Chapter 3

History of the press in North East India

North East India is known for its natural beauty and rich cultural heritage. It consists of eight states and each of these states has a legacy and history of their own. North East states had numerous tribal kingdoms operating independently. With the British entering into this part of India, the region slowly found their place in the colonial state. Print media did not have any well written documented history in North East India as it subsisted in this part of the country even before independence. Primarily, news from these areas had been covered and airlifted by Calcutta. With the emergence of the necessity for a public forum it became part of media in North East India.

Press in the North East

With the passing of the Charter Act of 1793, the British Parliament initiated to promote the Christian religious faith among the native Indians. In order to carry on the task the missionaries were also sent to the distant parts of Assam. In 1793 two British Baptists went to Calcutta William Carey and John Thomas and they settled in the Danish Colony of Serampore. Carey translated the holy Bible into the Indian languages and the translated versions were however checked by the Indian pandits. As such, the ‘Assamese New Testament’ emerged in the year 1813. To evangelize the people of Assam Carey deputed James Rae who was initially a soldier but later became a missionary. In doing so he went to Guwahati and also entered into the Khasi dominated areas with the Assamese New Testament. Then William Robinson came to help Rae in his missionary activities. Initially the missionaries first took
shelter in schools to propagate the religious activities. Rae later on joined the
government school and Robinson went to Bhutan. With the American entry to this
part of the country the British missionaries left their entire base in Assam. The
American Baptists Nathan Brown and Oliver T. Cutter arrived with their families at
Sadiya. The missionaries’ intention was not to restrict their activities to Assam but
rather wanted to go beyond the borders of Assam. They even planned to enter the
territory of China and as well to reach the Shan tribes of Northern Burma and South
China. However, the Chinese authorities did not allow any foreigners to enter their
territories. Therefore, they came back to Assam to proselytize the Assamese people.
The American Baptist, Nathan Brown introduced the printing press for the very first
time in Assam and Oliver T. Cutter accompanied him in his mission. When Brown
was in Assam he had mistaken the Assamese language for a Bengali dialect. After
this he began loving the language and soon started learning it. He met another
linguistic by the name of Miles Bronson the next year. The missionaries even
brought out the book of Khamti and Singhpo. A school was started by Mrs. Eliza
Whitney Brown and Mrs. Harriest B. L. Cutter to teach Assamese to children. During
this time the Khamti and Singhpo agitated against the British inroad into their native
place. So after the death of Col. Adam White, the missionaries out of fear left Sadiya
and moved to Jaipur where they worked along with the eastern Nagas at Namsang.
Another American Baptist Cyrus Baker was sent to Assam in order to help at Sadiya.
The missionaries concentrated on the Brahmaputra valley as the people belonging to
this area spoke only Assamese. At this time William Carey’s Bible was useful as it
contained the Sanskrit vocables. 'The Orunodoi' published by the American Baptist
Missionary was the mouthpiece of the mission of propagation of Christianity in
Assam. The publication is also considered to be the first Assamese periodical which
made its appearance in 1846 under the editorship of Oliver T. Cutter. This periodical
had created history in shaping modern Assamese literature which was regularly published for over 36 years.

Assam

Thus the Press in Assam has emerged and also served as a platform which was instrumental in ushering the literary fluency in the Assamese language and as well as in the culture of the indigenous people. In this context, journals like ‘The Orunodoi’, ‘The Jonaki’, ‘The Banhi’, ‘Jayanti’ and ‘Ramdhenu’ have been imprinted in the history of the press in Assam. Below are the descriptions of the Assamese presses which are pertinent to analyse. They are -

‘The Assam Bilasinee’ was launched in 1913 and the paper claims to be the first Assamese daily newspaper. It is difficult to mention whether the paper contributed towards the language and literature as there is no evidence available with regard to this. Nevertheless it made a significant contribution towards the freedom struggle. Krishna Kanta Bhattacharya, the founder of the paper, was a patriot and used his paper to write against the British Raj. Another paper ‘Assamiya’ a weekly started in 1918 contributed immensely in making the Non-Corporation Movement a great success. ‘Assamiya’ laid the foundation in the field of journalism in Assam.

‘Assam News’ was brought out in 1882 by Hem Chandra Baruah the litterateur who was the founder editor of this paper. This was the first newspaper that was also printed with an English edition. Later the eminent literature Sahityasarathi, Lakshmi Nath Bezborua took over the editorship of ‘Assam News’. His editorial column in the paper compelled the British to review the revenue act that they had imposed. The paper died in 1885, and it was replaced by another weekly ‘Assam’. This was a
bilingual weekly and was published in both English and Assamese. This paper too attacked the British policy and helped spread Assamese Nationalism.

‘Assam Banti’ was brought out in 1900 and survived for 44 years. The first editor of this newspaper was Mahendr Mohan Baruah. Baruah had to resign from the paper because of a difference of opinion with the management. However in his tenure he created a sensation by carrying ‘The advocate of Assam’in the paper.

‘Assamiya; hit the stands in 1918 under the editorship of Chandra Kumar Aggarwalla. The paper went through a financial crisis in due course of time because of constant trouble from the British Government. W.H. Calvert, the then ASP of the Barpeta filed a defamation law suit against the editor for publishing reports on him and this was the first law suit against a newspaper in Assam. For eight years Haren Nath Barua was the editor of the paper and he was renowned as a ‘Natun Assomiya’.

‘Dainik Assamiya’,was the second daily newspaper which was published on 26th January in 1946. The modern era of Assamese journalism started from the year of its establishment. ‘Dainik Assamiya’ and ‘The Assam tribune’ are two of the newspapers from where professional journalists emerged.

‘Deka Assam’ was a weekly newspaper which was published from Guwahati in 1935. The editor, Ambikagiri Roy Choudhary had stated in the column that this paper should be treated as a pamphlet and that it should also be considered as a torch bearer which sheds light to its people. The paper however died out after the death of Roy Choudhary.

‘Dainik Batori’ was started by a tea industrialist Rai Bahadur Siva Prasad Borooah in 1935. The paper was liberal and moderate in its outlook towards the issues of the times. It was neither pro-congress nor pro-revolutionist. It did not even supported Tilak’s responsive co-operation on Gandhi’s Non-Cooperation Movement. The publication used to publish translated news items that were received through
telegrams, a practice which was never before done by any newspaper. It also used the
services of news agencies like Reuter and Associated Press.

‘Nagarar Kotha’ was started as a weekly by Moffazal Hossain of Jorhat. The paper
was more like ‘Ranar Batori’ (War News) that was published from Dibrugarh during
the time of the First World War. The newspaper was started as a daily and Hossain
was the man behind the paper. He did the marketing for the paper and also looked
after the printing at the press. However, the newspaper did not survive long despite
the immense efforts of Hossain.

‘Assam Sevak’ was established in 1937 and it was run under the stewardship of Hari
Krishna Das, Debendra Nath Sharma and Bijay Chandra Bhagwati who were
freedom fighters. During the mass movement in 1942 the police sealed the printing
press. But in spite of the trouble that they faced the publication resumed its
publication in 1945 and finally ceased fully in 1953.

‘Tarun Assam’, was a weekly which survived only for a very short duration.
Nandeshwar Chakraborty, the industrialist first introduced the publication in the year
1939. This publication was a supporter of the British Government. Despite its good
relations with the British Government, the publication had to stop owing to a
financial crisis.

‘Bhilangani’, the fortnightly was brought out by an eminent educationist of Naogoan,
Mahesh Chandra Goswami in 1947. The main objective in bringing out the paper
was to have a decent, hassle free society by removing the anti-social activities etc. In
spite of being the irregular production, the publication managed to survive till 1980.

‘Janmabhumi’, created a record for being the first newspaper to celebrate its ‘Golden
Jubilee’. The Sharma Brothers – Debeswar Sharma and Kanak Chandra Sharma of
Jorhat started the publication house ‘Janmabhumi’ in the year 1947 and then in 1972
the Assamese daily ‘Dainik Janmabhumi’ came into being. Then in June 16, 1991 the
English Edition also appeared with the name ‘The English Clarion’. This publication is considered to be the oldest among all the publications which are in circulation today.

‘Natun Assamiya’ survived for 30 years and during its existence the publication dealt with the various burning issues such as the oil refinery etc. The paper appeared on June 26, 1949 and the man behind the publication was Indra Kamal Bezbura. After his death the paper suffered huge financial losses. Initially it was circulated as a bi-weekly and then weekly before the paper died in 1982. Though the publication survived for a short period, it contributed towards the advancement of Assamese language and literature.

‘Shanti Doot’ had a unique masthead of Gandhi’s picture between ‘Shanti’ and ‘Doot’. The publication was started by Tarini Das who was a renowned litterateur as well as a businessman. It started as a weekly on 7th December 1951 and then from 2nd October 1954 the paper changed into a daily. The editor of the paper was Debendranath Sharma and Tarini Das was its managing editor. The publication did not survive because of poor management. However, through this newspaper many new and budding journalists were born.

‘Purbajiyoit’, a Hindi news magazine was launched on 1st March 1955 by Changanlal Jain. When there was a scarcity of good writers for the magazine Jain himself would write under different names. Due to many problems, the publication was closed down. However, Jain revived it as a weekly on 7th October 1969. The paper had succeeded in spreading amity and removing evil from the society. After the death of Changanlal Jain the paper also closed down.

‘Ganatantra Pratidin’ could survive only for a few months. It was launched on September 1982 from Pratos Prabh Press situated at Khanapara, Guwahati. The papers consisted of four pages but it could not hold the attention of the readers. The
main reason was the presentation of the news and articles which was not up to the mark. Rabijit Choudhary from Silchar was the editor of the paper and he was the first person to get the opportunity to edit the Assamese newspaper.

'Tindiniya Batori' was launched on 19th October 1981 and was edited by Rabhika Mohan Bhagwati and a renowned journalist and Harendra Nath Barua who was the chairman of the editorial board. The newspaper ceased its publication on 7th April 1982. The very next year another Assamese daily under the name of 'Rashtriya Batori' started from the same publication house. The publication tried to follow the journalistic objectives and did not bow to political parties. This paper also ceased its publication on 7th April 1983 because of a difference of opinion between the editor and the management.

'Ajir Assam' was launched by the sentinel group on 15th August 1987. The paper was initiated with the motive of informing the people of Assam about national events. In its first editorial, Radhika Mohan Bhagwati in 'Our Resolve' declared the policy of the newspaper and also commented that, "We will not simply cling to fleeting politics, nor shall we publish sensational news items just for commercial gains. Rather our objective will be to foster steadfast humanism that augments sense of values and dignity of life as a whole and fosters fraternity and universality of outlook". The paper was founded by Shankar Rajkhowa and it was published by Omega Printers. The other newspapers published by the groups were the English daily, 'The Sentinel', the Bengalee daily 'Samay Prabha' the weekly 'Prahari' and the Khasi Daily 'Dongmsa'.

'Natun Dainik' was initiated in 1988 by Surjya Hazarika, a young Assamese entrepreneur and the editor Chandra Prasad Saikia, who was a noted writer and novelist. The publication house which published this newspaper had also published an evening daily 'Sandhya Betori' the fortnightly, 'Chitra Sambad' and the weekly
sports journal ‘Khel Sambad’. In its first issue the editorial copy was run with the caption ‘Birth of a newspaper’ which put forth the objectives and principles of the paper. The paper even brought out the issues of ‘healthy journalism’ which were meant to raise awareness about the problems of the people. The newspaper also had a special page which contained articles on literature, culture, women, youth and many other social issues because of which even the young and promising journalists joined the paper.

‘Ajir Batori’ was launched on 16th December 1991 with the promise to publish both development issues as well the sordid stories of Assam. It was published by Rajendra Prasad Bora and had many noted personalities on board like Manoj Goswami who was a short story writer and who joined the publication as the executive editor. Later in 1992 the paper also started another weekly paper called ‘Rongpuran’ under the editorship of Lakshmi Nandan Bora. Later the publication also started the English daily, ‘The North East Observer’ from 2nd October 1992 and Girish Chandra Sharma took charge of this edition.

‘Ajir Sambad’ was published for circulating on a large scale in the year 1994 from Guwahati. Paresh Baishya was the founder editor who also edited a local newspaper ‘Hajor Batori’. This paper also did not survive long.

‘Assamiya Pratidin’ was launched on February 1995 with Ajit Kumar Bhuyan and Parag Kumar Das as the Executive Editor. The publication became popular among its readers because of its steadfast opposition to Hiteshwar Saikia, former Chief Minister of Assam and also brought into focus many corruption cases. Besides this, the paper also reserved space for the opinions of the public or of unheard issues. The publication emphasis on humorous, satirical writing and burning issues which added a new dimension to Assamese journalism. This characteristic of writing was
borrowed from the newspaper ‘Sadin’. This publication was the first one whose editor, Parag Kuram Das was assassinated in broad daylight on 17th May 1996.

‘Dainik Agradoot’, was established in the year 1995 and is still in circulation. The editorial of the paper emphasised on reason and objectivity rather than an outburst of feeling and emotion.

‘Amar Asom’ was launched in the year 1997 by GL Publication. This publication is considered to be the first newspaper that was published from two different places simultaneously with coloured photographs on the front page. It also attempted to start an evening newspaper ‘Biyalir Batori’in 1980, which was edited by Nava Kumar Hazarika. This publication however closed down as it did not manage to arrange stories and photographs in time. Yet the newspaper was able to cover events that occurred even late into the night.

‘Assam Bani’ was started after independence and was the first weekly launched on 1st July, 1955. It had an attractive layout with good quality printing. To entertain its readers, there were columns on technology and film and even plays were published. On the other side the publication was a staunch critic of government policies under the editorship of Tilak Hazarika. When Phani Talukdar took charge of its editorship, the publication was considered as a family newspaper. It then was run under Homen Borgohain who like Tilak Hazarika wrote against the Government and boldly exposed its flaws.

‘Sadiniya Navaying’ was launched by Rani of Beltola in 1963 from Guwahati. Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya was the editor of the news magazine. The actor, Chinahare Hazarika also joined the paper as a contributor. Even renowned literature was regularly contributed for publication in the paper which immensely contributed for the growth of Assamese literature. This weekly however was in circulation for only three years.
"Kalakar" was published in 1979 under the guidance of Haren Gohain. He was an intellectual and a critic who wrote against the Assam Movement. For his writing on the negative aspects of the movement, he was physically assaulted on the streets. But Gohain could not retain the newspaper for long which ultimately died in 1982. Beside Gohain also edited 'Natum Prithvi' and the 'Padatik' magazine of Assam.

"Sadin" was brought out with regularity from 6th January 1989. Tilak Hazarika was the Chief Editor of the publication and Ajit Bhyuan was its editor. The publication followed the policy of objectivity in journalism and was also projected to be fearless. This was a newspaper with the motive and intention to provide its readers with undiluted news and information which was considered to be the voice of the people. Bhyuan was also arrested thrice in the process of following this policy but this did not stop him from unearthing the truth and bringing this to the notice of the public. Bhyuan also edited a fortnightly "Pashek" which was brought out by Sadin which however did not last long.

"Budhbar" was launched on 29th March 1989 with the aim to provide fresh ideas to the readers and to provide a platform for the ordinary people. The paper used to organise seminars and the details of the deliberations were also included in the columns of the publication. Parag Kumar Das was the editor of the paper and was arrested twice. His service in the paper was terminated because of a difference of opinion with the management. Then Das started his own 10 day paper 'Agan', which was the first of its kind in Assam but this also died prematurely. "Budhbar" was suspended twice but from the middle of 1995 it resumed its publication and towards the end of that year Dilip Sarma became the managing editor of the paper.

"Prantik" appeared in 1981 under the editorship of Pradip Barua who was also the publisher and the printer. The magazine had occupied a vital position not only in Assamese journalism but also in Assamese literary world.
The history of newspapers in Assam is a long one. Assamese newspapers that have had long lives include 'Agnigarh', 'Nam Ache', 'Mangal Batori', 'Purbanchal', 'Natun Batori', 'Sambad', 'Pahari Doot' and 'Ma-lakhimi'.

Besides this, Assam also has English editions like 'The Times of Assam' which was launched on 5th January incidentally was the first English daily. This paper was started by Radhanath Changkokaki who started out on his own without any financial help from others. He is in fact the man behind English journalism in Assam which survived for more than 50 years. He was succeeded by Lakshminath Phookan. The paper enjoyed full patronage of the Government but ultimately it was also closed down in the year 1947.

'The advocate of Assam' was an English edition which was launched by Mathura Mohan Barua in 1903. It had its important role in freedom struggle of India.

'The Assam Tribune' was launched in 1939 and is still in circulation. The paper is been published from different part of Assam barring Silchar. It provides regional news as well as national and international news and information. The publication has been regarded as pro-congress but it did criticize the Government of Gopinath Bordoloi. It also had to face the ire of the Government where the paper was blacklisted and no advertisement was paid to it. But later it overcame financial losses and today it is the highest circulated English daily in Assam. This paper is the first in terms of pay scale as per the wage board. Besides this, the paper took active role in challenging the Assam Special Power (Press) Act in 1996.

'Dainik Jugasanka' was launched on 20th December, 1950, is owned and edited by Baidyanath Nath at Silchar and is the largest circulated Bengali daily newspaper of Assam. In 1979, the newspaper was shifted to Guwahati and it came back to Silchar in 1985. Presently, the newspaper has three editions which are in Silchar, Guwahati and Dibrugarh.
‘Assam Express’ was launched by Jibakanta Gogoi in 1969 and then in 1971 it became a daily. It celebrated its silver jubilee in 1996. The founder editor of the paper was the renowned Hem Barua. The management had also introduced another publication in 1977 ‘Nagarik’.

‘News Star’ came out in 1982 under the editorship of Ramendra Narayan Dutta Barua. It was initiated as a tabloid sized daily unconventional by assigning a title to each of the eleven pages excluding the front page. But it could not garner popularity among the readers which ultimately forced it to close down after a few years.

‘The Sentinel’ was launched in 1983 which was printed and edited by Omega printers. The owner Shankar Rajkhowa started his career in an advertising agency and the founding editor was Dhirendra Nath Bezbora. It also has its Saturday and Sunday issues which are popular among the readers. This publication is the second highest in terms of circulation.

‘The Northeast Times’ is owned by GL Agarwalla who took charge of the publication after the resignation of Khiren Roy from the post of editorship. Naren Deka after his retirement from Assam Tribune joined the paper as an editor.

In the 1990s many English newspapers were seen in the market such ‘The Eastern Clarion’, ‘News Front’, ‘The Northeast Observer’, and ‘The Frontier Sun’ which were launched in order to cater to the needs of the readers of Assam.

In the state of Assam, different dialects journals, newspapers and magazines were born which are not restricted to Assamese, English or Hindi. The state has Bodo with the first publication of ‘Bibar’ in 1824, the Bengali newspaper, ‘Shrihattaparakash’ in 1876, the Bishnupriya Manipuri magazine, ‘Manipuri’ in 1934, the Karbi newspaper in 1937, ‘Birta’, the Mising newspaper, ‘Aarohan’ in 1951, and the first Nepali newspaper, ‘Gorkha Sewak’ in 1936.
Arunachal Pradesh

Precedingly known as the North Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA), Arunachal Pradesh became a full fledged state on 20th February 1987. In 1988, the state had its first newspaper which is known as the ‘Echo of Arunachal’ an English tabloid under the initiatives of former PTI Bureau Chief, P.B. Dasgupta and a businessman Vijay Bothra and the then IPR Director Lummer Dai. In 1994 the newspaper became a daily and on 1st July 2009 it started printing the newspaper in colour.

‘The Arunachal Times’ was the first English broadsheet daily which was launched on 6th June 1989 with Vijay Kumar Nath as the Chief Editor and Taso Grayu as the editor-cum-publisher. The publication became popular among the masses and it also changed its letter composing to that of an offset in 1992 and web offset on 2nd December 2008.

‘The Arunachal Front’ English weekly started on the 3rd October 1992 under the editorship of Nanl Kojin. Vijay Kumar Nath who was chief editor of ‘The Arunachal Times’ joined the publication on 30th July 2007 and not only helped to convert the Arunachal Front into a broadsheet but also to bring out the publication as a colour daily on 20th August 2007 which made the paper to be the first colour daily in the state. Presently, Pradeep Kumar Behera is the editor of the publication.

‘Arunachal News’, English biweekly was launched on 18th January 1994 with Habung Payeng as its Editor.

‘The Dawnlit Post’, English daily hit the stands on 21st April 1998 with Gabriel Denwang Wangsu as the editor, printer and publisher of the paper.

‘The Sentinel Arunachal’, which is the extended service of the Guwahati based English daily ‘The Sentinel’ started in the state from the 1st October 2009.
‘Eastern Horizon’, which is an English magazine started its publication in 2000, however it could survive only for five years.

Similarly, a few other magazines as well as newspaper were at some time or the other running in the state but ceased publication due to the different constrains.

With the passing of time people of the state realised the importance of the media and with this, the number of newspapers and publications were in circulation grew which served the people of the Arunachal Pradesh. Besides this, the two news agencies the PTI and the UNI have been providing news and information since 1975. Newspaper like ‘Arunachal Epitome’, ‘Advertisement Times’, ‘Yangbo Calling’, ‘Roing Times’, ‘Veracity’, ‘Miao Times’ were circulated from the different places of Arunachal Pradesh.

When the headquarters of the North Eastern Frontier Agency was shifted from Shillong to Itanagar, a few more magazines were brought out namely the ‘Arunachal Review’, a quarterly in 1980, ‘Arunachal News Letter’, a fortnightly in 1986 and ‘Arun Information’, a weekly newsletter in 2005.

Manipur

Manipur was a princely state before the British had gained control over it. However, after independence the state of Manipur was merged with the Indian Union on 15th October 1949 and became a Union Territory in 1956. The state however achieved its statehood on 21st January 1972.

Since 1920, the press in Manipur has had a different outlook because of the printing technology and there were also developments in terms of reporting, presentation and designing during the last decade.

In 1917-18, a handwritten journal ‘Meitei Leima’ was published from Cachar. A monthly bilingual ‘Masik Jagran’ in Bengali and Manipuri was published under the editorship of Arjun Singh from Sylhet in 1924 which is now in Bangladesh.

There is some confusion as to the origin of journalism in Manipur as in one version it is said that the origin of journalism in Manipur is attributed to the hand-stencilled and cyclostyled journal ‘Meitei Chanu’ which was published in 1925-26 by Jan-neta Hijam Irabot Singh who is also referred to as the father of Manipuri journalism. However this publication could only come out with a few editions. On the other hand, some scholars opine that this publication cannot be termed as the first in the field of journalism as it is not printed on paper. However, the pioneer in journalism in Manipur is credited to the daily, ‘Dainik Manipur Patrika’ which was published by Thongjam Gokulchandrar Singh on 23rd March 1933. This publication also however survived only for five years, as it was closed down owing to its criticism against the British government in its column.

‘Yakairol’ a monthly was launched in the year 1930 and its publisher and editor was Dr. Ningthoujam Leiren.
In 1934, Arambam Dorendrajit brought out ‘Lalit Manjuri Patrika’ (Masik Manipur). Sagolsem Indramani started a weekly ‘Meitei Maiba’in 1938 and in the same year another publication, ‘Taun Manipur’ came in which was brought out by R.K. Sitaljit. ‘Manipur Paojel’, a bi-weekly paper hit the stands in 1939. R.K. Sitaljit brought out another weekly ‘Matam Manipur’in the same year. Nevertheless the paper survived only for three years. During the struggle for independence social reformers and freedom fighters employed the press to spread the message of liberty and uniformity against the evils in the society. This was carried in almost all the publications which were active during the era. Amongst them ‘Bhagyabati Patrika’ appeared in 1946 by Maishnam Biramani Singh. Kesam Kunjabihari Singh brought out two publications in the same year which are ‘Prajatantra’ and ‘Ngasi’, where the former was changed into a daily under the editorship of R.K. Maipkasana and later was converted from a monthly to weekly and ultimately to a daily before it ceased its publication in 2002. Kesam Kunjabihari who has used his publication to fight against British tyranny and because of his actions, was put behind bars. In Manipur, journalism appealed to almost all the people who were leading intellectuals.

In 1946 ‘Chhatra Jagat’ which was a Manipuri fortnightly appeared under the editorship of N. Tombi Singh. On April 1947, Irabot brought out ‘Anouba Yug’.

‘Praja’, a weekly magazine was launched in 1948 under the editorship of Loitam Yaima. Then in 1949, ‘Loumi’ was established which was edited by Elangbam Yaima. R.K. Maipkasana, the editor of ‘Prajatantra’ had launched another paper ‘Janambhumi’ in 1950. ‘Anouba Samaj’ was launched in 1952 under the editorship of Chingangbam Gourhari and the publication was the mouthpiece of the Communist Party of India. In 1956 ‘Anouba Manipur’ appeared which was edited by Thiyam Meghachandra. The Communist Party of India started its own publication
'Kollao' in 1963 edited by Thokchom Bira. The same year 'Bharat Sevak' hit the stands under the editorship of Waikhom Meghabama. In 1969, two publications came into being 'Marup' which was edited by Maynegbam Nilmani and 'Yug ki Eechel' by Irom Chnadras.

After Manipur became a full fledged state in 1972, the state saw the development of political awareness which also strengthened the movement of Manipur journalism. During this phase there was also the increase of newspapers in Manipur. With the appearance of 'Sanaleibak' edited by Chandam Manihar in 1972, several newspapers followed suit in the form of Manipur News, 'Janata', 'Huyen Lanpao' and 'Poajel'. 'Prajsatandra', 'Simanta Patrika' and 'Kollao' were the publications that brought out by political parties are therefore started a new trend in journalism.

'Ihou', a vernacular daily appeared in 1974 and it went out of publication in 2000. In 1976, 'Huyen Lanpao' a daily vernacular newspaper was published and edited by Sallam Bharata Bhushan. The editorial had a special feature which prints regularly in Meitei Script. Even the spot version of the events was introduced where other publications at that time gathered news from DIPR, PIB, police and others. The newspaper published the views and inputs of the people who were from the different spares of life. This publication was also known for writing against insurgency, human rights and as well as conflict issues.

On 1st February 1980, a vernacular daily 'Poknapham' appeared which was published and edited by Shamurailatpam Gopal Sharma. This publication incorporated the first ever web printing press in Manipur on 25th October 1996. On 3rd November 1980 English daily 'Manipur Mail' was published and edited by Former MP and journalist N. Tombi Singh. 'Kangleipakki Meira', a fortnightly hit the stands in 1982 with Wangkhencha Shymajai as its editor. The publication became a weekly in 1985, a daily in 1992 and an evening paper in 1995.
There was a boom in the Manipur press between the years 1972 and 1984 with the emergence of 27 dailies and 13 weeklies. Sh. Umesh Chnadra edited the newspaper called 'Ningtam Lanpao' which was launched in 1989. 'Paonikhol' was brought out in 1990 by Ch. Meghabarna Singh. After two years 'Lanbung' appeared in 1992 under the editorship of Krishna Chandra Singh. Valley Rose who is one of the pioneering woman journalists of Manipur launched 'Aja', a Tangkhul and English daily in 1992. The main motive behind bringing out the publication was to serve the people who could read only Tangkhul, as they are familiar with neither English nor Manipuri which were the languages used by most of the newspapers in Manipur. The same year on 12th December 'Freedom' English daily which was edited by R. K. Ranendrajit emerged. A year later, in 1993 'Nongalakpa' was launched and was edited by Suresh Luwang and in 1996 'Meeyam' came out under the editorship of K Shyam Sharma. At this point of time, most of the dailies were in the vernacular language and the papers which were in English were of poor quality printing and as well as layout. The 'Imphal Free Press' hit the stand on 8th May 1996, with Pradip Phanjouban a renowned journalist as its editor. The publication came out with a modern touch in its presentation as well as content of the newspaper where advanced printing technology and layout were incorporated. The same year two more newspapers were brought out namely 'Naharolgi Thoudang' edited by N. Biren and Imphal which was edited and published by Dhanabir. 'Matamgi Yakairol' which had two editions of English and Manipur was launched in 1997 with Brozendro Ningomba as its editor. Similarly, on 11th September 1999, 'The Sangai Express' was brought out under the editorship of Khellem Thokchom which also had both English and Manipur editions and this was the first publication in Manipur which was printed in colour. The same year the first evening paper of the state 'Kangla Pao' was published and edited by Paonam Labango Mangang, who was a former cadre of an
insurgent outfit. In 2004, Maisnam Shivadutta Luwang published and edited a monthly current affairs journal ‘Lamjung Meira’ from Manipur. However, the publication could not survive due to low readership, any proper infrastructure and untrained journalists besides no support from the side of the government.

The Press in Manipur also had to undergo tremendous pressure from insurgents, government, students and also from non-government organisations.

Presently journalism in Manipur has become a big industry which is competing with Guwahati in the North East region of India. Though it had occupied the bigger area in the business, the problem of wages and revenue had persisted. Time and again the freedom of the press in Manipur has been challenged which hampered the free flow of news and information. Since 1974, The All Manipur Working Journalist Union (AMWJU) and many other organisations have been fighting for the freedom of the press and for the safety of the media fraternity as media persons as these professionals do, from time to time, face lot of harassment while carrying out their duties.

**Mizoram**

6The Mizos are a people who migrated in India. Those who are first to arrived in the country are known as Kukis. Those who arrived after the Kukis are called the New Kukis and those who came last are known as the Lushai. In 1895, a proclamation was formally declared that the Mizo Hills were part of the British India.

The Christian missionaries initiated the education system among the Mizo tribe of Mizoram. In the late 1890s and the beginning of the 1900s the Christian missionaries published books and journals to spread their faith and through this trail journalism has emerged in this part of the country. During this time, most of the printing was
done outside the region and the publications which are from the state were mostly handwritten or with typewriter.

Captain J. Shakespeare IA, the then Assistant Political Officer/Superintendent edited the first Mizo dialect journal ‘Mizo Chanchin Laishuim’ in the month of August, 1898. The publication was a handwritten cyclostyled newsletter which however did not survive for long. Captain Shakespeare published another monthly journal ‘Mizo Leh Vai Chanchin Lekhabu’ in the month of November 1902. Mr. Makthanga was the first Mizo editor to serve this publication from 1911 to 1936. The 14 page journal included contributions from the first generation of literate Mizos and these were mostly human interest stories and Government stories. In 1911, the Presbyterian missionaries entered the field of journalism by bring out their monthly mouthpiece ‘Kristian Tlangau’ from Aizawl. The journal is still in circulation and it has the highest number of copies being circulated. The same year there was another development whereby the state had its first printing press namely the ‘Loch Printing Press’ which was changed into ‘Synod Press’. Though the earlier publications were mostly on Christian or Government related issues, there were also publications and journals which emphasised on the community oriented matters. ‘Tlawmngaihna’ is one of the magazines which were published in 1934 by the Baptist Mission of Lunglei. Through the human interest stories the magazine stressed on the community services and therefore supported the positive Mizo traditions and culture. While the Baptist Church of Serkawn published another monthly ‘Kohhran Beng’ was launched in the year 1947 which is also the mouthpiece of the Church and is still in circulation. Besides this, there were many publications and journals which contributed towards the development and promotion of politics, education and upliftment of the Mizo community.
Then there was the introduction of a journal which emphasised on the development and preservation of Mizo literature. The ‘LSA’ a monthly magazine was launched in September 1938 which was the mouthpiece of the Lushai Student’s Association under the editorship of Mr. L. H. Liana. The magazine covered issues which included articles on current affairs, essays and articles based on literary nature but publication was stopped in 1980. The name of the journal later changed into Mizo Zirlai Pawl’ (MZP).

There was a steady growth of newspapers and magazines in the Mizoram. However, due to the a lack of a reliable and efficient printing press, funds and the work force, the local dialect daily newspapers and weekly magazines were not in circulation until the 20th century. Later in September 1939, the first Mizo dialect weekly magazine ‘Tun Hapta Chanchinbu’ was launched under the editorship of Mr. Liangkhum. This is followed by the first daily newspaper ‘Ni tin Chanchinbu’ which was published in the same year by A.G. Mc Call ICS, the then Superintendent of the Lushai Hills.

At this point of time, a new trend of journalism was taking its shape with the political parties taking interest in the print media which is prevailing till now. A political party ‘Mizo Union Pawl’ brought out their publication called ‘Mizo Chanchinbu’ in 1946 which is the first political journal in the Mizo dialect. The journal was introduced in order to create and mobilize public opinion and was co-edited by Mr. Thanhilira, Mr. Thangbuiaia and Mr. Lalthlamuana. The rival political party Zalen Pawl also brought out their journal ‘Zoram Thupuan’ which was established in December 1947 and the paper was co-edited by Mr. Lalmawia, Mr. Thangruma, Mr.Lalrinliana and Mr.Rokunga. There was another political party which introduced their newspaper ‘Mizo Arsi’ in 1948 which was edited by Mr. H.K.Bawichhuaka.
‘Chawkhlei’, is the first daily newspaper of Mizoram which is published from Champhai. The daily newspapers of the Mizoram followed the same size format which prevailed till the late 1990s and after there was a standardized daily newspaper layout and format which is the current trend in the region. ‘Zoram Politik’ was started as a monthly, then a weekly and finally as a daily in 1976 by Zohmingthanga Tlau who is both the publisher and editor of the paper. Tlau also published and edited another publication called ‘Laisuih Weekly’ in 2004. Presently, ‘Vanglaimi’ a daily which was launched in 1978 has the highest number of newspapers circulated and the paper was the first one to distribute its issues in the morning hours unlike other newspapers which distributed them at noon. Among the entertainment oriented magazines, the highest circulated magazine is the ‘Lelte’ which is edited by Mr. C. Dinthanga. Similarly, ‘Lengzem’ is another monthly magazine based on human interest literature which also has the highest circulation and the magazine’s editor is Mr. Vanneihlaunga. The first vernacular periodical news magazine, ‘Zoeng’ in Mizoram was published in 1983. C. Lalrambuatsaiha brought out ‘Hotline’, a fortnightly magazine which was published in 1993 in both the Lushai Mizo and Hmar dialects in Churachandpur. The publication had to discontinue as there was a limited Mizo speaking population in the region. The magazine resumed its publication from 1994 and the contents of the magazine include current affairs, etiquette, manners, sex education, office procedure, sports etc. In 2001 the first web offset machine was set up in Mizoram by Khawlhring Sapdanga. A year after this on 30th October 2002 C. Lalrambuatsaiha launched a daily, ‘Aizawl Post’ which became the second largest selling newspaper in Mizoram.

‘Newslinl’, ‘Mizoram post’ and ‘Highlander’ are a few of the well-known English newspapers serving the people of the region. Besides these, the Mizo dialect newspapers and journals are running in the state and many government departments
also publish journals such as ‘Hriselna’ which is an organ of the Directorate of Health Services. In the same way ‘Thu leh Hla’ is the mouthpiece of the Mizo Academy of Letters and ‘Meichher’ is the publication of Mizo Adult Education Wing.

In Mizoram, there are more than 200 full time journalists covering events and there are about 100 Mizo dialect daily newspapers published in the state. Newspapers or journals started in order to impart information, education and entertainment to the people of the state. Nonetheless, the print media is Mizoram emerged to a new trend which is more inclined towards entertainment oriented content that can be understand from a quote of a local journalist, “It is crucial that Hollywood and international celebrities stories must be extensively covered, otherwise, how will we lure the young readers and sell our papers?” This is seen in most of the weekly magazines which require stories with the touch of a sensational feel to pull in the readers and in return the publication gets its boon for survival. While on the other side, a majority of the journalists in Mizoram are not trained professionals. They learned journalism in the field. Nevertheless, now with the help of development and growth, there are a good number of journalists who are well trained and experienced.

**Nagaland**

In 1816 Assam was invaded by Myanmar and even a large portion of Naga inhabited area was affected by this invasion. Then British took control of the area from 1826 and expanded its domain over the modern Naga Hills. After independence, the area which was covered by British rule remained as a part of the province of Assam. Then in an intense revolt for the freedom from the nation of India, the Nagas took active participation. In 1955, the Indian Army succeeded in taking control of the revolt
which the extremists had undertaken. The government tried to solve the issue and come up with diplomatic talks with the representatives of Naga tribes; the Naga Hills Council of Assam and the Tuensang frontier which were united in a single Union Territory. Then in 1960 at a meeting of Naga People’s Convention came to a conclusion to grant Nagaland a full-fledged state of India. The state of Nagaland was finally declared as a full-fledged state within the Union of India. Another milestone in the history of Nagaland was on 11th November 1975 with regard to restoring peace and normalcy in the state which was taking place and this was the Shillong Accord signed between the Union Government and the rebel underground outfits. Here the rebel leaders agreed to surrender their arms and decided to withdraw all their demands for the secession of the state.

Newspapers were introduced in Nagaland only in late 1960 and that too was purely meant for information and other necessities which were not defined in terms of commercialization. Therefore the quality of the newspapers was not up to the mark and was circulated only in two towns i.e., Kohima and Dimapur. The reason for this is a lack of educated conscious citizens who took a long time to establish themselves and come to the limelight of the print media. The first newspaper of the state ‘Citizen Voice’ appeared in the year 1967. The newspaper was initiated by a group of young men who felt the need to spread news and information to the people of the region. The editor of the paper was Neituo Angami and the paper was started as a bi-weekly and then later on converted to a daily. The ‘Citizen Voice’ is a great achievement in the history of media in Nagaland. This was also the time when electronic media was not seen in the market. The publication however survived till 1978.

The state also witnessed the growth of newspapers for political consciousness. As few concerned citizens felt that the freedom of speech of the people was being neglected and that this particular problem needed to be addressed. There were limited
writers, freelancers who would contribute to the newspapers. During 1967 to 1980, the readers and the newspapers gave importance only to news related events which was going around them. News which was not related to Nagaland was treated as secondary. 'Kohima weekly' hit the stand in 1972 under the editorship of Viya Sekhose. However the publication closed down in 1991.

After the Shillong Accord of 1975, the newspaper circulation increased rapidly. This was a time when the public wanted to know about the political scenario of the state more than the issues on other affairs. Newspapers from the region were also distributed in mainland India and as well in the international community to create awareness about the problems faced by the Nagas of the state.

In 1976 'Platform' a weekly from Kohima was launched which was published and edited by Mhiesizokho Zinyu. He established two more newspapers from Kohima, 'Nagaland Newsreview' a weekly in 1980 and 'Daily Review' in 1996. In 1984, 'Hill Express' was established under the editorship of N. Khashito Aye.

'Nagaland Post' which is one of the most reputed apart from being the first English newspaper from the state hit the stands in 1990 under the editorship of Geoffry Yaden. This paper was established at a time when the state needed a proper channel to communicate with the public. It was brought out for the cause of the social needs and the publication also had to face a lot of problems in its continuation of hitting the stands like finance, printing and distribution. Monalisa Changkija, a woman editor in the newspaper organization was for the first time seen in 'Nagaland Post' which was established in the year 1998 from Dimapur. Changkija formed the publication which is still continuing to raise a voice against wrongs and unearthing flaws. The 'Nagaland Page' was also the first newspaper in the state that runs seven days a week while other newspapers did not publish on Sundays. The publication was also the first one to introduce the offset orienting technology.
Many newspapers were introduced and as well many organisations also came up. Yet many newspapers also disappeared in the state owing to different problem faced by the publications. Among these publications which have disappeared are *The Nagaland times* under the editorship of S.K. Dutta, *The North East Herald*, *Ura Mail* with Assamwati Longkumer as the editor of the paper.

*The Morung Express* English daily was launched on 14th September 2005. The founder editor of the newspaper is Along Longkumer who also helps to conceptualise a professionally designed media platform. The publication was established to give alternative and unbiased news and information and it is the first daily newspaper in the state to come out with a website.

**Sikkim**

Three tribes resided within the territory of Sikkim, they are Naong, Mon and Chang. However, they could not retain their dominance in the region as Lepchas replaced the tribes soon. Inroads into the region by Lepchas and the consequences which resulted in combat with aborigines created the early history in Sikkim. With the British arrival in India, Sikkim united itself to fight against a common enemy, Nepal. However, this collaboration had dire consequences.

Under the Indian Union, Sikkim emerged as a special protectorate after India got its independence. In 1955 a state council was established to allow for constitutional government under the king of the Chogyal Dynasty. The Sikkim National Congress demanded fresh election and greater representation for Nepalese people in the state. Prolonged agitations led to a formal request for protection from India. Thus in 1975, the Prime Minister of Sikkim appealed to the Indian Parliament to merge Sikkim
with India and make it a state therein. Finally, on 16th May, 1975, Sikkim became a part of the Indian Union and the institution of monarchy was completely abolished.

In Sikkim, journalism was initiated through the publication of a monthly ‘Kanchenjunga’ in 1957 which was edited and published by the late Kashiraj Pradhan. Besides having a wide regional readership, the usage of language and style, the publication had a literary touch in the content of the publication. The paper was printed at Mani Printing house at Kalimpong and was owned by the prominent linguist, educationalist and literary personality Dr. Parasmani Pradhan. However, the publication survived for only 14 years. The ‘Sikkim Herald’ was published in the latter part of 1950 by the Department of Information and Public Relations, Government of Sikkim. After the merger of the state with the Indian Union, English weekly called the ‘Sikkim Express’ appeared in 1977 which was later converted into a daily and the publication was edited by R. K. Singal. A Nepalese weekly, ‘Himalibela’ was published from Himalindia and the publication hit the stands with an aim to provide the people with the news and information of the region. The publication’s founder editor was Ram Patro who later took charge of the publication house and also edited the Sikkim Express simultaneously. These two publications, ‘The Sikkim Express’ and ‘Himalibela’ have completed 30 years of publication. After the demise of Ram Patro, his wife Mrs. Mala Rana Patro took charge of the management of the publication house while her son Amit Patro took over ‘Sikkim Express’ as its chief editor. Under his supervision the newspaper had flourished and thereby became the largest circulated newspaper in Sikkim.

In the 1960s, C.D. Rai and B.B. Gooroong were the Gangtok based correspondents of ‘Amrita Bazar Patrika’. During the regime of the former Chogyal (King) in 1960, late Mr. Niras and Mrs. Santos Niras also contributed to the field of journalism and
they also brought out the news magazine ‘Border news’ in 1978. In the same year, another Nepalese daily, ‘Daínik Aawaj’ was started from Gangtok.

The era of modern journalism in Sikkim can be traced to the years after 1975. The journalists from the region contributed greatly in shaping the foundation of journalism and among them, R.K. Singh, Binor Agrawal, Suresh Pramar, Jigmé N. Kazi, Navin C. Gurung, Subash Deepak, Ganga Rai, Druba Gurung and the likes are names that cannot be forgotten. In the initial stage of journalism in Sikkim, the periodicity of the newspapers was mostly weekly. The main reason for this is the lack of professional news persons and proper infrastructure. Though newspapers like ‘Himalibela’, ‘Wichar’, ‘Gangtok’, ‘Purbasandesh’, ‘Himigiri’ etc were weeklies, they played their role in bringing in professional journalism in the state. ‘Sikkim Express’, ‘Sikkim Now’, ‘Hamro Prajasakti’, ‘Samay Dainik’, ‘Sikkim Mail’, ‘Sikkim Reporter’ etc. and the colour news magazines such as ‘Snowline’, ‘Talk Sikkim’, ‘Sikkim Outlook’ etc. are a few prominent newspapers and magazines which published articles containing not only news stories but also analysis of reports, feature stories etc. Besides this, some of these newspapers also have online editions. In Sikkim, presently there are more than 100 dailies and weeklies which are in circulation. Most dailies fall within the small or medium newspaper category and some of the newspapers are also distributed outside the state. The prominent dailies are ‘Sikkim Express’, ‘Samay, Hamaro’, ‘Praja Sakti’ and ‘Aaja Ko Sikkim’.

However, due to limited readership and investors in this publication sector, the main revenue for these publications comes from the Government advertisements.
Tripura

Tripura had gone through several phases of geographical change. Since 1947 the Manikya dynasty had ruled the state of Tripura. However, after independence, princely rule in the region came to an end. In November 1956 Tripura became a Union Territory of India and finally on January 21st, 1972 Tripura attained its full statehood.

The history and growth of newspapers in Tripura had not been recorded in a systematic form until 1995. There are very little referred documents available which deal with Tripura newspapers. Nevertheless, a series of discussions with mature consumers and the veteran journalists of the region and the information gathered from the private archives maintained by late Ramaprasad Datta helped to assimilate the important events in the history and growth of newspapers in Tripura. Until the merger of Tripura with the Indian Union, the newspapers were published from Comilla, Dhaka and Kolkatta and major events of the Tripura’s Royal dynasty had been covered by those newspapers. ‘Samachar Darpan’ which was published in 1818 in undivided Bangladesh covered the grand wedding of the Tripura king, Maharaj Ramganga Manikya and his coronation in the year 1821. ‘Tripura Gyan Prasarini’ a monthly established in 1860 is the first newspaper of undivided Tripura from Bikrampur. The publication was edited by Kailash Chandra Sarkar under the patronage of then ruler Ishan Chandra Manikya. The newspaper dealt mostly with literary activities and ultimately died down after few publications. The second publication ‘Pakshtyk Tripura’ was established in 1876 although only three editions were published. The same year ‘Barshiki’ was launched under the editorship of Radharaman Ghosh. The newspaper was directly sponsored by the 16 year old Maharaja Radhakishore Manikya. In its first publication, Radhakishore had himself
written an article titled ‘Nababarsha’ and this newspaper is considered as the first
literary newspaper of Tripura’s Royal family. A 16 page newspaper ‘Tripura
Bartabaha’ was launched in 1879 by late Lalit Kumar Chakraborty from Comilla.
This publication was the first one to introduced the concept of advertisements in
newspapers with the advertisement space devoted at 12.5 paisa per line and its
annual subscription was rupees two. The publication rendered its services to the
people of Tripura for ten years. The same year another hand written newspaper
‘Pancha Pandit’ appeared under the patronage of Maharaja Bir Chandra
Manikya. ‘Tripura Hitaishi’ a weekly hit the stands in 1883 and was published by
Sri Gurudayal Singha. The newspaper was publishing in four full scaled sizes till
1948 under the management of his wife Urmila Singha. ‘Panchapandit’ a monthly
was launched in 1890 by Maharaja Radhakishore Manikya while a fortnightly
‘Tripura Prakash’ was published by Nabakumar Datta in 1893 from Comilla.
Ramkanai Datta published ‘Usha’ from Brahmanbaria in the same year in 1893. A
year after in 1894, ‘Hira’ appeared under the editorship of Bhagaban Sen from
Brahmanbaria and published by Anukul Chandra Chakraborty. A unique feature of
this publication was that it had published a Suchana (Introduction) instead of an
editorial. From Brahmanbararia, another newspaper ‘Hitobarta’ appeared in 1899
which was edited by Nil Kamal Datta. The publication ceased its publication after a
few years. A monthly, ‘Pritinidhi’ was published by Sashibhusan Dey under the
editorship of Rajani Nath. The newspaper gave its priority to the coverage of the
agriculture industry and commerce and according to the opinion of late Rama Prasad
Datta this type of exposure was the first of its kind among the publications of the
region. In 1903, two literary newspapers ‘Dhunketu’ and ‘Bangabhasha’ were
launched in Tripura. ‘Dhunketu’ was edited by Prince Mahendra Debarman under
the patronage of Maharaja Bir Chandra Manikya. ‘Bangabhasha’ was edited by
Suresh Chandra Thakur and Lalit Mohan Bhattacharjee was the assistant editor of the publication. This newspaper was published with the help of Ujir Gopi Krishna Thakur and many renowned personalities had also contributed to the publication like Umesh Bidyaratna, Jagadananda Roy, Akhshoy Maira, Dinesh Chandra Sen, Pareash Sen and Dinnanath Ganguly. On 4th April 1905 ‘Arun’ appeared which was published and edited by Pandit Chandraday VidyaBinode and was published from Rajmala Press in Agartala. ‘Arun’ stood firmly against the British regime since its inception and the publication was born from the inspiration of revolution to dive Bengal in 1905. However, the newspaper ceased its publication after two years. In order to carry on the zeal of ‘Arun’ another fortnightly ‘Santan’ hit the stands in 1907 and it was published by Ramkanai Datta. In 1911, ‘Tripura Guide’ was launched by Rajanikanta Gupta of Comilla. The publication was edited by Kadambini Gupta and Nani Gopal Chattarjee. This newspaper had a unique style of presentation with the first page in English, second page in Bengali, third page of advertisements while the fourth page was a mixture of English and Bengali, which was the continuation of first and second page. This paper could survive till 1938. The next year in 1912, three handwritten periodicals appeared, they were ‘Mathathanda’ edited by Suresh Chandra Chakraborty, ‘Siksha’ edited by Bharat Chandra Sen and ‘Sadhana’ edited by Bhupendra Nath Sen. In 1916, ‘Tribeni’ appeared under the editorship of Surenda Mohan Roy, but it closed down after two years in 1918. In 1920 Kunjamohan Ghatak published the Tripura Gazette, ‘Pakkhik Prajabadhu’ which was edited by Purnachandra Chakraborty and ‘Palli Pradip’ edited by Ramani Mohan. In 1924 ‘Rabi’ hit the stands which were jointly edited by Prince Narendra Kishore Debbarman and Kaliprasabba Sengupta. This publication made a mark with its literary excellence and had the coverage of different events and activities with news, views etc. Rabindranath Tagore and many eminent writers had
also contributed to the publication. The same year, a monthly ‘Baniya Barta’ on agriculture and commerce appeared in 1924 under the editorship of Upendranath Mukhopadhyaya. ‘Chunta Prakash’ was launched on 16th January 1926 from Comilla by Apurba Chandra Bhattacharjee. This publication was the first one to introduce the concept of deployment of correspondents in every village of the state. In return, the publication gave free subscription to the correspondent instead of remuneration. The publication was closed down after 20 years in the field (ref: An article by Titas Choudhary). ‘Chasir Katha’a weekly appeared in 1930 and was published by Mohammed Aratulla. In 1932, another weekly ‘Tripuri’ was launched under the joint editorship of Sankarimohan Chattopadhyay and Amarendra Mukhopadhyay. The publication later on converted to a monthly. Initially it started with literary articles and later included news items as well. The same year in May 1932 a literary newspaper ‘Purbasha’ was born which was edited by Sanjay Bhattacharjee. This newspaper was closed down a few months after independence. The Royal family and the intellectuals of Tripura had brought out a periodical ‘Purbali’ in 1934 published by Ajit Bandhu Debarman. However, the publication survived for only a year. In 1935 ‘Tripura Laxmi’ was published by Bhupendra Nath Ghosh of Comilla which is the mouthpiece of the Union of Tripura district. The same year another monthly ‘Khanaprabha’ was launched and edited by Chiturendra Debbarman. ‘Alo’ a monthly was published in 1937. Three monthlies were launched in 1938, ‘Dhumketu’ edited by Kanu Sengupta, ‘Ajab’ edited by Rabindranath Datta, and ‘Tarun’ by Narendra Nath Dasgupta. ‘Projar Dabi’ was also published in the same year and its editor was Biren Datta, who was one of the founders of the Communist Party in Tripura. ‘Kalyani’ appeared in 1939 which was edited by Khirod Bihari Chakraborty. A handwritten monthly ‘Namaskar’ was also published in the same year in 1939 under the editorship of Jagat Mohan Bhattacharjee. ‘Tripura Bandhab’ was
published in 1942 and edited by Anil Chandra Bhattacharjee from Rajimala press with the help of the then minister Rana Bodhjong Bahadur. This publication introduced a new section ‘Chotoder Khoshbag’ which is the first journal for children. Few other journals also appeared in 1942, they are ‘Chhatrakantha’ edited by Manimoy Deb Barman, a monthly ‘Chhatra’ edited by Parul Dutta and ‘Academy’ by Shibdas Chowdhary. In 1943 ‘Pataka’ was published by Bimal Sarkar and in 1944 ‘Paraka’ a weekly was published under the editorship of Sirajuddin Ahmed. In 1945 ‘Nabajagaram’ a weekly appeared from Agartala under the joint editorship of Pandit Ganga Prasad Sharma and Nurul Huda. The first daily newspaper of Tripura ‘Jagaran’ appeared in 1945. The publication was edited by Jiten Pal which was published six days a week. ‘Whip’ and ‘Nabajagaran’ also initiated its publication in 1945, and was edited by Ganga Prasad Sharma and Gulam Nabi respectively. In 1946 another newspaper ‘Abhudyaya’ of six pages was launched and was edited by Hrishikesh Debbarman and Ajit Bandhu Debbarman. The publication highlighted the issues concerning the people movements, refugee problems as well as the development and educational programmes. ‘Congress Bulletin’ started in 1947 edited by Shukmoy Sengupta. The newspaper was the mouthpiece of the Tripura Pradesh Congress Committee and continued its publication only for eight years. In January 1947, the ‘Tripura High Court Law Journal’ was published by the Chief Justice of Tripura district Khagendranath Nag with the help of a group of legal luminaries. Two political newspapers came into the scene of newspapers in the state ‘Tripura Rajyer Congress Karmider Katha’ on 15th March 1947 which was edited by a former Chief Minister of Tripura Sukhamay Sengupta. This newspaper was followed by ‘Tripura Rajyer Katha’ which started its publication just 10 days later under the editorship of the communist stalwart of Tripura Biren Datta. Besides this, both the newspapers had opposite political ideologies. In June 1947, a weekly literacy journal ‘Sarathi’ was
instituted and edited by Kishore Deb Barman and the publication was the mouthpiece of the Tripura Krishti Samsad. A weekly newspaper ‘Aragati’ was born just a month before independence on 14th July 1947. The newspaper was initiated in a missionary zeal to promote the nationalist movement under the joint editorship of Prof. Satyendra Kishore Kar and Hem Chandra Dutta Choudhary. The publication was however closed down for two years after which it reappeared in 1950 and at that time the editor was Prof. Dwijen Dey and when it again reappeared on 14th April 1956 the editor was Nepal Dey. Two monthlies also appeared around this time. ‘Sanskar’ appeared in 1947 which is the mouthpiece of Tripura Janasiksha Samiti and ‘Sanghar’ was published by Tarak Paul. The year 1947 witnessed the growth of many periodicals like ‘Landar’ edited by Munsi Arman Ali, ‘Stahi’ edited by Anil Bikash Das, ‘Janamat’ edited by Nanigopal Chatterjee, ‘Udayan’ edited by Aatikut Islam and ‘Satyabadi’ edited by Basanta Majumder. ‘Natun Alo’ was a literary periodical published from Comilla on 15 January 1948. In April 1948 a weekly newspaper ‘Chiniha’ was launched which was edited by Prabal Chandra Roy. The publication continued only for four years and the same year Priyadas Chakraborty edited a monthly newspaper ‘Shikha’ which had a separate section for women called Mohila Mohol. In August 1949 ‘Tripura Rajya Patrika’ was published under the editorship of Gulab Nabi. Biren Datta edited ‘Tripura Katha’ which was published in 1951 and this paper became the mouthpiece of the undivided Communist party. ‘Manush’ appeared on 2nd February 1951 and the newspaper’s editor was Kamala Ranjan Talapatra. It was published as a weekly to half-weekly and finally into a daily and is still in circulation in the state. A weekly ‘Amader Katha’ was published on 18th May 1951. ‘Samiksha’ was published in Tripura on 11th February 1952. In 1953 three publications were launched, ‘Samaj’ which was edited by Niranjan Banerjee, ‘Samachar’ edited by Anil Kumar Bhattacharjee and ‘Sebak’ a weekly under the
editorship of Amiya Debroy who was also the first president of the Agartala Press Club. After a year in 1954 ‘Katak Kothoma’ was published and the newspaper was edited by Sudhanya Dev Varman. In 1955 ‘Satanka Triprora’ hit the stands as the mouthpiece of the Satanka Triprora Samiti. Two weekly newspapers ‘Swatatra Triprora’ and ‘Abhijan’ were published on 3rd September 1955 from Krishnanagar and were edited by Milan Sengupta. ‘Katal Kathakhya’ is the first newspaper that published in the local language of Tripura. However the newspaper survived only for a year. ‘Katal Katuma’ was also the first Kokborok newspaper of Tripura which was edited by Sudhanwa Debbarman. ‘Farida’ a weekly appeared on 10th May 1956 under the editorship of Siraful Islam. During 1956, a newspaper ‘Panchayat’ was instituted which was edited by Ranjit Sen and Suresh Chandra Bhattacharjee. ‘Mouthpiece’ the English newspaper was published in 1956. A year after this in 1957 ‘Kokborok’ a monthly appeared and the paper was edited by Bangshi Thakur. In the same year ‘Gaoer Katha’ was published from Kailashahar. On 2nd November 1957 a monthly ‘Samaday’ was published by Tripura State Co-operative Union. The next year in 1958, the MBB students brought out ‘Gumati’. The same year ‘Nagarik’ a weekly was published with Mohanalal Roy as its editor. This was followed by another newspaper, ‘Sangram’ published in 1958. ‘Rudrabina’ hit the stands in 1959, firstly as a weekly which was later converted into a daily newspaper. Another publication ‘Grantholok’ appeared in the same year which is the monthly journal of the Tripura Library Authority. A few more publications came in the year 1960 namely the fortnightly ‘Kolol’, ‘Nishan’ a weekly and ‘Kaktun’ which was published in the language of Tripura in a Bengali script. The same year ‘Ganaraj’ also appeared which was a popular newspaper of that period and was run under the editorship of Sukhmoy Sengupta. The newspaper ceased its publication on 1978. The year 1960 also witnessed the coming of Tripura’s first English weekly newspaper ‘Spark’
which was published from Agartala. The publication was started by Apanshu Mohan Lodh who is also the father of English journalism in Tripura. Later in 1961 the title of the newspaper was changed to ‘Tripura Times’. On 6th July 1961 a weekly ‘Sanhati’ was launched which was edited by Bipin Bihari Debbarman and the publication was the mouthpiece of Tripura Art and Culture. ‘Vivek’ a weekly appeared in September 1961 and was edited by Indra Mohan Debnath. The publication later converted to a daily and was renamed ‘Dainik Vivek’ which is still in publication and the present editor is Deb Nath. Another weekly under the name ‘Sanhati’ was launched in 1961 which was renamed to ‘Tripura Sanghati’.

During the emergency period of the Indo-Chinese war ‘Tripura Katha’ was closed down as it published objectionable material. As mentioned before the publication was the mouthpiece of the undivided communist party but after the division of the party it became the mouthpiece of the C.P.I (M). In July 1966, the publication restarted as ‘Desher Daak’ which was again renamed to ‘Desher Katha’ and presently the publication is called ‘Daily Desher Katha’ under the editorship of Goutam Das. ‘Dashak’ emerged on September 1962 and was edited by Shakti Das. A year after in 1963 a literary newspaper ‘Drishtikon’ was established. The same year a weekly ‘Gana Abhijan’ was published. ‘Gana Abhijan’ was later changed to ‘Abhijan’ under the editorship of Milan Sengupta. This weekly turned into daily in the year 1966 under the name ‘Dainik Gana Abhijan’ which runs six days a week. Again in 1969, the publication name changed to ‘Dainik Sambad’ and is the largest circulated Bengali newspaper of the state whose present editor is Paramita Livingstone. In the month of February 1963 ‘Pradarshan’ was started which was edited by the then School Inspector Pramod Ranjan Choudhary. ‘Nabadiganta’ was edited by Suresh Chandra Bhattacharjee on 15th April 1963. On August 1963 ‘Aryashakti’ a weekly newspaper was commenced and was edited by Rajanikanta
Chakraborty. This newspaper was published only for a year. On the eve of Gandhi Jayanti 'Mandanda' a weekly started on 2nd October 1963 under the editorship of Amalendu Gangopadhaya. The year 1963 also saw the establishment of a few more publications which rendered their services to the public. These publications were ‘Sapandan’ a quarterly journal from the department of Industry of the Government of Tripura, ‘Rajnalipi’ and ‘Samaday Barta’, a weekly published by the Tripura State Co-operative Union. The mouthpiece of the Tripura Rabindra Parishad ‘Bhaskar’ appeared on August 1964. A literary newspaper ‘Uttaran’ commenced on 1964 and the publication was jointly edited by Nidhu Hazra and Anil Sarkar. Dr. Kamal Kumar Singha edited ‘Kolahal’ on 1964. There was also the emergence of other newspapers between 1964 and 1965 such as ‘Uttaran’, a literary paper, ‘Arunpol’ published from Amarpur and ‘Bharat Kalyan’ edited by Nirode Barman Das which was the mouthpiece of the Tripura Chha Mazdur Union. In the form of short stories ‘Gandhar’ contributed towards creative literature. The publicity department of the Government of Tripura also published ‘Tribes’ which ran only seven years. ‘Tripura Barta’ was published in 1966 and its joint editors were Anil Sarkar and Jagadish Dey. In April 1966 ‘Silpabarta’ appeared in the region and story writer Subimal Roy was the editor of the publication. In the year 1966 three weeklies appeared ‘Sfulinga’ edited by Ashok Kumar Bhattacharya, ‘Bishan’ and ‘Kripan’ also appeared the same year. ‘Anirban’ a literary newspaper was published in 1967 and was edited by Dulal Chakraborty. A weekly newspaper ‘Chini-Kok’ appeared on 2nd September, 1967 under the editorship of Ajoy Debbarma and the publication is still in circulation in the state. Lina Purakayastha edited a literary newspaper ‘Samaj’ on 15th October 1968 and the cost of the newspaper was 50 paise. ‘Tripura Pradesh’ a weekly was born on October 20, 1969. A monthly ‘Nandini’ was published on 1st September 1969 under the editorship of Sujay Roy. From the year 1967 to 1971 newspapers that were
launched in the state were ‘Uditi’, ‘Kakoli’, ‘Dheu’, ‘Abhyudaya’, ‘Amader Katha’, ‘Ganayug’ and ‘Nadachhanda’. ‘Yapri’ a Tripuri dialect newspaper and ‘Bhabi Bharat’ appeared in 1968, edited by Bhaskar Kumar Bhattacherjee are still in the service to provide news and information to the people of Tripura. ‘Ganadoor’ a weekly appeared from Dharmanagar under the editorship of Susil Chowdhury which later converted into a bi-weekly and in 1977 it was renamed ‘Dainik Ganadoor’. In 1968 few other publications were also seen like ‘Swagatam’ a quarterly, ‘Niharika’ a monthly and ‘Pralay’ a fortnightly. The same year ‘Simanta’ appeared which was later renamed ‘Simanta Prakash’ under the editorship of Mrinal Kanti Kar. The District Administration also published a fortnightly ‘Kajer Shese’ in 1969 which was edited by Omesh Saigal, IAS, the District Magistrate of Tripura. ‘Dainik Sandhya Khabar’ was the first newspaper that was published in the evening. This was followed by another evening newspaper ‘Tridib’ a literary journal called ‘Tribhuj’ which was published from Kailasahar. ‘ChatraSambad’ a monthly appeared on January 7, 1969 by Tripura State Students Federation. On September 1970 ‘Katha’ was started which was jointly edited by Arijit Bhattacharya and Ashokendu Chakraborty. The same year ‘Syandan’ appeared which one of the leading newspapers in Tripura is. The publication started as a weekly and from 1975 it converted into a daily and the present editor is Subal Dey. In 1970 a weekly ‘Gana Sambad’ appeared which was edited by Gopal Roy. Later in 1977 the newspaper was renamed ‘Dainik Gana Sambad’. The other newspapers that were published in the same year are ‘Kheyal, ‘Bratati Pounami’, ‘Jala’ and ‘Paramayu’. The year after in 1971 a weekly ‘Lok Sambad’, ‘Tripura Prabha’, ‘Chandana’ ‘Hal Samakal’ and ‘Rakta palas’ appeared. Papers like ‘Joy Bangla’, ‘Swadhinata’, and ‘Sandip ThekeDhaleswari’ appeared after the liberation of Bangladesh. Lina Purakayasta edited the ‘Tripura Bharati’ which is the first newspaper in the state that was
published in Sanskrit which contributed to journalism in Tripura. ‘Jiban Pradip’ appeared in 1972 and was edited by Sukumar Mitra. The same year a religious newspaper ‘Ashirbad’ was started which was edited by Dinesh Chandra Deb. Bimal Majumder edited the Bengali weekly newspaper ‘Janatar Ray’ which was published on 1972. A daily ‘Janapad’ also appeared in the same year under the editorship of Kamal Kumar Sinha. The publication is still in circulation in the state of Tripura. The year 1972 saw the emergence of a few more periodicals namely ‘Khudrata’, ‘Purbanchal’, ‘Jantar Rai’, ‘Tripurar Mukh’ ‘Platform’, ‘Uttat’, ‘Sakal’ and ‘Gharana’. ‘Bitirna’ a weekly appeared in 1973 and it is still in existence under the editorship of Paritosh Biswas. During this year, a few other newspapers were also started such as ‘Tripra Kantha’, ‘Rashmi’, ‘Nabarun’, ‘Sruti’, ‘Arjun’, ‘Kintu’, ‘Prabal’, and ‘Pratik’. A literary monthly journal ‘Ajanta’ also appeared with Archana Ghoshas its editor. ‘Karam’ was published in three different languages i.e., Bengali, English and Mizo. ‘Agartala Barta’ a weekly was printed from Sen Printing Works of Agartala on 8th August 1973. ‘Pragati Sambad’ published in 1973 was started as a weekly and then converted into a daily newspaper. The publication was edited by Milan Bhownik and it is still in circulation from Agartala. Another weekly ‘Janayog’ was published in April 1974 by Shiddhartha Dutta and then Samiran Roy as its editor. The publication later changed its name to ‘Tripura Darpan’ and converted to a daily. Subal Dey edited the publication ‘Syandan Patrika’ and ‘Dainik Ganadoot’ was edited by Susil Chowdhury. ‘Pramod Barta’ was edited by Dilip Ghosh during this period. A monthly newspaper ‘New Guide’ was launched on 1974 under the editorship of Sontosh Deb Roy. ‘Gomati’ was published on May 09, 1974. ‘Aajker Tripura’ a weekly newspaper was published in April 15, 1974 and was edited by Subhas Das. The two literary journals ‘Mausumi’ and ‘Balmiki’ and two other periodicals ‘Saikat’ and ‘Tatar’ were started in 1975. In 1975 ‘Bartaman
Tripura’ started as a weekly but later it was converted into daily. The publication was edited by Satyajit Purkayastha and it is still being published from Agartala. ‘Kirtiman’ was published on 1976 under the editorship of Abdur Rashid. The literary journals of 1976 are ‘Bichitra’ and ‘Gandhib’. ‘Dainik Desher Katha’ a daily appeared on 15th July, 1976 and belongs to CPI (M). In 1977 ‘Lama’ was launched which is a Tripuri language paper and it was edited by Dasharath Deb. Birendra Kumar Deb and Gouri Sankar Biswas jointly edited ‘Jiban’ on November 1977. ‘Tripura Today’ a fortnightly organ of the Government of Tripura was published on 7th July 1978 which was edited by Gurupada Sau. Phulan Bhattacharjee edited the ‘Shakal’ and ‘Mauchak’ which was edited by Kalyan Gupta in the year 1978. The year 1978 also saw the growth of other periodicals namely ‘Samadesh’, ‘Sraban’, ‘Agartala Uday and Runner’, ‘Swadhiyar Darpan’. ‘Crime Reporter’ was published on January 1979 and the publication was edited by Santosh Purakayastha. On 15th August 1979 ‘Daily Desher Katha’ was instituted which was edited by Gautam Das and the publication is still running today. A monthly sports journal ‘Khellar Khela’ was published on 15th August 1980 under the editorship of Debashish Paul. Kalyan Kumar Mukherjee edited the ‘Gram Bikash’ was published on 1981. On 1st May, 1982, Pakkhir newspaper ‘Sramik Barta’ was published and it was edited by Kantibhusan Chakraborty. Gopal Saha edited the yearly publication ‘Kuheli’ which was published in the year 1983 and Bijan Dhar edited the ‘Samaj Darpan’ which was started on 3rd September 1983. ‘Mukh’ was institute in 1984 and in the next year on January 1985 ‘Apanjan’, a monthly newspaper was published from Sonamura and its editor was Jyoti Ranjan Shil. Aashish Kumar Bhattacharjee edited ‘Ananda’ which was launched on 1st December 1986. ‘Renaissance’ hit the stands in 1986 and it was edited by Rupak Debnath. Rajat Baran Chakraborty edited the ‘Kishore Barta’ which was published on 1987 from the Dholayswar Press. On January 1988 under the
editorships of Abhijit Choudhury and Pulakendu Chakraborty 'Bhor' was published from Kaxton Printers. On 1991 'Jagriti' was published which was edited by Rajib Datta. The following year, 'Pushpanjali' was published under the editorship of Haridas Saha. 'Tripura Observer' English daily started its publication from November 1992 and was edited by Arun Nath. In April 1993 'Surabhi' was published and its editor was Abdul Alam. Kalyani Bhattacharjee edited the cultural publication 'Manabi' which was published on 8th May, 1994. A monthly newspaper 'Kishore Pachali' was published on 1996 from Deepika Printers. Ranjit Sinha edited 'Tripurari' which was started on 15th August 1997. From Udaipur 'Matribhasha' was published in September 1998. A weekly newspaper 'Maitri Sambad' was published on 14th December, 2001 under the editorship of Sanjit Debnath. On August 2nd, 2001 Nandan Charcha was published. Debananda Dam edited 'Pustak Barta' which was launched on 2003. A monthly newspaper 'Sakal' was published on 21st February, 2005 under the editorship of Bidhan Paul. A daily newspaper 'Aajker Fariyad' was instituted on 15th April, 2005 and was edited by Bijoy Paul and this publication is still in circulation in the state. On 15th August 2005 'Dainik Aarohan' was started. From January 2006 Prantar newspaper started its publication. 'Aaranya' was published on October 2008 from Kailashahar and it was edited by Priyanku Chakraborty.

According to the RNI (Registrar for Newspaper in India) presently there are 26 dailies, 63 weeklies, 14 fortnightlies and 14 monthlies in Tripura. The largest circulated newspaper in the state in Bengali is the 'Dainik Sambad'. The prominent dailies in the state are 'Daily Desher Katha', 'Syanand', 'Tripura Darpan', 'Dainik Ganadoot' and 'Aajkaal'. The trend of newspapers in Tripura has changed with the changes of time. In mid eighties because of the communal issues, the different socio-political conflicts had indirectly persuaded for the emergence of newspapers in the
state. The demand for the public and private advertisement had also contributed to the growth of the newspapers. What we see in the newspapers of Tripura today is better printing qualities, presentation of quality of news and information.