

Chapter III

Overview of Indian Newspaper Industry

3.1. Introduction

The Press in India and elsewhere refers to the print media including newspapers, periodicals, magazines, news agencies, press syndicates and any other organised publishings and materials. The idea behind forming the Press is not only to share public information but also to create a powerful vehicle of expression and feedback for the nation and its people. This has impelled journalism and mass communication to evolve unimaginably in terms of content, coverage, context presentation, and technology. Of the constituents of the Press, however, newspapers are the most important business and social proposition. Yet, this is changing now at an accelerated pace owing to the imperious prevalence of Information Technology products.

In this regard, this chapter is devoted to the study of the beginning, growth and development of newspapers in the Indian context. Its history and evolution, growth profile, historical time line, the fate of the very first newspaper, administration and environment, details about prominent and oldest newspapers and the present governing bodies are analysed. Here, although the history of Indian print media is centuries old, it is largely associated with that of Europe, both socially and technologically. Hence overlapping of aspects could be observed at some instances. Secondly, the old names of cities are

presented as are in the archives for the sake of clarity and faithfulness. Yet, their new names are put in brackets at the beginning.

3.2. History of Growth and Development

There were written newsletters during the Mogul dynasty in the 16th century India. The first ever printing press was established in Bombay (now, Mumbai) in 1674. It was followed by a second one in Madras (now, Chennai) in 1711 and the third one in Calcutta (now, Kolkatta) in 1779. In the year 1780, India had its first official newspaper namely Bengal Gazette published by James Augustus Hickey. However, before that in 1766 a British editor William Bolts established a printing press for his fellow countrymen in Calcutta. He published a book of 500 pages which detailed the alleged corrupt activities of the British East India Company. It also lamented the supposed hardships faced by Indian people at the hands of the East India Company. For this writing against the British Government, Bolts was forcefully sent back to England within two years of his establishing the press. Following William Bolts, James Augustus Hicky too took an anti-government stance. His Bengal Gazette was much more vociferous in criticising the Government. For these reasons, Hicky's Bengal Gazette survived only for two years and Hicky was both fined and imprisoned. The fate of James Augustus Hicky and his Bengal Gazette is a unique case in the history of Indian journalism which deserves a separate subheading and hence is presented following this subsection. Another newspaper, India Gazette was introduced in November 1781. Not only was it

pro-Government, but also took a stand against anyone criticising the British East India Company.

Following those dramatic happenings, another newspaper was published in Madras in 1785 named, the Madras Courier. Following that, journalism in Bombay began with the Bombay Herald in 1789. Pursuantly, Bombay Courier was launched in 1792 in Bombay. It was similar to the Madras Courier and published advertisements in English and Gujarati. In the meantime, in 1799, the British East India Company passed regulations to enhance and tighten its control over the Press. In 1816, Indians printed their first newspaper in Calcutta. It was also called Bengal Gazette and was published by Gangadhar Bhattacharjee. It was a liberal paper which advocated the reforms of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who was a prominent journalist and social reformer of the time. He associated himself with many publications. Initially he found the first Persian weekly, Mirat ul Ukhbar in Calcutta. Roy was later associated with Bengal Herald which was printed in Bengali, Persian, Hindi and English. Moreover he published The Brahmanical Magazine, an English periodical purportedly to counter the religious propaganda of the Christian missionaries of Serampore in Bengal.

Pursuantly the first newspaper in a vernacular language was Dig Darshan in Bengali. It was published as a monthly newspaper from 1818 by J.C. Marksman, a Baptist missionary. It soon became a weekly newspaper. Moreover in 1829 it become bilingual with English and Bengali publications

that covered local and foreign news. During the early 1820's many vernacular papers appeared in Gujarati and Bengali that were active in religious and social journalism. Of them, notable one was the Chandrika Samachar started in 1822 in Bengal. In the same year in Bombay, the Bombay Samachar was started by Ferdunji Marzban. These papers gave importance to social reform and commercial news. The first Hindi newspaper, Oodunt Martand, was published in 1826. This was also from Bengal. However, it could not survive long because it was not able to afford high postal rates for its distant readership. Its place was soon taken by Jami Jahan Numa, a newspaper that was pro-Establishment. Another event related to newspaper happened in 1832 when Bal Shastri Jambhekar launched an Anglo-Marathi newspaper from Pune.

The Statesman and The Pioneer were the two leading newspapers owned by the Englishmen. The Statesman was founded by Robert Knight in 1875. It was published from Calcutta and Delhi. During the course it absorbed the Englishman (founded in 1821) and Friend of India. The Pioneer started publication in 1865 from Allahabad. Ananda Bazaar Patria founded in 1878 was the most famous of Bengali newspapers. By the early 1960's it enjoyed one of the largest circulations among Indian dailies with 1,02,000 copies. Another leading daily in Bengali was Jugantarm founded in 1937. Both the newspapers were published from Calcutta.

The Hindu, madras, began as a mimeographed journal of the literary society, became a regular weekly in 1878 and a daily in 1889. pursuantly, the

much famed Times of India was founded in 1838 in Bombay. Initially it was named as Bombay Times and had Bombay and Delhi editions. Another notable newspaper was The Tribune, published from Impala of East Punjab. Although it started publication in 1881, it was made a daily only in 1960, The Tribune became a modern and influential newspaper thereafter.

The Press in India in the early 1930's consisted of more than 300 daily newspapers with an aggregate circulation of 45,00,000 copies. Therein 75 publications were in Hindi, 42 in Urdu, 33 in English, 26 in Malayalam, 24 in Tamil the rest in other languages. In the matter of circulation however, the English language outnumbered any other language newspaper. Nine dailies had a circulation of over one lakh copies. Of them four were in English (Times of India, Indian Express, Statesman and The Hindu), two in Tamil (Daily Thanthi and Dinamani), one in Marathi (Loksasfta), one in Hindi (Navbharat Times) and one in Bengali. Nearly 40 percent of newspapers and periodicals of all kinds were concentrated in the then Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Madras.

Indian Newspapers formed their own cooperative news agency in 1948 under the name, Press Trust of India Ltd. It thus took over the 50-year old Associated Press of India Ltd. The Associated Press was a subsidiary of the Reuters in India. After that, in the early 1960's half a dozen leading Indian dailies in English were owned by Indians. This included the newspaper group with largest combined circulation, the Indian Express (now, The New Indian Express). It was started in the year 1953 and was published simultaneously

from five major cities.

3.3. The Very First Newspaper in India - Bengal Gazette

Bengal Gazette, also called, The Original Calcutta General Advertiser, was the first printed English newspaper in the Indian subcontinent. It was founded on January 29, 1780 in Calcutta (now Kolkata), the capital of British India. Compared to today's newspapers, Bengal Gazette was smaller in size. It was twelve inches long and seven inches wide and had only two sheets with three columns on each page. It employed double-sided printing, which was difficult at that time. Compared to today's figures, its circulation was so limited that it would barely exceed 200 copies. Every issue of Hickey's Bengal Gazette came with a self-declaration, 'weekly political and commercial paper open to all parties but influenced by none'. The predominant reader base was the employees of the East India Company and European traders. However, the newspaper lasted only for two years and ceased publication on March 23, 1782. It was published as a weekly newspaper by James Augustus Hicky, an Irishman, who was also its editor. While the credit of being the first journalist in the Indian subcontinent goes to William Bolts, a Dutch writer who came to India after the Lisbon earthquake of 1755, it was James Augustus Hicky who started a full-fledged newspaper.

Before starting Bengal Gazette, Hicky had been in prison in India for seven years for his inability to repay debt. There he read a treatise upon printing. Pursuantly, it occurred to Hicky that great benefit might arise from

setting up a public newspaper as nothing of that kind had ever appeared in Calcutta and the Indian subcontinent as a whole. The treatise too provided him with sufficient information to commence printing. After he got released from the debtor's gaol by the help of an attorney-at-law named William Hickey, James Augustus Hicky started the newspaper and help poured in from many directions for his courageous writing. Thus, meeting with extraordinary encouragement, he speedily issued his first edition of the Bengal Gazette. This very first printed newspaper from the subcontinent soon became extremely famous not only among the British officials, European traders and soldiers posted in India but also among ordinary citizens. It inspired the Indians to the extent of writing newspapers of their own. William Hickey has himself written at length in his memoirs about James Augustus Hicky.

However, that which happens to all those who speak, write or act against the establishment waited to happen to Hicky as well. Bengal Gazette covered new items that were invariably critical of the conditions of colonies under the British rule. More than that, Hicky earned the wrath of the British East India Company for exposing its shortcomings, scandals and aberrations. He undauntedly criticised in his writing the Governors General, their lifestyles and many other clandestine activities. Primarily, the paper had satirical anecdotes and appropriate nicknames for individuals and the establishment it attacked. As Bengal Gazette was consistently anti-establishment, it very soon had to encounter the fury of the then Governor General, Warren Hastings and the then

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Sir Elijah Impey. The establishment began endeavouring to obliterate Bengal Gazette's presence.

First, the establishment withdrew postage facility to Bengal Gazette, but provided concessions to a rival newspaper, India Gazette (also, Calcutta Public Advertiser). This was a trap to instigate Hicky further into the negative domain. As expected, Hicky was furious and his writing became more sarcastic and vulgar. For this reactionary outburst, Hicky was branded as an eccentric by the establishment. In the meantime, Hickey still managed to circulate Bengal Gazette by appointing 20 delivery men who handed over the newspaper directly to the readers. However, once Hicky published a news against the Chief Missionary of the Main Church, Jan Zakariya, the latter filed a complaint with the Government against Hicky. Pursuantly, a case of defamation was filed against him on the charge that he used Bengal Gazette as the channel of personal invective to scurrilously abuse individuals of all rank in the most wanton and cruel manner. As Hicky refused to yield to the pressures of the establishment, imprisonment followed obviously. Hickey was fined Rs 500 and sentenced to four months imprisonment. As Hicky even continued to write from jail, four more fresh cases were filed against him, besides hefty fine. Still unrelenting, Hicky's journalistic spirit was put down finally by forcefully seizing his movable types in the jail. Bengal Gazette passed into oblivion and Hicky died a pauper.

Notwithstanding failures, James Augustus Hicky is still acclaimed by the

Bengali Press as well as the British journalists as the fearless champion of journalism and the Father of the Indian Press. The paper itself survived until the 1830's in a modified form. At that time, Bengal Gazette's circulation was exceeded by The Englishman, a famous newspaper also published from Calcutta since 1818. Now, The Englishman is published as The Statesman. Contemporary journalists and intellectuals were of the view that every person who read the Bengal Gazette was delighted. In Bengal Gazette, its editor would usually write directly to the readers. Large number of letters received by Hicky that showered praises on his efforts bore testimony to the influence and reputation of the newspaper. Besides having a space for advertisements about auctions, the paper even had a Poet's Corner as well. In a nutshell, Bengal Gazette was a kind of moral monitor that held a mirror to the life of the European community in Calcutta. While Hicky benefited little from his newspaper, Indian journalism benefited largely from Hicky. He and the Bengal Gazette are still the sources of unending inspiration for the journalists of Bengal in particular and of India in general. Although both met a tragic end, the heritage James Augustus Hicky and his Bengal Gazette left for the Indian journalism still prevails. In his memory, January 29 of every year, the day he founded Bengal Gazette, is celebrated as Journalism Day in India. Hicky was harassed, attacked and imprisoned as a journalist. The fruit of his journalism, Bengal Gazette was taken away. Yet, Hicky and Bengal Gazette together remained as the fecund seed for a mightier journalism in the years to come.

3.4. Administration and the Environment

In the British India, the Governor Generals enforced rigid press control. Lord Wellesley and Lord Warren Hastings were more stringent in this regard. Newspapers of that time were only in English, as almost all the readers were British. News items too were limited to British activities in India. The local population was not the target audience and its problems and issues were out of the purview of news coverage. The East India Company feared that Indian responses and writings in news media could get to England and defame the Company in England or even corrupt the British minds. Therefore, English papers published in England too were put into circulation in India after a delay of nine months. In spite of these hurdles, many printing houses started to introduce newspapers and newsletters to the Indian readers. First generation newspapers like Darpan, Dig Darshan, Samachar and Friend of India were published from prominent cities like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. Rapid developments in printing and related technology soon evolved across many languages. Particularly, quality fonts and typefaces were created for Hindi, Tamil, Marathi, Urdu, Gujarati, Malayalam, Assamese and Punjabi languages in the later part of 1850's.

Bengal remained the nerve centre of Indian journalism during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Not only did many prominent newspapers come out from Bengal, but also the very first Indian newspaper, Bengal Gazette, was printed from Calcutta in 1780 by James Augustus Hicky. It was a

major historical event by itself, and therefore is presented under a separate subheading. Religion played an important role in contributing to the growth of the press in Bengal, and India as a whole. Although a few newspapers emphasising political and commercial aspects appeared in Bengal, they did not gain popularity until the end of the nineteenth century. Thus, of the many newspapers founded in Calcutta, important ones were The Bengal Gazette, The India Gazette, The Calcutta Gazette, The Oriental Advertiser, Calcutta Chronicle (1786) and the Bengal Journal. The Oriental Magazine (or Calcutta Amusement) was the first monthly journal from Calcutta. Another Bengal Gazette established by Gangadhar Bhattacharya in 1816 was the first newspaper edited by an Indian.

One notable development in the history of Bengali newspapers was The Calcutta Journal started in 1818. Its editor James Silk Buckingham caused much embarrassment to the administration. In particular, he offended in his writings Lord Hastings, the Governor-General of Bengal. To put an end to this, John Adam, the successor of Lord Hastings, passed a Regulation in March, 1823 to restrict the freedom of the press. Even more, Buckingham was deported to England in 1823. In the meantime, in 1819 a Christian missionary established the weekly, Samachar Darpan, in Serampore, Bengal, to spread Christianity. Superstitious practices, animistic conduct and primitive behaviour came under attack in this Weekly. However one Bhowanee Charan Banerjee considered as if it were an attack on Hinduism. He went on to start a journal, Sambad Kaumudi

(or the Moon of Intelligence) in December 1821. It carried on a verbal war against Samachar Darpan. However, as Banerjee was not able to continue the work, Sambad Kaumudi was taken over by the freedom fighter Raja Ram Mohan Roy.

Of the Indians, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar succeeded to some extent in printing. In 1858, he started a Bengali weekly Sam Prakash. Also, he took over the Hindoo Patriot. Kristodaspal was his chosen editor for that. Even more, Vidyasagar appointed a correspondent, S.N. Banerjee, at London. Yet, after the death of Kristodaspal in 1884, the Hindoo Patriot passed into oblivion. S.N. Banerjee however pursued the cause of his mentor. He founded Bengalee in 1879 and made it popular because of his single-minded devotion. Another noteworthy endeavour was the Amrita Bazar Patrika started in 1868 by Motilal Ghose. For their part, prominent politicians and freedom fighters in Bombay started newspapers in the middle of the nineteenth century. Dadabhai Naoroji founded an Anglo-Gujarathi weekly, the Rast Goftar, in 1851. Similarly, the India Prakash commenced its publication with M.G. Ranade as its editor. Tilak and Agarkar launched the Mahratta and the Kesari in 1881. With these newspapers, however, the press in Bombay assumed political character in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

During the growth of the press in India, about every newsprint reflected the values and attitudes of Europeans. Moreover, English, Latin and other European languages dominated the newsprint. This is due to that the Indian

side lacked technology, infrastructure, political influence and administrative skills needed to run a newsprint. Therefore, either indigenous efforts with regard to press depended on foreign expertise or attempts to venture into newsprint business by own measures proved a failure. There are numerous examples in this regard. First in 1674, Bhimji Parekh, a Gujarati entrepreneur of Bania, set up a printing press in Bombay (now, Mumbai). However, for that Henry Hills, a printer of the East India Company, provided expert assistance. Second, the endeavour in 1715 to open an indigenous paper mill proved unsuccessful. Likewise, Gangadhar Bhattacharya's The Bengal Gazette established in 1816 also proved a failure.

In the pursuant decades, the press became more popular and remained as a much needed power tool for information and education to the people in their freedom struggle. During the time of Independence, many leaders fought for the freedom of the press also. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the front runner among them. He was rightly called the father of the press industry revolution. First truly Indian newspaper was published by Gangadhar Bhattacharya, which was also named, Bengal Gazette. Over the decades, many famous and influential newspapers such as Bande Mataram, Kesari, Maratha, Free Press Journal, Madras Standard and Bombay Chronicle came out. These papers had direct association with national leaders and reputed freedom fighters including Mahatma Gandhi and Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Their association made the newspapers a great success and they kept creating waves of influence among

Indian nationalist movements.

3.5. The Post Independence Period - Evolution from Views Paper to Business Proposition

In the post independence period, States were created according to the language spoken in the region. Therefore, local or regional language gained priority over Hindi and English and automatically, newspapers in regional language were in great demand with the local subscriber communities. As Hindi and English being the dominant official languages, newspapers in these two languages had competitive edge over others in terms of readership, circulation, coverage, advertisement and patronage. However, despite stagnant literacy ratios in many States, newspapers kept on expanding in large cities and towns. The percentage of sale of regional language newspapers was about 60 percent of the total sales.

As the circulation increased substantially, political journalism was gradually replaced by mass journalism. Although political news is still the topmost priority area, many subjects such as education, cinema, sports, business, religion and culture find detailed coverage and review. Moreover, changes are made in content and presentation in accordance with the preferences and requirements of the target audience to whom the paper or section thereof is intended. Thus, fine tuning the newspaper based on gender, age group, socioeconomic status, religion, community, education level, line of work and the like, helped the publishers to cover almost every section of the

society, address the readership needs of most of its subscribers and present contents related to all walks of individual, family and social life.

As newspaper production is no more restricted to a regional cause or mission, the focus changed to its reach to the masses. Further, development of printing technology, international marketing, manpower development and larger investments facilitated the industry to achieve this goal. In line with this, large corporate houses and political outfits invested heavily in the newspaper industry to capture the fourth estate. Now, it has become the window of the external environment and more than that, shapes the opinions and attitudes of the people. Although this power is being used to subvert the cause and mission of the newspaper, it has a self-correction mechanism in the sense that such a subversion is revealed inadvertently or exposed voluntarily. Then onwards, as being witnessed nowadays, the struggle between subversion and human spirit takes place and finally, the spirit triumphs.

Furthermore, when readers get enough material that holds their interest and purpose onto a newspaper, they do not complain much about the newspaper's editorial policies, political leanings and other affiliations. However, the readers should not be taken for granted as personal values and attitudes, after a limit, outweigh the utility value of a newspaper. For, unlike the era when newspapers were medium of social instruction born out of sacrifice and societal cause, it is now more of a profit making business. Their unique pattern of financial management predominantly dictated by advertisement

revenue, dynamic functionality in relation to the operating environment and distinct objective of enlightening the masses make newspapers as one of the riskiest propositions in terms of accountability and viability, both in short and long terms.

Therefore in the past, there were Views Papers during the Independence era. They served with purpose and vision, be it freedom fight, education or social mobilisation. Thereafter, until the liberalisation drive of the early 1990's, there were News Papers. Their objectives turned to equality, democracy, development and betterment. They became the fourth pillar of democracy. After the liberalised era, until now, newspapers have become a business proposition. They are now instrument of mass conditioning, tool of socioeconomic influence, weapon of power, proponent of particular agenda and source of easy profit. Thus, from being a community endeavour exhibiting the pulse of the people, newspapers today have become a consumer product that simply meet the market demand and customer satisfaction. It is therefore clear that newspapers have got transformed and evolved for decades to what they are now.

3.6. Statutory and Governing Bodies

In India, news and information media is categorised into three segments namely the print, television and radio. The online news platforms of the Internet are evolving rapidly in the most dynamic manner. However the same is yet to be fully brought under statutory and legal control. Due to this diversity of

mediums, various governing and statutory bodies oversee their functions and operations. Of them the Press Council of India is the most important statutory body. It regulates newspapers and journals of the print media. It has statutory powers to censure upon and adjudicate matters related to press freedom and journalistic conduct. Second, every newspaper published from the Indian soil is to be registered with the Registrar of Newspapers in India (RNI). The RNI keeps the statistics regarding registration, titling and circulation of newspapers and journals. In addition it constantly monitors the content and presentation of news. Thirdly, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) oversees the television, cable and Direct to Home (DTH) arenas in addition to telephone and Internet services. Finally there is an accredited representative of the newspaper industry called Indian Newspaper Society (INS). The functions and operations of these Bodies are outlined in the following subheadings.

3.6.1. Press Council of India

The Press Council of India was constituted on 4th July, 1966 based on the Press Council Act, 1965. It was set up as an autonomous, statutory, quasi-judicial body. Its first chairman was Justice J R Mudholkar, then a judge of the Supreme Court. This Council functioned until December 1975. During the Internal Emergency, the Act was repealed and the Council was abolished with effect from 01-01-1976. However, the changed political scenario after the Internal Emergency lead to a fresh legislation providing for the reestablishment of the Council. An Act in this regard was enacted in 1978 and the Press Council

of India was reestablished in April 1979.

At present the Council consists of a chairman and 28 members. The chairman is nominated by a committee consisting of the chairman of the Council of States (Rajya Sabha), the speaker of the House of the People (Lok Sabha), and a person elected from amongst the Council members themselves. Of the 28 members, 13 are working journalists. Among them 6 are editors and the remaining 8 are non-editors. In the remaining 15 members, 6 are persons who own or carry on the business of management of newspapers, 1 is person who manages a news agency, 3 are eminent persons of various fields and 5 are members of parliament. In the case of eminent persons, one each is nominated by the University Grants Commission (UGC), the Bar Council of India and the Sahitya Academy. These members are persons of honour in their respective fields like education, science, law, literature or culture. The chairman and other members hold office for a period of three years.

The Council levies an annual fee on newspapers, periodicals and news agencies, which contributes to the revenue of the Council. However a substantial part of its funds is augmented by grant-in-aid from the Government. Notwithstanding, it has full functional autonomy and independence from government control in the discharge of its statutory responsibilities. Important functions of the Press Council of India include the following.

1. Helping newspapers and news agencies to maintain their independence.

2. Building up a code of conduct for newspapers, news agencies and journalists.
3. Ensuring the maintenance of high professional standards on the part of the newspapers, news agencies and journalists.
4. Fostering among the persons of journalism a due sense of the rights and responsibilities of both citizenship and public service.
5. Keeping under review any development likely to restrict the supply and dissemination of news of public interest and importance.
6. Promoting a proper functional relationship among the agencies, organisations and institutions engaged in the publication of newspapers and journals.
7. Monitoring developments such as concentration of power and/or ownership of newspapers and news agencies which could affect the independence of the Press.

The Council has a twin role to play. At one side it acts as a guide and advisor and at the other it is an adjudicator of complaints on matters concerning the freedom of the press and of professional standards of journalism. The Council handles two categories of complaints, one by the Press against interference with its freedom by an authority and the other by any individual or authority against the Press for violation of the canons of journalism. In respect of complaints against the press, the Council can warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, the news agency, the editor or the journalist or disapprove the

conduct of editor or the journalist. In other cases, the Council can summon and enforce the attendance of persons and examine them on oath. Moreover the Council can require the discovery and inspection of documents and receive evidence on affidavits. Also it can request any public record from any court or office. Furthermore the Council can issue commissions for the examination of witnesses or documents.

A unique feature of the Press Council of India is that it is one of the very few bodies set up under an Act of Parliament. Most parallel institutions or similar bodies in many other countries are voluntary ones or have come into existence after the Council in India. Thus, the Council exerts high moral authority, both in India and abroad. Its decisions are final and cannot be questioned in any court of law. The decisions of the Council are generally honoured and accepted by the media and the authorities alike. Yet time and again, scholars, bureaucrats, judges, cabinet ministers and many eminent persons have suggested that the Press Council Act should be amended so that the Council has penal powers to punish delinquent newspapers and journalists. Lately this suggestion has become louder and stronger with its present chairman Justice Markandey Katju has been in the forefront to seek such powers. In response, the Council has consistently taken the view that the moral sanctions provided to it under the existing scheme of the Act are adequate.

3.6.2. Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI)

The Office of the Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI) was

established on 1st July, 1956. To set up this Office, the Press and Registration of Books Act 1867 was amended based on the recommendations in 1953 of the First Press Commission. The amended Act covers all the duties and functions of the RNI. In addition, some other responsibilities have been entrusted upon RNI over the years in accordance with the changing environment. Now, the Office is performing both statutory and non-statutory functions, which are listed in the table.

Table 3.1

Functions of the Office of the Registrar of Newspapers for India

Statutory Functions	Non-Statutory Functions
1. Compile and maintain a Register of Newspapers.	1. Formulation of Newsprint Allocation Policy.
2. Issue a Certificate of Registration to every newspaper.	2. Issue guidelines and an Eligibility Certificate to newspapers so that they import or indigenously procure newsprint.
3. Scrutiny and analysis of Annual Statements of publishers.	3. Asses requirements of newspapers to import printing and composing machinery and allied materials.
4. Inform District Magistrates about available titles for new publishers.	4. Certify new machinery and recommend for technology upgrade.
5. Ensure newspapers are published according to the provisions of the Press and Registration of Books Act 1867.	
6. Verification of circulation claims furnished by publishers.	
7. Prepare and submit to the Government a yearly report containing all information and statistics related to functions, operations and emerging trends.	

3.6.3. Telecom Regulatory Authority of India

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) was established as a statutory body on 20 February, 1997 under the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997. Its objective was to regulate telecommunication services in the country. Moreover it fixes, revises or modifies service tariffs and tariff policies for telephone and Internet services. These powers were earlier vested with the Central Government. Its creation therefore lead to the evolution of Indian telecom market from a Government owned monopoly to a multi operator, multi service, open competition market. Broadcasting and cable television services were brought within the ambit of telecommunications by the government notification dated 9 January, 2004. Hence TRAI was vested with the powers to regulate these services also.

TRAI consists of a chairperson, two whole time members and two part time members. The chairman and the four members hold office for three years. It has 10 functional divisions altogether controlled by a Secretary. TRAI's stated mission is to create and nurture conditions for growth of telecommunications in the country so that India plays a leading role in global information scenario. Moreover it aims to provide a fair and transparent policy environment which promotes healthy competition and level playing field. Thus TRAI attempts to protect the interests of service providers and consumers so that orderly growth of these sectors is ensured.

The functions of TRAI are twofold, one recommendatory and the other

mandatory. These two functions are executed in the areas of consumer protection, quality of service, affordable tariff and interconnection. In this regard it lays down the standards regarding quality of service and ensures the same is provided to consumers. It also sees that service providers comply with the terms and conditions of their licences. Furthermore TRAI makes recommendations to the Government on issues related to the entry of new service providers and terms and conditions of licences for existing service providers. However the adjudicatory and disputes handling functions of the Authority were taken away in January 2000 and handed over to a Telecommunications Dispute Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT). This was effected by an ordinance issued on 24 January 2000 to amend the TRAI Act.

At present TRAI is working on the specific task of regulating cable and broadcasting services as there is an increasing trend in the country that the print media is entering into broadcasting sector and attempting to have cross media ownership without restrictions.

3.6.4. Indian Newspaper Society

Indian Newspaper Society (INS) is the accredited representative of the newspaper industry. In the pre-independence era, it was known as The Indian and Eastern Newspaper Society. The Society was founded in the year 1939, the year of the beginning of World War II. It is also associated with the World Association of Newspapers (WAN), an international Body representing 18,000

newspapers, which is based in Paris. The Society's object was to give direction and cohesion to the industry. Moreover, the Society ensures even growth and independent functioning of the print media by providing organisational support and coordination. More importantly, it protects independent publications from numerous pressure groups that always attempt to jeopardise the existence and functioning of those publications. In this regard, the Society has played a significant role in promoting the freedom of the Press in India. Further, it is involved in many spheres of activities such as importing newsprint, overseeing advertisement and licensing print machinery. It has control over 990 dailies, biweeklies, weeklies, fortnightlies and monthlies published in 18 languages that account for over 90 percent of the Indian readership. The dynamism of the environment and the communication revolution have posed many challenges before the Society. Therefore, the Society, as a part of its evolution, has stepped into newer areas to play a large role in improving the voice of democracy.

3.7. Conclusion

In this chapter the beginning, growth and development of newspapers were presented in the Indian context. Its history and evolution, growth profile, historical time line, the fate of the very first newspaper, administration and environment, details about prominent and oldest newspapers and the present governing bodies were analysed. The analysis shows that the newspaper industry in India has witnessed enormous growth and transition. Moreover, quite many of them are being controlled by corporates and commercial and

political interests. The news landscape and scope have changed from fearless dissemination of truth and moderateness to sensationalism and highlighting of superficial elements related to the life of upper and elite class people. It should not be an overstatement that their endeavours exhibit a sort of an attempt of homogenisation that aims to break individual bond and affinity towards family, community, locality, race and even nation. Thus it is feared that the media is used as a powerful instrument of mind control that seeks to do away with people's age old association with tradition, food habit, custom, dressing, culture and anything related to earthly life.

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