPC manager of the 2006 Turin Winter Games, "It's probably the best-ever laid-out MPC, and I think Beijing has (a) just cause to be proud of it" (Lei, 2008d). The Chinese government had also extended web telecast rights to Sina.com, Netease.com and Tencent to broadcast the Beijing Olympics. These web portals were to telecast the opening and the closing ceremonies as well (Wang, 2008).

The fear of the Chinese government's controls as against the desire for freedom of expression was made clear when the Chinese Olympic Committee announced that the spectators would not be allowed to take banners, musical instruments and soft drink containers into Olympic venues. The paper quoted Charles Chao, chief executive officer of Sina Corp arguing that, "With the extensive use of broadband and online streaming technology, online video has become one of the most popular Internet applications in China" (*China Daily*, 2008r). However, the Chinese government also announced that its openness towards the foreign media during the Olympics would not be withdrawn after the Games were over. The *China Daily* quoted Liu Binjie, minister of the General Administration of Press and Publication, who argued that, "Openness to the foreign media will be a long-term policy" (*China Daily*, 2008s).

Olympics Torch:

The journey of the Olympic torch is an integral part of the Olympic Games process. The Beijing Olympics began officially with the handing over of the Olympic torch to China in Athens on March 29, 2008(Lei, 2008e). In April 2008, The Chinese

President Hu Jintao lit a cauldron with the Olympic torch in the Tiananmen Square of Beijing and signalled the start of the torch relay. The *China Daily* quoted the Vice President Xi Jinping saying that, "Starting from here, the torch relay of the Beijing Olympic Games will pass across land and sea, connect the hearts and minds of people of five continents, and spread the message of 'one world, one dream' to every corner of the world" (Tan, 2008b). The decision of the Chinese Olympic committee to allow the Olympic torch to pass through Tanzania was highlighted as being a gesture of the Chinese government of sharing the 'joy and pride' of the Olympic Games. The article quoted Chinese ambassador to Tanzania Liu Xinsheng saying that, "As the African continent has never hosted an Olympic Games, and Tanzania has never hosted an Olympic torch relay, China would like to share with African people the passion, glory, dreams and joys of the Olympiad" (Yinan, 2008).

The Association of National Olympic Committee's (ANOC) meeting on the issue of possible boycott of the Beijing Olympics was covered by the *China Daily* extensively. In April 2008, it reported on how the heads of 205 national and regional Olympic committees agreed to give full support to the Beijing Olympics (Lei, 2008f). It also reported on the need for a distinction between sports and politics. It quoted IOC member He Zhenliang, who argued that, "The IOC granted Beijing the responsibility to host the Games, so the Games not only belongs to Beijing, but belongs to the whole world" (Cui, 2008k). The criticism by the IOC head Jacques Rogge on the violent protests against the Olympic torch relay was also discussed. He said, "I'm deeply saddened by the fact that such an important symbol has been attacked. We recognize the right of people to protest and express their views but it should be non-violent. We don't accept violence" (Lei, 2008g). The people who were disrupting the Olympic torch relay and protesting were heavily criticized by Chinese people on the online forums (China Daily, 2008t). The Olympic Games have seen challenges in the past and this was not the first time that a game faced problems. It also quoted Jacques Rogge as saying that "The Olympics is facing a crisis, but Beijing remains on track to stage a successful Game" (Lei, 2008h).

The *China Daily* also argued against the reports in French newspapers with respect to the problems that the torch relay faced. French media had stories with titles, *Give China a Slap in the Face and The Torch's Fiasco in Paris.* Such stories were not acceptable to the Chinese media. In response to such stories, the paper argued that the

French government should have been more careful and proactive in ensuring a problem free torch relay. The article also questioned the credibility of French media reporting (Duanfang, 2008). In addition, the paper also reported the Peruvian President's condemning of the recurring attacks on the Beijing Olympics torch relay (*China Daily*, 2008u).

The presence of the Olympic torch in Lijiang city, in the Yunnan Province, was seen as an opportunity for the province to showcase that it was a very favourable tourist destination to the world. It was also argued that this event would help Lijiang highlight its efforts in becoming environmentally friendly city (Wenyi and Jiachun, 2008).

The Beijing Olympic torch relay faced a huge number of challenges and thus brought to the fore the faultlines running through Chinese society. Even though the Chinese government was promoting the idea of "One World, One Dream", there were clearly a number of dissenting voices. The domestic fissures and rifts were clearly visible during the Olympic Torch relay. The Tibetans used the platform of the Olympics to voice their concerns against the discrimination which they were facing at the hands of the Chinese government. Tibetans also hoped that the Olympics torch relay would be the right occassion for them to bring forth their concerns to the global community. As the Chinese domestic media is heavily censored and the international media rarely gets access to Chinese domestic developments easily, the presence of the international media was a rare event in China and it was exploited by the Tibetans who wanted their voice to be heard by the global community.

Tibet riots and Western Media:

The occasion of Beijing Olympics brought attention to the faultlines present in the Chinese society. Even though the Chinese government has always promoted the idea of One China, it has not been able to completely mute the voices of dissent and criticism. The Olympics provided these voices with an unprecedented opportunity to express their grievances to the international community. The Olympic Torch relay was used by the Tibetans to express their grievances against the exploitation of the Chinese government. The large number of protests which the Olympic Torch relay faced and the increased security only added to the argument that the Chinese society was not a homogenous society. However, it was not only the marginalized sections

which used the Olympics as the platform, even the strong nationalistic sections within the Chinese society got space to express their views against the people who were criticising the government. Every criticism of the government was perceived to be anti-national by this section. The Beijing Olympics thus provided fodder for both the Nationalistic as well as the marginalized sections of the Chinese society.

The Olympics in China had gathered tremendous nationalistic fervour. The *China Daily* quoted Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, who said that, "The small number of individuals and groups who are biased against China and want to politicize the Beijing Olympics will "never get their way"" (Shangwu, Haizhou and Jize, 2008).Such statement were aimed at both the Tibetan and other smaller groups protesting against the Chinese government and using the Beijing Olympics as the platform to express their problems and draw global attention.

March 2008 witnessed a major uprising in Tibet. The protest was a very volatile one. A number of gunshots were fired and the Chinese government also closed down many monasteries (Watts, 2008). These protests were also the largest against the Chinese government since 1989 (Yardley, 2008).As a response to the western media's reporting and coverage of the riots, *China Daily* carried an article on April 1. It argued that the general Chinese people were raising their voices against the criticism of the western media. It also argued that these opinions were not those of the Chinese government but purely the opinions of Chinese people. The article further argued that, "Such actions on the part of the Western media gives the lie to their "impartiality" and makes a mockery of "freedom of the press" (Xiong, 2008a). These arguments strengthened the discussion that the Chinese government used its domestic media to argue against the global reporting of the issues in Tibet. It was caught in a situation where it could not successfully control the flow of information and thus had to counter the reports published internationally. To boost this argument, *China Daily* adopted a very strong approach towards the United States House Speaker Nancy Pelsoi for her comment that 'it was a mistake to award the games to China' (China.org, 2008). It quoted the foreign ministry spokesperson Jiang Yu, who said, "We urge political figures in the US to respect the spirit and principles of the Olympic Games, adopt a responsible attitude toward the Games and the torch relay, and not to do anything that is against people's aspirations" (Lei, 2008i). Such reportage also helped the nationalistic build up underway leading to the Olympics.

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The riots in Tibet were also perceived and reported as attempts to hamper the Beijing Olympics. The reports and newspaper articles in the foreign media about the Tibetan riots that said that the Chinese government was doing something wrong or was responsible for the riots were chalked down to western propaganda. *China Daily* quoted Premier Wen Jiabao saying that, "The appalling violence in Tibet - in which rioters used "extremely cruel" means to kill and injure innocent people - was aimed at undermining this summer's Beijing Olympic Games" (Huanxin, 2008). The Chinese government also announced that the planned schedule of the Olympic torch visiting Lhasa would not be changed due to the recent developments (Lei, 2008h). The reportage of the riots by the western media was termed "biased" and "unfair" by Chinese citizens (Jun, 2008). The Chinese netizens were the most vocal in denouncing the bias of the western media towards China with respect to the riots in Tibet (Jun, 2008).*China Daily* also published an apology from a German channel over its reporting of the Tibetan riots. The article stated that, "Germany's RTL television said on Sunday that it "regrets an error" in covering the riots in Lhasa when it "used a picture in a wrong context"" (*China Daily*, 2008v). There were also reports that the Chinese students abroad had created a website to counter western propaganda.[12] This was to protest against what they termed "Western media hegemony" (Xiaokun, 2008).Overseas Chinese in Canada, New Zealand and Germany organized a rally to showcase their support for the Chinese government in the backdrop of the riots in Tibet. They also rallied for the unity of China (*China Daily*, 2008w).

Even as the international community was rooting for the boycott of the Beijing Olympics, the *China Daily* reported that the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) was planning on attending the opening ceremony of the Games (Hodges and Haizhou, 2008). In addition the Chinese ambassador to United Kingdom, Fu Ying, was also quoted as saying that there was a need to separate politics from Olympics (*China Daily*, 2008x).

In a response to the western media's biased coverage of the riots in Lhasa, a Chinese website urged the Chinese people to "sign up" to show their discontent and also as a show of protest. *China Daily* also quoted a Chinese official residing in New York arguing that, "some photographs on the CNN and BBC websites had been

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[12] This website was namedwww.anti-cnn.com.

deliberately cropped to denigrate China" (*China Daily*, 2008y).On April 10, 2008 the paper published an article highlighting the reservations of the Chinese towards the hosting of the Olympics and how they had transformed viewing the international protests and criticism. This also highlighted the nationalistic fervour which the Chinese government generally resorts to in times of trying to gain positive opinions (Xiong, 2008b).In April, Pakistani President Pervez Musharaff was also quoted by *China Daily* as denouncing the western countries' efforts to demean the Olympic preparations in China and he also argued that the western countries should not impose democratic values on every country of the world (Xiaoyang and Haizhou, 2008).

The paper also reported on the people's protests in Melbourne, Australia against the distorted reporting on the violence in Tibet. The Chinese people carried banners reading "one China", "peace in Tibet" and "respect for truth". The article stated that, "The protesters condemned Western media for biased coverage of the violence in Tibet and subsequent anti-China protests" (Xu, 2008). There were also reports of overseas Chinese protesting against the biased media coverage in a number of western cities. Thousands of Chinese gathered in cities like London, Birmingham and Manchester, Paris, Vienna and Berlin as well as Washington and Los Angeles to show their support for the Beijing Olympics and also to protest against the biased western media reporting on the developments in Tibet (Zhang, 2008c). It also carried an article written by Greek-born US citizen, Michael J. Economides, who worked in China. The article highlighted the arguments made by the author stating that the way the Beijing Olympic torch relay was disrupted was not in the 'spirit of Olympics' (Economides, 2008). IOC president Jacques Rogge was interviewed by the Financial Times wherein he said, "China had given significant ground to the IOC by opening access to foreign media for the Olympics, which he expected to be extended beyond 2008 and believed would be a key factor in the social evolution of the country" (*China Daily*, 2008z). While such claims were made to soothe the Chinese anxieties, such tall predictions have not come true.

The newspapers also covered an interview with an American economist, Professor John Rutledge who was visiting Beijing's Chinese Academy of Sciences. The *China Daily* article stated that the United States media was biased towards China and they focused primarily on negative information. The media did not report on the efforts and economic achievements which China had gained over the years (*China*

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Daily, 2008aa). Such articles were published and given prominence to boost the agenda that the foreign media was primarily against the Chinese people's dream of achieving greatness. It also gave impetus to the argument that the foreign press was biased against the Chinese nation and was thus only focussing on the negatives and was not comfortable reporting about the positive developments in China. It was the Western media's agenda to propagate everything negative with respect to China and Beijing Olympics.

China had called for an apology from CNN. While reporting on the Olympic torch relay, CNN commentator Jack Cafferty made remarks which were not acceptable to the Chinese government and the Chinese people. Cafferty had said that, "US imported Chinese-made "junk with lead paint on them and poisoned pet food" and also called the CPC a "…bunch of goons and thugs they've been for the last 50 years" (Haizhou and Jingjing, 2008). The paper also reported on the failure of CNN to provide an acceptable apology. It stated that the statement issued by CNN could not be regarded as an apology (*China Daily*, 2008ab). There were people in Tibet who were protesting against the disruptions which the torch relay had faced and were also expressing their anger against the CNN statements by protesting. Chinese people were protesting in cities like Xi'an, Jinan, Harbin, Dalian, Beijing, Hefei, Qingdao, Wuhan and Kunming. The cities witnessed protests primarily aimed at the French chain Carrefour (*China Daily*, 2008ac). The French President had invited the disabled Chinese torchbearer Jin Jing, to visit France again. This invitation was delivered in the form of a letter which was given to Jin by French Senate President Christian Poncelet during his visit to China (Haizhou, 2008d). In addition to this, the Chinese President Hu Jintao also asserted the fact that the disruptions which the Olympic torch relay faced around the world had severely hurt the feelings of the Chinese people. The article quoted Hu Jintao saying, "These events are not what we want to see, and have hurt the feelings of the Chinese people" (Xiaoyang and Jize, 2008).As a response to French President Nicolas Sarkozy's remark about not attending the Beijing Olympics, sina.com conducted a poll. As reported by *China Daily*, according to the poll almost 88 percent of the Chinese people found the remarks "extremely unfriendly". As announced by sina.com, almost 100,000 people had participated in the ongoing poll by July 2008 (Li, 2008a). The decision of the United States President Bush to attend

the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics despite the calls for boycott was also reported (Xiaokun, 2008).

On the issue of the Tibetan riots, it was again argued that it was yet another attempt to hamper China's image and to disrupt the Beijing Olympics. The article argued that, "Unfortunately, the Olympics has been used by some Westerners as a means to "liberate Tibet from China" through intense media propaganda" (Graefin, 2008) However, to showcase the contrary point of view, *China Daily* carried articles by prominent western scholars arguing in favour of China. One such article was written by Martin Jacques. The author argued that, "The problem is that as the global center of gravity tilts away from the West, it is becoming increasingly important to look beyond our assumptions and gain a wider picture" (Jacques, 2008).

In May 2008, the *China Daily* also reported on the Japanese Prime Minister's desire to attend the Olympic opening ceremony. The remark by Yasuo Fukuda that "It would be good if I could go" was regarded as a positive gesture in China-Japan relations (*China Daily*, 2008ad). The Olympics was also being used to further the foreign policy aspect as well. The *China Daily* quoted Hu Jintao saying that, "The fact that 300 Japanese congressmen from different parties have formed a group to show their support for the Beijing Olympics fully shows the Japanese public's friendship toward the Chinese people and their efforts to carry forward the Olympic spirit" (Zi and Jize, 2008).

To describe the great achievements made by China, the *China Daily* quoted Michael Barbalas, president of American Chamber of Commerce in China. He argued that, "As I watch the Olympics this August, I will also be thinking about the competition our member firms face here in the Chinese market. As we watch the Beijing Games, we should appreciate just how far international competition has propelled China forward both in sports and economics" (Chuanjiao, 2008). It also argued against the bias which the international community had shown during the Olympic torch relay against China. The *China Daily* argued that China had come a long way and the people of China had been in sync with the government in making the Beijing Games a success (*China Daily*, 2008ae). The *China Daily* also carried a report negating the information that the authorities in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region demolished a mosque that was not showing its support for the

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upcoming Beijing Olympics. The Chinese foreign ministry stated that such reporting by the media was not right and it only strengthened the argument that there were groups which did not want to see China host a successful Olympics and were jealous of Chinese success and achievements (Qin, 2008c). *China Daily* also reported that a Sudanese official claimed that the role of China in Sudan was positive. It also argued that the aid provided by China to Sudan did not have any hidden agenda (Xiaokun, 2008).

The *China Daily* also reported the interaction between foreign journalists and Chinese athletes (Cui, 2008l).There was also regular reporting with respect to the other aspect of the Olympics games. Additionally, the official cost of construction of venues to host the Olympics was also released. The official figure of expenditure was approximately 13 billion yuan ($1.8 billion) (Lei, 2008k). In January 2008 it was also announced that the *China Daily* would be publishing the official English newspaper for the Beijing Olympic and Paralympic Games, as well as Village News (Cui, 2008m). The paper reported the schedule of the ongoing construction of the Bird's Nest stadium (Yingzi and Lei, 2008).

There were also polls conducted throughout China to gauge the level of excitement amongst the people with respect to the upcoming Olympics. As reported by the *China Daily*, "A survey released yesterday revealed the intense anticipation held nationwide for the Beijing Olympics, with about three-quarters of respondents expressing their overwhelming excitement 150 days out from the opening ceremony" (Cui, 2008n). The paper also reported on the construction of the green city as per the government promise for the Olympics (Zhao, 2008b). The government's efforts to reduce the emissions in the cities hosting the Olympic Games were discussed in detail (Ying, 2008). There were also reports on the Opening Ceremony of the Olympics and what it symbolizes (Tan, 2008c). For a smooth Olympics regular update was provided about the traffic rules and ban which the government was planning to put in place. It was reported that the ban on traffic would not be imposed till July 2008, that was one month prior to the start of the Games (Lei, 2008l).

In May 2008 the *China Daily* carried an article quoting Jia Qinglin, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. He said, "The 100-year Olympic dream of China will be realized, Let us raise our

spirits high and work solidly to fulfill the task of holding successful Games" (Lei, 2008m). It also reported the hosting of a 'fun run' in which around 10,000 people participated (*China Daily*, 2008af). There were also news articles confirming the fact that the Chinese government had extended its ban on smoking in public places as an effort to conduct a smoke-free Olympics (Jia, 2008).

The Chinese government's reform and opening up policy had helped the citizens and that the criticisms directed at China from the western scholars and media were unfair as per the Olympic Games ceremonies maestro Ric Birch. He said, "The fact that China has achieved so much in one generation is so extraordinary that we can't compute it. There has never been an equivalent, so we don't have any bench marks" (Whitely, 2008).

In June the Chinese government published the dos and don'ts for the foreigners visiting the country to attend the Beijing Olympics. "Foreigners must respect Chinese laws while in China and must not harm China's national security or damage the social order" (Lei, 2008p). The Chinese government had hired around 160 sniffer dogs to help in the security set up for the Beijing Olympics (*China Daily*, 2008ag). In addition to this, there were also plans by the IOC to hold a Beijing Olympic Expo, showcasing exhibits which were never put on display before (Hui, 2008).

The Chinese media quoted Dave Currie, the chef de mission of the New Zealand Olympic Team to Beijing, arguing in favour of the Beijing Olympics. It stated that the effort put in by Beijing showcased that China was set to host a very successful Olympics (*China Daily*, 2008ah). The newspaper also discussed the speculation surrounding the performances during the upcoming opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics (Zhou, 2008). In addition to this, the Chinese government also organized a calligraphy competition based on the Olympic theme, "One World, One Dream". Calligraphers from China and abroad participated in this competition (Xie, 2008).

For the convenience of the visitors coming to Beijing to attend the Olympic Games, the People's Bank of China discussed the services which the bank was to provide. *China Daily* published a detailed report (Lijun, 2008).To mark the Beijing Olympics, the People's Bank of China also issued a new 10 yuan note. It was reported

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that the bank decided to issue 6 million such notes (*China Daily*, 2008ai). The Chinese government had also planned to open separate channels at the airport to help the athletes, visitors and media people arriving in Beijing for the Olympics.

The *China Daily* also reported on various aspects of the Beijing Olympics which made it unique as compared to the other events. The points which were highlighted included:

> "largest number of volunteers, same organizing committee looking after the Olympics and the Paralympics, first digital broadcast, biggest TV audience, multimedia for the first time, largest media coverage, largest number of host cities, new sports, cheerleaders, largest transport expansion, babies named after the Olympics, massive Olympic education campaign, largest number of doping tests, huge number of cultural festivals, wedding scheduled for the day of Olympics. The torch relay was the longest as well as the highest till date, involving huge spending, highest number of mascots, and largest team from China ever, huge number of sponsors, lowest tickets, and large number of foreign coaches. The number of Chinese representing other nations was also large and medals were made of jade, to point a few" (*China Daily*, 2008aj).

In July, the Chinese government announced that it would be sending its biggest team ever for the Beijing Olympics. The Chinese team consisted of 636 athletes (Rui, 2008) while for the 2004 Athens Olympics only 384 Chinese athletes were selected (China at the 2004 Summer Olympics). The opening of the Games village was also announced in July (Lei, 2008n). In addition the reporters covering the Olympics also entered the media village in July (Cui, 2008o).

In a first for any Chinese President, in June 2008 Hu Jintao took part in an internet chat with the Chinese citizens. This clearly highlighted the fact that the Chinese government could not afford to ignore the influence that the internet had on the Chinese people (Haizhou and Yinan, 2008).

The Olympics were also highlighted as an important diplomatic event. The start of the Olympics was to coincide with the anniversary of establishment of Chinese diplomatic relations with Venezuela. As per the *China Daily*, "The celebration of 34 years of diplomatic relations between Venezuela and China coincides with the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. It is a historic year for China and Venezuela to both demonstrate the results of their hard work in sports" (Kan, 2008).

Thus one can conclude that the *China Daily* did cover almost all aspects of the upcoming Olympics in Beijing in extensive detail. In its reporting before the starting of the Olympics, *China Daily* highlighted the preparedness of the Chinese state and the people at large towards the successful conduct of the Olympics games. The newspaper also consistently published articles which were highly positive towards the efforts undertaken by the Chinese government and worked relentlessly for the success of the Beijing Olympics. Not only at the domestic level but even at the global level the *China Daily* countered a number of criticisms which were directed towards China through the international media. It worked hard to counter the global biases too.

During Olympics:

The primary focus of the paper during the Olympics was on all details about efforts undertaken by the Chinese government towards making the Olympics a success. During this phase, the newspaper focussed on the day to day efforts undertaken by the Chinese government. It shifted its focus to the discussions on environment, pollution, the safety of the food for the international athletes. It reported extensively about the efforts of the Chinese government to have a more green and clean Olympics. There were a large number of articles which discussed the long term benefits of the investments made for the Olympics. *China Daily* had reported all these points and aspects.

The first and the biggest highlight was the enormous number of flights and passengers which Beijing Airport was expected to cater to during the week prior to the Olympics. As per *China Daily* article, the Beijing airport was expected to handle about 1500 flights and 260,000 passengers (Jiao, 2008). On the eve of the Olympics, the Beijing airport handled almost 1350 flights and proved its working capacity. As per the paper, "Beijing airport was tested to its full yesterday, the eve of Olympic Games, and came out with flying colours" (Xin, 2008b).

However, the prediction of rains on August 8 was seen as a problematic development. But it was argued that the Chinese government was ready to handle this issue (Cui, 2008p). On the same front on August 7 it was reported that the weather is expected to be clear on the day of the Opening Ceremony and the government may not have to resort to technologies to reduce the rainfall (Zhu, 2008j). On day three of

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the games, thunderstorms helped in clearing the air and also maintaining the temperature of Beijing (*China Daily*, 2008ak).

In order to fulfill its promise of cleaner air in Beijing during the Olympics, the Chinese government announced that if the weather in the city deteriorated the government would pull more cars off the roads to maintain air quality. The number of cars pulled off was around 10 percent (Cui, 2008q). To check on the level of air quality in Beijing, Premier Wen Jiabao visited Beijing. *China Daily* quoted Wen Jiabao stating that, "China is a responsible country. We will fulfill the promises we made for the Olympics. We will not only host high-quality and unique Games, but also build a more scenic, greener and more civilized city in a sustainable manner" (*China Daily*, 2008al). The IOC also announced that the air quality in Beijing was good and the athletes had nothing to worry about. The air quality was being monitored every hour. IOC's top medical official applauded China for its efforts and argued that China "has done a lot. The Beijing Olympics will be a good example of what can be done with the Games in a city" (Jing, 2008). The IOC President also stated that the Chinese government had done everything which was "humanely possible" to help in improving the air quality of the city (Lei, 2008o). New reports also argued that Beijing was enjoying the cleanest air and skies in a decade. It was also expected that the level of air quality would remain good even after the Games got over (Zhu, 2008k). It was argued that concepts like, "high-tech, people's and green Olympic" would not only apply to Beijing during the period of the Games, but would also apply to the development strategy for the capital and even other cities nationwide in the future" (Xiaoying, 2008). In addition to this, while meeting the Chinese President Hu Jintao he also added that, "[China] has set a new standard for the next host" (Xiaokun, 2008). *China Daily* also published an article in which Michael Charlton, chief executive of Think London, the investment agency for the city, gave an interview arguing how London wanted to learn from Beijing's experience of conducting the Games (*China Daily*, 2008am).

Another area of concern for the Chinese government was the question of the quality of food which was to be served at the Olympic village. The international media had regularly questioned the quality of the food given the history of China's food safety records. In August the BOCOG announced that, "Beijing has so far received no formal notification from foreign delegations about bringing food into the

Olympic Village" (Zhu, 2008l). Arne Ljungqvist, the chief of the IOC medical commission gave an exclusive interview to *China Daily* and stated that, "The medical services are the best I have ever experienced in my Olympic life" (Xie, 2008b).

The Olympics had made China more open according to *China Daily*. The article argued that the government had shown great openness and this was a sign of increasing confidence. The Chinese government distributed leaflets discussing how to prevent any terror attacks; it also agreed to the sale of foreign publications in the Games Village and also allowed foreign journalists to interview the Chinese citizens. These examples indicate increasing openness. The author argued that, "Such unprecedented openness and transparency originate from China's self-confidence, which is based upon the country's belief in the improved perception and judgment of its people after the country has experienced decades of rapid economic and social development" (Jun, 2008). The Beijing Olympics had also put China under international "limelight". As discussed in an article in *China Daily* about the perceptions of China in the West, "To the US elites who are still critical of China, the Olympics is a golden opportunity to cast away their preconceived opinions and lend a listening ear to the voices of the general public in China" (Wang, 2008). However, *China Daily* also quoted former mayor of Atlanta, Georgia arguing that, "Everyone that watches will be impressed. Their attitudes to China will change" (Lee, 2008). The Chinese government further reiterated the fact that China would continue to remain open for the outside world. In the words of a senior party leader, "China has already opened its doors, and will never shut them" (Jiao, 2008).The Chinese President Hu Jintao also made a statement arguing that, "Politicizing the Olympics violates the Olympic spirit and will not work" (*China Daily*, 2008an). Hu further added that, "By hosting the Beijing Games we will show the world that the Chinese people are a peace-loving nation" (*China Daily*, 2008an).

In order to ensure safety at the Olympics, the Chinese government had deployed 34,000 soldiers and also deployed 74 jets, 48 helicopters and 33 vessels, as well as radar systems, ground-to-air missiles, chemical and engineering units, according to the *China Daily* (Yinan, 2008).The *China Daily* also reported that the IOC President Jacques Rogge made remarks about China and the Beijing Olympics at the opening ceremony of the 120th IOC General Assembly on August 4. As per Rogge, "China is a nation in transition, with a great future, tremendous potential and

some challenges. I believe history will view the 2008 Olympics as a significant milestone in China's remarkable transformation. We are about to experience a magnificent Olympic Games" (Xiaoyang, 2008). China's ambassador in London, Fu Ying argued that, "Beijing will go down in Olympic history as the largest effort ever undertaken for a wonderful Olympic experience" (Ying, 2008).

In order to make a telecast of the Opening Ceremony and the Closing Ceremony of the Beijing Olympics exclusive, the Chinese government undertook efforts to prevent any illegal telecast on the 216 Chinese websites. According to Xu Chao, deputy director of the National Copyright Administration of China (NCAC), "Protecting Olympic IPR and other related rights is an international obligation, and the surveillance mechanism will help us to fulfill that" (Xie, 2008c).

The Olympics saw gathering of a large number of dignitaries in China. Hu Jintao met with 11 of the foreign leaders who were in Beijing to attend the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics (Xiaokun, 2008). In addition to this, the Chinese foreign ministry also reported that the total number of leaders attending the Opening Ceremony was 80, the largest till date for this event. According to the *China Daily*, "54 heads of state, 16 heads of government, nine representatives of royal families and one regional leader attended the ceremony" (Xiaokun, 2008). The message which was portrayed at the Opening Ceremony was of Peace, unity and harmony. The *China Daily* argued that, "the message was loud and clear. The flying aspires, the moving types, the Chinese paper scroll, the Olympic rings and the colourful fireworks all danced to the tune of peace" (Rana, 2008). It was also reported that the Opening Ceremony of the Beijing Olympics had approximately 34.2 million TV viewers in the United States (*China Daily*, 2008ao). The viewership of the Beijing Olympic Games was one of the largest in history. As per the newspaper, "An official said some 4.5 billion people would have viewed the Games on TV and online" (Xie, 2008d).

Questions about how the Chinese economy responded after the Olympic Games were discussed quite often. In one article in *China Daily*, it was argued that, "China will continue its substantial investment in infrastructure even after the Games and that would help sustain the economy's growth momentum" (Xu, 2008). There were also reports suggesting that it was expected that there was to be an increase in the total number of tourists visiting Beijing and Shanghai post Olympics (Xin, 2008e).

The paper also published articles arguing that the amount of investment undertaken for the Beijing Olympic Games would prove to be worth their value as in the long run it would only help in improving the lives of the people. The article also stated that this investment would help Beijing, "cement its place as a world-class city and business center" (*China Daily*, 2008ap).While hosting the banquet for the success of the Beijing Olympics, the Chinese President Hu Jintao stated that, "The success of the Beijing Olympic Games is attributable to the concerted efforts of the Chinese people and people from the rest of the world" (Xiaoyang, 2008).It can be seen that the reporting by *China Daily* during the Olympics was primarily aimed at highlighting the successful execution of the games.

Post-Olympics:

Even after the games got over in August 2008, the *China Daily* continued to report on the effects of the Olympics on Beijing and also how it had affected the overall diplomatic relations of China. It also reported statements and articles in the foreign press which praised China's efforts towards hosting the Olympics. Some of the major points of discussion in the post-Olympics period were the Environment, Chinese Economy, and Foreign Media and Beijing Olympics.

Environment:

The Chinese government had undertaken major steps towards cleaning the Beijing's environment for the Olympics. One of the core focus areas was the air quality in Beijing. Achievements made during the Olympics with respect to a cleaner and better environment in Beijing were one of the most prominent talking points after the Games. The Beijing authorities knew that they had to come up with permanent solutions to the existing problems in Beijing. Tan Zhimin, deputy chief of the Beijing City Building Headquarters Office for 2008 argued that, "Air quality, garbage and sewage disposal, the development of green spaces, and the building of emergency shelters for use in the event of natural disasters are all things that need to be looked at" (*China Daily*, 2008aq).

Economy:

There were also ongoing debates on the effects of the Beijing Olympics on the Chinese economy. As reported by *China Daily*, "To probe into what kind of

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effects the Beijing Olympics would have on the Chinese economy, we should make a thorough analysis of the proportion of the country's investment in the Games as well as the investment-led industries and employment to its economic aggregate" (Yan, 2008). It was also argued that the Paralympic Games would greatly benefit the Chinese society as a whole and it would especially prove beneficial for the disabled community of China (Li, 2008b).*China Daily* also reported a survey which was conducted in 26 countries arguing that the hosting of the Beijing Olympics would help in boosting the tourism industry in China (Xin, 2008e). The construction and efforts undertaken towards the Olympics had led to a better living standard for the Beijing people (Roeder, 2008). The newly constructed Olympic venues helped in almost tripling the number of visitors coming to Beijing as compared to the 2007 figures (*China Daily*, 2008ar).

Foreign Media and Beijing Olympics

The Chinese media also argued that foreigners respected and looked up to China after the successful Beijing Olympics. Articles where foreigners praised the efforts put forth by the Chinese government and the people were published by *China Daily* (Samaranch, 2008). In addition, as reported by *China Daily* German Chancellor Angela Merkel also congratulated China on the successful completion of the Beijing Olympics (*China Daily*, 2008as). The paper also reported that the Swedish Crown Princess Victoria praised China for successfully conducting the Paralympics Games (Li, 2008c). The British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown also announced that, "Support for the Games and engagement with China is not at the expense of human rights. It is integral to their promotion. China has made enormous social and economic progress over the last three decades, but much more remains to be done". This was in response to the oppositions questioning his decision to attend the Beijing Olympics (Li, 2008d).

The *China Daily* published an article by Edwin Maher, a New Zealand born TV journalist working in China, entitled, 'How the Paralympics helped in changing the perceptions about China'. It asserted that, "The gulf between perceptions and realities about China has always been wide. But like a ditch filled with hardened objects, the Olympics and indeed the Paralympics may be doing more to bridge that divide than any other event in this country's history" (Maher, 2008). Even the IOC

President Jacques Rogge argued that the Olympics would help China and the world better understand each other. He said that, "The Beijing Games has done a lot for the Olympic movement by opening up China to the world" (Lei and Yilei, 2008). In addition, the Chinese Ambassador to the United Kingdom Fu Ying in an article argued that the successful Olympics and Paralympics had worked towards improving China's relations with western countries (*China Daily*, 2008at). There was also an article in *China Daily* which reported that the coverage of China in western media had undergone change after the successful completion of the Beijing Olympics and the Paralympics. As argued by the article, "The Games proved not only the existence of the China model, but also its success" (Hailin, 2008).

China Daily's (2008au) article quoted IOC President Jacques Rogge as saying that the Beijing Olympics as "truly exceptional" and "truly a great success". In addition to this, it was also highlighted that the French President Nicolas Sarkozy congratulated China on successfully completing the Olympics and the Paralympics and that he was looking forward to improved bilateral relations with Beijing. The *China Daily* reported that, "Beijing and Paris have exchanged acknowledgements recently that bilateral relations are back to the normal track after some unhappy episodes earlier this year" (*China Daily*, 2008av).

Summary:

Beijing Olympics was a very important event for the PRC. The Chinese government had worked extremely hard in bidding for the rights to host the games. Olympics have always been politically coloured and this held true in the case of Beijing Olympics as well. The right to host the Olympics was perceived and celebrated as a major win for China and its ultimate arrival on the global scene. The successful execution of the Olympics was directly linked with the global acceptance of Chinese achievements since the reform and opening up introduced in the 1980s. It was an opportunity for China to show to the world what it had achieved and also fight for what it believed a rightful place on the high tables.

Some of the major issues which the Chinese government faced and how these were tackled while undertaking a successful Olympics were clearly stressed by the news which received prominence in the *China Daily*. An analysis of the news highlights that the Chinese government had to undertake measures to handle

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situations both at the domestic as well the foreign policy level. It also showcases that nationalism played a very important role in setting the agenda for the Olympics and how the Chinese government reacted to western criticisms and concerns. The occasion was also used the Chinese power and capacity and thus using nationalism to good effect where it mattered. It also strengthened the argument that the Chinese government undertook a number of steps to execute a successful Olympics as it was essential for the overall global image projection of China. Beijing Olympics were regarded as a significant event in China as its success was to be in sync with China's success.

In order to accomplish this projection, *China Daily* published articles showcasing the efforts which the Chinese government and also the people had put in to host a successful Olympics. The paper also published articles which criticised the foreign press and journalists who were seen to be reporting negatively about Chinese efforts. The Chinese English media undertook targeted reporting in order to counter the global criticism of China especially about air pollution, food safety and also human rights and Tibetan issues. Even the Sudan issue and China's relations with the Sudanese government were discussed and debated. The English media argued that the Chinese government was not responsible for the behaviour of the Sudanese government and it was not the Chinese policy to be involved in the domestic affairs of any country.

Beijing Olympics has been one of the most viewed international events in the recent past. This consolidated a sense of Chinese nationalism and positively motivated the idea that China had finally arrived on the global platform, and it had also managed to give a fitting reply to all its critics.

Chapter VI

MEDIA AND THE EVOLUTION OF AN ACTIVE PUBLIC SPHERE AND DEMOCRACY

Media plays a crucial role in the formation and evolution of an active civil society and public sphere. It is also an important tool for the people to express their opinions and to highlight their problems. Media is a necessary support system for the structure of civil society. Without a free media a strong civil society will not be able to exist. In the context of China's unique political system, this chapter aims at understanding and answering the following questions.

- What are the characteristics of the civil society in China in the post reform period?
- What has been the role of media in the evolution and establishment of civil society in China?
- Has it led to the rise of an active Public Sphere in China? Does the introduction of the Internet have any role to play in the civil society and Public Sphere discourse?
- Has it helped the evolution and establishment of Civil Society and Public Sphere in China?
- Will these developments lead to establishment of electoral democracy in China?
- What has been the response of the Chinese government towards these developments?

The major effort in this chapter is to highlight the significant developments in Chinese civil society as a consequence of reform and opening up. With the introduction of the Internet and new media, there has been a surge in the number of debates surrounding the birth of a civil society in China. It is being termed as *Civil Society with Chinese Characteristics*. Another vital debate on the issue of the Chinese society has been the development of a Public Sphere in China and how the new media, especially the Internet plays a crucial role in its establishment and maintenance. Another essential consideration is how the Internet helps the people's

protests in China and the ways in which it has transformed the nature of mass protests in China. Today the Internet is helping the Chinese people be better organized and coordinated when planning protest against any government policies or programmes. The chapter thus looks into some of the prominent protests in the last few years and also discusses the role of the Internet therein. It attempts to answer the question as to whether these developments would eventually lead to the growth of electoral democracy in China. Finally it looks at how the Chinese government is attempting to control these changes that seem to question its legitimacy and authority to rule.

Civil Society in China:

The presence of an active civil society is regarded as a highly significant factor in measuring the 'vibrancy' of a society and the extent of freedom therein. In the words of Jurgen Habermas, "civil society is made up of more or less spontaneously created associations, organisations and movements, which find, take up, condense and amplify the resonance of social problems in private life, and pass it on to the political realm or public sphere" (Anheier). With the introduction of the Internet, there has been an upsurge in debates regarding the presence of civil society in China. The Internet has been playing an important role in bridging the gap between the people's grievances and government policies. As a result, in a number of incidents the government has been forced to listen to the demands of the people. This has been achieved by Chinese people resorting to online protests and debates. Some scholars like Brook and Frolic have argued that the Chinese state has always worked towards managing the Chinese society. The Chinese state has worked towards organizing the people into units and 'communities' (Brook and Frolic, 1997: 22). They further argue that, "China does not "have" a civil society. However, many of the elements associated with European-derived concepts can be traced to the Chinese past and present. Civil society in China is not a reality but a concept according to them (21) and "after assuming power in 1949 the CPC has worked towards preventing any kind of auto-organization in the Chinese society. It has dominated associational life and disciplined most people to accept Party-led organizations as the appropriate vehicles for mobilizing social action and public opinion" (Brook and Frolic, 1997: 36-37).

The CPC has successfully used the Department of Propaganda (DOP) to fulfill this end. The DOP is one of the four key institutions under the CPC. The other

three institutions are Central Organization Department, International Liaison Department and United Front Work Department. The DOP reports directly to the Politburo (Yongnian and Fook, 2006: 120). However, with the passage of time this department has remained relatively unchanged even though the socio-economic environment in which this organization operates has completely transformed after the reform and opening up (Yongnian and Fook, 2006: 150).

With reform and opening up, Chinese society has undergone major changes and as a result of this there has been some growth in the civil society. As stated by Wang Ming, "China's civil organizations have emerged from the nation's reform and opening, marketization campaigns, and social transformations as a civil society. One that is relatively independent of, interdependent with, intermingled with and yet synergistic with the state and market systems" (2011: 3). He further adds that civil organizations' social orientations reflect that these organizations are "for society" (Ming, 2011: 8). With reform and opening up, all types of civil organizations began to appear in the social and economic sphere (Ming, 2011: 15).

The question that arises therefore is how far the development of civil organizations has helped in transforming Chinese society and politics after more than 30 years. As has been argued by Xiaoguang, Xianying and Heng (2011: 368), "in China under the government's administrative system, China's civil organizations have neither escaped government control nor challenged government's authority. Conversely, civil organizations are providing services, resolving social problems, maintaining social stability, and maintaining government authority".

One thing which sets the Chinese civil society's evolution apart from the Western and European notions of civil society is the fact that "civil society against the state" does not apply to the Chinese situation (Brook and Frolic, 1997: 196). At the same time, evidence suggests that civil society organizations are on the rise in China. As noted by Liu Xiaobo, "the development of unauthorized civil organizations in spite of tight control and strict suppression by the party is striking evidence of the gradual maturation of Chinese society" (Xiobao, 2003: 3). He further adds that this will continue to develop till the time the Chinese government is ready to answer the people's demands for social justice (Xiaobao, 2003: 3).Scholars have noted that the discussion about civil society started within China in the 1990s. Wang Yizhou has

identified a number of factors which have resulted in the rise of this situation. According to him, the factors were the demise of the Soviet Union and the collapse of the Eastern Europe bloc which had encouraged the Chinese leaders and the CPC to start rethinking the relation between State and Society in China, the economic reforms, influence of debates over the term 'civil society' in international academic circles and Taiwan (Yizhou, 2005).

This also calls for an analysis of the general characteristics of a civil society. As identified by Yin-Hong Shi, there are six typical characteristics of a civil society. They are independence and autonomy; immunity from excessive state interference; self-consciousness and insubordinate values; the presence of a strong and economically powerful middle class; alienation from the state's belief system or ideology; and rationality and "civility." He further adds that a society that combines these fundamental characteristics is a developed civil society (Shi, 2004: 226). According to Shi, there are five drivers for why China has an emerging civil society (Shi, 2004: 229).

1. "The economic reforms and the partial change in the pattern of state political conduct accompanying that reform, of which the most fundamental feature is the great retrenchment of the state's power over society and its interference against society.

2. Continuous rapid economic growth, together with vast improvements in material life and education.

3. The diversification and increasing complexity of society, which, according to a study by CASS (the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences), has stratified into ten major levels, from state officials, the civil service, professional intellectuals, and private enterprises and down to ordinary manual workers and peasants. This replaces the previous notion of a much-simplified social division including mainly the proletariat, bourgeoisie, and petty bourgeoisie.

4. The opening to the outside world, in particular the dramatic increase in non-political exchanges with major Western nations in the fields of trade, finance, culture, education, information, travel, and migration, to such an extent that a web of interdependence is developing in some areas.

5. The gradual transformation of social values, of which the fundamental direction is the replacement of "state-standard" values with "society-standard" values, and the prioritization of individual welfare over state power."

The existence of an emerging civil society in China or some form of civil society in China has been summarized by Guobin Yang. He states that this can be concluded on the basis of following three factors:

- Existing forms of social organization have undergone change, new associational forms have appeared, and social organizations in general have proliferated; (White et al. and Davis, Kraus, Naughton and Perry, (eds.) (1995) and, Brook and Frolic (eds.), (1997) Cited by Yang in 2003: 456).
- both social organizations and individual citizens enjoy more autonomy from state power than in the pre-reform decades;[13]
- With the changing functions of the media and the increase in spaces for public discussion, a nascent form of public sphere has emerged.[14]

This point is further elaborated by Zixue Tai. He argues that, "parallel with the rise of the Internet as a social force is the emergence of civil society in China after decades of economic development. Although the specific nature of the Chinese civil society is debatable, the indisputable fact is that economic openness and prosperity in

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[13] For discussions on individual and organizational autonomy, see Wang Shaoguang, 'The politics of private time: changing leisure patterns in urban China', in Davis *et al.*, eds, *Urban Spaces in Contemporary China*, pp. 149–172; Michel Bonnin and Yves Chevrier, 'The intellectual and the state: social dynamics of intellectual autonomy during the post-Mao era', in Brian Hook, ed., *The Individual and the State in China* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 149–174; and Ruth Hayhoe and Ningsha Zhong, 'University autonomy and civil society', in Brook andFrolic, eds, *Civil Society in China*, pp. 99–121. As quoted in Guobin Yang in The Internet and Civil Society in China: a preliminary assessment Journal of Contemporary China (2003), 12(36), August, 453–475, p. 456

[14] On China's nascent public sphere, see Craig Calhoun, 'Tiananmen, television and the public sphere: internationalization of culture and the Beijing spring of 1989', *Public Culture* 2(1), (1989), pp. 54–71. For a symposium on public sphere and civil society in China, see, among others, Philip Huang, ' "Public sphere"/"Civil society" in China? The third realm between state and society', *Modern China* 19(2), (1993), pp. 216–240; and Frederic Wakeman, 'The civil society and public sphere debate: Western reflections on Chinese political culture', *Modern China* 19(2), (1993), pp. 108–137. On changing functions of the media, see Hong Liu, 'Profit or ideology? The Chinese press between party and market'; and Daniel Lynch, *After the Propaganda State: Media, Politics and 'Thought Work' in Reformed China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999). As quoted in Guobin Yang in The Internet and Civil Society in China: a preliminary assessment Journal of Contemporary China (2003), 12(36), August, 453–475, p. 456

China's reform era have led to the mushrooming of social organizations and social groups that serve a variety of purposes and functions. In the meantime, commercialization of the media industry has fostered a brand new audience–media relationship and has significantly expanded the public sphere that is so essential to the growth of civil society" (Tai, 2006:xix-xx).

Chinese Government and Civil Society in China:

Civil society can be regarded as the space where the government, the non-profit sector, the non-government and the commercial sector interact with each other (Ye, 2003: 21). The Chinese government has worked consistently and relentlessly towards controlling the existing spheres of discussion and people's organization. As elaborated by Kerry Brown, "The Communist Party of China has very effectively destroyed all potential sources of organized opposition". He further adds that, "Civil society is growing increasingly important, with government withdrawing from large areas of activity, allowing groups to be active on the environment, care of the elderly and the poor and educational provision. In the next five years, however, the Communist party and the government will come under increasing pressure to give civil society groups proper legal status, rather than continuing with the complex and ambiguous arrangements that exist at the moment" (Brown, 2011).

In the last decade there has been a consistent increase in the number of civil society organizations in China. Nevertheless, since a majority of them came into existence only in the 1980s, they have not had enough time to mature and take their respective forms. As most of them have been formed by the people, they still have a number of issues and problems to solve. The most pertinent in this regard is the institutional environment in China (Keping, 2009: 74-75).

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) form a major part of the existing civil society in China. In 2014, around 500,000 NGOs were registered with the Chinese state while 1.5 million more are unregistered (The Economist, 2014). To be considered an NGO in China, the organization needs to be registered under the Ministry of Civil Affairs (Ye, 2003).The official term for an NGO in China is "popular organization" (Lu, 2005: 1). They are also called "social organizations," "non-profit organizations," "nongovernmental organizations," or "mass organizations" (Ye, 2003: 4). One of the major achievements of the NGOs in China

was the successful organization of the first charity fair in Shenzhen in 2012 and it was also hosted by the Ministry of Civil Affairs (MOCA) and the local Shenzhen government (Guo, Xu, Horton Smith and Zhang, 2012).

While discussing the civil society in China, Yu states that, "Civil society itself is vibrant and active but weakened by deep cleavages due to the private barriers, state interference and enlarging social inequality: urban-rural, north-south, class, wealth, education, age, ethnics, religion and relationship to power-structure" (Yu, 2007: 4). The Chinese organizations are also not very comfortable being too proactive (Gough, 2004: 5).

Another factor which has prevented the growth of NGOs and civil society to its full potential is the preventive steps undertaken by the Chinese government. The Chinese government clearly stops any organization from becoming too big or active as it is constantly worried about its potential to challenge the authority of the CPC, especially if it feels that the said organization has a political leaning (Lu, 2005: 2). However it is the Chinese government which has played a very crucial role in the development of civil society. It would not be wrong to argue that the Chinese government has encouraged the role of the NGOs as well as civil society in areas where the state is incapable to extend support. NGO's have complimented the existing role played by the Chinese State and help in maintaining stability in society (Wacker, 2012). However, all has not been smooth with respect to the Chinese government's acceptance of the NGOs. Even though the Chinese government encouraged the establishment of NGOs there have been incidences which have strengthened their mistrust towards them. One of the major factors which strengthen the notion of mistrust of the Chinese government towards the civil society and NGOs is the role played by such organizations during the colour revolutions in the former Soviet Union (Wacker, 2012). Thus it is no surprise that China has adopted a, "two-track development process: groups working to address under-provision of social services and environmental issues have enjoyed a more relaxed operating space while groups promoting religious and political rights remain strictly off-limits" (Bartholomew, n.d.).

Free media is also an essential feature for civil society. As argued by Yu, in the context of China, "The transformation of media to a great extend enlarges the

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public sphere, influences political culture and power structures, provides the public with information to qualify for democratic participation and favours development of both social contentions and civil society during the process of mobilisation and interrelated framework" (Yu, 2007: 26).

Some other scholars like Timothy Cheeks are of the opinion that the civil society in China can be described as a 'directed society'. The reason for this is that the manner functioning of Chinese civil society highly depends on the propaganda machinery of the CPC. In other words, it is the CPC which decides the form which the Chinese civil society undertakes at any given time (Cheek, 2012:157). Jessica Teets argues that the characteristic of the Chinese civil society is one which is 'vigorous' as well as 'controlled'. She posits that, "local government's dual, and often conflicting, role of promoting economic development while maintaining social stability generates the simultaneous cooperation with and control of civil society represented in divergent news headlines about civil society in China" (Teets, 2012: 83-84).

It would not be wrong and far-fetched to term the existing civil society in China as *Civil Society with Chinese Characteristics*. The Chinese government has been adapting and changing with emergent developments. Even though civil society in China does not fulfill the criteria set by the Western definitions of civil society, it does meet a number of requirements. Today the civil society organizations in China are becoming an important bridge between the government and the people (Yu, 1999: 15). The Chinese government is also encouraging some form of civil organizations as in the post reform era the government has withdrawn its presence from a number of sectors of the Chinese society. The NGOs and other non-profit organizations are successfully filling this gap. However, the Chinese government is not comfortable with any NGO that displays political leanings. They accept the NGOs' presence and thus let the civil society function only up to the degree where it helps in promoting peace and stability and does not question the credibility of the CPC.

Democracy and China:

Before discussing the idea of democracy and media in China, a primer on what constitutes democracy is useful. The general and universally accepted definition of 'democracy' is "government by the people". In the words of Yu Keping, "In this sense, "democracy" is a continuum rather than a dichotomy" (Keping).What forms

the essence of democracy is that the government in power should be held responsible for its actions by the people. People should have access to institutions which can make the government accountable. There should be proper separation of power and people should play a crucial role in the overall political process. However, the Chinese leaders have always insisted that they are capable of evolving their own unique democratic process and there is no need for China to follow the western idea of democracy. They should have a democratic model which suits the needs of the Chinese people. (Yu makes similar argument). Yu further argues that the CPC proposes four types of democracies in China. They are democratic election, democratic decision-making, democratic management, and democratic supervision. However the CPC does not adhere to the idea of a multi-party democracy (Yu).

This line of argument is further supported by the central leadership as well. In 2009 National People's Congress Chairman Wu Bangguo had announced that China will never follow the path of multi-party democracy and it will never have independent judiciary. He further stated that elections will continue to be between candidates approved by the central leadership (Associated Press, 2009).

Charter 08

The most prominent recent call for democracy in China has been through Charter 08. This document calls for greater democratic reforms and also better Human Rights in China. Liu Xiaobo is the main drafter of this Charter. However, this draft did not manage to gain major leverage and Liu was sentenced to 11 years in prison in 2009 (Chongyi, 2010). The inspiration for Charter 08 is said to have come from Charter 77, a political document written in Czechoslovakia when it was under Soviet Union's influence (Bristow, 2010). The Charter 08 calls for the end of the One Party authoritarian government in China and the establishment of electoral democracy and also the rule of law (Adams, 2009). The document is divided into three parts. The first part discusses the recent Chinese history, the second part deals with the author's fundamental principles while the third part highlights a list of suggestions for future reforms (Bristow, 2010). The Charter 08 calls for the following changes[15]:

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[15] Full text of Charter 08 available at http://www.politica-china.org/imxd/noticias/doc/1231502360charter_08_Engligh.pdf accessed on April 08, 2016

- Constitutional Amendment

- Separation and Balance of Power

- Democratization of the Law Making Process

- Independence of the Judiciary

- Public use of Public Institutions

- Human Rights Protection

- Election of Public Officials

- Urban and Rural Equality

- Freedom of Association

- Freedom of Assembly

- Freedom of Expression

- Freedom of Religion

- Citizen Education

- Property Protection

- Fiscal Reforms

- Social Security

- Environmental Protection

- Federal Republic

- Transitional Justice

In the words of Sampson, Charter 08 is "one of the boldest calls for change to have emerged since the bloodshed of 1989 all but silenced dissent in China" (Sampson, 2009). In the words of He Weifang, a prominent law professor, "the organised nature of the petition had frightened officials" (Foster, 2009).The call for democracy and change by Charter 08 has clearly worried the Chinese officials. It has been first such organized call for change in the overall political structure of China since the Tiananmen Square Crackdown of 1989. Even the Dalai Lama expressed his support for Charter 08 on December 12, 2008. He wrote a letter saying, "a harmonious society can only come into being when there is trust among the people, freedom from fear, freedom of expression, rule of law, justice, and equality" (Link, 2009).

Many scholars have been arguing that this movement was the biggest protest against the CPC since the 1989 Tiananmen Square demonstrations and it was no

surprise that the Chinese government reacted sternly to the calls of democracy. The government took a hard-hitting approach towards the promoters of Charter 08. The Chinese government undertook harsh measures and jailed some of the supporters of Charter 08 while around 70 of the supporters were questioned by the police (Stanway, 2009). And, it came as no surprise that the Chinese government blocked the websites of BBC, CNN and Norwegian state broadcaster NRK a day before the announcement of the Nobel Prize for Liu Xiaobo (Dowell, 2010). The Chinese government had also blocked all searches for Liu on the Internet (Ramzy, 2010). According to Jiang Yu, a Chinese Foreign Ministry official, "The decision of the Norwegian Nobel Committee does not represent the wish of the majority of the people in the world, particularly that of the developing countries" (CNN, 2010). The Chinese Foreign Ministry also issued a statement arguing that, "We resolutely oppose any country or any person using the Nobel Peace Prize to interfere with China's internal affairs or infringe upon China's legal sovereignty" (BBC, 2010). To further show their discontent against Liu, *China Daily* published an article on October 27, 2010, in which it describes Liu as a criminal, foreign agent and a selfish man working for money with no respect for the Chinese State (*China Daily*, 2010).

Such actions of the Chinese government like after the publication of Charter 08 illustrate its control over the Chinese media. It further strengthens the idea that even today the Chinese government can manipulate information for its own agenda. The Chinese government successfully used the Chinese English media as well as the Internet to promote its propaganda, reinforcing the argument that the Chinese media is still struggling to be free. However, even though the government attempted to undertake full control and ban the news about the Nobel prize, some information did filter into China, which people responded to with happiness because 'some Chinese had won the prize', even though they were not aware of who Liu Xiaobo actually was.

Media and Democracy:

Media freedom is regarded as a key element for the promotion of any democratic value. According to Chuan, "it is an accepted fact that mass media should serve, promote and participate in democracy, even though it is also seen that media can both promote and undermine democracy" (Lee, 2001: 2). On the other hand Huang and Yu argue that, "the dynamic processes of China's reforms and the

imbalance in development between politics and the remaining sectors of the society (primarily economy) indicate that China is undertaking its own transitional course, a course likely to zigzag in its long march towards democratization. This process is delicate and slow and can include a period of neo-authoritarian rule" (Huang and Yu, 1997: 314).The mutable dynamics within China is giving rise to new systems. As stated by Susan Shirk, "even partially relinquishing control of the mass media transforms the strategic interaction between rulers and the public in an authoritarian political system like China. There is an increase in the level of information available to people in China today" (Shirk, 2011: 5).

The rise of media and especially investigative reporting has been described by Jingrong Tong. She states that, "investigative journalism is trying to deviate from the reporting orbit set by the ruling Party and to seek more journalistic autonomy. It is also posing increasing threat to the local authorities" (Tong, 2011: 54).

Internet and Democracy in China:

The introduction of the Internet in China has been perceived as a path breaking development which will eventually transform the political and social landscape of China. As stated by Bremmer, "some scholars have argued that the freedom that comes with the Internet will inevitably democratize China. Once Chinese people read about the freedoms of other, they will want the same for themselves. The tools of modern communications will reveal to Chinese citizens the political freedoms they do not have and provide the means to demand them" (Bremmer, 2010: 88). This feeling or understanding regarding where the introduction of Internet is associated with freedom and democracy is termed as "cyber-utopianism" by Susan Blum (Blum, 2012: 174).

The number of people having access to the Internet in 2000 was about 12.3 million, which constituted less than 1 percent of the Chinese population. As was argued by Lethbridge "if democratization is going to come to China via the Internet, the first step will be to bring Internet connections to a majority of Chinese citizens" (Lethbridge). However, this number has been on the rise. By the end of 2015, the number of Internet users in China had neared 688 million (Lee, 2016). This is a major jump within a decade and when compared to the Chinese population of 1.3 billion, people this number does not appear to be very small. China today is one of the biggest

Internet societies in the world. As stated by Guobin Yang, "In China's case, the Internet can better meet people's need for personal expression and public participation than conventional media can" (Yang, 2003: 418). This argument is further strengthened by Wang Ming when he argues that, "there has been an increase in the type of Internet groups (which have been formed since the introduction of Internet) and they are becoming an indisputable force influencing social life and even political life" (Ming, 2011: 33).Some scholars believe that as the Internet is inherently a free technology, it will boost the cause of democratic movement in China. They have even argued that the spread of Internet will lead to the destabilizing of the rule of the Chinese Communist Party (Kalathil, 2003: 489-501). However, this has not come to hold water within the Chinese society. Though the number of Chinese people who have access to Internet and use the Internet as a means to disseminate information has consistently expanded, the level of control exercised by the government has also strengthened.

By the late 1990s, the Chinese government had to shift its focus from the print media to Internet and work towards controlling the flow of ideas and political content on these channels.[16]As discussed previously, Chinese government uses extensive filtering monitoring mechanisms to oversee what is said and written online by Chinese nationals. It controls what it does not like and allows to flourish what helps promote its ideologies.[17] This argument is further reinforced by Sheng Ding when he claims that the Chinese government was one of the first to resort to Internet censorship. The Chinese censorship method has also proved to be one of the most "pervasive and sophisticated systems" (Ding, 2012: 392).As argued by Will Hutton, the Chinese government spends approximately 800 million dollars annually on screening the Internet and blocking websites that contain words like 'democracy' and 'Tiananmen' (Palfreym Jr., 2005). In addition to this, the Chinese government also employs 'Internet police' (estimated at 30,000–40,000 members) working under the Ministry of Public Security (MPS) in order to maintain control over this channel. As

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[16] For three book-length treatments of social organizations in reform-era China, see White et al., In Search of Civil Society; Deborah S. Davis, Richard Kraus, Barry Naughton and Elizabeth Perry, eds, Urban Spaces in Contemporary China (Washington, DC and New York: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Cambridge University Press, 1995); and Timothy Brook and B. Michael Frolic, eds, Civil Society in China (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997). As quoted by Guobin Yang in The Internet and Civil Society in China: a preliminary assessment Journal of Contemporary China (2003), 12(36), August, 453–475, p. 456

[17]for more see Tablot (2010).

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per some sources, administrative measures are also used to ensure the implementation of regulations (Ming, 2011: 40). Another factor behind this 'relentless' control over the Internet by the CPC is due to the fact that from the very beginning, the Internet has been viewed as a driving force for China's national economic development and not as a medium for citizens' civil participation and democratization (Ming, 2011: 41).

The White Paper on Internet in China (2010) states,

"The Chinese government encourages and supports the development of Internet news communication undertakings, provides the public with a full range of news, and at the same time guarantees the citizens' freedom of speech on the Internet as well as the public's right to know, to participate, to be heard and to oversee in accordance with the law. Chinese citizens fully enjoy freedom of speech on the Internet" (The Internet in China, 2010). However, it further adds that "laws and regulations clearly prohibit the spread of information that contains contents subverting state power, undermining national unity, infringing upon national honor and interests, inciting ethnic hatred and secession, advocating heresy, pornography, violence, terror and other information that infringes upon the legitimate rights and interests of others. According to these regulations, basic telecommunication business operators and Internet information service providers shall establish Internet security management systems and utilize technical measures to prevent the transmission of all types of illegal information".

In addition to this, the Chinese government official website www.gov.cnalso opened a Microblog and a Wechat account in October 2013. This platform is to be used to publish important information and other news (*China Daily*, 2013).

This clearly indicates that the Chinese government has drawn its redlines on what is and is not acceptable to be shared on the internet in China. It is getting more worried about the development of the Internet and the spread of information and news and is willing to see conspiracy in everything that is even remotely different from its own narrative. As debated by Mu Chunshan, "China's Internet censorship technology is becoming more sophisticated and the government's wish to maintain domestic stability is becoming more pronounced. Clearly, China's desire to prevent its citizens being exposed to alternative views is getting stronger" (Mu, 2011). This has been further stressed by Guobin Yang when he contends that, the internet in China has played a crucial role in building and sustaining the civil society as well as the public sphere. The internet also plays a very important role in managing the public

grievances and protests. It has helped in the formation of a virtual society which helps in the ongoing debates and discussions. (Yang, 2003: 454). He further states that, "China's users rely heavily on the Internet for personal expression and interpersonal communication. This point should be kept in mind in discussing the impact of the Internet on Chinese civil society" (Yang, 2003: 458). The Internet, like the printing press, is used for 'media production' and also gives space to the masses to discuss and debate a number of different and contradictory ideas (Shirky, 2010).

An Internet that is highly open and networked makes the transfer of information and communication swift. It also helps in conveying information to the entire audience nearly at once. Thus, this makes it tougher for the Chinese government to control the flow and "protect the people from Western cultural influences in both political as well as moral terms". What is worrisome for the Chinese government is that the Internet allows for diversity of opinion without stigma and control. It also gives space for helping dissident voices know that they are not alone in the wilderness and that there are other likeminded people who think on similar lines. It helps people know that divergence is not necessarily dissent and this is exactly the feeling that Chinese state does not like as the ghosts of 1989 recur. Thus it is obvious as to why the Chinese state is working hard to control these effects of the Internet on its people.

Internet and People's Movement:

The nature of Internet has also altered the way the people protest in the Chinese society today. It has also transformed the issues on which the people are protesting and demonstrating. According to Guobin Yang, "compared to the students' movement in 1989, where people had large scale gatherings, today's activists work on special issues, like calling for the release of a particular person or dealing with corruption or environmental pollution through creative means. Much of this is happening on the Internet with a lot of impact" (Lee, 2001: 66). This is also possible through the Internet since it, "reduces the barriers of geographical and social locations to voluntary associational life" (Yang, 2003: 466). Pan argues that, "(...)theInternet has acted again and again as a catalyst that amplifies voices and accelerates events (Pan, 2008: 323).It has also been claimed that post-1989, the primary focus of the activism seen on Internet is not on political reforms but on issues related to citizenship

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rights, cultural values, and social justice. However, even though this aspect accounts for a very small fraction of the Internet use in China, "it still constitutes a strong and emerging social force that is contributing to social change, a force that the Chinese state cannot afford to ignore" (Yang, 2009).

In addition, the Chinese government has also realized that its attempt to gain full control over the Internet will not always work. This was most prominently demonstrated during the 2009 ethnic riots in Xinjiang, where Uyghurs used social networks and microblogs to spread the news (Schmidt and Cohen, 2010: 80-81).Thus the Chinese people are using the Internet to organize and to protest. Also as a consequence, internet control in China is at its hardest in Xinjiang.

New Media and Public Sphere in China:

These changes led to the debate whether a public sphere now does exist in China. As the Chinese have always attempted to put 'Chinese characteristics' to things, one can assert that today the public sphere exists primarily in the virtual sphere. The basic understanding of the term 'Public Sphere' as defined by Jurgen Habermas "connoted an ideal of unrestricted rational discussion of public matter" which in turn helps in the formation of public opinion (Fraser, 1990: 56-80).

With an increase in the number of publications and the decline in the monopoly of the CPC sponsored publications, there has been more free space for discussion and analytical reporting. In addition to this, the introduction of the Internet has transformed the speed with which information is available to the Chinese people besides bringing more people in the ambit of information technology. The government decides the issues and the extent to which these issues can be left unrestricted for the people to have discussions on.

However, as discussed above, there has been a major progress wherein the people are attempting to push issues which affect their day to day lives. This is a welcome change. Meanwhile, journalists are also becoming increasingly skilful at agenda setting for public discourse while striking a balance between political survival and their professional ideals (Gang and Bandurski, 2011: 71). In the last few years most of the protests related to the environment and increasing pollution has been addressed by the journalists. In a number of these cases the government had to withdraw its plans and thus give in to the demands of the people. There are also cases

where people give information to the journalists for further research and reportage on issues ranging from plans to cheat at examinations to police brutality" (Burg, 2003: 807).

According to Bandurski and Hala, "the vantage point of party leaders' "supervision by public opinion" consists of using the media as a tool to expose corruption and other crimes at the local and regional levels. But with the development of more commercial and professional media, "supervision of public opinion" came to be associated with the media's right to monitor officials on the public's behalf. This strategy came closer to investigative journalism and other forms of reporting and thus a step closer to the freedom of speech" (Bandurski and Hala, 2010: 31). This argument is further explained by Jingrong Tong. She argues that, "the practice of investigative journalism in China has achieved legitimacy as a new genre of journalism, which facilitates the breaking down of the dominance of party journalism. It has also changed the Chinese journalists' perception of their occupation and they have become more professional" (Tong, 2011: 46-48). She further maintains that, "Chinese journalists have initiated many investigations into taboo subjects even though they were against the will of the party. As a result, investigative journalism in China has started to gradually become a threat" (Tong, 2011: 52).

According to Fong Tak-ho, "over the past two years, a few righteous people who have stepped up to the plate to confront the party's pressure and suppression of dissenting voices have successfully employed the Internet as their most powerful tool to unearth the truth covered up by authorities, help provide justice to the wrongly accused, and put the guilty in jail" (Tak-ho, 2004).This process has been supplemented with the help of Internet and other new communication technologies. For the Chinese people it is becoming easier to discuss and debate over issues which were considered taboo earlier, like accountability of lower rank officials. For instance, where the local officials make it difficult for news to be reported in one province, it generally finds audience in other provinces. With the help of the Internet, it is also becoming easier for people to disseminate information across the country.

No doubt journalists know that the government only lets them pursue news which does not directly question the sanctity and authority of the central leadership. This is still sacrosanct and outside the purview of media debates. As a result, the

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media now has two reporting authorities 'the people and the party' (Burgh, 2003: 807). According to Paul Mooney, Chinese intellectuals and journalists warn that this should not be mistaken as a move toward true freedom of expression. They posted that Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao would not sanction any reform that would undermine the party's - and their own – authority (Mooney, 2004).

This new space to debate and discuss some aspects of the society and politics can be regarded as a form of 'public sphere' in China. This space is also becoming powerful as the CPC now makes an effort to understand what the debates are. The party also wants to accommodate the demands of the people while they formulate policies. The role of the Internet for the CPC has been further elaborated by Schmidt and Cohen when they state that, "the regime's goals are clear: to control the Internet and to use technology to build its political and economic power" (Schmidt and Cohen, 2010: 80).They further argue that, "the actions undertaken by the Chinese government are a part of the strategy to ensure that the technology revolution extends, rather than destroys, the one-party state and its value system" (Schmidt and Cohen, 2010: 80).

According to Burge, "when the Chinese journalists appear to be taking up the cudgels on behalf of some group which is not part of the political establishment, this can be interpreted as the emergence of a nascent discourse of rights but it does not necessarily mean that the Chinese accept…notions of democracy" (Burgh, 2003: 807). However, as Yang argues, "civil society and online activism are mutually constitutive under the conditions of complex interdependence in contemporary China. Civil society generates online activism while contention activates civil society and boosts its development. The mutual constitution of online activism and civil society reveals a trajectory of co-evolution" (Yang, 2003: 405-422). Veg adds to this discussion by asserting that, "the privatization of the economy, technical innovations on the Internet, and the sinophone sphere of debate have combined to create new spaces for informed discussion of topics that are officially banned or at least discouraged in China" (Veg, 2015: 209).

Protests as a form of Public Sphere:

In any active civil society protests play an important role in extending the demands of the people to the government. Recent reports have showcased that there has been a sustained increase in the number of protests which the Chinese government

is facing each year. As noted by Jianrong Yu, a researcher at the CASS, 'the number of mass incidents increased manifold from 8,709 in 1993 to 87,000 in 2005' (Ren, 2009: 12). According to some reports, China witnessed an average of 500 protests per day. In the year 2010, it faced a total of 180,000 protests and it is accepted that the number might be on an increase since then (Fisher, 2012). According to the Pew Survey of April - May 2015, "About a third of Chinese are worried about environmental damage, with 35% saying air pollution is a very big problem and 34% saying the same about water pollution. Three-in-ten or more cite the gap between the rich and poor, safety of food and rising prices as top concerns" (Wike and Parker, 2015). The Media has come to play a significant role in the success of these protests, especially the introduction of new communication technologies. In the words of Xi Chen, "…popular contention has become a main form of interest articulation for social groups that suffered as a result of reform era government policies. While the accommodation of social protests has contributed to authoritarian resilience in China, it has also exposed fundamental weaknesses in the Chinese political system" (Chen, 2012).

In the past few years there have been a number of incidents where the state media was not allowed to report about the growing protests. However, the Internet has managed to expose these developments and helped the news to spread, thereby helping the protestors. The following section will discuss some of the important protests which the Chinese society faced and how the media played an important role in helping the cause of the protestors and also forced the government to react to the concerns of the people.

SARS Episode:

The SARS epidemic was one of the first major incidents which highlighted the role played by the Chinese media in reporting and conducting investigations. The initial reaction of the Chinese government towards this crisis was predictable. The government refused to accept that there was any problem. As a result, the virus spread rapidly since there was no awareness campaign on how to avoid it. This approach greatly affected the Chinese economy. According to some reports, the Chinese government lost around 400 billion RMB ($48 billion) (Yu). The major turning point in the government's approach was brought about due to the media's reporting. The

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Chinese media reported in April that the situation was not as rosy as the government promised (Xu and Lei, 2003).

Zhejiang Railway Accident:

In July 2011, there was a major train accident in the Zhejiang province in China in which around 33 people died and 190 were injured (Xinhua, 2011). As was expected, the initial reaction of the PRC was to control information about the accident, primarily because of the fact that it would affect peace and stability within the society and would lead to anti-Party feelings. However, some pictures and videos were leaked online and this resulted in a major public outcry, mainly on the social media. As a result, the CPC had to respond to public pressure and undertake a 'swift, open and transparent' investigation of the problem (Global Times, 2011)—something unprecedented in communist China. The government had to undertake this action primarily because it realized that it was futile to control the sentiments of the people and it was too late to try and cover-up the whole incident, though it did attempt to do so initially. The call for investigation and the distribution of compensation showed that the CPC realized that it may be detrimental for it to take the people's emotions for granted. This incident is a clear indication of a situation where new communication technologies (cell phones and Internet) played a major role in information sharing and opinion formation and forcing the Party to take people's wishes into consideration.

The Wukan 'Uprising':

Land rights, propriety and compensation has always been a matter of contention in China. In addition, rapid development and industrialisation has created increasing competition for land usage and rights of traditional users. This is increasing the level of discontent among the people towards the Party as the compensation is usually low and the rehabilitation is inadequate. This is also an area where large amounts of corruption takes place, especially at provincial and county or city levels. In a recent incident in September 2011, villagers of Wukan, in southern Guangdong, protested against the government's decision to sell a village-owned pig farm. People took to roads to protest (Jacobs, 2011). However, the government decided to use force in spite of the promise of negotiation, and one butcher, Mr Xue Jinbo (who was a protester and also a part of the negotiating team on behalf of the villagers), was

apparently killed in custody. This further agitated the people and they forced the authorities out of the town for about two weeks. Thus, it was a major defeat for the CPC as it lost its authority and control over this town (First World Post, 2011). The CPC has always been too conscious of its image and this incident greatly harmed the CPC's international face. It brought to the forefront the fact that there was a consistent increase in the level of anger among the Chinese people.

However, the CPC was able to gain control and called for fresh elections for local government (*China Daily*, 2012). Such incidents have been on the rise since China adopted its policy of economic reform and opening up. After this incident however, the CPC promised to look into the problem and formulate a better policy of land acquisition, as announced by Xu Shaoshi, China's Minister of Land and Resources (*China Daily*, 2012a). Meanwhile, the call for elections has also led to a lot of debate on the Internet in China regarding whether this will pave the way for democracy eventually. The news about the rebellion had reached the people through twitter and other communication tools (China Real Time Report, 2012). The growth of new communication technologies has come to play an important role in helping the people organize demonstrations in a society where information is heavily controlled and monitored.

In June 2011, there were protests by people in Taizhou, Zhejiang province. This row between the people and the authorities was also on the issue of compensation (The Guardian, 2011). According to reports, the argument was over the compensation amount to be paid by a petrol pump owner to the villagers. In a similar incident in the same month, there were protests in Lichuan, in the central province of Hubei. This was also based on land acquisition and the death of a local city council member in police custody (BBC, 2011).

Protests against Environmental Degradation:

In the last few years, environmental degradation has become an important cause of concern for the Chinese people. This distresses the people directly as their livelihood and other income sources get affected and demands for quality of life in China's metropolis gets louder. There is also an increase in the level of health issues which the Chinese people are facing as a result of increase in pollution, especially due to contact with toxic waste.

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In 2011, China witnessed a number of protests based on the environmental issue. There has been an increase in the pollution levels especially as the government presses on with its agenda of industrialization for increasing economic growth. Most of them have been seen to flout environmental concerns and rules as profit has been the primary driving factor. The gravity of the situation can be gauged by the fact that China has twenty of the world's thirty most polluted cities while 90 per cent of China's rivers and lakes are also polluted (Cary, 2012). The situation is primarily getting worse because the provisional and lower-level Party members push for more profit, without paying adequate attention to the environmental effects, as monetary gains are necessary for their promotion in the Party hierarchy. The following are some examples of protests by the people because of environment issues:

In August 2011, there were protests in the city of Dalian against a chemical plant which manufactured paraxylene (PX), a crucial ingredient in the production of polyester. PX is considered to be highly dangerous if absorbed through skin or inhaled (The Economist, 2014). The government had to heed the call of the people and shut down the plant. The reports suggested that the decision of the Party to go with the call of the people and shut the factory may highlight the increasing influence of the Internet (Bradsher, 2011). In September 2011, there were demonstrations by people outside a solar plant in Zhejiang province which was contaminating water of a nearby river. Five hundred people demonstrated outside the plant (LaFraniere, 2011). In December 2011, there were complaints in the southern Chinese city of Haimen against a solar power plant on concerns related to pollution and environmental degradation. The government had to postpone the construction plan (Spector, 2011).

Jasmine Revolution:

2011 witnessed a wave of protests around the Arab world against government policies and authoritarian regimes. The popular term used to describe these developments is the 'Jasmine Revolution 'which began in Tunisia. Most of the issues which the Arab people protested against were inequality, inflation, and bad governance. The masses organized and communicated about the protests with the help of the Internet and cell phones. The role of the social media and the Internet was very prominent, particularly because, when the official channels of news and information were controlled and censored by the government, people got their information through

the social media. As argued by Sam Gustin, even though the revolution was not started by facebook and other social media tools, "these tools did speed up the process by helping to organize the revolutionaries, transmit their message to the world and galvanize international support" (Gustin, 2011). Some articles also argue that, "The grassroots demonstrations that ousted Tunisian strongman Zine el Abidine Ben Ali were fuelled by a young, Internet-savvy generation of bloggers" (VOA News, 2011). The young and tech-savvy people were the primary driving force behind the Jasmine Revolution.

The news of these developments worried the Chinese government. The CPC was aware that there is an increasing level of discontent amongst the masses and it was worried that a similar level of movement within China could prove to be significantly detrimental to the party's interests, something which the Party may not be able to control as the movement would already have a fertile base. As the Jasmine movement swept the Arab World, similar calls were made within China. There was increased number of security forces deployed after an anonymous call for protests in Beijing. According to reports, 'more than a dozen other journalists who went to this part of Beijing to cover that event faced harassment, including being manhandled, pushed, detained and delayed by uniformed police and others' (Branigan, 2011). There are also media reports which suggest that the CPC controlled Internet access and search in order to control the inflow of information about the Jasmine Revolution (Long, 2011). Media control became all the more apparent during the 'Jasmine Revolution'. The Chinese authorities tightened control over Internet searches. The government had banned words like "Tunisia, Jasmine and Egypt" (Richburg, 2011). Even the cell phone text services provided by China mobile were blocked under the pretext of providing an upgrade in services (Chang, 2011). This clearly highlighted the fact that the Chinese government was scared that a similar movement may start within their own country and they might not be able to manage it. It should not be a surprise that as per reports, the Chinese government had blocked the search of the word "freedom" since 2010 (The New York Times, 2012).

In the past few years Weibo has come to play a vital role in showcasing the strengthening of the Internet's role. Weibo is considered as a platform for 'questioning the policies and steps undertaken by the Chinese government' (Parello-Plesner, 2012). Weibo can be called public sphere with Chinese characteristics. There

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are also reports which indicate that the average Internet user in China spends about 40 percent of his/her time on social media (Chiu, Ip and Silverman, 2012). However, it would be far-fetched to conclude that this medium is 'completely' free, keeping in view the extent to which the Chinese government undertakes media control. As has been argued by Sheng Ding, "in this era of globalization and civic activism, multiple media outlets have challenged the government's efforts for omnipresent social control and media censorship" (Ding, 2013).

Southern Weekly Protests:

January 2013 saw another important development with regard to media freedom in China. The centre of attention was the Guangzhou based *Southern Weekly* over the censorship of an editorial. According to reports, journalists at the *Southern Weekly* paper claimed that an editorial titled "China's dream, the dream of constitutionalism" (Ng, 2013) calling for political reform was censored by and re-written as a tribute to Communist Party rule" (Hunt and Xu, 2013). Further reports indicate that approximately 100 staff of the paper went on strike and protested against the action. It was also stated that some protesters carried banners that read "We want press freedom, constitutionalism and democracy" (BBC, 2013). It would not be completely wrong to indicate that this is the first such incident after the Tiananmen Square Crackdown of 1989 where journalists had overtly protested against the suppression of media freedom. In addition to this, the editor of *The Beijing News* had also resigned, protesting against the editorial that the Party had asked the newspapers to publish. In the end, only a limited number of newspapers printed the editorial (Li and Yi, 2013).It is believed that the protests came to an end after some sort of a 'deal' was reached between the newspaper and the government. It was stated that the level of censorship over the paper will be 'relaxed' (Kaiman, 2013). Scholars like David Cohen assert that it appears that President Xi was comfortable with the social media reporting on corruption issues (Cohen, 2013).

Guangdong Protest

March 2014 witnessed very serious protests against the construction of a chemical plant that was supposed to manufacture paraxylene (PX). Around 1000 people participated in the demonstrations against the setting up of the PX plant. Such incidents add to the arguments that there has been almost a 30 percent increase in

protests related to environmental concerns every year in China (Duggan, 2014). As a response to this, the Chinese Premier Li Keqiang said in March 2014 that, "We shall resolutely declare war against pollution as we declared war against poverty" (Smart, 2014). Such large number of protests forced the Chinese Government to amend its Environmental Law in 2014 after 25 years since it was adopted in 1989 (Bloomberg, 2014). The revised law came into effect on January 1, 2015. According to the new revised law, "economic and social development should be coordinated with environmental protection and encourages studies on the impact environmental quality causes on public health, urging prevention and control of pollution-related diseases" (Xinhua, 2014).

Tianjin Blasts

2015 witnessed a major protest in August after blasts at a chemical warehouse in the city of Tianjin, which killed around 173 people (The Guardian, 2015). Of the dead, 88 were fire-fighters (The Slate, 2015). There were reports which stated that the blast was visible from space (Tran, 2015). A number of norms had been flouted by this warehouse which was owned by Ruihai International Logistics. It was just 500 metres away from residential areas and was also storing quantities that were way more than the permissible limit (BBC, 2015). Such issues raised the basic question of negligence and corruption on the part of the officials. The government is investigated 11 officials and also arrested 12 others (Yahoo, 2015). These incidents add to the increasing pollution and contamination of air, land and water resources and also question the responsibility of the government with respect to people's lives and health vis-à-vis profit.

These protests highlight the fact that the people are wary of the way the CPC has been undertaking economic policies but also that people are more aware of their environment and of the side effects of unchecked growth. The sheer neglect for the health and life of the people has damaged the image of the Party as the party of the people. Even though the protests are generally staged against the local and provisional-level party officials for inadequate implementation of pollution control laws and norms, there is growing discontent among the masses which the top leadership will not be able to ignore.

There has been a change in the way the Chinese government reacts to the demands of the people today. In the words of Pan, "In the years since, it has demonstrated its resilience again and again, nimbly adapting to new challenges and reasserting itself as a rising world power" (Pan, 2008: 325).This clearly shows that the CPC is worried about its authority and knows that there is a large section of population that is not very happy with the government's policies. It is aware that accountability needs to be restored and that the people are using internet and social media for more accountable and humane governance. These events also highlight the fact that the Chinese citizens are using the Internet and other media tools for expressing their grievances with respect to government policies. In a number of these cases, the Chinese government had to withdraw or change its stance due to public opinion expressed through the media outlets. Pan further adds that, "Widespread access to the Internet has opened up new channels for citizens to obtain news and information, to express themselves and to build civil society (Pan, 2008: 321).As argued by Scotton and Hachten, "the reality of media communication in China today is that, even though the government owns the media, modern communication, newspapers and broadcasting plus the Internet, emails, cell phones, and communication satellites prevent the government from effectively controlling the vast flow of information and diversion coursing through the heads (and hearts) of over 1 billion Chinese citizens (2010: 26-27).

Role of Social Media:

Social media's power lies in its capacity to become a factor in strengthening the civil society and public sphere (Shirky, 2010). Social media is an important tool in the overall media landscape in China today. Social media was introduced in China in the year 1994 (Chiu, Ip and Silverman, 2012) and since then it has played a crucial role in helping the people to communicate and connect. On December 25, 2015, Xi Jinping wrote a message on Weibo, which was the first message on the social network site to be posted by any senior Chinese official (Huang, 2015). Subsequently, Xi also joined Facebook (even though it is blocked for Chinese citizens) to promote his visit to the United States (VOA News, 2015).

However, the current situation is not very positive. As per an official of the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television (SARFT),

government has decided to strengthen its control over news reproduction on the Internet (*China Daily*, 2015). Around 18,930 websites including Facebook, Twitter, Gmail, are currently banned in China (Chew, 2015). In 2015, China had arrested 23 journalists and 84 bloggers (Xin, 2015) and was ranked 175 on the World Press Freedom Index (World Press Freedom, 2015). It is no surprise that the Chinese government had arrested Jiang Yanyong, the SARS whistle-blower in June 2004 (Pan, 2008: 270).The current President Xi Jinping has been consistently tightening control over the Chinese media and Internet. This trend has been strengthened by the passing of the anti-terror law in December 2015. This law states that Internet companies may have to help the Chinese government with the decoding of information the government deems necessary. The anti-terror law, "restricts the right of media to report on details of terror attacks, including a provision that media and social media cannot report on details of terror activities that might lead to imitation, nor show scenes that are 'cruel and inhuman'" (Blanchard, 2015).

The Chinese government has also undertaken a number of steps to monitor the use of social media as a mode of protests and discussion. Chinese media and social media have always used 'puns', which are innovative forms of word play, to evade government control. In November 2014, an order from the Chinese State Administration for Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television stated that, "Radio and television authorities at all levels must tighten up their regulations and crack down on the irregular and inaccurate use of the Chinese language, especially the misuse of idioms" (Branigan, 2014). The reason behind such an act, as stated by the Chinese government is that the use of puns, "make it more difficult to promote traditional Chinese culture" (Silbert, 2014). To add to such efforts the Chinese government banned Gmail and Google in December, 2014 (Goodkind, 2014).Gmail services began to face disruption from June 2014, which marked the 25th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Crackdown, and the media sensors were attempting to delete any searches which included numbers 4 and 6 and the word 'tank' (Chu, 2014). However, Google was already facing problems in China since 2010 when it had declared that it would close its China portal. This was after the news of the hack into various Gmail accounts was released.

However, journalists continue to use innovative ways to protect their field. As Pan (2008: 322) reports, "journalists, on the other hand, are making progress in

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their fight for greater freedom, and despite the censor's best efforts and crackdowns …..state newspapers and magazines continue to find ways to expand the boundaries of what they can report". A Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS) study said that that the political role of the Internet would continue to increase as the number of users continue to rise (*CASS Report* cited in Scotton and Hachten, 2010: 41). It is evident that despite the controlling efforts by the government agencies one cannot deny that the social media "...creates a novel space for resisting oppression and injustice while at the same time increasing the protest's visibility among the general population" (Grano, 2015). Today the space provided by the social media plays a crucial role in the creation of public discourse and also boosts the existing civil society and public sphere.

Economic Growth, Media and Public Sphere:

The path of economic development in China has not been very smooth. There has been an increase in the level of discontent amongst the people as a result of failing policies. The government is aware that an increase in the level of inequalities in Chinese society and changing social values are causing these incidents. The other important factor behind these protests is the increase in the level of corruption. Even in his speech on the occasion of the 90[th]anniversary of the founding of the CPC, Hu Jintao accepted that:

> …grave challenges and daunting tasks remain in fighting corruption. If not effectively curbed, corruption will cost the Party the trust and support of the people. The whole Party must remain vigilant against corruption, be fully aware that fighting corruption will be a protracted, complicated and arduous battle, and give higher priority to combating corruption and upholding integrity. The Party must demonstrate greater confidence and resolve and take more forceful measures to improve the institutions for punishing and preventing corruption and unswervingly fight corruption (Xinhua, 2011).

Automation and changing industrial structures have changed employment structures in China since 2000. As a consequence of increased demand for skilled workers, many semi or un-skilled workers find it difficult to adjust to new jobs and skills leading to increased unemployment particularly in middle-age groups. This has also been exacerbated by the closing of State owned enterprises and the economic downturn. According to media reports, about 26 million migrant workers shifted back to their villages as they were unable to find employment in the urban centers. It

further states that in the first half of 2010, per capita income rose 13 per cent in the countryside, to $935 a year, and 10 per cent in the cities, to $2,965 a year. This, in addition to other factors, can be a major source of social instability (The Telegraph, 2009). Besides, China has also witnessed an increase in the number of slums around larger cities like Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou (Roberts, 2011). As has been argued by Susan Shirk, 'the worst nightmare of China's leaders is a national protest movement of discontented groups—unemployed workers, hard pressed farmers and students—united against the regime by the shared fervor of nationalism' (Shirk, 2007: 7).

Minxin Pei argues that 'mass social protest has become a permanent feature of the Chinese political system. Although such protest, by itself, won't dethrone the Communist Party, it does weaken the party's rule in subtle ways. Trying to maintain control over a restive population is forcing the party to expend ever-more resources on domestic security' (Pei, 2011). On the other hand, Yu Jianrong argues that the Chinese government today is dealing with too many sensitive issues. The Chinese government is branding too many issues, topics, and people as sensitive. Such extreme sensitivity only portrays the Chinese government's weaker points. If the Chinese government wants to look strong and stable there is a need for it to get rid of these extreme sensitive issues (2011).

The problem is also becoming aggravated as the new media comprising the Internet and other communication technologies is making it tougher for the Party to control the flow of information, which is a complete shift from earlier times. The CPC has had good control over the media apparatus till date and thus was able to control the information that it wanted the people to not know. However, with the opening up of the economy, it has had to relinquish some control over the media houses as a result of the withdrawal of the subsidies. Today, the papers have to finance themselves on the basis of advertising revenues. As a result, the media houses are working towards reporting events and incidents which the general public is interested in reading. Thus, the media houses are writing and talking about things that affect the people directly and not just the messages of the CPC. This has led to an increase in the amount of commercial media and encouraged the rise of investigative journalism in China. In addition, as the judiciary system is not totally free and it is the Party that dictates the terms, the Chinese people are getting closer to the journalists as they

believe that the media will be able to help them get justice. In most of the incidents mentioned above, it was because of the intervention of the media that the Chinese government accepted the various mishaps and misappropriations. This is leading to an increasing discomfort for the CPC, which is clear from the fact that 'before the Olympics in 2008, the propaganda department started working on tightening its control over the media houses, as it did not want any negative news to be reported. This was also because of the presence of large number of international media in China' (McGregor, 2011: 184-185).

The extra effort which the Chinese government has to employ to control the media is also aggravated by the fact that there has been a considerable rise in the number of newspapers in China in the last decade. By the year 2014 China had approximately 2,000 newspapers and hundreds of radio and television stations (Freedom of the Press, 2015). As rightly argued by Kerry Brown, "[Chinese society today is a] society so laden with double meanings was where, and how, to locate the truth, and how to sort out what to believe, and what to see as something referring to something else" (Brown, 2013: 161).

The extent to which the Chinese government controls the domestic media became apparent when the Chinese propaganda department decided to take the documentary 'Under the Dome', released in February 2015, off from the Internet and media outlet websites. This is a perfect example of *Internet with Chinese Characteristics*. The Chinese government is highly uncomfortable with the idea of free debate and discussion on any topic and has succinctly expressed this in the proposals for the 13th Five Year Plan especially which aims to "Strengthen ideological and cultural initiatives online. Cultivate a positive culture on the internet and "cleanse" its environment" (Leng, 2015).

Summary:

It is evident that media has been playing a significant role as a bridge between the Party and the people. With the introduction of newer communication technologies and an increase in the number of people using the internet, there has been a major strengthening of the role of the media as the mouthpiece of the people rather than that of the party alone. This dichotomy is interesting and real even if the government denies it. The Chinese media is using these technologies in order to

assess the grievances of the people. The CPC is working hard to control the flow of information in order to maintain stability within the society. However this task is not easy for the CPC as information is a tool of opposition according to the party

Even the Chinese people are using these new technologies to get their problems and issues heard by the government. There has been a rise in the number of protests in China using the internet to express discontent and also to organize and garner support. New technologies have been a result of the increase in economic prosperity among the people. Thus, economic opening up and reform, which currently provide legitimacy to the Party to rule but also challenges supervision through the use of technology. With better connectivity, people are communicating their issues and grievances better and rapidly. Even though the control of the Party over the media is strong, there have been incidents where the Party has been challenged and forced to accept the people's verdict. A similar trend is visible with respect to the flow of information regarding uprisings and movements across the globe. The Jasmine Revolution is a case in point. The Chinese government still believes that people in China can be influenced by these developments and it may lead to a major uprising in the Chinese society.

The Chinese media today is more active and versatile than ever before. It is managing to surpass the barriers set by the government watchdogs. It has also managed to carve a niche for itself as the voice of the people. The game of 'cat and mouse' is a constant factor in the life of Chinese journalists today. Both the government and the journalists are trying to see how far each can go in order to control the other. The Chinese journalists are becoming masters in walking the tightrope between freedom and persecution. This is what has resulted in an increase in the number of 'mass incidents' and the expanding role of the media in helping them gain popularity and visibility by the government.

With a consistent increase in these incidents, it would reasonable to conclude that in the near future the CPC will need more creative ways to address the challenges of 'mass incidents'. However, though not fully free, the media in China has managed to carve a niche for itself where it is becoming the voice of the people. By highlighting real issues, instead of always painting a rosy picture, it is helping in the creation and sustenance of an active and vibrant 'public sphere'.

Chapter VII

Conclusion

The study of English media facilitates a better awareness of the way the government and the society function. The Media projects the way that the people and the government think, and it is also an essential domain where most of the discussions take place. Both the government and the people use the media to express their views and also understand the other's perspective. Media freedom is a necessary measure for understanding the space present for discontent and public voice. Critical theory is a fundamental framework which helps in understanding the media's role and functions. In addition to this, the media is also a very important medium by which power is exercised. As the fourth estate, it is regarded as a crucial aspect in the process of extending control and thus exerting power. The role of the media in general has also undergone a major transformation with the current phase of globalization. The process of interaction and free and easy flow of people and ideas has transformed the way that media functions and is perceived by the people today. The effects of globalization are very prominently visible in the case of China. Civil society and public sphere theories also help in analysing the way media functions in any society. The degree of freedom or control that the media experience can be gauged by studying the strength of the public sphere and civil society. The general view is that the stronger the civil society and public sphere, the freer the media is. How active the media is, is also a very important benchmark used to measure efficacy of civil society and the public sphere. Thus both can be seen as strengthening and complementing the other.

China adopted the reform and opening up policy in the year 1978. Ever since this policy came into effect, the Chinese economy has come in close contact with other countries and has moved from being a closed economy to one of the most globalized economies in the world. This policy has had a direct and lasting effect on the media in China. Before the reform and opening up policy was adopted, the Chinese media was regarded as the mouthpiece of the Party. However, this notion has undergone major changes since 1978.

Nevertheless, the situation is not yet conducive for the Chinese media reporters even today. The Chinese government maintains a great deal of control over the reports and freedom of the media. Thus it is no surprise that Reporters without Borders ranked China 176 (out of 180) in 2016. This ranking clearly highlights the degree of freedom which media experiences in China today. Media control is regarded as complete and full in China. The Chinese government is the deciding institution when it comes to what can and cannot be reported by the Chinese media.

In spite of this extensive control, with the introduction of globalization and new information technologies, the Chinese media today is one of the most dynamic and evolving parts of the Chinese system. One cannot however deny that the CPC still perceives the media as the 'mouthpiece' of the Party which is expected to follow the Party dictum. But a lot has changed over time. With the introduction of economic reforms in the 1980s and the withdrawal of subsidies by the Chinese government, the media landscape in China has transformed drastically. Prior to the economic reforms, the Chinese government controlled the media houses, as the salaries of the editors and journalists were paid by the government. In addition, the Chinese government was the primary buyer of the newspapers and magazines published then. Thus, the newspapers and magazines were made to publish and write what the government deemed necessary and important. People's issues, demands and problems did not form a major part of media reporting.

The dynamics between the Party and the media mutated further with the introduction of advertising and the Internet. The Chinese government allowed the presence of the Internet in China hoping to reap its economic benefits, but today the Internet has carved a crucial space for itself, allowing the Chinese people to voice their concerns and grievances. The Internet in China has undertaken the role of the public sphere and nascent civil society. This has been visible in situations where the state media has been stopped from reporting about certain incidents or events, but the people have used the Internet and other new technologies of communication such as mobile phones etc., to discuss and report issues. One of the most prominent examples was the major train accident in the Zhejiang province in China in July 2011. The Chinese government attempted to control the flow of information regarding this incident. However, some pictures and videos were leaked online by people using mobile phones. As a result, there was a major public movement on the Internet. The

CPC had to succumb to pressure from the people and order an investigation. This event underlines the importance of the Internet and its capacity to be used as a tool to create pressure on the government. A similar role was played by the media during the SARS outbreak in China, when it decided to neglect the dictate of the Party and report the extent to which the infection had spread.

Thus one can say that with the introduction of these new technologies of communication, the Chinese government has been finding it really hard to control the information which the Chinese people access. Before the reform and opening up, the Chinese media was used primarily as a propaganda tool. It only reported events and issues which the Chinese government permitted and wanted to be reported.

With reform and opening up, the Chinese government had started to allow some freedom to the Chinese media in reporting and writing. A number of media outlets decided to report about the student protests and thus went against the wishes and comfort of the Party and the ruling elite. It was the first incident in the reform era where the media decided not to tow the Party line. However, the freedom was short-lived and with the armed suppression of the incident, the talks of democracy and political reform also faded. After the suppression of the demonstrations, the Chinese government decided to tighten its control over the media. This control was robust till the introduction of the Internet.

Even though the Chinese media has evolved and changed in its functioning, the government still has control over the content of the news and other programmes. The Chinese government also has an extensive and elaborate structure in place to control and monitor the Internet too. A number of websites like Facebook, Twitter, and Gmail are still banned in China and a number of foreign news websites are blocked. The primary reason behind this control is to prevent negative reporting about the Chinese government from reaching the people. The Chinese government is still not comfortable with the idea of its people having free access to foreign news and debates about China. The *Great Chinese Firewall* makes it difficult for the Chinese people to access most of the Western and other news websites and reports. This is clubbed with the *one-cent army*, which is very well known. This is a group of people hired by the Chinese government to counter the negative reporting about the government online. The people are expected to write good things about the Party and

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the government, and also discuss the good things which the government is doing for the Chinese people. However, with 688 million internet users, it is difficult for the Chinese government to exercise complete control. Reports also suggest that the Chinese government employs almost 30,000 people as part of the internet police force, in an effort to control what the Chinese people search and write online. In addition, some scholars have also reported that the Chinese government spends approximately 800 million US dollars on screening the Internet and blocking websites that contain words like democracy and Tiananmen.

The Internet that was adopted for economic purposes is gaining some political space and venturing into debating political issues as well. The Chinese government and the CPC have also started to use the internet for promoting their own agenda and ideas. In a number of cases, the Chinese government has used the internet to promote nationalism, especially with respect to Taiwan and the United States. At times, the government permits the spread of information and allows discussion as it perceives and uses this freedom of expression as a safety valve. In a similar fashion, the Chinese people have also started using the Internet to discuss and debate the issues that concern them. The Media today is playing the role of a mediator between the Party and the people and in some cases it is also performing the role of the judiciary in China by helping the people get their grievances heard. Chinese journalists are actively undertaking investigative journalism. The Wukan Uprising of 2011 is one of the most prominent examples. As a protest against land grabbing, the Chinese people forced the government authorities to leave the town for almost two weeks. This trend of dissent is also most visible with regard to the environmental degradation happening all over China. People have started resorting to the media for help in expressing their grievances and having their voices heard by the government.

In the context of these changes, this thesis attempted to study the changing dynamics of the Chinese media in the reforms and opening up era. One of the major themes discussed is how Chinese media has been balancing the role of bridging the gap between the Party and the people. It also discussed the various theories of media studies like critical theory and the role of globalization in changing the character and functioning of the Chinese media.

This study highlighted the existing differences between the media in Communist states with respect to democratic states. It also discussed the developments and changes within the media landscape with the onset of globalization. It also looked at the ways in which the media in general has changed since the onset of globalization. The Chinese media itself has undergone major transformation post the reform and opening up. Thus, one can conclude that globalization, which resulted in the interactions between the Chinese media and the world, has also led to a number of changes within the Chinese media space.

The changes in the Chinese media are discussed in detail in the second chapter. The introduction of reform and opening up has led to the introduction of market forces. The Chinese government also withdrew subsidies in the 1970s, which was one of the major funding sources for the media outlets. As a result, advertising was introduced. In the year 1979 the first ever forms of print and television advertising were introduced in China. On January 4, 1979 the first print advertisement was published and on January 28, 1979 the first Television commercial was telecasted. With this, the media publications and channels had to rely on the people to earn money. Thus newspapers and media channels were forced to publish and telecast news that the people were interested in and not what the Party permitted. This period also witnessed a surge in the number of papers published and the channels available. According to official data, there was a major increase in the number of press outlets in China from 200 in 1978 to around 1600 in 1988. In addition to this, the introduction of newer technologies for communication and information also resulted in new channels of news and idea sharing. Thus, the economic reforms and opening up policy adopted in the post-Mao period had a very strong impact on the overall media architecture of China. The media landscape underwent major transformations and reforms. The introduction of globalization brought the Chinese media in close contact with the international world. The withdrawal of subsidies and other benefits changed the primary client of the media. The Party was no more the primary client and it was replaced by the Chinese people. The major factor behind gaining advertising was based on the number of people who subscribed to the newspaper or the television channel. In essence, media became consumer-driven rather than donor-driven. Media houses had to therefore resort to publishing and broadcasting news which the people would be interested in reading. The introduction of the internet also helped in these

changes. It was because of the internet that Chinese journalists have been able to undertake the role of investigative journalism.

The internet has helped the journalists and activists in overcoming governmental control and monitoring. Even though the government has been using the internet for spreading propaganda, the Chinese people have been successful in using the medium for their own demands. Today the internet is one of the primary modes used by the Chinese citizens to express grievances and express discontent vis-à-vis various issues and policies adopted by the CPC.

One major test of the freedom of the Chinese media that unfolded was during the Tiananmen Square Crackdown. The Chinese media coupled with the global media, present in Beijing to cover Mikhail Gorbachev's visit, reported extensively about the ongoing demonstrations and protests at the Tiananmen Square. In some reports, the Chinese media also went against the government's line of propaganda, highlighting a certain degree of freedom. Most of the Beijing newspapers witnessed delayed printing in May 1989 as the reporters were working towards collecting the latest information about the students' protests. The presence of the global media was also used by the demonstrating students to get their demands and agenda heard. This also made the Chinese government appear vulnerable as it was not able to control the reporting of the global media. This vulnerability was used by the domestic media to report extensively about the ongoing protests by the students, thereby highlighting the support which it gained from the media houses. The Chinese media also reported critically about the government's policies and stance with respect to the student protests. However, this was a short-lived phenomenon. The government introduced martial law by the end of May and everything was heavily controlled and monitored after that. There was no longer any freedom for reporting and being critical, and the Chinese media went through a phase of complete control. The Chinese government also removed journalists and editors who were supporting the student protests. Even today, any reporting or mention of the Tiananmen Square Crackdown is heavily censored by the Chinese government. The government's censoring is so thorough that the Chinese government has successfully managed to keep the events of Tiananmen a secret from a large section of the Chinese populace. The Chinese government even monitors the reporting about the Tiananmen Square Crackdown by the global media as well.

Another major event, where there was a large number of international media present in China and the eyes of the global media were fixed on China, was the Beijing Olympics. The Chinese domestic media was allowed a great degree of freedom and in reporting the developments and execution of the sporting event. The Chinese government had even promised to allow freedom and space to the foreign media for reporting the ongoing developments and providing critical commentaries of the Chinese government. However, an analysis of the *China Daily* during the Beijing Olympics portrays a very nationalistic picture. The *China Daily* in particular was used by the Chinese government to report the good things that were done by the Chinese government to help conduct the Olympics successfully. A lot of nationalistic fervor was also present in the news and reports, where the success of the Olympics was linked directly to China becoming a global power and 'regaining' its lost space in the international order. Some of the news reports with respect to the Beijing Olympics in the *China Daily* were titled, *FBI chief praises Olympic security*, *China bashers turn blind eye to progress* etc. Such reporting was used by the Chinese government to show how the global community was not comfortable with Chinese development and progress. Reports like, *Beijingers taught to behave themselves for Olympic Games, 100,000 volunteers to work for Beijing Olympics,* argued about the commitment of the Chinese people to conclude a successful Olympics and how the Beijing Olympics were more than just an international gaming event. The games were being perceived not only as a success of the Chinese people, but also of the Chinese government and the CPC. Food quality was a major concern for the international players. To counter this, the *China Daily* published a series of articles like, Food at Olympics is safe: Officials, Food safety at Games top priority: Quality chief etc. The *China Daily* also published extensive articles highlighting the efforts undertaken by the Chinese government to provide a cleaner and healthier environment as well as total security for the foreign athletes and delegates attending the Olympics games. Beijing Olympics was a moment for China to be accepted in the global order as a normal player and media in China played its role to that extent.

During both these events, the discord between the reporting of the domestic media vis-à-vis the international media was very apparent. The Chinese government was highly unhappy with the way the global media reported the drawbacks, weaknesses as well as the problems prevalent in China. Some of the most prominent

discussions with respect to the Beijing Olympics which were being used to be critical of China were with respect to the quality of air and food in Beijing. Most of the international media constantly reported the way these things were causes of concern for the international athletes. In addition to this, the role of China in Sudan was also discussed and criticized. The international media also used the opportunity to report about the human rights issues and the Tibetan problem. The domestic media was used in full strength to counter the information presented by the international media with positive news and reportage. Any negative reporting by the global media was described and clubbed as attempts by the global community to undermine Chinese greatness and achievements. It was also regarded as general 'jealousy' and unhappiness of the international, especially Western countries, towards Chinese achievements.

Today, the Chinese media is also successfully playing the role of an active public sphere in China. This has been discussed in chapter six of the thesis. In a large number of incidents, it is the Chinese media that has provided the Chinese people with a space for discussion and debate. It is also playing the role of the bridge between the Party and the people. Increasingly, it is becoming clear that the CPC is highly uncomfortable with the increase in the level of information available to the Chinese people. With the reform and economic policies today, the Communist ideology is not the uniting factor of the Chinese society. Even though the control of the CPC is still strong, in a number of incidents it found itself on the back foot and accepted the demands of the people. As a result, the CPC had to initiate various changes and also roll back a few policies and programmes. 'Mass Protests' have forced the CPC to listen to the grievances of the people and work towards rectifying these. According to some reports every year around 90,000 protests or mass incidents take place against corruption, shoddy land dealings, environmental degradation and pollution in China. With a year by year increase in the number of mass protests, the CPC has been flexible with the demands of the people. The existing level of discontent within the Chinese society may become the Achilles heel for the CPC and ultimately pose a major challenge. Even though the media is not fully free in China, it has successfully managed to carve a niche and make a space for itself and it has become the voice of the people. In a number of protests, it was the media which took the driving seat. There has been and expansion of investigative journalists in China.

The journalists and media houses are comfortable in pushing the limits put forth by the government. Some journalists and media houses have also used their large base of subscribers and audience to cross the redlines put forth by the Chinese government. It is because of these developments that a number of scholars have been defining the existing public sphere in China as one with Chinese Characteristics. A similar argument can be put forth with regard to civil society in China today. One can term the existing civil society in *China as Civil Society with Chinese Characteristics.* It comes as no surprise that the Chinese government is working towards adapting to the changes and developments in Chinese society. However, while the existing civil society in China does not meet all the criteria of the Western definitions of civil society, it does come pretty close to meeting some of the important requirements.

It is this nascent active public sphere that the Chinese government is increasingly concerned about. The fear that the media may move out of the control of the CPC is very real. Maintaining peace and stability and showcasing unity at any cost has been the central principle of the CPC rule for the last three decades. The Chinese media has started to adorn the role of the people's voice which makes the CPC uncomfortable. This was intensely felt during the rise of the Jasmine Revolution. The Chinese government was so worried about this information reaching the people that during those days, even words like jasmine were blocked from the internet searches and there were police officers at venues which the government assumed could be used for public gatherings. Thus it is also in the name of peace and stability that the CPC controls the media.

The question which looms large thus is why a free and open media is perceived as a threat. Increasing and relentless economic reforms and growth have given rise to a number of fissures within Chinese society. More and more people approach journalists and media houses with their problems and concerns looking for a solution and a means for their voice to be heard by the CPC. These fault lines are a constant cause of concern for the CPC. With the speed with which information gets shared and spread today, the CPC worries that protest in one corner of the country can lead to similar events all across the country. A second Tiananmen is something which the CPC does not want to happen.

However, even though the media is able to question some policies and programmes adopted by the CPC, it is far from being fully free. The freedom that the media enjoys is still within the space which is permitted by the CPC. The Chinese government has worked consistently and relentlessly towards controlling the existing spheres of discussion and people's organization. One major example in this regard is that the Chinese media is still not allowed or able to question the integrity of the central leadership. Most of the changes and effects of the questioning and investigative journalism undertaken by the media is limited to the leaders at the provincial and regional level, thus clearly highlighting the limits of media freedom. Additionally, in a number of cases the CPC has been moulding the space which it permits to the Chinese media. In February 2015, the documentary, 'Under the Dome' was initially allowed to be online. However, once the debates around it intensified, the Chinese government withdrew it. The discomfort of the Chinese government towards free debate and discussion is clear with the proposals made in the 13th Five Year Plan. While discussing ideology, the Party argues that there is a need to, "Strengthen ideological and cultural initiatives online, cultivate a positive culture on the internet and "cleanse" its environment". The space for debate and discourse on any subject is relative to the comfort level of the Party bosses concerned. Anything beyond that is prone to being perceived as threatening the peace and stability of the Chinese society as it is seen as questioning the supreme position of the Party.

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