Chapter 3
3.1. Definition

At present era, everybody is familiar with movies, radio, television, internet, books, magazines, newspapers etc. but common people do not know what is actually happening when these means of communication are used to communicate mass audiences. Mass media is a term which is usually used to denote, as a class, the role of which is to communicate message that is specifically designed to reach a large audience at least as large as a province or a state. It was coined in the 1920s with the advent of nationwide radio networks and of mass-circulation newspapers and magazines. The mass-media audience has been viewed by some forming a mass society with special characteristics. Mass media make it possible to deliver messages to millions of people at roughly the same time. We cannot define ‘Mass Media’ without taking Mass Communication and the underlying principles into consideration. DeFleur and Dennis argue “Mass Communication can be conceptualized within the expanded version of the ‘linear model’ that helps to explain face-to-face interaction. Each stage is far more complex, but, as can be seen, the basic stages are very similar:

1. Mass communication begins with senders who are professional communicators. They decide on the nature and goals of a message to be presented to an audience via their particular medium. (That message may be a news report, an advertising campaign a movie, or some other media presentation).

2. The intended meanings are encoded by production specialists (a news team, a film company, a magazine, staff, etc). The encoding process includes the selection of not only verbal and nonverbal symbols, but also the special effects that are possible with a particular medium (sound, graphic, color, etc).
3. The message is transmitted through the use of specialized technologies characteristic of print, film or broadcasting to disseminate it as widely as possible.

4. A large and diverse (mass) audience of individual receivers attends to the medium and perceives the incoming message in very selective ways.

5. Individual receivers construct interpretation of the subject message in such a way that they experience subjective meanings, which are to at least some degree parallel to those intended by professional communicators.

6. As a result of experiencing these meanings, receivers are influenced in some way in their feelings. Thoughts, or actions; that is, the communication has come effect.” (1994:21-22)

These stages provide the proper understanding of the process of Mass Communication. Therefore, mass communication can be defined as “a process in which professional communication design and use media to disseminate message widely, rapidly, and continuously in order to arouse intended meanings in large, diverse, and selectively attending audience in attempts to influence them in a variety of ways”. (ibid: 28). Consequently, we can say any medium is a kind of mass media if it carries out the process of mass communication defined above or any medium can be considered as a kind of mass media, if it fits the above mentioned definitions of mass communication. Scholar’s endeavor was to identify the various types of mass media by their distribution channels. Books, newspapers, and magazines are often called the "Print Media," while radio and television are often called the "electronic" or "Broadcast Media”. Two other electronic channels of distribution are also recognized as very important: "Electronic Recorded" media which include such as CDs, cassette tapes, video tapes, and the like. These are electronic in nature but are sold and delivered much in the same way as books and film or movies which are similar to television but which are delivered in special buildings called cinema or theater. Telephones are electronic media, but telephones have not traditionally been included in the mass media because telephones are used mainly in person-to-person communication. Similarly, computers, especially large computer networks, have the potential to be used as mass communication media.
However, due to its large scale application, they have no true category. Although, computers are sometimes referred to as the “new media”.

DeFleur and Dennis states that, “The major mass media are print media (including books, magazines, and news-papers), films (principally commercial motion pictures), and broadcasting (mainly radio and television, but also several associated forms such as cable and video cassettes”. (ibid: 29). While these media differ in many ways, they all share the same characteristics which are as under:

I. Mass Organization: Mass communication messages are produced by organizations.
II. Medium: The medium is used for these messages permits accurate duplication.
III. Audience: The messages are distributed to large audiences at roughly the same time.

In brief, through different channels, mass media aims at delivering information to mass audiences. It acts as a tool that facilitates the distribution or transmission of the entertainment, facts, opinions and other forms of information by means of newspapers, radio, television, magazines, internet, books, journals, films etc. Schramm (1960) states, “A mass medium is essentially a working group organized round some device for circulating the same message, at about the same time, to large number of people”. (quoted in Kumar 2005:41). However, such definitions of mass media excludes the traditional media of ancient times e.g. folk media etc. modern mass media and traditional media in ancient times serve functions which are very similar i.e. dissemination of message to the audience.

McLuhan (1967) in ‘Medium is the message’, insists not only that “the medium is the message [that is, more important in itself than what is transmitted] but also “the medium is the message” [that is, it “roughs up and massages” our sense, altering the environment of the pre-electronic world]”. (quoted in Agee, Ault & Emery 1995:19).

By examining the definitions of mass communication and mass media, it can be concluded that modern understanding of mass media depends on addressing a large
diverse audience and mediated by some devices (mechanical or electronic devices). The use of mass media over several centuries, have revolutionized the human communication. People in advanced societies are deeply dependent on mass media and most probably could not exist in their present form without it. A mass medium's distribution channel aims at dissemination of the messages in the particular direction of a particular audience. Some media are best fitted to an audience that consists of individuals, each of whom is more or less alone when the message arrives. Other media are better fitted to an audience that gathers in groups. For example, books, newspapers, magazines and mail are usually read by individuals. Film, on the other hand, is shown in theaters which gather audiences together in large groups. Radio, television, and recordings are often delivered in group settings, but these groups are usually smaller than those who attend the show of a film, and the three are also often used by individuals. Therefore, the relationship between the audience as target and the medium are important to media organizations because they have work out the cost and effectiveness of their media products. In the case of print media, for example, the price of each book, journal, newspaper or magazine plays an important role in a person's decision to join or not join the audience. Many people like to read inexpensive books depends on the affordability. The other important dimension of this communication is availability, understandability and accessibility. In order to receive messages from a particular mass medium, a person as an audience must be able to have availability of the equipment and have the knowledge of the particular language of the programme etc and have to connect up to the channel, so as to receive and understand message. For example, television is not available to people who do not have possession of television sets; CDs are useless to people who do not have possession of CD players, and so on. Thus extent to which audience is able to make use of a mass medium is its availability, understandability and accessibility.

3.2. A Brief History of Mass Media
The new form of communication arose approximately five hundred years ago. This mass communication process, which makes use of printed text that can be made available to a large number of audience at the same time, has been quickly adopted as a habit in the lives of major fraction of population. A person can only start his day with a newspaper. The important change came with the discovery of printed text in Europe in the late 1500s. Whereas written documents could only be produced by individuals, one document at a time, printed documents could be mass produced. The phenomenon that we now call mass communication dates from the invention of printing press.

### 3.2.1. Print Media

The first step in understanding the history of mass media, therefore, should start from print media. But the contemporary understanding of print media relates with the origin of writing. It means that the development of writing and the evolution of print media are part of same process.

In ancient times, with the help of limited oral communication, people could train their new generation in myths and legends as to preserve their cultural heritage e.g. skilled storytellers tell folktales to the audiences. However, they found it difficult to accumulate thoughts, ideas, without writing system and could not be stored permanently. “From the time that human beings began to speak until about five thousand years ago, no system for recording and recovering ideas in written form had been devised. Human cultures did develop at an ever increasing pace, but it failed to develop ‘media’ that could conquer either time or distance. Except for the occasional use of such artifacts as notched sticks or such devices as flags, smoke, or drums, preliterate societies with limited to the capacity of the human voice to conquer distance and the capability of personal memories to preserve ideas through time”. (DeFleur and Dennis 1994:39)

The main need at that time was to develop a sort of system that could make it easy to accumulate and elaborate technologies and rich cultural heritage. That system was writing communication which took place when writing was developed, probably around the year 3000 BC in the Middle East.
The most obvious difference between writing and speech is in their media. Whereas speech is carried by sound waves in the air, writing is usually carried by one substance impressed upon another, as, for example, ink on paper. Even in its simplest form, the invention of writing produced significant changes in human communication, the writing communication, “was the second great communication revolution, following the development of speech and language, ... The first medium people used extensively was stones ... within few centuries, however, more portable media came into use. Ancient societies began to preserve and accumulate ideas in written form using such media as scrolls and tablets”. (ibid)

After this people start representing ideas with written symbols. “At some unknown point between 500 and 400 B.C, people in several areas of the Near East begun to use drawing to represent ideas in somewhat more uniform ways”. (ibid: 42). For example, simplified symbols where each is associated with one and only one idea or concept. And when joined together it could tell a story. Such a system is called Ideographic writing, or “pictographic writing”. The number required character is ideographic system known as ideograms got increased day by day. Thus, memorizing of all the ideograms became laborious. For example, “the hieroglyphics (sacred carving) used during the early Egyptian dynasties required only about seven hundred different ideograms. Elementary Chinese to require Knowledge of four thousand characters... Historically, where such systems were used, the majority of the population remained illiterate. Even powerful rulers were sometimes unable to read and write and, like others, relied on professional scribes. Because of their importance and skill, scribes often enjoyed high status and impressive financial reward”. (ibid: 43-44)

Improvements came slowly over about two thousand year until phonograms came in to use, where graphic symbols are linked to sound not to ideas or thoughts. “A phonogram is a graphic symbol linked to a specific sound by a convention or a rule that prevails among those who speak a particular language”. (ibid: 44). Eventually writing was greatly simplified when alphabets were invented. “... Its name reveals its origin –
alpha and beta are two letters of ancient Greek version”. (ibid). The writing systems of every language at present have thus came from these ancient phonograms.

To develop standardized alphabet was not the only need. But another important thing was to make portable media. Although the clay tablets were portable but were heavy and bulky. “As early as 3000 B.C., the Egyptians had developed papyrus (from which, incidentally, came our modern word “paper”)”. (ibid 47-48). When portable media replaced stones, ancient people start thinking about longer documents, books and even libraries. The Roman made the first book with letter on both sides of cut and bound pages and cover”. (ibid:49).

An important advancement in the production of books was the introduction of paper. Paper-making technology originated in China and spread into Europe from the Arabic world after invasion of Spain by the Moors. According to Clapper (1934), “one of the technologies that would become critically important in the development of print as a medium was the manufacture of paper. The Chinese had developed paper and used it extensively as early as the second century. (quoted in DeFleur and Dennis 1994:51).The invention of printing press is considered as truly an extraordinary technological advancement. “Printing as such was not really unknown before Gutenberg’s time”. (Moran 1973:17). “The Chinese had begun making inked impressions from elaborately carved wooden blocks shortly after 175 A.D., when they first developed paper”. (DeFleur and Dennis 1994: 52). However, the development and widespread use of printed text in Europe in the 1500s produced a brand new form of communication. This major change in communication started with the Guttenberg’s invention of printing press, “the age of printing began in 1455 when he produced two hundred copies of his famous bible. He worked many years to perfect his invention and feared that mechanical reproduction would never be accepted”. (ibid: 53).

For the first time a single message could be duplicated with little error and distributed to thousands of people. First used to propagate religious texts and arguments, this mass approach to communication quickly spread and was soon being used to distribute news, entertainment, and government convention.
McLuhan also believes that the print revolution begun by Gutenberg was the forerunner of the industrial revolution and one of the unexpected consequences of print was the disintegration of society. McLuhan argued that readers would now read in private, and so be alienated from others. "Printing, a ditto device, confirmed and extended the new visual stress. It created the portable book, which men could read in privacy and in isolation from others" (McLuhan, 1967: 50).

On the other side, McLuhan considered invention of printing, “‘an extension of the eye’ led to ‘the tendency to see reality in discrete units, to find casual relations and linear order, and to find orderly structure in nature’. It allowed individual to withdraw, to contemplate and mediate outside of communal activities. Printing therefore encouraged ‘privatization, the lonely scholar, and the development of private point of view’. An oral face-to-face ‘tribal’ culture gave way with the help of new technology of printing to a ‘detribalized’ visual, linear and symmetrical culture”. (quoted by Kumar 2005:32)

With the help of Gutenberg’s machine, instead of making many copies laboriously by hand, numerous copies could be printed out of a machine. Books became easily available to all. In fact, the invention of printing made possible the spread of education in schools and universities. People were not dependent on a few monks for learning monopoly with the access to the hand-copied manuscripts in remote monasteries.

Ultimately it was printing technology that made the development of newspapers possible. Gutenberg’s invention provided a great foundation to, books, newspaper, pamphlets, documents, magazines etc. According to DeFleur and Dennis, “essentially the story of newspaper begins with Gutenberg’s press. Soon after its invention and initial diffusion, printed description of important events began to appear. These brief documents, the forerunners of newspapers, were sent relatively quickly to distant places. In the mid-1550s, the leader of Venice regularly made available to the public printed news sheets about the war in Dalmatia. To receive a copy, Venetians has to pay a gazetta, a small coin (the word frequently used in Newspaper titles, came from that
source)… The first true newspaper was the Oxford Gazette (later called the London Gazette). (1994:75)

### 3.2.2. Electronic Media

The next major change came with the discovery of electronic media. With increased human curiosity and of course the intelligence, in order to make mass media sophisticated, the ability to print improved. Like, the telegraph for news gathering, the type writers, photography, the electric press, typesetting machines and computers etc. which helps in assessing both gathering news and controlling many technical assistance required to produce and distribute newspapers. According to Kumar, “By the early 19th century, power press printing helped introducing the daily newspapers- the greatest challenge to the printed book ... Deforest’s invention of the triode vacuum tube in 1907, opened up the news world of radio and television. All these technological innovations led to another revolution in communication”. (2005: 33)

The telegraph, the telephone, the cable, and the wireless were nineteenth-century inventions that have fastened the transmission of messages. The invention of Marconi’s wireless telegraphy of 1890’s divides mass media in print media and electronic media. “The motion picture films became a competitor that could bring to audiences in theaters a visual portray of such an exciting event as the Corbett-Fitzsimmons heavy weight prize fight of 1897 – the first news event shown on film. Soon excerpts of films of news events were put together into newsreels,... interpretive films like Time Inc.’s, The March of Times of 1930’s and the development in that decade of the techniques of the documentary film – The Plow that Broke The Pain and The River were notable examples – foreshadowed the impact that film would have on other news media once it had the means to reach the public directly, which television later provided”. (Agee, Ault and Emery 1995:153). In the mean time, news took to the air through the magic invention of radio. The first news broadcast in the United States is generally credited to Dr. Lee De Forest, who in 1906 invented the vacuum tube that made voice broadcasting possible, the next step beyond Marconi’s wireless telegraphy of the 1890’s”. (ibid: 153-154).
Radio broadcasting needed that mass production of receiver and market for it to be commercially viable. This came about during World War I largely because of military requirements. After the war, radio found its commercial base and was given a social form “through a combination of several traditions – those of telecommunications, mass industry and the press”. (Kumar 2005: 178). Radio was used to pass on orders and communications between armies and navies on both sides in World War I. Broadcasting began to become feasible in the 1920s, with the widespread introduction of radio receivers, particularly in Europe and the United States. Besides broadcasting, point-to-point broadcasting, including telephone messages and relays of radio programmes, became widespread in the 1920s and 1930s. In the meantime, Radio developed as a source of entertainment and news. Before the advent of television, commercial radio broadcasts included not only news and music, but dramas, comedies, variety shows, and many other forms of entertainment. Radio was unique among dramatic presentation that it used only sound. By mid 1923, as many as 450 stations were developed across the United States. In certain places, broadcasting was left to private companies. “Radio fully met the challenge of diplomatic arises and world war that began with Adolf Hitler’s annexation of Australia … in 1938. Beginning with patch-together but striking coverage of the Munich crises the radio network expanded their news reporting and technical facilities tremendously during World War II”. (Agee, Ault and Emery 1995: 158). By the twentieth century, television was casting its shadow over radio. In 1920’s experiments in television broadcasting were initiated in the United States and Europe. “Early television experimenters used a mechanical scanning disk that failed to scan a picture rapidly enough. The turning point came in 1923 with Dr. Vladimir Zworykin’s invention of iconoscope, an all-electric television tube... Soon joined RCA, where he developed the Kinescope, or picture tube. Other leading contributors were Philo Fransworth, developer of the electronic camera and Allen B. Dumont, developer of receiving tubes and the first home television receiver”. (ibid: 163)

In United States, “By 1960 there were 533 stations and 55 million receivers, in 1981 there were 764 commercial stations on the air ..., plus 268 educational stations. There
were 125 million sets covering 98% of the home in the United State. Television surpassed radio and magazines by 1955 in total advertising revenues and a year later passed newspapers as the number one national advertising medium…” (ibid: 165).

The age of satellite communication started in 1962 with the launching of Early Bird, the first communication satellite. Two big international satellite systems, INSAT and INTERSPUNIK began operating in 1965 and 1971 respectively and from then the progress in mass media is continuous. At present almost every country in the world has station linked to satellite for transmission and reception of programs. Satellite communication literally has transformed this modern world into what Marshall McLuhan liked to call ‘Global village’. The electronic and satellite communication by the twentieth century revolutionized the mass media. Such type of communication as mentioned above television, cable, internet, etc, has annihilated this world into global village. “Today, after more than a century of electronic technology, we have extended our central nervous system in a global embrace, abolishing both space and time as far as our planet is concerned “. (McLuhan 1964: 3). McLuhan’s view of electronic technology is that it has become an extension of our senses, particularly those of sight and sound. The indispensable fact of Marshall McLuhan’s view is that the speed of communication through electronic media echoes the speed of our senses. We are linked together across the globe through mass media via, telephone, television, computers, internet etc. To a large extent such means of communication has promoted the integration of people all over the world under one political, cultural and economical power. This has also helped people to gain knowledge of every field of learning. Media has enabled us to connect with people at any corner of the world in no time. McLuhan states, “As electrically contracted, the globe is than a village. Electric ...speed at bringing all social and political functions together in a sudden implosion has heightened human awareness of responsibility to an intense degree”. (ibid: 5). Village represents simply the notion of small space can communicate frequently and can know every event that take place. As he writes, “‘Time’ has ceased, space has vanished. We now live in a global village... a simultaneous happening” (1967: 63). In a broader perspective, village represents
community and the idea that we all have a role in shaping our global society. McLuhan writes, “we live mythically and integrally ... in the electric age, when our central system is technologically extended to involve in the whole of mankind and to incorporate the whole of mankind in us, we necessarily participate ... In the consequence of our every action”. (1964: 4). The image of one-being connected by an electric nervous system with which the action of one part will affect the whole.

It is because of the interest of people in news that made it natural for people to use any new medium of communication e.g., the telegraph, the telephone, the cable, the wireless, radio broadcasting, telecasting, and the communication satellite etc. that are used to disseminate the news events directly to the distant audiences.

3.3. The first newspaper in India

The history of newspapers essentially begins with Guttenberg’s press in mid-1500. Soon after its invention, printed descriptions of important events began to appear in other parts of the world. These printed documents, newspapers, magazines, journals, pamphlets, books etc were sent to distant places. The printing press was used in a variety of ways to provide news and information to the mass audience. However, the history of media in India was initiated by the colonialism. The initiation of printing in India started in 1700’s, when William Bolts, an ex-employee of the British East India Company attempted to start the first newspaper in India in 1776. It was of course the technology that urged the development of newspapers, but the credit in India goes the East India Company. Khan states,
This newspaper had twin function, “of informing the British Community of news from ‘home’, and of ventilating grievances against colonial administration”. (Kumar 2005: 61)

However, it was until James Augustus Hickey who dared to start Bengal Gazette also called as Hickey’s Gazette. “The Hickey's Bengal Gazette or the Calcutta General Advertiser was started by James Augustus Hickey in 1780. The Gazette, a two-sheet newspaper, specialized in writing on the private lives of the Sahibs of the Company. He dared even to mount scurrilous attacks on the Governor-General, Warren Hastings', wife, which soon landed “the late printer to the Honourable Company” in trouble.

Hickey was sentenced to a 4 months jail term and Rs.500 fine, which did not deter him. … These were the first tentative steps of journalism in India.

B. Messink and Peter Reed were publishers of the India Gazette, unlike their infamous predecessor. The colonial establishment started the Calcutta Gazette. It was followed by another private initiative the Bengal Journal. The Oriental Magazine of Calcutta Amusement, a monthly magazine made it four weekly newspapers and one monthly magazine published from Calcutta…”<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mass_media_in_India>.

Further, “The Madras Courier was started in 1785 in the southern stronghold of Madras, which is now called Chennai. Richard Johnson, its founder, was a government printer...

It was only in 1795 that competitors to the Courier emerged with the founding of the Madras Gazette followed by the India Herald. … In 1878, The Hindu was founded, and played a vital role in promoting the cause of Indian independence from the colonial yoke… Today this paper enjoys the highest circulation in South India, and is among the top five nationally. … The Bombay Herald came into existence in 1789. Significantly, a year later a paper called the Courier started carrying advertisements in Gujarati.”


The Indian printing press prior to independence had active role to play in the nation’s fight against British rule. It had started a brave fight in its efforts to expose the brutality of the British people and its expression of freedom movement. Chalapathi Rau
holds the view that, “the over-200-year history of Indian press, from the time of Hickey to present day, is the history of a struggle ended. There have been alternating periods of freedom and of restrictions on freedom amounting to repression. The pioneering works on the Indian press, like that of Margarita Barns, were stories of arbitrariness and despotism, of reforms and relaxation. The story of Indian press is a story of steady expansion but also one of press laws”. (quoted in Kumar 2005:61)

3.3.1. The First Urdu Newspaper in India

In India, a multilingual and multicultural country, the growth of newspapers in vernacular languages other than English also took place. The pioneers of Indian journalism were “the Serampora Missionaries with Samachar Darpan and the other Bengali periodicals, and Raja Ram Mohan Roy with his Persian newspaper Miratoo Akbar... the Bombay Samachar, a Gujrati newspaper, appeared in 1822.... In South, a Tamil and Telugu newspaper was established with the aid of government grant and in the west provinces, a Hindi and Urdu periodicals started off under government’s patronage. The Bengali press with as many as nine newspapers in 1839 had a circulation of around 200 copies each, even as the British press with 26 newspapers (six of them dailies) grew in strength and power ...” (Kumar 2005: 63)

In Urdu language, one of the major languages of the subcontinent, the first Urdu newspaper started publishing was Munshi Sadha Sikh Mirza Puri’s ‘Jam-e-Jahan-Numa’ on 27 March, 1822 from Calcutta. However, there is confusion about the date of first publication. Sidiqi states about the date of Jam-e-Jahan-Numa as:

مرکز کئے معتبر کئے عالمی ماغیر اخبار جمہوری نامہ ہیں۔ پوائنٹ کے جنگل کے تارکین وطن کے ہزینہات 1833ء میں خیالات کی گئی تھی۔

(Quoted in Khan1989:33)