CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Newsworthiness and Conflict as News

The review of literature has been organised as follows. Initially the discussion focuses on the ‘Conflict’ as a news value which makes news stories newsworthy and the role of the media in conflict situations. The latter part of the chapter examines the working of the Press in insurgency affected States followed by a review of studies in the West on terrorism with regard to Policy, coverage, etc. Also, the perspective of the Left theoreticians on the Press finds a mention here as the ideology of the Naxalite movement is mainly Left oriented.

A comprehensive definition of news is elusive. A newsworthy event is one that affects or changes social, economic, political, physical or other relationships. It is an account of man’s changing relationship with his environment; it is a development that disrupts or alters or shows promise of altering the status quo, and news is an account of such a development. These definitions suggest change, or potential change, as the essential element in news. The essential nature of news, can be found in and around the consequential disruption of the status quo, by the same token, the potential disruption of the status quo. Disruption (change) or potential disruption is an intrinsic quality of all news events. Disruption separates news events from non-news events. The extent of disruption (community consequence) measures the importance of events and determines their reader appeal.
In summary, the following factors which, as rationalisations, measure the importance of news.

1. the extent of disruption of the status quo (intensity),

2. the number of persons affected by the event (extensity),

3. the nearness of the event (proximity),

4. the recency of the event (timeliness);

5. the extent of results to flow from the event (consequence or significance) and

6. the variety of news values in the event (variety).

The qualifications or characteristics of news commonly recognised are special types of disruption of the status quo. Any news worthy event will not only disrupt the status quo but will also disrupt it in one or more of the following ways. They include: conflict, consequence, proximity or nearness, recency or timeliness, eminence or prominence, human interest and novelty. In journalistic parlance, these intrinsic characteristics of the event are called as news values which have been evolved by Western communication scholars, journalists and professional journalists' bodies. The Indian newspapermen also follow these news values while deciding and selecting news for the day. However, there is a note of dissent on the news values adhered to by the Indian Press.

Most conflicts are newsworthy as they are disruptive in nature. Actual conflict is generally newsworthy because it is physical and usually leads to injury and damage. Violent in itself, it arouses the emotions of the members of the society.
and seems to be of enormous importance. Wars, murders, violent protests—conflicts of a more disruptive nature have tension and suspense as corollary qualities.

### 2.2 Role of Media in Conflict

The media contributes to the democratic process by bringing things into the open. The Press is an integral sub-system within the total system, and its strong linkages with other system components impinge upon it as much as it impinges upon them, if not more.

While the Press does serve as a mirror, it is a part of the reciprocal process, being affected by the system and affecting it in turn. The Press is pushed into reporting events by organised forces in the system and its reports become an integral part of the social process which bears on the nature of future events. Groups in a society may use the Press as sources of intelligence, as indications of reaction of the public to events, and as a device for creating awareness and defining problems. The performance of the Press or other media becomes a part of the conflict/controversy. There are several aspects to it which are summarised here as proposed by Tichenor et al., (1994: 96) based on surveys of general populations, interviews with political elites and newspaper content analysis data.

#### a) Information Processing

The newspapers are not mere channels but they make judgements about selection and presentation of news. Decisions about information are made daily, and the growing social and political complexity of the milieu in which the small groups thrive or falter creates a potential for a lot of information on diverse topics.
The nature of newspaper's decision or judgement is a result of the social structure in which the newspaper operates. These decisions constitute a pattern of information control that has far reaching implications for what the society will hear about, think about and talk about.

b) Information Control

Information control is one aspect of all information activities, including the conduct of social conflict. In the process of information control, it is to be understood that the Press lives with the most intense conflicts but does not necessarily turn the conflicts into public issues. They may play these conflicts down or avoid them or they may give the conflicts sustained front page coverage. The Press coverage may more likely equalise levels of understanding to the extent that it contributes to the intensity of the conflict. Another aspect is that information is part of a general process of social control which includes media participation within different social structures. Information is a prime resource in the creation and maintenance of social power, a point which may become increasingly visible as social conflicts progress. Importance of information control is illustrated by the increasing development of specialized communication centres in business, government, education and other agencies and interest groups.

c) System Reinforcement

Another generalisation is that since they are dependent upon other parts of the system, newspapers and other media participate in social conflict in circumscribed ways which are reinforced within the system. Media will tend to reflect the perspectives of organizational power centers, which is apparent not
only in small homogeneous communities but is also illuminated in communities or regions where values and outlooks on major issues are highly diverse. Where there is diversity in social power, media tend to reflect the orientations of those segments that are higher on the power scale.

This tendency to reflect the outlook of dominant power groups can have consequences in conflict situations shapes the media outlook and which therefore receives reciprocal reinforcement from those media.

Another viewpoint considers knowledge as a power resource and conflict as an aspect of the process that coalesces the generation, distribution, and acquisition of knowledge. This generalization runs counter to the view that conflict produces mostly confusion, rumor, and social disorder, a view based on the belief that "emotional" issues lead to "irrationality" with "nobody listening to reason." The conflict process generally creates greater need for communication at various levels and tends to increase the distribution and acquisition of knowledge among different interest groups.

d) Knowledge Gap

Being an integral part of a conflict process within a social structure, mass media in performing their particular roles may contribute to either the widening or narrowing of disparities in knowledge within the system. Conflict is rooted in social differentiation, and newspapers and other media may contribute to increasing intensity and broadening of the scope of these conflicts while performing according to their traditional roles. This participation may serve to
reinforce the differences in orientations and outlooks between different interest
groups and sectors of society

The knowledge gaps may not always increase but may decrease in a given set of
conditions. One of these conditions is the existence of increasingly intense levels
of social conflict, particularly that associated with community issues that touch
basic concerns of different groups among the population. Conflict not only
results in generation and dissemination of new knowledge but it is also an
intervening variable in coalescing the concern of participating groups to acquire
that knowledge. Conflict increases the amount of interaction at various points
within the system and leads to a sharpening of the definition of group interests
and to greater clarification in the definition of social problems. In this process,
conflict leads to clarification of values of groups vis-a-vis other groups in the
system and to a sharpening of each group's position. Effective group positions in
social controversies include articulation of the relevance of the issue to the
interests of other groups. A basic conflict strategy is to engage groups in the
larger public which may have previously seen the issue as a distant fray over
"somebody else's problem."

e) Agenda Setting

Examining the agenda setting role of mass media for a group of issues that
aroused community conflict, Tichenor, et al (1994 106), say thus

mass media bring conflicts to public attention and highlight
particular aspects of a conflict so that they become focus of
public discussion and action. They conclude that the
media's agenda setting power lies in their ability to bestow publicity or to deny it in conflictual situations. Contrary to widespread beliefs, media do not initiate and shape conflicts.

Newspapers receive information and ideas from a myriad of organized sources and there is competition from parties in a conflict for media space and time (Bethell, 1977: 33). The role of the media, including that of the Press, assumes greater significance especially when a group becomes mobilised for action out of the frustration and deprivation it has experienced in the intense competition for socio-economic gain. The contending forces in the climate of conflict tend to strive for greater visibility and publicity through mass media organisations to attain societal legitimacy. In such conflict situations, what's expected of the Press.

Wolfsfeld (1984: 363) points out media publicity is one of the strategies among others through which groups can bring their concerns to the attention of the Government. Although media attention is useful for all protest groups, the groups' characteristics and goals determine the type and extent of publicity likely to be most helpful as well as the diverse obstacles each group will face in gaining media attention. Among the obstacles is fierce competition among groups for limited news space.

Barnes, et al., (1979) say that direct action techniques—a mainstay of the media arena—have become increasingly popular forms of political action.

Lipsky (1970: 181) one of the first to emphasise the importance of the mass media in protest strategy argues: 'Protest was the only political resource at the
disposal of the weak and powerless, and therefore action groups depend on the media to activate reference publics in “ways favourable to protest goals.” Later studies (Gitlin, 1980: 3; Bromley and Shupe, 1979; Molotch, 1979) also pointed out, protest leaders often find themselves paying a heavy price for such publicity, as they attempt to overcome the internal conflict of carrying out actions that will be covered by the media without alienating supporters or the general public.

The costs of entering the media are equivalent to the definition of newsworthiness (Tuchman, 1978). Groups must plan and execute protests to fit media ‘frames’ (Gitlin, 1980: 21), which serve as institutional filters designed to meet the structural and commercial needs of the Press (Bromley and Shupe, 1979). While conflict is the central issue for the media, its prevalence in the society’s demands that a group’s actions exhibit unusual amounts of drama, violence (or potential violence), and /or novelty. Groups must compete with often more powerful contestants to gain minimal amount of control over scarce resource of media coverage. Other costs of media competition are related to risks such as conflict escalation, personal injury or prosecution, and the aforementioned delegitimizing in the eyes of supporters and third parties.

Mc Combs (1981), observes that small unstructured groups have a great need for media attention, as such publicity offers the real entrance to the public agenda of important issues involving rewards and risks.

Leaders find themselves unable to control the messages that they try to transmit through the media filter (Gitlin, 1980. 128; Bromley and Shupe, 1979; Molotch, 1979). They become frustrated over media’s need to simplify, contrast and exaggerate in the unending search for sensation; group image is both the reward
they seek and the most serious risk they must endure. Such groups inevitably find themselves in serious conflicts when choosing between being true to their ideals and manipulating the media with publicity 'events' (Simons and Mechling, 1981). Media strategies are related then, to basic group needs.

In his theoretical framework, Wolfsfeld (1984) raises questions about the role of the mass media in political collective action. Alternative conceptualizations may consider the Press merely as an additional resource that groups try to mobilize in their attempts to challenge the authorities.

Mass media being one of the several conflict arenas, Wolfsfeld says, has advantages viz., groups must carry out some type of collective action before they can obtain access to the media. It provides understanding of the ways in which collective actions in different arenas demand different types of resources and different types of behavior. The framework offers a way of thinking about the relationship between direct action, violence and the mass media and about the ways in which groups plan events in order to attract the media than about the Press that is alternative channels of access to influence the government, and one that is especially important to groups who cannot afford to reach officials through more conventional means.

Gitlin (1980: 283), studied how the desire for media attention and the resulting coverage affect the evolution of protest movements and the course of political change with reference to the New Left Protest movement in the United States of America by the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) against the Vietnam war. The study concludes that the New Left was forced to define itself in ways that it made it newsworthy for the establishment media. Gitlin observed it has a major
lesson for protest movements to protect their identity in the face of blandishments.

Gitlin remarks that in the late twentieth century, political movements are called upon to rely on large scale communication in order to, to say who they are and what they intend to publics they want to say, but in the process they become newsworthy only by submitting to the implicit rules of news making, by conforming to journalistic notions of what a 'story' is, what an 'event' is, what a 'protest' is. The processed image then tends to become 'the movement' for wider publics and institutions who have few alternative sources of information; that image has its impact on public policy and when the movement is being opposed is in large part a set of mass mediated images.

Mass media define the public significance of movement events or by blanking them out, actively deprive them of larger significance. Media images also become implicated in the movement's self image; media certify leaders and officially noteworthy personalities, they are able to convert leadership into celebrity. The forms of coverage accrete into systematic framing and this framing, much amplified, helps determine the movement's fate.

The study identified two framing devices on the media movement relation on a time scale. The earliest framing devices were: trivialisation, polarisation (emphasising counter demonstrations), emphasis on internal dissension, marginalisation; disparagement by numbers and disparagement of the movement's effectiveness.
Later devices used by the SDS after it turned more militant with new themes and devices were added to the first group which include reliance on statements by government officials and other authorities; emphasis on the presence of communists; emphasis on carrying of Viet-Cong Flags; emphasis on violence in demonstrations; delegitimizing use of quotation marks and considerable opposition to Right Wing opposition to the movement, especially from the administration and other politicians conveying the impression that extremism was rampant and that the New Left was dangerous to public good.

Gitlin further states that the media pressed on SDS and anti-war activity by 1) generating a membership surge and, consequently, generational and geographical strain among both rank and file members and leaders 2) certifying leaders and converting leadership to celebrity . . . 3) inflating rhetoric and militancy. ; 4) elevating a moderate alternative ; 5) contracting the movement's experience of time and helping encapsulating it , and finally 6) amplifying and containing the movement's messages at the same time.

What are the implications of such media-movement relationships for the movements Gitlin contends, the more closely the concerns and values of social movements coincide with the concerns and values of elites in politics and in media, the more likely they are to become incorporated in the prevailing news frames.

Expressing difficulty in generalising about the susceptibilities of movements to the publicity process and its internal consequences, Gitlin further identifies two factors which were bound to increase a movement's dependency on the mass media, 1) the narrowness of its social base; and 2) its commitment to specific
society wide political goals, 3) the movements turn towards revolutionary desire and rhetoric in a non revolutionary situation, and 4) its unacknowledged political uncertainties especially about the legitimacy of its own leaders in the publicity process than are revolutionary ones. The revolutionaries, in contrast, can achieve media standing only as deviants; they become 'good copy' as they become susceptible to derogatory framing devices, and last a certain point, precisely what made them, 'good copy' may make them dangerous to the State and subject, directly or indirectly to blackout.

Smith (1971 447) based an evaluation of the New York Times' accuracy in coverage of a Sino-Indian conflict by comparing items about the conflict in the Times with three Indian White Papers. The 'event interaction,' defined as an interaction between national actors, constituted the recording unit, and 21 variables were recorded from the Times and the White Papers during November 1961-January 1963. Notes, memoranda and officials' letters were also coded to supplement the other data.

Smith's analysis revealed that Times provided information about event interactions by year accurately, when distributions from the two sources were compared. Closer analysis revealed, however, that the chronology of specific events, including protests, complaints, and broader violations, were inaccurately reported in Times.

Bishara A. Bahbah (1985 16) provides a Palestinian view of the Palestinian print Press in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. She says that the Palestinian Press fulfills the twin contradictory objectives of 'Israel to maintain its occupation at minimal cost and that of the Palestinians to rid themselves of the occupation
Also it serves various functions viz,

*The Press, that is by no means free provides the politically active and conscious with a medium of expression- it is seen as important in defusing tension among a segment of population precluding the possibility of a dangerous alternative such as an underground Press

*The Press also provides Israel with 'evidence' that its occupation is a 'liberal' one as some publicity conscious Israelis claim that Palestinian media under Israeli control are quite free and more critical than most of the Press in the Arab world.

* Ultimately, the censor becoming the editor of the Palestinian Press who is bestowed with unlimited authority to order a publisher to submit for any inspection any items intended for publication Granting licenses to Palestinians with divergent political views as it enhances the 'liberal' image which would engage the diverse political groups in a verbal tussle to provide evidence that Palestinians are divided

* Israel benefits from the Press as a source of information and political analysis as the analysis and opinions expressed in the
forum reflect the political trends and mood of the populace

*The Press is viewed as a strong mobilising medium and as a tool of information and education under occupation, since it is difficult to control the educated and sophisticated population.

The recording of information on human rights violations, land confiscations, harassments, arrests and trials of suspected PLO members serves a to document Palestinian history.

*From the PLO’s perspective, the function of the Palestinian Press is to monitor various opinions, ideas and trends by soliciting writers, conducting interviews with leading personalities, or simply reporting on the general public’s views.

*Occasionally the Press attempted to mobilise public opinion by presenting the beliefs of leading nationalist personalities on issues. This has also been used to influence Palestinians living outside the occupied territories to carry out a particular policy or urge dissenters to conform with a majority decision.
The Press is used by the PLO in its disputes with other Arab nations and it plays an indispensable role in maintaining daily ties between Palestinians outside and inside occupied territories.

*Exposing the agents of occupation despite the Censor,

criticising the policies and actions of the PLO even as they supported it.

On the non-political level, the Press plays a social role and that of a peacemaker. People air their grievances against the Israelis and fellow Palestinians.

Giving an Israeli view, Shalom Kital quotes Benjamin Ben Aliezer having said that "that there is no precedent in the history of the Arab world, or elsewhere, of granting such a degree of freedom to a Press that denies the right to exist of the State allowing them to publish. The censor seeks to avoid the encouragement of civilian uprisings and calls for strike, propaganda, terrorism and raising of the Palestinian flag. He says that there are contrary views:

Dany Rubinstein states that 'restricting the Arab newspapers from publishing views that Israel finds dangerous is useless' and the 'office of the censor could be abolished without harming Israel's security' Ben Aliezer, remarks that 'the
Arab Press has adapted and amplified the views of the PLO, silencing the moderate views and serving as a catalyst for unrest (Bishara).

The Arab Press is perceived in Israel as a political tool, willingly and conscientiously serving the political cause as felt by the defense and political circles.

Sawant (1996. 7) says that the media should not contribute directly or indirectly to the creation of such conflict or situations that breed conflicts. When such conflict erupts, the media ought to take steps within its reach to end them promptly as possible and to restore stability, help find amicable solutions to prevent their recurrence.

Violence, one manifestation of the conflict process has become endemic to the Indian society. Chroniclers and historians of violence and the individuals involved in them, have differed depending on their interest in them, their access to the information with regard to them, their competence to interpret the information and their ability to communicate. In the past when incidents of violence were reported by word of mouth, town criers, correspondence, or newspapers, the impact of a given incident was deadened by the sheer inertia of communications processes as they existed in a primitive form. But the advent of the print media and its potential as a mass communicator was soon realised and it was used both as an informer and a propagator by people including the participants of the conflict.
2.3 Press and Conflicts in India

The causes of conflicts in a society tend to be varied, complex and deeply rooted in a community's historical, political and cultural development. This complex nature of the phenomenon and the power the Press wields in the society provides a source of fascination for the communication scientist.

Though the Indian polity is plagued by separatist, insurrectionary, and Left Wing Extremism (Naxalism), Indian academicians have not addressed themselves to examine the role, use and impact of the media in general, and Press in particular, in such 'crises' situations. There are a few reports of the Press Council of India (PCI), articles in Indian journals, periodicals, newspapers, books by eminent columnists, and journalists on terrorism and the working of the media in different parts of the country. Naxalism has been viewed historically or from a sociological or political science perspective but not from the journalistic angle. There is scarcely any empirical study on the working of the Press and Naxalism in Andhra Pradesh.

However, available literature of the West reveals that wars, revolutions and liberation movements provide the frequent context of violence and terror which have triggered a debate on the policy, coverage and effects. Extensive research has been undertaken in the West on terrorism - the apex form of violence, its manifestations and the media.
Working of the Press in Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir and the North East:

In India the Press has come under pressure in Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir, Assam, Tamil Nadu (in relation to LTTE-related activities), the Naxalite belt in northern Andhra Pradesh, and in parts of Bihar. But nowhere has the pressure been more evident as in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir.

Reflecting the concern over the deteriorating media situation in both these States the Press Council by two separate Orders dated December 14, 1990 set up a sub-committee consisting of Jamna Das Akhtar, K Vikram Rao and B.G. Verghese 'to examine the pressures and problems confronting the Press and its personnel in the State of Punjab'. Also the Committee was to look into the role and functioning of the Press in Jammu & Kashmir the role of the authorities of the State government in dealing with the Press.

With regard to the Kashmir inquiry, the Committee was also asked to go into reports/articles published in certain newspapers alleging excesses by the armed forces.

Background

Over 3700 persons were killed in Punjab during 1990, the cumulative total for media-related personnel being estimated at around 65 during the preceding decade, some 52 of these (inclusive of hawkers and news agents) belonging to Jalandhar's Hind Samachar Group alone. Nanak Chand Nagpal (Sunam), Bhag Singh Khala (Jagran), and Balbir Singh Saggu were among the reporters/stringers killed during 1990.
The level of terrorist violence escalated in the last quarter of 1990 with the thinning down of security forces in Punjab for duty in Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh (following intensification of the Ayodhya agitation and, later, in Assam to deal with United Liberation Front of Assam. The report of the committee was published in the PCI (1991-92) annual issue titled "Postscript on Punjab, curbing objectionable matter, (Overcoming fear)" and Crisis and Credibility on Jammu and Kashmir. A few observations of the committee are mentioned below.

**Perceptions of the Press**

The Committee ascertained two dominant perceptions of the Press in Punjab. More than one official or members of the public complained that the Press had become a mouthpiece of the terrorists and secessionists. Reference was made to the publication of every bandh call and 'code' which elicited instant and widespread compliance and spared the terrorists or criminal gangs the task of communicating their message through letters, posters, proclamations or word of mouth, all of which would enjoy a far more limited reach. Likewise, threats and hit-lists were published, spreading fear. While bhog advertisements eulogising known criminals and murderers as 'martyrs' and calling on the public to attend samagams, where sedition and subversion were preached, were reported. On January 5, Ajit, Punjab's leading Punjabi daily published from Jalandhar, carried at least three large display second anniversary bhog advertisements in memory of Indira Gandhi's assassins.

On the other hand, sections of the Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi Press in Jalandhar saw themselves manning the barricades that others, especially 'Delhi', had deserted. These include the Hind Samachar Group (*Hind Samachar* in Urdu,
Punjab Kesari in Hindi, and Jag Bam in Punjab; Milap (Hindi and Urdu), Partap (Hindi and, until it suspended publication recently, Urdu), and the two Leftist Punjabi papers, Nawa Zamana (CPI) and Lok Lehar (CPI-M) Also, six radical Left (Marxist-Leninist) weeklies from Ludhiana, Patiala and elsewhere have been the only papers to defy, openly and totally the so-called Panthic media code. The Hind Samachar group braved the killings of its founder, Lala Jagat Naran (1981), his son and successor as editor, Ramesh Chander (May 1984) and other senior staff. Since July 1989 its news agents and hawkers were under threat and papers of the group were distributed by hawkers accompanied by gunmen. Even so several hawkers and agents were killed in various parts of the State.

Another section of the Press, representing the news agencies, the Tribune and Indian Express groups at Chandigarh and reporters and stringers for a wide assortment of Punjab and national dailies felt aggrieved by the taunt that they had succumbed to terrorist pressure having 'crawled when they were merely required to bend.'

They were riled over pontification from the safety of Delhi and what they regarded to be the shallow and smug quickies by visiting 'know-alls' who slid in and out of Punjab at low risk. The panic reaction of the Punjab government and the electronic media were cited in justification of their own caution.

Finally, there were a few journalists, especially younger ones, who were bolder and more venturesome but felt somewhat let down by the lack of direction or timidity of their seniors in Chandigarh and Delhi.
In brief, as the PCI notes, Punjab Press is divided and confused, helpless and angry, polarised and some of it, partisan. The professional associations remained dormant. At no stage, joint action was considered, except to a limited degree among certain like-minded groups in Jalandhar, partly on account of the widespread belief that the Punjab Press, like other organisations and institutions in the State, had been infiltrated by moles. The terrorists instantly knew everything that transpired in any newspaper office or gathering of newsmen. So most preferred to work alone or move in closed circles.

There was clearly a widespread sense of insecurity among media personnel in Punjab. This was admitted by journalists who questioned why newsmen as a class should act or react differently from civil servants, judges or other sections of society. As the Editor of the Lehar exclaimed, 'Newspapers must have a social purpose; they are not merely news factories.'

**The Panthic Press Code**

Later, a Committee headed by Sohan Singh issued a six-page Panthic Code of Conduct for the Press which was published by certain papers on November 22. This threatened memorable punishment to those violating the code while reporting from the 'Land of Khalistan.' The code demanded use of the phrase militant or mujahideen in place of 'terrorist', omission of the prefix 'so-called or self-styled' before the rank of terrorist commanders without placing the rank within quotes, either affixing Sant to the name of Bhindrawale, and no further reference to the Panthic Committee as being Pakistan-based.
The official media and Department of Information and Public Relations complied with the Code. A succession of other codes followed on the use of Punjabi for all official purposes, enforcing various 'social reforms', declaring Amristsar, Anandpur Sahib and Damdama Sahib 'holy cities', a dress code for college girls and school children etc, were published by the Press.

The Committee gathered that the Information Department hand-outs, started using the term 'militants' for terrorists. So did AIR and Doordarshan. Official Press notes previously issued in English and occasionally in Punjabi, started being put out solely in Punjabi.

As far as the Press was concerned, all the newspapers and agencies had fallen in line, some completely, others not so completely. The two Leftist Jalandhar dailies, Nawa Zamana and Lok Lehar defied the Panthic Press code. Editors of six radical Left (Marxist-Leninist) weeklies also issued a statement denouncing the Panthic code as reported in the Statesman of January 2, 1991. The Leftist papers and journals enjoyed relatively modest to small circulations.

The Committee noted that Editors of many papers pointed out that 'death sentence' for non-compliance with the Panthic Press Code was made real when R.K.Talib, Station Director, AIR, a paralytic cancer patient was gunned down at his residence while on a leave two days before his daughter's marriage.

Doordarshan Jalandhar adopted the Panthic Press Code as soon as the news agencies did in late November. It reverted to normal usage after two or three days but resumed compliance after news readers and other staff received threats.
The position of AIR was equally sad. AIR- Chandigarh stopped airing its Hindi news bulletin with the announcement of the Press code and transferred this to Rothak, while Jalandhar AIR stopped relaying the Chandigarh Hindi bulletin though the bulletin continued to be prepared in Chandigarh.

The committee arrived at the following conclusions:

* The Committee pointed out that the Press was polarised just as the society in Punjab. The herd mentality is at work and is easily communicable. Many newsmen and editors have withstood continuous pressure for months and years with fortitude and courage, especially at Amritsar, though many others have possibly over-reacted. However, the Punjab Press (and their broadcast cousins) have a legit grievance in that their situation had not been properly appreciated and their struggle to uphold the freedom of the Press had not received the prompt and full throated support they expected and deserve by head offices, professional associations or the government. Few senior editors and executives of media organisation visited Punjab and the districts after the Panthic Press Code was announced. There was no attempt to evolve a common strategy as the Defamation Bill was in vogue then. The idea of a common editorial denouncing the panthic code was discussed in Delhi but shelved.

* The Committee realised that the Sohan Singh Panthic Committee backed by a brains trust of intellectuals and the intelligentsia shaped and wrote the various codes and Press notes with professional nuances and understanding of social relationships and Punjab's history and culture. The terrorist organisations dealing with the media had inside knowledge and used jargon like 'takes', 'slug', and 'creed'. They were familiar with internal structures and copy flows and used
the media as their prime line of communications to enforce their will more effectively

* The government too had no overall media strategy within a Punjab strategy. Its actions uncoordinated, faltering and ad hoc. The inability to use radio and television more purposefully in Punjab or Kashmir revealed the lack of a communication policy to demolish the ideological basis of the terrorists and their paymasters.

**Press in Assam**

* The Assam Press was warned of death in July 1990 if it infringed ULFA's code for coverage of events in the State. Printed letters demanded that the reporting of ULFA must have the prior approval of its Central Committee. In other words, ULFA proposed censorship. Within days journalists roundly denounced the ULFA code at a meeting held at the Guwahati Press Club. The assembled newsmen resolved that "the profession of journalism has its risks, but that should not deter newsmen from discharging their professional duties." (Prabhakara 1991: 8)

**Press in Jammu and Kashmir**

Like Punjab, the State of Jammu and Kashmir also witnessed a spurt in militancy in the 1980s. As a result, 1989 alone witnessed 171 bomb blasts, 18 deaths, 30 bandhs in Srinagar and several more in other parts of the valley. The violence not only paralysed the valley's economy but also created an atmosphere of hardship and uncertainty for its people. Under such conditions the Press had to toe the
line of the militants Under fear and pressure some widely circulated dailies published appeals by militant groups calling for boycott of Independence day celebrations which was declared as a 'Black Day'. They also published another report on a death sentence pronounced by an underground organisation against four allegedly Pakistan trained militants who had given up the path of terrorism and returned to the national mainstream. Two Anantnag based newspapers, Kashmiriyat and Hindi Nav were taken to task by the terrorists for their failure to comply with the latter's diktats.

It was alleged that a section of the Press in Jammu and Kashmir acted like the mouthpiece of the terrorists and provided a conduit linking the underground with the over ground wings of the militant movement. It was also argued that the existing State laws were punitive whereas the crisis of terrorism, secessionism and sabotage and the malicious and ceaseless campaign to whip up communal passions and inter regional tensions with the help of foreign powers warranted the enactment of some laws that could prevent the occurrence of violence in the State.


The Bill evoked strident criticism and strong protest and the Press Council of India sought suo motu to examine it. The Government at the meeting on 4 September 1989, argued that if the Press assured that it was prepared to break the nexus between the underground and the overground by not publishing advance notices or proposed action and programmes issued by the underground
as against merely publishing these events after their occurrence- the State Government would be willing to withdraw the Bill and rely on such a code of conduct. On the other hand if the Bill was to go forward the government would be willing to consider amendments designed to provide safeguards against possible abuse that would ‘improve’ the measure.

The Council observed that the State Government is invested with sufficient powers to deal effectively with any kind of behaviour on the part of the Press. However, the Government, did not use them to check or punish the gross misconduct of the Press The Council regretted that the Government had not lodged a single complaint. Though the Council was of the view that the existing laws could not deter the Press from publishing anything objectionable, it made explicit that the punitive laws, when enforced firmly and justly, would have certainly a preventing effect owing to their inherently deterrent character

* The Council further observed that pre censorship and freedom of the Press do not go together and feared that the remedy would be far worse than the disease. Declaring the Bill superfluous, it advised the Government to withdraw it

In its own words

The withdrawal of the Bill would be a statesman-like gesture

on the part of the Jammu and Kashmir Government This would strengthen its hands in dealing with the delicate and distressing situation that confronts it and the country

The Council suggested that a Press Advisory Council should be formed in the State which might provide a ‘useful forum for constructive dialogue, and help
evolve a sound working relationship between the authorities and the media that would promote Press freedom without prejudice to national interest. Codes could not be imposed upon the Press but must be encouraged to grow from within. The Council argued that unrest in Jammu and Kashmir was a symptom of a deeper malaise which had its roots in a variety of complex social, economic and political forces and which must be addressed. Mere suppression of certain news reports and notices by pre-censorship or loyal restraints could not solve these problems. Since the issue was political the Council advised the Government to build up public opinion in favour of constructive and cooperative action for the common good in the national interest. It further observed that it would examine objectionable reports and comments in the Press when these are brought to its notice by the Government.

Following the recommendations and suggestions by the Council, the Government withdrew the Bill. The situation further deteriorated in the State, posing more threat to one’s life and property. As a result, representatives of the national Press, Press Trust of India, United News of India and the news units of Radio and Kashmir and Doordarshan left the Valley. Only the people working in the local media were left behind. Some sections of the local media were also closed. The situation was certainly grim and distressing. The Press, therefore, urged the Governor of the State to send a report on the conditions of the media in general and of the Press in particular.

On 17 October 1990, the Governor, Girish Chandra Saxena, in his reply to the Council said that the local Press did not favour the idea of reconstitution of the Press Advisory Committee. Meanwhile the Press, became “more strident in its
anti-national writings” in a campaign “to lionise the secessionist elements and to bring the Government into disrepute.” The Governor further said that the threat to freedom of the Press has been from the side of the militants and not from the State Government.” The Editors, according to him, were forced to publish the Press notes issued by the militants at the gun point. When a few Editors threatened the militants that they would stop the publication of their newspapers as a matter of protest against their diktats, the latter hurled a bomb against the Srinagar Times on 2 October 1990. As a result most local newspapers including the leading ones closed down their establishments for five days from 5 to 10 October 1990. From January 1990, onward, while the Press in Srinagar increasingly assumed the role of supporting and guiding the militant movement, the media as a whole in the Valley came under severe pressure from the militants. The killing of the then Director of the Doordarshan, Lassa Kaul on 13 February 1990 sent strong signals to the media that they must either toe the line dictated by the terrorists or leave the State. The media personnel became panicky when they received threats. The militants also announced a “ban” in February on the distribution of national newspapers and threatened to kill anyone selling these papers.

The Pressmen based at Srinagar, like the Chiefs of Bureau of the UNI and PTI news agencies, correspondents of The Hindustan Times, The Times of India, Indian Express etc, felt highly unsafe which made them virtually non-functional. The brutal assassination of P.N Handoo, the Assistant Director of Information, on 1 March 1990 further scared the newsmen, particularly non-Muslim Pressmen and journalists from outside the State. All these persons were forced to flee the State.
These media persons operated from Jammu. From then onwards, news stories, communicated from Srinagar, were filed from Jammu.

The local British Broadcasting Corporation correspondent, who also represented The Telegraph (Published from Calcutta) and the Reuter, and the correspondent of Voice of America, continued to operate from Srinagar throughout. Similarly, The Times of India appointed a new correspondent in Srinagar.

Following the assassination of Lassa Kaul and P.N. Handoo, the media-persons feared for their lives. Most of the correspondents could not go to the Telegraph office every day to file their stories because of the Government and “civil” curfew restrictions. In addition, their free movement and fair reporting were very much restricted by the threats issued by the militants that they would be taken to task if they failed to carry out their orders. Many correspondents received telephonic threats warning them against blacking out or even editing the statements of militant outfits. Journalists were forced to migrate to Delhi or Jammu. The exodus left a media vacuum in Kashmir. It is because of threats, killings and breakdown in communications and difficulties of movement and access, Srinagar-based reporters were either unable to perform their job or had to operate under duress. The correspondents were forced to reflect an angle by terrorists to the exclusive of others.

It may be mentioned here that nearly 170 papers including weeklies and monthlies are published from the State of Jammu and Kashmir (Jammu: 140 and Kashmir: 30). Many of these papers are published irregularly or their circulations are limited. While four principal Urdu dailies - Aftab, Srinagar Times, Al Safa and Wadi Ki awaz - are published from Kashmir, Jammu boasts of two English
Since 1988, the Press in Kashmir has been reflecting the changing ethos in the Valley—alienation, euphoria, resignation and fear. Empathy with the people's movement in 1989 and early 1990 could be assumed to have been more or less universal. Not all the papers wanted to yield to the demands of the militants. Not all of them wanted to act as the mouthpieces of militancy. The Press was "ebullient" after countering official efforts to enact the Kashmir Press Bill and "rode the popular tide."

Underground leaders suddenly came to lime light as they were quoted, interviewed and photographed. They soon found to their surprise in media publicity a powerful instrument of advancing their cause while this in turn fuelled the public response to their advocacy in a chain reaction. "All this made evocative copy. Circulation rose, and paid disavowals by alleged informers and other provided good advertisement revenue. As a result of militancy and violence, the representatives of the Press and the agencies found it difficult to function normally in the surcharged atmosphere of 'low-intensity warfare' that prevailed in the valley. Life continued amidst killings, bomb-blasts, shoot outs, kidnappings, cordon-and-search operations and clamping of curfews very often. To avoid any untoward happenings, most correspondents were housed in a Government colony or in the MLA's hostel located in Central and somewhat secure neighbourhoods.

Access to information was severely restricted. Most of the news was security-related and these were officially made available daily through the office of the Director General of Police. The Department of Information either distributed the news releases with bare information to correspondents at designated addresses or
flashed messages on telephone  On-the-spot visits were rarely taken and when they become a must the reporters moved in groups to avoid any danger to their life or property

Dictated by the militants and controlled by the Government, the Press in Kashmir was unable to disseminate right information. Providing disinformation to its readers has become a common phenomenon on its part. The Government and the militants wanted the Press to publish something which suited them and they did not bother for actual occurrence of these events. Much emphasis is laid by them on what should be said rather than on what may have happened. Newsmen also report a considerable variance in figures of damage or loss caused by arson in some instances as between the official version and ground observation. It is pertinent to observe that the Press correspondents in Kashmir are not only harassed by the militants but also by the security personnel who do not honour their identity cards and curfew passes and subject them to humiliation and delay.

At present, the threat to freedom of the Press in Kashmir comes primarily from the climate of fear and insecurity generated by the militants supported by Pakistan. The Press in general and the local Press in particular was vulnerable as it has been working in a most uncertain and hazardous security environment. It has been working under tremendous pressure and heavy odds. Bewilderment and dilemma are easily discernible in the journalists including the editors “They feel isolated and alone in their perilous assignment or agonising predicament”. Their feelings are to be shared by the “doyens” of the profession and professional associations in the rest of the country. They also need the latter’s guidance, cooperation and help in undertaking their job. Necessary steps should be taken by all to restore the freedom of the Press in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.
In April 1996, the Government issued a circular addressed to the editors said, "you are advised to desist from publishing any objectionable material in your newspapers, failing which the Government would be constrained to initiate necessary legal action." The circular listed some of the objectionable material which is violative of legal provisions and should not be published in the newspapers as follows:

(a) Publication of threat or reports that tantamount to criminal intimidation, create alarm, scare or fear in the minds of individuals groups of people, government servants, political workers, etc with a view to force them not to do or do some thing which he/she is legally bound to do or not to do

(b) Publication of interviews, statements, speeches of terrorists, secessionists aiming at terrorising the people, abetting violence, promoting secessionism, communalism, ill-will and hatred among various communities and sections of populations.

(c) Publication of militants' call for bandh, disruption of public life, essential supplies, electoral process or for any activity prejudicial to public peace and security of the state and country.

(d) Publication of material which is prejudicial to the unity and integrity of the state and the country or directly or indirectly express lack of faith in the Constitution of India and of Jammu and Kashmir State.

(e) Publication of any inflammatory matter likely to foment communal disharmony, regional tension, violence or public disorder.
Publication of reports or obituary advertisements of killed terrorists which aim at glorifying acts of militant violence, killing of innocent civilians and security forces, eulogising slain terrorists. "Publication of these objectionable and subversive material in the newspapers attracts provisions of various laws including Ranbir Penal code, Criminal Procedure Code, the Newspaper (Incitement to Offences) Act and criminal proceeding could be launched against the erring editors", the circular said. The circular asked Press persons that if they face any threats to their lives they should approach the police authorities for providing need based security after necessary assessment.

The Government, according to the circular, felt that many newspapers were publishing highly objectionable material in gross violation of the laws which it considered amounted to direct or indirect abetment in commission of offences and creating disturbances. Such publications usually culminated in killings, murders and physical harm to people and damage and destruction of public and private properties which are sought to be justified in the media on one pretext or the other.

The Government contended that the matter was considered at various levels with reference to the constitutional requirements and legal provisions. Even while assuring that the Freedom of the Press enshrined in the constitution would be upheld, the Home Department banned the publication of militant and secessionist statements. Those violating the directives would attract action under the provisions of various laws and criminal proceedings could be launched against the erring editors.
On the other hand the outlawed Hizbul Mujahideen directed the editors not to publish Government advertisements and developmental stories.

Following these curbs imposed by the Government and the militants all the Urdu and English dailies decided to suspend publication for an indefinite period from April 20, 1996. While this was the response of the Government to the pressures faced by the media, nations across the globe evolved different policies to deal with terrorist acts.

2.4 Studies in the West on Terrorism and Media

a) Policy

Concern with terrorism has provoked much discussion about news coverage, especially live broadcasts of terrorist incidents. Such varied activities as those of the Red Army Faction (Baader-Meinhof Gang) in the Federal Republic of Germany, the Red Army in Japan, the Red Brigades in Italy, Israeli and Palestinian terror strikes, bombings by separatist groups in Spain, Canada, and India, resistance to state-supported terror squads in Argentina, the Tupamaros of Uruguay, the Irish Republican Army, State terrorism in South Africa, has resulted in bans and limitations on news reporting in many countries. These have ranged from the temporary suspension of liberties in Canada to the Prevention of Terrorism Act in the United Kingdom and the strict censorship of the Press in South Africa.

Most of the controversy over Press coverage of terrorism revolves around who should control the news and on the basis of what objectives. The Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1974, for example, was enacted in the
United Kingdom in the wake of an IRA bombing which killed 21 people and injured over 160. The Act suspends civil liberties for anyone suspected of supporting the IRA or withholding information about it. Under its provisions, the police seized a copy of a 15-minute untransmitted film shot by a BBC crew at an incident at Carrickmore. After a long debate in Parliament and in the Press, the government decided not to prosecute the BBC, but rules on reporting were tightened.

In a statement issued on 10 March 1982, the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) urged news personnel to 'remain professionally detached' from events they cover, get advance clearance from the management for interviews with 'very important persons', and avoid live broadcast of terrorist incidents 'except in the most compelling circumstances, and then only with the approval of the President of ABC News or a designated Vice President'. The policy statement warns reporters not to jeopardize the lives of hostages, nor to interfere with efforts to free them, nor to allow 'terrorists to use or manipulate us for their own ends'. Even when these (often conflicting) rules are scrupulously observed, the statement notes, coverage may aggravate an already serious situation and contribute to its escalation. Nevertheless, it continues, 'we cannot regard suppression of such reporting s being justified. To suppress news of terrorism would raise serious questions of credibility on other issues ('What else are they keeping from us?') To suppress the news would surrender objective reporting to whatever rumours were being circulated And to suppress the news for whatever reason, good or bad, violates the fundamental principle that governs a free Press in a free society.' The principle of independent and often ad hoc decision making is even more firmly established in the print media, which are traditionally less
dependent on government than are licensed broadcasters. In September 1976, a group of Croatian nationalists hijacked a passenger jet bound for Chicago and demanded front page publication of their statement. The Washington Post, whose Editor once said 'We pride ourselves that the President of the United States can't tell us what to put on Page One published the hijackers' lengthy manifesto on Page One.

The following year Hanafi Muslims seized three buildings in Washington, D.C., killed a radio journalist and took more than 100 hostages. Media blunders and interference with the police led to much discussion about Press guidelines. The National News Council, a media watch group since disbanded, urged the Press to avoid the dangers of live coverage and of telephoning terrorists or hostages during the event. Most editors nevertheless continued to oppose written guidelines.

Widely publicized airline hijackings in the mid-1980s and other events during which hostages were taken generated further controversy about media coverage. Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger called for a voluntary blackout of all coverage of terrorist activity. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher urged restraint ‘to starve the terrorist and the hijacker of the oxygen of publicity on which they depend’ The Reuters news agency instructed reporters not to write stories about terrorist threats nor to name Reuters or any other agency as having received statements of responsibility for terrorist actions.

A survey on terrorism and the Press in the American Newspaper Publishers (ANPA) trade paper PressTime (August 1986) commented that 'some news executives on the terrorism speaking circuit joke about the "cottage industry"
that has grown up around the topic', and concluded that no uniform standard
could be formulated or enforced

A collection of essays on Terrorism, The Media and the Law (Miller, 1982 13) analysed the relationship between law enforcement and journalism, and presented reports and recommendations by the National News Council, the United States Department of State, CBS television, two newspapers and the UPI news agency

Surveys carried out among police chiefs and journalists show much disagreement. The courts refused to hold the Press immune from the due process of law or to assure it of the unlimited right to gather information in critical situations. Legislatures in many countries have reacted to public outcry by enacting measures that also limit media autonomy. Police chiefs tend to see live media coverage as a threat to law enforcement and to the safety of hostages

Picard (1987) pointed out in his study of the news coverage of terrorist incidents that while all mainstream media support the social order of which they are a part, commercial media have a special clientele in the business community that subsidizes them through advertising. Their independence from government control is thus a commercial necessity, though the media will voluntarily adhere to the government's point of view when it is compatible with that of the advertisers.

Schlesinger, Murdock, and Elliot (1982) provided a comprehensive account of British practice in their study Televising Terrorism, Political Violence in Popular Culture. They concluded that the system which developed through the troubles in
Northern Ireland, the Falklands' war, the controversies over fictional violence, and other incidents is 'constrained not only by the different kinds of programme forms available but also by the complex modes of control and pressure which the state and the wider political establishment can bring to bear on broadcasting. This exercise of power is usually discreet, but when it is judged worth having a row, it may take a highly public form.

The Italian experience with terrorism presents one type of media coverage and government response. The experience involved nearly 5,000 kidnappings between 1973 and 1978, Red Brigade bombings and assassinations, the long and internationally involved trial of Mehmet Ali Agca, Mafia hit squads, and Palestinian hijackers. It created a severe and prolonged political crisis. Parties from the whole political spectrum demanded and obtained stronger law enforcement and other legislation to deal with the crisis.

But the plurality of forces and voices helped to preserve the legitimacy (and tenure) of the government and to avert the scenario of severe repression with its ultimately destabilizing consequences. The Italian policy of restrained coverage coupled with relatively little direct government interference is claimed to have thwarted the aim of the Red Brigades, which was to provoke measures so harsh as to force the state to 'drop the mask' of legality and democracy. Although the media in the United States continued to put increasing emphasis on international terrorism throughout the 1970s, the authoritative chronology of transnational terrorism by Mickolus (1980) showed that the frequency of incidents peaked in 1972 with 480 that year, and subsequently declined to an average of 340 per year. However, the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation reported a
decline in domestic terrorism and an increase in international acts from about 500 a year in the early 1980s to almost 800 in 1984. A North Atlantic Assembly study reported in The New York Times (14 November 1986) noted an average of about 500 terrorist attacks a year, worldwide, while United States government figures quoted in the same news item claimed 488 such incidents in the first half of 1986 alone. Many of the reports and statements accompanying them focused on the Middle East. There have been no such authoritative and equally well publicized statistics of State or anti-State terrorism in Africa, Latin America or Asia.

Extensive documentation of the role that media selections and definitions of terrorism play in national and international politics may be found in the work of Said (1980), Chomsky (1986), Herman (1982) and their associates. Chomsky and Herman distinguish ‘official’ State violence which they call ‘wholesale terror’ and individual and small scale violence, or ‘retail terror’.

They contend that the way in which the media focus on ‘retail violence’ tends to justify ‘wholesale violence’ against opponents of the State at home and abroad.

b) Coverage of Terrorism

bibliography of studies conducted by the Rand Corporation lists some 90 publications on international terrorism alone.

Although international terrorism by and against states received most attention, Bassiouni (1981, 1982: 128) and others point out that terrorist acts in a national context far outnumber international ones. Disappearances, bombings, kidnappings, and State violence in many countries, often unreported, claim thousands of times more victims than do well publicized acts of international terror.

Wurth-Hough (1983: 403) documented the roles of media coverage of terrorism in selecting events and defining analysed. He studied the New York Times' coverage of the IRA, the Red Brigades, and the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional (FALN) from 1 July 1977 to 30 June 1979 and found no basis for the charge that coverage legitimizes the cause of terrorist organization nor its supporters, and the 7 per cent that did mention names surrounded them with statements issued by authorities.

In a follow-up study of American network news, Milburn et al. (1987), also noted the frequent omission of any causal explanation for terrorist acts, and the attribution of mental instability to terrorists and their leaders (Similar States were more frequently explained). The implication, the researchers noted, was that "you can't negotiate with crazy people".

Knight and Dean (1982: 144) provided a detailed account of how the Canadian Press coverage of the siege and recapturing of the Iranian embassy in London form Arab nationalist 'gunmen' served to assert the efficiency and legitimacy of
violence by the British Special Air Service. In the process of transforming crime and punishment into a selectively choreographed newsworthy event, the media have to some extent assumed the functions of moral and political - in short, ideological - reproduction performed previously (and limitedly) by the visibility of the public highly publicized and 'morally coherent' scenarios of violence and terror have made public punishment unnecessary as demonstrations of State ideology and power.

In their detailed case study of the 'Bulgarian connection' in the trial of Mehmet Ali Agca, Herman and power. They traced a trail of false evidence and widespread disinformation creating an 'institutionalized myth' of enduring ideological utility, despite the acquittal of the alleged conspirators.

Silj (1978) studied the interplay of the media and political forces in the coverage of Aldo Moro's kidnapping and murder. The Italian crisis brought about by terrorism and its coverage in the Press did not result in severe repression or a change in government, as the terrorists claimed they expected. Sciascia's (1986) book-length study of the 'Moro Affair' came to the conclusion that, on the contrary, the kidnapping and murder strengthened the unity of the government it was supposed to shatter. The Red Brigades struck down the architect of the historic collaboration between the Communist and Christian Democratic parties. As both, and particularly the Communists, took a strong stand against terrorism, and as the Italian Press includes strong party organs, the act could not be easily exploited for partisan advantage.
A contrasting outcome was the subject of study by Ozyegin (1986). He conducted an analysis of the Turkish Press in three political periods marked by changes in government from 1976 to 1980. He found that the terms 'terrorist' and 'anarchist' were used interchangeably and were used by the mass circulation right and centre papers to indicate left-wing political activity. These papers also tended to ignore less violent political protests, demonstrations, and movements. The left-wing daily paper tended to identify right-wing perpetrators of violence as terrorists, and covered a much larger number of political strikes and demonstrations without using the label.

Over time, the 'terrorist' label became so firmly attached to leftist violence that left-wing papers stopped using it. Ultimately, media coverage appeared to discredit the centre-left government and pave the way for a military government. The role of the media was found to be 'an unprecedented symbolic unification of the entire nation under the military rule against the common enemy: the anarchy, the terror.' The Turkish political and media context, unlike the Italian, lent itself to the use of terrorism for political advantage, besides its usual function of enhancing state, rather than terrorist, power.

c) Hostage Crises

Altheide (1982: 482) studied American television network news coverage of the taking of American hostages in Iran in 1980. He found that the similarity among the networks amounted to a 'national news service' with a limited view of the events. Iranian students in the United States received more attention than did internal events in Iran. He concluded that the broadcasts contributed little to historical or political understanding.
Larson (1986, 108) provided a more detailed examination. His study traced American television news coverage of Iran from before the revolution to the aftermath of the hostage crisis. In the little news broadcast about Iran during the last six years of the Shah's regime he found that the emphasis was on oil and arms. Visits of dignitaries were covered. Occasional demonstrations and violence, when noted at all, were attributed to unnamed 'anti-Shah groups' or 'Marxist guerrillas'. Signs of internal instability were generally ignored, and coverage rarely strayed from the administration line.

The interplay between media and terrorists is described by Palmerton (1983) and further developed as a 'rhetorical genre' by Dowling (1986, 418). Focusing the discussion on 'crusaders who practice terrorism for political ends', and 'seek to change the world, yet lack the power to do so', Dowling traces various tactics for gaining attention and credibility from the media. The purpose is not so much to gain converts as to obtain concessions, weaken authority by defying it, or provoke the authorities into violent, repressive, or other actions that may discredit them. However, the ability of the media to define the situation in the long run, and the symbiotic relationship between the media and the authorities, make it possible for those in power to turn the terrorist 'rhetoric' to their own advantage.

On the coverage of the Gulf war by the Cable News Network, Smith (1991, 125), CNN military analyst admits that the CNN beat the much touted network newscasts and allowed itself to become an instrument of enemy propaganda with its reports from Baghdad after Iraq imposed censorship. Smith makes it explicit that Peter Arnett, CNN correspondent could have pushed harder against Iraqi...
censorship and should have been concerned with filing a complete and accurate daily report staying in Iraq.

Acts of terrorism may be committed by individuals with or without any indoctrination. But, such extremist operations acquire a different connotation when executed by ideologically committed persons as their views of the society, state and the various institutions are different. In the context of the present study the Left theoreticians' views of the Press are relevant as the Naxalites believe in their perspective.

2.5 Left Theoreticians on the Press

The Left Wing Parties draw heavily from the ideologies of Marx, Lenin and Mao and this section deals with the theoretical discussion on the role assigned to the Press by Marx, Lenin and Mao. A critique offered by Lenin on the bourgeoisie Press is dealt with. In the subsequent units field data from ideologues on the character of the Press in Andhra Pradesh, its ideology and the coverage is also presented.

The Marxist-Leninist theory sees the Press as a channel through which the party can influence the masses, communicate with them and direct them in the process of constructing the classless society. It sees the Press as Sbornik (1957 39) says, 'a tool of education and organisation of the society on the principles of scientific socialism'.

Later, Stalin wrote the second definition of the Press in the hierarchy of propaganda media. The generally accepted summary of these is as follows.
To propagate the ideas of Marxism and Leninism, agitate people for the principles of the party, organise workers in their fight for the application of these principles in everyday life, to forge a lasting link with the popular masses; educate them in the spirit of communism; explain the policy of the party and government; foster vigorously a habit of criticism and self criticism; organise self emulation; fight for power and to expose warmongers.

To sum up, the Marxist-Leninist theory assigns the following functions to the Press. 'Mass propagandist, mass agitator and a mass organiser and mass critic and controller.'

In a letter to two party members, Mao Tse Tung (1959) assigned five major functions to the Press: 'to organise, to stimulate or encourage, to agitate, to criticise and to propel.'

Mao went on to explain:

1. To organise is to accurately propagate the objectives, policies, and directives of the party, it is to mobilize and organize people into a powerful force to realise and to struggle for the various great tasks prescribed by the party at different stages in history.

2. To fully develop the function of agitation and stimulation,
editors must wholeheartedly integrate the creativeness of the masses with their emotions and energy to reflect accurately and timely the accomplishments of the various fronts, they should further learn to make use of the experience of the people's success to suggest new demands, to agitate the masses to compete with or challenge those who have gained early successes.

3 The most important function of criticism of the Press is to be able to select issues and to present convincing arguments to attack the various shades of opportunism, conservatism, and destructive capitalism, to assure the establishment of socialism, to conquer pessimism, and to mobilise aggressivism.'

For the Chinese Communists, news was 'the process of developing socialism and eventually Communism.' Lu Ting-I (1958: 144), Director of the Department of Propaganda of the Chinese Communist Party, said, 'the Press is an instrument of class struggle.' Also Teng Kuo (1958), Editor of the People's Daily said, 'the Press is the most powerful and effective weapon to mobilise and organize masses for the building of socialism, particularly the fight for agricultural production.'
Lenin and the Bourgeois Press

Lenin's ideas and themes 'the Party and the Press' and 'socialism and the Press' marked a considerable advance in the development of the Marxist theory and lay at the basis of the theory and practice of Communist journalism throughout the world. No less valuable are his thoughts on 'capitalism and the Press' to which he devoted several other works 'The Journal Svoboda' (1901), 'Party organisation and Party Literature' (1905), 'Martov's and Cherevann's pronouncements in the Bourgeois Press' (1906), Concerning Vekhi' (1909), 'A career' (1912). The Soviet English translation of Lenin's Collected Works was reprinted in 1980. His comments on the bourgeois press have been gleaned from this edition.

Lenin's immense merit is that he deprived the bourgeois Press of its aura of being a supernatural force, he resolutely showed up its class nature and utter dependence on the ruling class. Internal haggling between the bourgeois newspapers and journals constitutes contention over individual aspects of policy. Irrespective of political nuances, the entire bourgeois Press within a capitalist state is a weapon for consolidating the power of the bourgeois. This is glaringly apparent when that power or its hallowed right of private ownership is threatened. It closes its ranks against such a threat. Lenin's conclusions dealt a blow both to the theories of bourgeois journalism, which tried to portray the bourgeois Press as a special above class force of a purely information communication nature, and to the practice of the bourgeois Press. Lenin's theoretical ideas helped in each separate case to unmask the biased nature not only of bourgeois journalism, but also the so-called objective information provided by the bourgeois Press.
He demonstrated convincingly that the publication of a newspaper or magazine in capitalist society is a normal commercial undertaking requiring the investment of a great deal of capital for acquiring up to date typographical equipment and paper and for maintaining staff. Only big entrepreneurs, the wealthy those who have at their disposal large sums or shares can afford such outlay. The political trend of the publication will naturally be under their control, at any rate on such principally important issues for the bourgeois has power and the right of private ownership.

Even at the dawn of capitalist entrepreneurship in the world of Press, Lenin saw in advertising, a mechanism by which representatives of the big capital, seeming to stand outside publishing could exercise a decisive influence on the Press and the entire propaganda machine and dictate its terms of conduct. He showed that the advertising mechanism, the advertising business was drawing the bourgeois Press irresistibly into the world of buying and selling, the world of spiritual and moral depravity associated with the laws of the bourgeois commerce and its paramount principle ‘deceiving to sell’ revenue from advertising ensured quite a high level of payment to bourgeois journalists for writing words of order.

In his analysis and evaluation of the content of the bourgeois Press as a whole, Lenin frequently pointed to the shallowness of these papers, the absence of any reference to the serious issues of the day in both papers and magazines. Bourgeois publicists, said, Lenin possessed, an amazing capacity to ‘pass over in complete silence the great ideological questions’ but he ‘will tell you in detail all that is well known in the servants rooms’ (Collected Works, 18 318)
Lenin more than once pilloried and mocked the bourgeois Press for its predilection for piquant tit-bits from the lives of crowned and uncrowned personalities— the henchmen of the capitalist class— for their engagements, weddings, peregrinations, junketings, handshakes, gossipping and rendezvous. Each time he forcibly made the point that this was nothing more than a device by which the bourgeois Press veered away from discussing painful issues affecting social life.

With regret, Lenin noted in March 1918 that ‘the Soviet Press has devoted excessive space and attention to the petty political issues, the personal questions of political leadership by which the capitalists of all the countries have striven to divert the attention of the masses from the really important, profound and fundamental questions of life’. (*Collected Works*, 27: 203)

He felt that the problem had to be tackled in a radically new way. Regarding the purpose of the flow of news such as new appointments, honours and official ceremonies, Lenin said ‘The sensational reports cooked up daily by the bourgeois newspapers, whose occupation it is to sell the ‘latest’ and the ‘most exciting’ news at a profit, are designed specifically to distract the attention of the crowd from the really important questions and the real background of ‘high’ politics’ (*Collected Works* 36: 228).

Lenin often directed his journalistic fire at this aspect of the bourgeois Press. He was aiming at the bourgeois Press itself, its approach to reality, its methods of work; and in part the ridiculous fads and fancies of the readers which the bourgeois Press then played on. In the first case his words were merciless and devastating in their pamphleteering style. In the second, he used irony, in which
there was reproach sympathy, the hope for a change in the bad taste of the reading public. For instance, his description of readership: 'The man on the street, swallowing everything he is told, listens to these fables, taking them at their face value, and blindly following the swindlers who try to divert 'public' attention with exactly the kind of thing that serves their interest.' This summing up conveys a wish that such readers would not accept newspaper frauds on trust, and not take their fables and old wives' tales as the absolute truth.

More than once, Lenin drew the attention of his readers to the fact that the bourgeois Press often drummed up petty issues, and sometimes even pseudo issues in lieu of a profound and serious analysis of the vital questions of the day.

Lenin formulated the roots of the disease of the bourgeois Press as follows: Disdain for conditions as they really are and for economic evolution as it really is, unwillingness to analyse the real interests of the different classes of Russian Society in their inter-relationships, the habit of laying down the law from above, about the 'needs' and the 'destiny' of the fatherland, of boasting about the miserable survivals of medieval associations that exist in the Russian village communities.' (Collected Works 2: 321)

Disdain for real and economic processes, the avoidance of any analysis of the interests of individual classes in present day capitalist society, and supercilious-superficial judgements on the 'needs' and 'destinies' of the common people in their own and other countries are all features of the bourgeois Press to this day, engendering shallow journalism and evasion of really essential socio-economic problems.
Lenin relentlessly exposed the phrase mongering habits of the bourgeois Press. With their verbal clamour, biting sarcasm and florid prose, bourgeois papers usually masked their emptiness, their divorce from reality and vagueness of political programmes of the parties and groups in whose name they were published. As a campaigning journalist, Lenin always contrasted the loud noises made by the bourgeois papers about 'social evils', their pompous pronouncements, with their woolly thinking on such measures as they actually recommended for getting of the social evils. 'We greatly love to chatter about culture, about the development of productive forces, about improving the peasant farm, and so on, and we are past masters at it. Yet whenever, it comes to removing the stone that lies in the way of 'improving the lot' of millions of impoverished, downtrodden, hungry, ragged peasants, our millionaires become tongue tied.' (Collected Works 19:309)

Lenin was particularly sarcastic when writing about the verbal orgy in the bourgeois Press during election campaigns, seeing this as an inevitable process rather than a simple coincidence. 'All elections in a bourgeois country are accompanied by rampant phrase mongering and licentious promises,' he wrote in 1912 at the time of elections to the Fourth State Duma. (Collected Works 36:191)

The State Duma was an elected legislative body with restricted rights, set up by the autocracy under pressure from the 1905-07 revolution.

The main objective of the bourgeois Press organs was invariably quite cynical— to throw sand in the eyes of the electorate, to instil in them a temporary belief in the promises of the party whose programme most suited the political interests of the publishers and editors of a given periodical. Lenin saw that the main task of the
Party, its Press, editors and publicists in such circumstances was 'not to trust words but to go to the heart of the matter' With the whole force of his campaigning talent Lenin waded into the bourgeois publicists for their gaze precisely what they had scrupulously striven to conceal behind their strident phrases. 'Put no faith in phrase mongering, it is better to see who stands to gain!' (Collected Works 19 53)

Lenin appealed to readers of the phrase mongering bourgeois Press The strident tone almost invariably concealed a definite class and political self-interest- that was Lenin's argument in his polemic against the bourgeois Press as he strove to show a wide readership this hidden part of the message 'Empty phrases, lame excuses' was Lenin's description of the above mentioned article from the Promyshlennost-i-Torgovlya paper Not simply phrase mongering for the sake of phrase mongering but for the sake of evasion evasion of what? Of the most pressing issues of the moment. The theme of the mendacity of the bourgeois Press is fairly frequently mentioned in Lenin's works devoted to the theme of 'capitalism and the Press' He enumerated four different aspects of this mendacity.

First, the bourgeois Press was false because it was obliged to defend the cause of the exploiting minority, to safeguard the interests of the ruling classes to the detriment of the interests of the overwhelming majority of the working population; it had to advertise the decadent social system. It was therefore false in the widest meaning of the word, false before history.

Secondly, organs of the bourgeois Press were deceitful in their concrete political programmes, which were drawn up without taking account of the class
relationships within the country, without allowing for profound and irreconcilable social antagonistic contradictions, or for the historical perspectives of social development. They therefore reacted to the most complex, essential, profound and antagonistic social contradictions and problems by giving vent to a sort of foolish hypocrisy or hypocritical foolishness! (Collected Works 19 309)

Thirdly, the bourgeois Press was often false in its reporting of specific events and the facts of life. The unintended life, simple carelessness as regards the accuracy of information was widespread, for the reason that it was the only way to engender sensation, and without sensation the publishers could not make their super profits. Finally there was yet another variety of the "Specific lie" that was widely practised. Silence on facts and events that it was not in their interest to mention.

Having in mind a general picture of the bourgeois Press, Lenin noted with ire: 'Once in a while they 'discover' in every big city and any rural backwoods, appalling, abominable squalor, want and neglect unworthy of human beings. They 'discover' them, inform the public through the big newspapers, comment on the fact for a day or two, and then forget it. The sated do not understand the hungry" (Collected Works 18 545) That was the principle underlying the mendacity of the bourgeois Press on matters of import: silence on the most taxing and dangerous social ailments and avoidance of burning socio-political and economic problems

Lenin was able to perceive one of the typical and essential features of the bourgeois Press. It exists to this day, as soon as the internal political situation
worsens in any capitalist country, it begins to play up the bogey of a communist
danger, the threat of anarchy, extremism and violence. It also let loose the scare
of civil war, for, as Lenin remarked, "of all the methods of intimidation, that of
scaring with civil war is perhaps the most widespread" (Collected Works 26 28)

Lenin saw the bourgeois Press as an organic component of the superstructure of
capitalist society with all the consequences that this entailed. For example, he
linked the issue of freedom of the Press with that of bourgeois freedom generally,
the bourgeois attitudes to slogans of freedom of conscience, assembly and speech
in the process of historical development (from sincere proclamations when
fighting feudalism to blatant opportunism and utter violation when fighting
socialism). What freedom of the Press for the working people can there be in
present-day capitalist countries, the advertising business and so on are all in the
hands of the capitalists? He touched upon the theme of "capitalism and the
Press". There could be no prevaricating: One cannot talk of any freedom of the
Press for working people in such conditions, one can only talk of freedom of the
Press for the propertied classes. "All over the world, wherever there are
capitalists, freedom of the Press means freedom to buy up newspapers, to buy
writers, to bribe, buy and fake 'public opinion for the benefit of the bourgeoisie.'
(Collected Works 32 505)

The myth of the bourgeois Press as an expression of public opinion was created
by bourgeois theoreticians of journalism so as to mask its class nature. Bourgeois
sociologists saw the category of "public opinion" They always presented it as an
arithmetical mean of popular will. It was precisely the bourgeois Press, the
bourgeois spends vast quantities of money moulding it with the aid of that very
Press, and nowadays with the help of television and radio as well Lenin almost invariably put this concept in inverted commas or added “so-called public opinion”.

In treating the Press as a superstructural category, Lenin arrived at a very important conclusion: the Press does more than express the interests of the ruling class, it actively defends them and is a weapon used to safeguard those interests. What is more, it is always both a partisan and a class force. No bourgeois paper or journal can stand aside from partisan differentiation of the big, medium and petty bourgeoisie. Lenin regarded attempts by editorial boards to advertise their publications as exclusively non-partisan or being above partisan strife as either political blindness or a deliberate ploy or device calculated to gain a wider readership and to deceive the working people. He always mocked publishers’ claims being non-partisan.

As a counter to naive or malevolent attempts to bring out non-partisan Press organs, Lenin issued the well-known slogan “Down with non-partisan writers! Down with literary superman!” (Collected Works 10 45). He thereby emphasised yet again the impossibility of a non-partisan Press existing in class society. The non-partisan journalist is just as absurd a phenomenon as superman. Lenin used this slogan to summon the proletarian Press, as counterbalance to the bourgeois Press, openly to proclaim its partisanship.

Lenin’s historic service was to substantiate the need to do away with the bourgeois Press during the socialist revolution. This conclusion emanated from the entire set of views Lenin held on the bourgeois Press as both a part of the capitalist superstructure and as a weapon of class and partisan struggle.
days after the October 10, revolution in 1917, Lenin showed persistence and initiative in achieving the adoption of the “Decree on introducing a State Monopoly on Advertising” which he had carefully edited. This put into effect Lenin's long-held idea of depriving the bourgeois Press of its main source of income, thereby blocking the channel through which the bourgeoisie were generously nurturing their ideological service with the aid of payments for advertisements, were financing its technical base, expenditure on paper and salaries for hacks ready for any twists and turns of thought.

Lenin's ideas on the issue of 'capitalism and the Press still serve as a theoretical base for Left ideologues, including the Left Wing Extremists in Andhra Pradesh.

The preceding discussion points to several facts 1) the role assigned to the Press in conflict situations 2) the nature and character of the Press as viewed by the Left theoreticians 3) the pressures subjected on the Press as revealed through the Reports of the Press Council of India. Studies in the West focus on the policy to be adopted by the media during such 'extremist operations'. In this context, the working of the Press in an agrarian conflict with overtones of insurgency is sought to be examined.