IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON INDIAN PRINT MEDIA
1990-95

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled **Impact of Globalisation on Indian Print Media 1990-95** submitted by me for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own original work. The thesis has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree of this University or any other University/Institution.

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CERTIFICATE

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

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Preface and Acknowledgement

Media is also known as the “mind industry” precisely because of its power to influence people. The 1980s will be known in the history of India as an era when the media played an explicit role to create images suitable for a peculiar social narrative. Amidst all this, my career as a journalist started in Kannur in northern Kerala. That was a time when the Ramayana serial was aired on Doordarshan on Sunday mornings. As a journalist I received numerous complaints about doctors and health staff staying away from duty at the district hospital which was one of the few centres in the entire northern Kerala where people could avail of emergency services. I reached the district hospital on a Sunday morning in 1988 and was shocked to find hundreds of patients standing in queues while doctors and health workers were busy viewing Ramayana in the TV room. Along with my photographer Jayadevan, I walked into the room and took a few snaps. A scuffle ensued and although the doctors managed to lock me up in the TV room, my photographer managed to get away and publish the photos of the act. The following day the story was widely reported locally. Later on the matter was raised in the Kerala assembly which led to an inquiry followed by disciplinary action against erring doctors.

Kerala wasn't a region that was excessively obsessed with Hindu epics, in a relative sense. Hindi language was also comparatively less spoken among the Malayali population at that point of time. This programme in Hindi was therefore an unlikely hit among the local population, including the doctors. Nevertheless, this incident at the hospital made me realise that changes were afoot in society, and that waves of change were buffeting Kerala as well. Shortly thereafter, I reached Delhi in the winter of 1988 and was thrown straight into the turbulence of the Ayodhya movement. Delhi politics was being reshaped in the most insidious way by the decision taken by the RSS to launch an agitation for the construction of a Ram temple in the very spot where the Babri Masjid stood. As a journalist, I had the opportunity to be part of most of the events connected with this campaign such as the shilanyas (stone-laying ceremony), L.K. Advani’s rath yatra and later the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992.

I can very well say that my foray into academics was under the thick shadow of journalism and its influence was felt all through my six years stint in the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). 1992, the year I joined for M. Phil. was tumultuous on many counts and

none of us could be insulated from the churning that was underway. JNU‟s pursuit for academic excellence was built on a liberal ambience where anything and everything was debated. Home to enlightened academics instilled confidence in us to navigate to unchartered territories. The Centre for Political Science (CPS) provoked us to undertake academic voyages which would not have been appreciated in a regulated or conservative university system. Though three decades have gone by, I still relish the lack of red tapism at that time where in the focal point was the "student". The long shadow of journalism made me to choose "Freedom of Press in India" as the topic for M. Phil dissertation. And later on as sequel to this, "Impact of Globalisation on Indian Print Media 1990-95" was approved as my topic for Ph. D. thesis.

It's often opined that "Journalism can never be silent: that is its greatest virtue and its greatest fault". It's true that a line of distinction always exists between journalism and academics. The way journalists deal with the narration of stories and pursuit for truth can be shallow compared to the academic discourses. Nevertheless, like in my case, many a time at many a juncture, both could be interwoven with incidents of insight and interface with stark realities. Perhaps, this always prompted me to revisit open fields of journalism even while having my feet reasonably entrenched in academics. I had the fortune of witnessing the changing face of India both as a journalist and a student.

The nineties could be the decade of unprecedented upheavals. The idea of India that I had internalised was evidently dented in the face of these new ideas that showed signs of making a tremendous impact. In this context, I still recollect the day, 6th December 1992, when the Babri Masjid was demolished. I along with few journalists from Delhi were camping at a hotel in Faizabad hardly 4 km from Ayodhya. We had visited the disputed site on the previous day and there was calm, but it was virtually a lull before the storm. On December 6 morning, we started before daybreak to Ayodhya, inside an Ambassador car. It was extremely cold and our car waded through the dense fog. We huddled in the car and none of us spoke. Obviously, many thoughts were crisscrossing my mind and but never thought I was going to write an obituary of secular India. After we reached Ayodhya, we stood at the terrace of Manas Bhawan, located opposite to the Babri Masjid so that we got a good view. As time passed, VHP and BJP leaders along with sadhus and sanyasis started addressing the karsevaks. L K Advani was leader of the pack that comprised Ashok Singhal, Murli Manohar Joshi, Uma Bharati, K N Govindacharya, Vinay Katiyar and so on.

As the sun rose the sounds from the crowds became shriller, almost resembling a war cry. On the terrace of Manas Bhawan we were sharing our concerns and also speculating about what might happen next. When the sun rose further, we saw the karsevaks rushing to the mosque with ropes and pulleys. They were also equipped with shovels and pickaxes and within seconds the domes were engulfed by tornadoes of dust. Hardliners like Uma Bharati and others were seen falling on the back of Murli Manohar Joshi and yelling "ek dhakka aur dho". The message was loud and clear. The mission of the karsevaks was to bring the mosque down. Suddenly, there were attempts to chase away journalists watching all this. Karsevaks turned against journalists, smashing their cameras and other equipment on the ground. We thought that we were going to be trapped on the terrace. At that moment, an idea occurred to me. Saffron shawls were being sold on the steps of Manas Bhawan and I purchased one, literally giving double the price. We tore the cloth and tied saffron bands on our heads and quietly walked down the footsteps of Manas Bhawan, while behind our back the ancient mosque had almost disappeared. We could see karsevaks chasing other journalists. Shocked as we were, none of us spoke in the car until we returned to the safety of our hotel in Faizabad. We later on walked to the district telegraph office which was the only source of communication at that point of time to phone in and telex the news to our respective offices.

Contrary to my faith in the great fortitude of the nation, I was writing the obituary of a secular India. My journalist friends from Delhi who were part of the group like Venkitesh Ramakrishnan (Frontline), Murlidhar Reddy (The Hindu), P.R. Ramesh (Economic Times), M K Ajit Kumar (Mathrubhumi) and E S Subhash (Madhyamam) all found it tough to come to terms with the new reality. We were crestfallen. The next morning, we went again to visit Ayodhya. The mosque was razed to the ground. In its place we could see a make-shift temple and scores of karsevaks queuing up for the darshan of "Ram lala". It is an irony that the central forces dispatched to protect the mosque were now protecting a make-shift temple.

What RSS-BJP leaders wanted to tell the media was simple and total: that things have changed forever and that you will be terrorised for writing and speaking the truth. In fact, large sections of reporters from the Hindi media were seen rejoicing watching the mosque being demolished. Even those media personnel who were perceived to be against the communal campaign of the RSS were heaving a sigh of false relief that this event

would end the mayhem of communal politics. Most journalists from the English media were aghast, but they too reconciled with the situation shortly. Many senior journalists and commentators were seen arguing publicly that the demise of the mosque would redeem the nation of polarised politics. They were still in denial that this was just the beginning. It is an irony to note that the very newspapers that described the demolition of the Masjid as a bolt on the secular democratic constitution later were triumphant when the Supreme Court decided to give the disputed property for the construction of Ram Mandir.

Now, to rewind a bit. In the late 1980s when I had the opportunity to travel to Delhi to work as a journalist and later to pursue my studies at JNU in the early 1990s, I felt life walking along with history. It was a time of great upheaval and realignment of political forces in the country and to watch it play out in front of you in Delhi was, in hindsight, an evocative experience. For the first time in the history of the Congress, a leader within challenged the electorally formidable Congress party and became Prime Minister, humbling the Grand Old Party and the humiliation of that resounding setback was conspicuous in the outgoing premier Rajiv Gandhi's young face as he accepted defeat, with grace. The rainbow coalition that had the outside support of strange bedfellows – the Left and the Right – didn't last long after Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh decided to implement the Mandal Commission Report, which had been in cold storage for a decade then. Cracks appeared in the new dispensation with the BJP, which had offered him backing in the Lok Sabha, reviving with gusto its agenda of building the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

Notwithstanding the political turmoil building up outside with some of the most insidious Indian organisations battening down the hatches in their mission to alter the idea of India as we always knew it, JNU that I joined for M. Phil and later for Ph. D, helped to have a dispassionate grasp of whole gamut of issues staring at the nation . Although I did take a rather long break to be in the grime and dust of journalism, in print first and then on TV, the calling – that I need to submit my thesis come what may – was always there at the back of my mind. I had come under the spell of my supervisor late Professor Kiran Saxena's excellence and scholarship and there was no way I could not have returned to complete this project because it is also a tribute to her memory. After all, I had completed a vast chunk of my work on my research, including collection of primary material, before I had to devote myself fully to journalism.

During the years I was away from JNU, I was caught in the swirl of journalism, handling both editorial and managerial responsibilities. One arena that has witnessed maximum changes would be the field of journalism. I had the fortune of witnessing many an upheaval, event and incident which impacted the course of India's trajectory or even the world politics. Riots in the aftermath of the demolition of the Babri Mosque, Mandal agitation, Gujarat pogrom, Nepal elections and the US invasion of Iraq are some of these. All these interfaces made me to realise more and more that the cliches like "fourth pillar of democracy", "free media", "objective journalism" etc. were invariably way away from the reality, if not infructuous. Nevertheless, an independent media continues to be a prerequisite for a democracy. You may have a democratic constitution or an elected government or independent judiciary but if existence of a media, relatively free from the control of the state, is absent, then there cannot be a free and democratic society.

Though I have stuck to the period of the study and various related verticals, contours of the drastic transformation of the media has been taken into account. The years since 1998 have seen a massive churning in the media. If anyone was to be teleported from the late 1990s to today's newsrooms, they would find themselves in a strange world, considering the staggering pace of change in the dissemination of information thanks to giant and unprecedented leaps in technology. Renowned journalist Carl Bernstein's stellar work, Chasing History: A kid in the Newsroom, offers great insights and rich anecdotes on how the media has changed worldwide over the past several decades that has seen widely circulated newspapers disappear into the digital format. While the quality of the medium has grown at a fast pace, one cannot often argue that the message is fairer and more accurate than it used to be. In fact, very often the message, which in the case of the media is the reporting of an event, is often muddled, partisan and far more sensational and prone to agenda creation compared with those days when public broadcasters and newspapers separated news from views. Over time, we see that in India as well as abroad, news and views tend to merge. Sometimes they become indistinguishable to the extent that falsehoods or half-truths are peddled as truth. It is as if a section of the media is in a perpetual war mode in which propaganda alone matters. As a result, we see journalists doubling up as propagandists or vice-versa.

We are in a world where a good chunk of media managers, reporters and anchors seek validation only from their loyal base of followers and do not want to be held

accountable to the larger public or to be seen as accurate with facts. This recklessness has massively transformed the media landscape. Therefore, my return to complete my Ph. D. offers me an edge, thanks to the changes I have witnessed. All this transition coincides with sweeping changes in Indian politics and society, which appear far more divided along religious lines than when I had begun my project (a time when it was politically incorrect to target people for physical and verbal attack merely based on their faith). As is inevitable, the academic climate in JNU and the rest of India has changed, too. Regardless, JNU, where I spent a fruitful six years from 1992 to 1998, continued to beckon because it was this institution that moulded me and prepared me to take up new challenges in life, the latest being that of a lawmaker. There is still interactive and participatory learning in JNU, especially when you compare it with universities elsewhere in India. I relish those moments in the nineties when at JNU, I was deeply inspired by the luminaries I had the luck to either interact with or attend lectures of. Among them was Prof. K N Panikkar who was the Dean of School of Social Sciences, when my research topic was approved. He encouraged me to study about the media and he believed there were not many studies on the role of Indian media and its character. As part of completing the thesis I called on him at his flat in Trivandrum and I could see a shine in his eyes when reminisced about the conversation we had almost three decades back in the Dean's office. He is now a pale shadow of what he was but his grit and determination remain firm.

I am glad that I belong to a generation that had read Marquez and Llosa, knew the works of Thomas Mann, worshipped Albert Camus and Eduardo Galeano and was determined to protect Indian secularism. Whenever I return to JNU I return to those roots of knowledge I had picked up from there. Which is why I treat this second coming as a rewarding and an amazing experience of being back to school. I am back here with the richness of experience of running various newsrooms. I expect it to enrich my academic work.

I am extremely grateful to the faculty chaired by Prof. Narender Kumar for the unstinting cooperation in helping me to complete my research. My deep gratitude goes to Dr. V. Bijukumar, Associate Professor, CPS and my supervisor who literally navigated me back to academics from the philistine or shallow world of journalism. He literally chiselled my rough edges and instilled the value of independent enquiry, analysis and moreover endurance. I am also indebted to Prof. Dwaipayan Bhattacharyya and other faculty

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JNU John Brittas A.P.

14th March, 2022

Abbreviations

ABP	-	Ananda Bazar Patrika
AFP	-	Agence France-Presse
AINEC	-	All India Newspapers Editors Conference
AP	-	Associate Press
BBC	-	British Broadcasting Corporation
BHEL	-	Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited
BJP	-	Bharatiya Janata Party
CBS	-	Columbia Broadcasting System
COVID	-	Corona Virus Disease
CMS	-	Church Missionary Society
CMS	-	Centre for Media Studies
CNN- IBN	-	Cable News Network - Indian Broadcasting Network
CPI (M)	-	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
CRIS	-	Communication Rights in the Information Society
DIG	-	Deputy Inspector General of Police
DM	-	District Magistrate
FDI	-	Foreign Direct Investment
FIPB	-	Foreign Investment Promotion Board
FICCI	-	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
FM	-	Frequency Modulation
GATT	-	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GFC	-	Global Financial Crisis
HAL	-	Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
HMT	-	Hindustan Machine Tools
ICT	-	Information and Communication Technology
IFI	-	International Financial Institutions
IFWJ	-	Indian Federation of Working Journalist
IMF	-	International Monetary Fund
IPCL	-	Indian Petrochemicals Corporation Limited
LMS	-	London Missionary Society

MNC	-	Multi National Corporation
MTRP	-	Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices
NALCO	-	National Aluminium Company
NDA	-	National Democratic Alliance
NDC	-	National Development Commission
NEP	-	New Economic Policy
NIP	–	New Industrial Policy
NMC	-	New Middle Class
NRI	-	Non Resident Indian
NTPC	-	National Thermal Power Corporation
OBC	-	Other Backward Class
PARI	-	People's Archive of Rural India
PCI	-	Press Council of India
PSU	-	Public Sector Undertakings
PTI	-	Press Trust of India
RBI	-	Reserve Bank of India
RNI	-	Registrar of Newspapers for India
RSS	-	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
SAP	-	Structural Adjustment Programme
SEZ	-	Special Economic Zones
SJM	-	Swadeshi Jagaran Manch
STAR	-	Satellite Television Asian Region
TDS	-	Tax Deduction at Source
TNC	-	Transnational Corporation
TRAI	-	Telecom Regulatory Authority of India
UPA	-	United Progressive Alliance
UNI	-	United News India
UTV	-	Utility Task Vehicle
VHP	-	Viswa Hindu Parishad
WB	-	World Bank
WTO	-	World Trade Organisation

Chapter I

Introduction

Media is a mediating mechanism that works within the community, its culture and the individual's relations with society. Media transmits information within societies and populations and spreads literacy among them. Political communication is the essence of a political system, especially a democratic one where information reaches citizens through media (Deutsch, 1963). Unlike other political institutions, though mass media is not an institution of the government, it is supposed to establish responsiveness and accountability. Stiglitz recognises the role of the press both in ensuring openness and "conspiracy of secrecy", especially in reporting (Stigtliz, 2002: 42). Greater openness reduces centralisation and misuse of political power and ensures transparency, which is an essential part of good governance and is of intrinsic value in a democracy (Stigtliz, 2002: 42). Though the media is a source of information and often takes position partially, independent media is considered the lifeline of a democracy. However, how does one understand the concept of independent media? Independence from whom? Whether it should be construed as independent from government control or business interests?

As a public institution in a democracy, mass media is expected to deliver news in the form of public good, which is non-profitable and non-exclusionary. The publicness of the media makes democracy more vibrant and effective. Media influences public policy and elections and often pressurises policymakers to act in favour of, or against certain policies. As an agent of political socialisation, media also influences political attitudes and behaviour of citizens in a democracy and in turn, public opinion. Media plays a vital role in democratic transition and democratic consolidation. Vicky Randall recognised the role of media in democratisation (Randall, 1998). Media is integral to democratic revolutions, as it checkmates the overwhelming powers of the state to ensure the rights of the citizens and functioning of other institutions and brings accountability and responsibility of the government to the public. The Hutchins Commission 1944 emphasised the increasing public understanding of the importance of the freedom of the press. However, freedom of the press is influenced by the prevailing political and ideological values existing in a

country. N. Ram, one of the eminent media experts in India, asserts that “the role of an independent press such as India‘s must be viewed and analysed as part of a wider institutional values and ideological- political context” (Ram, 2007: 187).

Media’s Democratic Role

In a democracy, like other institutions such as the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary, the media also has a critical role. It is considered as the fourth estate and the eyes and ears of democracy. According to Stiglitz, "openness is one of the most important checks on the abuse of the public fiduciary responsibilities" (Stigtliz, 2002: 42). Since the mediated public are essential for liberal democracy, the role of the media creates public reasoning and instruments of deliberative democracy. However, the media's coverage on certain issues influence people's perception and the formulation of public opinion in a certain manner (Ram, 2007: 190). The liberal press is duty-bound to checkmate the state's power and ensure the people's political liberty. Media is a liberal overseer in checkmating the overwhelming state power against its citizens and ensuring the state's accountability to its citizens. N. Ram identifies four major positive functions of the mass media: providing credible information, acting as a critical-investigative "watchdog", and discharging educational and agenda-building functions (Ram, 2005: 40). In liberal democracies, the media acts as communication agents between politics and society. In a multicultural society, public media has certain obligations as it is supposed to reflect the diversity of news, diversity of languages, regions and cultures which manifest in the form of heterogeneity of news.

In his development economics literature, Sen asserts that the existence of a free press, strong political opposition and competitive party system played an active role in preventing famine in independent India in contrast to British India. British India witnessed the great Bengal famine in 1943 where an estimated three million people died. This could be prevented in post-independent India due to greater media exposure and its transparency. Amartya Sen says that the media has (a) its intrinsic role in the process of development (b) its informational function in broadening understanding across the society (c) its protective role in reducing human insecurity and in preventing serious deprivations (d) its constructive contribution in the interactive and informed formation of values (Sen, 1984:86).

Mass Media as a Public Sphere

Media provides a public sphere where debate and deliberation take place intermittently. The liberal public sphere originated in the context of western Enlightenment is guided by public reasoning and motivated by communicative rationality. Habermas, who belongs to the critical theory tradition, Frankfurt school, believes that "bourgeois public sphere" is the space for contention of ideas and deliberations (Habermas, 1962). Like other public spheres such as libraries, schools, churches, and trade unions, the media also initiates discussions. However, of late, the corporate media is setting the agenda. However, as Jeffrey asserts, "one cannot have Habermas' public sphere without the presence of the newspaper" (Jeffrey, 2005: 262).

Even while not denying that rational deliberations do take place, it has to be borne in mind that they fail to challenge the status quo of market economics. Moreover, the public sphere created by the media is in fact an elite sphere where issues concerning the common man rarely find place. However, government control in the form of censorship affects the public sphere (Herman and McChesney, 1997: 4). Public deliberations in the media which are supposedly based on rational values are dictated by media corporations. Media is also considered as an instrument of power and social control. Walter Benjamin, Erich Fromm, Marcuse and Habermas have further elaborated on this concept. Media pushes an agenda for deliberation in a particular way. Horkheimer and Adorno argue that mass media under capitalism acts as a "mike" for the governments of the day (Horkheimer and Adorno, 2002). In the same vein, Chomsky describes the media as a propaganda machine (Chomsky, 1991). Media engages in furthering an agenda dictated by ruling class interests. The hegemonic control of the mass media is manifested in its control over mass culture and society.

The extended version of this formulation is found in Habermas' theory of communicative action, where among other aspects, he argues that consciousness and possessive individualism with their accompanying motivations of performance and competition join forces to shape conduct in advanced industrial societies (Habermas, 1981). When the administration and the bureaucracy take over the political space, it

undermines people's participation in opinion-making. Information is not meaningfully accessible even in what is sometimes labelled as an information society. Knowledge, therefore, is both simultaneously present and absent in such a society. It is available in different forms and becomes an element in the control of societies, rather than being available to citizens for participation and decision making. Though the press is considered as a potential mass communication tool, it caters to and protects the interests of a few. As the Hutchins Commission observes, this danger is partly due to modern society and as a result of the failure to accept the responsibilities. The Hutchins Commission Report, 1947 was a turning point in the media concept of the west because it challenged the theory of newspapers that they will have to give to customers what they deem necessary. The public has come to perceive the press as arrogant, careless, and in many ways unethical in its pursuit of news. Irresponsible is an epithet increasingly hurled at the so-called free press of the West (Hutchins Commission Report, 1947: 1).

Media as a Cultural Industry

Media is often considered as a cultural industry stabilising capitalism, promoting consumerism and eroding class consciousness among the working classes. The idea of culture industry was popularised by the Frankfurt School in the 1930s, especially in the works of Horkheimer and Adorno, where culture is treated as a commodity under capitalism and monopoly corporations which are central to the capitalist system (Horkheimer and Adorno, 2002). Linking the relationship between communications in culture, the Frankfurt School asserts that like any other industry under monopoly capitalism, the culture industry is profit-driven and acquisitive in nature. Mass production under capitalism contributes to the commodification of culture. The cultural industry links the working class into the capitalist system through media and potentially damages the revolutionary potential of the working class. Cultural production does not reflect the mass culture, as it does not emanate from the masses and is not inclusive of local practices and values. Since it strives for standardisation, homogenisation of culture, the culture industry is an antidote to mass culture or popular culture. Through cultural industry, the ruling classes exercise their ideological and social control to reproduce the values of capitalist societies. It is anti-emancipatory in nature, as it averts the potentialities of social revolution. In the culture industry, new technologies are used as instruments of ideological

mystification and class domination. It is argued that "the very process of production in the culture industry is modelled on factory production where everything is standardised, streamlined, coordinated, and planned down to the last detail" (Kellner, 2013: 8). Adorno and Horkheimer argue that the relationship between mass production in the culture industry and needs of the consumer is linked to a technological system grounded in economic power where needs are themselves subject to manipulation and that this process impinges on consciousness itself in a way that serves to strengthen the structure of domination which generates this form of social and cultural control (Horkheimer and Adorno, 2002: 94-136). The corporate media is emerging as a culture industry through technological innovations and practices. Media content and advertising promotes the culture industry. Media through advertisement and entertainment imposes certain cultural values and models on the people. Marcuse argues that like any other institution of the state under the capitalist system, media perpetuates the hegemony of corporate capital. According to Marcuse, media emerged as "new forms of social control" that cultivates "false needs", and "one-dimensional" thinking for the perpetuation of capitalism (Marcuse, 1964). The cultural industry encompasses cinema, popular music, comic books and pulp fiction. Media culture reflects the dominant culture and dominant monolithic ideology perpetuated by capitalism, not of the common masses.

Human communication is often influenced by subjectivity and emotional overtures of the human being. Communication gives birth to social institutions and technology revolutionises communication. The mass media's mind control affects people's perception about politics and public opinion. Media, for that matter, uses various techniques and strategies for the dissemination of information. Visual narratives in the electronic media influence the mind of the audiences and create a psychological effect on the viewers (Rajagopal and Rao, 2016). Mass media is "instrumental in the creation of the mass mind and the public sphere" (Chatterjee, 2016: 237). In the context of US politics, Chomsky says that the media as a propaganda machine involves controlling the public mind and directing public consciousness towards a set of pre-determined goals (Chomsky, 1991).

The Marxian Conception of Mass Media

In contrast to the liberal conception of media as a medium of free exchange of ideas, Marxism takes a diametrically opposite view that the media functions under class domination. The Marxian approach to media challenged the questions of ownership and the cultural context of media production. According to the Marxist interpretation, dominant classes control the means of material production aiming at the accumulation of profit. As such they are both producers of ideas and regulators of production. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relations in the bourgeoisie society (Marx and Engels, 1938). Media is part of an ideological and political superstructure, influencing politics and society, both in direct and indirect ways. In capitalist societies, the media, like any other industry, is controlled by the dominant class who control the means of production. Though it is perceived as an independent institution, it has a deep ideological base and propagates the dominant ideology, the ruling class's ideology.

By establishing a close connection between media and class power, Marxists believe that the media's content and structure are influenced by the ideology of the dominant classes. Media is influenced by capitalist morality and values, which are intertwined with market values. In contrast to the liberal conception that media is an institution for the representation of people, Marxists view that media representation is skewed in favour of the dominant class and ignores popular protests and issues. It is argued that "the structure of media corporations is based upon a class division between the owning class (the few people who own and manage the corporation) and the working class (the many people who sell their labour-power to that corporation in exchange for a wage" (Mirrlees, 2013: 61).

While critiquing the media as the carriers of capitalist values and ideology, Marxists strive to create an alternative media that helps further class struggle and circulation of critical ideas. The alternative media critiques accumulative tendencies of the media industry in capitalist societies and poses a critique of the corporatisation of media and viewing news as a commodity. The capitalist accumulative tendencies also get reflected in the media industry – otherwise called media capital –manifested both in the

spheres of media content and media infrastructure (Fuchs and Mosco, 2016: 10). It is argued that the "media content industry is important for advertising and marketing commodities in the circulation process of commodities, which is at the same time the realisation process of capital in which surplus values is transformed into money profits" (Fuchs and Mosco, 2016: 11). The media corporations are "institutionalised expressions of the class divisions in capitalist societies" (Mirrless, 2013: 61).

In the early years of his career, Marx was a journalist and became the editor-in-chief of the Neue Rheinische Zeitung in Prussia. While writing against the authoritarian political establishment of Prussia he made a strong plea for the freedom of the press and opposed any form of censorship. In Grundrisse, Marx reflects information for capital as it catalyses capitalist development. To Marx, the press is the "most general ways for individuals to communicate their intellectual being. It knows no reputation of a person, but only the reputation of intelligence" (Marx, 1842).

The old libertarian concept got radically changed with the west turning to full-fledged capitalism and also it acquired diametrically opposite meaning with the rise of Marxism as a powerful political ideology. Many theories of the media emerged with the changing socio-political situation. In the present-day world, where information is the real power, the media has become a powerful weapon in the hands of the dominant ideology. In short, the role of the media, from the perception of individual freedom during the period of enlightenment, got transformed to a key political tool in the hands of the ruling elite. The dominant ideology and ideas always being that of the ruling classes, the media is an important agent for the legitimisation and dissemination of those ideas. The autonomy and independence of the media, especially in a democracy cannot be seen divorced from this. According to Masterman, "since the media have been seen as important 'carriers' of dominant ideology, the increasing sophistication of the answers which have been supplied to that question has been paralleled by more complex conceptualisations of the media themselves" (Masterman, 1985: 170). The social role of the media as perceived by the socialist ideology and the third world theory is absent in the Western concept to a larger extent. Obviously, when newspapers become a commodity, the role and character of news begins to change. Herman and Chomsky argue that the media is depending on powerful government sources out of economic needs (Herman and Chomsky, 1988).

Freedom of Press – A Misconceived Notion

The main criticism against the western concept is that it has turned the newspaper into a product for profit (Hall, 1983: 315-348). The Hutchins Commission, which manifested the common man's fear in the most concrete terms, was paving the way for a new thinking. The discussions and debates that sprang up as a result of this, to a certain extent, succeeded in underlining the need for a new concept of freedom based on "responsibility". This was again carried on to a new stream of thinking by which the term "professionalisation" was introduced as a concept in the functioning of the press. According to this concept, media as a body is supposed to control each individual journalist and enforce its responsibility. This had its inherent weakness due to the emergence of tight managerial control over the media. The flaws in the press often occur as part of a deliberate market strategy adopted by the executive. The professionalisation of the journalist did little to arrest this tendency, as newspapers became products and brands in the hands of market forces. The social responsibility theory, anyway, gained acceptance in the western world. At least, the reaction of the thinkers and the common man reflected this fact.

Earlier, the press was to a large extent, free of direction and interference from the government, even while reporters were not free from the interference of editors and publishers. This, however, has changed lately, and the concept of "embedded media" has evolved. John C Merrill argues that the basic concept of press freedom, in the United States, is changing from the traditional emphasis on the press, to a new emphasis on the people. The old institution of the press and press freedom is giving way to a new concept that would provide the people with more power over the press (Merrill, 1997). Interestingly, if it is true, this is leading to a situation in which the governmental and legal establishment has an ever-growing power over the press, because it is only through such an establishment that the people can get more powers. This dialectic adds a new dimension to the concept of freedom of press, according to the nature of society and the polity. This theory does not stand the test of time as is revealed in the scenarios existing in most countries. The so-called increasing powers of the people remain confined to school text books. The changing character of the capitalism sometimes creates illusions which does not match with reality. The reality is that capitalist society always denies freedom to the

people, while the elite is called upon to decide matters for the common man. The Hutchins Commission report was an eye-opener to the state of affairs in the American press. It clearly showed how the so-called libertarian press in the developed capitalist society turned to be the fortress of vested interest. The technological development and the emergence of the media as a powerful political weapon had far-reaching implications on the social fabric. At the same time, it should be noted that any flaws in the polity would certainly reflect on the functioning of the media in that particular society. Given capitalist pressures to maximise profits, media conglomerates pay lip service to public concerns.

The media, at any given moment, arrogates to itself the authority to decide on what is true or false, what is reality or not. When there is monopoly in the media, though it may reflect the existing monopolistic nature of society, it will lead to a situation in which "developed truth" (term used by Karl Marx) will be suppressed. An in-depth analysis, reveals that the lack of scientific knowledge cannot be stated as the reason for this. The real reason is the unchallenged information system in which a counter viewpoint is not allowed, if not crushed. Any discussion about the superiority of a media system would be unending, and in the case of western media, where the libertarian and social responsibility theories are prevalent, the existing system of media has been accused of many flaws. The hidden hand of the free market ensures that so-called media freedom for society is for the pursuit of private interest only. The concentration of media power prevalent in the west shows the negation of the general notion that a free market provides plurality and competing ideas.

As outlined by Harry Bravemen and further developed remarkably by theorists such as Michael Burawoy and Paul Thompson, labour process theory underlines the link between technology and labour and relates to the impact of technology on work. According to Bravemen, separation of the conception and execution of labour is a form of control and in media it is exercised through differentiation so as to maximise productivity and profit (Braverman, 1998). For instance, we can mention here the ordeal of one of India's noted editors, Vinod Mehta and his experience of working as an editor-in-chief of Outlook, The Pioneer and Sunday Observer for over 30 years. In his autobiography, Mehta vividly narrates how the job of the editor is also a profession which has to be adapted to the market

(Mehta, 2014). The labour process theory understands news as a commodity produced in such a way to obtain maximum productivity and ensure profit. Further, it functions in such a way that management is still in control of the content of the news although journalists enjoy a certain extent of responsible autonomy. It is done to maintain a certain balance between news and market, but at the end, it is the market or the interest of the management that prevails. The management of the media doesn't exercise coercive measures to assert its control, rather it is very subtle and is executed through responsible autonomy. The management, instead of being systematically coercive, provides a certain degree of autonomy to the journalists to collect adequate information. But what information will become news and how that news will reach the public is systematically controlled by the management, by means of responsible autonomy. As opposed to the labour process approach, Bourdieu's field theory takes into account the agency of the workers and demonstrates how the agents in the field flout the rules of the game for their benefit (Bourdieu, 2015). The media dominated by corporate interests flout the values of the media as a public good and transforms it into a commodity.

Corporatisation of Media

Like every other business, the media has also become a business as it sells a product to buyers to maximise profits. But the product sold by the media is slightly different from other products in the market, as it sells to audiences or the citizens in the market of advertisers. In the market of advertisers, the only thing that matter is improving advertising rates, and as a result of this media has become fundamentally biased towards more wealthy and influential audiences and citizens, and the market has become the representative of the "public will". As Chomsky argues, the media sets the agenda to promote corporate interests, business overshadows its democratic values. This is manifested in the managerial positions and the commentators who are expected to share the perceptions, aspirations, and attitudes of their associates, reflect their own class interest as well (Chomsky, 1991: 23).

The impact of globalisation on print media has led to the corporatisation of media houses. Big business houses with their influence in politics have controlled, governed and manipulated the ethics of journalism. The impact of globalisation in media has led to the

transformation of the traditional role of the media. From being a reflective force, now the media has transformed itself into a generative force, where it works as an engine for the ruling classes of the country. As Herman and Chomsky pointed out that the media in contemporary times has been involved in manufacturing desires through which business models for popular and elite culture as a commodity, are being developed (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). In the realm of politics, national and local media, in the form of television, newspapers and magazines have been involved in creating political opinions that help the ruling classes. Media lately has been influencing and in fact dictating politics or a certain kind. It unabashedly promotes a certain set of leaders and interprets events and developments to suit its interests or that of a particular political party. More importantly, its highly opinionated views tend to influence voting patterns. Emotions manufactured by the corporate culture have overpowered logic and rationality. Due to the degradation of ethics-based journalism, criminal tendencies have escalated. Media biases and tilt towards a particular ideological worldview has created distrust among religious communities.

In other words, in the corporatised world of responsible autonomous media, the foundational eco-system has become such that "projects unsuitable for corporate sponsorship tend to die on the vine". And the media does so in the interest of the big corporates and to gain as much profit and capital as possible, marketing advertisements. The global media which stands between oligopoly and in some cases total monopoly, includes large conglomerates like Viacom, CBS Corporation, Time Warner, 21st Century Fox and News Corp, Bertelsmann AG, Sony, Comcast, Vivendi, Televisa, The Walt Disney Company, Hearst Corporation, Grupo Globo (earlier Organizações Globo), and Lagardère Group. These large conglomerates not only aspire to dominate the market, but soon begin buying out all the small-scale companies. As a result, competition is eliminated with buyouts and forced outs and corporate houses establish a monopoly in the media. The noted Indian Journalist, P. Sainath, who has also been a keen observer of the media space, points out that greater monopolisation and corporatisation of the media results in giving less space to smaller voices, differing voices and dissenting voices (Sainath, 2009). By referring to the Reliance KG gas deal and the Radia tapes, Sainath shows how the ministers and senior journalists lobby on behalf of several big corporate clients and control what people will read, see and think.

The Second Royal Commission on the Press (1961-62), which looked into the working of the British press was dismayed at the spectacular movement towards the concentration of media power. In 1977, the Third Royal Commission was forced to go beyond its earlier findings when it frankly stated that the greatest acceleration of chain ownership has occurred. Freedom of press is an epic and heroic concept, and any governmental interference will be treated as unwarranted. It was always upheld that without freedom of thought there could be no such thing as wisdom and public liberty, which in turn always goes with the security of property. But the pertinent question here is, does this view take note of market tendencies? The reality sometimes is that the concept of free press is contradictory to the theory of liberty (Keane, 1991: 11).

As discussed earlier, it is imperative to note that the media structure of a country is part and parcel of the existing socio-political system of that country. The character of the media cannot be seen in isolation. The flaw of the capitalist system is bound to impact the working of the media. Moreover, when the media is considered a reflection of private property, there is competition from the bottom to the top for political and economic supremacy. The end of the cold war spiralled up the corporatisation of the media in the west when it started to transgress the territorial boundaries. Obviously, in the changed order, supra-national and regional institutions and governance processes began to be more necessary to cope with the complexities of both an internationalised and a more liberalised set of economic and social relations. The communist approach to the concept of freedom of the press has its relevance even in the changed scenario, with an aggressive imperialism trying to mount increasing attacks on socialist countries. According to communist philosophy, the media has to play a constructive role in trying to mould public opinion towards strengthening the socialist system or aiding the proletarian cause.

The liberal media can ultimately only transmit messages which take into account the protection of these interests. The main thrust here is domination. The ideology of domination operates precisely through abstraction and idealisation, which confer universality on the expression of particular interest. Thus, when the bourgeoisie project has to abandon the panegyric spheres of its "pure democracy" in order to give its abstract notions and ideals of liberty of the press and expression of concrete form, it finds it is constrained to accept the mediation of the capitalist enterprise in the production of information as a *sine qua non*, the commercial orientation and professionalisation of this

liberty.

The western concept of freedom of press and what is known as the free flow of information was seen as an infringement on the right of third world countries. It is a fact that it was the non-aligned countries - which had thrown up the issue of biased flow of information - were countries that were freed from the yoke of colonialism and had new values surpassing the concept of the Western media. However, the end of the cold war and the disappearance of the Soviet bloc once again brought to force the issue of an equitable information order. The aggressive force of the marketplace, which has been propagated incessantly by the west, has now penetrated the Third World countries too. The media empires which were once restricted to the developed countries have started transgressing the borders of the Third World. This is accompanied by the slogan of free flow of capital. After the Second World War, the doctrine of free flow of information was vigorously propagated by the United States and other Western countries both in the United Nations and outside. The socialist countries, given their ideological positions, expressed reservations to the free flow of information, which they felt operated to their disadvantage and was against the concept of the role of media and democracy. The Western slogans like "free flow" was recast to "free and balanced flow" and the right to know became "right to know and communicate". The difference in perception was due to the different political backgrounds in which the Third World had to carry the burden of colonial rule whereas the west continued to dominate through economic devices. The objective of the Third World nations to have a New Information World Order gained momentum in the 1960s and 70s.

From Media to Sensational News

Since the beginning of civilisation, when human beings started telling stories and in Europe it dates back to news ballads in the late 1500s, sensationalism has been around (Bird and Dardenne, 1990). It has said that the intention of sensationalism is to spread information and news to the less-literate masses for strengthening the social fabric. However, the term 'sensational' received a negative connotation after a few decades, mainly with the rise of the 'Penny Press'. As a result of industrialisation and consequent industrial revolution, some media houses were selling papers for just a penny with an aim to reach more consumers and attract more advertisements. Newspapers like The Sun, New York Morning Herald etc. were its forerunners. Until the end of the 19th Century, Penny

papers dominated the media space. However, later, they were outdone in their own game with the journalistic innovations of William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer (Altschull, 1990; Tannenbaum an Lynch, 1960).

The challenge posed by Pulitzer and Hearst to the penny press, gave rise to "yellow journalism." However, the term derives its name from a cartoon character named the Yellow kid, drawn by Richard Outcault for the Pulitzer's New York World - to expose corruption. Along with the innovations in the press, Pulitzer carried pro-union and pro-labour positions; campaigns were carried to expose the corruption in municipal corporations, injustices happening in the labour sector; and advocating heavy taxation of the wealthy. Later, as the profit motive became the foundational impetus for the media, sensational journalism also became a practice and the new normal, intended to gain large viewership ratings (Berkowitz, 1993; Scott and Gobetz, 1992). Media houses were turned into commercial enterprises. The growth of papers and the penetration of big business houses which had a pervasive effect on the Western Media, has come to play an important role in the Indian print media too. The Freedom of the Press has been usurped by the publisher, or, owner, who now represents powerful vested interests.

In 2000s, Kortti developed the concept of "mediatisation" – which constituted a central concept in media studies. Mediatisation is a process which strongly depends on the historical context including, economics, culture and politics. Mediatisation is based on a two-point agenda. Firstly, without being technologically deterministic, technological innovations, like the telegraph, printing press and microchip, the applications of electricity as well as the exploitation and use of minerals and plastic have contributed in shaping and creating the media in varying degrees. Secondly, economy and politics have been core to the development of media (Kortti, 2017: 115-129). Contemporary print media is also not beyond technological determinism.

The Trajectory of Newspapers

The advent of newspapers is one of the most significant developments in human civilisation. This contributed immensely to uplifting the consciousness of people. The beginning of the printing press can be traced back to the invention of the paper, initially in China and later on of printing in China, Korea and other parts of Asia. This was more than four centuries before Guttenberg's invention of the printing machine in Europe (Kumar, 2016). Before the invention of the printing press, books were written by hand which was time-consuming. Therefore, knowledge and information were also in short supply (Tandon, 2008). The evolution of books has a long history, although it is uncertain for how long they have been in existence. The clay tablets used in the form of books in Babylonia around 4,500 years ago, is considered to be the earliest record on the existence of books. Further, historical evidence also shows that the Egyptians made inexpensive writing material from the Papyrus plant which grew along the river Nile. However, the invention of paper in China in the first century A.D. marked the origin of books in its modern form (Odorume, 2012). *The book of the dead* written in Egypt between 1589 and 1350 B.C. is considered to be the first book in history. But books did not become a mass medium for long because of its limited availability and being expensive.

The art of printing was invented first by the Chinese. During the Tang Dynasty, in 600 AD, wooden blocks were used to print. In 868 AD, the Buddhist text, "Diamond Sutra" by Wang Chicken was the first published book in China, printed by using the woodblock. The invention of woodblock printing is regarded as one of the four great inventions of Ancient China. Another significant advancement to the woodblock printing came in the early 11th century with the invention of the movable clay type. A Chinese named Bi Sheng developed it in 1042. Sheng's movable methods were created out of baked clay and therefore it had the disadvantage of breaking easily. Later, in 1298 AD, inventor Wang Zhen started using much stronger wooden type and he invented a complex system of revolving tables which substantially improved the print[1]. Further, the first cast-metal movable type was invented in Korea in 1377. It predates Gutenberg's invention of metal movable type in Europe in the 15th century[2]. In 1440, Johann Guttenberg invented a

[1]see A brief history of printing. From the 15th century to today (2018) https://www.pixartprinting.co.uk/blog/brief-history-printing/

[2] see Korea, 1000-1400 A.D. https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/ht/07/eak.html

movable type of metal printing press in Germany. The invention of the press helped produce multiple copies of a book at once. The movable type printing machine introduced by Guttenberg in Mainz, Germany made the production of multiple copies of books at once. His creation of the moveable type printing press made the mass publication of books like the Bible (Kumar, 2021). Gutenberg's contribution to the printing technology revolutionised the art of printing, as it enabled the mass production of books resulting in the rapid propagation of knowledge throughout Europe in the 15th century (Odorume, 2012). Gutenberg printed his first Bible in 1455. Later, the printing of religious books picked up momentum with the printing of the writings of Martin Luther during the Protestant Reformation. Printed books made their appearance in England in 1476. The development and spread of books were so rapid that by the end of the 15th century, there were more than 35,000 books under different titles, with more than 15 million copies in circulation altogether across Europe. Most of these books were printed following the method of Gutenberg (Odorume, 2012).

The invention of the newer form of printing press had a profound social impact on society. With the invention of printing, learning ceased to be a monopoly of few monks with access to hand-written manuscripts in remote monasteries. Then on, with the development of sophisticated technology for printing (the steam press and later the rotary press) over centuries, writers and leaders could easily communicate to the literate masses in their own vernaculars. These developments on the technological front lead to revolutions and mass uprisings across the world. The speedy and efficient communication made possible by the invention of the printing press was instrumental in the eruption of religious revolutions like the Protestant Reformation in Germany, the political revolutions like the French Revolution, American Revolution, and the anti-colonial struggles that emerged in Africa, Asia and Latin America (Kumar, 2021; Odorume, 2012).

Newspapers play a vital role in the democratic revolutions in many societies of the world (Douglas, 1999). As Jeffrey asserts, the newspaper revolution was a part of capitalism, and that the struggle is neutral between religious majoritarianism and liberal democracy (Jeffrey, 2005: 266). On the publication of the first newspaper, historians offer diverse findings. Chronologically speaking, the newspaper came into existence after books

(Odorume, 2012). But, it is generally held that the first systematic attempt to initiate a similar work was found in the ancient Rome. The global history of print dates back to before 59 BCE when *Actadiurna* recorded official business and matters of public interest (Odorume, 2012) in the Roman Empire. This is considered to be the first forerunner of the newspaper (Mudgal and Rana, 2020). By the A.D 800s, the Chinese had started *Tichau*, a newspaper printed from carved wooden blocks (Odorume, 2012).

The story of newspapers began in Europe roughly five centuries ago. The hand-written newsletters written and distributed by the merchants were the first known form of circulated information in Europe before the publication of the first newspaper in Germany. These newsletters contained information regarding economic conditions, wars and weather (Patil, 2011). The first printed newspaper of Europe, *Avisa Relation oder Zeitung* was started in 1609 in Strasbourg, Germany. *The Weekly News*, established in 1622, was England‘s first newspaper and the first British daily newspaper, *The Daily Courant* was started in 1702 (Odorume, 2012).

The first newspaper published in America was *Public Occurrences, Both Foreign and Domestic*. On September 25, 1690, Richard Pierce printed it, and Benjamin Harris edited the newspaper's first copy (Patil, 2011; Odorume, 2012). Though the paper was intended to be issued once a month, it was discontinued sooner. Americans were left with no newspapers of their own for over a decade. In 1694, four years after the publication of *Public Occurrences* in America, the first true newspaper published in English was the '*London Gazette*'. It was fourteen years later that the second newspaper, *Boston News-Letter* was published in America in 1704. It was published as a weekly and continued to be so till William Brooker replaced Campbell as the Postmaster of Boston. Since Campbell refused to authorise the title "News-Letter" to anyone else, Brooker later named his newspaper as the "Boston Gazette". Brooker was replaced by Philip Musgrave as the Postmaster of Boston seven months later. The printer at the Gazette, James Franklin, was also replaced at that time. Thus, the number of newspapers in America increased gradually and there were 30 newspapers in the American colonies by 1765. This increase in the number and circulation of newspapers in the colonies played a pivotal part in propelling America towards the Revolutionary War (1775-1783) against British rule. Hence the story of growth and development of the print media can be deemed as the story of mass

communication, mass struggles and a story of freedom struggles across the world (Odorume, 2012).

Even though the first official newspaper was published in Strasburg, Germany, in 1605, newspaper publishing gained momentum only after the growth in the steam printing press and telegraph at the time of the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century. This led to the production of inexpensive papers and its distribution to a larger audience. The newspaper industry grew between 1890 and 1920 and it soon assumed the role of the chief source of information. This period was called the 'Golden Age of print media. However, the tremendous growth in the newspaper industry faced a serious setback during the Great Depression of 1930, leading to the shutting down of hundreds of companies. The next development which disrupted the growth of the newspaper industry was the emergence of the broadcast radio that offered avenues of alternative news at lower prices, thereby diverting a lion's share of advertising revenue from the newspaper. The next technology that contributed to a setback in the newspaper business was the introduction of Television. Television was a powerful medium to disseminate information and it took away the majority of national advertising from the newspaper during the 1960s (Patil, 2011). A change in the pattern of news dissemination can be observed with new interactive digital media taking over print media, with many newspapers providing good quality news through online websites, apps and multimedia content. While digital news dissemination has made access to current news and events much faster, their credibility is often questioned, because these platforms, in many cases, do not cross-check the information before relaying it.

Challenges to Contemporary Media

Contemporary media is affected by two distinct trends – post-truth and populist persuasions of politics. The postmodernist definition of post-truth is that it is nothing but an extreme form of untruth. So in that sense, the reel is actually dictating the real. For the sake of argument, if a certain television channel keeps on vociferously asserting that the leopard has changed its stripes in bulletin after bulletin, people will tend to believe it unquestioningly. That is the power of the electronic media where the reel becomes the real.

Today, even the print media has turned digital with its web versions and presence over other platforms. People are reading newspapers not necessarily its physical version, but its digital versions on the screen; they are even watching TV content and listening to radio and other audio broadcasts over their devices, handheld or otherwise. So in that sense, the reel has become more dominant than the real, is my sense (Kumar, 2021).

The second spectre that is haunting the media is the populist persuasions of politics. Like other institutions, the media too is under attack. The anti-media sentiment is unveiled when right-wing political forces define mainstream news media as part of a liberal establishment that collaborates with ruling elites (Jagers and Walgrave, 2007) while being "unwilling to, represent ordinary people and their needs" (Hameleers, 2018: 2175). In denigrating the role of media, the right-wing forces use the Internet and social media, posting that the mass media lost its credibility due to its elitist image. Mudde has defined populism as a "thin ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite,' and holds that politics should represent the general will of the people." (Mudde, 2004: 562). Indeed, populists are not only accusing so-called "elites," of depriving "people" of their rights, but actively present themselves as the only ones capable of restoring popular sovereignty through the elimination of intermediaries (Engesser et al., 2017). Mainstream journalists have also been accused of being "biased, partisan and deceitful" (Figenschou and Ihlebaek, 2019: 1228) and of using "double standards when judging established elites compared to representatives of populist movements and parties" (Krämer, 2018:139).

Print Media in the Indian Situation

The Indian print media that emerged in the context of nationalist movement, expanded under the patronage of the Nehruvian model of development, and revolutionised in the free market economy of the 1990s, traversed a dramatic course in history. This was reflected in the ideology, philosophy, social orientation and public outlook of the print media from time to time. It has grown manifold both in its circulation and in its technological and economic superiority since independence. Media is supposed to initiate, stimulate and accelerate the process of change in tradition-bound developing society. However, in India,

the print media was affected by communalisation and corporatisation, which eroded the nationalistic ethos of the print media.

In India, the first and foremost attack on the print media came from the larger communalisation process in the country since the 1980s. In the year 1987, broadcasting of Ramayana and Mahabharata serials on state-run Doordarshan television resulted in the largest political campaign in favour of communalism after independence. Television was the medium that brought new possibilities of 'politics of inclusive authoritative' nature of Hindu nationalism. Ramayana broadcasting on national television ensured the inclusive viewership from a large population, cutting across caste, creed, ethnicity and gender. It in return gave much needed authority to Hindu nationalist groups and sowed the seeds for furthering Hindutva politics in the country. In the 1990s, the Indian print media had undergone dramatic changes due to the impact of growing communalisation of politics in the context of the belligerent Hindu nationalist forces during the Ayodhya movement. The Hindi newspapers in the Hindi heartland and to a certain extent the national English newspapers gave disproportionate coverage and legitimacy to Hindutva and thereby systematically eroded the secular nationalist image of the media.

Secondly, capitalist and monopoly tendencies have penetrated deeply into the functioning of almost all of mainstream newspapers of the country. There is an explicit tendency displayed by industrial houses to hold increasing clout on the press through its direct and indirect control. The Second Press Commission had made a special study to understand the structure of the press and its influence in the working of newspapers. Even though the report was published in 1982, its relevance has only grown, together with the rise in the monopolistic tendencies in the Media. The Second Press Commission commented that the Indian newspaper industry has a high degree of concentration and the disquieting fact of its continuation. There is an explicit and precise degree of domination and control of big business in the press. It is observed that ownership and control of the press does not rest within the industry. Present managements have vested interests and strong connections outside the industry.

News has become the reflection of information and a commodity shaped and marketed for profit. Now, newspapers have at least two functions, to inform and to generate profits. The two-fold ambition of newspapers may often clash. The quest for

super-profits, many times, clearly overwhelms the newspapers' role as a provider of information. The media's fabrication and sensationalism indulged in can hardly be termed as informational. This transformation has converted news into a commodity. The premise of any democratic governance is that power rests with the people. But how will this power be exercised when people are often misled by the media. The westernisation of the newspaper industry has reduced the status of the news to a product for more profit. The freedom of press which is supposed to be exercised by the editor, in the ultimate analysis, rests with the publisher, whose hands are full with safeguarding and promoting interests, including business and politics.

Research Questions

In the context of the above developments, the study sets the following questions:

1. What is the role of print media in the democratic process of India?
2. How did the goal and objectives of the print media change in the 1990s?
3. In what way communalisation of politics influence the print media? How does the emergence of Hindu nationalist politics impact of the print media?
4. How does globalisation of the Indian economy impact on the media content, controland ownership?
5. In what way has communalisation of politics and globalisation of economy affectedIndian democracy due to its impact on the print media?

Data and Methodology

The study used both primary and secondary data and adopted a historical and analytical methodology. The primary sources include the parliamentary debates on media, reports of the government, Press Council of India, various commissions set up at various periods for studying media's role in communal politics and economic globalisation. The study also made use of the in-depth interviews of media personalities involved in both national and Hindi media, especially the print media. The content analysis of the selected English and

Hindi newspapers on communal events and riots was also used for the study.

Chapterisation

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Chapter II

Globalisation and Media: A Theoretical Framework

The advent of globalisation is a historical process as it emerged as a significant advancement towards capitalist development and brought about a dramatic transformation in the contemporary world. Tracing the different phases and characteristics of globalisation, Charles Oman identifies two phases of globalisation – the first phase of globalisation took place in the period of 1870-1914, where Britain assumed the hegemonic economic and political power in the global economy. The period was associated with the colonisation process, technological advancement and use of gold standard. In the second phase (1950s-60s) the US emerged as the hegemonic power and the dollar replaced the gold standard accelerated by growth of international trade, Multinational corporations and Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) (Oman, 1996: 10). However, the current spurt is traced back to the late 1970s and early 1980s when neoliberal globalisation assumed a new turn in writing the course of the global economy with the advent of neoliberal ideas of Thatcherism and Reaganomics emphasising free market. In other words, neoliberal globalisation emerged in the 1970s, due to the crisis of Fordism- Keynesian redistributive capitalism (Robinson, 2014: 63). Since the 1990s, neoliberal globalisation has emerged as a buzz word indicating dramatic changes in economy and politics all over the world. Globalisation emerged after the setbacks to socialism in the Soviet Union and East European countries that relied on centralised planning. Globalisation projected itself as the logical advance in the emergence of free market based capitalism.

Setting a new Ideological Terrain

Though Daniel Bell in the 1960s proclaimed the 'end of ideology' claiming that ideological debate is no longer relevant as it has exhausted, globalisation emerged as the visible form of neoliberal market ideology in the 1990s (Bell, 1960). In other words, the current spurt of globalisation is the bedrock of neoliberal ideology which believes in unrestrained free-market competition, primacy of economic growth, the significance of free trade, individual choice and reduction in government regulation (Steger, 2002: 9). Globalisation is an ideological trend of neo-classical economics based on the infallibility

of the market in economic development. In fact, neoliberalism, the ideological foundation of the current spurt of globalisation, can be traced to its commitment to the economic ideas and philosophy of classical economists such as Adam Smith, David Ricardo, and the neo-classical economists such as Milton Friedman and Hayek. Premised on the Washington Consensus, neoliberalism preaches fiscal discipline, cut in public expenditure, trade liberalisation, privatisation, and deregulation.

Adam Smith's theory of naturalism and optimism in the market and his commitment to natural laws in the economic activity of the market impacted economic liberalism. Smith's conception of the market as a natural institution and its self-regulating mechanism, equilibrium of supply and demand, and trickle-down effect provided the ideological path for globalisation. While attacking the mercantilist concept of wealth creation and the active state intervention in economic activity, Smith urged for strengthening market economic activity under capitalist production. Eliminating tariffs on imports and other barriers to trade and capital flows between nations, Smith facilitated the windows for free market operations in the economy. Through his comparative advantage theory, David Ricardo facilitated further legitimacy for the market in economic development.

Globalisation can be described as a process linked with increasing economic openness, deepening economic integration and growing economic interdependence in the world economy. For Deepak Nayyar, globalisation is used mainly in two ways: to describe a process of increasing integration into the world economy; and in the normative sense, to describe a strategy of development based on rapid integration with the world economy (Nayyar, 1998. 15). He identified three dimensions of globalisation that include international trade, international investment and international finance (Nayyar, 1998. 16). Neoliberal globalisation is manifested by social and territorial compression as it is dismantling the social, economic, political and cultural boundaries. Globalisation is often seen as the universalisation of capitalism where "every human practice, every social relationship, and the natural environment are subject to the same requirements of profit-maximisation, capital accumulation, the constant self-expansion of capital" (Wood 1999: 8).

Globalisation is often described as the latest version of modernity envisaged by capitalism, a recourse towards modernity based on a homogeneous process. Capitalism once perceived industrialisation as a path towards modernisation. Schuurman defined globalisation as "the global spread of capitalism and modernity" (Schuurman, 2001:66). Globalisation is viewed as a necessary accompaniment of modernity (Robertson, 1992); as the consequence of modernity (Giddens, 1990); as the second modernity (Beck, 1993). It is further seen as a project of emancipation. Like enlightenment and capitalism which emancipated people from the 'self-imposed immaturity' and social conservative and oppressive feudal social order respectively, globalisation, liberated the economy from the controls and restrictions imposed on it. Hence, it was argued, modernity was conceived of as a single, homogeneous process that encompassed many aspects and could be traced to a single causal principle: the rise of capitalist commodity production envisaged by Marx and of rationalisation by Weber. Modernity was associated with the development of industrial capitalism and its distinct social forms, the most prominent of which was the nation-state‖ (Shani, 2003: 44). However, globalisation is a liability for modernity itself as it often leads to crisis due to the contradictions of globalised capitalism.

Unlike the previous versions of globalisation, the present globalisation is multidimensional as it involves social, economic, political and cultural aspects. As Keller argues "the key to understanding globalisation is theorising it as at once a product of technological revolution and the global restructuring of capitalism in which economic, technological, political and cultural features are intertwined" (Kellner, 2002: 286). As Chomsky asserts neoliberalism functions not only as an economic system, but also as a political and the cultural system (Chomsky, 1999: 9). At the political level, it seeks to project itself as emphasising on individual choice and good governance, while at the cultural level, it emphasises cultural standardisation. It is claimed that globalisation accelerated the process of political modernisation and thereby strengthened democracy.

Culturally, globalisation involves a greater amount of homogenisation, marginalisation, and resistance of the vast majority of people. Economically, globalisation involves the integration of the national economy into a globalised economy and the free flow of goods and services across the globe. Globalisation aims at the interconnection and

interdependence between economies, easing out the movement of goods and services across the borders and establishing strong bond of relationships.

Market Rationality and Growth Centrality

Neoliberal globalisation expresses its unflinching faith in the logic of market rationality, influenced by the ideas of Fredrick Hayek and Milton Friedman of the Chicago School of Economics. Though neoliberal market rationality gained momentum in the 1970s and 80s, with the emergence of Thatcherism and Reaganomics in the UK and USA respectively, it developed as a hegemonic ideology globally, strengthening the strands of global capitalism only after the collapse of the Soviet Union. With its focus on growth, neoliberal globalisation is often criticised for its unquestioning belief in market rationality, which Joseph Stiglitz described as "market fundamentalism" (Stiglitz, 2002). While integrating into the global economy, the market emerges as the instrument of development. Achin Vanaik argues that "unlike Keynesian or social democratic forms of pro-capitalist ideology, neoliberalism is an unabashed promoter of an unrestrained and ruthless form of capitalism in which the market mechanism is to be allowed fullest sway and the role of the state in mitigating capitalism's evils is to be reduced as much as is socially and politically possible" (Vanaik, 2001: 2). Giddens argues that "market-governed freedom of individual choice becomes an enveloping framework of individual self-expression" (Giddens, 1991: 199). According to Steger, "globalism is ethically unsustainable because it routinely privileges self-interested market relations over other-regarding social relations" (Steger, 2002: 148). Neoliberal globalisation strives to achieve impressive economic growth at the cost of social equity and sustained development of the ecology. Joseph Stiglitz describes the uncritical acceptance in the capacity of the market as 'market fundamentalism' saying that "there are limitations on market, as market by themselves do not produce efficient outcomes when information is imperfect and markets are incomplete" (Stiglitz, 2008: 42). Accordingly, while market fundamentalism beliefs that market by themselves lead to economic efficiency, Stiglitz calls for a balanced role for markets and government in development.

The neoliberal globalisation works with the instrumentalities of Multinational Corporations (MNCs) or Transnational Corporations (TNCs) as well as International Financial Institutions (IFIs) such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB). The TNCs in the global and national economies with a focus on take over and merger of companies across national boundaries acting as the agent of international flow of private finance capital, technology and investment in the global economy. As Bagchi contends that "globalization is generally accompanied by the dominance of giant TNCs and other global players" (Bagchi, 1994: 25). However, the operationalization of globalisation through the TNCs often produced undesirable trends in the national economies resulting in popular grudge against their activities. The larger criticisms and discontent against the process of globalisation was articulated against the activities of the TNCs. The IFIs through its policies and programmes, further consolidated the process of globalisation across the world. The Washington Consensus and Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) gave a new leverage to the process of globalisation at the international level. However, these institutions came under cloud due to its policies for helping the neoliberal globalisation. For instance, Stiglitz argued that the IMF has mismanaged the globalisation process of the developing countries, pressuring them to open up their capital market (Stiglitz, 2002). Moreover, the impact of globalisation on developing countries has not been cushioned by the assistance of International Financial Institutions. It is argued "the developing countries have thus experienced increasing globalization while the IFIs capacity has not kept up with the rising demand for funds" (Milner, 2005: 841).

Restructuring the State in Development

Though explicitly, neoliberalism developed greater optimism in the market, it required a strong state to act as a facilitator to market (Gamble, 2006: 22). Accordingly, the state removes the obstacles to capital accumulation to "ensure the democratic legitimacy of the market order to create the kind of institutions which encourage participation and limit the destructive impacts of free markets" (Gamble, 2006: 35). Neoliberalism is the revival of classical economies against the failures of Keynesianism intending to lower the function of the state in economic activity. In other words, neoliberalism is often described as a classical counter-revolution to Keynesian state intervention and welfare state.

In the late 1970s and starting of 1980s, the emergent globalisation project reconfigured the functions of the state and transformed the dominant notion of development. Reversing the role of the state in the post-war economies, globalisation redrew the boundaries of the state and its functions for facilitating market operations. Globalisation is now a process that subverts the state's capacity to act for the interests of its citizens. In the era of globalisation, the state is acting as an instrument of global finance capital, agent of big business (Ahmad, 1996: 43-48). Though capitalism takes a more pessimistic view on the state's role in contrast to the market, which is considered a product of a natural order, capitalism always required the state for its economic fulfilment. Quoting Lenin's theory of imperialism, Patnaik argues that when capitalism moved from free competition to monopoly capitalism, the nature of state also changed and a different kind of relationship between state and market emerges (Patnaik, 2002: 3). The erosion of the state in development was manifested by the crisis of human security visibly in education, public health, economic and social policies, etc. The report of the South Commission identified three economic roles of the state – macroeconomic management, planning and regulatory role in the forms of allocation of resources in the public and private sectors; and its role as an entrepreneur (South Commission, 1990: 114).

The neoliberal notion of economic globalisation is characterised as a "rightwing effort accelerating income and wealth inequality between and within countries, eroding the vitality of the welfare state" (Vanaik, 2001: 13). The current phase of neoliberal globalisation is marked by the presence of corporate actors in the actions of the global economy. The corporate business in connivance with the state power delegitimises popular sovereignty. Globalisation leads to losing control over territory and sovereignty by the nation-state (Sassen, 1996). It erodes the capacity and vitality of the state in development. The state and its institutions are often seen as pessimistic lenses, inefficient and corrupt. The state is increasingly becoming less autonomous from the lens and interest of capital, and the interest of the state and multinational corporations often appear to be synonymous. Sassen argues that globalisation has affected the three distinct features of the modern state: territoriality, sovereignty and citizenship. While globalisation is denationalising territories with financial operations, sovereignty has been decentered, citizenship has been devalued as it not only de-enfranchises the political rights but also the

economic rights of the citizens where the citizens are reduced to a mere consumers in the market economy (Sassen, 1996). Globalisation accelerated the process of FDI in various sectors of economies of the global south. Many sectors of the economy, which was once the sole state domain, opened for larger FDI. Prabhat Patnaik argues that, "the neoliberal state that is so enmeshed with financial and big business interests thus becomes intrinsically incapable of undertaking any poverty alleviation, a fact that underscores the vacuity of the 'states theory' which advocates neoliberal policies in the 'first state' as a means of preparing the ground for redistribution in the 'second stage' (Patnaik, 2011: 135).

Impact of Globalisation

There are two contending arguments related to globalisation with regard to its impact on developing countries. According to the first view, globalisation is considered beneficial to their development as it promotes efficiency and cuts down waste and brings higher prosperity to every individual (Sachs and Warner, 1995: Gwartney and Lawson, 2000). On the other hand, others argue that globalisation creates havoc in the developing countries (Chomsky, 1999; Gray; 1999). The process of globalisation strengthens the world capitalist economic system and promotes conspicuous consumerism. In fact, globalisation is marked by a conflict between growing centralisation and organisation of power that is more plural, multiple and open to contestation than was previously the case (Kellner, 2002: 294). As Sen contends, "globalisation offers great opportunities for overcoming the different insecurities, and yet the nature of the contemporary world also adds to the incidence of these insecurities" (Sen, 2007: 120). Globalisation adversely impacted the economy, polity, culture, and environment of the global south. The reductionist view of the state in development is visible in rendering social safety nets, and welfarism to its people leading to social vulnerability and economic impoverishment of the vast majority of people. As Stiglitz asserts, "globalisation created economic volatility, and those at the bottom of the income distribution in poor countries often suffer the most" (Stiglitz, 2007: 147). Industrial countries dictate the rules of games in the international market. Stiglitz contends that “the rules of globalisation have been determined by the advanced industrial countries, for their interest, or more precisely for the interest of the special interest, often to the marked disadvantage of the developing world" (Stiglitz, 2007: 134). Globalisation affects the

production and consumption of human beings in a society. The process of globalisation made a devastating effect on lifestyles, consumption patterns and other forms of cultural expressions. At the cultural level, globalisation promotes the values of Americanisation and westernisation (Amin, 2004). Globalisation involves a greater amount of reflexivity and accelerated the process of cultural homogenisation and hybridisation. The cultural assault of globalisation is manifested by commodification, commercialisation and consumerism. It is argued that "all particularities, local cultures would eventually give way under the relentless modernising force of American cultural imperialism" (Featherstone, 2000:100).

Like capitalism, globalisation accelerated class inequality, augmented poverty and unemployment, and generated interregional and intra-regional inequality. It promotes concentration of wealth and income in fewer hands leading to inequality even as it widens it's the gap between the rich and poor. It is argued that as the economy is internationalised, the living standards have remained standstill and inequalities widespread (Mann, 1997: 482). Globalisation accelerates inequality as private capital accumulation unavoidably leads to concentrated resources in fewer hands, leading to poverty. Piketty asserts, "the global distribution of income is more unequal than the distribution of output" (Piketty, 2014: 67). According to him, "when the rate of return on capital exceeds the rate of growth of output and income, as it did in the nineteenth century and seems quite likely to do again in the twenty-first, capitalism automatically generates arbitrary and unsustainable inequalities that radically undermine the meritocratic values on which democratic societies are based‖ (Piketty, 2014: 1). The current phase of neoliberal globalisation is marred by increased polarisation of capital and income at the global and national levels, increasing unemployment and underemployment, widening gap between labour and capital (Berberoglu, 2014). On the labour front, the economic changes brought by globalisation transformed the production system and labour markets and weakened the bargaining power of organised labourers. It is argued that the globalisation saw the general weakening of the power of organised labour to pressurise governments to enforce labour standards, such as minimum wage legislation‖ (Haynes, 2003: 1041).

Globalisation and the Crisis of Capitalism

Though globalisation is often seen as instrumental for strengthening capitalism, it also brought in its wake its crisis. The transnational capitalist class influences neoliberal globalisation in the accumulation process. The over-accumulation brought by neoliberal globalisation has blown over as the global economic crisis. This impact has been the outcome of the globalisation process which has undermined the national economies in the interests of transnational capital. Globalisation's mindless and desperate desire for accumulation leads to a crisis of the global economy (Petras and Vettmeyer, 2014). The Global Financial Crisis (GFC) 2008 also revealed the imbalances that have characterised the globalisation process. Some developing countries were strongly hit because their growth models overly relied on exports of few products to advanced capitalist countries. The impact of globalisation on the global financial crisis manifested in the form of the undermining of national economies for the interest of the transnational capital which profits from its global operations on a world scale (Berberoglu, 2014: 53).

Globalisation increased the integration of economies around the world, specially, through trade along with financial flows. Globalisation also accelerated growth in the field of telecommunication and information technologies, followed by tremendous intensification of political, economic, social and cultural interconnections and has led to interdependencies on a global scale. While claiming that accumulation through dispossession is a permanent feature in the history of capitalism, Samir Amin, argues that the GFC was the exclusive result of a sharpening of the internal contradictions peculiar to the accumulation of capital‖ brought out by neoliberal globalisation (Amin, 2001. 15). Citing global financialisation of capital as the reason for the crisis, Berberoglu argues that finance capital was the major force behind the financial meltdown as it was unregulated and uncontrolled (Berberoglu, 2014).

Globalisation and Technological Advancement

Globalisation is marked by the advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) leading to the compression of space and time. It accelerates "the phenomenal increase in the private capital flows across the world, aided by information

and communication technology" (Samuel, 1999: 1). Jorge Nef identified three main categories associated with the present globalisation – technology, ideology and economy (Nef, 2002: 60). Technology compresses time and space, facilitating the easy flow of information through communication networks. The technological-informational innovations taking place in the era of globalisation brought drastic changes in every field of human life – social, economic, political, cultural and ecological. Giddens defines globalisation as "the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" (Giddens, 1990:64).

The advent of the personal computer, ICT and networking further boosted the printing process and its outreach in society. While the advent of ICT made the dissemination of information easier across the world, access to information is unequal and heavily dependent on wealth and skills. The global north exercises control over the dissemination of information in the global south, further increasing the gap between the information-rich and the information poor, discrediting the very idea of information society. One can see that from the steam engine to the personal computer, technological progress leads to uneven economic growth as opposed to achieving equity and justice.

Globalisation is considered a path towards technological advancement, as it brings technological modernisation in accelerating the wide ICT network. Globalisation accelerates technological revolution and fusion of technology to technologically starved countries of the world. However, technological advancements by the forces of globalisation leads to technological determinism. As Kellner asserts, “the fundamental importance of scientific and technological revolution and the new technologies that help spawn globalisation or interpret the process in a technological determinist framework that occludes the economic dimensions of the imperatives and institutions of capitalism” (Kellner, 2002: 287). However, globalisation has enhanced the technological gap between the industrialised North and developing countries of the South, often leading to the lack of access to technology for the poorer countries.

Corporate controls over Information and Communication Technology

Webster identifies four ways through which consumer capitalism can be encouraged by ICT. Firstly, television operates as a means for selling goods and services. Secondly, the bulk of the programming itself, aside from the advertisements, encourages a consumerist lifestyle. Thirdly, ICT‘s are exacerbating the tendency of the marketplace to substitute self and communal organisations, and fourthly, it allows massive surveillance on the general public that facilitates the corporations to address their message of persuasion to it (Webster, 2002: 154-155). Based on cross-border flows and global telecommunications, globalisation leads to deregulation and the emergence of regimes that enable the free flow of goods, capital, information and services (Sassen, 1996: xiii). Globalisation is accelerated by the revolution in information and communication technology. Among the inputs in the modern production process, information and knowledge also are important. Knowledge has become central in information society. ICT is rapidly transforming societal interactions and the relationship among citizens. It is argued that “unlike other technological changes, the rapid developments in, and diffusion of ICTs, and the emergence of interactive multimedia applications have the potential to affect all economic sectors, organisational and work structures, public services, cultural and social activities” (Audenhove, et al., 1999: 388). The protagonists of globalisation claim that information explosions reaches out to the common masses and the information technologies may likely diffuse into society (Lyotard, 1984). In the knowledge society where knowledge became the principal force of production, it penetrates all spheres of life (Stehr, 2002: 18). Fukuyama, for instance, argues that a society built around information is likely to produce often two things that people value most in the modern democracy – freedom and equality (Fukuyama, 1999).

The critics of the information revolution accelerated by the forces of globalisation take a skeptical view of the emergence of information society. According to them, information society is serving the needs of global capitalism intended to further capital accumulation and inequality in capitalist societies. According to Daniel Bell's argument, information is reduced to a commodity that can be bought and sold in the marketplace (Bell, 1976). The revolution in ICT further boosts productivity, augments private capital and thereby establishes the hegemony of global capitalism. It brings new lifestyles,

encourages rampant consumerism and materialist persuasions favourable for the functioning of the market (Dabinett, 2005). Bell argues that information and knowledge have become strategic resources and transforming agents of post-industrial society (Bell, 1976). Since knowledge is considered as power, global capitalism extensively controls it to sustain its political and economic hegemony in the world. Critics argue that "the idea of information society is a kind of ideology based on new forms of power and exploitation" (Mattelart, 2003; Mary, 2002; Robins and Webster, 1987).

The advent of ICT created a virtual society, political community and public sphere, adding a new dimension to the democratic process. Virtual political communities have constituted a new public space to engage in deliberations and political arguments. ICT is used by citizens and civil society for the purpose of networking, mobilisation and as a new method for social interactions and political mobilisation. However, knowledge production in the information technology-induced society often meets with many uncertainties. Knowledge production serves capitalist persuasions than society at large. In such situations, knowledge often distanced from truth, makes human life more destitute and meaningless. Earlier, knowledge production was legitimised by religion for its predetermined goals. However, as opposed to this, knowledge production in capitalist society intends to serve its accusative and accumulation goals, though it has the content of rationality, empiricism and pragmatism. The information disseminated through media often ostensibly from truth and social reality, serves capitalist goals. Peter Jarvis while acknowledging this reality, wonders "the age of modernity is clearly one of science and technology but we need to relate this knowledge to the concept of truth- how do we know that this knowledge is true?" (Jarvis, 2008: 62).

Like the transformation of the economy, neoliberal globalisation made an impact on the cultures across the world. The emergence of global cultural industries is based on new communication technology. Through media and communication technologies, western cultures and concepts and tastes are being imposed, and cultural homogenisation sought to be imposed. The dangers that ICT poses are more evident in the cultural sphere.

Section - B

Media Globalisation and its Transformations

Like other sectors of the economy, the media is not insulated or immune from the impact of globalisation. The current spurt of market-led economic globalisation brought both positive and negative changes in the media. The process of globalisation has been reshaping the world's economic, social, political and cultural landscape along with bringing multiple changes in media in technology, communication, production and dissemination. Technological advancement enabled the dissemination of information to people and various cultures worldwide and connected the peripheral regions to the centre. It brought about revolutionary changes in content and its outreach compressing space and time. Though placed at a distance, technology is a great enabler. This is what at Giddens called the process of “distanciation" (Giddens, 1991).

Globalisation brought new trends in global communications, adoption of new technologies, satellite communications, change in the quality of news, entertainment, educational programmes, advertising and popularisation of the entertainment industry. Technological advancement brought changes in printing and graphic images that attracted more readers. The emergence of new communication technologies brought globalisation of communication and created a global public sphere. In combination they accelerated the print media's contribution to the knowledge industry. The increasing penetration of the internet further expanded the scope and reach. Media's contribution to knowledge includes knowledge production, education and information dissemination.

The relationship between media and globalisation is complementary and contributory to each other. While the corporate media needed globalisation for its expansion, globalisation needed the corporate-controlled media for its propagation. While globalisation contributes to media expansion, advances in modern technology also accelerates globalisation. It is argued that “globalisation could not occur without the media, that globalisation and media act in concert and cohort, and that the two have partnered throughout the whole of human history” (Luke, 2011:5). Globalisation brought rapid investment in media sectors like all other sectors of the economy. It also accelerated the process of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), merger and acquisitions in media conglomerates.

Vertical and Horizontal Integration

Though the impact of globalisation produced certain positive trends in the media, it has also brought certain changes in the media's nature, structure, and content. Globalisation of the media involves both horizontal and vertical integration of the media industry. Chomsky talks about the corporate character of the media and its integration into the political economy of the dominant economic system, i.e. the global capitalist system. Horizontal integration implies the takeover of the smaller firms by bigger ones. It enables "a media corporation to control one kind of media product in one type of media market" (Mirrlees, 2013: 79). The vertical integration involves one media corporation acquiring other media corporations in its entire gamut of production and distribution activities. The corporatisation of media includes both these processes leading to the emergence of oligopolistic media markets all over the world (Mirrlees, 2013: 79). In other words, the oligopolistic media market is characterised by horizontal and vertical integration, making media globalisation a distinct development in the globalised world.

The development of ICT affected some sections of the media industry adversely also. Some media houses collapsed due to stiff market competition, while others gained strength from the new avenues created by globalisation. Certain big media houses and corporations became more global, parts of the production being outsourced to different countries and parts of sales achieved in the other countries. The globalisation of economy and the media exposure have generated awareness about culture in every human being, either positively or negatively (Joseph, 1998). Media is considered to be one of the agents of dissemination of information through news in the information society. The commercialised media loaded with advertisements perpetuates middle class fantasy in society. It is argued that the commercialisation of cyberspace is leading to new forms of corporate censorship that are getting exerted through reluctant ISPs, search engines and bandwidth retailers (CRIS, 2005: 31). Knowledge ownership gets concentrated in the hands of a few corporates, affecting the dissemination of information. Chrisman argued that an "important factor in globalisation‘s merger of media and economy is the use of computers as the repositories of knowledge central to the functioning of the economy, culture, and society” (Chrisman, 2013: 75).

Media-Industrial Complex

Globalisation of the media creates media monopoly; with its entry into foreign markets, a new dimension to monopoly capitalism is added. There is intense competition between corporate media houses to control the media as also takeover of other media houses leads to creating media monopolies. As production and distribution are influenced by corporate ownership, it impacts the quality of the output as well. Denis McQuail identifies the basic reasons for media globalisation such as more powerful technologies for long-distance transmission, increasing commercialisation, colonisation and imperialism, economic dependency, geopolitical imbalances and advertising and the expansion of telecommunications (McQuail, 2010). Transnational Corporations are influencing media content, often driven by market profitability, especially in television, as opposed to their social obligation. It is also influencing music and entertainment spheres. Transnational media corporations manufactured "a total cultural environment" and sold it "to a global as well as a national market" (Schiller, 1991:14).

Another dimension of globalisation of the media is the increasing control exercised by the international bodies in regulating and governing media organisations and their content. Such regulations and controls push the media as a commodity intended to cater to the needs of the consumer in the market. In such a situation, the mass control over media is a missing link. The economic changes brought by capitalist mass production and consumption impact the media too. It is argued that the development of the corporate newspaper has been controversial since many critics think that it is degrading democracy and good journalism. They have accused that corporate newspapers lay more emphasises on profit rather than quality. This can lead to restrictions being imposed on journalists' autonomy and can alienate workers. Corporate newspapers also fail to serve the informational needs of the people. It only serves the interest of big business houses and most importantly it fails to produce and promote diversity of ideas. Reflections of diversities are believed to be important for discovering truth and reaching sound public policy decisions and being a measure of personal freedom (Demers, 1996).

In the wake of the globalisation, advertisements of lifestyle products, fast foods and cosmetics, have flooded the media, which in turn have led to an escalation of consumerism. More importantly, this has also influenced social behaviour, attitudes and culture. The mainstream media has become an exponent of elitist culture. It is argued that "once the market economy, divorced from social good, becomes the dominant factors of media business, the decision-makers select information not according to public interest of the people who consume but according to what brings in the largest profit" (Iyer, 1994: 3084). Moreover, "commercial media and advertising, by their own admission, are central to a dynamic of ever-growing consumption by the middle classes and wealthy, that in turn boosts ever-growing production, consuming more resources and fuelling environmental degradation" (CRIS, 2005: 30). The corporate control of media, among all things, erodes democracy. It dilutes the individual's right to participate in the political process. Participatory democracy transforms an individual into a political being. In emerging market citizenship, an individual as a member of a market community has duties and obligations to the market. Under globalisation, neoliberalism constitutes its key ideological tenet and is often considered to be a political project of embedding market value and structure within not only economic, but also political and social life (Rodan, 2006: 197).

Media as an Agent of Cultural Globalisation

The impact of globalisation on media is reflected in cultural globalisation where media plays a vital role. This attempt at cultural homogenisation is done by propagating certain cultural values. Food choices and habits closely associated with cultures are sought to be overridden, and homogenisation of the McDonald variety is taking place. The Frankfurt School establishes the relationship between culture and capitalism and argues that media controls individual's beliefs through the cultural industry. Adorno who coined the term 'cultural industry' says that it influences the masses' leisure time and robs them of their imagination. Critical theory conceptualises how the culture industry has served as a tool of social control and thus served the interests of social domination. Global media disseminates the cultural images of the dominant cultures and propagates them to be technologically and economically superior. Gradually, masses start losing their potential of critical thinking and are led away from reality. As Colin Sparks argues, "to the extent that globalization is constituted in and through networks and the resulting circulation of

symbols rather than things, then the immateriality of media products is emblematic of the process of globalization" (Sparks, 2007: 133). Appadurai asserts that globalisation does not necessarily denote homogenisation or Americanisation, and to the extent that societies in different space and time appropriate the goods of modernity differently (Appadurai, 1996: 17).

The process in which consumption and consumer values are enlarged and imposed upon the marginalised by assuring identification with metropolitan norms and values leads to the creation of the world in their own imagination of economics and culture (Chrisman, 2008:14). In the 1970s and early 1980s, cultural imperialism dominated media literature. Herbert Schiller in his work described the concept of cultural imperialism as the sum of the processes through which societies are brought into the modern world-system and how its dominating stratum is attracted, forced, pressured and at times bribed for shaping social institutions and correspond to, or even promote, the norms, values and structures of the dominating centre of the system (Schiller, 1976: 9). According to Schiller, "under the banner of the 'Free Flow of Information' US media products came to dominate the world" (Schiller, 1976: 24-38). Media representations often pose interesting questions to scholars to think deeply since they allow us to critically analyse and question complex issues, such as identities and derive detailed relationships between global and local (Wong, 2010: 273). The chief outcome of new media clusters and their news brand and "infotainment" is hyper-reification, affecting and degenerating individuals' cognitive and moral spheres (Chrisman, 2008:14).

Another significant development in the age of media globalisation is the importance of "local". Local news often gains wider saliency in a globalised media. It is often alleged that the mainstream media often leave out local issues and news. Doyle asserts that the concentration of ownership in the media can lead to over-representation of a certain kind of political opinions or particular forms of cultural output and has inbuilt tendencies to exclude others (Doyle, 2002: 26). The undue representation of particular interest may affect the formulation of public policy and development as it is titled in favour of some groups.

The Corporatisation of Media

Like economic globalisation, media globalisation is guided by the Multinational Corporations (MNCs) activities, which has impacted mass-media content and distribution. Chomsky argues that "the media serve the interests of state and corporate power, which are closely interlinked, framing their reporting and analysis in a manner supportive of established privilege and limiting debate and discussion accordingly" (Chomsky, 1989: 36). Globalisation saw many MNCs establishing media institutions aimed at making profits. The impact of globalisation on media brought the phenomenon of big corporates exercising their control over the media. The growing state-corporate nexus in media management and control shows the connivance of the ruling classes with global capitalism. Herman and Chomsky highlight the changes brought by the corporatisation of media such as centralisation, decline of public broadcasting, the weakening of the boundaries between editorial and advertising departments, incorporation of newsrooms into transnational corporate empires (Herman and Chomsky, 1988: xviii).

Corporatisation is marked by mergers and acquisitions, leading to the concentration of media in a few hands. Doyle identified three major strategies of corporate growth which influences the media industry. These include vertical, horizontal and diagonal expansions. The horizontal merger "occurs when two firms at the same stage in the supply chain or who are engaged in the same activity combine forces". The vertical growth includes, "expanding either 'forward' into succeeding stages or 'backward' into proceedings stages in the supply chain". The diagonal or 'later' expansion occurs when firms diversify into new business areas (Doyle, 2002: 5). The control of MNCs over the media creates a news industry and defames news as a public good. Major global media corporations control news, and the profit motive throttles media institutions' autonomy. The MNCs are changing the rules governing media consumption and media ownership. According to Stiglitz, the concentration of media power is not just because of the resulting market power, but is excessively and additionally tied to financial interest, which will not provide ample checks against abuse by special interests (Stiglitz, 2002: 41). It is argued that "media outputs are commodified and are designed to serve market ends, not citizenship needs" (Herman and McChesney, 1997:9).

The emerging trend of the corporatisation of the media by big business is described as the 'Murdochisation of media'. Rupert Murdoch, the media baron, lorded over the media business in the 1990s. The monopolistic corporation taking over media enterprises stifles editorial independence, putting at stake the very survival of small and medium newspapers. When the media corporations favour oligopoly powers for the generation of profits, it is leading to the disturbing tendencies of control over media (Mirrlees, 2013:76).

Global Capitalism and Global Media

Since the 1990s, the emergence of the global media market has added a new dimension to the media industry. It is argued that "although media were almost entirely local and national phenomena until the twentieth century, modern capitalism has always extended across national boundaries" (Herman and McChesney, 1997:11). Global capitalism expanded the outreach of the media. The integration of the national economy to the global economy transformed the media's ownership, control, and content. The global media is guided by profitability and monopolistic and oligopolistic trends. It is argued that "globalisation has encouraged media operators to look beyond the local or home market as a way of expanding their consumer base horizontally and of extending their economies of scale" (Doyle, 2002: 5).

From Media Control to Media Ownership

Media globalisation is accelerated by transforming media control to media ownership. At the current juncture of media globalisation, the emerging issue is of media ownership and its control. Today, corporate business controls the media and owns the media outlets, which underlines the nexus between political power and corporate power. Cross-media ownership as also industrial units from a different background and orientation acquiring media ownership, is a contested issue in the period of media globalisation. The control of a media company acquired through capital ownership strikes at plurality and diversity of views and news. This is evident in the manner in which the media covered the American invasion of Iraq. Rupert Murdoch's News Corp's entire 150 newspapers supported the American invasion of Iraq. Murdoch's Star TV dominates in Asia. In 1991, Murdoch created Satellite Television Asian Region (STAR) in order to capture the Asian media market. Chomsky talks about three models of media organisations - corporate oligopoly,

state-controlled and democratic. The corporate oligopoly is reducing democratic participation in the media to zero. Talking in the context of the US, Chomsky argues that "the model of media as corporate oligopoly is the natural system for capitalist democracy" (Chomsky, 1989: 16).

Concentration and cross-ownership in the media are matters of concern. Corporate media serves the interest of the corporate business ignoring other mass concerns, movements and actions. Just four companies – Walt Disney, Comcast, 21st Century Fox/New Corp and Time Warner Holdings, supply around 90% of the content for the world‘s media. Media is concentrating on larger media business companies and proprietors. It is influencing public opinion, setting national agenda and democratic governance. Some of the examples are Rupert Murdoch (UK), Silvio Berlusconi (Italy), Televisa and Carols Slim (Mexico), Globo (Brazil). Media mergers and expansion are driven by market signals. The growth of media transnational corporations, though brings efficiency, can lead to the centralisation of media monopoly and spread and intensification of commercialisation (Herman and McChesney, 1997:8). In 2011, UTV Software Communication was acquired by the Walt Disney Company. Few media cartels own and control most of the newspapers and magazines.

Corporate newspapers hurt the diversity of ideas in the market place due to the concentration of ownership. Secondly, since the corporate newspapers are more profit-oriented, it only serves the interest of the capitalists. Thirdly, it leads to work alienation. Fourthly, it leads to loss of community identity and solidarity (Demers, 1996: 14). Instead of acting as the agent of social control, it contributes to destroying democracy itself. There is increased control of ownership and power concentration in the hands of a few very large TNCs. Media concentration is an antidote to democratic distributive principles for communicative power (Barker, 2007: 7). Barker points out three important reasons for opposing ownership and media concentration into the hands of few – "a more democratic distribution of communicative power, democratic safeguards and quality and the bottom line" (Barker, 2007: 5-28). Media concentration contrasts the effect of media access – public information on equal access to all. The concentration of media or media monopoly is contrary to market competition. As explained by Paul A. Baran and Paul M. Sweezy, monopoly capitalism does not contradict free-market competition and the idea of choice. These two infirmities do not lead to the destruction of capitalism itself, but revitalises its

ideology (Baran and Sweezy, 1966). Monopoly is against the plurality of media and the marketplace of ideas. On the other hand, competitive markets enable the emergence of ideas. It is argued that ". . . the increase in circulation of big newspapers leads to the concentration of large market shares, and subsequently the concentration of news ownership in their hands" (Kumar, 2015: 22). Further, it is argued that "… the concentration of ownership of media implies that the influence and power which result in distribution of news and culture among other forms of oppression and opinion-buildings in the country is now vested in only a handful of people – those who own or control the media" (Kumar, 2016: 127). The industrial houses investing in media companies is a way to take control of the independence of the media. The vulnerability caused by monopolistic and oligopolistic tendencies of the market creates the crisis in the media industry. In other words, like the free market-driven neoliberal globalisation which is susceptible to crisis, the media market witnesses such a crisis due to market failures. During the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) of 2007-08, the media industry was also in the doldrums like any other economy sector. For instance, the New York Times was losing its advertising revenues during the crisis. Ram cites that The New York Times got bailed out with a US $250 million loan from an emerging Mexican billionaire Carlos Slim (Ram, 2011: 1). In other words, in the era of media globalisation, when the media became integral to global capitalism, adversities in the market impact the media industry too.

The content of the media is fastly changing due to the changing nature of ownership and control. The hegemony theory explains the reasons for the diversion of reality in the media content due to manufacturing the content (Sallach, 1974). Talking about the media in the western context, Chomsky argues that the elite media sets the agenda, and others generally follow (Chomsky, 1989: 7). The corporate ownership of the media denigrates the very idea of pluralism. The attack on media content directly bears on its diversity and media pluralism in general. The interests of the owners and advertisers prioritise readers' interests, thus denigrating the citizen's right to access truth through news. Media pluralism is in fact a reflection of social and political pluralism.

Corporatisation and Media Imperialism

The corporate influence over the media creates a situation of media imperialism related to information imperialism. Globalisation works on imperialistic persuasions. There is capital concentration in the information sector in advanced countries. In fact, both finance capital and information capital are controlled by the capitalist countries (Fuchs, 2010). The integration of national media to global media is intended to serve the interests of the market. The Transnational Corporations are controlling the flow of information. Media globalisation is part of information imperialism where "global influence of the neoliberal logic of accumulation by dispossession on media" (Fuchs, 2010: 48). Globalisation reinforces the idea of media imperialism as the advanced capitalist countries control it for perpetuating their hegemony (Boyd-Barrett, 2015). Media globalisation also witnessed a phenomenon of the separation of ownership and management control in the newspaper industry. John C Busterna says "The passing away of owner-managed, locally controlled newspapers to chain and corporate-managed newspapers will result in a greater concern for profits, perhaps with less concerns for local issues" (Busterna, 1989). Hazel Dicken-Garcia, Mass communication historian says, in corporate newspapers, "emphasis shifted from newspersons to news selling and an editor-centered personal structure gave way to corporatism, focused on advances in technology, increased competition, large circulations, diversification, and advertising as a means of profit" (Dicken-Garcia, 1989). Adam Smith's analysis of division of labour offers at least two major insights for the study of corporate newspaper structure. Larger, more complex newspapers would be expected to be more efficient, productive and profitable. And newspapers controlled by managers would be expected to place less emphasis on profits.

Media along with giant corporations strive for profit. Marx argued that competition would produce concentration of capital and ownership on a grand scale. Marx‘s analysis suggests that competition would be expected to promote the growth of large-scale newspaper organisations, since it stimulates innovation, reduces prices and throws the less efficient newspapers out of business. Lavine and Wackman suggest that one of the most important goals sought by newspapers is seeking or maintaining profits. Like all business organisations, newspapers must make a profit to remain viable as an organisation. Most

newspapers, like most business organisations, pursue other goals as well. These include knowing and serving the market; producing a high quality product or service; attracting, training, challenging, promoting and keeping the best possible employees; positioning the organisation to prosper in the future and protecting the company‘s franchise (Lavine and Wackman, 1998).

The growing influence of International Financial Institutions impacted the global media governance, adding a new dimension to communication theory. Moreover, not only the owners, but also most of the employees in the media have begun to see themselves as part of the corporate sector (Chatterjee, 2007: 64). The control of global capital on media can change the consciousness of the nation and implant a set of new values and aspirations suited to market goals (Chatterjee, 2007: 65). The concentration of industrial power and print media ownership is challenging the development of the global south. To tackle fierce competition, media firms adapted their business and corporate strategies accordingly (Doyle, 2002: 3).

The rampant marketisation of the media trivialises the public sphere and the deliberations. However, the “media‘s displacement from the public sphere to the marketplace is not just about profit motive but guided by deeper ideological consensus – neoliberal agenda” (Chatterjee, 2007: 65). In the Habermasian conception of the public sphere, the rational and rights-bearing and duties endowed citizens are engaged in public deliberation and sustain the vitality of the public sphere. When the market transforms citizens into consumers, the media systematically heads to serve and protect the needs of the market, instead of serving the citizens (Saeed, 2009: 471). The instances of concentration of media ownership is impacting the public sphere also. In fact, the democratic vision of the public sphere depends on removing the ownership concentration and egalitarian distribution of control (Barker, 2007: 7). It is argued that corporatization of media due to the market-driven initiatives, local content and technological advancement may create a feeling of expanding the public sphere. However, in reality, it is narrowing and striking the parameters of debate in ideological terms (Thussu, 2005: 65). Herman and Chomsky view that the neoliberal market ideology that strengthened the propaganda model's applicability weakened the public sphere (Herman and Chomsky, 1988: xviii). The

growing advertisement-driven media depoliticises the public sphere by creating a consumer culture. Since citizens are transformed into consumers, the public sphere has lost its vitality and liveliness.

Though globalisation has brought many positive changes in the media, the recurring corrupt practices in paid and fake news are tarnishing its image among the public. Media corruption not only degenerates it as a public institution delivering news as a public good, but also undermines democracy at large. The payment of money by candidates to representatives of media companies has been highlighted even in the PCI's report on paid news. Market-driven values erode media ethics. Media corruption also involves the process of mergers and acquisitions. Like state and bureaucratic corruption, corporate corruption too adversely impacts the media (Barker, 2007:29). When media products are turned into private goods, pressure on the media to access them leads to unscrupulous corruption. Since media consumption influences its audiences' behaviour (Barker, 2004), moral and ethical values are at stake. While analysing the future of the Print Media in India, Vanita Kohli-Khandekar argue that "paid news scandal and the print industry's abysmally sanguine reaction to it are not good portents for both the business and the ethical health of the industry" (Kohli-Khandekar, 2013:3).

Conclusion

Globalisation is marked by the restructuring of the state in economic development, especially in the economies of the global south. Though the State has withdrawn from many key areas, it still seems to be active in some other areas. However, in the media space, ―there is no clear evidence for a decline in the role of the state, but the state‘s role is changing in response to media globalisation and new developments in media, technology, business and consumption‖ (Flew, Iosifidis and Steemers, 2016: 8-9). In the age of media globalisation, media regulation has been a part of the national agenda of the state. The state has the potential to regulate the media either to protect the national media or cultural industries. The state‘s role in enforcing a communication policy, and exercising its sovereignty in regulating national media entry is recognised. However, with the state losing its capacity in controlling the media market, new challenges emerge. In the

contemporary world, the media is affected by the populist persuasions of politics. The anti-institutionalist stand of populism, projection of one leader as the saviour of all their problems, the advent of emotional political mobilisation in contrast to rational political action would influence the vitality of the media in democratic regimes (Holt, 2020).

There are two views on the impact of globalisation on the print media. According to the first view, the print media is declining in the age of globalisation due to its takeover by the electronic and social media. For instance, in the book, The Vanishing Newspaper, Philip Meyer, predicts that in the first quarter of 2043 newsprint would die in America (Meyer, 2009). On the other hand, it is argued that newspapers have not witnessed massive decline, as it is growing in India, China, Brazil and South Africa in contrast to the advanced countries. Their circulation and advertising revenues have increased. Technology has enabled the printing of colour pages, attracting more readers and advertisers. Richardson identified two-fold goals of the commercial logic of the newspapers market – "newspapers don't just sell copies they also sell advertising space; and the significant links between newspaper tiles (and types), capital generally generated from advertising revenue and audience cannot be overlooked" (Richardson, 2007:79).

Perhaps, the most disturbing currents of media globalisation is the deterioration of mass media as a propaganda machine and its capacity to filter news. Herman and Chomsky identified the five essential ingredients of the propaganda model of the media. Firstly, the size, concentrated ownership, ownership of wealth, and profit motive of the dominant mass media houses. Secondly, advertising has become the central source of avenue for the mass media. Thirdly, media is heavily dependent on government and experts for news information. Fourthly, ‘flak’ as a medium for disciplining the media; and lastly anti-communism has become a national religion and a mechanism for control (Herman and Chomsky, 1988: 2). Benjamin Barber asserts that finance capital is the driving force for religious fundamentalism, especially Islamic fundamentalism (Barber, 1996). Citing the Indian context, Prabhat Patnaik highlights that the ordinary people, who have been impoverished under the Corporate-Hindutva alliance propelled market reforms are being mobilised to Hindutva (Patnaik, 2019). He argues that the growing discontent against neoliberalism is being channelised to Hindu nationalist mobilisation (Patnaik, 2000: 246-

247). In a recent report, *The Economist* magazine explains 'virtual nationalism' and 'data sovereignty' as a trend that operates counter to the earlier 'cosmopolitan ideals' of the free and cross-border flow of knowledge and information (The Economist, 2020).

Chapter III

Indian Print Media: Growth and Transformations

Print media, in general, refers to a form of media that disseminates printed matter. It largely consists of newspapers, magazines and books (Odorume, 2012; Nehulkar, 2019). As a traditional form of media, print media has played a pivotal role in the development of communication (Patil, 2011). The emergence and development of print media revolutionised information dissemination and knowledge production in society. The advent of printing, the first communication revolution in world history, produced a large amount of printed books which made possible mass circulation among a large number of the people. Though printing contributed to the European domination of almost the rest of the world as it established print capitalism (Anderson, 1983), print media contributed to the production of knowledge and played an active role in creating national consciousness. In fact, the revolutionary vernacularisation thrust of capitalism in Europe contributed to national consciousness. Though the advent of printing resulted in a massive production of books, it did not encourage enough critical inquiry due to the domination of the Church, fearing that it would challenge its religious authority in society. As John Feather argues that "partly under the influence of the church, which was paramount in all intellectual life for more than a thousand years, enquiry and experimentation was discouraged" (Feather, 1996: 21). In course of time, printing broke the domination of religious authority of church in literature and facilitated further massification of religious literature. As Feather asserts that "variant texts of sacred and secular works alike could be edited and recoiled into a standard, accepted, version, which anyone could read and criticize" (Feather, 1996: 21). Though printing could open the wider horizon of the massification of literature, the church and state still exercised its control in the form of censorship on printing materials. The confrontation between the Catholics and Protestants in the middle of the sixteenth century, and the latter's commitment to individual freedom and liberty further facilitated the spread of printing. The advent of printing created a new national conscience which contributed to the emergence of the modern nation-state (Feather, 1996: 21; Anderson, 1983).

In his thesis on print capitalism and its relationship with nationalism in the western European context, Benedict Anderson argues that the commercial interest in publishing contributed to the spread of print media. The advent of printing loosened the control of the authority of the church and the grip of feudalism in regulating production. Printing contributed to the emergence of the capitalist mode of production and destroyed the vestiges of feudalism (Anderson, 1983). Eric Roll argues that "the loosening of the central doctrinal authority, caused by the Reformation, and the progress of the concept of natural law in jurisprudence and political thought prepared the ground for a rational and scientific approach to social problems; and the invention of printing created new possibilities of intellectual discourse" (Roll, 1953: 55). The invention of printing revolutionised the advent of photography and eroded the religious authority's control in knowledge production. The Industrial Revolution and the emergence of communication technologies updated the media and attracted the users to the media.

In the Indian context, the realm of print media and written communication underwent unprecedented transformation since prehistoric times. Its history often followed civilisation's progress, which in turn evolved in response to the changing technologies (Patil, 2011). The first signs of the emergence of the press in India were the writings on walls and stones which date back to centuries before Christ. One of the other oldest proof of the origins of the press is the edicts of the emperor Asoka renouncing violence which is available to this day (Natarajan, 1955). The concept of freedom of press in India can be located back to the Mughal Era. Mughal emperors like Aurangzeb granted great freedom for news reporting, though unreliable reports (Ray, 2009). According to Natarajan, the earliest forms of newspapers in India were newsletters. They were continuously issued during the Mughal period. Newsletters so issued were the sole source of information regarding the developments taking place in any part of the empire. It is believed that newsletters must have remained so till the arrival of the East India Company in India and they might have inspired the beginning of newspapers in colonial India (Natarajan, 1955).

However, unlike Europe and America, the modern printing press was introduced in India much later. In 1674, the first printing press in India was established in Bombay, followed by a second in 1772 in Madras and the third in 1779 in Calcutta. The history of

newspaper publication in colonial India started in the 18th century with an attempt by William Bolts in 1766 in Kolkata. He was a merchant of Dutch origin who was deported from Bengal to Madras for pasting a notice, citing the need for a printing press on the door of the council house in Calcutta (Natarajan, 1955; Ray, 2009). However, the *Bengal Gazette*, otherwise known as the *Calcutta General Advisor*, by James Augustus Hickey on 29 January, 1780 was the first newspaper in India. The newspaper was in English and was published on a weekly basis. It was generally devoted to the publication of rumour and gossip about the staff of the East India Company where he was employed as a clerk. His exposure of the private lives of the staff of the Company led to his imprisonment and closure of the newspaper in 1782 (Natarajan, 1955). The publication of the *Bengal Gazette* was followed by the publication of two other newspapers from the Madras and Bombay presidency. *Madras Courier* from the Madras presidency, published in 1785 and the *Bombay Herald* from the Bombay presidency, started four years after the publication of the *Madras Courier*, were the second and third newspapers to go down in the history of printing press in India. But all of them were short-lived and the circulation of these newspapers was limited to British residents as their news contents were primarily focused on the East India Company (Natarajan, 1955; Ray, 2009; Patil, 2011).

Print Media and Colonial Governmentality

During the colonial period the print media was under the larger British colonial machinery to suppress the national consciousness and resentment against the British. The colonial regime wanted to thwart the anti-colonial urge and the consciousness of the subjugated people. Though the British started printing press in the country, they were quite aloof to the emergence of newspapers in the states as they criticised their actions. The publishers were not granted any privileges apart from what existed in the general statute. There were no press laws to protect the freedom of the press and therefore the press was not free to print news as per their discretion. During the reign of the East India Company in India, stricter control and censorship were imposed on the press than during the Mughals. The rule of the Company in India was autocratic and their officers did not welcome any sort of criticism (Ray, 2009; Mudgal and Rana, 2020). Hence, after the controversial closure of the *Bengal Gazette*, the Company became very watchful about the contents of the

newspapers and started imposing several restrictions on the press and editors (Natarajan, 1955).

The enactment and imposition of stringent laws with a view to restrict the sovereignty of the press led to the prosecution of several editors and publishers. Measures like pre-censorship were imposed on the newspapers which requisitioned them to submit the content for scrutiny before publication. In 1795, censorship of the press came into force when a newspaper titled *The Madras Gazette* was asked to submit all its contents for scrutiny before publication. Similarly, in Bengal too several newspapers like *Indian World, Bengal Journal* and *Bengal Harkaru* invited displeasure of the Company authorities leading to the imposition of several legal restrictions on the press soon after. The May 1799 regulation requisitioned the newspapers to carry the names of the printer, editor and proprietor in every single issue along with scrutiny of all the contents before publication. However, most censorship rules were neither strictly followed nor enforced by the British at that time (Natarajan, 1955).

In 1818, several regulations called the Adams Regulations were introduced by the British to curb the freedom of the press. Though the regulations granted freedom to editors, it kept a strict surveillance on the content of the press. Ram Mohan Roy and James Buckingham started raising their voice for the freedom of the press. Later, pre-censorship was withdrawn but several other rules continued to remain to control the press (Natarajan, 1955). Further, the criticism levelled against the administration by the press led to the issuance of the First Press Ordinance in1823. The ordinance introduced regulations for editors and levied heavy fines and penalties upon infringement. The Company's staff were restrained from having any relation with the press. Though political writings were prohibited, socio-religious publications were encouraged. Christian missionaries were allowed to run publications which led to the establishment of newspapers and weeklies in Bengal such as *Samachar Darpan, Dig Darshan,* and the *Friend of India,* the precursor of *The Statesman.* However, things improved when William Benedict became the Governor General of India. Benedict showed a liberal attitude towards the press and a certain amount of freedom was guaranteed. Later, in 1835 when Charles Metcalfe became the Governor-General, many restrictions imposed on the press were relaxed (Natarajan, 1955). Annoyed

by the emergence of vernacular press and it‘s contribution to raising national consciousness, the British brought the Vernacular Press Act 1878 under the Viceroyalty of Lord Lytton to curb their freedom. In 1909, the Newspaper Act was passed. In 1910, the Indian Press Act was passed to curb the sentiments of the people of India.

No set pattern can be attributed to the shapes and formats the media acquired in India. However, as stated in the beginning, it is indisputable that the value of the press and its role got better clarity as part of the national awakening during the freedom struggle. Hence, the history of the media and the history of the freedom struggle are inseparable. The first initiative to start a newspaper in Calcutta was made by Mr. William Bolt an ex-employee of the British East India Company in 1776. It is viewed that "he had many things in manuscript to communicate which most intimately concerned every individual and this naturally gave rise to alarm in official quarters" (Natarajan, 1955). Needless to say, this evoked serious suspicion and eventually led to the deportation of Mr. Bolt back to Europe. The aftershocks prevented others from venturing into such an area and there were no attempts for a decade and more. However, in 1780, James Augutus Hicky initiated the Bengal Gazette or Calcutta General Advisor as a two sheet weekly, more or less in line with the dreams of Mr. Bolt. This venture was focussed in dealing with the private lives of East India Company servants. Bolt was still in the blue. The adventure led Hicky to trouble and he was sentenced to a year's imprisonment along with a fine of Rupees two thousand. Mr. Hicky was relentless in his mission and he continued with his pursuit even in jail without any amends. This, obviously, made the authorities furious and led to the seizure of the paper which brought a curtain over Hicky's career.

The India Gazette in 1780, The Calcutta Gazette in 1784, Bengal Journal in 1785 and the Oriental Magazine in the same year, and the Calcutta Chronicle in 1786, ushered in an ambience in favour of publications. There were efforts in Madras and Bombay too. The first newspaper in Madras, The Madras Courier by Richard Johnson came into existence in 1785. In 1789, The Bombay Herald, Bombay’s first newspaper, was launched. The Courier followed a year later and then Bombay Gazettestarted publishing in 1791. Attempts to distance from authorities by the publications had their impact on the survival of many pioneers. William Duane who was the Editor of ‘Bengal Journal‘ in 1791 was accused of

publishing a false report on the death of Lord Cornwallis in the Maratha War and he was prosecuted and was removed from editorship. His enthusiasm could not be doused and he went on to launch another publication called Indian World but eventually he was also sent back to England in 1794.

Christian missionaries forayed into publications and they went ahead in giving reflections to the moods of the public. The British administrators did not like this but they got away because of their ecclesiastical status. The first Indian to launch a newspaper was Gangadhar Bhattacharjee and he started his 'Bengal Gazette' during the time of Hastings. The efforts by the missionaries cannot be missed as publications like 'Dig-Darshan', 'Samachar Darpan' and 'Friend of India' were launched by the Serampore order. The 1880s witnessed many uproars against the regulations on the media. Lord Hastings abruptly ended the press censorship that was prevalent under the auspices of the official press censor. The new rule that was introduced was in favour of the publications where Lord Hastings brought the burden of responsibility on to the shoulders of editors. However, the authority of the government or to act against the public interest was insulated from the newspapers. This was another form of restriction on the freedom of the media. Bombay and Madras had a plethora of regulations imposed from time to time considering the growing clout of publications. The importance of two personalities, James Silk Buckhingam and Raja Rammohan Roy cannot be missed because their efforts were significant in laying the foundation for the freedom of press in India. Buckhingam, the editor of 'Calcutta Journal' which had eight pages and published twice a week has his own version of editorial policy. He said he was responsible for admonishing Governors for failing in their duties and warned them furiously against telling falsehoods (Natarajan, 1955: 17). It is noteworthy to mention that he edited his paper with courage till 1823. Despite being deported, the spirit in him could not be killed. Back in England, his 'The Oriental Herald' exposed India's administration with a missionary zeal. Rammohan Roy had a normative approach towards the role of the press and he considered truth to be its main pursuit. His publications 'The Brahminical Magazine' (English), the 'Sambad Kamudi' (Bengali) and the 'Mirat-ul-Akbar' (Persian) swore this as their goal.

Interestingly, there was a constructive discourse between Buckingham and Rammohan Roy and their collaboration laid a firm basis for media freedom in the country. In fact, this also lent a philosophy for the media as to its role in the freedom struggle. The abolition of pre-censorship and the benevolent postures of Lord Hastings had an enduring effect and also enriched the growth of present India. The new dictum that the free press was essential for improving the apparatus of administrative streams found wider acceptance. However, after the term of Hastings, John Adam became the new Governor General and he held a contrary view. He observed that "I cannot imagine a greater political absurdity than a government controlled by the voice of its own servants" (Barns, 1940). In short, he had no faith in a free press. A new ordinance issued brought in immense control over the press, wherein every violation was met with fine and imprisonment. This was also made applicable in cities like Bombay and Madras. Rammohan Roy had serious reservations regarding the new regulations and he along with other leaders approached the Supreme Court. The appeal was rejected but he went upto the King in Council, against the press regulations. As this also was rejected, as a mark of protest, Rammohan Roy stopped publication of Mirat-ul-Akbar. A new phenomenon of launching publications in vernacular languages came into existence. Publications in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Urdu, and Hindi came into existence.

The advent of publications had reciprocal actions from authorities as many steps were taken to ensure that controls were exercised on publishing materials. The first decades of the 19th century saw Marques of Wellesly bringing in rigid control, which Marques of Hastings later relaxed. He issued guidelines to the press to submit proof sheets, notes, handbills etc. for scrutiny and perusal. Though this was very much a measure of censorship, the publishers then considered them to be tangible relaxations.

Though the history of Indian media started along with the European invasion, the real discourse began with the freedom movement. Indian freedom fighters considered print media as part and parcel of the struggle against the British. Numerous print media units sprung up across the country in different languages with the cardinal cause of building resistance against the colonial rule. The freedom movement in India was not homogenous, and there were differing perspectives on various fronts. At the same time, the media was

looked upon to be an agency to have synthesised so that the larger course was not affected. Mahatma Gandhi was greatly convinced about the media's positive role, and his own publications proved his perspective and the concept of a media entity. Jawaharlal Nehru once said: “I would rather have a completely free press with all the dangers involved in the wrong use of that freedom than a suppressed or a regulated press.” Nehru‘s words underline the philosophy adopted by the Indian leaders, at that point in time, towards the status of the media. In fact, national leaders with their exposure to the Western world held a progressive view regarding the role of the media. Nevertheless, they were convinced that the Indian media would be responsive enough to support the various causes espoused by the freedom struggle.

Growth of Indian Newspapers

Despite the mounting regulation of press freedom, the 19th century was remarkable for the emergence and growth of Indian newspapers in India. It witnessed the establishment of a host of Indian newspapers which particularly focused on diverse socio-political issues of the time other than reporting the affairs of the British administration. *Samachar Darpan*, published in 1818 in Bengali, was the first local and regional language newspaper published in India. The oldest newspaper of Asia, the *Bombay Samachar*, was started in 1822 (Patil, 2011). Moreover, journalism at that time assumed an activist‘s role by vigorously campaigning against the existing social evils like child marriage, Sati and thereby emerged as a tool for social reforms and the creation of public opinion on issues like education and widow remarriage. Realising the potential of newspapers, Ram Mohan Roy spearheaded social reform movements through his newspapers titled *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* in Persian and *Sambad Kaumudi* in Bengali in1822 and the Brahmanical Magazine in 1821 (Mudgal and Rana, 2020). The print media became instrumental in social awakening and social movements across colonial India. An apt case in point would be the Civil Rights movement in the 19th century in the erstwhile Travancore, in the present state of Kerala. It was mainly through publications that the marginalised Ezhava community leaders urged the community members to assert and educate them about the value of civic rights. The publications of marginalised communities, particularly those of the Ezhavas, Christians and Muslims, played a pivotal role in the transformation of the state into a democratic

polity. They served as a vehicle for communicating their ideas and objectives.

The Indian language press made rapid strides by publishing in several regional languages. Newspapers started in Urdu and Persian languages won many readers in north-western India. Moreover, Gujarati and Marathi newspapers too started getting published. Furthermore, newspapers in other regional languages like Hindi, Malayalam, Kannada, Tamil, Oriya, and Punjabi appeared around 1850 or later (Natarajan, 1955). The *Malayala Manorama* and *Mathrubhumi* in Kerala, *Gujarat Samachar* and *Sandesh* in Gujarat, *Rajasthan Patrika* and *Dainik Bhaskar* in Rajasthan played critical roles in the nationalist movement. Later, the press gradually became a powerful tool in promoting the freedom movement across the country by spreading liberal notions and moulding public opinion to shape the country's destiny and protect the citizens' rights and liberties (Ray, 2009). The publication of newspapers by towering personalities of the freedom movement contributed to national awakening and the development of an anti-colonial attitude among the people.

The emergence and development of print media has a historic record as it evolved through various critical phases of evolution and expansion of the Indian state. In India, the modern press began with the advent of European civilisation. Portuguese were the first Europeans to introduce the printing press in India (Ray, 2009). Mass media was influenced by major ideological trends of the nationalist movement such as liberalism, socialism and free market ideology. During the nationalist movement, the media played a critical role in developing the idea of an India based on secular, inclusive and modern rational values. However, the history of print media in India is largely associated with India‘s freedom movement and the sterling role they played in shaping public opinion and channelizing the energy of the Indian people in their quest for freedom. Ram identified three distinct phases of the Indian print media. Firstly, based on the cherished history of Indian freedom struggle, where it stood against political and social oppression and as vanguard for emancipation. Secondly, it manifested the values of diversity and pluralism and thirdly, the sharp ideological and political divides – secular democratic and right wing Hindutva nationalist ideologies (Ram, 2011: 6).

During the nationalist movement, the first newspaper, *The Bengal Gazette*, was published on 29 January 1780 by James Augustus Hicky, also called the *Hicky's Gazette*. In 1818, *Samachar Darpan,* in Bengali began publication. This was followed in 1822 by

the *Bombay Samachar*, the Gujarati Newspaper published from Bombay. In 1854, *Samachar Sudha Varshan*, the first Hindi newspaper was brought out. Subsequently, The Hindu (1887), The Tribune (1880), The Times of India (1861), The Pioneer (1866), The Amrita Bazar Patrika (1868), The Statesman (1875) followed. Though private individuals owned these newspapers, they assumed a nationalistic character, not driven explicitly by motive of profit, but rather committed to the larger political and social cause. The larger goal of the print media was social and political emancipation of the Indian people. Bengal's cultural and intellectual tradition and the social reform movements influenced the exponential growth of print media in Bengal. During the nationalist phase, the print media became part of the cultural awakening and struggle for independence and was also instrumental in bringing reforms within the Hindu community by fighting against evil practises, and social taboos.

The Urdu newspaper, *Al Hilal* by Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, the Bengali newspaper *Bande Matram* by B. C. Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh and the Marathi newspaper, *Kesari* by B.G. Tilak helped in generating national sentiments against colonialism. In 1920, Ambedkar started the publication of *Mooknayak* and four other periodicals such as *Bahishikrit Bharat, Janata, Samata, and Prabuddha Bharata* with the aim of inculcating national consciousness and emancipation. Gandhi started weeklies such as *Navajivan, Harijan, and Young India,* which further boosted the print media during the nationalist movement. Gandhi insisted that print media generates national consciousness and mobilises the upper middle class and the common people.

Kalyan Chatterjee highlights the role of the media in the creation of national imagination during the nationalist movement as it created a national consciousness among Indians (Chatterjee, 2016: 237). Media played an important role in imagining the nation, the formation of the state and its political institutions and practices. The print media played a vital role in instilling national consciousness and shaping the ideology and philosophy of inclusive nationalism. The goal of the nationalist movement was not limited to political freedom but also extended to the social, cultural and economic spheres. Print media emerged as the powerful weapon for national imagination for freedom of India. Media acted as an instrument of political education and propaganda and enshrined diversity and

pluralism in society.

The noted media personality BRP Bhaskar narrates that there were two categories of newspapers during the colonial rule, those under British ownership and those under Indian ownership (Bhaskar, 2005: 19). The newspapers that Britishers owned legitimised the colonial regimes and the native press stood for national consciousness and freedom. Closer to independence, a leading industrialist, G.D. Birla, obtained controlling shares in. *The Hindustan Times*. According to Bhaskar, "it marked the beginning of industrialists' incursion into the nationalist press as well" (Bhaskar, 2005: 20). Though the Indian print media had a close relationship with powerful business houses, that latter did not see any contradiction of conflict of interest in delivering media as a public good and to achieving their profit motive (Mehta, 2014: 56). In other words, while aiming at profit motives, the business houses did not compromise on their social and political goals.

Nationalistic Persuasion of the Indian Media

The press in India, particularly the vernacular press, was in the forefront of India's struggle for freedom. Many national leaders who had started their own publications used their newspapers to invoke national sentiment among the people, thereby ensuring their participation in the freedom struggle. And that was the precise reason that forced the Colonial administration to employ every weapon in its armoury to silence the nationalist press (Patil, 2011). The set of rules and regulations that colonial administration came up with at the time of the revolt of 1857 were primarily aimed at restricting the press. One such law was the 'Ganging Act" of 1857 (Natarajan, 1955). The year 1857 is important for journalism in India to note that the newspapers owned by the British and Indians were separated (Mudgal and Rana, 2020).

After the revolt of 1857, Queen Victoria became the Empress of India. The nationalist leaders were demanding greater participation in the administrative affairs of India. Journals and newspapers were reporting news and comments on the same. Lord Lytton imposed the Vernacular Press Act in March 1878 to control the Indian language newspapers; he was concerned by the increasing impact of the writings in the press. The law came down heavily on the press imposing a host of restrictions. Under this Act, district

magistrates and police commissioners were empowered to force publishers and the printers of newspapers to agree and not publish certain kinds of content, demand security, and confiscate printed matter that they deemed objectionable (Natarajan, 1955). Apart from the imposition of the Vernacular Press Act, numerous other draconian laws were introduced and imposed on the press in the second half of the 19th century. They include the enactment of the India Official Secrets Act (1889), Press and Registration of Books Act, and Sections 124-A and 505 of the IPC, Defence of India Rules, Post Office Act, Sea Customs Act etc., which created tremendous difficulties for the press (Natarajan, 1955).

Though the growth of the press received a serious setback after the revolt of 1857, it failed to suppress the growth and development of the press in India. This was evident from the establishment of a number of Indian language newspapers after 1860**.** Many newspapers, namely, *Patriot, Nil Darpan, Indian Mirror, Shome Prakash and Bengalee*, influenced public opinion to a great extent. The sphere of journalism in India transformed radically with the publication of *Amrit Bazar Patrika*, first in Bengali and then in English around this time. It has to be noted that several English language newspapers got established in India during this period. With the convergence of four newspapers - *The Bombay Time, The Courier, The Standard* and *The Telegraph, The Times of India* came into being. Further, three more English newspapers namely, *The Pioneer, Civil and Military Gazette* and *The Statesman* were also established. In Madras, *The Mail* and *The Hindu* came into existence soon after. This period saw a boom in the Indian language press in the country, Bengali language newspapers were at forefront followed by other languages like Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Punjabi etc (Natarajan, 1955). There were 11 Urdu newspapers and 8 Hindi newspapers in 1861, which further increased by 1870. In Bombay, there were about 62 vernacular newspapers; in North-West Provinces, Oudh and the Central Provinces, there were about 60 newspapers; Bengal had around 28; and Madras (Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Hindustani) had 19 newspapers. There were around one lakh readers and the highest circulation for any one newspaper was around 3000 (Ray, 2009). Many intellectuals, thinkers and political leaders of the time were associated with English and Indian language newspapers. Most of the eminent journalists were freedom fighters. Several newspapers such as *Bande Matram* (Hindi), *Kesari* and *Maratha* (Marathi) *Swadesamitran* (Tamil), *Amar Bazar Patrika, National*

Herald, Free Press Journal, Bombay Chronicle, The Leader, The Tribune, Madras Standards, The Hitavada, and a lot of other papers in English came to existence. Moreover, a number of Indian language newspapers of the time enjoyed reputation and greater circulation. Periodical journalism started around this time.

The intervening period between the First and Second World Wars witnessed proliferation of Indian newspapers especially in English and Hindi. During World War II, the press initially rendered support to the British Government, but later differences arose about reporting war news in the newspapers. As a result, the government later brought a notification which prohibited all forms of news publication which can directly or indirectly instigate opposition to the war. In the wake of all these developments, the All India Newspapers' Editors Conference (AINEC) was established with a view to uphold the standards of journalism and safeguard the freedom of publication (Natarajan, 1955).

Print Media and the Nationalism Discourse

The idea of nation and nationalism attracted any number of scholars, historians, sociologists, political scientists to unfold the intricacies and nuances involved in those ideas and the processes involved. On the one hand, the advocates of nationalism argued that the national consciousness existed always, scholars, on the other hand, argue that the idea of nationalism is essentially a modern construction, exists across the nations and yet it is impossible to define what it is (Anderson: 1983 intro). From Ernest Renan to Benedict Anderson they have tried to understand nationalism from various perspectives. Since the publication of *Imagined Communities* in 1983, it has created an unending debate among social scientists across the world. Anderson's idea of 'imagined communities' conceptualised provides us with many entry points to understand the origin of nationalism and its consciousness. Anderson's contribution of understanding nationalism and the importance of media is immensely helping us to understand the imagined community and the way it gets produced in a particular nation. For Anderson, nation is a politically imagined community, and it is imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. He further argues that it is imagined community because even the members of the smallest nation will never know each other, they would not know most of their people, they would

have never met each other, neither they would have heard each other, yet in the soul and minds of each member lies the image of their communion (Anderson 1983: 6). According to Anderson, nationalism was imagined in three different ways or levels. The first peculiarity of imagination of a nation is its nature i.e. limitedness. According to him, nation and nationalism are essentially limited in their nature. It can't be universal. Secondly, the nation is sovereign. According to him, it was imagined as sovereign because nationalism was born in the age of "Enlightenment and Revolution", which destroyed the old order and beliefs and questioned the religious authority, kingship, and demanded freedom (Anderson 1983: 46). He argued that the third and final point was that nations imagined themselves as a community. He argued that violence exists among the people of a nation that doesn't stop them from dying for their respective nation despite inequality. This kind of sentiment according to Anderson was the product of a particular culture that has been produced after the rise of 'print capitalism'. Print capitalism produces and reproduces books, journals, and newspapers. These kinds of productions create a particular kind of identification with the past and dissemination of it through media creates a sense of belonging.

Anderson further argues that “the convergence of capitalism and print technology on the fatal diversity of human language created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, which in its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation. The potential stretch of these communities was inherently limited, and at the same time, bore none but the most fortuitous relationship to existing political boundaries” (Anderson 1983: 46). Anderson formulated three kinds of modular nationalism: Creole of America, Linguistic nationalism of Europe, and Russifying nationalism. He not only identifies that form of modular nationalism but went on to propound that this modular form becomes easily available for other intelligentsia such as colonial intelligentsia to emulate the so-called west and their idea of nationalism. Anderson noted that this becomes modular because: “Americans and Europeans had lived through complex historical experiences which were now everywhere modularly imagined, and because the European languages-of- state they employed were the legacy of imperialist official nationalism” (Anderson 1983: 113).

Partha Chatterjee's Critique of 'Modular form' of Nationalism

Anderson's modular theory argued that the third world countries or colonised world merely imitated the coloniser's methods, was criticised by Chatterjee in his work Nations and its Fragments. Chatterjee while situating him from one camp, the Asian/Indian nationalism camp asked: "if nationalisms in the rest of the world have to choose their imagined community from certain 'modular' forms already made available to them by Europe and the Americas, what do they have left to imagine?" (Chatterjee 1993: 5). This is true in a sense the colonised subject must have their own imaginations of being a nation, and not merely imitating the West. Partha Chatterjee invoked the anti-colonial struggle, which he called 'anti-colonial nationalism' to criticise Anderson. According to him, Asia and Africa's nationalism was not in the line of identity, but with the 'difference'. Therefore, he said that we cannot reduce this struggle as merely a 'caricature' (Chatterjee, 1993: 5). Chatterjee argued that the anti-colonial struggle creates its sovereignty, away from western influence. He divides two domains of the colonial world/India: material and spiritual. Material domain, according to him, was dominated by the superiority of the west, while, the spiritual domain was represented by the anti-colonial struggle, which he saw as essential markers of 'cultural identity' (Chatterjee, 1993: 6). According to him the sovereignty of anti-colonialism lay in the cultural domain. It is important to bring Anderson's argument here. According to Anderson, sovereignty was in western nationalism the freedom and modernity which questions the old order of kingship, and religious authority, which I had referred to earlier. Chatterjee on the other hand argued that sovereignty of Asian (read Indian) nationalism is spiritual or 'cultural identity', which the western world has discarded long back with the advent of 'enlightenment and revolution'. Chatterjee goes on to speak of 'national culture' without defining what this culture means in the Indian context. Since India has no homogenous culture, it is important to ask which culture is Indian and which is not. However, he agreed with Anderson that print media played an important role in shaping or imagining nationalism (Chatterjee 1993).

Gopal Guru, another political theorist, brought an important intervention to the debate on nationalism, especially in the context of Partha Chatterjee and others. He brought a unique position of nationalist thought beyond the discourse of desi and derivative. He argued that with the desi and derivative discourse there is a third alternative discourse which is 'beyond', i.e. the Dalit discourse. According to Guru both desi and derivative discourse of nationalist thought do not give a place for the Dalits, or their concerns. For instance, Guru wrote, the internal structure of nationalist thought as argued by Chatterjee and endorsed by Kaviraj is extremely complex because according to these scholars it contains critiques within critiques. While there is no problem in accepting the validity of this reading of nationalist thought, the associative problem of this critique within the critique "is that it does not exhaust its logic in the sense that it pays rhetorical attention rather than offering substantive treatment to the question of caste" (Guru, 2011:36-43). Apart from the two discourses of desi and derivative, Guru pointed out another alternative discourse of nationalism which exists in India. This alternative imagination comes from Phule to Ambedkar to Periyar. While Phule saw the kingdom of Bali, the mythical peasant king, Ambedkar visualised Prabuddha Bharat, the enlightened India. According to him the discourse and the language the Dalit movement deployed in its initial phase is negative such as Ambedkar usages of Bahiskrut Bharat (ostracised India), but they later transcend this negative language to universal language.

Print Media in the Post Independent India

Recognising the role the press played during the freedom movement and its future potential to be an active player in development of the nascent nation state, the Government of India set up various commissions and came up with policies for the growth and development of press in the country (Press in India Report, 2019-20). The "Indian Nationalist saw the establishment and enhancement of the Indian Nation as the aim of the media and the principal criterion for assessing it" (Rajagopal 2009:11). The emergence of the press as a powerful social institution and acknowledging its potential to be one of the major players in the nation's socio-political development in the modern era came to be called the 'Fourth Estate' (Ray, 2009). Press is one of the most significant information institutions that can ensure transparency in decision making, rendering and gathering

public information. Joseph Stiglitz talks about the function of the media in enhancing and ensuring transparency and openness of the governmental process (Stiglitz, 2002: 43).

In independent India, the media was considered to be free; the country and its leadership had envisaged a proactive role for the press, especially in areas like social and economic emancipation. The leaders of the time were emphatic about this creative course and a reflection can be seen in the First Press Commission Report: "While the primary function of the press is to provide comprehensive and objective information on all aspects of the country's social, economic, political and cultural life, it has also educative and mobilising role". This philosophy was prevalent in all important arenas of national life. This was underlined by the Supreme Court when in the Ramesh Thapar v/s State of Madras the Supreme Court stressed on the values of freedom of press in a democratic society. A clear reading of the adjudication of the Supreme Court also gives clarity to the expectations at that time. Nobody imagined a scenario where the press would tread on a path which is against the democratic life of the nation. In fact, various institutions held similar views about the media in different ways. A free media was looked upon as an imperative to lay a strong foundation for a democratic India.

Post independent India witnessed enormous growth of the print media, which emerged as an important instrument in modernisation of the socio-cultural, economic and political landscape. It emerged as a significant apparatus for social change and obligation. The media acted as the pushing factor for the state in its modernisation project. The media's role in promoting public reasoning and scientific temper constituted an integral part of the project of Nehruvian nationalist agenda. In a traditional society like India, the media is expected to infuse rational values and cultivate scientific temperament among the people. This would help in the pace of modernisation from the traditional social structure. The indigenous press and nationalism were more interactive as they promoted inclusive and secular nationalism. The print media that was instrumental in India's democratic transition from the British also played a critical role in democratic consolidation. It instilled critical consciousness and public reasoning, reflecting the diversity and pluralism of the country. Given the diversities, the national media strived for the promotion of inclusive nationalism and its rational values. It acted as the bridging mechanism between

the elite and the masses, between the urban and rural people, in the process of national reconstruction. Thus, the print media played a critical role in nation-building and institution building.

The print media acted as the pillar of the developmental state of the Nehruvian model within the ideological framework of Nehruvian socialism. In other words, the media established a close relationship with the Nehruvian model of development. The public media had more backing of the Nehruvian protectionism and regulatory mechanism. In the early decades of independence, media was heavily dependent on the state. Government advertisements mostly of developmental schemes and infrastructural projects and welfare, contributed the main source of revenue for newspapers. The media played a crucial role in development and public policy making. In his path-breaking study of famine in India, Sen argues that the emergence of the free press had a direct bearing on controlling famine after independence. The free press exposes the government's failures and brings issues to its attention, helping it address them. A free press contributes to the development of the country and exposes the failures of public policy and the mismanagement of the government of the day.

The growth of print media in post independent India has a certain amount of continuity and change. Nilanjana Gupta says that "much of post-independence media development in India was based on the framework set down by the British", family connections, state involvement, and interest groups (Gupta, 2002). In the post-independence period, the big business families such as Birlas, Tatas, Goenkas and Jains controlled the print media. Though the state didn't have direct involvement in the print media's governance, the release of advertisements was a powerful method for indirect government financing. Since the state was the storehouse of resources and the chief engine of development, it had to advertise its programmes and policies through the print media, adding revenue for the newspapers. The Indian Language Newspapers Association (1941), the All India Federation of Working Journalists (1951) and the Press Guild of India (1965) were bodies formed to protect the interests of journalists in the print media. The government appointed wage board undertakes periodic wage negotiations with the involvement of various representative bodies. It is argued that "big business houses such

as the Birlas definitely had an advantage over the others given their access to financial resources and political connections with the ruling Congress party but also because of the unrivalled economic power that they enjoyed" (Thomas, 2010:62). It is also contended that the political bias of the print media is due to the political class's relationship with the owners of the newspapers (Gupta, 2002: 185). While endorsing this argument, Reddy argues that "in print, ownership has traditionally been in the hands of closely held family enterprises, many of which had direct or indirect links with the political parties" (Reddy, 2019: 191).

As Bhaskar maintains, the control and ownership of Indian print media by the native bourgeois after independence, raised concerns about the freedom of press as there were apprehensions of "the Fourth Estate ending up as an appendage of big business, cutting out diversity of opinion and endangering press freedom" (Bhaskar, 2005: 21). However, the native Indian bourgeoisie which took control of the English newspapers maintained its nationalist fervour in the immediate post-independence period. In fact, the ownership and control of the media in the post-independence era was in tandem with the interest of the native bourgeois against the foreign bourgeois in protecting the nationalist interest of postcolonial India. Like any other sector of the economy during the Nehruvian period, they sought more protectionism from the state. Even the Indian Federation of Working Journalists (IFWJ), founded in 1950 as a professional organisation of journalists, had to demand state intervention to check monopolistic trends and ensure freedom of the press. However, some form of monopolistic tendencies manifested in the Indian press, under state supervision. However, the newly drafted constitution did not explicitly emphasise the freedom of press in India. As a result, since the 1950s, the state had a monopoly over the media in terms of its governance, regulation and control. It is argued that "the state has played an extensive role in establishing policies related to media regulation and reform" (Thomas, 2010: 25). The Government of India in 1953, appointed a Press Commission chaired by Justice G. S. Rajadhyaksha under the Commission of Inquiry Act, 1952 to inquire into the state of press in India and recommended the indigenisation of Indian press both in capital and staff, especially at the higher level. It also examined the management and ownership structure of newspapers. The First Press Commission reflects the nationalist ethos and more connivance with the philosophy and

ideology of the new constitution and its principles. Emerging under the shadow of state protectionism, it reflects the existing wider social and political consensus in democracy.

Like any other public institution which evolved during the nationalist movement and formally took the Indian ground after independence, the press has certain political, social and economic goals. Like other institutions, it is built on democratic values, societal goals and upholding rational and secular values and pluralist life. It also enriches the sovereignty of the people and the state. It is argued that even though private individuals and families set up and controlled the print media starting from nationalist movement and post-independence period, upto 1960s, the media reflected a "pan-India" ideological representation (Nair, 2003: 4183). Since the 1960s, regional interests, identity politics and regional parties forced the media to adopt a regional orientation. It is argued that in the 1960s, "the regional press began to align with the regional political classes to provide support to the regional cause" (Neyazi, 2011: 77).

As discussed earlier, the press in India has a glorious past which was intertwined with the freedom movement in India. In India, the press has been working as a watchdog of the government in power, right from its inception back in the colonial times (Rodrigues, 2010). Newspapers in pre-independent India were published with the sole objective of furthering the ideology of their publisher. Therefore, it is not surprising to see a lot of national leaders and social reformers venturing into publication of their own newspapers (Mudgal and Rana, 2020). Newspapers' pro-freedom struggle maintained an anti-colonial stance till 1947. The approach of newspapers changed gradually after independence (Patil, 2011).

The promotion of free thinking, exchange of ideas and debates are essential to ensure democratic functioning of the government. Therefore, the Press after independence was accorded paramount importance and thereby deemed as an essential element of democracy in the country. Even though the Constitution of India does not contain any specific provision on the freedom of the press, the Supreme Court of India at the earliest opportunity, declared such a right for the media in 1950 itself (Ray, 2009). Apart from the provision and promotion of freedom of expression in post Independent India, attempts

were made to make use of the mass media to promote the unity and integrity of the nascent nation state by informing, educating and mobilising the people and seeking their participation in the socio-political development of the country. Therefore, after independence, the press actively took part in the government's developmental efforts by talking about the plans and policies adopted by the Government of India. When five-year plans were initiated in India, the newspapers made the public aware of the plan and how they could benefit from it through their writings (Patil, 2011).

Even though the situation changed for the better after India gained independence and the function of the press in a democratic country was underlined, the first three decades after independence witnessed the government exercising a certain degree of control over the functioning of the press through direct and indirect means (Rodrigues, 2010). It was in this context that the first Press Commission was constituted. The main objectives of the first Press Commission 1954, were particularly to examine the financial structure, management and ownership of the newspaper and periodicals, curb the effect of monopolistic tendencies in the industry that can hamper the presentation of fair and factual news, to uphold the freedom of press and annulment and amendment of laws that hinder it, enquire into the method of recruitment and remuneration and other benefits for journalists, machinery to minimise the external influence on healthy journalism and ensure and promote higher standards of journalism. It highlighted the conflicting relationship between the management and editors and the declining status, independence of the editor and the devaluation of the editor‘s office. It also highlighted that the media should be regulated and restrained from influencing the public.

The major recommendations made in the report included: the establishment of a Press Council, to act as watchdog and promote high standards in journalism along with the protection of the freedom of the press; a Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI) to be appointed in order to maintain account of the press and position every year, introduction of price-page schedule to protect small newspapers from competition, constitution of a Press Consultative Committee to maintain cordial relations between the Press and the Government, Constitution of Newspaper Financial Corporation to restrict the monopolistic tendencies among the newspaper organisations, enactment of the Working Journalists Act,

the recommendation to convert the Press Trust of India into a corporation, among others (Press Commission of India Report, 1954). The subsequent years witnessed the implementation of most of the recommendations by the Government of India. The establishment of the Press Council of India in 1966, appointment of the RNI in 1956, passing the Working Journalists Act in 1955 and setting up wage boards for the industry were some of the remarkable achievements of the first Press Commission.

Regional Surge of Print Media

The 1960s witnessed the Congress Party's crisis and the emergence of regional parties in some states. The Fourth general election in 1967 was significant in the sense that it articulated regional consciousness and moulded regional identity in India and marked the emergence of regional politics. Regional parties critically depended on regional newspapers for communication between the leaders and parties. For example, in Tamil Nadu, regional parties strike a strong rapport with the regional press for their political mobilisation and regional assertion. The regional newspapers acted as the image builder for the local leadership emerging at the state levels. Since the 1970s, India has witnessed the increasing number and circulation of newspapers, especially regional ones. Jeffrey identified five reasons for the mushroom growth of vernacular newspapers – improved technology, literacy, adequate purchasing power, aggressive publishers, politicisation of larger sections of the population especially in the Hindi areas (Jeffrey, 1993: 2004). Tara S. Nair connects the emergence of the press to the larger democratisation in India. According to her, between the 1960s and the 1990s, the “movement of politics” shifted away from the centre to the states, the emergence of local interest, changing the role of the print media in India (Nair, 2003).

In the southern state of Kerala, the newspaper reading habit of the people and the massification of the vernacular newspapers generated critical consciousness, public reasoning and people's political participation. In Kerala, newspapers played a vital role in shaping its world acclaimed development model. By creating inclusive ground for public action, political mobilisation, strengthening inter-community relations, and acting as the link with radical mobilisation and progressive politics, newspapers contributed to its social

development and political democratisation (Jeffrey, 2009). The news content of these papers sensitised people, took up their issues concerning governance, and contributed to participatory democracy (Ramachandran, 1996: 206). Jeffrey even highlighted the popularisation of newspapers, and the reading culture of the Malayalees led to the emergence of 'print communism' in Kerala (Jeffrey, 2009). In neighbouring Tamil Nadu, vernacular regional papers carried rational ideas and developmental issues and generated regional consciousness and autonomy, which contributed to its social development and strengthened Indian federalism with more powers to the states. In Andhra Pradesh and to a certain extent in Karnataka, vernacular press articulated the regional aspirations of the people and tried to strengthen regional political parties.

The 1970s were eventful in the history of print media in various respects. It witnessed ups and downs alike in the decade. The advent of electronic media and the establishment of the state owned-television channel came in 1972. The status of the sole news provider enjoyed by print media declined with the advent of the radio earlier and later on by the television. The print media had to reinvent themselves to combat the challenges from new technology. A notable improvement was the use of advanced technology for colour printing. Apart from that, publishers resorted to more localised news and entertainment-based content to attract their readers (Jeffrey, 2000; Mudgal and Rana, 2020). The advancements taking place on the technological fronts led to a readership battle between print media and the new electronic media. However, they survived the challenges posed by the electronic media by adapting to changing consumer demands and adopting the new technologies to reinvent themselves thereby retaining their readership. They grew to become an industry during the1970s (Jeffrey, 2000; Mudgal and Rana, 2020). Even in the face of new technologies they could retain their position as a credible and authentic source of information by producing more elaborate, investigative and interpretative contents. They took up the social responsibility for educating the masses by revealing the government's functioning and the policies they adopted (Mudgal and Rana, 2020).

Emergency and Curtailment of Press Freedom

On 25 January 1975, national emergency was declared and the Indira Gandhi government imposed censorship on the media curtailing press freedom. The emergency period (1975-77) and the period that followed also brought about extreme changes in the way the press functioned. The friction and embitterment between the press and government resulted in the suspension of the freedom of speech and press during the emergency period, 1975-77. The government suspiciously watched the media's role in political actions, movements and protests, especially in the context of the J. P. movement. Censorship consequent to the imposition of internal emergency contributed to the dwindling performance of the print media in the seventies. After the lifting of the emergency in 1977 and the formation of a new government, the press could resume its growth (Jeffrey, 2000; Patil, 2011). The lifting of the censorship of the press after the end of the emergency in 1977 gave a new boost to the growth of the press in India (Rodrigues, 2010).

In the late 1970s, India witnessed the boom of the regional press influenced by the communications revolution. Dainik Bhaskar, with its 20 editions, spread to eight states. India is a land of language presses where numerous newspapers – local and regional – integrated into human consciousness and the imagination of everyday life. The growth of Hindi media gave a new direction to the communication revolution. It decentralised the newspaper production, distribution, and consumption and introduced new lifestyles and local news coverage. The increasing circulation of Hindi newspapers added new avenues for dailies through advertisement. It reflects the diversity and pluralism in India. After the emergency, the publishing industry witnessed great transformation as it entered into business, marking the print media boom (Kohli-Khandekar, 2013: 21).

In the meantime, under the chairmanship of PK Goswami in 1978, just after lifting the 15 month long emergency, the Second Press Commission (SPC) was set up to look into the state of the press in India (Nireekshak, 2014). However, the resignation of PK Goswami in January 1980 led to the reconstitution of the commission in 1980 under the chairmanship of Justice K K Mathew which submitted its report in 1982, commonly known as the SPC Report. The aim of the SPC was to look at the state of the press since

the last press commission and suggest improvements for its future development. In particular the Commission was to examine the role of the press in a democratic country and the role it should adopt in developmental policies, the ownership patterns and practices, their relation to growth and development, professional integrity and editorial independence, impact of newspaper chains and their effect on competition thereby the readers‘ right to objective news, economics of the newspaper industry, to look at the existing institutional mechanism to promote the freedom of press and suggest measures to improve it (Second Press Commission Report, 1982).

The major recommendations included the delinking of the press from any other industries, establishment of a National Development Commission (NDC) to facilitate growth of the press and to provide assistance to the small and the medium newspapers to develop printing and other technologies that suit their needs, recognition of the significant role of editors by conferring them further authority, relieving newspapers from the impact of the foreign capital, recommended news to advertisement ratio for all small, medium and big newspapers and more importantly, the commission emphasised on the social responsibility and accountability of the press to the public, among others (Second Press Commission of India Report, 1982). The report also cautioned newspapers from presenting sensational news items on the outbreak of communal issues that has the potential to instigate disturbances.

The SPC under S.J. Goyal and Chalapathi Rao, titled "Ownership and Control Structure of the Indian Press", signals the dangers of commercialisation of the press and highlights the role of big business in the newspaper industry leading to the selective presentation of news and views for promoting business interests. Moreover, big business houses' ownership and control of press leads to projecting and promoting the ideology and orientations of the newspaper owners. It made it clear that those who practice commercial news and ethics cannot claim moral authority to discipline others (PCI, 2001: 38). It further highlighted that sensationalism and exploitation of the feminine figure for selling products through advertisements impoverishes the values of the media. It also advocated for public takeover of top eight newspaper establishments as it was "essential to delink the press from monopoly houses". The SPC recommended that people carrying on publishing a

newspaper business should not have additional interests in other businesses with an excess of 10% of its subscribed share capital. Secondly, it noted that people involved in any other business should not have a stake beyond 10% in publishing a newspaper. While cautioning the narrowing base of media ownership, it viewed that the concentration leads to the big business control over the content of the newspapers and influencing readers' views (Second Press Commission Report, 1982).

Print Media and Public Sphere in India

Print media, especially newspapers played a vital role in expanding and consolidating the secular public sphere in India. It played a vital role in transforming the colonial public sphere constructed by the colonial government into a postcolonial public sphere with adherence to legal rational authority based on constitutional morality. Beginning with the nationalist movement and followed by the postcolonial phase, the print media predominantly propagated secular and democratic values, and was in the forefront of inculcating the public with reason and scientific temperament and created a conducive atmosphere for the expansion of the public sphere, though not fully inclusive, as they predominantly reflected the sensibilities of the elite and middle class (Ali, 2001). Arvind Rajagopal asserts that "following independence, the Indian government sought to establish the identity of the public sphere with the national–popular, albeit with uneven success. A restrictive colonial legacy and an underlying fear of the public undoubtedly accounted for much of the reserve towards mass communications; to these can be added a residual Gandhian suspicion towards modern media" (Rajagopal, 2009:8).

The public sphere created by the print media, became the realm of political mobilisation and action in the post-independence period. For instance, the recourse of political action by the opposition forces during the anti-emergency movement, restored liberal democracy from the assault of the authoritarian regime of Indira Gandhi. The regional public sphere created by the vernacular newspapers in the 1960s in a way contributed to rising regional consciousness, emergence of regional political parties and strengthening the federal governance in India. The public sphere generated by the articulation of local interests by the regional bourgeoisie, influenced mass consciousness.

The emergence of identity politics and redistributive demands among certain communities and social groups was facilitated by the media's advent in the regional public sphere.

In the late 1970s, the public sphere was enriched by the expansion of the Hindi print media, especially in the Hindi heartland. It is pointed out that it took thirty-two years after independence for Hindi daily newspapers to overtake the circulation of English newspapers (Ram, 2000). In his study of the Indian media, C. Rammanohar Reddy argues for three interconnected factors for the overwhelming growth of the Indian media (Reddy, 2019). The first factor, Reddy argues, is the significant expansion of education or literate citizens. In 1971, literacy rate of India was 35%, which almost doubled to 74.04% in 2011. The consequent expansion in the size of the literate population certainly expanded the market for newspapers, with an always increasing population in general. Secondly, the gradual increase in per capita income since the 1980s and the corresponding reduction in absolute poverty have together increased readership of newspapers (Reddy, 2019). And thirdly, since the 1980s there have been tremendous technological innovations that greatly assisted in the huge expansion of the production and circulation of newspapers. Further, as pointed out by Robin Jeffrey, because of this technological innovation, an aggressive attempt was made by publishers of Indian language newspapers to be part of the national "market". This was simultaneously recognised by the national advertisers that there was a local and non-metro demand for consumer goods. With the aid of technology, the advertisers soon expanded their market throughout India and media became a universal consumer good, available in any part of India (Jeffrey, 2009).

However, Reddy points out here, the limitations of Jeffrey‘s framework and argues that the agency of the Indian readers also has significantly contributed to expansion of newspapers. For instance, the Hindu ‘sentiment’ in north India, which was voiced in Hindi newspapers in the late 1980s and early 1990s, contributed significantly to the rising circulation of newspapers. Similarly, the mobilisation of the lower castes - especially the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) also found expression in the Indian language press thus expanding its growth (Reddy, 2019).

Conclusion

Print media is one of the oldest and most widespread forms of media, which includes newspapers, magazines, books etc. It is an informative and engaging medium which is readily accessible and available to most of the population across the globe. The growth and development of the print media in India did not have a smooth sailing right from its beginning in the pre-independent period and faced multiple challenges which threatened its very existence like the repression from the government, lack of resources and trained personnel, weak infrastructure, poor business, and revenue generation (Chatterjee, 2017). However, the print media, especially the newspapers, acted as agents of social change by creating public opinion against the social evils that existed during that time (Patil, 2011). The significant role they played in arousing anti-colonial sentiments and energising the freedom struggle cannot be overlooked. The print media in pre-independent India had also mirrored and represented the plurality and diversity of Indian society through its publication (Rodrigues, 2010). Given its glorious past, the print media in India, unlike the ones in the West, enjoy some sort of respect owing to the role it played during the freedom movement and the role it played in nation-building post-independence (Rodrigues, 2010).

The print media played a pivotal role in the economy and politics of society and contributed to deliberative democracy, freedom, enlightenment and generated critical consciousness among the people. It played a significant part in the development of the country as informers, educators and entertainers. Print media acted as a voice of the nationalist leaders, as an instrument for modernisation, instilling public reason. Freedom movement and the growth of English education and industrialisation contributed to the further massification of print literature in India. There has been a paradigm shift in the way newspapers and print media are conceived over time. The print media underwent a rapid transformation to keep and catch up with the changing technologies and the resultant changes in customer preferences over the years (Ray, 2009). In terms of circulation, the English language newspapers maintained their dominance over circulation in the 1960s, but later in the 1990s the vernacular press, especially the Hindi dailies, took over (Mudgal and Rana, 2020). The print media offers numerous advantages to its readers in the form of its in-depth analysis, wider coverage of events and mass circulation of affordable and

tangible news and advertisements. The print media has contributed in its way to the country's development at different times. Yet, among the varied kinds of media platforms existing today, the print media stands out owing to its rich history and enduring importance even in the current digitalised world.

Chapter IV

Communalisation of Print Media and its Manifestations

The trajectory of the Indian print media during the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial period was marked by numerous social and political developments and currents. The print media in the initial decades of independence was considered more critical of the government and provided more unbiased news coverage than contemporary print media. The media enjoyed relatively more freedom and the ruling party and government did not exercise much control or put curbs or dictate to the media. This, although the press had on occasions been ruthless in its criticism. Pluralistic and diverse views were not sought to be curbed in the manner that we see today. With the mushrooming of television and radio channels, more diversity should have been expected. But what we are witnessing today is the imposition of a certain amount of homogeneity both in news and editorial content. With the advent of right wing forces to power, it exercises its power and influence and tries to control and shape media content. Unlike print media in most places in the world, major sections of the mainstream print media in India have turned communal. While the Indian media initially, seemed to look progressive and secular, that was not entirely the case. Sections of the media had their own prejudices both communal and caste based. With the ascendancy of the right wing forces to power, this has become much sharper and dangerous. Veteran journalist N. Ram, talks of the ideological and political divide in the Indian press, with one faction being secular-democratic and the other representing the ideology of the Hindu-Right. He further points out that even during the immediate post-independence period when major sections of the press were considered 'secular' and 'nationalist' ideological and political divides did exist, which was reflected in the editorial attitudes, differentiated news coverage towards the ruling congress and the other national and regional parties (Ram 2011: 5-6). Even in the pre-independence period this bias was very much visible. For instance, Ambedkar's anti-caste movement in Maharashtra during the 1920s hardly had any press coverage, nor did the many caste-based atrocities and the regional anti-caste struggles across India. Even though the print media in India played a major role in expressing dissenting views, it was mostly the result of independent and locally produced newspapers and magazines. The mainstream newspapers that have a monopoly over print media market, instead produced news that was palpable to the dominant and prejudiced masses, or in favour of those in power.

Perspectives on Communalism in India

The process of communalisation of the print media needs to be looked into from the wider perspectives of communalism in India. Communalism apart from other things, is an ideology. Communal tendencies imply a particular and peculiar way of looking at, and mobilisation on these lines began to be promoted in the second half of the 19th century in India (Mukherjee, 1991). Bipan Chandra argues that "in India, communalism defined politics in religious terms that their politics were directed against fellow Indians and not against colonialism. Their fight was against the other 'community'. The protection they sought was from the followers of other religions and exploitation they denounced was also by them" (Chandra, 1984). Engineer says that "the Hindu-Muslim relations are not merely governed by the religious factor alone but, more often, by political and economic developments. The political contours are determined by the social changes brought about by economic development and technological progress which in turn decides the pattern of behaviour and political perceptions and these perceptions ultimately determine the shape of the relationship between Hindus and Muslims in society. Thus is the process of economic development, social change and political perceptions which are far more important than the religious factor in determining inter-communal relations" (Engineer, 1991).

The clash of three identities marked twentieth century: caste, religion and language, at times distinct but intertwined and remains the effective tool for political mobilisation in Indian electoral democracy. The construction of identity so as to say 'communal identity' needs to have a contextual framework within the larger social process, in the temporal space of the 19th and 20th Centuries. For Bidyut Chakrabarty, 'nationalism and democratisation' (Chakrabarty, 2003) seem to be the obvious reason. Nationalism and liberal democracy have an inherent tendency of inclusion and exclusion'. Inclusion, because at least in the theoretical framework, it attempts to include people regardless of their caste, class, creed, religion or ethnicity. Democracy in another way is a participatory project, attempting to link different strata of political, economic and socio-cultural life. Exclusion, under the neoliberal regime, need not take place explicitly.

The imagination of nationhood in India as a historical fact relied on the Western model presented by Anderson. 'print capitalism' as defined by Benedict Anderson in his book *Imagined Community*, paved the way for nationalist imagination. Through 'print capitalism' the discourse of nationalist imagination spread far and wide. People belonging to different places, following different religions, speaking different languages, varied culture and food habits came together and shared a sense of kinship. The oneness was constructed through an imagination carried by the proliferation of the print media. The wide reach of literature shaped the nationalist imagination. The idea of nation in the west was built on shared experience of a common religion, race, language and territory. People living in different parts of territory, who never met, still could share a sense of togetherness for their nation.

In response to this, it was propagated that India was neither a nation nor can ever become one because it lacked the basic ingredients of the conventional concept and notion of the nation (Chakrabarty, 2003). Print capitalism as a medium helped in shaping, spreading, and consolidating nationalist imagination, argued Anderson. The ruling elite made concerted efforts to underline the unifying factors of religious traditions in India. Differing from Anderson's 'modular form', India had its own experience of uniting the multi-ethnic and multi-religious groups and communities in the anti-colonial struggle that vastly differed from the western experience. 'Indianness' came through the consciousness born and cemented during the freedom movement. Although the western ideas of nationalism deeply influenced Indian nationalist leaders in the fight for economic and political independence, they were at the same time aware of the shortcomings of the 'modular form', in a different social and economic context. Subsequently, the ideas drawn from the western concept got indigenised. Leaders like Gandhi restricted using the language of nationalism mainly because he was conscious that the Congress' flirtation with nationalist ideas was seen as a threat by sections of not only the Muslims and other minority communities but also the Hindu lower castes (Chakrabarty, 2003).

Both nationalism and democratisation have played a role in the evolution of the communal identity. Thus, the community identity needs to be looked at and analysed in the context for the search of nationhood, and in the process those that were left behind and felt

threatened under existing socio-economic configuration or due to their marginalised identity. In 1933, the first attempt to distinguish Indian Muslims from the Hindus as a distinct community was initiated by Rahmat Ali on the ground that the religion, history, culture, tradition, laws of inheritance, economic system, marriage and succession are fundamentally different and distinct from those belonging to other religious communities. These differences got validation from the fact that Hindus and Muslims do not interdine, their food habits and diets are different, they do not intermarry, their national calendars and customs are different. On these grounds Rahmat Ali and others claimed that they deserve the recognition of separate national status as it was fundamentally different from the Hindus. During the Lucknow Pact in 1916, Jinnah defended a separate electorate for Muslims by underlining that it was the only way and mechanism to defuse inter community tensions.

In the later part of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century, Hindu nationalists imagined and carried a conception of space, inherited from the views of ancient India. In *Dharmashastra,* India is described and known as the land of *dharma*. The Hindu nationalist imagination of India spread between the Himalayas and the sea. In 1875, the Arya Samaj, a proto-nationalist Hindu movement founded by Dayanad Saraswati reinterpreted the conception of the Hindu state and emphasised on the ‘entrenchment of the Aryan sovereignty’ (Jaffrelot, 2010), amongst whom the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas are said to have been twice-born! Later on, the Hindu nationalist ideology was codified by Savarkar in the Hindutva in 1923. In *Who is a Hindu?* he defines Hindutva or Hinduness as a sense of togetherness to an ethnic community, having a territory and presenting the same racial character (Jaffrelot, 2010). Savarkar has raised the 'rallying cry' (Corbridge and Harriss, 2001) that all politics in the country should be ‘Hinduised' and militarise ‘Hinducom’ (McKean, 1996). For Savarkar, the sense of ‘nationality’ was developed during the Vedic period by Aryans. Inspired by Savaakar’s ideas, the concept of territory was further developed and strengthened by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) that came into existence in 1925. The hyper Hindu nationalist organisation remained silent for some time after Nathuram Godse, a member of the RSS and a disciple of Savarkar assassinated Gandhi. After the ban on the RSS, other Hindu religious organisations such as Bajrang Dal and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad stepped in to fill the gap

of RSS to keep Hindu nationalist sentiments relevant. From 1950 onwards there was not a single year in which communal riots did not take place in the country. Many states witnessed communal riots since the days of independence, leading to deaths from both sides, with minorities being the worst affected.

Violence that specifically targets communities on the basis of religion is termed as communal violence. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, religion captured centre stage in Indian politics. Time and again, communalism has threatened the harmony of Indian society. Belligerent aggression and violence instigated and led by the communal forces was witnessed during the partition; in the decades of 1990s and the first two decades of the 21st century and continues to the present day. Hindutva organisations led by RSS and backed by the BJP, are vigorously pursuing their aim of converting the secular Indian republic into a Hindu rashtra. Rallying behind the idea of India as a 'Hindu nation', Hindutva organisations of late celebrate "aggression and violence, declare war against other communities, and scorns all legal and democratic norms" (Gupta and Sharma, 1996). The idea of 'Hindu nation', is projected as a cultural scheme invoking a sense of pride in so-called ancient glory, tradition and values. Under this veneer, however, lies a political plan, which while othering the rest of the communities seek to establish Hindutva supremacy. It is invoking this false sense of superiority and hatred against the Muslims that Hindutva organisations create a mass hysteria. While doing so, it also seeks to gloss over the heterogeneous character of the followers of the Hindu religion and its deep-rooted caste and social identities. It advocates and promotes a unitary and homogenous society and polity by its very nature. The concept of one nation, language, and culture seeks to subsume all other identities and diversities. Even while proclaiming that all those born in India are Hindus, it seeks to instil fear and insecurity amongst the Muslims and portrays them as second class citizens living at the mercy of the majority Hindus.

Competing Approaches to Communalism

The debate highlighting the nationalist version of collective identity has two broad directions as pointed out by Bidyut Chakrabarty. The communitarian nationalist in the Hindu Mahasabha on the one hand and the Muslim League on the other, held the opinion that nation has to be a political codification of a 'single cultural community' (Chakrabarty, 2003). These were diametrically in opposition to the syncretic nationalist ideas that Gandhi and Nehru propounded. The inspiration for this was mainly drawn from the orientalist idea of India, which viewed the country as an amalgamation of several separate communities, unified by a spiritual idea of a nation, comprising the whole. Nation, thus was a supra-identity, and all other identities were the subset of that broader imagination. Thus, religion, caste, creed, gender, ethnicity and other identities were the subsets of the broader imagination. These identities, as assumed by nationalist historians, existed to serve and protect the spiritual imagination of the nation. In the anti-colonial struggle, other identities became secondary to the spiritual imagination of the nation. Therefore, both Hindus and Muslims were considered as a homogeneous community with different sets of rituals and practices in the horizontal divisions.

The Marxist interpretation of communal identity has two connotations. One that India was not a nation because it did not have a common language and a common culture. The other Marxist intervention came in the opposition to imperialism as a singular unit during the freedom struggle. The subaltern school of thought intervenes and contributes to the discourse with the most recent on the ongoing debate on communal identity. Subaltern perspectives on communal identity have challenged the stereotypical old notions of Hindus as majority and Muslims as minority and argues that they are 'historically constituted and thus subject to change' (Chakrabarty, 2003). Ambedkar argues that the debate on majority and minority cannot be understood in numerical terms, rather it needs to be analysed from the vantage point of powerlessness and vulnerability in a given set of space and time. A community may be numerically large but at the same time can be vulnerable because of the existing inequality in the socio-economic and political spheres of life. The depressed classes are large in their numerical strength but these communities live in extremely inhuman conditions because of the existing discriminatory practices within the Hindu

codified society. With a large population, these communities are also those who have been historically left out, socially and culturally excluded and politically underrepresented. These communities have faced untouchability, discrimination, humiliation, forced exclusion and were denied equal opportunity in the public sphere. Moreover, Muslims were not only a minority in comparison to Hindus, they too were subjected to discrimination in large parts of the country, though not a scale comparable with others. Of course, they had a similar opinion to that of their Hindu brethren and acted like one of them on many social and political issues. Therefore, for the subaltern, every individual develops his or her identity, tastes and pursuits in the context community. Undermining the communitarian logic, it sees that individual identity is invariably determined by the community, as it is the community that shapes the nature of an individual. Therefore, the subaltern school of thought argues for fragmented identities of Indian society; those identities that have a major contribution in building the nation but have been ignored from mainstream society; the smaller religious groups and castes, tribal communities, women groups, industrial workers, all invariably represent and hold a different world view, with their own set of knowledge and experience, which are different from mainstream society.

Yet, there are other anti-caste thinkers like Periyar, Phule and Ambedkar, whose writing critically examine and question the basic nature of Hindu society. For Ambedkar, nation is a daily plebiscite. India was not a nation but a nation in the making. The idea of nation as a sense of ‘oneness', 'togetherness' does not exist because there is a graded inequality in the society that we live in. G. Aloysius says that nationalism that exists in India is a sectarian concept. He argues that, nationalism witnessed in India is Hindu nationalism, an elite nationalism, and a brahmanical nationalism, which excludes the marginalised and deprived communities. Aloysius further argues that Indian nationalism is a rhetoric nationalism in which social and political communities have been excluded in the process (Aloysius, 1997). Irfan Habib says that the object of the Freedom Movement was to make India free: it could not settle all internal problems. The responsibility lay on us, and we failed in meeting communalism‘s ideological offensive which came long after Nehru was dead and his and Indira Gandhi‘s “socialist” project (which embraced land reform and an expanding public sector) was abandoned by their successors (Habib, 2021).

The context of the contemporary communalism spread by the Hindu nationalist forces is not spontaneous but based on "everyday communalism" of the society which constituted the larger part of the Hindutva political project (Pai and Kumar, 2018). Communal riots were meticulously planned and designed by the vested interests in an environment of socio-cultural dislocations brought about by modernity and it was the everyday effort of the Hindutva organisations to instigate communal riots. The polarisation between communities, and low-intensity communal clashes pegged on routine everyday issues which was a part of the deep rooted strategy of Hindutva (Pai and Kumar, 2018).

Tracing the emergence and consolidation of Hindutva since the late 1980s with the initial years of post-independence, Prakash Karat, the former general secretary of CPI (M) says that after independence what is necessary for modern transformation was a break from the old and abolition of landlordism, end of feudal domination etc. With their compromise with the landlords at the time of independence, the bourgeoisie struck an alliance with the landlords to protect their class rule. By striking an alliance with the landlords, they gave up and compromised in their fight against all pre-capitalist relations including caste. Despite its wavering nature and hesitancy by many leaders of the freedom movement to take the communal forces head on, the fact cannot be denied that there was a struggle against communal ideology even during the independence struggle. However, the failure to take the bull by its horns, so to say, and to assure the dominant leadership of the Muslim minority of their safety, security and prosperity in a secular India, paved the way for the country's partition. It needs to be recalled that the two-nation theory was first propounded by the RSS. Despite the large-scale communal riots mainly in Punjab and Bengal, in the immediate eve and aftermath of the partition of the country, communal frenzy could not be whipped up. This is not to, however, undermine the fact that the communal ideology was still prevalent in some manner or the other.

However, the failure of Indian ruling classes, the bourgeois-landlord classes, in taking forward the gains of the freedom movement and fulfilling its promises and aspirations and bringing about a radical transformation impacting the lives of the vast mass of the people provided the opportunity for the communal forces to exploit the discontent among the mass of the people. All the values and aspirations that the freedom movement

aroused, including secularism and scientific temper, came under attack as the Hindu religious identity was sought to be asserted. Hindutva was sought to be equated with nationalism. A substantial section of people in various parts of the country think that BJP and RSS represent nationalism. The juxtaposition has been done very cleverly and shrewdly, with all national symbols, including leaders of the national movement being appropriated. This ideology has penetrated so much among the masses that they no longer hesitate to identify with it and call themselves nationalists. They are not seen as communal, but as nationalists. This is how they could bring their agenda to the fore and make that the binding force for their political platform. And that is also being reflected in the media in a big way, since the advent of corporate media. This jingoistic nationalism, turned the media more jingoistic nationalists than even the BJP (Karat, 2021).

Tracing the Communal Bias of Media

The various hues of communalism, influences the media in India and the media takes this forward to the people. As Engineer argues, "in modern society, media plays an important role not only in matters related to communal matters but in moulding the character, attitude and behaviour pattern of the readers and viewers" (Engineer, 1992). Bipan Chandra says:

> *Many nationalist newspapers functioned as nationalist and part time communal organs. For example, The Tribune of Lahore had the widely accepted reputation of being a nationalist organ. But it also…..openly adopted a Hindu communal attitude on communal riots etc. This was also true of the Leader of Allahabad and the Amrita Bazar Patrika of Kolkata. Even the Hindustan Times was unwilling to disown the Hindu Mahasabha (a Hindu organisation that aggressively called for the religious conversion of non-Hindus to Hinduism), inspite of its association with Mahatma Gandhi* (Chandra, 1979: 127).

However, the manifestation of communalism in the print media appears in different ways. Rao and Reddy assert that "the print media has by and large become tendentious and provocative. It created stereotypes and the process contributed to an aggravation of the Hindu-Muslim divide in India. In its writings on religious sectarian (or communalism) the print media failed in its social responsibilities during the high point of the Ayodhya controversy" (Rao and Reddy, 2011). Engineer found that "*Samna*, the Marathi mouthpiece of the Shiv Sena, uses highly provocative language against Muslims and Christians, During the Bombay riots, *Samna* branded the Muslims pro-Pakistani traitors and wrote several highly inflammatory editorials against them"

(Engineer, 1991). He further says that

> *The leading Hindi newspapers from Uttar Pradesh "published highly exaggerated reports of incidents in Ayodhya in 1990 when Mulayam Singh, the then Chief Minister of UP, tried to prevent karsevaks from reaching Ayodhya. Highly emotional stories were published with an exaggerated account of the police brutalities. It was reported that hundreds of people were shot dead. This was totally untrue and even the national Press Commission reprimanded these papers for publishing false accounts of what happened at Ayodhya* (Engineer, 1991:8).

Communalisation of Media as Systematic Effort

In a democracy, mass communication is a potential instrument for influencing the minds of the people and mobilising public opinion in favour of and against an ideology and policies of the government. In India, such realisation gained momentum during the emergency period. During the 1970s, at the time of emergency, the right wing organisations, RSS in particular, had realised the importance of public communication. The mass protests and political mobilisations against Indira Gandhi's declaration of emergency gave a new realisation to the RSS that public communication had the potential to propagate its ideology. The emergency also taught the RSS how media is influencing masses, especially in the Hindi heartland against the Congress. The RSS through its machinery has intervened and infiltrated the communication platform with the help of professional talent. The orientation helped the right wing in shaping their discourse in the media. It has to be remembered that during the emergency, Indira Gandhi merged all the news agencies into one named Samachar. But after the emergency was lifted and the Janata Party government came to power in 1977, the earlier status of agencies, the Press Trust of India (PTI), the Hindustan Samachar, the Samachar Bharati and the United News India (UNI) were restored. In fact, the two Hindi agencies, the Hindustan Samachar and the Samachar Bharati were completely dominated by the people owing allegiance to the RSS and its affiliates. They had been turned into arms of the Sangh Parivar and in the process they also became defunct. However, many connected with the RSS got accommodated in the PTI and the UNI. This infiltration took place when in 1977 Lal Krishna Advani (at that time was part of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh faction within the Janata Party), was the Information and Broadcasting minister in the government led by Moraji Desai. In the 1980s, RSS made a well-planned and systematic attempt to infiltrate media houses and capture top positions (Gupta and Sharma, 1996: 4). The All India Radio and other government broadcasting

services were also infiltrated. The capture of the media by the rightwing forces was not limited to major media houses and the government owned broadcasting services. It penetrated among the media houses and journalists in the rural areas, which became much easier given the lack of sensitivity and coverage of issues of the rural masses by the mainstream English media. They exploited this to further their ideology and attack the so-called left-liberal domination in the print media. They propagated that the English speaking liberal-left elite who dominated national newspapers, ignored the countryside and the sensibilities of the rural populace. They knew that the vernacular media had a stronger influence on the rural masses' consciousness and lived experience than its counterpart, the English national newspapers. The Sangh also published magazines in Hindi and regional languages to propagate its ideology and sensitise people about its voluntary activities in the rural areas.

The Sangh realised that recruiting low-paid stringers at the local level could enhance its Hindutva mobilisation capacity (Gupta and Sharma, 1996: 4). Beginning from the experience of controlling the print media in the 1970s, the Sangh in the late 1980s exercised control over the electronic media as well, especially television for its ideological and political mobilisation both among the rural and urban middle classes. The telecasting of Ramayana and Mahabharata by the state controlled Doordarshan further helped the the Sangh advance in taking control over the media in furtherance of its political goals. In fact, its successful experience, in controlling the print and electronic media in since the late 1970s, extended to its control over the social media in the subsequent years. This greatly contributed to the BJP's 2014 and 2019 general elections victory.

Umakant Lakhera, veteran journalist who worked with Dainik Jagaran, Hindustan, and Rashtriya Sahara, argues that the Sangh's infiltration into the media came from its realisation that unless and until the Sangh captures the media it cannot influence the larger population or communicate with the masses easily. This realisation led them to first capture the print and later on electronic media (Lakhera, 2021). As Manchanda points out

> *The Sangh Parivar has over the years systematically placed allied journalists in positions in the media, and the BJP has provided inducements of transport and lavish hospitality to journalists covering its National Conventions and Executive Council meetings, There can be little doubt, in fact, that the BJP"s media management policies*

> *played a crucial role in enabling it to move from the political wilderness into centre space as the political party with a difference* (Manchanda, 2002:307).

According to Pamela Philipose, an eminent journalist and former director and editor-in- chief of the Women's Feature Service and senior associate editor of The Indian Express and currently the ombudsperson at the Wire, the BJP has always been in the forefront, managing the Indian media. The BJP has infiltrated the media. Also they set up systems to feed and manage the media. The activities of Sangh Parivar outfits always used to get better coverage starting from the 1980s. The Ayodhya movement is an important milestone, wherein the BJP indulged in manoeuvring and manipulation (Philipose, 2021). Human rights activist Ram Puniyani, who has been vocal in opposing Hindu communalism, says that the infiltration of the RSS in the media happened more after Modi became the Chief Minister of Gujarat. Modi gave clear signals of being pro-Corporate. Corporates in turn started taking control of media on a larger scale after this. RSS ideology started being presented as the mainstream ideology, which influenced many journalists to surrender to divisive ideology (Puniyani, 2021). Many of them changed colours overnight. Many media persons got plum positions including being given tickets to the Rajya Sabha. However, rejecting the argument that the RSS/BJP adopted such an approach to infiltrate the media or to influence it, even, K. N. Govindacharya, former Sangh ideologue, asserts that the Sangh doesn't believe in such an approach. He says that the English media, which till then was hiding facts, ultimately had to fall in line in the face of glaring facts (Govindacharya, 2021).

The Shah Bano Case and Media's Communal Flare Up

On 15th January, 1986, the Supreme Court pronounced its verdict in the Shah Bano case. It was a watershed moment in the history of the struggle for Muslim women's rights and empowerment. Shah Bano, a divorced Muslim woman, sought alimony from her former husband. The Supreme Court upheld her plea and directed her divorced husband to pay maintenance. The verdict irked the Muslim community and generated disenchantment among them. Hasan says, a widespread movement, it galvanized Muslims by invoking fears that the application of the Criminal Procedure Code to Muslims would undermine the Shariat and that its acceptance would open the gates for the courts to overrule Muslim Personal Law as a whole (Hasan, 1998). The response of the Union government led by

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was to succumb in the face of the growing disenchantment among the Muslim community. A settlement was reached with the leaders of All India Muslim Personnel Law Board and an announcement of introducing a Bill to reverse the verdict in the Shah Bano case was made. However, the Hindu organisations viewed the decision as an appeasement of the Muslim community. Sensing the rising Hindu sentiment against the government, Rajiv Gandhi, as a balancing act, decided to remove the lock at the disputed site at Ayodhya. As a result, on the 1st of February 1986 the lock which was placed there at the instance of the District Administration in 1950 was removed, In fact, the soft Hindutva stand of the Congress and pro Hindutva tilt of the certain sessions of the Congress added further flavour to the communal recipe of the Hindu nationalist forces. As Andersen and Damle assert that "the first major effort to prepare the way for a Ram temple was botched move by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to play a Hindu card in response to charges of a pro-Muslim bias by facilitating the opening of the locked Bari Masjid in 1986 to allow Hindu pilgrims to worship within the disputed structure" (Andersen and Damle, 2018: 196). In fact, the unlocking of the disputed structure and allowing pujas by the Hindus irked some sections of the Congress itself. Maulana Muzaffar Hussain Kacchavi, former Congress MP and President of the Babri Masjid Action Committee stated: "I am convinced that this (Central) government does not care for Muslims. Such a thing never happened in the time of Nehru, Shastri or Indira. Why should it happen now?" (India Today, 1986). According to Arif Mohammad Khan, then Union Minister during the Rajiv Gandhi government, the retracted stand of the Rajiv Gandhi government on the Shah Bano case and its subsequent balancing act of appeasing Hindus by removing the lock of the Ayodhya temple fanned the Hindu nationalist movement in the late 1980s (Khan, 2021). It is another matter that Khan later found himself in the company of the Hindu right and went on to become the Governor of Kerala under the Modi regime.

The Rajiv Gandhi government's announcement of bringing a Bill to negate the court verdict gave further ammunition to the right wing print media which screamed that the appeasement policies adopted by the Congress government would harm the interest of the Hindus. Arun Nehru, advisor to Rajiv Gandhi at that time, disclosed that during the early 1986, the government passed Muslim Women Bill so as to play the Muslim card and later on, decided to unlock the Babri Masjid, playing the Hindu card.

Another instance of the communalisation of the Hindi media manifested in reporting on the incident of Sati in September 1987 when 18-year-old Roop Kanwar jumped into the funeral pyre of her husband in Deorala, Rajasthan, with Hindi newspapers valorising the victim as a symbol of Hindu pride and generating Hindu consciousness. The *Jansatta*, supported the 'sati' incident and came out with a statement that "only one among *lakhs* of widows is determined enough to become *sati* and it is only natural that she will become centre of reverence" (Jansatta, 1987). Condemning *sati* was portrayed as equal to condemning Hindu traditions (i.e, Indian), customs, and religion itself (Jansatta, 1987).

Perhaps, the most outrageous incident of communalisation of the print media manifested in the reporting of the Bhagalpur riots. In October and November 1989, the Hindi newspapers' tilt towards Hindu communal politics was more visible in the Hindu-Muslim riots at Bhagalpur. It was reporting the incidents more biased to flame communal hatred. While reporting on the Bhagalpur riot, Gupta and Sharma say that

> *During the entire period of the Bhagalpur riots, there was an established bias against Muslims in almost all the newspapers. The reports pointed to the Muslims as instigating the riots; claimed that Hindus were tolerant, while Muslims were aggressive and spotted a fictitious Pakistani hand in the disturbances. In fact, the myth of equal losses by both communities could have been easily shattered by even a cursory visit to the camps, but none of the reports of the leading national dailies made any attempt to do so* (Gupta and Sharma, 1996: 5).

Telecast of Ramayana and Mahabharata Serials

In the late 1980s, the Sangh Parivar devoted more attention to content broadcast on Television. Television was the medium that brought new possibilities of the 'politics of inclusive authoritative' nature of Hindu nationalism. Rights activist Shabnam Hashmi opines that with the growth of the Hindu right wing and their successes in capturing the people's minds through their well-oiled propaganda machinery, the majoritarian ideas were pushed through all channels, including the media (Hashmi, 2021). It is no accident that the telecast of Ramayana and later on the Mahabharata serials coincided with the movement to demolish the Babri Masjid and build a temple there. The telecast of Ramayana on state controlled Doordarshan channel in the year 1987 contributed in no small measure to aiding the largest communally surcharged political campaign after independence. Ramayana broadcast on national television ensured viewership from large sections of the population, cutting across caste, creed, ethnicity and gender. This was at a time when Doordarshan was

the sole TV broadcaster in India. Such religious serials in return gave authority to Hindu nationalist groups and sowed the seed for furthering Hindutva politics in the country. The symbolic display of Hindu religious supremacy through hoardings, banners, posters by the Hindutva forces, created insecurity among the minorities.

As a journalist, I started work stationed in a remote district of India, Kannur, situated in the northern belt of Kerala. That was a time when the Ramayana serial was being shown on Doordarshan every Sunday morning. As a journalist, I received numerous complaints about doctors and health staff being away from duty at the district hospital, one of the few centres in the entire northern Kerala to cater to health emergencies. I reached the district hospital on a Sunday morning in 1988 and was aghast to find hundreds of patients standing in the queue unattended as doctors and health workers were busy viewing Ramayana in a designated TV room. Along with my photographer I barged into the room and took a few snaps to depict the apathy and dereliction of the doctors. There was a scuffle and the doctors managed to lock me up in the room whereas the photographer managed to get away. The following day the issue was a heading in my paper and also in other papers due to the fracas. Later on the matter was raised in the Kerala assembly which led to an enquiry followed by disciplinary actions against the doctors.

The telecast of these two serials -Ramayana and Mahabharata – impacted the minds of people and transformed the political landscape of India. According to Sharad Gupta, Bureau Chief of Delhi, Amar Ujala, when all these mythological serials started being telecast there were stories about how people used to take a bath early in the morning and then wear new clothes and sit before the TV as if they were sitting in a temple. All of these contributed to the prevailing sentiments or evoking a typical kind of sentiment about the Hindu identity (Gupta, 2021). Martha C. Nussbaum argues that

> *The effort to position Rama in the center of Hindus" consciousness got a tremendous boost from a famous televised serial of the Ramayana, broadcast in 1987–88 in seventy-eight weekly episodes. The serials were so popular that daily life virtually came to a stop during the broadcasts, which apparently reached approximately 90 percent of homes with television* (Nussbaum, 2007: 172).

It is argued that "running for years, these two serials were hugely popular and as they were shown around the same time as the Hindutva movement was gaining strength they deliberately or otherwise aided the mobilization of communalism" (Rao and Reddy, 2011). The telecast of Ramayana and Mahabharata were 'electronic H*indutva'* unleashed

on the Indian people which gave a big boost to this movement (Bagaitkar, 2021). The telecast of mythological serials like Ramayana and Mahabharata also contributed to the expanding sphere of the Hindu nationalist forces (Philipose, 2021). And as scholars like Arvind Rajagopal have demonstrated, the popularity of Ramayana and Mahabharata serials was used by the BJP as part of a very well thought out plan to promote the Ramjanmabhumi movement. And this was to a great extent supported by sections of the media.

So it‘s more a kind of a link between the liberalisation of the media which was part of the economic reforms programmes and the rise of Hindutva politics or right wing Hindu majoritarian politics (Thakurta, 2021). Endorsing this view, Ram Puniyani reiterates that the mythology of these two epics played havoc to social sensibilities. Already Gita Press was propagating retrograde values. These two epics popularised religiosity sky high and democratic values went for a toss in popular mind (Puniyani, 2021). Shabnam Hashmi says that the timing of the telecast of Ramayana and Mahabharata coincided with the Rath Yatra, which was preceded by a massive leaflet campaign, where the various Sangh outfits delivered lakhs of inflammatory leaflets individually to people through door to door campaigns and through post. At the same time, in urban India community level satsangs and jagarans started. All this contributed to the Hindu identity being foregrounded and pushing back the identity of being an Indian citizen (Hashmi, 2021). The telecast of the two serials, as Umakant Lakhera says, influenced the political propaganda of the BJP at that time. And it created a religious frenzy in which people forget all other issues like food, job, shelter, poverty etc. It became a sort of addiction. So in a very calculated move they changed the mindset of people (Lakhera, 2021).

Govindacharya, the Sangh ideologue, on the other hand, sees the telecast as an exposure to Bharat's civilisational content which the Hindu identity has buttressed. The telecast of Mahabharata and Ramayana helped definitely but there was no connection between politics and these aspects. It was a civilisational thrust. Hindutva essentially has one ingredient that is respect to all gods. Hindutva is also about egalitarianism, eco-friendly techno-economic order, special status for women and the goal of life not being material happiness. The telecast of Ramayana and Mahabharata rekindled the civilisational urge which was suppressed and trampled upon in the last 200-250 years. Unfortunately due to colonial influence, nationalism is condemned as communalism and minoritarianism is

eulogised as secularism. Through these serials, the historical course is getting corrected. (Govindacharya, 2021).

Mandal Effect on Indian Print Media

The communalisation of the Indian print media was more visible during the Mandal agitation. In 1990, the V P Singh government announced the implementation of the Mandal Commission Report that recommended 27% reservation in the jobs for Other Backward Classes, in the central government and Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs). The decision to extend positive discrimination to the OBCs was encountered with massive agitations and violent protests by the upper castes who held the view that implementation of Mandal Commission Report would lead to shrinking of job opportunities for them. The Mandal agitation was seen as the Hindu response to breaking the homogeneity and unity of the Hindu community. It is argued that "the caste issue raised by the Mandal Commission had fractured the image of Hindu homogeneity presented by the Hindutva forces and imperilled their Hindu agenda" (Gupta and Sharma, 1996: 5). Organised protests and counter protests from upper castes and the lower castes took place across the country. Yogendra Yadav has described the upsurge of the backward castes as the 'second democratic upsurge' in Indian politics (Yadav, 2000). During this time, the lower castes and OBCs started en-bloc voting on caste lines, which led to the formation of governments led by OBC leaders, in Uttar Pradesh by Mulayam Singh Yadav and Laloo Prasad Yadav in Bihar. The media labelled their regimes as 'Yadav Raj' (Jaffrelot, 2010). Mandal politics and the mobilisation of the OBCs posed a threat to the communal agenda of the BJP. Therefore they sought to counter it. In doing so, the right wing political parties started appealing to the religious sentiments of Hindus. The attempt by the Hindu nationalists was to run 'populist language of politic' (Rajagopal, 2001), by appealing to conservative authoritarian values rather than the values of democratic governance.

During the mandal agitation, the national and local newspapers published reports with provocative communally coloured headlines intended to further raise the communal pitch. The communalisation of the Hindi media was more visible during the course of the mandal agitation. Violating all ethics they carried sensational reports, giving graphic details of the unfortunate but ill-advised acts of self-immolation by some youth. The OBC mobilisation by the Hindu nationalist forces in the context of the Mandal agitation, gave a

boost to the circulation of the Hindi newspapers. Arguing that the V. P. Singh's government's decision to implement the Mandal Commission Report is a sinister design to break Hindu identity, the Hindu nationalist forces ratcheted up the Ram mandir issue for communal consolidation. Jaffrelot argues that the movement led by Hindu nationalists to build the Ram Temple was largely and out rightly in reaction to 'Mandal' politics, with the aim of reuniting Hindu community on religious lines that had been divided by the OBC leaders along the caste lines on the issue of reservation (Jaffrelot, 2010).

On the same pattern, news published by the national dailies on the Mandal commission report, which had recommended reservation in jobs for the backward castes, was far more intense and filled with hatred against these communities. Gupta and Sharma mention that between August to September 1990, mainstream national newspapers such as the *Indian Express* had devoted around 12.81 times more space to anti-Mandal agitations than the anti-Muslim riots (Gupta and Sharma, 1996). The intensity only to oppose Mandal reservation, which was implemented by V.P Singh, was more than that of anti-Muslim hatred. Newspapers and magazines, arrogated to themselves the authority to speak on behalf of the nation and act as their saviours. In both the cases, whether it is anti-Muslim sentiments or anti-Mandal agitations, under the veil of nationalism, the upper castes/class exposed their deep and intense hatred for the deprived and marginalised.

Ayodhya Movement and Communalisation of Print Media

Perhaps, the belligerent communal manifestation by the print media, reflected in the Ayodhya movement, started in the late 1980s and early 1990s with the national and local newspapers reporting on communal lines. The Ramjanmabhoomi movement was launched in September 1984 by the Ramjanmabhoomi Mukthi Yagna Samiti set up by the VHP.

The repercussions of both the Shah Bano case and Mandal politics contributed to the steaming of the Ayodhya movement. It needs recall that the movement to build the Ram mandir in Ayodhya, at the place claimed to be Lord Ram's birthplace, was aggressively carried out by the right wing forces such as Hindu Mahasabha, Vishva Hindu Parishad, Bajrang Dal, RSS, Shiv Sena etc. From 1984 onwards, the VHP had been demanding the restitution of the Ram mandir, which they claim was demolished to

construct the Babri Masjid in the 16th century. During the Ayodhya movement, the Hindu communal forces in their efforts at communal-political mobilisation, repeated the unproven claim that the Babri Masjid was constructed in 1528 on the orders of Mughal General Mir Baqi under the direction of Babur, allegedly after demolishing the Ram temple. However, a number of prominent historians have rebutted such claims. K.N. Panikkar, a noted, Historian says:

> *The local tradition that has been developed sometime back is now considered to be made as a matter of the national faith. It is being argued that the place of Babri Masjid as the Janmabhoomi of lord Rama is a matter of Hindu faith, just like the Christians hold that Jesus is the son of God and Muslims holds that Mohammad is the Prophet of Allah, the Hindus think that Rama is the avatara of lord Vishnu. These are the matters of faith but not so the birth of Mohammad at Mecca or of Rama at Ayodhya. They are questions of fact. The known history of Ayodhya does not indicate that what is claimed as the janmasthan was the birth place of Rama or the temple existed at the site of the Babri Mosque* (Panikkar, 1991:33).

In the peak of the Ayodhya movement, on 25th September 1990, L. K. Advani undertook his rath yatra from Somnath to Ayodhya under the blessings of the RSS and the Sangh Parivar. Advani's rath yatra was carried out to communalise the atmosphere and to further consolidate Hindutva nationalist politics. As Nanda narrates, "while the chariot itself carried no idols – only L. K. Advani and saffron–clad Hindu holy men and their associates, many dressed as Hanuman (the monkey god) and other characters from Ramayana – the procession took on a ceremonial life of its own" (Nanda, 2004: 40). The Hindu communalists for their mobilisation used the changing language and symbols – Vande Matram to Jai Sri Ram. Some of the bhakts were even offering Advani with bowls of their own blood (Jaffrelot, 1996: 34). Advani's "pilgrimage-style political rallies" (Nanda's description) attracted huge women folk who showered flowers and offered *arati*. Nanda argues that "Advani's procession came at a time when communalisation of Indian politics was already at an all-time high" (Nanda, 2004: 39). Throughout the yatra, Advani addressed political rallies and whipped up communal sentiments. The places the rathyatra traversed witnessed communal tensions, violence, arson and riots which were rarely reported by the Hindi media. The Hindi newspapers such as *Amar Ujala* and *Navbharat Times* distorted the violence, highlighted the deaths, and increased additional pages to give maximum coverage. Nanda says that in the rathyatra "demonstrations of religious fervour and political militancy blended each other" (Nanda, 2004: 40). The ritualistic and

obscurantist religious orthodoxy propagated during this time, filled the space vacated by secular nationalism. In place of scientific temper and rational values, mystifying events, glorifying mythical icons, and harvesting emotional sentiments gained the upper hand. Conservative and obscurantist values and ideas as opposed to rationality and modernist values of secularism were legitimised by the argument that the latter failed to impact the people.

Karseva Mobilisation and the Media

In the 1990s, the karseva activity under the VHP, mobilised large sections of the Hindus generating Hindu consciousness among them. The Karseva (voluntary work) was another step forward in the project of communal mobilisation. The entire movement for the destruction of the Babri Masjid and constructing a temple in its place relied on distortions, half-truths and utter falsehoods. The media played along in escalating communal sentiments and emotions among the Hindus by carrying sensational stories on a regular basis. They tended to polarise people by their reportage on violence and deaths. The report from *Independent* states that "… 17 year old Narendra Joshi, a commerce student … has been a member of the RSS since his childhood. His chartered accountant father and school teacher mother did not try to stop him (for going as a karsevak to Ayodhya), but instead encouraged him to do his bit 'in the service of Lord Ram'" (Independent, November 1, 1990). The media created a toxic environment across the country, and the Muslim minority lived in utter fear of their lives. The 31st of October 1990 will go down in history as a black day for the Indian media. Most newspapers that day reported that a large number of Hindus were killed in police firing in Ayodhya. While there were no official casualty figures, different newspapers made up and fancied the figures to be anywhere between 20 and 500. Later on, it was revealed that 90 per cent of the stories were fabricated and relied on lies. However, the BJP's version of the entire episode continues to remain unquestioned and unchallenged by sizeable sections of the media who continue to propagate that the UP police under directions from the Mulayam Singh government fired indiscriminately at karsevaks.

Andersen and Damle argue that the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, spearheaded by the VHP as an "expression of pan-Hindu nationalism" was used by the RSS to "galvanise

the Hindu community" in the 1980s (Andersen and Damle, 2018: 193-195). In June 1989, the BJP in its national executive meeting held at Palampur, Himachal Pradesh, decided to support the Ayodhya movement. This in fact, contested the claims of the BJP that Ayodhya movement is not a political issue but is a cultural and religious one. However, the fact remains that it was a political movement aimed at capturing state power. The BJP's realised that it has to harp upon a construct that the majority community has been discriminated, denied of opportunities while the minority Muslims continue to be appeased. In other words, in the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, the BJP worked on the "restricted interpretation of the past with that of the present in order to justify future politics" (Kinnvall, 2006: 147). The larger intention of the Hindu nationalists during the movement was to construct an undivided Hindu self and project that it was under threat from the Indian concept of secularism, which they interpreted to mean as minority appeasement. The cultural nationalism of Hindutva centred on mobilising the communal and obscurantist ideology against the so-called threat by western modernisation by raising cultural and religious consciousness. In the 1990s, Hindu nationalism invoked the need "to establish clear boundaries around a distinguishable self. This involves construction and verification of the cultural roots of one exclusive identity pattern at the expense of others" (Kinnvall, 2006: 147). Not only the middle class Hindus but also the Hindu diaspora was used for such mobilisation. The Ayodhya movement started in 1988-89 became a (full blown) movement in 1990 which also invoked the the drastic measures invoked by the Mulayam Singh government in Uttar Pradesh and also the stoppage of the rath yatra at Samastipur in Bihar. Advani's rathyatra created a sense of xenophobic hostility against the Muslims, which peaked in the destruction of the mosque in Ayodhya on 6th December 1992.

On 2nd November 1992, the Uttar Pradesh government under Kalyan Singh‘s Chief Ministership gave an assurance to the Supreme Court that the karseva on 6th December, 1992 would be symbolic. However, the mobilisation of Karsevaks was a pre-planned and systematic exercise by the Sangh Parivar. The White Paper on Ayodhya by the Government of India narrates the mobilisation of Karsevaks on December 6. It says that as early as 1st December, 25,000 karsevaks had reached Ayodhya. 370 tents and kitchens were set up at the Ram Katha Kunj where 16,000 karsevaks were accommodated in close proximity of the disputed structure. The number of karsevaks went up to 60,000 by the

afternoon of 2nd December and crossed one lakh on 3rd December. On 5th December, i.e., on the eve of the karseva the number had exceeded two lakhs (Government of India. 1993c: 30). The PCI in its report claimed that "the assault on the disputed structures had been precisely planned and smoothly executed" (PCI, 1991b:155).

The Liberhan Commission Report on Babri Masjid demolition (The one man commission constituted in 1992 which submitted its report to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on 30 June 2009) recorded that "the prognosis of video recordings, oral testimony and the documentary evidence brought on the record consistently establishes that the media personnel present in and around Ayodhya were specifically targeted and subjected to violent attacks" (Government of India, 2009: 891). The Commission report says that

> *The entire event was choreographed exclusively by the RSS and VHP and their associates. The presence of the press was regulated by these organizations, i.e., the RSS, VHP and the BJP. The journalists coming to Ayodhya were required to get accreditation and passes allowing them access to the disputed site etc. These passes ere tellingly issued by the aforementioned organisations and not by the district administration as required and expected. The district administration did not make any arrangements for the media despite knowing that they would be present in significant numbers given the significance of the events. Even the state owned media or institutions or the offices of the state departments were not shown to be present much less having recorded such a historical and internationally known event taking place* (Government of India, 2009: 152).

It further stated that "the organisers were quite clear of the media personnel and their identity and their numbers who came for covering the incidents. They had an exact idea of this event's interest globally. They were fully conscious of philosophies, the multi-coloured thoughts and views that media persons represented, apart from their blinkered views on the issues" (Government of India, 2009: 152).

On 6 December, 1992, in his address to the nation, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao announced on Doordarshan that "the mosque" at Ayodhya had been demolished. Following the demolition of the Babri masjid, communal violence took place in many states in India. On 18th December, 1992, S. B. Chavan, the then Union Home Minister, made a statement in Parliament on the events related to the demolition of the Babri Masjid. This was followed by the imposition of the President's rule in Uttar Pradesh and the dissolution of the State Legislative Assembly. In fact, hyper Hindu nationalist activists who participated in the demolition of Babri Masjid, received protection from BJP

leaders (Jaffrelot, 2010). The Hindi media not only followed the BJP line "just in the structure and thrust of news reports, but also in the unthinking adoption of the very rhetoric of the Hindu right, as if this was the language of neutrality and balance" (Gupta and Sharma, 1996: 11). The Hindi media's undue coverage to these incidents contributed to the Hinduisation of the press in India. Another prominent Hindi newspaper, *Punjab Kesari*, carried news naming specific temples such as Jagannath Mandir and Dhakeshwari temple, having been damaged in Bangladesh. Reddy contends that "the aggressive mobilisation of what was called Hindu "sentiment" in North India, which was voiced in Hindi newspapers in the late 1980s and early 1990s, contributed to the circulation of newspapers" (Reddy, 2019: 188).

The Ayodhya movement created a new narrative based on Hindu identity for political mobilisation and electoral aggrandisement of the BJP. The Hindu religiosity raised by the Advani's rathyatra and the supporting role of the Hindi media gave political dividends to the BJP in the 1991 general elections as the party increased its seats and vote share. In the election, the party secured 120 seats with a vote share of 20.8% compared to its 85 seats and 11.36% votes in the 1989 election.

BJP on Destruction of Babri Masjid

In April 1993, the BJP brought out a White Paper on Ayodhya and the Ram temple movement. In its foreword, L K Advani, the BJP president, argued that "the structure which Mir Baqi put up on the orders of Babur never had any special significance from a religious point of view. It was purely and simply a symbol not of devotional and of religion but of conquest" (BJP, 1993: 1). Critiquing the prevailing secularism in India, the white paper claimed that Hindu nationalism is the answer and reconstructing Ram temple became the symbol of the rising consciousness of the people of India. Advani stated that when large sections of the English press described destruction of the Babri masjid as a "national shame", "madness", "Barbaric" for the rest of the country, it was a liberation, a sweeping away of cobwebs" (BJP, 1993: 2). The BJP claimed that the Ayodhya movement had a religious and cultural origin, and was not merely a political issue. According to it, the movement for construction of Ram temple was not just a demand and that instead it was a reflection of a far deeper journey for recapturing the Hindu national identity. The

movement they believe is firmly rooted in India's inclusive and assimilative cultural heritage. "It represented the soul of the nationalist thrust of our freedom movement" (BJP, 1993: 7). Hindutva nationalists portrayed that "Ayodhya movement symbolised the re-establishment of the roots of India's nationhood which had dried up due to post-independence politics and a spiritually bankrupt idiom" (BJP, 1993: 7). According to the BJP, "the Ayodhya movement developed into a massive protest against the derailment of all that inspired the freedom movement – the elevating chant of Vande Mataram which Maharshi Bankim Chandra gave to its nation, the goal of Rama Rajya held out by Mahatma Gandhi as the destination of free India, the ideal of spiritual nationalism expounded by Swami Vivekananda, the spirit of Sanatana Dharma which Sri Aurobindo described as the soul and nationalism of India, and the massive devotion to the motherland built around the Ganapati festival by Bal Gangadhar Tilak" (BJP, 1993: 7).

The BJP legitimised the destruction of the Babri Masjid as it was based on its promise to construct a Ram temple at Ayodhya. The BJP firmly believed that the construction of Ram Mandir at Janmasthan is a symbol of the vindication of India's cultural heritage and national self-respect. As per the BJP, it is purely a national issue and it will not allow any vested interest to give it a sectarian and communal colour. Hence, the party is committed to build Shri Ram Mandir at Janmasthan by relocating the super-imposed Babri structure with respect. The party often cites its Manifesto for the 1991 Parliamentary election. It has to be reminded that the BJP in its manifesto for the election 1991 promises that

> *BJP firmly believes that construction of Shri Ram Mandir at Jamnasthan is a symbol of the vindication of our cultural heritage and national self respect. For BJP it is purely a national issue and it will not allow any vested interests to give it a sectarian and communal colour. Hence party iscommitted to build Shri Ram Mandir at Janmasthan by relocating super imposed Babri structure with due respect* (BJP, 1991: 7).

Congress's Role in Ayodhya Movement

The then leadership of the Congress Party and the government headed by Rajiv Gandhi were found to be vacillating in the face of the aggressive positions that the Hindutva forces were taking. This was in total contrast to the approach adopted by Nehru, when he was at the helm. Nehru was uncompromising in the struggle against communalism and for establishing a secular India. Both he and Ambedkar had played a stellar role in ensuring

that India adopts a Constitution which was secular in nature. However, unfortunately, over a period of time, these principles were getting eroded. One of the reasons for this erosion is the inability of the Indian ruling classes to materially transform India. It failed to deliver on the aspirations aroused during the struggle for freedom - of poverty alleviation, employment opportunities, overcoming economic and social backwardness, etc. This was bound to lead to brewing discontent and questioning the very model of development that India chose.

Those days it was called the Nehruvian model — welfarist policies, public sector playing a vital role, self-reliance, independent foreign policy etc. Since developments did not match people's aspirations, these ideals were being challenged. The right wing majoritarian communal forces exploited this situation to intervene. The crisis in the capitalist system contributed in no small measure towards this. Such a situation came in handy for the erstwhile Jan Sangh, and its new incarnation the BJP to galvanise sections of the majority community on a communal basis. Instead of confronting and challenging the ideological and political onslaught mounted by the Hindutva forces, the Congress Party sought to compromise. Opening of the locks of the Babri Masjid and permitting worship of the idol installed there was an attempt to appease these forces. Instead of stemming the erosion of the Congress's support base, such an approach compromised on the secular ideals that the country had been following and dealt a body blow to this very concept (Karat, 2021).

The Congress which spearheaded social movements was later found to be compromising and it was manifested on various issues related to the Babri Masjid-Ram Janmabhoomi dispute. Irfan Habib, noted historian, views that what was wrong was not so much the Congress‘s weak criticism of the Ayodhya movement, but refusal of the Government of India to use the Army to protect the Babri Masjid at the critical moment (Karat, 2021). Apart from unlocking the gates of the Babri Masjid, the government headed by the Congress allowed the Shilanyas (foundation laying ceremony) to take place and also sat over the demolition of the Babri Masjid. While reporting on the shilanyas ceremony at Ayodhya, The Times of India made an indictment of the Congress party and its role in the growth of Hindutva. According to it, the shilanyas “was a dangerous turning point in the history of independent India. The seeds for the disintegration of the secular vision of the country were sown that day. History cannot easily pardon the Congress for its direct and

indirect contribution to the spectacular growth of Hindu chauvinist forces witnessed today and the tightening hold of the Muslim community" (The Times of India, 1989). As Zoya Hasan, argues;

> *The first decade after independence, the Congress party and government were not monolithic institutions. Both contained many groups with differing political orientations and ideologies. The Congress had representatives of three important ideological persuasions within its ranks with quite definite but often contradictory views on what direction public policy and politics should take. The first wished to build a secular and liberal party; the second was committed to pursuing socialist policies; and the third was committed to promoting Hindu interests. Each of these groups exerted considerable influence in the Congress, but none fully dominated the Party; each group was producing its own pressures outside the Congress* (Hasan, 1998:63).

However, the Ramjanmabhoomi movement and the destruction of Babri masjid proved that the Congress was succumbing to the pressure exerted by the Hindutva forces.

Print Media's Communal Outreach

Throughout the Ayodhya movement, including the destruction of the Babri Masjid and its aftermath, the print media both regional and local tended to report on communal events to further intensify the hatred between the two communities. The Hindi newspapers in the Hindi heartland, openly supported and sided with the Hindu communal forces. The demolition of the Babri Masjid was celebrated and portrayed as a 'grand mobilisation without any dissent' by the Hindi media. This reflects the media's support to Hindu-right mobilisation over Ramajanmabhoomi (Ram 2011: 20). Further, the gap in reportage between the English and Hindi media left more room for Hindu nationalists to camouflage such communal mobilisation, since consumers of Hindi media did not have access to multiple and a somewhat objective coverage like that was being done by the English press. The media's helping hand in prompting the Hindu right-wing ideology and its gaining the upper hand in Indian politics in the context of Ayodhya movement, is very visible. Anant Bagaitkar, senior journalist and Bureau Chief, Sakal, Delhi Bureau, who was the former President and General Secretary of Press Club of India as well as former Press Council member who covered Ayodhya movement extensively and was also in Ayodhya when the Masjid was demolished, asserts that media was completely dominated by upper castes and also an economic class which represents middle class outlooks. He observes that earlier people with some kind of a social commitment with the liberal democratic mindset used to

do journalism, but it is a different scenario now with large number of media persons not having this background, who obviously fall in trap of some kind of a Hindutva ideology with which they easily identify (Bagaitkar, 2021).

Further, it is argued that the media was a central factor which helped Hindutva forces to consolidate their hold over India. Hindu right wing ideology managed to get wider acceptance on account of the editorial positions adopted by many media organisations. Indian Media has also helped greatly in the cult building of Hindutva leaders (Philipose, 2021). Ram Puniyani argues that by 1980s a section of Hindi media in particular had taken a right turn. This became possible more due to Advani's tenure as I&B Minister in the Janata Party Government. It was able to reach large sections of rural masses in North India in particular (Puniyani, 2021). Vipul Mudgal finds that the mainstream media got further emboldened to Hindu nationalist ideas when the opposition also started soft- pedalling Hindutva (Mudgal, 2021).

Thakurta clarifies that the English media which seemed more neutral was actually pretending that it was neutral; though as far as religious issues are concerned they were neutral. They were quite secular. But, it needs to be underlined that they are not ideologically neutral. They have always favoured the rich, the elite, and those who believed in free enterprise capitalism. It has also vehemently put down those who believed otherwise. But as far as the religious matters were concerned they behaved in a more neutral manner. This started changing from 1990‘s onwards or actually it started in the 1980‘s when people like the late Girilal Jain, took over as the editor of Times of India. Though he was never blatantly a Hindu majoritarian, he indirectly did and justified the rise of Hindu nationalism. Later on, it became more and more blatant to the point where you were having television channels like Times Now and Republic which are openly anti-Muslim and in fact have contributed a great role in spreading Islamophobia. And this is a phenomenon that took a penultimate form from 2013 onwards and is still going on (Thakurta, 2021). Ram Puniyani argues that it is true that after Babri demolition a section of English media started caving into a communal whirlpool. Its rightwing orientation was due to active intervention by corporate sections at a later period. On top of this, the RSS oriented journalists made inroads into media (Puniyani, 2021). Shabnam Hashmi says that

the English media held onto journalistic ethics much longer but with time and well planned strategy of the Sangh of replacing journalists, controlling the owners, hobnobbing with the owners and providing them lucrative offers for their other businesses, the role of editors was undermined and it became impossible for professional journalists to stick to the ethics. They either left or succumbed and over time the English media also caved in. A few, like Telegraph, have not given in so far (Hashmi, 2021).

Sharad Gupta was quite skeptical of the neutrality of the English newspapers in the communal reporting when she says that they tried to maintain a balance between integrity and credibility and reporting on communal reporting though it was very hard to. He says that

> *Because if a newspaper group has two language editions, as Navbharat Times was Hindi, Times of India was English, as Jansatta was in Hindi, Indian Express was in English, so Jansatta was completely on the right, then Indian Express could not be on the left or centre, so have certain inclinations* (Gupta, 2021).

The Ayodhya movement changed many journalists' ideological and political position working in the English media. As Sharad Gupta argues, even journalists like Prabhu Chawla, Rajat Sharma, Chandan Mitra, Swapan Dasgupta, etc. who identified with the Left suddenly became right wingers, which impacted the reporting and editorial positions of the English newspapers (Gupta, 2021). Irfan Habib, noted historian, says that "even the English media assumed that the Babri Masjid was built by destroying a temple, and so there did not arise the same spate of criticism against the VHP's movement as one would have expected in any other case of illegal destruction" (Habib, 2021). The commercial media must look to profit from advertisements, which in turn come from Government and Big Business. Doubtless, there are brave, independent voices, but these are overwhelmed by the chauvinistic and majoritarian loudspeakers (Habib, 2021).

Umakant Lakhera, veteran Hindi journalist, argues that though initially the English media desisted from reporting the nefarious activities of the Hindu nationalist forces, in the later course, a major part or stronger portion of English media also joined hands directly or indirectly and gave core support to this ideology which got reflected in the news content (Lakhera, 2021). As Rajagopal asserts the English media, including English newspapers that were once citadels of secularism, were culpable through blanket coverage and display

(Rajagopal, 2021). Asserting that the Ayodhya movement was a well-planned, well organised and well-orchestrated program of the Hindu right wing groups led by the various constituents of the RSS to enlarge its base in the Hindi heartland, Rajagopal says that they got support from sections of the Indian media. Certain writers and journalists were also part and parcel of this whole Ram mandir movement and the demolition of the Babri mosque, which they all openly supported in their writings.

Ironically, the English newspapers which took pro secular stand during the Ayodhya movement and the destruction of the Babri masjid in 1992, turned round in November 2019 when the Supreme Court of India delivered its judgment on the Ayodhya dispute. The Times of India in its headline, "Ram Mandir within Site" said that the five-acre plot allotted to Muslims for a mosque was a balancing act (The Times of India, 10 November, 2019). The Hindustan Times in its headline, "Temple Set in Stone" implied that he Ayodhya verdict was significant "because it is related directly to three fundamental shifts underway in India: the nature of state institutions and its changing relationship with faith; the nature of identity-based political mobilisation; and the nature of inter-community dynamics" (The Hindustan Times, 10 November, 2019). The Indian Express in its headline, "Temple gets site, mosque a plot", apart from highlighting Modi's speech after the verdict and what the judges said in the judgement, the daily also explained how the case went in favour of the Hindus (The Indian Express, 10 November, 2019).

Hindi Media and Ayodhya Movement

The resurgence of Hindi newspapers in the 1990s rekindled the debate on Indian politics. While one section perceives that the resurgence is due to rising literacy levels, aggressive marketing strategies, better transportation infrastructure, and their increasing awareness in the political process, communal mobilisation and politics (Neyazi, 2011) it is also argued that people kept away from the English language newspapers as they were obsessed with growth mantra of the neo-liberalisation and its popularisation for the elite in contrast to social justice and redistribution (De, 2017). Many other studies on this period, establish a strong relationship between the Hindi media and the communal mobilisation of the Hindu nationalist politics (Nandi, et al, 1995; Engineer, 1991; Engineer, 1990; Rajagopal, 2001; Hasan 1998). Accordingly, it was argued that the rise of Hindi newspapers was part of the rise of communal and identity politics in India rather than their role as vehicles of democratisation (Rajagopal, 2001; Hasan 1998).

According to Anant Bagaitkar, some Hindi media persons actually helped Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and those video cassettes might now be part of the record. They actually helped VHP, Bajrang Dal and other outfits by assisting in making video cassettes, propaganda material etc to propagate the Ram mandir issue. That also was a very disturbing development which they experienced at that time (Bagaitkar, 2021). Pamela Philipose argued that since the late 1980s and 1990s when major shifts took place in the social and economic sphere, the media tried to adopt ways and means to enhance its profit. The ideals of a free media got submerged with this. At the same time, the Hindu identity was buttressed by many media organisations and there were flagrant violations of media ethics. Many newspapers were seen as championing the cause of Ayodhya movement. The Ayodhya Rath Yatra of L K Advani from Somnath started on 25th September 1990 is an example. More than 300 journalists covered the Yatra details and it was a situation of a captive media (Philipose, 2021). According to Philipose, religion, faith, etc. came to the forefront when it came to reporting in the Hindi Media. Largely circulated newspapers like Dainik Jagran, Dainik Bhaskar, etc. were seen to be whipping up communal sentiments. The technological revolution helped these newspapers to spread their presence to remote and rural areas. In turn, sensationalism and religious emotion helped these newspapers increase their circulation (Philipose, 2021). Thakurta asserts that the Hindi media saw this as both an ideological project as well as an opportunity to increase their revenue, the advertising revenue. So it was a combination of factors and the Ayodhya movement or the run up to the Ayodhya movement. It was one opportunity that the Hindi media contributed to in fuelling support for the right wing and the BJP in particular. And as I said earlier, they were not just promoting the interests of the rightwing but in their coverage of the communal violence in Gujarat in 2002 and even in earlier riots that took place in the immediate aftermath of the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Mumbai and elsewhere they adopted a blatantly partisan role siding with the rioters belonging to the majority community, because the proprietors and the editors shared the right wing political-economic ideology of the ruling dispensation, notwithstanding their opportunism. (Thakurta, 2021).

Ram Puniyani says that to begin with it was an attempt to enhance the business, later on in a planned manner RSS sympathisers cultivated and promoted this section, this in turn enhanced their commercial interests (Puniyani, 2021). The Safdar Hashmi Memorial Trust which extensively campaigned against communalism and conducted

exhibitions on Ramayana, views that the communalisation of media had taken place and was very visible in those times and also there was a turf war for expansion of readership. This was the period when regional newspapers were significantly expanding. So it was kind of a competition of which newspapers could be more blatant about appeasing the Hindutva sentiments and in the process reach out to more readers who were getting influenced by the Sangh's venomous propaganda. It was not confined to reporting only. Even the editorials of newspapers like Aaj and Dainik Jagaran took very strong pro-Hindutva positions. There were many other Hindi dailies but the major competition seems to be between these two. Dainik Jagaran's naked support to the Hindutva forces and its blatant espousal of the Ram Temple issue helped it to become the largest circulated daily in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. The English press still held onto journalistic ethics but the Hindi dailies virtually acted as mouth pieces of the BJP and the Sangh and in that process moulded people's opinions, making them more communal and pro-Hindutva (Hashmi, 2021).

According to Zoya Hasan, the VHP has considerable influence among journalists, and its sympathisers occupy the key posts in Hindi newspapers. According to her,

> *Before the karseva, Dainik Jagran published two leading Hindi dailies from Kanpur, Lucknow, Jhansi, Gorakhpur, Varanasi, Meerut, Agra and Bareilly and Aaj were performing karseva in newspaper columns. Through reports, editorials, and published appeals, they asked their readers totake a stand on the 30 October karseva. Newspapers accused security agencies of committing atrocities on karsevaks. All newspapers falsely reported that karseva was performed at the Ramjanmabhoomi temple site and the construction had already begun (Hasan, 1998:59).*

Engineer highlights the communalising politics of the Hindi press in reporting the Kar Seva activities at Ayodhya in the month of October and November in 1990. While reporting the activities of Hindu communal organisations, the Hindi newspapers covered up the actions of the organisations and their sinister attempt at communal polarisation and hate politics. The press even fabricated the death of karsevaks at the Ayodhya (Ramakrishnan, 2021). Even the Press Council of India warned the Hindi media for reporting the events with more communal colour. Hindi dailies such as Aaj, Dainik Jagran, Swatantra Chetna and Swatantra Bharat were taken to task. Here local Hindu priests were paid large sums to become stringers/part time reporters for Hindi newspapers "for the clout that comes with being a stringer for Hindi newspapers thus gaining access to their audiences" (Farmer, 1996).

The role played by the media, particularly the Hindi media during the Ramjanmabhumi movement is one of inciting passions about the Ram Temple and creating communal tensions and stoking Hindu sentiments. In the period 1991-92 the electronic media did not have much of a presence. Three major Hindi newspapers, the Dainik Jagran, Aaj and Amar Ujala, played a leading role in shaping public opinion and inciting communal passions, particularly in states like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. At every juncture when there was some major turn in the movement or critical situations, we found that the Hindi media played the role of an instigator inciting the people. Even while contributing to raising the communal pitch, the media was, in a sense, reflecting the growing communalisation that was happening on the ground. This came about because of the RSS's sustained campaign and relentless efforts and outfits. It can also be said that while the media also played a dirty role, it itself was succumbing and reflecting the communal feelings and passions seen at that point in time. Initially while it was playing to mass sentiments aiming to increase its circulation figures, subsequently they too got co-opted and became vehicles for propagating the Hindutva agenda. Over time, they turned themselves into becoming full-fledged vehicles for taking forward the Hindutva ideology. Initially the attempt by the Hindutva forces was to infiltrate the media. But now things had changed dramatically with the media becoming plaint turning itself into the voice of the communal forces... More and more sections of the bourgeoisie or big bourgeoisie of the country also started either supporting the Hindutva agenda or sought to remain silent.

In the 1991 general election, it was for the first time BJP emerged as the major opposition party in the country. At that time, we could see sections of the big bourgeoisie who had traditionally supported the Congress Party, tilting towards the BJP. The process that began at that point in time, culminated in the outright or total support for the BJP from the big bourgeoisie, with the rise of Modi. This was very much reflected in the attitude of the corporate media as well. While large sections of the Hindi media had been supportive of the Hindutva agenda even during the Ramjanmabhoomi agitation, the English media had not succumbed till the rise of Modi in 2014, when it came out in the open either backing them or opting to remain silent (Karat, 2021).

Communalising the Newspapers Content

In 1990 alone, a number of national and vernacular newspapers published a lot of objectionable content, which the Press Council of India pointed out in 1991.

Name of Newspaper	Date	Objectionable Publication
Aaj, Lucknow	4.10.1990	Karnailganjdanga main saw mare; Darjanonbachhegharnahinlaute, (Hundred killed in Karnailganj riots; dorzen children did not return home).
Aaj, Varanasi	22.10.1990	President of India was unhappy and astonished at the statements of Chief Minister Shri Mulayam Singh and that Mulayam Singh will not be given assistance of the army to strike terror in the State.
Aaj, Lucknow	22.10.1990	MukhyaMantri Ki Vakyavyabaji Se RashtapatiChintit (President worried at CM's remarks).
Aaj, Kanpur	24.10.1990	Mirzapur Jail Main Ram BhaktonKoGhodeyKeeLeedKhilayeeJaaRahi Hey (The worshippers of Ram are being fed horse dung in Mirzapur Jail).
Aaj, Lucknow	24.10.1990	Ayodhya Jane Par Babar Ke Bad Pahli Bar Rok (Visiting Ayodhya banned for the first time after Babar).
Aaj, Ranchi	26.10.1990	Ayodhya Main Ram Mandir Toda Gaya (Ram Temple demolished in Ayodhya). The news under the above headline did not mention this. It only said that the canopy standing over the shilanayas site and idol put in the pit had been removed.
Aaj, Lucknow	27.10.1990	Government has banned the chanting of Ram in UP. Therefore, instead of chanting Ram Naam Satya Hai (Ram Nam is truth), the people were forced to chant (Mulayam namsatyahai).
Aaj, Kanpur/Lucknow	1.11.1990	Guerilla war has begun between the armed forces and the Ram bhakts.
Aaj, Agra	2.11.1990	Ayodhya Main Firing, SainkadonHatahat, Sarkar DawaraKhandan, MirtakSankhyaPanchBatayee (Firing in Ayodhya, hundreds injured, denial by Government gives out the figure of five dead).
Aaj, Lucknow	2.11.1990	Saw Se AdhikLashenSaryu Mein FainkeeGayen (More than hundred dead bodies thrown into river Saryu). Armed KarSewaks will now be pressed into the movement.
Aaj, Patna	2.11.1990	The November 2, 1990 issues of Aaj gave different figures of causalities from different centres of publication as below: Varanasi … 100 dead Ranchi … 400-500 dead and injured Agra … 100 killed Kanpur … 200 killed Bareilly … 500 killed

Aaj, Bareilly	2.11.1990	KartikPoornimaPrKhoon Se NahaiAyodhya; Ram Bhakton Par Char Ghantey Firing; Kam-se-Kam 500 log mare (Ayodhya has a blood bath on Kartikpoornima: firing on Ram bhaktas for four hours, at least 500 people killed).
Aaj, Kanpur	3.11.1990	Nihethe Ram BhaktonKoGher Ker Ghanton Firing – 200 KartikMarayKeSnanParv per Khoon Se NaliayeeAyodhya, JalliyanwalaBaghKaandBounaPada (Hours of firing om the unarmed worshippers of Ram after rounding them up – 200 die, Ayodhya episode becomes petty against this).
Aaj, Kanpur/Lucknow	3.11.1990	River of blood flowed through the entire lanes
Aaj, Kanpur	4.11.1990	Ram BhaktonNei DIG Ko Peeta, MagistratonKeeBhagawat, DM Chhuti Ley Bhagey (Ram worshippers beat up DIG, Magistrate revolt, District Magistrate flees by taking leave).
Aaj, Lucknow	11.11.1990	YadiBalidanNahinHuye, To Kahan Gaye Ye 307 KarSewak (If there were no sacrifices then where did these 307 KarSewak go).
Aaj, Bareilly	16.11.1990	Merey 64 sathiyenkounhon ne qatalkarsaryu main daaldiya (My 64 companions were butchered by them and thrown in the Saryu).
Dainik Jagran, Lucknow	25.10.1990	Sangeenokesayameindubkikhamoshi (Calm under shadow of guns). Tended to arouse the wrath of minority.
Dainik Jagran, Lucknow	31.10.1990	Lok Shakti ki Jay Ho (Victory be to the power of the people). The editorial campaign on page 1. (Such editorial destroy all journalistic prudence and balance in presentation, and suspense, speculation and guess work is paraded as news).
Dainik Jagran, Lucknow	2.11.1990	(Special afternoon bulletin) Ram bhakton ne vivaditsthalghera – Ayodhyamein firing : 100 mare (Devotees of Ram occupy controversial place : firing in Ayodhya : 100 dead).
Dainik Jagran, Lucknow	3.11.1990	Ayodhyameinphir firing: 32 log shahid (firing again in Ayodhya: 32 becomes martyrs). Regular edition 3.11.1990
Dainik Jagran, Lucknow	6.11.1990	Asthai Jail kiDeewarTodi; Pradarshan, Rasta Jam. VishaktBhojanKhane Se DedsonBandiKarSewakBeemar (Temporary jail wall broken, protest road block: 150 KarSewak taken ill after consuming poisoned food).
Dainik Jagran, Lucknow	7.11.1990	HarGaonkoAyodhya Main KarSangharshKarnan (Consider every village Ayodhya and fight out), Ram MandirKeLiyeDasLankhKaLadekooDastaBanagge (Ten lakh strong militant force should be built

		up for Ram Temple). This was based on a statement, but no attribution was made to any source in the heading, nor did it carry any quotation mark.
Dainik Jagran, Lucknow	8.11.1990	1000 police and army personnel who are Ram bhakts were leaving their jobs to join "Shri Ram Kranti Brigade" (some totally imaginary)
Dainik Jagran, Lucknow	15.11.1990	Chief Minister, Shri Mulayam Singh was very angry that no enough bullets were fired on the unarmed Ram BhaktKarSewak at Ayodhya during the past few days. A sub-heading said that the police was not in favour of firing at the unarmed KarSewaks.
Dainik Jagran, Lucknow	16.11.1990	Chief Minister, Shri Mulayam Singh had repeatedly tried to pressurise the Chief of the Army's Central Command Lt. Gen. Bilimoria to order his force to fire at the unarmed KarSewaks from all sides in Ayodhya on October 30. After visiting the areas by helicopter, Lt. Gen. Bilimoria refused to obey the orders of the Chief Minister. The Chief Minister then contacted the Central Government and requested it to get orders for Lt. Gen. Bilimoria from the Army Headquarters.

Communalised Reporting on Babri Demolition

Many journalists working in the Hindi print media unabashedly expressed their happiness at the demolition of the Babri Masjid. Radhika Ramaseshan, a reporter of a news daily narrates the state of affairs in reporting the incident. According to her, "Rajnath Singh, the resident editor of Swatantra Bharat, Lucknow was among the few journalists present inside the mosque when it was being damaged." After it was over, the editor emerged with unconcealed glee, and ran all the way down the lane, screaming, "the masjid has been broken down completely" (Ramaseshan, 1990). She further says that the staff photographer of National Herald, Lucknow was forced to say Jai Sri Ram by kar sevaks in Ayodhya, He refused to do so, saying he was a pressman, upon which he was heckled and his camera damaged (Ramaseshan, 1990).

While *The Indian Express* reflected its earlier Hindutva slant even in its reporting and comment on the demolition, *The Hindu carried the banner headline —Outrage in Ayodhya: Babri Masjid Destroyed*

> *All the secular political forces must rally to the defence of the country and pull it back from the brink. The first step would be to rebuild the destroyed Babri Masjid as a*

> *gesture towards the minority community and as a reaffirmation of an unwavering commitment to the vision of a democratic India, free of any kind of bigotry* (The Hindu, 1992).

Violence spreads nationwide: 230 die (*The Hindu*, 8th December 1992) Toll rises to 950 as violence continues (*The Hindu*, 12th December 1992) Widespread in Bombay (*The Hindu*, 11th January, 1993)

Fear stalks Bombay areas (*The Hindu*, 16th January, 1993)

The Liberhan Commission and the Media

The Liberhan Commission which was set up after Babri Masjid was demolished, took serious note of the reportage by large sections of newspaper and media houses, notably the local and the vernacular press which were reporting half-baked news and information. According to the Commission, the most common grievance that came up was that some journalists and media channels had their own agenda, so they would present fictitious contents or attribute words to a particular leader, even while that leader might not have uttered those words or had spoken in a different context and with different viewpoint and more gentle connotations. The Commission even criticised the Press Council of India (PCI) the only body entrusted to regulate the media. However, the PCI is seen as a toothless body, having no substantive powers in its hands except the power to censure. Censuring a journalist, a publication or for that matter a channel is nothing more than a slight rap on the wrist which carries little or no value. It also added that a section of the media is enjoying benefits by polarising the media, making it a subservient ally or supporter of specific polity. These groups are unscrupulous in their moral conduct, regardless of national interests or individuals or organisations. As opinion makers, the group becomes preachers and argues for a single vision, regardless of their duties and their responsibility to be objective while reporting, and making the public informed and vigilant. It noticed that these media groups glossed over the fact of an alternative perspective, or of legality and the rule of law.

Media Reporting on Communal Riots

Communal divisions existed in many parts of India right from the days of independence.

From the days of partition, the country has witnessed a number of social and religious conflicts that has led to irreconcilable differences between the Hindus and Muslims in particular and other social groups in general. There are ample examples of communal violence that the media have reported from the days of Independence. To name some, communal clash occurred in Jamshedpur, Kolkata and Rourkela following _the theft of a relic hair of the Prophet in Kashmir in 1964‘ (Galonnier, 2021); in 1970 there were riots in Bhiwandi, repeated incidents occurred in Hyderabad; Nellie massacres in 1983 and in 1984 terrible communal riots in Bombay-Bhiwandi.

The communal flaring up of the Ayodhya movement and the destruction of the Babri Masjid ignited communal riots in India. According to Ramaseshan, the press, particularly newspapers in vernacular languages, were directly responsible for setting off most of the communal riots, including the ones that erupted in UP when the Babri Masjid was demolished resulting in the death of more than a hundred. The press sustained the feverish campaign by highlighting the alleged ‘blood bath’ in Ayodhya, caused by police firings on November 2; against the police repression on karsevaks lodged in different jails, especially the one in Unnao; and against the pro-Muslim bias of Chief Minister, Mulayam Singh Yadav. Doing this achieved three objectives; it whipped up emotional fervor for the 'cause' of the Ram temple even among large sections of disinterested apolitical Hindus and as a corollary completely polarized the Hindus and the Muslims, since the shrine ultimately symbolizes Hindu animosity against Muslims. Lastly, it had seriously undermined the moral authority of Mulayam Singh Yadav, who by steadfastly maintaining that he adhered to the letter of law in this dispute, came to represent the voice of moderation and sanity (Ramaseshan, 1990). The same has been the nature of the press in reporting and proliferating communal tensions between religious communities.

It needs no reiteration that the mainstream media has always generally been the mouthpiece of the ruling class and spokespersons for the dominant ideology, religious groups and caste combinations. “The media has a social responsibility as it is the primary source of information for people to make their judgement with respect to sovereignty. But corporate-controlled media is being used for manufacturing public consent (Yechury, 2014) Large sections of the press in India, especially the Hindi ones, have unabashedly supported the ‘Hindutva’ narrative propounded by the RSS and BJP. Anyone seen

opposing 'Hindutva' politics was branded a 'traitor or the 'ally of traitors. Mulayam Singh, who was the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, during the *rathyatra*, *was* labelled 'Mullah Mulayam', with the title 'Mullah' being used as a slur. Also implicit being conveyed was the proposition that being a Muslim in itself was an offence. Leaders like Mulayam Singh Yadav and Laloo Yadav, who stood in vehement opposition to the politics of Hindutva and preached communal harmony were projected as enemies of 'Hindus'. The pliant media played along and ably assisted in spreading this falsehood.

Table: 1

Hindu/Muslim Riots (1990-95)

Year	**No. of riots Various Sources**	**No. of riots Varshney/Wilkinson dataset**	**No. of Deaths Various sources**	**No. of Deaths Varshney/Wilkinson dataset**
1990	1404	107	1248	596
1991	905	41	474	161
1992	1991	76	1640	1337
1993	2292	32	952	750
1994	179	9	78	35
1995	40	7	62	11

Source: From Jaffrelot book, Religion, Caste and Politics in India, 2010, pp xxii.

Communalising the Public Sphere

The print media, especially daily newspapers constitute an essential component of the public sphere in India. The resurgence of Hindi newspapers widened the Indian public sphere. It opened new vistas for the participation of the marginalised groups in the public sphere created by the print media which was dominated by the English speaking elite (Neyazi, 2011: 75). It not only contributed to the emergence of regional public spheres challenging the national ones created by the national media but also contributed to the regional issues being debated on par with national issues. It is argued that "the booming Hindi news media industry is a testimony to the fact that vernacular media pose a serious

challenge to the dominance and authority of English media in the public sphere" (Neyazi, 2011: 75). Ninan too believed that "localisation of coverage by the print media expanded the existing public sphere at the local level" (Ninan, 2007: 26). The process of localisation of news led to a "democratisation of news-gathering which encompassed the citizenry at large" (Ninan, 2007: 114). However, the public sphere created by the Hindi media, shows that ―the most effective songs in the public sphere so created are those sung by Hindu chauvinist choristers‖ (Jeffrey, 2005: 264). It is argued that in the Habermasian conception of the public sphere, literacy, reading and newspapers may lead to rationality, reflection and debate. However, the rise of the Hindi public sphere shows the other way round that it led to the "fragmentation of the public sphere" (Kumar, 2002). Contesting Krishna Kumar's conception of fragmented public sphere, Jeffrey argues that it is not that the people's public sphere has been fragmented; rather, they have entered a public sphere for the first time because in the rural north India, the regular exposure to print media is in last 15 years (Jeffrey, 2005: 265). In fact, the regional newspapers coverage of regional, ethnic, religious (mostly Hindu nationalist sentiment) and local issues eroded the monopoly of the English media over public spheres.

The public spheres created by the Hindi media were more chauvinist and communal in nature. Instead of sticking to objective and matter-of-fact reporting, media indulged in sensationalism, spewing hatred and spreading fear. This led to the trivialising of the public sphere and generating fear (Barlett and Gentile, 2011: 64). From offering a platform for the hitherto underdogs to acquire political power, the Hindi media gradually transformed itself to becoming the launching pad for the Hindutva mobilisation and political fermentation. In fact, the "Hindi media helped such social groups by providing not only a language but also an institution" (Neyazi, 2011: 78).

Communalising the Media Content

In the 1990s, many newspapers both Hindi and national English dailies took a pliable stand on Hindu nationalist politics and were involved in fomenting Hindu sentiments. English language papers such as The Times of India and The Economic Times and Hindi newspapers like Janasatta, Punjab Kesari, Amar Ujjala were in the forefront of such communal constructions (Gupta and Sharma, 1996: 15). Electronic media in terms of

television emerged as the fastest supplier of information, entertainment, knowledge, news, business etc. During the decades of 1990s, the promotion and public display of symbols and artifacts of Ram, "has proved to be the biggest commercial success story of the 1990s, and Ram-centred communalism has raised Hindu solidarity to a new level of militant intensity – not least through the print media" (Gupta and Sharma, 1996). During the 1990s, there were a lot of discussions on the authenticity of 'Hindi print media' in transporting news to the readers. Scholars like Charu Gupta and Mukul Sharma have interrogated the relationship between print media and communalism (Gupta and Sharma, 1996). Differing from the old view on the importance of print in proliferating the ideas of nation building, Gupta and Sharma argue that the press has not been an important medium of communication in a country where large sections of the population are illiterate. Even among the among the literates, only those having access to modern education and dominating the structures of power, get access to newspapers, which are out of the reach of the masses.

The print media in India deliberately, and unconsciously at times, defines, constructs and maintains communal ideologies. Media in general and print media in particular is not only a powerful source of communal ideologies but it is also a space where ideas are expressed, elaborated, discussed and articulated, along with the proliferation of entrenched values. In fact, during the 1990s, most of the mainstream Hindi newspapers came under scrutiny for carrying Hindu right wing ideologies and sowing the seeds of communal hatred. The participation of the press in proliferating right wing ideologies has led to the propagation of communal policies and polarisation of the people on communal lines. The fact that the popular press is publishing blatantly communal content lends it a sense of legitimacy and acceptance in the public sphere. In popular perception, news publishing houses are conceived as manifestations of truth. Newspapers have gained an unquestionable legitimacy and values among those at the bottom of the ladder.

There have been a number of instances where the press has instigated communal disharmony through its reporting and editorials. The Press in the 1990s paved the path for the mobilisation of Hindutva forces. We are also witnessing an exponential growth of the

Hindutva communal press. As opposed to the corporate controlled English language press, regional papers have a better reach now. This has contributed immensely in spreading the communal ideology wide and deep. *Samna* and *Marmick,* are two newspapers of the Shiv Sena that had wider circulation than the elite national newspapers in Maharashtra. Amongst all the regional parties that have either supported earlier or continue to support the BJP-led regime at the Centre, only the Shiv Sena (SS) has a clear ideological affinity with the RSS-controlled Sangh Parivar. The Shiv Sena was founded on June 19, 1966. However, the spadework for the formation of the SS had started six years earlier, with the launching of the Marathi weekly "Marmik" by Bal Thackeray on August 13, 1960, just three months after the formation of the state of Maharashtra on May 1, 1960. The publication of the first issue of "Marmik", significantly, took place at the hands of the first chief minister of Maharashtra and a top Congress leader, Y.B. Chavan! (Dhawale, 2000). The crude and vulgar simplification of the vexed question of unemployment soon made "Marmik" popular in Mumbai and its environs. "The public response to this weekly was, in fact, the main factor that prompted Thackeray to form the SS, and it was this "Marmik" readership that eventually became the nucleus of several SS "shakhas", or branches, in the urban belt of Mumbai and Thane districts" (Dhawale, 2000). The SS while branding the communists as anti-national, with ample support from the big business houses started using the chauvinist card to break communist led working class strikes, which dealt a severe blow to these unions. The Samna was launched later in 1988, which coincided with the rise of the communal forces and the SS also started raising the communal pitch.

The English press during this time was also not far behind. Girilal Jain, ex-editor of *The Times of India,* wrote many articles justifying how Hindu communalism is just a reaction to the activities of others as "it is a religiously defined community, Hindu society can become the basis of the Indian nation and nationalism; Indian secularism is a clear reflection of Hindu tolerance towards other religious beliefs, etc" (Gupta and Sharma, 1996). In another instance, the *Indian Express* on 15th December 1992 dedicated four columns on its first page primarily to focusing on the BJP. In two of these columns, photos of two BJP supporters who had carved 'Jai Sri Ram' on their chest while protesting outside Pakistan High Commission were published. In the following pages, there are ten more news reports and a lead editorial directly connected with the BJP. One national newspaper,

on a day published fifteen news items directly concerning the BJP. Thus, the consciousness of the readers is manipulated, moulded and shaped in a specific ideological pattern through the biases of news items since 'what is retained in consciousness of the reader are usually the headlines, cartoons, first page news and block items' (Gupta and Sharma, 1996).

The *Navbharat Times* in its series of editorials titled 'Mainstream', opined that 'it is escapism to emphasise that this important issue of [referring to the Ram Janmbhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute], which is linked to emotional and national ambitions, can be solved through court verdict'. Another editorial published by a vernacular newspaper after the Babri Masjid was demolished, declared that, 'It would be an act of hypocrisy to condemn the young men who could not endure this insult anymore. Oh, intellectuals and editors, shed as many crocodile tears as you like. But the average Hindu feels that these spirited young men have washed off the symbols of Mughal arrogance after 400 years and also the appeasement policy of our present rulers.' The communalised press tried to portray the Hindu right wing leaders as the saviours of humanity. It projected Advani as a soft spoken, professional gentleman, dignified and charismatic leader who has carried the spirit of Hinduism and who can express what was there in the 'sub-consciousness of every Hindu' (Gupta and Sharma, 1996). During this time, *The Times of India*, had interviewed Bal Thackeray, Shiv Sena leader, twelve to fifteen times and described him as a "cultured, well read, charismatic person" (Gupta and Sharma, 1996). The SS had by that time become an ally of the BJP and started adopting a blatantly communal stand.

Resurgence of the Hindi Newspapers and Hindutva

The massification of Hindi newspapers in the 1990s was often interpreted as taking place due to rising literacy rates in the Hindi heartland and the politicisation of the lower caste sections of society. These newspapers opened the vistas of institutions of democracy to these sections, thereby deepening Indian democracy (Neyazi, 2011). Moreover, along with localisation of politics, the localisation of news by Hindi newspapers to enhance their advertising revenue also enabled them to compete with national newspapers, in the age of fierce market competition created by the forces of globalisation. With the aid of technology it could decentralise production, distribution and consumption at the local level. The localisation also enabled the corporates to expand their markets and make more profits.

Localisation of production, consumption and distribution helped the spread of local media. This also forced the national newspapers to focus on local issues. Sevanti Ninan finds the reasons for the expansion of print media in the 1990s, including revitalization of panchayati raj, increasing grassroots political participation, new awareness and civic participation, and civil society action (Ninan, 2007). In addition to this, the social and political churning in the Hindi heartland such as the consolidation of the upper and middle class Hindus behind the Hindu nationalist forces and the emergence of the backward classes and the Dalits in Bihar and UP gave a boost to the circulation of the Hindi newspapers. The increasing purchasing power of the rural middle classes due to the rising farm incomes and growing service sector in the rural areas added further advantage to the increasing readership and circulation of Hindi newspapers (Ninan, 2007: 15). In the metropolitan and urban areas, newspapers carried supplementary pages on entertainment and lifestyles, health, glitzy and glamour photos of models etc. which attracted people, leading to its increased circulation.

The resurgence of Hindi newspapers in the 1990s made it difficult for English newspapers to continue their dominance over social, cultural and political spheres in postcolonial India (Neyazi, 2011: 75). The resurgence of Hindi newspapers established a counter hegemony to English newspapers which was perceived to be ignoring rural issues. The massification of Hindi newspapers widened rural India's social, cultural, and political spheres, which were ignored by English newspapers. The Hindi print media raised regional consciousness and contributed to regional mobilisation and acted as the instrument of political communication as they are more accessible to the people at the grassroot level. It is further argued that “Hindi media has played a vital role in creating an alternative public discourse which has definitely changed conditions, if not by displacing the extant public sphere, then by putting regional issues on par with national issues” (Neyazi, 2011: 75). Further the spurt of Hindi print media opened the vistas of opportunities for hitherto marginalised groups.

The resurgence of Hindi newspapers and its jump in circulation in India can be seen in the context of the declining newspaper circulation in the west due to the advent of technology and emergence of electronic media. In the U.S. for instance, the circulation of

newspapers declined at the rate of about 6% a year. On the other hand, India witnessed a boom in the circulation of Hindi newspapers. In the 1990s, the emergence of regional and local newspapers to checkmate the dominance of the English newspapers in the Indian media market contributed to the localization of news and widening of the local public sphere (Jeffrey, 1993; Ninan, 2007; Rajagopal 2001). This however also provided a fertile soil for the emergence and growth of Hindu mobilisation in the Hindi heartland of India initially and beyond the Hindi speaking areas contributing to the phenomenon of "Print Hindutva" (resembling the "Print Capitalism" of Benedict Anderson). In spite of globalisation and technological advancement and the popularisation of English as the aspiring language for empowerment, Hindi newspapers emerged in innumerable ways increasing their circulations and readership. The vernacularisation of print media thereby contributed to the vernacularisation of Hindutva, especially in the Hindi heartland. The Hindi print media was able to control the mind of the people and influence the mass consciousness by means of spreading lies, sensationalisation of news, cultivating emotional and communal hatred among the local people. The resurgence and massive expansion of the Hindi media challenged the "perception of the English press as the 'national press'" (Neyazi, 2011:77).

In the late 1980s, the political mobilisation caused by the Mandal and the Ayodhya movements further consolidated the gains made by Hindi newspapers. In the 1990s, the "second democratic upsurge" further contributed to the popularisation of the Hindi print media. The politicisation of new social groups and their democratic mobilisation further boosted the circulation of the Hindi newspapers (Yadav, 2000 and Jaffrelot, 2003). In addition to this, the regionalisation of Indian politics at the centre – regional parties' alliance with the national political formations and government, gave it a further impetus. Since the middle of the 1990s, Hindi newspapers witnessed the exponential outreach in circulation with multiple editions being published by Dainik Bhaskar, Dainik Jagran, Amar Ujala, Rajastan Patrika, and Hindustan.

English Newspapers on Ayodhya

Irfan Habib, noted historian, says that "even the English media assumed that the Babri Masjid was built by destroying a temple, and so there did not arise the same spate of criticism against the VHP's movement as one would have expected in any other case of

illegal destruction" (Habib, 2021). The commercial media must look to profit, which comes from advertisements, which in turn come from Government and Big Business. Doubtless, there are brave, independent voices, but these are overwhelmed by the chauvinistic and majoritarian loudspeaker (Habib, 2021).

The Pioneer (Lucknow), October 31, 1990 on karseva said

> *It was bound to happen. People"s power at its extreme. Everyone knew it; except our wooden- headed government. For the next thousand years, this day , October 30 will be remembered for what honest, simple religious folks wanted to do out of devotion and faith, and how many obstacles were put in their path by a state machinery determined at every stage to stop their march to Ayodhya. Mulayam Singh Yadav will have to answer before the bar of the people and that of history. Because of his shortsightedness, in gaining a few votes, he has lost sight of the basic tenet of democracy* (The Pioneer, 1990).

The mainstream press as well as the regional newspapers, with all the capacity at its command, projected Hindus as a tolerant and peace loving community and Muslims as peace-breakers. For example, when L.K Advani took out the *rathyatra*, the *Indian Express*, which is a widely circulated national newspaper, stated in one of its reports that 'The Muslims of Faizabad are gearing themselves… They promise bloodshed if there is a move to demolish the Babri Masjid.' Just after four days *Jansatta*, claimed that the Muslims of Dhanbad were planning to stop the *rathyatra* led by Advani. In the entire episode, Muslims were perceived as antithetical to the development of India and were branded as 'problem population' (Sharma, 1996). The Hindu rightwing has systematically cultivated the hatred towards the Muslim community based on blatant lies, distortion of truth, half-baked truths, myths, rumours, etc. A Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) pamphlet claims that the objective of Muslim family planning is *Hum paanch, humare pacchis*. In the build up to the demolition of the Babri Masjid, Muslim communities residing in Ayodhya and its surrounding areas were living in fear. Almost all Muslims in Ayodhya evacuated their homes to save their lives. Yet, the daily newspapers and rightwing run magazines falsely propagated that the Hindu community was living in fear in Muslim dominated areas.

The press, in order to justify and legitimize the pulling down of the Babri Masjid, propagated that there was communal tension in Bangladesh and Pakistan, where the Hindus are in a minority. In another instance, *The Times of India* in its first page carried a story on 8th December titled, 'Temples burnt in UK, Pak, Bangladesh'. *The Indian Express*

had on its front page, had a picture prominently placed of a temple collapsing, with the caption, 'Pakistanis watch a Hindu temple in Lahore crumble after demonstrators attack it with crowbars and swords.' This kind of fake, unverified and sensitive news permeated in the press during the 1990s. The deep-rooted and entrenched communal bias was nakedly visible in their choice of words and vocabulary when reporting events. In the event of even a minor damage to a temple, it would be reported that the temple was destroyed. At the same time when it was a mosque that was under attack, the report would stated that it was a 'disputed structure. That is how Babri Masjid was converted from being a masjid to a 'disputed structure'. The vocabulary and language used while reporting events by almost all the press were with the clear intent to serve the interests of brahmanical chauvinists. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, then a prominent leader of the BJP, famously stated that 'what was demolished was not a mosque but a disputed structure' (Gupta and Sharma, 1996).

The Electoral Gains of the BJP

The virulent form of communal mobilisation by the Hindutva forces in the 1990s, enabled the BJP to reap rich electoral dividends. The BJP increased its influence in UP exponentially at the expense of the Congress. The vacillating and compromising stance of the government during the Ayodhya movement gained credence to the BJP, which it utilized to the hilt and benefitted electorally. Sevanti Ninan says, the *Dainik Jagran*'s use of the Ayodhya issue to establish its supremacy as a newspaper in Uttar Pradesh parallels the Bharatiya Janata Party's sustained use of the Ramjanmabhoomi campaign in Ayodhya to establish itself politically in UP. The Ayodhya controversy and the crusade for the appropriation of disputed shrines was central to the communalisation of politics in UP and the success of the BJP. In the 1991 UP Assembly election, the BJP secured 221 seats with a vote share of 31.45% in comparison to the 1989 Assembly election when the BJP got 57 seats with 11.61% vote share. However, the repercussions of the Ayodhya movement was not confined only to U P. It reverberated in the entire Hindi heartland and India as a whole. In the 1991 general election, the BJP increased its seats to 120 and its vote share to 20.11% in comparison with its 1989 tally of 85 seats with 11.36% votes.

Table 2

General Elections 1984, 1989 and 1991 – Performance of INC and BJP

State	1984		1989		1991	
	INC	**BJP**	**INC**	**BJP**	**INC**	**BJP**
Uttar Pradesh	83 (85) 51.0%	0 (50) 6.4%	15 (84) 31.8%	8 (31) 7.6 %	5 (82) 18.3%	51 (84) 32.8%
Bihar	48(54) 51.8%	0 (32) 6.9%	4 (54) 28.1%	9 (25) 13.0%	1 (52) 24.2%	5 (51) 16.0%
Gujarat	24 (26) 53.2%	1 (11) 18.6%	3 (26) 37.2%	12 (12) 30.5%	5 (16) 29.0%	20 (26) 50.4%
Andhra Pradesh	6 (47) 41.8%	1 (2) 2.2%	39 (42) 51.0%	0 (2) 2.0%	25 (42) 45.6%	1 (41) 9.6%
Karnataka	24 (28) 51.6%	0 (6) 4.7%	27 (28) 48.9%	0 (5) 2.6%	23 (28) 42.1%	4 (28) 28.8%
Kerala	13 (13) 33.3%	0(5) 1.8%	14 (17) 41.7%	0 (20) 4.5%	13 (16) 38.8%	0 (19) 4.6%
Tamil Nadu	25 (26) 40.5%	0 (1) 0.1%	27 (28) 39.1%	0 (3) 0.3%	28 (28) 42.6%	0 (15) 1.7%

Source: Compiled from Election Commission of India data. See www.eci.gov.in

South Indian Print Media's Communal Insulation

As stated earlier, in south India, language newspapers played a vital role in the generation of regional consciousness, strengthening regional political formations and regional autonomy, local governance and people's participation. However, in the Hindi heartland, the rising circulation of the Hindi newspapers and increasing reading habit of the people produced certain undesirable trends. In the late 1980s and 90s, the proliferation of Hindi dailies ignited communal consciousness and promoted communal mobilisation by Hindu nationalist forces. Newspapers peddled social conservatism, promoted irrationality and obscurantism, and cultivated toxic politics based on fake news. Unlike north India, south India has a unique media culture that is insulated from the onslaught of the Hindu nationalist forces in the media. The progressive social movements in these states influenced the media culture. The progressive social movements led by Sri Narayana Guru

in Kerala Jyothiba Phule and Ambedkar in the western India, Basaweshwara in Karnataka, and Periyar in Tamil Nadu, in fact, created a mindset which was liberal and inclusive. In the western India, most of the social reformers or those who actually fought for the downtrodden were all from the upper castes, excluding of course Ambedkar. On the other hand, North India did not have such a liberal and inclusive social reform movement that could have impacted the media culture, especially the Hindi media (Bagaitkar, 2021). While drawing a comparison between the Hindi newspapers in the Hindi heartland and the vernacular newspapers in south India, especially in Kerala, Thomas Jacob, senior journalist and former Editorial Director of Malayala Manorama, says that during the Ayodhya movement, the Hindi media behaved in such a fashion also due to the social situation there. For example, Kerala media is a benign media because of the long tradition of the reform movements. Communists also played an important role in keeping the society secular. In fact, the genesis of the Malayalam media lies in the fact that the Missionaries began newspaper ventures. Basel Evangelical Mission in North Kerala and CMS in South (LMS in Thiruvananthapuram) played a pioneering role in this. The printing press in Kerala created a situation to ensure that literacy and knowledge traverse beyond the Brahmanical order (Jacob, 2021). He further says that the presence of three prominent religions, viz. on an equal footing, Hindu, Christian and Muslim also created an ambience for the media to have a balanced position contrary to what prevailed in the North Indian media. Moreover, one important aspect of Kerala's renaissance is that it had begun from the bottom and newspapers enriched this process. The gains of the renaissance are still in the society and they have an important role in deciding the character of the media (Jacob, 2021).

Sharad Gupta, relates the media culture in the North and South India with certain historical and socio-cultural factors. According to him, “in fact, all the invaders, they came from North. And by the time they reach Madhya Pradesh or Maharashtra, they lose steam. So in a way South was completely insulated from all such cultural influences and religious influences which north could not. So that explains why the South was more insulated from all such movements” (Gupta, 2021). Thomas Jacob says that it is because of the role played by the media that the influence of BJP is relatively less in the southern part of the country. The southern media, especially the Malayalam media, has adopted a neutral or balancing position. Of late, there have been changes due to the aggressive stance

propagated through social media. However, mainstream media upholds a stand that is neither sympathetic nor antagonistic towards any particular ideology (Jacob, 2021).

Contesting the argument that south India, insulated the onslaught of Hindutva, Prakash Karat, former general secretary of CPI (M) clarifies that the influence of Hindutva on the regional newspapers in south India is not insulated, but relatively less. In his opinion the Hindu nationalist forces have not succeeded in inoculating this so called Hindu nationalistic consciousness among the masses in the southern states but with important qualifications. They have succeeded to some extent in Karnataka. In pockets, even in a state like Tamil Nadu where there is a stronger regional identity, traditional Dravidian movement, etc.one can find that there is strong support for Hindutva among the upper middle class and upper caste. But it confines to certain pockets and strata. But it‘s present in other southern states like Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, etc. There are certain sections susceptible to this appeal, which is an all India phenomenon. But it has not yet become influential among the masses in many south Indian states (Karat, 2021). However, rejecting this argument, Govindacharya argues that south India does not have as much of a history of fighting against oppression as compared to the north. So the relationship vis-à-vis the state is not that antagonist as it is in the north. So the impact on the social and religious orders were not that much adverse as it was in the north. Societal response also is a bit different in Hindi and non-Hindi speaking states. That may be one of the reasons. (Govindacharya, 2021).

Intervention of the PCI

In its December 1991 Ayodhya resolution, the Press Council of India (PCI) found that prominent national newspapers, vernacular newspapers, weeklies, dailies and magazines were involved in publishing objectionable and irresponsible accounts with respect to the Ayodhya movement According to it some errant newspapers showed scant understanding or regard for the higher values underlying the concept of freedom of the press and misused this freedom for partisan ends at grievous cost. In doing so, they compromised the credibility of the media as a whole and invited public anger, suspicion, contempt and blunt reprisals from the authorities. The worst offenders were Aaj, Dainik Jagran, Swatantra Chetna and Swatantra Bharat…..fear and outrage created by the fabrications and

exaggerations of a section of the press …….the Council found the publications in the four Hindi dailies namely: Aaj, Dainik Jagran, Swatantra Chetna and Swatantra Bharat as grossly irresponsible and improper, offending the canons of journalistic ethics. The Council decided to censure these four newspapers (Press Council of India, 1991b: 338-339).

The PCI in its resolution noted that "there is little doubt that some influential sections of the Hindi press in UP and Bihar were guilty of gross irresponsibility and impropriety, offending the cannons of journalistic ethics in promoting mass hysteria on the basis of rumours and speculation, through exaggeration and distortion, all of this proclaimed under screaming banner headlines. They were guilty, in a few instances, of doctoring pictures (such as drawing prison bars on the photograph of an arrested Mahant), fabricating causality figures (for example adding '1' before '15' to 115 deaths) and incitement of violence and spreading disaffection amongst members of the armed forces and police, engendering communal hatred" (PCI, 1991b). The Sub-Committee of the Minority Report under PCI observed that "The Council felt that these papers (*Aaj, Dainik Jagran, Swatantra Chetna and Swatantra Bharat)* had shown gross irresponsibility and impropriety, offending the cannons of journalists ethics, in covering the events relating to the Mandir-Masjid issue on and around October 30, 1990" (Sub-Committee Minority Report, 1991). The Council also "deplored the action of the authorities of government of UP in invoking provisions of non-existent press (objectionable matters) Act, 1951, and misapplying provisions of the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867 in suppressing freedom of the Press" (PCI, 1991b).

Indicting and castigating the authorities the PCI said that the "Government trying to deny opportunities for covering events; its offices not being available or not being sufficiently communicative; press-passes, curfew-passes being denied to newspersons, press photographers and newspaper hawkers passes not being honoured by the police; and deliberate disinformation being spread by authorities. Two, pre-censorship sought to be imposed; newspapers being prevented from being published; printed copies seized or not allowed to be transported/distributed; and journalists, managers and hawkers beaten up, arrested or maltreated" (PCI, 1991b).

The PCI, at its meeting held at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, on January 21-22, 1991 censured four Hindi dailies, Aaj, Dainik Jagran, Swatantra Chetna and Swatantra Bharat for their gross irresponsibility and impropriety, offending the cannons of journalistic ethics, in the events relating to the Mandir-Masjid issue on and around October 30, 1990 (Kar Seva in Ayodhya). The Council found that some influential sections of the Hindi press in U P and Bihar were guilty of promoting mass hysteria on the basis of rumours and speculation, through exaggeration and distortion in their banner headlines. The Council also found them guilty of doctoring pictures, fabricating causality figures, incitement of violence, spreading disaffection among members of the armed forces and police, and engendering communal hatred. These newspapers were instrumental in creating provocative and sensational headlines for communal polarisation. The Council viewed that fortunately, other newspapers by and large kept a balance in reporting the issue, these Hindi newspapers created "the environment of surcharged emotion, fear and outrage created by the fabrications and exaggerations of a section of the Press" (PCI, 1991b: 3).

The sub-committee recommended that the Council may express deep displeasure and serious concern at the above mentioned role of a section of the press in two states, particularly of the multi-edition papers of UP which command widespread circulation, thereby influencing the opinion of a large section of people in the state. They may be reprimanded for this. The Council may also issue an appeal to all newspapers and newspersons to strictly and faithfully adhere to and carry on the noble traditions of the Indian press to maintain the highest standards of free, fair and objective journalism, particularly during the periods of national crisis and communal and social strife (PCI, 1991b). In the case of *Aaj, "*the Committee finds that the paper not only did not exercise the restraint which is expected of a responsible publication, it allowed itself to assume a posture of frenzy consequently ignoring the well-established norms of journalistic writings in a situation surcharged with communal passion" (PCI, 1991b).

New Religiosity and Divine Personification in the Media

The media industry's communalisation and liberalisation created a situation where religious occasions, Hindu demigods, horoscopes, etc. were celebrated or promoted by the media invoking religious fervour. In fact, both Hindu nationalism and neoliberalism needs

such new religiosity to further firm up its hold in Indian society and politics. Ram Puniyani sees that now a separate page was started devoted to festivals, rituals and identity aspects of Hinduism. Even spiritual columns made their appearance in mainstream papers. The role of Godmen-Satya Sai Baba, Sri Sri Ravishanker, Asaram Bapu and Ramdev added on to the process (Puniyani, 2021).

As Sharad Gupta narrates:

> *For the media, parliament election or general election is a festival of democracy and it happens once in five years. It"s the biggest event for media. Even budget comes every year but general elections happen once in five years. Even during this period, TV channels stop their live telecast for one hour just to air their horoscope and religious programmes saying this is must and it has more viewership. So even that festival of democracy has to wait for that one hour of horoscope. All the TV channels have this horoscope programme and people are glued to that. Even yoga with chanting, all those things are created for that one hour. And that invoked religious fervour* (Gupta, 2021).

However, Govindacharya sees this phenomenon as the pressure of marketism rather than Hindu nationalism (Govindacharya, 2021).

Conclusion

The process of localising news content and communalisation of news enabled Hindutva to consolidate its position in North India. Though initially localisation was considered as a factor for deepening democracy, later it emerged as a cynical way of communalising the news and for political mobilisation for Hindu nationalist politics. The national dailies too fell under the phenomenon. Once, we trace back the role of print media and analyse their published contents in the backdrop of economic liberalisation and the Mandir issue in Ayodhya, one can find that the press has facilitated the dominant castes and classes to shape their hegemonic discourse. Since, the economy was liberalised, big-business houses, corporates and new players, in the form of 'middle class' emerged, whose participation earlier was negligible. The middle class, which had an upwardly mobile aspiration got its new identity, as they could now invest and participate in the economy. Economic liberalisation did benefit the elites and the upper middle class, however its fruit never reached the toiling masses. Moreover, the economic division between the ‘haves’ and 'have nots increased systematically and the press has chosen not to report the ‘real' issues of the masses and has rather operated as a tool for the corporates. Corporate intervention in media

houses has excluded the issues of the lager masses.

Analysing the role of media in market, mandir and mandal, it can be drawn that the media has protected the interest of the dominant community in all the major events that took place in the 1990s. Print media has downgraded itself and failed in reporting the real issues of society. The corporate culture has made the media dependent for survival on the big business houses. Right wing governments have moulded media houses to shape their own politics and have supported private media houses only when their interest has been taken care of. In a way, it can be concluded that the print media has served the interest of dominant groups while providing some sort of news to the masses. Newspaper reporting in the year 1990-1995 has been communal, casteist and profit oriented. The ideological nexus of the right wing with the big-business houses driven on the idea of consumerism has helped Hindutva politics proliferate and establish its hegemony.

Chapter V

Corporatisation of Print Media and News as Commodity

Through the economic liberalisation policy, the globalisation process in India was initiated by the Congress government led by Narasimha Rao in 1991 under the nomenclature of New Economic Policy (NEP). This was in consonance with the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) at the behest of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank which were imposed on the debt ridden developing countries. The debt crisis of the developing countries in the 1990s forced them to approach the IFIs for more financial assistance in the form of loans. The IMF and the World Bank imposed conditionalities for loans, directed countries to adopt SAPs which laid emphasis on the liberalisation of the economy. These changes were imposed in an international context that saw the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the setbacks to socialism in East European countries and the subsequent emergence of a free market economy, reforms in the Communist China and the so-called success stories of the market economies in East Asia.

Domestically, in the early 1990s, India witnessed its worst economic crisis and was on the edge of a sovereign default. There was a sudden rise in oil prices because of the 1990-91 Gulf War leading the country to deteriorating fiscal deficit and burgeoning international debt. Inflation reached double digits which added to the burdens of the common people of the country.The immediate challenge was to prevent sovereign default. In response to the economic crisis that affected India, in 1991 the Narasimha Rao government, with the finance minister Manmohan Singh, who played a key role, implemented 'ambitious liberal reforms' (Jaffrelot, 2010). To mitigate the economic crisis, the government took some immediate measures. Devaluation of the rupee was carried out in two phases against the major currencies. In the first phase, the Indian rupee was devalued by 9 percent followed by 11 percent on 1 July 1991 (Nair, 2021). In another step, the government pledged gold holdings in four tranches to shore up the foreign reserves from 4-18 July 1991. The Indian government also received an emergency loan of $2 billion from the IMF in two tranches.

The reforms signalled the transition from an economy in which the government had a lot of say to a free market economy. Among other things, the crucial issue was the withdrawal of the state from key areas of the economy, dismantling of state interventionism and reorienting the state driven development policies with a greater role for the market. The principal components of stabilisation and adjustment programmes included devaluation and exchange rate adjustment, restoring market mechanisms and privatisation of public sector undertakings. The first major policy document of the government was the budget presented by finance minister Manmohan Singh on 24 July 1991. Corporate tax was increased to 45 percent and Tax Deduction at Source (TDS) for financial transactions was introduced, subsidy on sugar was removed and the prices of fertilisers, petrol and cooking gas cylinders were increased. The Government introduced a scheme to declare unaccounted wealth for the people with relaxation on interest and penalty, without prosecution. The New Industrial Policy (NIP) 1991, abolished industrial licences except in certain strategic sectors such as the arms industry, atomic energy and strategic minerals –relaxations in the provision of the Monopolistic and Restrictive Trade Practice (MRTP) Act, liberalisation of foreign investment by raising the limit on foreign equity holdings in Indian firms from 40 to 51 per cent.

The Eighth Five Year Plan formulated in tune with the NEP painted a grim picture of the country's fiscal crisis and emphasised the reorientation of the public sector. It called for removing all restrictions and regulatory measures and opening up the economy to the private sector externally and internally. In 1993, the government issued a discussion paper entitled, "Economic Reforms: Two Years After and the Tasks Ahead", which proposed further liberalisation of foreign trade, further withdrawal of subsidies, reduction of direct taxes and customs tariff (Government of India, 1993). On 15 December 1993, India signed the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) taking another step towards economic globalisation and liberalisation in India.

Perhaps, one of the main areas of liberalisation was the privatisation of public sector undertakings (PSUs). PSU shares were sold in two rounds on 31 March and 31 December, 1994. In tune with the NEP and under the pretext of maintaining fiscal discipline, the government scaled down the budgetary support to public sector enterprises,

compelling them to turn to the market for resources and shedding of equity. Some of the profit making PSUs such as National Aluminium Company (NALCO), Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HZL), Indian Petrochemicals Corporation Limited (IPCL), Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), Hindustan Machine Tools (HMT), and National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) sold out about 20% of their equity holdings in the initial days. This was to acquire a much faster pace later on.

Neoliberal policies came under sharp criticism by some political parties, especially the Left and a section of economists in India. During the early 1990s, the BJP posited itself to be in favour of swadeshi - protection of the Indian market and industry and promotion of domestic economic interests as opposed to economic globalisation. It is another matter that they pursued these very same policies with greater vigour once they assumed office According to the party, swadeshi was not viewed as isolation from the world economy, but 'integration' into a global economy should not mean obliteration of national identity or subordination to external economic forces (BJP, 1992: 2). The BJP in the early 1990s argued in favour of internal economic liberalisation – a free play of market forces within India. Though it did not altogether reject foreign investment but was against giving foreign investors preferential treatment against Indian owned companies (BJP, 1992: 10-11). In the early phase of liberalisation, the Hindu nationalist forces claimed that this would pose a challenge to the values and culture of India. It often equated the forces of globalisation as western materialism of Nehru which was intended to destroy Hindu cultural values and identity. The RSS affiliated Swadeshi Jagaran Manch (SJM) is a vocal critique of economic liberalisation and utilised the growing animosity of people towards market reforms, though the government led by its political arm, the BJP, later adopted economic reforms with the epithet "reforms with human face". In fact, economic liberalisation provided a conducive ground for the cultural politics of the BJP and its political expansion in India. The cultural politics of the BJP premised on the glorification of India's past and based on invoking its indigenous culture, building a "compassionate and tolerant alternative to the rational, aggressive and impersonal west" (Kinnvall, 2006: 146).

However, the most ardent support for liberalisation at that point in time came from Keshubhai Patel, the Chief Minister of Gujarat, who asserted that "we are not opposed to the policy of liberalisation. In fact, we have been demanding it since the Jana Sangh days". After routing the ruling Congress in the state assembly election in March 1995, he clarified that it was the Congress which later adopted our programmes and policies in this regard. "I do not believe that the government or the public sector can do everything that is needed to be done. There is a definite role for the private sector". Though the economic reforms brought contradicting viewpoints among the political parties in India, there was consensus within industrial and business houses in favour of the liberalisation process. It has to be remembered that since the introduction of the 1991 reforms programme, business houses are playing an increasing role in shaping economic policies as they are the chief beneficiaries of the reforms (Kochanek, 1996: 155-173).

The neoliberal reforms came under criticism from a host of economists and academicians. They felt it was going to be an end to India's long cherished developmental values, independence and self-reliance. It altered the long cherished principles of growth with justice, social responsibility and accountability, self-reliance as opposed to market oriented growth. Nayyar described the transition of the Indian economy with the initiation of economic reforms as a transition from a "quest for state-led capitalism to a world of market-driven capitalism" (Nayyar, 1998: 3127). Patnaik and Chandrasekhar are critical of the reforms and tend to blame the outside world for imposing it on India. The industrial policy favoured the urban rich and harmed the poor, especially the rural poor (Patnaik and Chandrasekhar, 1998: 92). Liberalisation, not only led to 'greater social inequality'but emergence of regional disparities within the states and between states. Jafferelot argues that "the liberal turn of 1991was the right antidote to the Mandal affair: while additional quotas reduced the traditional opportunities of the upper caste elites in the public sector, the liberalisation of the economy opened new ones in the private sector" (Jaffrelot, 2010).

The economic liberalisation brought devastating changes in the rethinking of the development model, from a state dominated one to a market oriented one. Economic liberalisation reinforces the asymmetrical view of the state and market. Though economic liberalisation does not completely abandon the state intervention in development, its role

was redefined in terms of a strategic intervention to guide the market (Bhaduri and Nayyar, 1996: 137-139). It is argued that "the reforms are not simply about the renegotiation of India's relationship with the global marketplace nor even are they about the relationships of private capital with the Indian state in the formal economy, the reforms are also about the reworking of the idea of the state itself and of the state's capacity to work on behalf of those who stand outside India's (expanding) social and economic elites" (Corbridge and Harriss, 2000: 169). Chandrasekhar and Ghosh argue that the economic liberalisation in the 1990s got support from large corporate capitalists and the urban middle class (Chandrasekhar and Ghosh, 2002). Economic reforms not only accelerated income inequality among the vulnerable groups such as the SCs and STs (Chandrasekhar and Ghosh, 2002) and jobless growth but also brought hunger to high levels (Patnaik, 2007).

Amid growing criticism against economic reforms from within and outside party circles, Finance Minister Manmohan Singh said that the ongoing economic liberalisation programme was irreversible and 'there is no stopping it'. Inaugurating a five day international conference on Financial Management and Accountability in the public sector-strategies for changes, he clarified that the speed and the context of economic reform programmes will have to respond to changing social and economic environments. The implementation of far reaching reforms in the framework of a democracy and a plural society was the most challenging task being faced by the nation. According to Singh, India adopted a wide ranging programme of economic reforms in response to the changes that had dramatically changed major economies. The basic medium-term objective of these policies is to lay the foundations for sustained growth of output and employment in the context of increasing global competitiveness of the Indian economy (Singh, 1994).

Rejecting the claims of the advocates of economic liberalisation who argued that the slow growth in the initial decades of development failed to generate revenues, and the ability to finance health and education expenditures, growth under the neoliberal reforms would be a double-barrelled assault on poverty (Bhagwati and Panagariya, 2013), it is argued that while India has climbed rapidly up the ladder of economic growth rates, it has fallen relatively behind in the scale of social indicators of living standards, even compared with many countries that India has been overtaking in terms of economic growth. Though

India‘s growth potential remains strong, it could not be utilised for the advancement of human lives and the development of human freedom and capabilities (Dreze and Sen, 2013).

Economic Liberalisation and Media

Among the various push factors for the initiation of economic liberalisation in the early 1990s, the role of the media cannot be underestimated. Perhaps, the bigger push for economic reforms came from the English newspapers rather than the regional and vernacular newspapers. The English newspapers were vociferously pushing for liberalisation and stood with the government in liberalising various sectors of the economy. For instance, The Times of India urged upon the government to open up the economy on all fronts (The Times of India, 1991a). It also highlighted the minimum programme acceptable to all to rejuvenate the economy of India (The Times of India, 1991b). The Times of India advised to “adhere faithfully to a sound macroeconomic discipline and implement fundamental structural reforms to strengthen their economic base” (The Times of India, 16th July, 1991). It was the class interests that dictated the English media's championing of economic reforms. As mentioned earlier, many of them had business interests other than the newspapers that they were publishing. That these reforms would also boost their media houses was also evident. The middle class that has aspirations for climbing up the ladder also became part of the so-called consensus being marketed through the media. Reddy contends, that the transformation of the Indian economy affected the media in two ways: "the changes in the economy influenced the media, including its finances. The media too developed an interest in an economy that was on a high-growth path and in the maintenance of a framework that pushed the economy in that direction" (Reddy, 2019: 197). In 1991 when liberalisation started, the Indian media described it as a moment of India breaking away from "corruption and inefficiency" (The Hindu, 17 July 1991) and "increased the efficiency and international competitiveness of industrial production" (The Hindu, 22 July 1991) and "imparted a new element of dynamism to growth processes in our economy" (The Times of India, 24 July 1991). It is another matter that corruption was institutionalised and acquired more dangerous proportions; new forms of crony capitalism were encouraged. More on that later.

In his study of liberalisation and Indian newspapers, Rahul De traces some of the changing rhetoric and frames around which liberalisation is discussed in English language

newspapers in India and argues that this change set the terms of debate and critiques of liberal reforms (De, 2017). According to Anant Bagaitkar, in the 1990s, big print media supported economic reforms because proprietors were never socialists or left of the centre. All the newspaper proprietors wanted concessions from the government and at the same time they also wanted to do businesses. Newspapers tend to tow the government line only to serve their own interests. And that‘s why they wholeheartedly supported liberalisation and reforms (Bagaitkar, 2021).

On the impact of economic liberalisation on the media, contesting views existed as many media persons and experts asserted that economic liberalisation brought positive and negative changes in the media industry. Since the 1980s, technology has been heavily influencing the quality and circulation of media which accelerated with the liberalisation phase of the economy. The new offset printing technology, introduction of colour printing, entrepreneurial managerial practises and new marketing strategies proved a boom for the print media. Economic liberalisation brought about revolutionary changes in the information and communication technologies leading to a rapid transformation of the press in India (Ray, 2009; Patil, 2011; Jadhav, 2020). R. Rajagopal, the editor of the Telegraph says that technology adaptations, facilitated by liberalisation, have made Indian media much more audience-friendly (R. Rajagopal, 2021). Sevanti Ninan asserts that the effects of liberalisation need not be seen negatively alone as “economic liberalisation has enabled advertising led media expansion. Media consumers changed and the value system of the media also changed, to some extent. There are many aspects to all this” (Ninan, 2008). Moreover, economic liberalisation brought new avenues for the Indian media in the forms of new debates, columns and advertisement, diverting from the earlier media content. As a result of the larger transformation of the Indian economy over the past quarter-century in general, Indian media has been growing exponentially. Liberalisation of the Indian economy structurally transformed many parts of the Indian economy and the emergence of a consumer market in both rural and urban India in turn facilitated the unhindered growth of the Indian media.

FDI in Indian Print Media

In the early 1990s, when India opened many sectors for foreign investment, a heated issue

that emerged was on the question of the entry of foreign players in the Indian print media, especially in the newspapers. During the reform process there was mounting external pressure on the government to open up the media industry, which was protected from overseas participation since independence, to foreign players. It needs to be recalled that in 1955, there was strong opposition to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the Indian print media. The Government of India, through a Cabinet Resolution prevented any foreign investment in media especially in newspapers and magazines. In 1955, while making a statement in the Lok Sabha, the Information and Broadcasting Minister, B V Keskar, announced that the government accepted the recommendation of the First Press Commission that such foreign newspapers and periodicals which are dealing with news and current affairs should not be allowed to bring out editions in India (Keskar, 1995). Though the New York Times wanted to bring out its international edition in India, it could not do so in the light of these developments. The Second Press Commission in 1982 under Justice K K Mathew had suggested that a debarring law should be made to keep foreign interests out of the Indian print media. The Commission suggested restrictions on certain types of financial patronage for newspapers and news agencies in India. On 8th August, 1989, the Committee of Secretaries in its meeting held that no foreign owned newspaper or periodical should be permitted to be published in India.

In the 1990s, during the economic liberalisation, divided opinion emerged among the print media industry on FDI as some were in favour of it while some expressed concerns. Those who advocated the opening for FDI argued that foreign capital was essential for the survival of the small and medium newspapers to compete with the big monopolies. In the context of commercialisation of the print media and circulation war between big newspapers, small and medium papers were badly hit and in many cases squeezed out. Since the big newspaper conglomerates have more financial resources, they are able to sell their newspapers at the rate of Rs. 1 or Rs. 1.50, while the regional press struggles to survive in the competition. It is argued that 'the smaller newspapers (are) being driven out of the market by predatory pricing by the bigger counterparts' (Rodriques, 2010: 65). Along with the price war, mounting confrontation with increasing production and printing, distribution and marketing cost, and to expand the multiple editions necessitated revenue generation through foreign capital. In fact, there is a widespread

feeling among the small media enterprises that FDI would ensure not only modernisation and technological upgradation but also, their survival which would be dependent on the opening for foreign investment. It was argued that since all sectors of the economy opened for foreign players, it should be opened for newspapers as well.

Like the justifications for FDI in other sectors of the economy, it was argued that opening up would upgrade the existing technology improving the quality of content and readership. In other words, there was growing market pressure on the print media to seek foreign capital for its survival and upgradation. It is claimed that "the top five advertising agencies, with major holdings from outside the country, account for well over half of advertising business in the country and this has been on the increase" (Rao, 2002: 105). Rejecting the wider perception that the entry of foreign players to the Indian print media would endanger the English language newspapers only, Ram asserted that it would also pose a threat to the language press in India (Ram, 1994: 2788). Any entry of foreign participation not only endangers the English dailies but also the regional newspapers.

There was also the view that opening to foreign participation was detrimental to the interest of the Indian press and that this would have an adverse impact on people's mind and would be detrimental to democratic process. The growing apprehension was that foreign media may 'purchase facts to promote particular interests' against public interest and promote interest of the foreign business (Iyer, 1994: 3084). The dominant view was that opening up for foreign investment would lead to the erosion of "Indianness" in newspapers (Ram, 1994: 2787). The critics of FDI in media felt that foreign investment militates against the stated principles enshrined in the 1955 First Press Commission. It was claimed that their entry would go against the plurality and diversity of the news, ethos and democratic values of the country. It was apprehended that the press would implement powerful transnational corporations' foreign and ideological and political agenda. Many media conglomerates were critical of the entry of foreign players in the media especially in newspapers, in spite of some powerful foreign media interests pushing for it. However,in 1993, when the ABP wanted to tie up with the Financial Times – the debate over foreign investment accelerated.

Amidst growing concerns over foreign participation in the Indian media, in 1994, the government appointed a five-member ministerial group comprising Finance Minister Manmohan Singh and Human Resource Development Minister Arjun Singh to look into the issue of FDI in media. In its recommendations submitted to the cabinet, the group favoured the entry of foreign capital with a cap of 49%. However, some members had divergent opinions on removing protectionism given to Indian newspapers. Even Arjun Singh opposed it and wanted the Indian press to remain Indian. Though there was divided opinion in the committee, the general view was that only minority equity shares should be given to foreign players. Stiff opposition came from the newspaper proprietors and organisations in the press sector such as working journalists, the All-India Newspaper Federation and the All India Newspaper Editors Conference and the Indian Newspaper Society. The major political parties, including the ruling Congress party opposed the move for foreign investment. In the face of the stiff opposition from political parties and the ruling Congress itself, the government decided to put the decision on hold.

In 2001, however, the general consensus among those in the ruling circles was in favour of foreign investment without diluting the provisions of the Cabinet Resolution of 1955. As a consequence, in June 2002, the government allowed 26% FDI in Indian print media. Foreign participation was allowed with a provision that the editorial content and newspaper management would be exclusively with Indians. In 2004, 100% FDI was allowed in printing scientific and technical magazines, periodicals and journals, with prior Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) approval. In 2005, the Government of India allowed FDI in the Indian media ending its five decade old protectionism, allowing upto 26% equity in news and current affairs, keeping the editorial and management control in the hands of Indians. Business houses in India pushed for further media liberalisation and opening up of the Indian media to foreign equity. In 2006, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Pricewater Coopers in their report indicated the need for media liberalisation, attracting FDI, especially in areas of advertising, TV software production, cable networks, FM Radio and print (FICCI/Price water Cooper, 2006).

The consolidated FDI policy circular of 2020 of the Ministry of Commerce and

Industry allowed 26% FDI in publishing of newspapers and periodicals dealing with news and current affairs. Magazines, which were defined as periodical publications, brought out on a non-daily basis, that contained public news or comments, would also be subject to the Guidelines for Publication of Indian editions of foreign magazines dealing with news and current affairs issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and could attract FDI. On Magazines, 100% equity would be allowed in publishing/printing of scientific and technical magazines/specially journals/periodicals, subject to compliance with the legal framework and 100% equity in publication of facsimile editions of foreign newspapers. However, FDI should be made by the owner of the original foreign newspapers whose facsimile edition they propose to be brought out in India (Government of India, 2020).

In the recent past, a broader consensus has been emerging within the ruling circles on the issue of FDI in the Indian media. Though the intent of restrictions on FDI was legitimate, especially as no one wanted the sovereignty to be affected by foreign news agencies or foreign newspapers in the era of globalisation and with the digitisation of technology and with satellite, such intent may not be practicable (Kumar, 2021). For instance, there is an FDI restriction of investment in the print, but many newspapers were freely reproducing articles from the New York Times, the Guardian, the Washington Post, etc. Some of them had syndicated columns, some of them had columnists who were based abroad, including in prestigious papers like the Hindu and the Times of India amongst others. Most of the foreign news in the print media comes from Reuters or Associate Press (AP) or Agence France-Presse (AFP) in contrast to earlier practice of foreign news agencies routing content through the Press Trust of India (PTI) which had a certain nationalistic character. When the economic landscape changed from a mixed economy to a totally liberalised one dictated by market forces, technology made it impossible to follow FDI norms in a strict sense. Unlike protected economies like China which believe that news from outside can dent its own chosen path of politics, it is difficult in a democracy like India to have strict FDI norms functioning in this area (Kumar, 2021). Vinod K. Jose, noted journalist, and the current executive editor of The Caravan, says that the resistance to FDI in news media comes from a position of the big media owners worried about losing their prominence (Jose, 2021). Though the liberalisation argument had demolished this resistance from big Indian businessmen in all other sectors, from automobile to insurance

to retail to entertainment, this was not the case with the print media. Here, political leaders found it was more conducive for them to control the Indian print media leaders than Western influence that could come into news media and redefine the news collection and distribution space. So in that sense, the resistance to FDI in news media is coming from a space of self-preservation, from long standing vested interests (Jose, 2021). Kohli-Khandekar, on the other hand, found another reason for the increasing media business in India in the 1990s – generational shift in the ownership of print media, as young blood started taking over the media business. These young managers, who came from the family – sons and nephews- were foreign educated in prominent business schools abroad and took over the media business and were prone to FDI (Kohli-Khandekar, 2013: 26).

Paranjoy Guha Thakurta argues that the resistance to foreign direct investment in news was to put up a pretence that Indian news media is nationalistic, independent, autonomous and wouldn't be dependent on foreign funding or investment. However, it remains a pretence than reality because the large media houses publicly opposed foreign funds in news but weren't averse to it. It‘s double standards and hypocrisy that they welcomed FDI in every sector, as also in news as long as they were in control (Thakurta, 2021). According to Vinod K. Jose, the resources whatever came in from abroad were not going into improving the quality of news gathering, widening the footprint of the media, or increasing the diversity of the workforce. And big Indian private players were acting as cartels and the inherent caste bias of the leadership were blocking diversity etc. (Jose, 2021).

R. Rajagopal, editor, The Telegraph, asserts that blocking FDI in the media in the 1990s was a big blunder. It is one of the principal reasons large sections of Indian media are controlled by a few oligarchs with vested and varied interests. The lack of foreign investments has ensured that the entrenched players indulge in predatory pricing to kill off any new competition. They strike cheap deals with advertisers to bleed competition to death. The domestic media giants are mostly beholden to those in power (Rajagopal, 2021). Many others felt that FDI would have brought in real competition and exposed the cartelisation that everyone pretends does not exist in India. For instance, the television business: oligarchs have taken them over completely. Lack of capital not only affected the

business side of the media industry, but the craft itself has remained in a rut. One's treatment of news, packaging, writing styles, graphics, typography, and the follow-up art are all trapped in the 1990s.

Business –State Nexus and Media

The adverse impact of economic liberalisation on the media can be located in the broader context of the emerging nexus between the state and business in the 1990s. The shedding welfare image of the state was replaced by the pro-business nature of the state and its fidelity to the free market. The pro-business tilt of the Indian state is visible when the business lobbies exerted pressure on the government to accelerate market reforms with the goal of achieving economic growth (Jaffrelot, Kohli and Murali, 2019: 1-24). In fact, the emerging business–state relationship is manifested when business shapes the agenda of the government (Sinha, 2019: 50-92). The emerging state-business nexus too influenced the media though the business control over the media is not a new development in the media history of India. Even during the nationalist movement and post-colonial India, industrial and business conglomerates exercised their control over the media. For instance, The Times of India run by the Sahu-Jain family controlled the New Central Jute Mills in Calcutta; The Tata owned the Statesman controlled the steel industry, The Hindustan Times was owned by the Birlas; and The Hindu in Madras was owned by S Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, a lawyer. In this sense the business-state-media nexus is not a new phenomenon but began much earlier during the national movement which continued after independence too.

Ram talks about two media traditions in India – the older tradition had a close link with state and business, was pluralistic and was relatively independent, rooted inpluralism. The younger tradition manipulated and misused electronic media like Radio and elevision. The new tradition is reaching out only to the urban middle class and the market. However, Ram does not prefer the traditional to the younger one. Though the younger one has more merit, it may contradict the values of pluralism and secularism as compared to the older tradition (Ram, 1994: 2787).

The emerging business-state nexus in the media has wider implications in India's

development and its democratic exercise. When India opened up for liberalisation, the nature of the media too changed accordingly. In the 1990s, due to the impact of NEP, the imperatives of journalism for nation building had taken a backseat and journalism became an entire market proposition. Journalism became a market model (Kumar, 2021). The old fashioned ‘developmental journalism' which inherited the values of nationalist movement and capturing rural news and important events like farming, subsidies, issues that affected the poorer sections of society gave way to making profit; not just making profit but profit maximisation (Kumar, 2021). The ethos of the media converted into ethos of capital accumulation. Moreover, due to the business push on the media, the sacred line between advertising and editorial started collapsing. According to Sashi Kumar, one of the big casualties of liberalisation on the media was that capital infused growth in the media eroded its public purpose and lost its connection with the people. When recession takes place in the market economy, it badly hits the media too. However, the media adopts dubious steps to regain the loss of public connection to strengthen its position in society. The bigger newspapers and the channels have to keep inventing more dramatic, false news, fake news or sensational news to keep TRPs or advertising alive or to get eyeballs (Kumar, 2021).

Emergence of Media Industry and Ownership

Like any other industry, when profit motive becomes the essence of the media industry, it turns into a commercial enterprise. Technological advances are used to expand the market and enhance profits. Media monopolies extinguish small media companies due to fierce competition and are detrimental to maintaining plurality and diversity of news. Since democracy requires plurality of opinion in media it necessitates "the dismantling ofexisting monopolies and cross-media empires and a check on the growing concentration of media ownership‖ (Thakurta, 2013: 12). Media monopoly is catering to the interest of the business. The growing media monopoly is growth centric as opposed to the welfare of the people. The pattern of media ownership changed from family ownership to corporate ownership with the entry of corporate ownership (Reddy, 2019: 1991). It is argued that “corporations are indeed key factors in contemporary media landscape; yet, their agency has to be understood in conjunction with a range of other social actors" (Natale, Bory and

Balbi, 2009: 326). The Aditya Birla Group which has interests in a host of businesses, controls the Hindustan Times. Same is the case with Reliance industries which controls the CNN-IBN. In the big media houses, revenues from advertisements are the major source of revenue, which comprises around 60% of the total revenue. Samir Jain took over the Times of India. On 3 January 2012, Reliance Industry, India's largest corporate entity in the private sector purchased the Network 18 group and Eenadu group. The corporate takeover of media sector would lead to the "growing concentration of ownership in an oligopolistic market that could lead to loss of media heterogeneity and plurality" (Thakurta and Chaturvedi, 2012). While circulation and revenues are increasing, ownership is getting concentrated in a few hands. Such a situation leads to the "diminishing levels of media plurality in a multilingual and multicultural country" (Thakurta and Chaturvedi, 2012: 13).

Faster economic growth also had an impact on the media industry. It was no more the fourth estate but had become entirely profit driven. As Smita Gupta contends the liberalisation of the economy in the 1990s, brought new opportunities for growth for the Indian media. The media sharpened its focus on the interests and aspirations of the beneficiaries of economic liberalisation to bring in audiences whose numbers and profits would help it lure ever-growing amounts of advertising (Gupta, 2005: 291). Chatterjee talks about three elements of the ideological offensive which seeks to reinforce the neo-liberal consensus –"the demonisation of the political class, denigration of public institutions, trivialisation of news and glamorisation of individuals" (Chatterjee, 2007: 66). Smita Gupta captures the changes that occurred in the media during the economic liberalisation. According to her, "the space for political stories shrank; if the subject was the economy, it was the state of the corporate sector or the stock market which was monitored "monitored in most cases more meticulously than a possible seismic convulsion by the meteorological department" (Gupta, 2005: 292). The media's relationship with advertisers has been modified, editorial practices have changed (Reddy, 2019: 183).

Maitrayee Chaudhuri argues that "a preconfigured idea of the 'national media is difficult to sustain, both because of the globalisation of communication as well as the emergence of a transnational capitalist class" (Chaudhuri, 2010:65). It is argued that "even

editorial control got transferred to the management, and public interest subordinated to the business and commercial interests of the owners" (Nair, 2003: 4183). Saima Saeed describes the media situation in India after liberalisation arguing that "after liberalisation, the national broadcasting system was regulated to adapt the changed scenario, private players were allowed to enter the market, and the state was in a hurry to expand the economy. However, this did not necessarily lead to diversity of ownership, as a few media companies began to control most of the production and distribution" (Saeed, 2009: 471).

The 'Murdochisation' of the Indian media, according to Daya Kishan Thussu, professor of international communication at the University of Westminster, is a process that involves the transfer of media power from the public to privately owned, transnational, multimedia corporations that control both delivery systems and content of global information networks (Thussu, 2005). The concentration of media ownership in the hands of a few large corporate groups; the increasing dependence on advertising for revenue leading to frenzied competition for ever-higher ratings; an excessive focus on what is called as breaking news and the so-called exclusive stories and use of anything goes tactics; a restriction in contents to take into consideration the interests of the elite and of the middle class etc. – are all facets of Murdochisation that is visible across large sections of the media in India (Thakurta, 2011). Highlighting the menace of both national and international monopoly over the media, and the increasing commercialisation in the media, the PCI cautions that it would pose a grave threat to democracy (PCI, 2001: 37). The First Press Commission 1954, raised serious concerns over the concentration and ownership of the Indian media industry. The Second Press Commission of 1982 advocated public takeover of top eight newspaper establishments to break up the monopolistic structures in India. However, the emerging tendency in India is towards media monopoly and concentration. Even in the USA where media concentration exists, cross holding is prohibited. That means if a person has a news channel he can't have a newspaper. The demarcation of newspaper and channel is very strict but, in India it is a free for all, creating a media monopoly (Bagaitkar, 2021).

Commodification of Media and News as Commodity

The rampant growth and confluence of news media, entertainment, telecommunication and

the vanishing of the demarcation between journalism, advertising, public relations, and entertainment created a process of commodification of the media. Currently, the media is looked at more as a business objective of `remaining profitable'. Newspapers and news have assumed the role of a commodity which can be bought and sold in the market (Jadhav, 2020).

Perhaps, one of the most serious impacts of globalisation on the print media is the deterioration of news as a commodity from its conception as a public good. News is often considered as a public good. Samuelson identified two characteristics of public good – non-rivalry and non-excludability (Samuelson, 1954). News is not only a commodity that aims at maximising profit, but news is also a public good that aims to strengthen democracy by producing well-informed citizens. Being both a commodity and a public good simultaneously makes the media go through a permanent conflict or tension. Occasionally, market forces always have the upper hand in controlling the tension with the social capital of elites playing the determining role. In this context of news being a commodity, I will mention two sets of theories that aim to understand the conflict between news as a commodity and news as a public good.

News has a use value as it serves the citizens'consciousness and strengthens the foundations of democracy. Commodification is "the process of transforming use value into exchange value" (Mosco, 1996: 39). Communication is a basic process that underlies media and technology in capitalism (Fuchs and Mosco, 2016: 11). Graham Murdock argues that the three possibilities for the political economy of the media are ownership by capital (the commodity form of communications), the state (public service form of communications), and civil society (communications as gifts/commons) (Murdock, 2011: 18). The corporatised media converts news as a commodity which can be sold out for its market value. The penchant for higher profit forces the corporate media to blend news with entertainment to increase its readership or viewership (Philipose, 2005: 112). Reddy narrates how the process of commodification of the media affected the goals and philosophy of the media itself. Firstly, by facilitating market expansion, the media drifted away from issues of livelihood and social concerns. Secondly, the good practices of the media got diluted (Reddy, 2019: 197).

Sharad Gupta relates the corrosion of news as a commodity with the emerging relationship between editors and advertising. He cites the reasons for such a deterioration with respect to designating the editors as editor Delhi market. In fact, editors earlier had nothing to do with either the marketing team or in bringing revenue, and if there is something like an editor of market that means the newspapers are playing to advertisers. In some big newspapers like The Hindu and The Indian Express, the journalists were totally isolated from the marketing team and thereby immune from making news as a commodity. This is not the case with other major English and vernacular newspapers in India (Gupta, 2021). Sharad Gupta shared his personal experience while working in a newspaper;

> *I started my career in Times of India and their marketing used to call the shots. They will send some press releases marked as 'must' and if reporters are not using that, then they go to the editor and complain that it is in business interest and if reporting team ignore it we will incur loss and theeditor will say ok, ok, I will look it into it and it will get published. But that was not the practice with some other newspapers like Indian Express where editorial was supreme. We had a Manager, viz. Manager editorial services. If I need a tour advance I don't have to tell anybody, I just have to tell Manager editorial service that I need this. And no marketing officer ever dictates terms that this story is must or not. But that was not the case with other newspapers* (Gupta, 2021).

Endorsing this view, Sashi Kumar asserts that when news became a commodity, the credibility of the news and the reliance of the news collapsed simultaneously. It also created a phenomenon of trust deficit between the readers and the newspapers as the authenticity of the news was under cloud. As a result of the commodification of news, news was like any other commodity being sold in the market (Kumar, 2021).

The changes in the functioning of the press can be seen from two vantage points, as argued by Gupta and Sharma, the ideological and the commercial. The changes in the working pattern of the press have been marked through the entry of corporate culture. After liberalisation, print media is being run by big business houses and corporates. The entire process operates in a centralised manner, bypassing the profession's internal workings. The press, which is supposed to depict fact based news and speak for the masses has moved from its origin. Since corporate and big business houses now govern the print media, it has a tendency to protect, project and portray the interests and ideals of dominant groups. Journalism lately has established relations not with the masses but with those in positions of power. The media has distanced itself from picking up issues and debates that

serve the interest of masses, if at all it does for the commercial compulsion, 'then populist and stereotypical beliefs and ideas are usually upheld' (Gupta and Sharma, 1996). The functioning of the media in recent times is seen as being 'reel'and not 'real'. Gupta and Sharma say that "though the glossiness of newspapers has steadily increased, the press, while reporting current happenings, has generally been more concerned with the superficial and the sensational than with the significant. Thus all issues are reduced to small, easily digestible nuggets, to a 'yuppiefication' of newspapers" (Gupta and Sharma, 1996).

Advertising and Control over Media

While Herman and Chomsky view advertising as a ―subsidy‖ to the revenue of the media (Herman and Chomsky, 1994), Jeffrey sees advertising as the messenger of capitalism. It has presented a tantalising paradox in India. By coercing newspapers into far remote corners for the first time, advertising has achieved the possibility of having political activity – of participation in the "public sphere" "to a large number of people. "Yet, simultaneously, advertising and capitalism may emasculate these possibilities by making newspapers into accomplices of consumerism" (Jeffrey, 2000: 51). While endorsing this view, Thakurta asserts that the needs of countryside India are mostly neglected and the advertisement-driven media generally has a tendency to target urban consumers. Media aggressively promotes the growth agenda over the development agenda (Thakurta, 2013: 12). By influencing market research agencies foreign countries create proliferation of brands and consumerism (Rao, 2002: 105). It is argued further that "the entry of foreign advertising agencies has been going on parallel with the entry of foreign brands and the increasing share of foreign corporates in the total advertising in the country" (Rao, 2002: 105). The Press Council of India, in its publication in 2001 revealed that of the total newspaper advertising revenue, one third of it comes from foreign companies in contrast to the earlier one-sixth of the revenue that came from the state (PCI, 2002). Reddy argues that the surge in advertising was a significant factor in driving the growth of the media‖ in the 1990s (Reddy, 2019). He argues that the corporate advertising is more indirect control over the Media (Reddy, 2019).

From the early 1990s, the media has seen an unprecedented expansion owing to the introduction of new communication technologies and the rising aspirations of the urban

middle class, who became targets of advertisements because of their consumerist aspirations. The commercialisation of the Indian media takes many forms. It has to be noted here that a few among India's leading media houses conglomerates including Bennett Coleman & Co., the publisher of The Economic Times and The Times of India offer integrated and innovative marketing strategies which blurs the conventional old line between advertising and the article content. To illustrate an example, Bennett Coleman's Medianet division lets the advertisers place articles on specific pages in the paper without distinguishing them as advertisements (Kapoor 2010). The greed for profit motive has changed the profile of the media entrepreneur. At present, the media enterprise is looked upon as a necessary subsidiary of an emerging business enterprise, political parties and even individuals seeking and hunting to leverage public influence for their private gain. The commercial success of media houses is dependent on advertising revenues rather than their subscription or circulation figures. Advertisers have replaced recipients of consumers of news.

Cumulative Growth in Advertising Revenue

After liberalisation, the corporatised Indian media has sunk into the world of advertisement and revenue. In 1991, the print media could mobilise Rs. 10.69 billion from advertising which had gone up to Rs. 150 billion in 2012 (Reddy, 2019). In other words, advertisement has become the fundamental determining force of Indian media and the media has shifted its focus almost unequivocally from public good to enhancing its advertisement capacity, thus creating an ecosystem dependent on "advertising dominance". In this ecosystem it has become pertinent and ownership of the media becomes increasingly concentrated and corporatised. Jeffrey, analysing the ownership profiles of the ten most widely read newspapers of India in 2012, concluded that "all were controlled by families; none was a fully public company controlled by its shareholders. Four had a limited number of publicly traded shares" (Jeffrey, 2015). In the boom of the past quarter-century, there has been some movement towards corporatization of family enterprises, with the original owners retaining control. The new development has been the expansion of corporate entities already in print or TV to other media segments and, most significantly, the diversification of business empires into the media through acquisitions and new ventures. It is argued that the media in India has become a profitable business since the early 1990s,

leading to a commodification with the attendant abandonment, by and large, of journalism as a public purpose. This process has accompanied rapid economic growth that has led to a widening of consumer choice, and therefore to a major increase in advertising. The need to attract advertisers has persuaded publishing companies to turn their products into consumer items like any other packaged product to attract the largest number of readers or viewers. The expansion of the media on the back of advertising income has brought many investors into both print and TV. This essay argues that the result has been that while the Indian media can still on occasions speak truth to power, commodification has meant that publishers have struck a Faustian bargain with commerce, resulting in the loss of the uniqueness that is associated with journalism (Reddy, 2019).

Vinod Mehta, however, asserts that the corporate control of the media is not a bad idea, however, cartelisation which leads to monopoly or media dominance of a handful or single media merchant is a cause of concern for the media. According to him, corporate control of the media like Rupert Murdoch and Silver Berlusconi are not a threat, but media monopoly is the real threat (Mehta, 2014: 61). The corporates and large media groups while promoting free market forces are often averse to government interventions and regulations on them. According to Jeffrey, "newspapers localise because advertisers see a commodity that is worth buying; rural and small-town spending power" (Jeffrey, 2000: 75).

The urgency in fact facilitates the corporatisation of media for increasing the revenue of the print media from the advertisers. In early times, 55-77% of the total revue of an average media came from its readers directly through subscription or copy sales. However, in course of time, the craze for revenue generation led to advertising corporate products leading to consumerism, mass consumption, new lifestyles, etc. The growth of advertising in the media has increased exponentially since liberalisation. Advertising emerged as the main revenue source for the media. A new phenomenon of full page advertisement on the front page emerged with corporate entities, government and political parties publishing advertisements and news being pushed back to the inside pages.

Erosion of Media Content

The mounting pressure of business interest and advertising eroded media content. Thakurta argues that news has not just become a commodity, it has become entertainment.

Advertisements are rechristened and sold as advertorials and then there is something called "edutainment". News presentation in itself is sought to be made entertaining with more emphasis on crime, cricket and cinema, the three c's, with all of them interlinked blurring the division between fiction and nonfiction (Thakurta, 2021). Vipul Mudgal who associated with The Hindustan Times, India Today and BBC, asserts that the erosion of media content has happened by choice and not by chance. The corporate media houses love to sell dreams and are disturbed and irritated by too much reality (Mudgal, 2021). Rajagopal asserts that "an element of servitude, refusal to point out their shortcomings and generally treat them as normal humans with extraordinary work experience have ensured that we have reduced celebrity journalism to popcorn prose" (Rajagopal, 2021). Ram Puniyani says that the role of media from auditor of Government policies has turned upside down and now profit making has become the central core of a large section of the media. This is where sensationalism took the better of the objectivity in reporting and open editorial pieces (Puniyani, 2021). Sharad Gupta narrates that political stories are always inside in the print media in western countries like the UK, Europe, and the US. The front page is always people centric. Especially something which people have to consume whether it is about their bread and butter or petrol prices, school fees or insurance, health, etc. So issues which affect day to day life of people, find prominence. But in India we give maximum prominence to diatribes, accusations and sensationalism (Gupta, 2021).

Ram Puniyani too argued that apart from the page three columns many papers started daily supplements for glamour content. Aping the western media and under the influence of globalisation-commercialisation, the media's role as a conscience keeper started being undermined, sidelined and forgotten over a period of time (Puniyani, 2021). Sharad Gupta gives another reason for the erosion of media content. The advertisement by the corporates, which brings huge amounts as the revenue for the newspapers, influences the media content as the corporates make sure that no newspaper publishes anything against them. So if any newspaper dares to publish something against a corporate, then they will buy out the reporter, editor or proprietor (Gupta, 2021). The causality is the content of the newspapers. If media has to maintain good content, then it should desist from seeking the revenue from the corporate advertisement for which the consumers have to bear the high cost of the newspapers. Until and unless the consumer starts buying the content at its cost thereby making advertisers irrelevant, only then advertisers are going to lose their power, otherwise they will be dictating. Sharad Gupta says that "if readers want

independent journalism, they have to bear the cost. They cannot just think of getting free or subsidised news" (Gupta, 2021). Sharad Gupta relates the erosion of the media content with the job insecurity created by the forces of neoliberalism. To him, journalists who work as reporters, correspondents and editors were apprehensive about their job security in the age of liberalisation, which impacts the print media's content (Gupta, 2021).

The Sunset of Editors

The editorial is supposed to be separated from the advertising and marketing in the print media. However, the thin wall between editorial and advertising and marketing is collapsing leading to the erosion of the sanctity of the editorial which is manifested in the phenomenon of "advertorial". The demise of institution called editor is due to the altered climate. "Earlier it was editors paper but now the paper is no longer the editors paper, because proprietors thought if editor gets recognition from the power or the government or whose so ever is there in the power, why not me" (Bagaitkar, 2021). The PCI in its document claimed that since profit motive dominates all other considerations, the business managers, and not the editors and the scribes, have come to rule the roost (PCI, 2001: 37).

Robin Jeffrey sees the sunset of editors as part of proprietors'attempts to capitalise on the opportunities of economic liberalisation. Newspapers reflect the prejudices of their proprietors who also cater to the tastes of their readers (Jeffrey, 2021). The proprietor and owners wanted to gain superiority over editors. So when economic interest started dominating news-worthiness or the neutrality of news was no more important. When the entire media industry is run by the owners, not by the editors, the victim is news, factual accurate news. Sensationalism was there all along but liberalisation and the taking over of the editorship by proprietors actually ruined the media industry. Newspapers were known by the names of the editor and not by the proprietors. So this is the tragedy of Indian media, which we are now facing (Bagaitkar, 2021). Stating that the sunset of editors has everything to do with the owners losing their spine, Vipul Mudgal argues that it hardly suits them to hire editors with spines or views (other than those of the ruling parties or the establishment) (Mudgal, 2021). As Lakhera argues earlier, advertising and editorial were two separate sections and now it has changed all of a sudden. The corporate and editorial nexus emerged, undermining the sanctity of the editorial position (Lakhera, 2021).

Paranjoy Guha Thakurta asserts that the importance of editor vis-à-vis the proprietor had started declining and this trend accelerated from the 1990s onward. It also meant that news or information was treated more like a commodity, and hence the reader or viewer was looked up on more as a consumer than as a citizen. And therefore, the advertising department got a certain supremacy over the editorial department. And the Chinese wall that existed between the two departments slowly broke down completely (Thakurta, 2021). Ram Puniyani sees that now news and views have started being seen as a vehicle to sell the advertisement, rather than the other way around. Big media barons made hay while objectivity and idealism were undermined (Puniyani, 2021).

Rejecting the prevailing view that the erosion of the sanctity of editorials and dignity of the editors is due to the influence of foreign corporate advertisements, R Rajagopal asserts that it is more with the Indian media run by a few oligarchs that lead to this state of affairs. In fact, the full-page advertisements on page 1 were pioneered in India long before the mainstream in the west wised up to it. Indian media have not been globalised and are run by a few oligarchs and it is unfair to blame globalisation for what is wrong with us (Rajagopal, 2021). Govindacharya, the former Sangh ideologue, traces the decline of the sanctity of the editors in the 1980s, during the Rajiv Gandhi government itself, when it moved to liberalisation of the economy and entered into the GATT negotiations, with the Dunkel draft, WTO in 1985, when independent editorship was compromised. When management took more interest even in the case of editing or editorial sections, the problem started. And moreover in the proprietor-editor relationship, ultimately editorship succumbed to the advertisement section. In fact, the freedom of journalism is attributed to freedom of management rather than the journalists themselves (Govindacharya, 2021). According to him,

> *When the new economic policies started India was promoted, Bharat was neglected. 70-80 percent of the peoples' voice were just untold, subjugated. They were silent, they were made silent and those the pro protagonists and pro forces of liberalization or LPG, they got more space. Because readership was mostly in that domain. And in that English media again it was setting the trend and it has been considered to be a leader in the media field. So they had their say and severe change happened in which truth and justice got compromised and the interests of the poor, deprived people have suffered much* (Govindacharya, 2021).

When the ownership took over all other roles and profit became the sole motive, revenue from advertisements gained priority. In the process the editorial team got a roughshod.

The Menace of Price War

Price war is a marketing tool practised by big players to lower the paper's cover price to attract more subscribers and readership. The volume of advertisements and the revenue thus generated influences or is a determining factor in fixing the price at which a newspaper is sold. This inversely proportional relationship erodes the position of editors and in turn editorial policy. As a result, small and medium newspapers are pushed out as their subscription, readership and revenue decline. Sashi Kumar cites an example that the Deccan Herald, the local English daily in Bangalore, lost many subscribers with the arrival of the Times of India, which sold the paper for one rupee. This was when the others had a cover price of three or four rupees. All these trends accentuated with liberalisation, globalisation and the market model of the media becoming very powerful (Kumar, 2021). Thakurta contends that the price war was a reality orchestrated especially by large media houses like Bennett Coleman & Co. Ltd. to weaken their competitors (Thakurta, 2021). Sharad Gupta is goes to the extent of saying that the prices would lead to destroying the independence of the press. According to him,

> *Newspapers like Times of India and Hindustan Times sell their copy for just one rupee and get cross subsidized by advertisements. They were even ready to sell it for free. And that happened too. When the DND toll plaza was started, Times of India and Hindustan Times used to give free copies to each person paying the toll. All the trains, all the airline seats, they used to give copies as complimentary. No price at all. Because they were getting all the revenues from advertisements. So this all had a toll on independent journalism* (Gupta, 2021).

Sharpening Exclusion in the Media

The impact of globalisation sharpened the existing contradiction in the society which contributed decisively to the globalisation of the Indian media. The public spheres created by the new media, reinforces patriarchal and feudal mind set as women and the other socially vulnerable sections face further exclusion. Their concerns and issues rarely find place in the media coverage. The prevailing caste, class, gender, ethnic and religious cleavages continue to haunt the print media in the age of liberalisation. Though relatively changing, most of the print media professionals are male, urbanised, English speaking, and

Hindus and with little presence of dalits, women, adivasis, and religious minorities (Gupta, 2002: 188). Nilanjana Gupta, while endorsing the argument, views that "while on the one hand, the Indian press is relatively vital and free, the commercial nature of the press deprives the majority of Indian citizens of true access to the media" (Gupta, 2002: 189).

Dalit assertion, mobilisation and political participation did not bring about a satisfactory result as far as media representation is concerned. Jeffrey highlights the meagre representation of Dalits in the editorial position of India's print media. He compares the absence of dalits in the newsrooms as reporters and sub editors with that of Blacks in the American media. It has to be reminded that the Kerner Report 1968 emphasised the lack of diversity in American newsrooms due to permeating racial discrimination which has not changed substantially even today. According to him, newspapers rarely carry stories of Dalits, "unless they involved spectacular violence" of 'positive discrimination', though they are against Dalits (Jeffrey, 2001: 228). Like the exclusion of gender issues, the new media gives meagre coverage to caste issues, caste violence, atrocities against Dalits, their assertion and mobilisation. Most of the media conglomerates have a meagre representation of Dalits –Adivasis as media correspondents and editors in the national dailies (Anandi, 2005: 172-197). The public sphere created by the media was converted into a 'caste public sphere' where Dalits have no deliberative power. However, others argue that in the 1990s, with the advent of electronic media, the emergence and expansion of Dalit middle class entered into media public sphere (Loynd, 2008: 62-86).

Pamela Philipose, for instance, explains how women represented and participated in the newly emerged media public spheres. Critiquing media as a gendered public sphere, she asserts that "the twin processes of globalisation and liberalisation brought about a general dilution of emphasis on social issues, including related to gender" (Philipose, 2005: 104). She identified three phases of addressing women's issues in the Indian media. In the first phase covering the initial 25 years after independence, "the visibility of gender-centric news in the media was negligible". However, in the following two decades due to the impact of women's activism on urban society, the silence was broken to an extent. The following years witnessed further dilution of gender issues due to the changing pattern of

media ownership and then globalisation and liberalisation (Philipose, 2005: 104).

The skewed social representation in the media and the lack of coverage of the issues of Dalits, adivasis and women, is a cause of worry for media diversity. The media monopoly created by the corporate business further aggravates the situation of exclusion and marginalisation in the media. The mainstream media rarely reports the issues of poverty, hunger and starvation deaths and corruption in the development programmes of rural India (Sainath, 1996). Sashi Kumar perceives the issues of exclusion or less representation of minorities, dalits and women in the media with the larger Marxist conception of 'bourgeois media'. Paranjoy Guha Thakurta contends that a large section of the media in India is very elitist. And therefore they ignore the underprivileged sections of the population — minorities, dalits and women. And these sections are also underrepresented in media organisations. So their views are not often given the kind of prominence they should be receiving. The fact that large section discerned to an elite audience that they are looking at the readers and viewers as consumers or potential consumers to reach their glossal to their advertisers rather than as citizens to be empowered. It is very closely linked to not giving adequate importance or often ignoring issues pertaining to minorities, dalits and women (Thakurta, 2021).

Stating that the social structure of the newsroom is the most important factor that will shape how a media outlet would function, R. Rajagopal, admits that the state of most of the Indian media is pathetic as Muslims, Dalits, gender-marginalised groups are a rarity in Indian newsrooms. According to him, “The number of women is better than earlier but I don‘t think they are adequately represented in leadership and decision-making roles. There is always a male boss sitting somewhere on the upper floor, unless a daughter of the owner is calling the shots” (Rajagopal, 2021). Asserting that deliberate affirmative action is the only solution to rectify this under representation because the upper classes unwittingly intimidate the disadvantaged sections from walking into media outlets and trying for a job. You often hear howls of outrage, dismay and cheap jokes about accent and spelling mistakes. Ridiculing this stereotyping as “absolute rubbish”, Rajagopal asserts that some of the brightest minds hail from disadvantaged sections and these sections are also our invaluable stakeholders, without whose insight we cannot even begin to chronicle the life

and times of such a huge and diverse country (Rajagopal, 2021). There is lack of diversity in newsrooms though India is a diverse country. The institutional insulation to diversity is done under the plea that it affects the media institutions 'quality and esteem.

Like the print and electronic media, the emerging digital media too is controlled by the elite, counterpoising the representation of the marginalised. For instance, digital news portals like Wire, Print, Quint, etc. are mostly controlled by upper caste communities. The exclusion in the print and electronic public sphere is also visible in the public sphere created by the digital media. Since, the "upper-caste domination in Indian media spaces continues even after the advent of digital and social media", the hope of a democratic digital media appears to be a myth (Mandal, 2020).

From Real issues to Reel Issues

The corporate media often hides the real issues of the people, especially when it concerns developmental issues. As Sen argues “India has not had a famine since independence, and given the nature of Indian politics and society, it is not likely that India can have a famine even in years of great food problems. Newspapers play an important part in this, in making the facts known and forcing the challenge to be faced” (Sen, 1984: 84). However, in the contemporary media, the real issues of people, poverty, hunger and farmers death get overshadowed by other news and issues. Smita Gupta argues that in the 1990s, the emphasis was on the "feel-good stories" rather than the people's real problems (Gupta, 2005: 292). Economic liberalisation saw the majority of the country‘s mainstream media houses, whether print or television, adopt a business model that was advertisement-oriented, and where the target audience of the media shifted from readers/viewers to advertisers. It was not just advertisements that linked mainstream media directly and intimately to the market. Indian corporate bodies, some of them with deep political connections and ambitions, also began to invest directly in the media businesses to promote their business interests and influence policymaking by buying over existing newspaper houses and television channels, or setting up new ones. The markets and the media thus came to be linked in a feedback loop, with the markets ploughing in capital and drawing profits made through the media‘s capacity to create and propagate demands, dreams and desires for the goods and services offered by the markets. The growing

synergy of the media and the market created more profits for shareholders; it also fashioned a distinct category of people who benefited disproportionately from economic liberalisation and who expressed their euphoria over, and appetite for, the goods and services offered by global markets. It was also a class of people that aspired to be upwardly mobile and ambitious, not just for themselves but for India as ‘their' country.

Sashi Kumar says that the Indian media has by and large lost their professional pride and sense of purpose and become a money making or influence peddling machine for their owners. The media is not representative of the larger reality of India. For a country where the bulk of the population - between 65 and 70 % - live in villages there is hardly any rural coverage. And when it does, the stories are more about rapes, khap panchayats and farmers suicides. Not that these are not important. But the problem with the dominance of 'event' journalism is that the story of how the majority of the rural and urban poor struggle in their daily lives for jobs, education, crucial social services, healthcare, etc. go unnoticed. This makes it important for the Indian media to adopt "process" journalism rather than "event" journalism (Kumar, 2021). After liberalisation as the priorities changed and the State abandoned its role and withdrew itself from the social sector, gave up the welfarist principles and moved towards a totally marked oriented economy, profit became the only motive. It was natural that such a model would lead to huge economic inequalities as a corollary, as we are witnessing the world over. In such a situation of rising inequalities, it was important to divert people's attention from the questions of health, hunger, education and jobs and engage them in trivial and emotional issues. This has happened all over the globe and in India (Hashmi, 2021). This trend has resulted ultimately in compromising the truth and people‘s interests and especially the poor people‘s interest (Govindacharya, 2021).

Underlooking the Rural India

Rural India is totally left out in media coverage. As Sashi Kumar points out, the real India is rural India, but the stories carried by the media from rural India portray a very negative impression. Many of such reports are about killings, rapes, issues arising from inter-caste marriages, revenge killings etc. The media rarely captures the development process, the struggle of daily living, deprivation and news of bonded labour, agricultural labour, and

migrant labour (Kumar, 2021). There is a serious erosion in media content and what it shows is not representative. Even in the larger landscape, the news that one sees, reads, or hears in India is not representative of the country. The unrepresentative character of news is worrying. Sashi Kumar asserts that it is not at all representative of the realities, particularly in a the country like India, where that reality is very complex and very varied; including sharp and stark differences, not limited to economic inequalities alone. . The erosion of news content manifested more as it drifted from real to reel. Reel is something that is happening in the movie and what you experience in life, lived life, is real. From reading printed copies delivered at your doorstep, both the manner of delivery and the mode of reading has undergone a dramatic change. Reading, now is no more confined to physical reading. It can be read on the screen, on the computer screen, over mobile phones etc. People also watch clips of news and audios over their devices. And this is gaining ascendancy thanks to the proliferation of devices and more access to the internet. So in that sense, the reel has become more dominant than the real.

However, there is another dimension to this as well. Once something plays out on reel, whether in a web portal or somewhere else, this gets picked up and amplified by other media outlets and modes and discussions and opinions are formed and framed around it. In many of such cases, the veracity of what had been reported in the first place is not checked. Govindacharya argues that the promotion of glamour is adversely affecting society. Information is power. But it should not convey the impression that you are being led to heaven while in reality you are led up a garden path. Conditioning of the minds of the people to think in a particular way and make a particular choice, is dictated by the market. So markets and foreign economic forces are the best to reap the harvest of this distortion (Govindacharya, 2021).

Post-1991, media coverage has tended to underplay the criticism and objections to the impact of the reforms, under-representing the negative socio-political and socio-economic effects of the economic liberalisation policies, especially among the poor and marginalised sections. As Shashi Kumar notes, the lower the one is in the social hierarchy, the lesser relevance they will receive in terms of press coverage, reflecting an inherent unequal treatment to its citizens (Kumar, 2021). P. Sainath, the founder and Editor-in-Chief of People‘s Archive of Rural India (PARI), points out crucially that how the issues of utmost public importance such as shortage of water, diminishing rainfall, women &

farmers and so on which are directly linked to rural India and the masses seldom get the attention of mainstream Indian media. For Sainath, Indian media considers these rural social groups as unimportant because Indian media is for the urban middle class and the elite. As a result, Indian media has disconnected itself from the masses and specifically the marginalised sections of the rural farmers. In his renowned journalistic work, Everybody Loves a Good Drought, P. Sainath explores rural poverty and daily struggle of the poor and unearths the damaging corporatisation of media and its negative effects on the mass the Indian poor and the farmers. Particularly post-liberalisation, India has been rushing fast towards development which is mostly corporate oriented (Sainath, 1996).

Since independence, millions of farmers have been displaced and their land grabbed for roads, mining, setting up industries etc. either by the government or by corporations all in the name of development. Sainath points out that between 1951 and 1990, more than 26 million farmers have been displaced by development projects. Besides, the creation of close to four hundred Special Economic Zones (SEZs) after liberalisation has resulted in even more farmers being pressured to sell off their land cheaply. The government hopes to attract more investment by giving firms that open offices in the SEZs incentives such as tax holidays and non-application of labour laws. Trade Unions and the Left parties have been vehement in their opposition to the exemption granted to enterprises set up in the SEZs from the purview of labour laws that provide protection and rights to the workers and not leave them at the whims and fancies of the employers. The intended purpose of passing the SEZ Act was to provide a stable policy framework for creating Special Economic Zones, which would serve as engines for industrial growth and exports. However, it is mainly agricultural land that is being acquired to set up SEZs in several cases, resulting in displacement of farmers and other sections of people, which have serious implications. It is argued that "several provisions made in the SEZ Rules have raised concerns of misuse of the SEZ Act for creating a speculative real estate bubble instead of building industrial infrastructure. The Reserve Bank of India has warned against the possibilities of uneven development between different regions owing to the SEZ Policy. There are also apprehensions regarding substantial revenue losses on account of the tax concessions provided under the SEZ Act" (CPI (M), 2006). Within two years of the passage of the Act, over five-hundred square kilometres had been acquired for these zones.

As Sainath points out, the poor farmers bear the costs of development while the rest of the nation have a free lunch (Sainath, 2009).

The neoliberal development thus not only has created a vast growing economic gulf between India‘s elite and the vast majority of its population, it has at the same time systematically and deliberately created a similar disconnect between mass media and mass reality. Many of India‘s English-language newspapers have abandoned the responsibility of being the fourth pillar of democracy and a public good. Now, they claim that they are mere content providers devoted to delivering to advertisers the largest number of eyeballs possible. As a result, the ever increasing divide between the rich and the poor that is a consequence of new economic policies introduced in the early 1990s is not really part of the media discourse. Sainath points out that although debt, health, education, displacement, and irrigation remain the biggest problems of India, yet, large sections of the country‘s English-language press operate as though they are allies of the state in a national project to convince citizens that India is predestined to soar to global supremacy and all those rural farmer‘s issues are not important at all (Sainath, 2009).

As a result, when displacement and poverty force millions of farmers to abandon their land and seek employment in cities, many of India's English-language newspapers transform themselves into halls of mirrors, focusing only on news they believe will interest their elite readers. This metamorphosis is the product both of a passionate neo-liberal eco-system in which everything, including the news, has become a commodity that's up for sale, and of a generational shift in newspaper ownership. So, while the readers of English-language newspapers are served supplements in which they can learn all about holidays in Monaco and the latest yachts, they are deliberately denied the information they need to understand how the upheaval on the country‘s farms is affecting their lives. Further, due to this deliberate ignorance of rural India and farmers in the media, many middle-class Indians are blissfully unaware of the distress around them in a country where poverty is depressingly visible all the time. For instance, The Times of India, which claims a readership of more than 7 million nationwide, has advocated the concept of “aspirational journalism”. They have often told their journalists that the Times must help readers forget the mundane reality of their lives and show them the possibilities of what their new

affluence can bring and that news should put a smile to their faces every morning instead of reminding them of their problems.

According to CMS Delhi, the five-year average of agriculture reporting in an Indian national daily equals to 0.61 percent, which includes politics and the agriculture ministry, while the village-level stories appear on an average of 0.17 percent only. Only last year the number rose to 0.24 percent (Kedia, 2017). On the other side, with concurrent droughts, crop failure and financial disparity in the farmers income, when the scale of distress among the agrarian community is vast and farmers suicide in India requires exclusive and fundamental attention from the media, the Indian media has maintained a studied silence. Although, given the recent large-scale farmers protest across the country, particularly in the Delhi-Haryana border and in the heart of the national capital, which shocked many in 2020 and 2021, the national media have seen discussing farmers issues even in its prime-time bulletins. This, however, was only part of its efforts to compete with competitors to gain more advertisements rather than bring farmers in the forefront - which again soon faded away in the guise to the Covid pandemic, vaccination news and as always suicides and drug abuses in Bollywood. And if we look at the rural coverage of news by the major national English and Hindi newspapers of India, we get a very depressing situation. Among all the news in a day, rural India that is Bharat gets only about less than 2 percent coverage in the Indian media.

Table: 3
Rural Coverage of Major Newspapers

Papers	Number of Rural news per day	% of days total news
The Times of India	1.97	2
The HindustanTimes	2.93	1.76
The Hindu	3.38	2.2
Dainik Jagaran	1.85	1.3
Amar Ujala	4.68	2.07

Source- Mudgal 2011.

In a detailed study of rural coverage in media, Vipul Mudgal finds out that even of that tiny 2% of news, most rural news is not about the farmers or about their concerns relating to land, livestock, resources or farming. His content analysis of 968 news items shows that 36% of the coverage goes to issues of violence, accidents, crime or disasters. Only less than 28% is about rural themes while 15% is about hunger, suicides, malnutrition, distress migration, displacement or farmers' movements (Mudgal, 2011). In other words, in the corporatised and sensational world of Indian news, the issues of farmers or the rural masses are not object of news as they do not attract much advertisements, as this news bring sadness and not entertainment to the elite and middle-class public.

Paid News as an Attack on Media Morality

While the real issues affecting the people took a backseat, new issues which are protecting the interests of the particular group or individuals started getting wider coverage in the media. The growing phenomenon of paid news – for getting wider attention in news by individuals or groups paying money to the media, emerged as the real challenge to media in contemporary India. Paranjoy Guha Thakurta, for instance has pointed out that the practice of paid content had become "institutionalised." He said it goes beyond individual editors or publishers and the occasional paid junket. In other words, what started out as an individual aberration has become an illness, an epidemic of sorts which poses a serious threat to the ethics of media at large (Thakurta, 2012). P. Sainath has been instrumental in drawing attention to such practices. In a series of articles on elections in Maharashtra last year, Sainath listed specific prices for different articles. For Rs. 400,000, he found, newspapers would publish the profile of a candidate as well as "four news items of your choice". For Rs.15 million — ten times the amount a candidate in state assembly elections can legally spend on a campaign — politicians could buy a special supplement. (Sainath, 2009). The emerging menace is the paid news scandal where the editorial pieces were paid for by politicians who either wanted positive coverage on themselves or negative coverage on their rivals during the Lok Sabha election 2009. Taking the issue seriously, the PCI in July 2009, set up a two-member committee consisting of Paranjoy Guha Thakurta and K. Srinivas Reddy, to study the paid news scandal.

Neoliberalism, Hindutva and Media

Neoliberalism and Hindutva, the two ideological currents of India in the 1990s, are contingent forces as they reinforce each other at various levels and multiple wavelengths. The decade of 1990 witnessed an opportunistic alliance between the vanguards of Hindutva and economic reforms since both of them shared a common interest. There was a new development under the veil of Mandal-Mandir politics. Building Hindu nationalist sentiments around Mandir helped to check Mandal affairs and helped to bring neoliberal changes in stealth. However, this intrinsic linkage was explained by Rajagopal in incongruous terms. According to him, while ordinary Hindus across the community thought that 'they were harking back to an epic golden age, Hindu nationalist leaders were embracing the prospects of neoliberalism and globalisation' (Rajagopal, 2001). This also exposed the doublespeak of the Hindutva leaders, who on the one hand were vehement in their opposition to the policies of neoliberalism and globalisation, while on the other hand were impassioned votaries of the same. Prakash Karat sees a strong interconnection between neoliberal capitalism and the rise of Hindutva in the 1990s. To him, the rise of Hindutva and rise of neoliberalism were twin developments as they got completely intermixed and intertwined (Karat, 2021).

The pursuit of liberalisation and neo-liberal policies required the backing of a new political ideology. The old ideology represented by the Congress that was no longer considered suitable for the new phase of capitalist developments or neoliberal capitalist developments. Hindutva provided that right mix for them because Hindutva far from being anti-capitalist is actively pro big business and pro big bourgeoisie (Karat, 2021). According to Karat, the Hindutva of Narendra Modi, who was then the Chief Minister of Gujarat, got great acceptability among the big corporates. After the Gujarat riots in 2002, Modi started the vibrant Gujarat annual exercise where big corporates such as Ambani and Adani used to share the stage with him and hailed him as the new economic reformer. And some of them went to the extent, saying he should be the country's future prime minister. The open endorsement was due to their realisation that Hindutva is promoting free markets policies; promotes crony capitalism; and is opposed to the welfare state. So the big corporates found Hindutva most convenient for big business and neo-liberal policies. In

2014, this realisation extended to the national level, when Modi became the Prime Minister of India. The corporate Hindutva alliance had become a reality with his government‘s pro-corporate and pro-market policies. Though it was originally the Congress that had started the neoliberal policies, they were not found to be as efficient or as effective as the capitalists would have wanted for pushing the neo-liberal policies. Moroever, in the first UPA government, the Left‘s relentless pressure restrained it from going the whole hog. However, the subsequent BJP government vigorously implemented it as large sections of the big bourgeoisie have rallied behind the BJP and the Modi government (Karat, 2021).

Hindu nationalism in the process of gaining legitimacy within the masses fashioned a new public image with the nexus of market and media. The electronic media thus created and inculcated a 'visual image‘of its so-called ancient glory that was purely based on higher class Hindu cultural superiority. With the emergence of electronic media in the form of television, a channel of communication was set up between culture, economy and polity. The process allowed Hindu nationalists to fashion and design rhetoric in the public sphere and draw an analogy between cultural identification, forms of consumption and voting behaviour (Rajagopal, 2001). With the expansion of communication technologies, political participation increased across the spectrum. Rajagopal puts out that “the rhetoric of market reform and that of an insurgent cultural politics went public together, and interacted to express a new historical conjuncture” (Rajagopal, 2001). Both, the cultural politics and the market forces “militated against a dirigiste status quo” (Rajagopal, 2001) and promised to bring a radical change if hidden social forces were emancipated, whether of profit motive or of a long-suppressed Hindu religion.

In the background of the economic reforms, technological advances and transformation in the media during the 1990s the functions of media were no longer unidimensional. Liberalisation and globalisation, ensured free flow of technology and capital ever faster than before with limited regulation by the state. Technological revolution enabled the media to reach out enhanced number of viewers and readers to propagate its vested interests. Hindutva found the emerging media as a faster mechanism to propagate its ideology and programme among the people. Economic liberalisation and Hindu religious politics allied with each other and expanded its reach across the Indian

states, especially in the Hindi heartland. The new media technology ensured smooth transmission of its product to the audience. As Nanda argues that ". . . mixing of religion, big money, and the machinery of the state has become the major source for spreading the Hindutva message across the country" (Nanda, 2004: 41).

Prabhat Patnaik found certain covert or overt understanding between Hinduvta and neoliberalism. Patnaik asserts that the current ruling dispensation in the country represents a Corporate-Hindutva alliance. Modi is the architect of this alliance who has nurtured corporate interests assiduously even while promoting the Hindutva agenda. This overt understanding between Hindutva and "economic reforms" is what underlies Indian fascism (Patnaik, 2021). The Corporate-Hindutva alliance: Corporate-controlled media played its role in building up Modi and Hindutva.

The western media is not openly pro-fascist the way the Indian media is, which in turn is because while the *tendency* towards fascism is evident everywhere (Trump in the U.S. represented this tendency), a government carrying out the agenda of a fascistic organisation has not triumphed everywhere in as pronounced a fashion as in India. According to Patnaik, the strength of the liberal bourgeoisie in the West is greater than in India, which is why despite the commonality, the media still retain, and did so even during the Trump era, a certain independence vis-à-vis the government, and a certain adherence to a liberal tradition (Patnaik, 2021). However, Vipul Mudgal asserts that the relationship is between economic reforms and power, and not just Hindutva or Islam. In Islamic countries, it is the relationship between Islam and reforms and in some other countries, it is the market and orthodox Catholicism and so on. When democracy shrinks and liberalism becomes defensive (and self-serving), opportunistic alliances become the norm rather than the exception (Mudgal, 2021).

Neoliberalism, New Middle Class and Hindutva

In analysing the changing content and media in the 1990s, one has to look at the strong linkage between neoliberalism and the emergence of a new middle class in India. As stated earlier, in the 1990s, during the economic liberalisation, India witnessed the emergence of a new middle class (NMC) who christened new ideas, lifestyle, etc. It has to be

remembered that the middle class in India after independence was closer to the Nehruvian protectionist development models, and extended its staunch support for the Congress. It was in the forefront of many social and political movements. In the post Nehru period, the middle class pushed for deregulation of the economy and politically even kept a distance from the Congress and moved towards the regional parties. In the 1990s, it was pushing for economic liberalisation as it thought that the Nehruvian developmental model was no longer viable for fulfilling its political and economic aspirations (Fernandes, 2006). As the backbone of the reform, the middle class pushed their pursuit on the government contributing to the changes in consumption behaviour and patterns. This shift is reflected in many areas such as social, political, economic and cultural. In his exposition of the great Indian middle class, Pavan K. Varma argues that this is a category of people who are 'convinced that India's destiny is about to change, and that the country is at last set to get its due in the international arena' (Varma, 1998). The NMC was proactive to the Hindutva agenda of the Sangh Parivar and the BJP. Kinnvall asserts that "Hindutva politics must be centred on building a unified pan-Indian hegemonic identity that overrides the agglomeration of localised identities if it is to appeal to the new middle classes" (Kinnvall, 2006: 146). The middle class started asserting their "newly legitimated right to consume and of business groups seeking a successor to a developmentalist regime in eclipse" (Rajagopal, 2001). Through the Ramajanmabhoomi movement, the BJP wanted to search for securitised subjectivity for the verification of the Hindu identity which is intimately connected to striving for cultural confidence among Hindu nationalists and their followers (Kinnvall, 2006: 146).

The NMC in the 1990s have been moulded by the media and the later exert pressure on the media too. The media is projecting the middle class' lifestyle and attitude and reshaping the culture and identity. It can be seen that "while neoliberal reforms have inexorably changed social and economic life, their indirect impact through globalised-induced, cultural change has also been an affront to middle-class morals, culture and identity" (Ganguly- Scrase and Scarse, 2009: 152). The media drifts its attention to issues, ethos and values of the Indian middle class. Middle class values, consumerist culture, religious practices, divinity, celebrity worship, exhibitions started dominating media content. Media emerged as the area for fulfilling their middle class lifestyles and values in the society. On the one hand, the sweeping consumerist values unleashed by the Indian media made them less concerned about the real issues, while on the other hand, the media

tried to inject a Hindu identity in them. Every Hindu religious festival was used by the media to drive in this identity. Hence we can see a serious connect between liberalisation and the slant towards Hindutvaisation. The religious identity of this category – primarily Hindu – and its caste composition - primarily upper class - could be seen as factors that fuelled the onward march of Hindu nationalism from the late 1990s onwards (Philipose, 2021).

The Hindutva party that existed was at the margin and needed an ally. The new middle class and the business elite were natural allies of the Hindutva party. In collaboration with the middle class and business elites, the Hindutva party expanded their presence. The country which as proud for having adopted the principles of secularism, tolerance and mutual respect for all the religions, notwithstanding the fact that Hindu religious symbols were very much visible in the public domain, got transformed drastically. Hindutva politics pushed a new challenge to the basic structure of Indian society through the naked display of Hindutva icons and symbols in most of Hindu dominated provinces in the independent India.

Changing Media Culture

The blending of news with entertainment, lifestyles and celebrity changed the acclaimed media culture, thereby denigrating democratic values. The emergence of celebrity journalism in the 1990s, overshadowed civic issues affecting the people and setting a new morality based on urban sensibilities. In fact, Habermas too critiques modern mass media for privatising civic life and degrading citizens into consumers. News is not only a commodity that aims at maximising profit, but news is also a public good that aims to strengthen democracy by producing well-informed citizens. Being both a commodity and a public good simultaneously makes the media go through a permanent conflict or tension. Individuals or citizens which form the public in a democratic society and polity, become a mere object, a consumer product to satisfy the advertisement needs of the market and big corporates. Media, as a result, becomes not a means to make a society & polity more democratic but a tool to generate more profit and control public discourse in the interest of the big corporates. News, therefore, is nothing but a commodity sold by media houses in the market to generate more profit and universalise corporate interest. But news was not

supposed to be a commodity but rather news in its ideal form is a public good, which aims at informing the public about their issues of interest so that an informed public can make informed and logical public judgments when it comes to organising society and polity in a functioning democracy. In this context of news being a commodity and not a public good, I will mention here two sets of theories which aim to understand the conflict between news as a commodity and news as a public good.

Erosion of Press Council of India

Even in the context of the Ayodhya movement in the early 1990s, where some of the Hindi newspapers vigorously engaged in communal reporting, the Liberhan Commission Report on the Babri demolition indicted the PCI. According to the Commission, "the only body set up in India for overseeing the media and controlling it, the Press Council of India is unfortunately a toothless body, with virtually no substantive powers, except of censure. A censure of a journalist or a publication or a channel is no more than a slight rap on the wrist and carries little or no value" (Government of India, 2009).

If it has to be a professional body, it must have a proper mandate and substantial powers to take both remedial as also deterrent actions. Apart from issuing a censure, it cannot even direct the censured publication or journalist to even publish this disciplinary action in their own publication! Most of the big newspapers don't give a hoot to the Press Council of India. Nowadays the Chairperson of the PCI is selected by a committee consisting of the senior most member of the council, Chief Justice of India and Speaker of the Lok Sabha. As has been the norm, a retired Supreme Court judge heads the PCI. There is a need to make the body completely independent, free from government influence, interference and control and made inclusive. Only then can we expect a modicum of discipline in the media (Bagaitkar, 2021). Echoing the same view, Sebastian Paul says that the Press Council was formed on the basis of the recommendation of the First Press Commission Report. This was to ensure a free and fair press in the country. However, the effectiveness of the Press Council has drained out and it doesn't serve the purpose for which it was constituted. Moreover, vast chunks of the media are outside the purview of the Press Council (Paul, 2021). According to him, the effectiveness of the Press Council

depends on the persons who are part of the Council. In fact, they should effectively discharge their obligations. There have been drastic changes in the media and its character since the 1980s. You may recollect the way in which the print media collaborated with the forces of communalism and unbridled liberalisation. A Press Council Committee had specifically indicted various media organisations. But no corrective steps were taken by the media organisations. Nowadays, nothing is heard from the Press Council despite plummeting standards of the print media. Moreover, since the media scenario has changed and an uneven situation exists, it would be desirable to have a new Media Commission look into the whole gamut of issues and devise means of regulation. It is also advisable to expand and rename Press Council as 'Media Council' to include Television, Social Media, Over The Top (OTT), etc. (Paul, 2021). Though PCI is a quasi-judicial body formed under an Act of Parliament, it is devoid of punitive powers. India needs not just a far more proactive and inclusive PCI but a far more proactive judiciary in calling out those who indulge in hate speech. This is all the more important in a situation where the social media is being increasingly misused and is playing a very dubious role in spreading disinformation and communal propaganda. Today, this is becoming a huge problem in India more than print medium (Thakurta, 2021). Endorsing this view Ram Puniyani asserts that their role as monitoring body has been gradually reduced, and the violation of norms by media went unchecked (Puniyani, 2021). Shabnam Hashmi views that they have miserably failed but it has not happened overnight. There has been slow poisoning and slow infiltration of minds, of institutions, of every public and private space by the right wing ideology (Hashmi, 2021). Sharad Gupta claims that these organisations think that or claim that we are monitoring and regulating the content, but actually that's not happening. They are safeguarding their own interests, so no other body is interfering and no one should interfere. There should be self-regulation, but in a proper way (Gupta, 2021).As an important part of democracy, these bodies became victims of communal frenzy and excessive government control (Lakhera, 2021).

Viewing the losing institutional autonomy of the PCI within the wider context of the erosion of the institutions in India, Prakash Karat asserts that many state institutions are now under the control of the BJP/RSS virtue of their being in power. The BJP and RSS are successfully subverting the integrity of these institutions or overriding the autonomy of

these institutions. But this process was started earlier. So when the political executive itself is unable or unwilling to tackle these forces how will these institutions be able to tackle them? In a parliamentary democracy the executive, the political authority or the government are the main forces and the strongest section of the state. The inability to stand up to these forces of the institutions of the state, is a reflection of the basic class shift that was taking place, ruling class, sections of ruling class has shifted support to this ideology (Karat, 2021).

In the 1990s, due to the impact of NEP, the imperatives of journalism for nation building had taken a backseat and journalism became an entire proposition of the market. Journalism became a market model (Kumar, 2021). When India opened for liberalisation, the nature of the media too changed accordingly. The old fashioned "developmental journalism" which inherited the values of nationalist movement and captured rural news and important events like farming, subsidies, and other issues that affect the poorer sections of society gave way to making profit, not just making profit but profit maximisation (Kumar, 2021). The ethos of the media converted into the ethos of capital accumulation. Moreover, the sacred line between advertising and editorial started collapsing. According to Sashi Kumar, one of the biggest casualties of liberalisation which saw huge infusion of capital in the media has been the erosion of the media's connection with the people. However, the media adopts dubious steps to regain the public connection to strengthen its position in society. The bigger newspapers and the channels have to keep inventing more dramatic, false news, fake news or sensational news to keep Television Rating Point (TRPs) or advertising alive or to get eyeballs (Kumar, 2021).

Conclusion

To sum up, the Indian media began its journey as a public good provider under the presence of a developmental state. However, in the post liberalisation period, due to technological innovation and expansion of market, the Indian media entered a phase of corporatisation. Media as a commodity has gained complete monopoly over media as a public good. Rather than acting as a news provider, the media has transformed itself into an advertisement mechanism to sell the products of the corporates and thereby maximising its revenue. Over the years since liberalisation, Indian media has been commodified to

such an extent that market forces now control the very functioning of the media. The commercialisation and corporatisation of the media has affected not only the quality of journalism in several ways, but also lesser space allotment to serious reporting. Several matters don‘t get due coverage since proprietors and the media houses don‘t consider them important (Varadarajan, 2016). The dangerous nexus of corporate and social elites (mostly upper class) thus through their combined efforts not only make media a profitable business but they at the same time innovate diverse strategies to retain the hegemony of their social, cultural and political capital. Hence we can say, whether it‘s the right-wing ruling government, or the rule of centrist-Congress, the media has always remained within the garb of the powerful, neglecting the people with less power and voice. The concerns of caste and communal equality has never remained a concern for the illiberal press.

The Indian media is around two centuries old. Their strengths have been largely shaped by its historical experience, particularly by its association in the freedom struggle and with movements for reform, social emancipation and amelioration. In India, both the print and electronic media have been expanding rapidly since the 1990s. At the same time, there has been an accompanying explosion in advertising revenue. The structure of ownership in the media, too, has been changing. Traditional family ownership has been joined by the entry of new owners (both family and corporate) and business empires have extended their reach and control to the media. Side by side, its independence is also coming increasingly into question.

Chapter VI

Conclusion

The print media in India has evolved through a historical process spanning the freedom movement, postcolonial times and the liberalisation period. During the anti-colonial struggle, most of the stalwarts of the independence movement were either lawyers or journalists or both. In the post-independence period, the print media was more informational and educational. While it carried the advertisements of the government's various developmental policies and programmes, it was not advertisement driven or dependent on consumerist tendencies or market rationality. Imbibed by the nationalistic ideals and values, and the postcolonial project of nation building and modernisation, news was not treated as a commodity to be marketed or sold. The print media played an important role in the democratisation process by disseminating information to the public and inculcating national consciousness and values; ethos of the multicultural society; and developing rationality and scientific temper among the people. The protectionist economic policies and the one party dominance of the Congress both at the centre and most of the states in the initial decades of independence, cemented the media's relations with the Congress.

Beginning from the 1960s, the emergence of the regional bourgeoisie, the proliferation of regional parties and the demand for greater political and fiscal decentralisation, added a boost to the print media, especially the regional vernacular newspapers. During the national emergency in 1975, the Indian print media survived many attacks including the stifling of its freedom and autonomy. In spite of censorship, arrest of media persons and coercive methods adopted against the media, it was successful in strengthening anti- emergency consciousness and movement in India. The emergence of Hinduvata's communal politics goes back to the 1980s, during the Shah-Bano case during the Prime Ministership of Rajiv Gandhi when the right wing Hindutva forces utilised its for political mobilisation, the Congress played the soft Hindutva card to counter the BJP's Hindutva. The galvanisation of communal hatred proliferated in different regions of the country because regional barons of the Congress party were staunch conservatives and did

whatever was necessary to win elections. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, mandal and kamadal politics altered the political landscape. It is argued that the impact of the Mandal commission recommendations and the telecasting of Ramayana and Mahabharata serials over Dooradarshan strengthened Hindus' religious sentiments and beliefs (Corbridge and Hariss, 2000). In the backdrop of Ram Mandir campaign in Ayodhya, state sponsored broadcasting of particular Hindu religious epics, sharpened the existing communal rift between Hindus and Muslims. Hindu nationalist politics constructs a homogenous Hindu political identity which is used for its political mobilisation. It is argued that Hindu nationalism can be seen as the elite project of 'cultural homogenization' (Appadurai, 1996) and it is counteracting the inclusive and secular vision of the Nehruvian nation-building (Khilnani, 1997). The Hindutva's onslaught impacted the public sphere, as the values were replaced with communal majoritarian ideological values. The BJP has succeeded in creating an overarching 'Hindu Identity' that cuts across social-ethnic divides to a large extent. Along with it also does microlevel caste based mobilisations.

Though the late 1980s and 90s are considered to be crucial for the Hindu nationalist forces' outreach to the media, especially the Hindi newspapers, the RSS' role in capturing media and public communication systems to propagate its ideology and for political mobilisation go back to the post emergency period. In other words, though the role of the media in helping the Hindu rightwing ideology to gain upper hand in Indian politics is more recent and in the context of Ayodhya movement, the Sangh Parivar's incursion to media dates back to the immediate post emergency period when L.K. Advani, the Information and Broadcasting Minister in the Janata Party Government, utilised the opportunity to cultivate the media. The RSS, after acknowledging the importance and power of communication, infiltrated their people to occupy major positions in the media industry. Since then Hindu right wing represented by Jana Sangh and BJP were seen to be managing the press better than other political parties. The press carried mass manipulation rather than mass communication. Major and minor statements, press conferences, announcements, and demonstrations are regularly issued as a press release, sent to the reporter's desk and newspaper offices. The management of newspapers by the Hindutva forces has been extremely efficient and effective for the right wing ideology. For example, during the time of the *rathyatra*, the BJP supported by RSS, managed the press in

publishing uncritical reports on the entire communal incidents. In fact, communal coverage had been pre-designed, pre-packed and released in a proper form by the press. By publishing contents that are of a communal nature, both by the print media and other channels of communications, legitimacy was accorded to it.

In the 1990s, the emergence of the right wing Hindu nationalist politics and its consolidation had impacted the media too. The mobilisation for the Ramjanmabhoomi movement and the destruction of the Babri Masjid further strengthened Hindutva‘s sectarian political ideology and posed a challenge to India‘s long cherished values of secular nationalism. Jaffrelot argues that the movement led by Hindu nationalists to build the Ram temple was largely and out rightly in reaction to ‘Mandal’ politics, with the aim of reuniting Hindu community on religious lines that had been divided by the OBC leaders along caste lines on the issue of reservation (Jaffrelot, 2010). The movement to build Ram mandir in Ayodhya, identifying Ram Janmbhoomi as the birthplace of Lord Ram, was aggressively carried out by the right wing forces such as Hindu Mahasabha, Vishva Hindu Parishad, Bajrang Dal, RSS, Shiv Sena etc. From the year 1984, the VHP demanded the restitution of Ram mandir, by demolishing the Babri masjid, which they claimed was built over the Ram mandir, which existed at the exact spot. The communal mobilisation for Ram mandir by Hindutva forces led to a strain in the relationship between communities especially between the Hindus and Muslims used for political mobilisation. In the 1990s, we witnessed the mainstream press championing communal and sectarian mobilisation as against espousing nationalist aspirations earlier. By igniting Hindu consciousness, the print media polarised the Hindus and Muslims and fomented communal consciousness. Thus, the media emerged out of the broader consensus between media and communal consciousness (Rajagopal, 2001).

During the 1990s, at the time of conflict on ‘Mandal and Mandir' issues, the Indian media was heavily criticised for its communal reporting, it was charged with creating conflicts within the society, were accused of sensationalising news and blowing them out of proportion and at times covering it up. During this period, national English newspapers like The Times of India and Indian Express, provided false information in the tense atmosphere, resulting in a further acceleration of tensions among social and religious communities. The Indian Express devoted 12.81 times more space for the anti-reservation protest during the implementation of the Mandal Commission recommendations. Similar

has been the case in communal riots of October-November 1989. Rumours and stereotypes were presented as facts by the national and regional dailies. The role of media has to be in preventing ongoing social conflicts, instead, the media content circulated during the time of the Mandal agitation and Mandir conflict became the principal ingredient, a central component of widening social tensions. In the name of reporting, everything that legitimises the dominant ruling class's ideology and power has been served to readers and viewers. In many states, violence broke out due to the circulation of false information by the media, leading to hatred among religious communities. The dominant caste amongst Hindus has successfully maintained their supremacy by making minority communities fight among each other. Due to the media reporting, Muslims and lower caste communities are looked through the lens of suspicion both by the state and the administration. Through the production of movies based on justification of caste hierarchy and propagating Muslims as a threat to national security, corporate media has done irreparable damage to the community's dignity. Although, the Press Council of India appointed committees to enquire complaints against English national dailies and Hindi newspapers for raising communal tensions, no penal action has been taken except for reprimanding and censuring them.

Scholars like Jaffrelot who have extensively worked on Indian politics by capturing events occurring during the 1990s argue that unlike Europe and America, ‘twenty-first century’ (Jaffrelot, 2010) in India was born ten years earlier. It was because of this that for the first time after independence, the ‘Nehruvian model' (Jaffrelot, 2010) was questioned in a more decisive way than had happened before. Four pillars of the Nehruvian model, 'state driven economy, secularism, conservative democracy and nonalignment in foreign policy' (Jaffrelot, 2010) were revisited in the 1990s that further shaped the map of Indian politics. Since the late 1980s, Hindutva's calculated strategy of communalising the media enabled it to reap impressive electoral harvests in India. In the 1989 general election, the BJP secured 85 seats with a vote share of 11. 36% from its 1984 tally of 2 seats with 0.89% votes. In the 1991 general election, the communal mobilisation on kamandal and mandir politics raised its graph both in the number of seats (120) and vote share (20.11%).

The growth of Hindi newspapers in the 1990s was approached by two opposing views. According to one view, the upsurge for democratisation by the socially backward groups and the rising literacy levels and the improvement in infrastructure and

technological developments and advancement of economic conditions among sections of the rural poor, especially their rising purchasing power, contributed to the massification of Hindi press. The opposite dominant view looked at this resurgence as the result of sheer communal mobilisation by the Hindu nationalist forces for their political aggrandisement. The Ramajanmabhoomi and Babri masjid controversy provided fire to the communalisation by the Hindi media. The Hindi media could construct a new communalised public sphere based on Hindu majoritarianism. The assertion by Hindi newspapers that its English counterpart is elitist and not nationalistic, added to its further popularity among the people. Even the Press Council of India went on to criticise the Hindi newspapers for "offending the canons of journalistic ethics" (PCI, 1991: 338-339). In fact, the Hindi language newspaper revolution in the Hindi heartland of India cemented the Hindu nationalist politics in the later decades.

The 1990s marked a watershed for India as it moved from a planned economy, with state control to a liberalised economy. Simultaneously, it also witnessed social and political churning. Denouncing the Nehruvian legacy, both the Hindu right and proponents of economic liberalisation made favourable conditions for new politics in India. These two trends altered the ideology and philosophy of the Indian state. There was an overt or covert understanding between the Hindi media, Hindutva and economic liberalisation as the Hindi media used this as an emotional subject to enhance its business interest and circulation. Economically, the restructuring of the national economy was dictated by global capitalism to suit its interests. The reforms allowed rapid flow of foreign capital, protecting the interest of finance capital, in contrast to protecting or advancing the interest of the common people. Though the reforms led to an increase in the country's GDP compared to the previous decades, it exacerbated economic disparities, which had a social and political impact. India witnessed growing rural unrest and strains in the economic health of the country and the growing levels of unemployment and declining real wages of the people.

In the 1990s, both the newspapers and the media industry were overwhelmed by technological innovations. While helping the media both in terms of profit and reach, technology also made it accessible to a large section of the people. The advent of satellite and cable TV, the emergence of innumerable channels, dedicated to news, entertainment,

cartoons, education, sports, recreation, fashion, spirituality and religion significantly influenced the larger populace. The advent of ICT and internet further modernised the print media in terms of its style, shape and appearance. The new reporting styles, writing and editing added a new dimension to the print media. Now the print media has an online version reaching out to many, much beyond its normal readership. Technological advancement starting from the invention of printing press revolutionised the process of knowledge production and dissemination accessibility, due to print of multiple copies of books and magazine and newspapers, spreading of new ideas. It had an adverse impact as well. Globalisation has set two trends in the field of media – the influence of technology and big business. The big business set the agenda of globalisation. Big business houses owning the media enterprises are not a new trend in India. Though described as the fourth estate in a democracy, the free media is always guided by the dominant ideologies of the time. Even during the nationalist movement, prominent families owned and controlled the Indian print media. The media business established a close relationship between politicians and the ruling parties. Though the print media in India was owned and controlled by powerful families (the Hindu by Kasturi Iyengar, Malayala Manorama by Maman Mapila, Mathrubhoomi by K.P. Kesava Menon), it was not used for personal interest and profits on a large scale. The print media retained public trust. However, the emerging media monopoly is posing a threat to Indian newspaper industry, critical consciousness and democracy. Public relations are controlled by the corporates catering to the interest of the foreign corporates or their collaboration in India. Powerful interest manipulate the flow of news and information, which has implications for the democratic process. The emerging complex character and specialised nature of media is conducive to the spread of corporate media. The changing nature of functions of media planning and their public relations erode editorial control. It enables corporatisation with foreign agencies having managing control over the media (Rao, 2002: 105).

The corporatisation of media is stifling public opinion and sometimes acting as a propaganda machine of the government in the economic liberalisation. In the globalised era, the media is influenced by the self-interest of capitalism and profit. Since the national markets have been opened for competition as it has been integrated to the global economy, there is a growing trend of blurring boundaries in the media market as well. Since the

national media has been for global competition, the media markets are expanding and the national markets are increasingly interrelated to the global economy. Digitalisation and convergence is further blurring the boundaries of the national media markets. The corporate control over the media is visible in advertisement and foreign influence through advertisement revenues by the multinationals and big corporates resulting in sensationalisation and trivialisation of news. There is an increasing trend of concentration of ownership of the media in powerful hands which was earlier visible in European countries only.

The growing trend of corporatisation of the media by big business and monopoly trends affects the survival of the small and medium newspapers, manifested in the form of low circulation and financial crunch. Price war, which affects the survival of many small and medium newspapers, is considered an assault on localisation of news, affecting the voice of the local people. In India, local newspapers act as the mirror of local sentiments. Taking over and usurpation of the minor newspapers by the big business controlled media is a move towards media monopoly. The growing instances of media corruption, yellow journalism, distortion of news and disinformation, paid news syndrome etc. devalues the media. The compulsions of the market are being reflected in the shrinking space for the editorial and the production departments, in an increasingly management and owner controlled media. The emerging tendency of devaluing the office of editors commonly described as the 'sunset of editors', the erosion of media ethics of good practices, and distorted and un-factual reporting is damaging the confidence that the people at large had in the media. In a democracy, the media should reflect the plurality and diversity in society. In fact, like other institutions in democracy, diversity makes the media as an institution worthy of its functioning and social trust. The growing media monopoly reduces the diversity of content and limits its canvas. Further, the changes in media ownership and its concentration in a few hands have implications for cultural diversity, pluralism, and democratic values.

The new middle class which emerged in the 1990s found favour with these two trends – globalisation and Hindu nationalist politics. The ethos of the new middle class and their tastes and prejudices are captured in the Indian print media more explicitly. The revolution in ICT provided new avenues for the media in the areas of information and entertainment. The print media carries special weekend supplement editions on lifestyles,

food habits, health, new gadgets etc. The emerging middle class is sympathetic to the Hindutva project in contrast to the secular nationalist ethos they identified in the immediate post independence period. The economic reforms and cultural politics drew its potential from market forces and got energised in the backdrop of liberalisation, with support from the middle classes. The middle class' access to the polity, culture and market in collaboration with the proliferation of 'H*indutva"* politics challenged the dominant elite. By the 1980s, the presence of the middle class was minimal. Moreover there was no middle class consciousness as such although they existed. The media‘s role in shaping, moulding and formulating aspirations of the middle class has increased manifold.

Changing Print Media Ownership

In the 1990s, changing economic philosophy and goal of development influenced the nature and character of the media. The media as an agent of globalising India in the 1990s, made significant changes. Business orientation entered into media reporting. Renowned journalist, Pamela Philipose, captures this transformation stating that "the dominant elite led a discernible shift in emphasis from the broad social and political obligations and preoccupations of the earlier period to a narrower focus that valorised individual success and the pursuit of profits" (Philipose, 2005: 112). In fact, an interesting paradigm shift was witnessed in print media ownership in India in the 1990s "from being family-owned enterprises to becoming a corporatised industry, which has also resulted in a focus on the bottom-line and profit margins" (Rodrigues, 2010: 54). In the late 1980s and 1990s, the advent of television channels via satellite technologies impacted the print media's readership and revenue, which forced them to update their technology, skills, content, and marketing strategy. Live discussions and programmes over TV channels reaching out to the drawing rooms of families both the literate and unread, reduced the readership of newspapers and its revenues critically. In order to cope with the new challenges, the print media was forced to accept new technologies and to become more professional and sensitive to the structure of the market (Ray, 2009). This brought about more professionalism in print media as well. The management of print media became more commercial (Jadhav, 2020). The industry also benefited from the new advancements in printing and communication technology. As a result, there was a remarkable increase in the

number and circulation of newspapers and magazines in the eighties and nineties (Patil, 2011). The corporatization of media culture and commercialisation of the entertainment industry adversely affect public trust in the media. Media started emerging as the profit making business for its owners. The oligopolistic controlled media engages in setting the agenda for the rest of the media, throttling diversity and neglecting the genuine and urgent issues of the people. Media constructs cultural identities and selectively represents these identities.

The dilemma of the print media in the 1990s was on the issue of inviting foreign direct investment and opening up to foreign competition. For a long time, the Indian print media was protected from competition from abroad, as it had nationalistic goals. Though many felt that infusion of foreign capital is necessary for keeping sections of the media from going bankrupt on account of the price war and reduction in the number of subscribers, such infusion would on the contrary lead to oligopoly as this investment would be available to a select few players only and would undermine the independence of the media house. The emerging oligopolistic tendencies lead to the usurpation of the smaller media business by the bigger ones that has an adverse impact on media plurality and the vitality of democracy as a whole.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) and the Department Related Standing Committee of Parliament on Information Technology, in tandem with the neoliberal policies, have refused to take a firm stand against the increasing monopolisation of the media. The measures it has taken are half-hearted. Curbing media monopolies includes restrictions on mergers and acquisition guidelines (Thakurta, 2013). While some hold that TRAI can play a vital role in curbing media monopoly or the concentration of media ownership (Thakurta, 2013), others feel inadequacies in TRAI's actions. It is opined that "a regulatory framework must go beyond diversity of media ownership and the marketplace of ideas to ensure that there is space for diverse citizen voices to be heard" (Kumar, 2015: 20). The emerging competition between media cannot be leading to monopolistic tendencies. As opposed to media monopoly, a healthy and vibrant democracy requires diversity of ownership of media. Concentration of managerial and editorial powers in the same person has serious implications for democracy.

Degeneration as Propaganda Machine

While the media is supposed to be a "marketplace for ideas", today it is emerging more as a propaganda vehicle. This transformation of the media as a propaganda machine in India was visible from the early nineties both in its aggressive Ayodhya communal mobilisation favouring the Hindu right wing organisations as also in its wholehearted support to the economic liberalisation process that helped the big business houses and the corporates. With honourable exceptions, this has been taken a step further by the media, playing the role of spokespersons of the government and the ruling party. In the current scheme of things, even the slightest criticism of the government or ruling party or its actions are not tolerated. Such critics have to confront a range of hostile reactions and accusations, including of being on the payroll of an enemy power and acting at their behest. A narrative has been scripted, which is dutifully followed by others now.

The assault on the various pillars and institutions has led to undermining of various constitutional authorities and bodies. The very legitimacy of these bodies are being questioned, its power and authority undermined. They have been subjugated and manipulated to act according to the dictates of the ruling dispensation. The media is no exception. Like other institutions the media has become not just pliant but seen as 'more loyal than the king'. Sections of the English media which had earlier sought to display a semblance of neutrality even on religious issues and disputes, meekly caved in before the Hindu right wing. They began expressing their support either explicitly or passively giving legitimacy to the proponents of Hindutva. The forces of liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation actually eroded media content and started indulging in blatant sensationalism and consumerism. The sunset of editors, supremacy of advertisement, news as a commodity, marketing tools like price war, etc. have to be seen as the adverse impact of globalisation and liberalisation on the Indian print media.

The process of liberalisation further aggravated the existing contradictions in the media industry such as the skewed media representation and lack of diversity in newsrooms. The lack of adequate social representation led to elitism in the media and

ignoring issues related to Minorities, Dalits and women. Plurality of perspective is absent, more importantly, diverse perspectives are not given adequate space and thoughts are not entertained in the corporate based media house unless it generates revenue for the company. Plurality of perspective, which is an essential ingredient to strengthen democracy, is missing in the media houses. The dissemination of news and its use goes together. In India, the elite nature of journalism has faster reach to those who have access to higher levels of education. Studies have shown that as the flow of news information increases, those with higher levels of education tend to acquire news at a faster rate than those who are uneducated or less educated. Those who are in receipt of news earlier become much more equipped and knowledgeable as compared to the others. Far from creating an equilibrium in society, the media can sometimes create conflict and hierarchy. The impact of media globalisation is detrimental to media pluralism and diversity of news, threat to localism, concentration of media ownership, diluting deliberative public spheres, and corporate corruption. Media pluralism is the cornerstone of democracy. The concentration of ownership and corporatisation would endanger media plurality and diversity of news content.

Real Issues Ignored

Apart from being the cornerstone of democracy, a free and independent media allows the reader to make informed choices, hold political parties and governments responsible, and is the greatest asset in fighting misinformation and disinformation. It has to be the people's voice, reflecting their issues and aspirations. It should be a seeker of the truth and speak truth to power. Substantial sections of the Indian media discharged this role with aplomb till not long ago. It exposed the faulty policies and planning of the government; highlighted issues of the common man, poverty, malnutrition, hunger, unemployment, price rise, rural distress, and the problems and issues of the minorities and marginalised sections of Indian society.

The role of the Indian media underwent a sea change thanks to the policies of liberalisation and globalisation. Real and burning issues of the mass of the Indian people were put on the backburner, they were no more a saleable commodity. Media became a

wagon for carrying forward the ideology of the market, of the free market economy. In this scheme of things, the common people did not figure anywhere except as targets, as recipients of consumerist ideas. It got itself totally distanced from the masses, their aspirations, urges and sentiments, it began projecting a surreal world of fantasies that the middle class aspires to. In the process it sidelined the issues of the mass of the people. Sensationalism took over. The transformation from real to reel has taken place thanks to liberalisation. Page 3 culture has now even taken over the front page. P. Sainath, former Rural Affairs Editor of The Hindu, and now founder Editor of People's Archive of Rural India says that in the liberalisation period, the media rarely reflected the concerns of the 'other India' such as reporting on poverty, agrarian issues, farmers' deaths, etc. Markandey Katju, former judge of the Supreme Court and former Chairman of the PCI identified three major defects in the Indian media – diverting the attention of people from the real issues to non-issues; dividing the people on communal, ethnic, religious, caste, native and immigrants; and promoting superstitions among the people. According to him, 90% coverage is given to news related to entertainment and only 10% to the nation's real issues (Katju, 2011).

Institutional Erosion of the Fourth Estate

Like any other public institution, the media loses its vitality in Indian democracy. The media has certain distinctions as compared to other institutions in so far as it has no visible relations with the government and power. However, having lost its integrity, autonomy and vitality, it is increasingly being questioned because of its failure to maintain diversity and objectivity in its coverage of events and news. The commercial nature of the media and its image as a profiteering institution insulates its social commitment. Institutions like the Press Council of India, courts and other professional bodies have miserably failed in protecting the independent nature of the Indian media. While oversight mechanisms and bodies set standards and govern occupations like medical practitioners and lawyers, no such professional standards body exits vested with the powers to deal with yellow journalism. The PCI in its existing form lacks the mechanism to listen to complaints from the persons aggrieved of questionable reporting and holding accountable and punishing mischievous journalists. Therefore, there is an urgent need to replace the Press Council of

India with a Media Council empowered with a mandate including to entertain complaints against journalists and media bodies and take legally binding decisions.

The ‘print Hindutva' led to the spectacular emergence of the BJP as a dominant force in Indian politics. It has to be recalled that the print media in the initial decades after independence acted as a vehicle of propaganda of the government for its developmental programmes and welfare schemes and to strengthen national unity and integrity of India. However, since the late 1980s, the Hindi media has come under the radar for its predominant role in aiding right wing narratives. Its reports were predominantly skewed in favour of Hindutva propagandists. The Hindi media played a vital role in shaping and giving credence to the narrative of the Ayodhya movement led by the VHP and the BJP. Instead of promoting scientific temper and rational ideas, obscurantism, irrationality and superstition were promoted.

Experimenting with the print media for communal mobilisation, in the late 1980s, Hindutva's attention turned to the electronic media, especially Television. Though the BJP was not in power, it could use television images for constructing new narratives for its political mobilisation. The Hindu identity was buttressed beyond a point with a particular content, especially in the telecast of Ramayana and Mahabharata on state run Doordarshan. Like its control over the print media, the electronic media also communalised India's secular democratic public sphere. The ICT accelerated by economic liberalisation in the 1990s opened further vistas for satellite television and the emergence of the private profit motivated television channels. Hindutva forces firmed up its private channels to propagate their ideology and programmes. However, in the 1990s, cherishing on cultural nationalism as a political tool and swadeshi as an economic ideology, Hindu communal organisations were pitting the Hindus against the minorities. The media was used for hate campaigns against the minorities and stereotyping them. The media gave credence and acceptability to such a campaign. Religious occasions, Hindu demigods, horoscopes etc. were celebrated by the media invoking religious fervour. Arvind Rajagopal‘s study highlighted the relationship between the politics of television and the Hindu nationalist mobilisation in the nineties.

Hindutva turned towards social media in contemporary India to propagate its ideology and political mobilisation. Circulating hate speeches, distorted and fake news through the social media and its utilisation for electoral strategies added a new dimensioto Hindutva's media. Perhaps this emerged out of the Sangh's realisation that social media can more effectively influence minds than the print or electronic media. "The Social Dilemma", a documentary released over OTT platform "Netflix" directed by Jeff Orlowski, provides an interesting analogy, the media controls human behaviour. The same documentary has been reviewed by Mahato and Ashok, titled "Psychological Dilemma: How do we adjust with technology without being governed by technology?", where the authors highlight the adverse effect of technology and the importance of it in the contemporary period, where corporates have governed mainstream media, the way alternative media has served the vacant purpose (Mahato and Ashok, 2020). The advent of social media also created a virtual public sphere for Hindutva‘s global mobilisation and for ideological promotion among the NRIs and for funding.

Hindutva developed an exemplary nexus in contemporary India with the big business and corporate sector. Though in the 1990s, the BJP and the Sangh were critical of the economic liberalisation initiated by the Narasimha Rao government clinging on the swadeshi ideology, the BJP government in subsequent years vigorously implemented neoliberal policies. In the early 2000s, the BJP government under Narendra Modi was promoted by the big business houses of Ambani and Adani. In 2014, the ascendancy of Narendra Modi as the prime minister of India, had the backing of the big business who pressured for vigorous reforms to suit its interest. In fact, the nexus between Hindutva and big business was explicated in contemporary India as it promoted the interest of each other. Stating that image building and icon building of the Hindutva as a threat to media culture, Venkitesh Ramakrishnan asserts that media constructing images contributed to the consolidation of the right wing politics in India (Ramakrishnan, 2021). The BJP led government has tightened its control over the media, largely owned by corporate houses. It dictates and doctors the flow of news and information to the people. Various methods are used to make sure that the agenda of the Sangh Parivar is propagated as opposed to the people‘s issues and sufferings. In popular perception the media is now referred to as the ‘Godi Media’, a term coined and popularised by veteran journalist Ravish Kumar.

Challenges to the Print Media

Democratic elections and freedom of press are essential prerequisites, apart from other constitutional and administrative devices for a democracy to survive and thrive. A free press can take governments to task contributing to better accountability and functioning of the government (Edwin 2004: 131-133). The two central functions of the press are credible information and critical-investigative-adversarial, but which have seen a constant decline in the past decade. A major reason for the decline in quality of press can be due to a higher level of manipulation of news and analysis, degradation of editorial functions and editorial gatekeeping, tailoring news to meet advertising and marketing goals, hyper-commercialisation, price wars, media monopoly and private corporate involvement in place of free and aggressive press (Ram 2011: 9). Some of these tendencies have grown manifold in the past decade, and has been sharply criticised by PCI chairman Katju. He further demands more power to the PCI by amending the Press Council Act (Ram 2011: 10).

Another reason for the degradation of quality of news reporting is the multi-channel private satellite televisions, whose huge numbers and lack of quality control makes news further biased and controlled by market demands. The advances in printing technology and accessibility and appearance of the media added new dimensions as it enabled it to set up multiple editions in more cities and spread its circulation. However, the advent of the electronic media brought more challenges to the print media. The plummeting advertising revenues due to the migration of advertising budgets from print to the electronic, as also changing consumer behaviour due to online media poses a challenge to the print media. Moreover, like elsewhere, the emergence of right wing populist politics and the spectre of post truth politics haunt the print media in India. It is a situation never before witnessed in world history. An avowedly reactionary party with a divisive and communal platform had taken centre stage and was ruling a huge and vast country like India. Conscious of this fact, large sections of the media pandered by promoting its divisive and communal platform, which is based on hatred against other religions, promotes revivalism, intolerance and ultra-nationalist chauvinism. The threat to the country's secular foundations has become real and the penetration is very deep. The

support extended by large sections of the big business houses, corporates and the media to this communal platform is fraught with serious consequences for the body politic of our country.

Inculcating Newspaper culture

The role and importance of print media in a democratic society is well written about. For Ram, an authentic public opinion is not possible without a newspaper-reading culture in a society. A "socially conscious media can trigger agenda-building process to help produce democratic and progressive outcomes, and this they can do best when an authentic public opinion and congenial context of attitude, feeling and critical democratic values and practices exist, as in Kerala"(Ram, 2011: 18). Some prerequisites for development of a newspaper culture are literacy, basic communication and adequate technology (Jeffrey, 1987: 608; Ram, 2011: 7). He further suggests five factors that have been used as buoyant forces for the growth of successful newspapers: improved technology, steadily expanding literacy, better purchasing power, aggressive publishing, and political excitement (Ram, 2011: 9). Taking the case of Kerala as a case in point, Ram suggests that higher literacy levels have important implications on the quality and depth of opinion and participatory democracy in the state. However, irrespective of the newspaper culture, if the press manipulates and presents biased news, it can only impact its readers to a certain extent. Media often uses deliberate tactics of biased representation by using provocative reporting and images. This could be observed in the communal mobilisations centred around Ayodhya, where newspaper circulation clubbed with political excitement, led to increased news consumption and spread of bias among people (Ram, 2011: 7). In the 1980s and 1990s the print media's role in propelling the Ayodhya movement of VHP and BJP was even criticised by the Press Council of India. The Press Council sub-committee indicted a couple of Hindi newspapers for blatantly fanning communalism to help the BJP and using the opportunity to further their business by resorting to communal reporting. However, South India is relatively insulated from the Hindu right wing ideology. In fact, the language and character of the media have a role to play in this.

The Future of the Indian Print Media

Mixed responses have emerged from media persons on the future of the print media in India. For Pamela Philipose, the circulation and revenue of the newspapers in the west have declined. In India also, the future of the Print media seems to be fragile. The present business model has to be changed. Now we have advertisements to subsidise the operation. This may not prop up the industry in the future. However, the digital online monetisation can be an option (Philipose, 2021). Thakurta observes that the print medium across the world and also in India is in a continuous state of decline. It is not that people will stop reading, they will read less and less on pieces of paper and more on monitor screens whether it be hand held devices, desktops or laptops. So all of this would have a huge impact on the working of the print medium in India and the world and unless the print medium adapts fast to the changing realities and the way people consume information then more and more publications will close down unless they adapt and become more innovative (Thakurta, 2021).

In the digital age there is fear that the news industry is no longer in control of its future, with digital media homogenising public spaces that were erstwhile controlled by news media. Comparing it with the decline in news media in developed countries like America and across European countries, Ram states that a decline in the news industry in India can be expected, following the footsteps of America and Europe. While news media has declined in America and Europe, its market has increased in Asia and Latin America, making India and China 'the world absolute leaders in the newspaper industry', with nearly three-fourth of the world's 100 top-selling newspapers being published from Asia. In India, the readership growth is especially for Indian language newspapers, with Hindi newspapers in the lead. However, it should also be noted that such a rise in newspaper circulation has also to be seen together with extreme underpricing of newspapers and thousands of copies that get dumped in the junk markets or get thrown out (Ram, 2011: 4).

Robin Jeffrey expresses some optimism that once India headed down the new economic path in 1991, media outlets would adopt techniques from elsewhere that produced profits for proprietors. But India, so far, has not produced a bunch of big joint-

stock companies in media businesses, as has happened elsewhere. The print-on-paper, daily newspaper in Indian languages has a future for ten or even twenty years (Jeffrey, 2021). Thomas Jacob, Senior Journalist and former Editorial Director of Malayala Manorama, is too optimistic that many had predicted the demise of the print media even some decades back. But it survived or flourished. The newspaper industry will have to be flexible in embracing new verticals and technology. Newspapers as such may diminish, but the newsroom and its content will continue or manifest in different forms. He also exhibited optimism that though newspaper reading may die in India, it would die in Kerala the last (Jacob, 2021). According to the annual report on Press in India 2019-20 by the Office of the Registrar of Newspapers of India, the print media in India is witnessing a constant growth with a total of 1,43,423 registered publications (Newspapers & Other Periodicals) as on 31st March, 2020 (Press in India Report, 2019-20). India has a larger media market, though its expansion is not in correspondence to the size of its population. According to the National Readership Survey (NRS 2006) there were 204 million readers of daily newspapers and 222 million were readers of all publications, out of which 50% of daily newspaper readers were 'rural' readers. However, the report suggests an under representation of women readers in the country. There were 650 million people in ages 12 and above who did not read the daily newspaper. In comparison, there were 360 million people who could 'read and understand' and yet did not read daily newspapers, representing a huge potential of readers (Ram 2011: 8). In spite of all up and downs faced by the print media, it has a significant role in sensitising the people and strengthening liberal democracy in India.

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Appendix – I

List of Interviews

Sl. No.	Name	Designation/Position	Date of Interview
1.	Sashi Kumar	Media Personality, Founder, Asianet News, Associated with Asian College of Journalism, Chennai.	5th November, 2021
2.	Anant Bagaitkar	Bureau Chief, Sakal, Delhi Bureau.	19th November, 2021
3.	Arif Mohammad Khan	Former Union Minister in Rajiv Gandhi Government	6th November, 2021
4.	K. N. Govindacharya	RSS ideologue	10th November, 2021
5.	Sebastian Paul	Former member of Press Council of India, also well known as a media critic and cultural activist.	8th November, 2021
6.	Pamela Philipose	Indian journalist and researcher, the director and editor-in-chief of the Women's Feature Service and the senior associate editor of The Indian Express.	6th November, 2021
7.	Paranjoy Guha Thankurda	Media Critique, Worked with The Telegraph and India Today, former Editor, EPW.	3rd November, 2021
8.	Prabhat Patnaik	Eminent Economist and former Professor of Economics in JNU.	19th September, 2021
9.	Ram Puniyani	Involved with human rights activities and initiatives to oppose Hindu fundamentalism in India and is currently the President of the Executive Council of the Centre for Study of Society and Secularism (CSSS).	23rd November, 2021
10.	Robin Jeffrey	Canadian Professor of Modern History and Politics of India, expert on Indian Newspapers.	4th November, 2021
11.	Shabnam Hashmi	Associated with Safdar Hashmi Memorial Trust, which extensively campaigned against communalism and conducted exhibitions on Ramayana.	19th November, 2021
12.	Sharad Gupta	Amar Ujala Bureau Chief, Delhi.	10th November, 2021
13.	Thomas Jacob	Senior journalist and former editorial Director of Malayala Manorama.	10th November, 2021
14.	Vinod K. Jose	Executive editor of The Caravan.	22nd November, 2021
15.	Umakant Lakhera	Press Club of India President. Veteran journalist. Worked with Dainik Jagaran, Hindustan, Rashtriya Sahara etc.	13th November, 2021
16.	Vipul Mudgal	Associated with Hindustan Times, India Today and BBC.	22nd November, 2021
17.	R. Rajagopal	Editor, Telegraph.	24th October, 2021
18.	Venkitesh Ramakrishnan	Chief of Bureau & Senior Associate Editor, Frontline / The Hindu group of publications	11th November, 2021
19.	Prakash Karat	Former General Secretary of CPI(M)	27th December, 2021
20.	Irfan Habib	Eminent Historian	27th December, 2021

Appendix-II

List of Tables on Print Media Circulation

Table 1:- Daily Newspapers (Market Share by Calculation) - 1984 to 1996

Sl. No:	Name of the Newspapers	1984	1988	1992	1996
1	Indian Express Group (*Indian Express*)	5.4	5.4	3.2	N/A
2	Manorama Group (*Malayala Manorama*)	5.2	5.4	4.1	4.5
3	The Times Group (BCCL) (*The Times of India*)	4.5	4.7	3.9	5.8
4	Mathrubhumi Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd. (*Mathrubhumi* Malayalam)	3.7	N/A	N/A	3.4
5	Kasthuri & Sons (*The Hindu*)	N/A	3.6	N/A	N/A
6	Punjab Kesari Group (*Punjab Kesari*)	N/A	N/A	3.5	3.9
7	Lok Prakashan Ltd (*Gujarat Smachar*, Gujarati)	N/A	N/A	3.3	3.9

Source: *Audit Bureau of Circulation, India, 1984, 1988, 1992 and 1996*

Table 2: Media Trends in Indian Advertising Expenditure

Year	Press	Television	Outdoor	Radio	Total Ad. Spend
1994	66 %	25%	6%	3%	Rs 30.46 Billion
1995	63 %	29%	6%	3%	Rs 39.06 Billion
1996	59 %	33%	6%	2%	Rs 47.26 Billion
1997	58 %	34%	6%	2%	Rs 57.86 Billion
1998	56 %	34%	8%	2%	Rs 63.06 Billion

Source: *Ammirati Puris Lintas Research, 1991.*

Table 3: Budget Allocation for DAVP (Rupees in '000')

Year	Plan	Non Plan	Total
1989	1,700	1,31,640	1,33,340
1990	1,150	1,60,250	1,61,400
1991	1,250	2,53,350	2,54,600
1992	2,000	2,68,000	2,70,000
1993	5,000	2,38,515	2,43,515
1994	3,000	2,58,017	2,61,017
1995	11,900	3,10,076	3,21,976

Source: *Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Policy for Government Advertisement, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994 and 1995*

Table 4: Circulation of News Interest Dailies Owned by Big Units

Sl. No.	Name of the Unit	No of News Paper			Percentage Share in the Circulation of Respective Language			
		1989	1991	1993		1989	1991	1993
1	Bennett Coleman and Company Limited	17	16	17	English Hindi Marathi	18.8 6.1 9.3	22.1 4.4 3.4	21.3 4.5 7.1
2	Express News Papers	25	26	37	English Hindi Marathi Kannada	14.3 1.5 13.6 12.0	22.9 1.2 11.3 11.6	16.0 2.4 9.7 12.8
3	Malayala Manorama	4	5	5	Malayalam	35.9	43.0	41.5
4	Mathrubhumi	3	2	5	Malayalam	25.4	19.6	28.8
5	Jagran Prakashan	7	8	7	Hindi	5.1	5.8	3.4
6	Anand Bazar Patrika	5	5	3	Bengali	34.9	45.7	32.4
7	Kasthuri & Sons	5	6	4	English	9.0	11.7	9.7
8	Bhaskar Publications & Allied Industries	6	6	5	Hindi	1.7	1.9	1.3
9	Sandesh Ltd.	4	3	4	Gujarati	24.4	17.7	28.8
10	Thanthi Trust & Allied Publications	16	15	16	Tamil	30.3	34.9	31.4

Source: *PRESS IN INDIA, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1989, 1991 and 1993*

Table 5: Circulation of Big & Medium Dailies Under Common Ownership Units

Language	Number of Dailies		Circulation (in '000')	
	1995	1989	1995	1989
Hindi	82	65	5,119	3,638
English	43	40	3,668	2,774
Malayalam	21	11	1,748	1,319
Gujarati	16	13	1,572	814
Marathi	16	12	1,513	1,010
Bengali	6	7	1,505	943
Telugu	13	10	791	578
Tamil	16	22	737	747
Kannada	8	4	565	448
Oriya	5	1	344	115
Punjabi	4	4	216	162
Urdu	3	4	112	119
Assamese	2	2	61	78
Total	235	195	18,061	12,745

Source: *PRESS IN INDIA, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1989 and 1995*

Table 6: Number of Newspapers / Weeklies / Others – 1990 to 1995

Year	Dailies	Tri/Bi Weeklies	Weeklies	Others	Total
1990	2,856	181	8,926	16,528	28,491
1991	3,229	257	9,621	17,107	30,214
1992	3,502	271	10,375	17,809	31,957
1993	3,740	275	11,136	18,461	33,612
1994	4,043	294	11,973	19,291	35,601
1995	4,236	316	12,695	20,007	37,254

Source: *PRESS IN INDIA, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994 and 1995*

Table 7: Number, Circulation and Annual Growth Rate of Dailies: 1990 to 1995

Year	Total Number	No Related to Circulation	Circulation (in '000')	Annual Growth
1990	2,856	952	22,637	(-) 2.0
1991	3,229	923	24,290	(+) 7.3
1992	3,502	1,043	28,386	(-) 16.9
1993	3,740	992	29,258	(+) 3.0
1994	4,043	995	31,559	(+) 7.86
1995	4,236	1,056	35,451	(+) 12.33

Source: *PRESS IN INDIA, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994 and 1995*

Table 8: Growth in Circulation of Newspapers (Language wise - in '000')

Language	No. of Papers	Circulation 1994	Circulation 1995	Growth Percentage
Malayalam	78	5,696	5,810	+ 02.00
Oriya	44	1,170	1,208	+ 03.24
Punjabi	71	1,510	1,765	+ 16.88
Sindhi	7	53	79	+ 49.05
Multilingual	10	55	285	+ 418.18
Others	7	22	47	+ 45.15
Assamese	14	316	260	-17.12
Bengali	177	3,063	2,700	-11.85
English	203	8,027	5,907	-26.41
Gujarati	62	1,762	1,608	-08.74
Hindi	1,160	21,558	19,199	-10.94
Kannada	50	1,816	1,811	-00.27
Manipuri	0	7	0	-100.00
Marathi	77	2,739	1,247	-54.47
Sanskrit	0	4	0	-100.00
Tamil	47	3,190	1,871	-41.34
Telugu	56	1,853	1,357	-26.76
Urdu	110	2,923	1,859	-36.40
Bi-lingual	38	299	235	-21.40
Total	2,211	56,063	47,248	-15.72

Source: *PRESS IN INDIA, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1994 and 1995*

Table 9 : Total Number of Newspapers (State / UTs and Periodicity wise) – 1995

State	Dailies	Tri/Bi Weeklies	Weeklies	Fortnightlies	Monthly	Quarterly	Bi Monthly	Annual	Total
UP	681	30	3295	717	1,025	248	95	14	6,105
Delhi	185	45	830	681	2,305	608	276	53	4,983
Maharashtra	373	36	1144	342	1,227	404	200	156	3,882
West Bengal	133	10	647	527	930	566	210	29	3,052
Madhya Pradesh	377	8	1918	122	284	59	37	5	2,810
Rajasthan	374	22	933	939	294	89	26	3	2,680
Tamil Nadu	339	49	408	239	892	118	57	15	2,117
Karnataka	344	11	435	258	661	93	52	5	1,859
Andhra Pradesh	240	7	559	280	537	68	33	6	1,730
Bihar	394	33	664	137	226	51	21	2	1,528
Kerala	200	4	178	174	762	95	55	15	1,483
Gujarat	88	5	334	115	355	56	51	3	1,007
Punjab	115	13	365	121	279	33	33	5	964
Haryana	73	6	270	171	172	38	12	0	742
Orissa	69	2	117	74	263	108	36	10	679
Assam	27	7	146	52	76	20	16	2	346
Jammu & Kashmir	62	4	172	25	27	5	5	0	300
Chandigarh	31	1	62	27	102	38	18	3	282
Himachal Pradesh	5	0	41	19	38	15	6	0	124
Manipur	42	3	11	11	33	9	6	3	118
Mizoram	36	10	30	6	11	4	4	0	101
Tripura	22	2	50	6	11	3	1	0	95
Goa	13	0	13	9	26	9	5	1	76
Meghalaya	3	4	32	5	15	5	3	1	68
Pondicherry	3	1	10	4	18	16	5	1	58
Andaman & Nicobar	3	0	13	6	5	2	2	0	31
Nagaland	2	0	9	0	0	2	0	0	13
Sikkim	0	2	6	1	0	1	1	0	11
Arunachal Pradesh	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	5
Lakshadweep	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	3
Dadar & Nagar	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Daman & Diu	0								0

Source: *PRESS IN INDIA, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1995*

Table 10: Total Number of Newspapers in 1995 (Language and Periodicity wise)

Language	Dailies and other periodicals
Hindi	14,517
English	5,712
Urdu	2,458
Bilingual	2,231
Bengali	2,163
Marathi	1,691
Tamil	1,611
Kannada	1,289
Malayalam	1,192
Gujrati	1,038
Telugu	873
Punjabi	749
Oriya	568
Multilingual	429
Others	324
Assamese	182
Sindhi	92
Nepali	50
Sanskrit	48
Manipuri	31
Konkani	5
Kashmiri	1

Source: *PRESS IN INDIA, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1995*

Table 11: Ownership of Newspapers

Form of Ownership	Number of Newspapers & Percentage				
	1989	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1995**
Individuals	18,873 (69.8)	21,610 (71.5)	23,064 (72.2)	24,474 (72.8)	27,693 (74.34)
Societies/Associations	3,875 (14.3)	4,009 (13.3)	4,088 (12.8)	4,162 (12.4)	4,299 (11.54)
Firms/Partnerships	1,237 (4.6)	1,332 (4.4)	1,409 (4.4)	1,449 (4.3)	1,539 (4.13)
Joint Stock Companies	1,199 (4.4)	1,330 (4.4)	1,408 (4.4)	1,502 (4.5)	1,641 (4.40)
Government (Central/State)	673 (2.5)	692 (2.3)	706 (2.2)	713 (2.1)	724 (1.94)
Other	11.97 (4.4)	1,241 (4.1)	1,282 (4.0)	1,312 (3.9)	1,358 (3.65)
Total	**27,054 (100)**	**30,214 (100)**	**31,957 (100)**	**33,612 (100)**	**37,254 (100)**

Source: *PRESS IN INDIA, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1989, 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1995*

Table 12: Ownership Pattern of Newspapers (Periodicity wise – In terms of percentage) – 1991 – 1995

Forms of Ownership	Dailies		Weeklies		Fortnightlies		Monthlies		Others	
	1991	1995	1991	1995	1991	1995	1991	1995	1991	1995
Individuals	79.2	30.07	89.0	90.34	80.7	82.80	59.8	61.9	39.0	41.99
Societies / Association	2.6	51.13	3.0	2.58	7.7	7.20	22.4	20.66	32.3	30.59
Firms / Partnerships	5.3	5.27	3.3	2.87	4.0	3.45	5.4	5.40	4.2	4.31
Joint Stock Companies	10	10.03	2.7	2.59	3.2	3.03	3.9	3.03	6.2	6.03
Others	2.9	2.5	2.0	1.62	4.4	3.72	8.3	7.9	18.3	17.08
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: *PRESS IN INDIA, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1991 and 1995*

Table 13: Number of Newspapers under Common Ownership Units (1990 – 1995)

Year	Number of Units	Number of News Interest Newspaper	Number of Non – News Interest Newspapers	Total
1990	112	450	90	540
1991	112	459	93	552
1992	112	482	102	583
1993	115	517	107	624
1994	128	608	131	739
1995	142	676	134	810

Source: *PRESS IN INDIA, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994 and 1995*

Table 14: Number of News - Interest Newspapers under Common Ownership Unit (Periodicity wise) (1989 – 1995)

Year	Dailies	Weeklies	Others	Total	Growth	Percentage
1989	344	82	17	443	(+)	2.10
1990	350	82	18	450	(+)	1.60
1991	363	79	17	459	(+)	2.00
1992	380	85	17	482	(+)	5.01
1993	402	98	17	517	(+)	7.26
1994	477	109	22	608	(+)	17.60
1995	535	115	26	676	(+)	11.18

Source: *PRESS IN INDIA, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994 and 1995*

Table 15: Circulation of Newspapers under Different Forms of Ownership

Form of Ownership	Number of Newspapers & Percentage				
	1989	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1995**
Individuals	2,659 (38.9)	2,445 (40.5)	2,776 (40.3)	2,746(42.0)	3,431 (48.8)
Joint Stock Companies	136 (5.2)	396 (37.7)	472 (38.9)	486 (39.0)	565 (39.5)
Firms / Partnerships	250 (11.6)	224 (11.7)	237 (11.6)	233 (10.0)	144 (5.3)
Trust	374 (3.8)	103 (5.02)	128 (4.2)	121 (5.0)	91 (3.1)
Societies / Associations	453 (38.9)	271 (3.2)	310 (3.8)	288 (3.0)	199 (2.3)
Governments (Central / State / UT)	42 (0.6)	48 (1)	41 (0.6)	31 (0.5)	37 (0.5)
Others	80 (1)	60 (0.9)	63 (0.6)	49 (0.5)	24 (0.5)
Total	**3,994 (100)**	**3,547 (100)**	**4,027 (100)**	**3,954 (100)**	**4,491 (100)**

Source: *PRESS IN INDIA, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1989, 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1995*

Appendix – III

Tables of Election Results

Table: 1

Election Commission of India - General Elections, 1989(9th LOK SABHA)

PERFORMANCE OF NATIONAL PARTIES VIA-A-VIS OTHERS

	PARTY	CANDIDATES			%		VALID	
		CONTESTED	WON	FD	WON	FD	VOTES	VOTES %
1	**BJP**	225	85	88	37.78%	39.11%	34171477	11.36%
2	**CPI**	50	12	20	24.00%	40.00%	7734697	2.57%
3	**CPM**	64	33	5	51.56%	7.81%	19691309	6.55%
4	**ICS(SCS)**	14	1	9	7.14%	64.29%	978377	0.33%
5	**INC**	510	197	5	38.63%	0.98%	118894702	39.53%
6	**JD**	244	143	29	58.61%	11.89%	53518521	17.79%
7	**JNP (JP)**	155	0	149	0.00%	96.13%	3029743	1.01%
8	**LKD (B)**	116	0	116	0.00%	100.00%	602110	0.20%
NATIONAL PARTIES :		1378	471	421	34.18%	30.55%	238620936	79.33%
STATE PARTIES :		143	27	42	18.88%	29.37%	27923500	9.28%
REGISTERED (Unrecognised) PARTIES :		926	19	868	2.05%	93.74%	18438206	6.13%
INDEPENDENTS :		3713	12	3672	0.32%	98.90%	15793781	5.25%
TOTAL :		**6160**	**529**	**5003**	**8.59%**	**81.22%**	**300776423**	

Table: 2

Election Commission of India - General Elections, 1991 (10th LOK SABHA)

PERFORMANCE OF NATIONAL PARTIES VIA-A-VIS OTHERS

	PARTY	CANDIDATES			%		VALID	
		CONTESTED	WON	FD	WON	FD	VOTES	VOTES %
1	**BJP**	468	120	185	25.64%	39.53%	55345075	20.11%
2	**CPI**	42	14	16	33.33%	38.10%	6851114	2.49%
3	**CPM**	60	35	7	58.33%	11.67%	16954797	6.16%
4	**ICS(SCS)**	28	1	25	3.57%	89.29%	982954	0.36%
5	**INC**	487	232	60	47.64%	12.32%	99799403	36.26%
6	**JD**	308	59	146	19.16%	47.40%	32589180	11.84%
7	**JD(S)**	2	0	2	0.00%	100.00%	4548	0.00%
8	**JP**	349	5	309	1.43%	88.54%	9267096	3.37%
9	**LKD**	78	0	78	0.00%	100.00%	173884	0.06%
NATIONAL PARTIES :		1822	466	828	25.58%	45.44%	221968051	80.65%
STATE PARTIES :		490	50	340	10.20%	69.39%	35728290	12.98%
REGISTERED (Unrecognised) PARTIES :		842	4	821	0.48%	97.51%	6068961	2.21%
INDEPENDENTS :		5514	1	5497	0.02%	99.69%	11441688	4.16%
TOTAL :		**8668**	**521**	**7486**	**6.01%**	**86.36%**	**275206990**	

Table: 3

Election Commission of India-State Elections, 1989 to the Legislative Assembly of UTTAR PRADESH

PERFORMANCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

PARTY	SEATS			VOTES POLLED		VOTE % IN SEATS CONTESTED
	CONTESTED	WON	FD	VOTES	%	
NATIONAL PARTIES						
1. **BJP**	275	57	153	4522867	11.61%	18.11%
2. **CPI**	68	6	54	606885	1.56%	9.60%
3. **CPM**	8	2	3	142763	0.37%	20.43%
4. **ICS(SCS)**	10	0	9	34979	0.09%	3.72%
5. **INC**	410	94	51	10866428	27.90%	28.89%
6. **JD**	356	208	51	11571462	29.71%	35.27%
7. **JNP(JP)**	119	1	117	289154	0.74%	2.66%
8. **LKD(B)**	204	2	198	464555	1.19%	2.48%
	1450	370	636	28499093	73.18%	
STATE PARTIES						
9. **FBL**	6	0	6	836	0.00%	0.15%
	6	0	6	836	0.00%	
REGISTERED (Unrecognised) PARTIES						
10. **BJS**	4	0	4	1892	0.00%	0.67%
11. **BKP**	1	0	1	5481	0.01%	5.76%
12. **BKUS**	5	0	5	1315	0.00%	0.28%
13. **BLMD**	2	0	2	1535	0.00%	0.85%
14. **BRP**	1	0	1	125	0.00%	0.14%
15. **BSP**	372	13	282	3664417	9.41%	10.72%
16. **DDP**	396	0	396	387194	0.99%	1.07%
17. **DMM**	3	0	3	1587	0.00%	0.55%
18. **HMS**	23	1	22	68943	0.18%	3.52%
19. **HSD**	1	0	1	841	0.00%	0.86%
20. **ICJ**	1	0	1	1514	0.00%	1.76%
21. **IML**	2	0	2	2265	0.01%	1.20%
22. **IPF**	6	0	6	13667	0.04%	2.67%
23. **KMP**	3	0	3	899	0.00%	0.30%

PARTY	SEATS			VOTES POLLED		VOTE % IN SEATS CONTESTED
	CONTESTED	WON	FD	VOTES	%	
24 . **KSP**	3	0	3	464	0.00%	0.18%
25 . **MUL**	5	0	4	23648	0.06%	4.60%
26 . **MUM**	6	0	6	14187	0.04%	2.48%
27 . **NLC**	2	0	2	1474	0.00%	0.85%
28 . **NRP**	1	0	1	862	0.00%	1.27%
29 . **PBI**	4	0	4	8369	0.02%	2.14%
30 . **QM**	2	0	2	3943	0.01%	3.32%
31 . **RPI**	21	0	21	25232	0.06%	1.33%
32 . **RSD**	2	0	2	3518	0.01%	2.46%
33 . **RSP**	3	0	3	2025	0.01%	0.81%
34 . **SDP**	1	0	1	43	0.00%	0.06%
35 . **SOP**	6	0	6	2161	0.01%	0.36%
36 . **SOP(L)**	3	0	3	1890	0.00%	0.66%
37 . **SOP(RP)**	3	0	3	886	0.00%	0.35%
38 . **SSD**	15	1	14	71763	0.18%	5.02%
39 . **SUCI**	4	0	4	2739	0.01%	0.83%
40 . **UKD**	6	0	5	65061	0.17%	14.02%
41 . **UPRP**	29	0	29	45340	0.12%	1.80%
	936	15	842	4425280	11.36%	
INDEPENDENTS						
42 . **IND**	3710	40	3609	6020921	15.46%	15.56%
	3710	40	3609	6020921	15.46%	
Grand Total :	6102	425	5093	38946130		

Table: 4

Election Commission of India - State Election, 1991 to the Legislative Assembly of UTTAR PRADESH

PERFORMANCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

PARTY	SEATS			VOTES POLLED		VOTE % IN SEATS CONTESTED
	CONTESTED	WON	FD	VOTES	%	
NATIONAL PARTIES						
1. **BJP**	415	221	41	11770214	31.45%	31.76%
2. **CPI**	44	4	34	388853	1.04%	9.96%
3. **CPM**	14	1	12	120229	0.32%	9.77%
4. **ICS(SCS)**	24	0	24	10505	0.03%	0.49%
5. **INC**	413	46	226	6480753	17.32%	17.59%
6. **JD**	374	92	155	7051639	18.84%	21.05%
7. **JD(S)**	3	0	1	42172	0.11%	15.54%
8. **JP**	399	34	268	4687418	12.52%	13.13%
9. **LKD**	107	0	107	130929	0.35%	1.38%
	1793	398	868	30682712	81.98%	
STATE PARTIES						
10. **BSP**	386	12	299	3532683	9.44%	10.26%
11. **FBL**	12	0	12	12315	0.03%	1.14%
12. **MUL**	1	0	1	274	0.00%	0.28%
13. **RSP**	7	0	7	5012	0.01%	0.77%
	406	12	319	3550284	9.49%	
REGISTERED (Unrecognised) PARTIES						
14. **ALD**	7	0	7	2757	0.01%	0.51%
15. **BD**	4	0	4	1263	0.00%	0.26%
16. **BJS**	7	0	7	1323	0.00%	0.21%
17. **BKUS**	9	0	9	2206	0.01%	0.27%
18. **BLMD**	14	0	14	4263	0.01%	0.37%
19. **BRP**	10	0	10	4505	0.01%	0.49%
20. **CPI(ML)**	1	0	1	884	0.00%	0.93%
21. **DDP**	361	0	361	131036	0.35%	0.41%
22. **DMM**	3	0	3	1585	0.00%	0.60%
23. **HKSP**	1	0	1	1080	0.00%	1.24%

PARTY	SEATS			VOTES POLLED		VOTE % IN SEATS CONTESTED
	CONTESTED	WON	FD	VOTES	%	
24 . **HMS**	44	0	44	28797	0.08%	0.74%
25 . **HSD**	5	0	5	929	0.00%	0.19%
26 . **ICS (SCS)**	1	0	1	53	0.00%	0.05%
27 . **IML**	6	0	5	20871	0.06%	3.56%
28 . **IPF**	17	0	17	14264	0.04%	0.92%
29 . **JKMP**	2	0	2	710	0.00%	0.31%
30 . **JND**	2	0	2	799	0.00%	0.42%
31 . **JNP**	3	0	3	517	0.00%	0.18%
32 . **KMS**	1	0	1	76	0.00%	0.08%
33 . **MDL**	5	0	5	501	0.00%	0.11%
34 . **MIM**	1	0	1	652	0.00%	0.69%
35 . **MSD**	3	0	3	409	0.00%	0.14%
36 . **NRP**	1	0	1	288	0.00%	0.32%
37 . **PBI**	3	0	3	1106	0.00%	0.38%
38 . **PRC**	3	0	3	751	0.00%	0.28%
39 . **RPI**	16	0	16	8193	0.02%	0.55%
40 . **RRP(S)**	3	0	3	644	0.00%	0.24%
41 . **SHS**	14	1	13	45426	0.12%	3.62%
42 . **SHS(R)**	6	0	6	1588	0.00%	0.31%
43 . **SMD**	2	0	2	429	0.00%	0.23%
44 . **SOP(L)**	13	0	13	3082	0.01%	0.29%
45 . **SOP(RP)**	11	0	11	21387	0.06%	2.25%
46 . **SSD**	21	1	20	42026	0.11%	2.29%
47 . **UKD**	13	0	12	52558	0.14%	5.17%
48 . **UPRP**	32	0	32	10336	0.03%	0.38%
	645	2	641	407294	1.09%	
INDEPENDENTS						
49 . **IND**	5007	7	4983	2784607	7.44%	7.46%
	5007	7	4983	2784607	7.44%	
Grand Total :	7851	419	6811	37424897		

Table: 5

Election Commission of India - State Election, 1993 to the Legislative Assembly of UTTAR PRADESH

PERFORMANCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

PARTY	SEATS			VOTES POLLED		VOTE % IN SEATS CONTESTED
	CONTESTED	WON	FD	VOTES	%	
NATIONAL PARTIES						
1. **BJP**	422	177	20	16637720	33.30%	33.30%
2. **CPI**	37	3	33	321617	0.64%	7.50%
3. **CPM**	17	1	11	236402	0.47%	11.65%
4. **INC**	421	28	264	7533272	15.08%	15.11%
5. **JD**	377	27	244	6162231	12.33%	13.76%
6. **JP**	298	1	296	262048	0.52%	0.74%
	1572	237	868	31153290	62.35%	
STATE PARTIES						
7. **BSP**	164	67	40	5554076	11.12%	28.53%
8. **FBL**	22	0	22	11339	0.02%	0.41%
9. **MUL**	9	0	9	4204	0.01%	0.34%
10. **RSP**	7	0	7	1648	0.00%	0.19%
11. **SHS**	180	0	179	138919	0.28%	0.63%
	382	67	257	5710186	11.43%	
REGISTERED (Unrecognised) PARTIES						
12. **ABBP**	53	0	53	22316	0.04%	0.35%
13. **ABGP**	4	0	4	320	0.00%	0.06%
14. **ABLP**	2	0	2	234	0.00%	0.10%
15. **ABSR**	1	0	1	145	0.00%	0.10%
16. **ADU**	4	0	4	530	0.00%	0.11%
17. **ALD**	1	0	1	183	0.00%	0.17%
18. **BEP**	3	0	3	205	0.00%	0.06%
19. **BJJP**	1	0	1	770	0.00%	0.63%
20. **BJK**	4	0	4	6175	0.01%	1.19%
21. **BJND**	1	0	1	308	0.00%	0.27%
22. **BJS**	14	0	14	4324	0.01%	0.26%
23. **BJVP**	2	0	2	375	0.00%	0.13%

PARTY	SEATS			VOTES POLLED		VOTE % IN SEATS CONTESTED
	CONTESTED	WON	FD	VOTES	%	
24 . **BKD**	79	0	78	119147	0.24%	1.28%
25 . **BKD(J)**	14	0	14	5607	0.01%	0.36%
26 . **BKUS**	1	0	1	114	0.00%	0.12%
27 . **BLMD**	6	0	6	1998	0.00%	0.31%
28 . **BMKD**	2	0	2	1621	0.00%	1.07%
29 . **BMSM**	18	0	18	10523	0.02%	0.47%
30 . **BRED**	3	0	3	1715	0.00%	0.43%
31 . **BRM**	3	0	3	878	0.00%	0.24%
32 . **BRP**	69	0	68	97688	0.20%	1.13%
33 . **BSD(ML)**	2	0	2	541	0.00%	0.20%
34 . **BSSM**	1	0	1	166	0.00%	0.13%
35 . **BVD**	2	0	2	2420	0.00%	1.03%
36 . **DBP**	1	0	1	665	0.00%	0.59%
37 . **DDP**	401	0	401	226281	0.45%	0.48%
38 . **DMM**	1	0	1	621	0.00%	0.47%
39 . **ICS**	15	0	15	4901	0.01%	0.28%
40 . **IPF**	14	0	14	24517	0.05%	1.52%
41 . **IUML**	6	0	6	879	0.00%	0.12%
42 . **JKC**	1	0	1	53	0.00%	0.05%
43 . **JSP**	4	0	4	1241	0.00%	0.24%
44 . **KSPL**	7	0	7	4430	0.01%	0.55%
45 . **LKD**	57	0	57	17025	0.03%	0.24%
46 . **LPI**	1	0	1	18	0.00%	0.01%
47 . **MB**	3	0	3	120	0.00%	0.03%
48 . **MCPI**	1	0	1	93	0.00%	0.08%
49 . **MSD**	5	0	5	599	0.00%	0.09%
50 . **NDPF**	5	0	5	1088	0.00%	0.18%
51 . **PRC**	1	0	1	219	0.00%	0.20%
52 . **RADP**	2	0	2	369	0.00%	0.15%
53 . **RMEP**	2	0	2	180	0.00%	0.08%
54 . **RPI**	25	0	25	28964	0.06%	1.00%
55 . **RPI(D)**	9	0	9	9794	0.02%	0.93%

PARTY	SEATS			VOTES POLLED		VOTE % IN SEATS CONTESTED
	CONTESTED	WON	FD	VOTES	%	
56 . **RPI(K)**	1	0	1	350	0.00%	0.27%
57 . **RRP(V)**	3	0	3	566	0.00%	0.17%
58 . **RSSD**	5	0	5	2581	0.01%	0.44%
59 . **RVD**	1	0	1	252	0.00%	0.23%
60 . **SHS(R)**	1	0	1	381	0.00%	0.33%
61 . **SOP**	3	0	3	662	0.00%	0.19%
62 . **SOP(L)**	9	0	9	3865	0.01%	0.34%
63 . **SOP(RP)**	8	0	8	3714	0.01%	0.40%
64 . **SP**	256	109	52	8963697	17.94%	29.48%
65 . **SP(M)**	1	0	1	1635	0.00%	2.28%
66 . **SSD**	29	0	28	40697	0.08%	1.13%
67 . **SSP**	4	0	4	996	0.00%	0.22%
68 . **UKD**	13	1	12	75177	0.15%	6.57%
69 . **UPRP**	15	0	15	8133	0.02%	0.48%
70 . **UPVM**	4	0	4	920	0.00%	0.21%
71 . **URP**	1	0	1	181	0.00%	0.20%
	1205	110	997	9704167	19.42%	
INDEPENDENTS						
72 . **IND**	6557	8	6530	3400751	6.81%	6.82%
	6557	8	6530	3400751	6.81%	
Grand Total :	9716	422	8652	49968394		

Appendix – IV

Media Coverage on Ayodhya Movement in the 1990s

Press Council of India: Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid Issue

Aaj (Lucknow), 4/10/1*990:* Hundred killed in Karnailganj riots; dozen children did not return home.

Aaj (Varanasi), 22/10/1990: President of India was unhappy and astonished at the statements of Chief Minister Shri Mulayam Singh and that Mulayam Singh will not be given assistance of the army to strike terror in the state.

Aaj (Lucknow), 22/10/1990: President worried at CM's remarks.

Aaj (Kanpur), 24/10/1990: The worshippers of Ram are being fed horse-dung in Mirzapur jail.

Aaj (Lucknow), 24/10/1990: Visiting Ayodhya banned for the first time after Babar.

*Aaj (*Ranchi), 26/10/1990: Ram temple demolished in Ayodhya.

Aaj (Kanpur/Lucknow), 1/11/1990: Guerilla war has begun between the armed forces and the Ram bhakts.

Aaj (Bareilly) 4/11/1990: Pakistani flag hoisted on the Jama Masjid in Badayun.

Aaj (Bareilly) 9/11/1990: Come to Ayodhya only after being armed, V.P. – Mulayam should have been torn by dog, Advani should have no illusion that Muslims are either weak of cowards.

Dainik Jagran (Lucknow), 31/10/1990: Victory be to the power of the people.

Dainik Jagran (Lucknow), 2/11/1990: Devotees of Ram occupy controversial place: firing in Ayodhya: hundred dead.

Aaj (Lucknow), 2/11/1990: More than hundred dead bodies thrown into river Saryu.

Aaj, 2/11/1990: The November 2, 1990 issues of *Aaj* gave different figures of casualties from different centres of publications as below:

Varanasi – 100 dead

Ranchi – 400 to 500 dead and injured

Agra – 100 killed

Kanpur – 200 killed

Bareilly – 500 killed

Aaj (Bareilly), 2/11/1990: Ayodhya has a bloodbath on Kartik purnima, firing on Ram bhakts for four hours, at least 100 people killed.

Aaj (Kanpur/Lucknow), 3/11/1990: River of blood flowed through the entire lanes.

Dainik Jagran (Lucknow), 6/11/1990: Temporary jail wall broken, protest road block: 150 kar sevaks taken ill after consuming poisoned food.

Dainik Jagran (Lucknow), 8/11/1990: Thousand police and army personnel who are Ram bhakts were leaving their jobs to join "Sri Ram Kranti Brigade"

Dainik Jagran (Lucknow), 15/11/1990: Chief Minister, Shri Mulayam Singh was very angry that not enough were fired on the unarmed Ram bhakt kar sevaks at Ayodhya during the past few days.

Dainik Jagran (Lucknow), 16/11/1990: Chief Minister, Shri Mulayam Singh had repeatedly tried to pressurize the Chief of the army's central command Billimoria to order his force to fire at the unarmed kar sevaks from all sides in Ayodhya on October 30.

Dainik Jagran (Lucknow), 18/11/1990: Sri Ram Kranti Brigade will cut off the hands and feet of Mulayam by the next month

Swathantra Chetna (Gorakhpur), 2/11/1990: Gate of Goraknath temple seized, terror among sadhus, opponents flag unfurled at the main gate.

Swathantra Bharat (Lucknow), 2/11/1990: Unarmed kar sevaks massacred: upto 100 killed, 25 bodies found, thousands wounded.

Swathantra Bharat (Lucknow), 4/11/1990: Rivers of blood flow in Aydohya, 168 dead.

English Newspapers-

November 1989

Violence in Indore takes 20 lives (*The Hindu*, 15th October, 1989)

20 dead in Bihar violence (*The Hindu*, 25th October, 1989)

Army called out in riot-hit Bhagalpur (*The Hindu*, 26th October, 1989)

Curfew in Shimoga (*The Hindu*, 12th November, 1989)

September-October 1990, the ratha yatra

Stabbing, arson in Karnataka (*The Hindu*, 25th October, 1990)

36 more killed in temple violence (*The Times of India*, 1st November, 1990)

68 killed as violence spreads, 7 burned alive in Gujarat (*Independent*, 3rd November, 1990)

Religious frenzy overhangs Gujarat (*The Times of India*, 16th December, 1990)

On 6th December 1992

Violence spreads nation wide: 230 die (*The Hindu*, 8th December 1992)

Toll rises to 950 as violence continues (*The Hindu*, 12th December 1992)

Widespread in Bombay (*The Hindu*, 11th January, 1993)

Fear stalks Bombay areas (*The Hindu*, 16th January, 1993)

Frontline **Report:** An investigation by one magazine, Frontline found that only 11 of the people on this list (VHP claimed 59 kar sevaks died) had died during the frenzy at Ayodhya – the others are either died from other causes, were still alive or were non-existent. (Frontline, 11-24 May 1991)

Appendix –V

News on Ayodhya Movement Published in the Hindi Newspapers

दैनिक जागरण

रामनगरी अयोध्या में रक्त की नदियां बहीं

राम भक्तों पर धुंआधार फायरिंग: १०० म

हजारों घायल, चारों ओर लाशें, राम भक्तों का आगे बढ़ना जा

अयोध्या में जन्मभूमि जा रहे कारसेवकों पर फायरिंग, 15 मरे दर्जनों घायल

आज कार्तिक पूर्णिमा के दिन सरयू तट पर हजारों साधुओं का कार सेवा के लिये उपवास शुरू

कारसेवकों के शिलान्यास स्थल तक पहुंचने की सम्भावना

नौतनवा में अधोषित कर्फ्यू

मेरठ में छुरेबाजी, एक मरा

कर्फ्यू में ढील सिर्फ नमाज के लिए, स्नान के लिए क्यों नहीं

जनसत्ता

अयोध्या में राम मंदिर का ताला खोल दिया गया

शिलान्यास स्थल की छतरी हटी

मुख्य द्वार पर ताला, प्रवेश बंद

सी.आर.पी. के जवानों में असंतोष

सभी बंदिशों को धता बताकर कार सेवकों का जत्था अयोध्या पहुंचा

राजस्थान सहित नौ राज्यों में हिंसा जारी, एक सौ मारे गये

आज

उत्तर भारत एवं बिहार से सर्वाधिक प्रसारित

आगरा, गोरखपुर, इलाहाबाद, कानपुर, लखनऊ, आसनसोल, बरेली, पटना, रांची, जमशेदपुर तथा इलाहाबाद से प्रकाशित

कार्तिक पूर्णिमा पर खून से नहायी अयो

जलियावाला बाग हत्याकांड की पुनरावृत्ति, जनरल डायर को भी मात

अयोध्या, २ नवम्बर। राम जन्मभूमि दिर की ओर जाने की मांग कर रहे निहत्थे र सेवकों पर हनुमान गढ़ी दिगम्बर खाड़ा, गली, सरयूपुल सहित करीब आधा र्जन स्थानों पर गोलियां बरसायी जिसमे ार सौ से अधिक लोग मारे गये और करीब क हजार घायल हो गये। हनुमान गढ़ी के ामने मुख्यमार्ग पर जय श्री राम का गान रते हुए जब कार सेवक वहां जमीन पर बैठके जा रहे थे

तो पुलिस ने लाठियां चला कर उन्हें बैठने नही दिया। ये लोग सामने दिगम्बर अखाड़े की ओर भागे तो वहां पहले से पोजीशन लिए हुऐ सुरक्षा बलो के जवानो ने करीब बीस हजार कार सेवको को घेरकर अंधाधुंध गोलिया चलायी

जिसमें कम से कम ५ सौ लोग मारे गये और इतनी ही संख्या मे लोग जख्मी हो गये।

गोलियां करीब साढ़े दस बजे चलना शुरू हुयी और सवा ग्यारह बजे तक चलती रहीं।

इतना ही नही इन जवानो ने गली मे दोनों ओर बसे लोगों के घरों के दरवाजे तोड़कर घर उनके परिवारों के युवकों को कार सेवक बताते हुए गोली मार दी।

यह सारा कुछ देश और दुनिया के दो दर्जन से अधिक पत्रकारों की आंखों के सामने हुआ जो बाहर मुख्य सड़क से सब देख रही थी, सामने हुआ इ बलोंने गली को आधे घंटे तक सील रखा और इस बीच अधिक लाशे दर्शन नगर प्रवाह के लिए भिजवा दी। मे जाना चाहा तो उनके किया गया और एक फोटो मार दी गयी तथा एक अन्य की धमकी दी गयी।

रामभक्तों पर चार घंटे फायरिंग कम से कम ५ सौ लोग मारे गये, सैकडों हताहत

"At least 400 die," the 8-column banner says. On Jan 4, 1991, the PM had challenged to prove more than 16 killed in all incidents put together.

आज

धर्मलोक

ध्या में तैनात पुलिस और होमगार्ड जवानोंमें असंतोष

ध्या में १०और शव मिले, कारसेवा की जिम्मेदारी अब बजरंग दल पर, सरकार को १२ घंटे का अल्टीमे

जस्ट्रेटों, अफसरों द्वारा ड्यूटी करने से इंका

बरेली

[illegible]दायूँमें जामा मस्जिदपर पाकिस्तानी झंडा फहराया

(आलोक दुबे)

[illegible] जम्मू कश्मीर की तर्ज पर यहाँ भी कुछ पाक परस्तों ने जामा मस्जिद पर पाकिस्तानी झंडा फहरा दिया। जिससे शहर का माहौल [illegible] और प्रशासन ने [illegible] कर्फ्यू लगा दिया।

[illegible] अयोध्या में [illegible] बलों द्वारा चलाई गयी खून की होली का समाचार शहर में फैला। दोनों समुदाय के लोग अपने अपने तरीके [illegible] जिससे शहर में एक ओर तो क्षोभ तो दूसरी ओर [illegible] पैदा हो गयी।

इस बीच कुछ पाक परस्तों ने [illegible] मोहल्ला स्थित जामा मस्जिद पर पाकिस्तानी झंडा फहरा दिया। और कुछ [illegible] तत्वों ने यह अफवाह [illegible] कि [illegible] में एक मंदिर को क्षतिग्रस्त कर दिया गया है।

[illegible] जैसे [illegible] आग लग गयी हो उसी तरह यह खबर पूरे शहर में फैल गयी। [illegible] में लोग जामा मस्जिद की ओर [illegible] मस्जिद को अर्धसैनिक बलों की मदद से चारों ओर घेर लिया। जिससे वहाँ परिस्थिति [illegible]

परन्तु तब तक देर हो चुकी थी। [illegible] तत्वों द्वारा फैलायी गयी इस अफवाह का असर हुआ जिससे शहर में तनाव पैदा हो गया। [illegible] प्रशासन ने [illegible] फिर से कर्फ्यू लगाने का फैसला किया। जिसकी घोषणा पुलिस वाहनों से सारे शहर में [illegible] बजे तक का कर्फ्यू लगा दिया गया।

छः बजे जब कर्फ्यू हटा तो [illegible] प्रशासन की ओर से घोषणा की गयी कि कर्फ्यू दोबारा लगाया जा सकता है। इसलिए [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] बताते हैं कि प्रशासन ने [illegible] पाकिस्तानी झंडे को न उतरवाया होता [illegible]

[illegible] रामभक्त बनाम प्रशासनः तू डाल-डाल मैं पात-पात

☐ राज्य कर्मियों पर भी अंकुश? कार सेवकों को निर्देश जारी

पुलिसकर्मी कारसेवा में मदद क[illegible]

Even Army wives are dragged into the controversy. 'Police staff to help kar seva,' the three-column heading says.

निहत्थे कारसेवकोंकी नृशंस हत्याका विरोध

फैजाबादमें सेना के अफसरों की पत्नियोंने किया जनरोषका नेतृत्व

(आनंद मिश्र, रणविजय सिंह)

अयोध्या, ३ नवम्बर। श्रीराम जन्मभूमिके पास दिगम्बर अखाड़ा गलीमें कल कारसेवकोंको घेरकर भून दिये जानेकी घटनाके विरोधमें आज फैजाबादमें सेनाके करीब ५०० अधिकारियोंकी पत्नियोंके नेतृत्वमें पचास हजारसे अधिक नागरिकोंने प्रमुख मार्गोंसे [illegible] पहुंचकर नेतृत्वकर रही महिलाएं सड़कपर बैठ गयीं और वहां डेढ़ घण्टेसे अधिक समय तक 'सीता-सीता राम' बोलो कीर्तन हुआ। मंडलायुक्त मधुकर गुप्त घरमें नहीं थे। उन्हें अयोध्यासे बुलाया गया। उनके पहुंचनेपर उनकी गाड़ी प्रदर्शनकारियोंकी भीड़में फंस गयी और लोगोंने उसके शीशे तोड़ डाले। श्री गुप्त [illegible] किसी तरह भीड़ तितर-बितर हो गयी।

सेनाके अफसरोंकी पत्नियोंके आजके प्रदर्शनकी ही तरह कल रात्रिमें राज्य कर्मचारियोंकी पत्नियोंके नेतृत्वमें दस हजारसे अधिक लोगोंने मंडलायुक्तके आवासपर प्रदर्शन किया और अंदर घुस तोड़फोड़ की। इस [illegible] आज राज्य सरकारने [illegible] गया। ऐसे ही कुछ संदिग्ध तत्वों द्वारा कल रात फैजाबादमें मुस्लिम मोहल्लोंमें अफवाह फैलायी गयी कि सशस्त्र लोग हमला करने आ रहे हैं। तनावमें जनाक्रोशकी दिशा बदलनेकी हर संभव कोशिश जारी है।

इसके अलावा निहत्थे कारसेवकोंपर गोलीबारीकी घटनाके खिलाफ आज फैजाबाद जिला जेलमें सभी राजनीतिक और [illegible]

109.

No real bar this but a photo trick for a bigger impact. Editor admitted the manipulation. (Bottom) even pictures of street posters are used to whip up tempo.

पार्टी के एक नेता ने अयोध्या में श्रीराम मंदिर निर्माण में कार सेवा से रोकने पर खिन्न होकर आज अपने घर में आत्मदाह कर लिया।

भारतीय जनता पार्टी के नेता मदन लाल खुराना ने कल बताया कि शकुरपुर ब्लाक के मण्डल महासचिव केवल किशन ने आत्मदाह कर लिया, जबकि पुलिस ने दावा किया है

एक साथ प्रकाशित

गी नहीं: देवी

श्री देवीलाल ने यह भी कहा कि इस विवाद का स्थायी हल तभी निकलेगा जब सारी राजनीतिक पार्टियां अपने को इससे अलग कर लें और इस मसले को पूरी तरह धर्मनिरपेक्ष नेताओं साधु संत महात्मा एवं सूफियों को सौंप दिया जाना चाहिये। उनका कहना है कि इस मामले में सारी देवीदगियां राजनीतिक नेताओं के कारण पैदा हुई है।

पूर्व प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा कि सरकार का कर्म कानून एवं व्यवस्था बनाये रखना है और इस सिलसिले में उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्यमंत्री मुलायम सिंह यादव से निरंतर संपर्क बनाये हुए है।

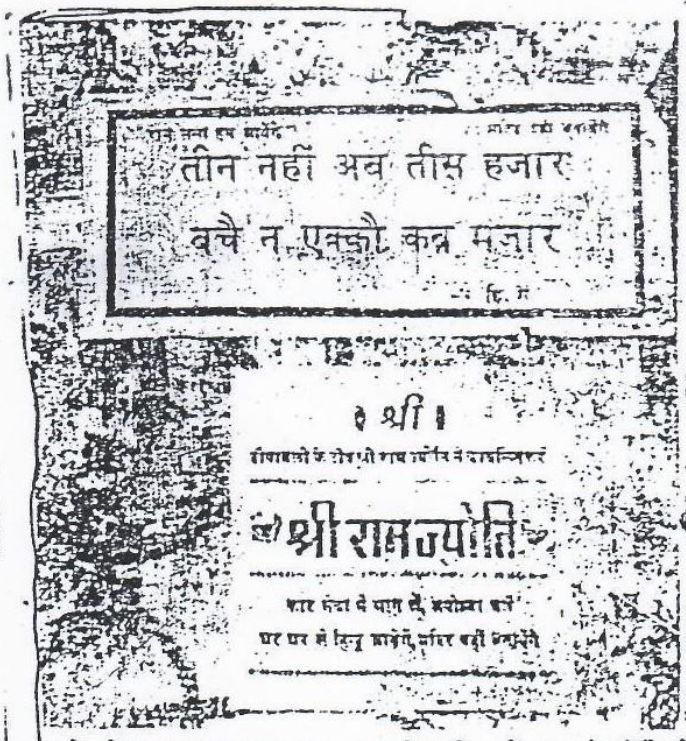
● लखनऊ, २७ अक्टूबर (वार्ता)। इलाहाबाद उच्च न्यायालय की लखनऊ खंडपीठ ने आज यहां सभी को अयोध्या की पंचकोसी परिक्रमा में बिना किसी रोक टोक के भाग लेने के सम्बन्ध में आदेश पारित किया।

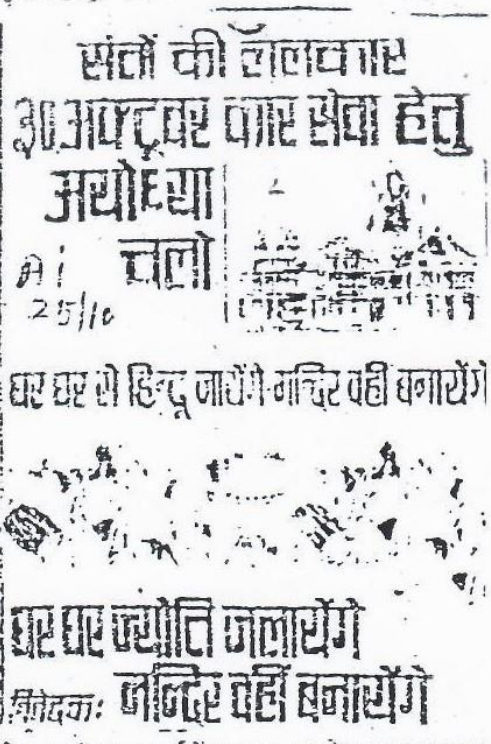
अभूतपूर्व धोखा

नयी दिल्ली, २७ अक्टूबर (वार्ता)। कम्युनिस्ट (एम) के प्रवक्ता बी. एन. गाडगिल ने कहा है कि रथ यात्रा और राम मंदिर निर्माण के बारे में भाजपा से मुख समझौता करने प्रधानमंत्री विश्वनाथ प्रताप सिंह ने देश के अल्पसंख्यकों की अभूतपूर्व धोखा दिया है।

श्री गाडगिल और श्री एन. डी. अकबर ने संवाददाताओं से बातचीत में कहा कि यह सुनिश्चित करने इस बात का सबूत है कि श्री वी. पी. सिंह अपनी गद्दी बचाने के लिये किस हद तक गिर सकते है और क्या क्या दांव चल सकते है।

उन्होंने कहा कि श्री सिंह का चरित्र इसी से साफ झलकता है कि उन्होंने साम्प्रदायिक सद्भाव को ताक पर रख कर भारतीय जनता पार्टी से मुख समझौता किया, इसी के तहत दूरदर्शन पर रथ यात्रा और बाबरी के दृष्टिकोण को बढ़ावा देने प्रसारित किया गया और राम मंदिर के लिये भूमि अधिग्रहण अध्यादेश जारी किया गया।





प्रदेशके आलाकमान द्वारा अपनायी गयी तुष्टीकरणकी नीति से बहुसंख्यक वर्गमें उभरा आक्रोश अब शहरव दीवारों पर भी परिलक्षित होने लगा है। सार्वजनिक स्थानों पर उग्रवादी हिंदू संगठन नामक तथाकथित संस्था इन दिनों उत्तेजक पोस्टर लगाने शुरू कर दिये है। इन पोस्टरोंकी चर्चा हर वर्गमें है। उधर श्री राम कार सेव समिति, विहिप और बजरंग दल द्वारा अयोध्या में प्रस्तावित श्री राम मंदिर के निर्माण के संबंधमें धुंआधार पोस्ट बाजी जारी है। इसका आम जनता में अच्छा असर दबाव दिखाई पड़ रहा है। लाया- आज

मंदिर निर्माण की उलटी गिनती शुरू - छह

दिल्ली का सिंहासन डोला, यू.पी. का भी डोलेगा?

दबाव में इस्ती

मंदिर निर्माण की उलटी गिनती शुरू - तीन

बड़ी तेज बहतबा राम मंदिर के बयरिया
का होई ए राजा उनतीस की रतिया

मंदिर निर्माण की उलटी गिनती शुरू - सात

मुलायम ने वी.पी. को औकात बतायी

लालू यादव ने मुलायम का एहसान उतारा

मंदिर निर्माण की उलटी गिनती शुरू - चार

बहुत बवाल हुआ और अभी बहुत बवाल होगा लेकिन क्यों?

मचने दो बहुत बवाल हो रहा है, होने दो। लोगों के दिल जल रहे हैं... रो रहे हैं, सैकड़ों मदमाती बदल रहे हैं, होने दो।

किसी

वार्ता

मुलायम को खाड़ी देशों से पचास करोड़ मिले

सी.बी.आई. जांच की मांग

Of the 'countdown' serials intended to step up partisan campaig...

दैनिक जागरण, लखनऊ

(9)

VIII

'Mulayam's legs and hands to be cut off', says the report. 'Ram Bhakts fed horse dung in Jail', 150 kar sevaks in Jail taken ill', says the reports below.

श्री राम क्रान्ति ब्रिगेड अगले माह तक मुलायम के हाथ-पैर काट देगी

(आगरा कार्यालय)

[illegible]

जन सम्पर्क (निरीक्षा) विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश, लखनऊ

6. 11. 90

अस्थाई जेल की दीवार तोड़ी, प्रदर्शन रास्ता जाम

दूषित भोजन खाने से डेढ़ सौ बंदी कारसेवक बीमार

[illegible]

मिर्जापुर जेल में रामभक्तों को घोड़े की लीद खिलायी जा रही है

25-10

(निजी संवाददाता)

[illegible]

हिन्दुस्तान में हिन्दू ही विस्थापित क्यों ?

आज से ४३ वर्ष पूर्व भारत विभाजन के समय लाखों हिन्दू अपनी मातृभूमि को छोड़ने के लिए बाध्य हुए थे।

तब से लेकर आज तक न जाने कितनी बार हिन्दुओं को ही हिन्दुस्ता में विस्थापित होना पड़ा है।

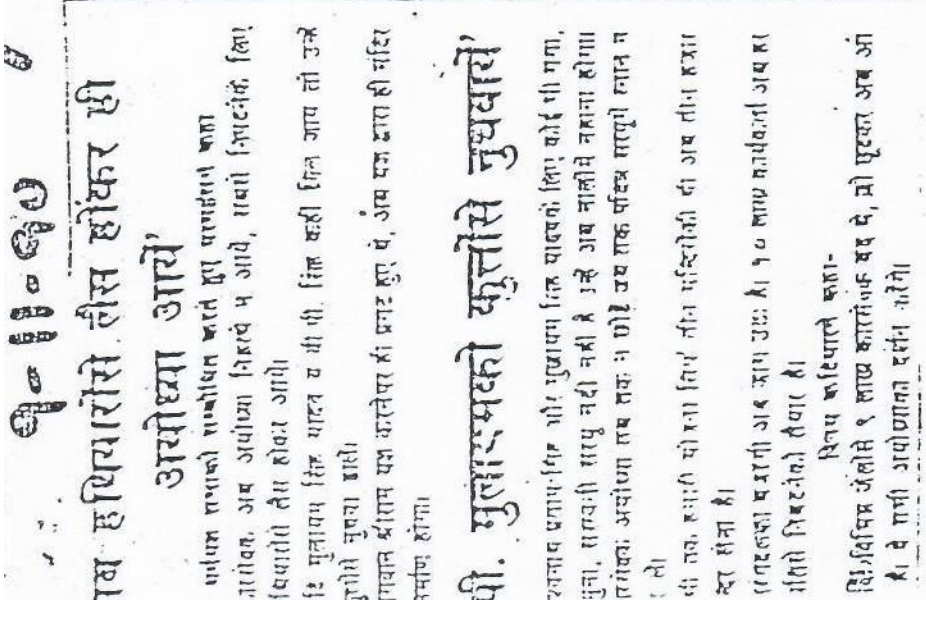
अभी एक वर्ष से काश्मीर घाटी के ५० हजार हिन्दू परिवार अपने घर-बार छोड़ कर शरणार्थी शिविरों में जीवन जीने के लिए बाध्य है।

और अब कल की ही बात है रांची में हिन्दपीढ़ी तथा कड़रू के सैकड़ों हिन्दू परिवार निकटवर्ती धर्मशालाओं में शरण लिए हुए है। और वह तो तब जब यहां का प्रतिनिधि केन्द्रीय गृह राज्य मंत्री है।

तो धर्म निरपेक्षता तथा कानून की रक्षा करनेवालों बताओ कि इसका जिम्मेवार कौन है?

हम प्रशासन को चेतावनी देते है कि अतिशीघ्र उन सब हिन्दू परिवारों को सुरक्षित अपने घरों पर पहुंचाने की व्यवस्था करें नहीं तो हिन्दू समाज की प्रतिक्रिया के लिए तैयार रहें।

हिन्दू जागरण मंच



जनसत्ता

अयोध्या में कारसेवकों पर अंधाधुंध फायरिंग

चालीस मारे गए, घायलों का हिसाब नहीं, पर साठ बुरी तरह जख्मी

हेमंत शर्मा
जनसत्ता संवाददाता

अयोध्या, 2 नवम्बर। अयोध्या की सड़कें, मंदिर और आसपास के अहाते कार सेवकों के खून से सन गईं। अर्द्धसैनिक बलों की अंधाधुंध गोलीबारी में सैकड़ों लोग मारे और बहुत से घायल हुए। इस संवाददाता ने अपनी आंखों से तीस लाशें देखी हैं। मरे हुए कार सेवकों की सूची कार सेवा समिति ने दी है। 64 कार सेवक सामने दीखे जो सिर पर गोली लगने से मरे थे। इसके अलावा वे लोग जिनकी लाशें सरयू में बहा दी गईं, घायल होकर अस्पताल ले जाए गए और वहां मरे, इसका कोई हिसाब नहीं है। गोली कांड विवादास्पद स्थान से एक किलोमीटर दूर हुआ। प्रशासन का यह दावा झूठा है कि कार सेवक विवादास्पद स्थान के करीब पहुंच गए थे और कार सेवकों को पहले आंसू गैस, लाठी चार्ज से खदेड़ने की कोशिश हुई। गोलीकांड से उपजे विषाद और दुख के माहौल में अब अयोध्या के किसी भी मंदिर में शाम को भोग नहीं लगाया गया।

प्रशासन ने कार सेवकों पर अंधाधुंध गोलियां उस वक्त चलवाईं जब कार सेवक सत्याग्रह के लिए सड़कों पर बेड़ाबंद रामधुन गा रहे थे। कार्तिक पूर्णिमा का स्नान करके कार सेवक, साधु पुलिस घेरों को लांघ, सरयू करीब ही बढ़े थे। प्रशासन ने विवादास्पद स्थान से एक किलोमीटर दूर हनुमान गढ़ी के पास पुलिस किया हुआ था। गोलियों के मुकाबले, हनुमान गढ़ी के पास पुलिस सुरक्षा चौकियां बनी थीं। कार सेवकों ने उन्हें भी जीत लिया था।

फैजाबाद में कमिश्नर की कोठी को लोगों ने घेर लिया

जनसत्ता संवाददाता

फैजाबाद, 2 नवंबर। अयोध्या में कारसेवकों पर पुलिसिया गोलीबारी के विरोध में फैजाबाद के लोग कर्फ्यू के बावजूद आज रात सड़क पर निकल पड़े। जुलूस के रूप में करीब दस-बारह हजार लोगों ने कमिश्नर राजन गुप्ता की कोठी को घेर लिया। जुलूस में ज्यादा तादाद महिलाओं और बच्चों की थी।

जुलूस में शामिल लोगों ने कमिश्नर के खिलाफ नारे लगाए। भीड़ कमिश्नर के घर में घुस गई। भीड़ के हिंसक हो जाने की आशंका को देखते हुए सुरक्षा कर्मियों ने हवा में गोलियां चलाईं। भीड़ ने कमिश्नर को घेर लिया।

अयोध्या में कारसेवकों पर अंधाधुंध फायरिंग

चालीस मारे गए, घायलों का हिसाब नहीं, पर

हेमंत शर्मा
जनसत्ता संवाददाता

अयोध्या की सड़कें, मंदिर और कार सेवकों के खून से सन गईं। अर्द्धसैनिक बलों की अंधाधुंध गोलीबारी में अनगिनत लोग मारे और बहुत से घायल हुए। इस संवाददाता ने अपनी आंखों से तीस लाशें देखी हैं। मरे हुए कार सेवकों की सूची कार सेवा समिति ने दी है। 64 कार सेवक सामने दीखे जो सिर पर गोली लगने से मरे थे। इसके अलावा वे लोग जिनकी लाशें सरयू में बहा दी गईं, घायल होकर अस्पताल ले जाए गए और वहां मरे, इसका कोई हिसाब नहीं है। गोली कांड विवादास्पद स्थान से एक किलोमीटर दूर हुआ। प्रशासन का यह दावा झूठा है कि कार सेवक विवादास्पद के करीब पहुंच गए थे और कार सेवकों को पहले आंसू गैस, लाठी चार्ज से खदेड़ने की कोशिश हुई। गोलीकांड से उपजे विषाद और दुख के माहौल में अब अयोध्या के किसी भी मंदिर में शाम को भोग नहीं लगाया गया।

प्रशासन ने कार सेवकों पर अंधाधुंध गोलियां उस वक्त चलवाईं जब कार सेवक सत्याग्रह के लिए सड़कों पर बेड़ाबंद रामधुन गा रहे थे। कार्तिक पूर्णिमा का स्नान करके कार सेवक, साधु पुलिस घेरों को लांघ, सरयू करीब ही बढ़े थे। प्रशासन ने विवादास्पद स्थान से एक किलोमीटर दूर हनुमान गढ़ी के पास पुलिस किया हुआ था। गोलियों के मुकाबले, हनुमान गढ़ी के पास पुलिस सुरक्षा चौकियां बनी थीं। कार सेवकों ने उन्हें भी जीत लिया था।

फैजाबाद में कमिश्नर की कोठी को लो

जनसत्ता संवाददाता

फैजाबाद, 2 नवंबर। अयोध्या में कारसेवकों पर पुलिसिया गोलीबारी के विरोध में फैजाबाद के लोग कर्फ्यू के बावजूद आज रात सड़क पर निकल पड़े। जुलूस के रूप में करीब दस-बारह हजार लोगों ने कमिश्नर राजन गुप्ता की कोठी को घेर लिया। जुलूस में ज्यादा तादाद महिलाओं और बच्चों की थी।

जुलूस में शामिल लोगों ने कमिश्नर के खिलाफ नारे लगाए। भीड़ कमिश्नर के घर में घुस गई। भीड़ के हिंसक हो जाने की आशंका को देखते हुए सुरक्षा कर्मियों ने हवा में गोलियां चलाईं। भीड़ ने कमिश्नर को घेर लिया।

ड़ लगा दी। पुल
ा हैं। श्रीगंगानगर
न पता नहीं चल
ने खून से सड़क
था या भगवान
सी.आर.पी.एफ.

ारा वहा ढेर हो
अपनी आँखों से
से परेशान लोगों
बलों ने उसे भी

श्रीगंगानगर, राजस्थान का एक कारसेवक, जिसका नाम पता नहीं चल पाया, गोली लगते ही गिर पड़ा और उसने अपने खून से सड़क पर लिखा सीताराम। पता नहीं यह उसका नाम था या भगवान का स्मरण। मगर सड़क पर गिरने के बाद भी सी.आर.पी. एफ. की टुकड़ी ने उसकी खोपड़ी पर सात गोलियाँ मारीं। इस पूरे गोलीकांड का चश्मदीद गवाह यह संवाददाता स्वयं है।

Appendix –VI

Newspaper Headlines on Supreme Court's Judgment on Ayodhya Dispute

(10th November, 2019)

(Source: https://scroll.in/latest/943226/mandir-wahi-banega-how-front-pages-reported-the-supreme-courts-ayodhya-verdict).