Chapter - III

Newspaper in India:
Some Important Events
3.0 Introduction

During later part of the 15th century, William Caxton’s press brought reading to a much wider English public through movable type cast in bronze. Hand presses remained in use for printing until the 19th century. It was the newest medium of communication, a newspaper, *The Times of London* which first acquired a steam-powered press in 1814 in response to the need for a quicker way to circulate news to a growing readership. A high-speed rotary press, with the printing surface wrapped round a cylinder, was invented in the United States in 1847. Along with later inventions of telegraphy, paper folding (and later in paper production) and in type setting by machine, it made possible the advance of large circulation newspapers. The freedom of the press, proclaimed by the poet John Milton during the English Civil War of the 17th century, was among the great liberal causes of the 19th century . . . gradually newspapers gained in power.
Traditionally, print culture, beginning with Gutenberg’s invention of printing form movable type, has been characterised by the mass production of single texts and newspaper. Functions of the press may be consolidated to the areas of (i) conveying government policies to the public; (ii) keeping government informed of public needs; (iii) keeping government informed of public reactions to government policies; and (iv) keeping the government and public informed of events taken place in and around. The necessities of such awareness for both the side may be traced as far back as the beginning of organised society. There is evidence of the ruler making his will known to the people through edicts and proclamations. At a later stage machinery was developed to keep the ruler informed of the main currents of the life of the people.

The newsletter was an early institution which kept the ruler regularly informed of developments in various parts of the country and among different classes of the people. The Mughal emperors and the East India Company also requisitioned the services of news writers to the same purpose.

3.1 The Origin of the Press in India

In India, the East India Company had installed printing press in Bombay in 1674, in Madras in 1772 and in Calcutta in 1779. In 1780 James Augustus Hicky started the *Bengal Gazette* or *Calcutta General Advertiser*. Hicky’s *Gazette* was considered as the first newspaper in India which used to expose the private lives of servants of the company. Some other earlier newspapers published in the country during 18th century are shown in the following table:

In more than one sense, according to Press Commission’s Report (1955), “the turn of the century marks the end of a phase in journalism in India. During
Table 3.1
Earlier Newspapers in India (1780-1800)

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<tr>
<th>Year of Publication</th>
<th>Title of Publication</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
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<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>Bengal Gazette</td>
<td>James Augustus Hicky</td>
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<td>1780</td>
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<td>B. Messink</td>
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<td>1784</td>
<td>Calcutta Gazette</td>
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<td>Bengal Journal</td>
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<td>1786</td>
<td>Calcutta Chronicle</td>
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<td>Bengal</td>
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<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>Bengal Harkaru</td>
<td>Charles Maclean</td>
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<td>1785</td>
<td>Madras Courier</td>
<td>Richard Johnson</td>
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<td>1795</td>
<td>Madras Gazette</td>
<td>R. Williams</td>
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<td>1789</td>
<td>Bombay Herald</td>
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<td>1791</td>
<td>Bombay Gazette</td>
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this period, there were no Press laws as such. If the person intending to start a paper was already persona non grata with the Government or with influential officials he was deported forthwith. If a newspaper offended and was unrepentant, it was first denied postal privileges; if it persisted in causing displeasure to the Government, it was required to submit part of or the entire newspaper to precentorship, if the editor was ‘incorrigible’, he was deported. Another aspect of journalism in India during this period was that it contained material exclusively of interest to and relating to the activities of the European population in India”.³

The early newspapers were started by ex-servants of the Company and their columns were devoted to the exposure of the evils and malpractices of the time. Later, newspapers were started with direct or indirect official patronage.
During the first twenty years of the 19th Century some developments in journalism could have been observed⁴ as noted below:

(i) The Marquess of Wellesley imposed a rigid, almost wartime censorship, presumably in anticipation of a series of conflicts. He also had in mind the need for keeping the European community in Calcutta under control.

(ii) The Government (Lord Minto) did not approve the early activities of the Serampore missionaries in attacking Hindu and Muslims religious beliefs and practices but later (Hastings and Lord Amherst) extended facilities and privileges to the Serampore publications for the valuable information they carried.

(iii) Both in India and England opinion was sharply divided on the issue of freedom of the Press in India.

(iv) In India, Lord Hastings did not seem to have had the support of his Council in his liberal measures in regard to the Press.

(v) Raja Rammohun Roy’s papers and generally, the progressive Indian Press were viewed with some apprehension in official circles while newspapers, which favoured the orthodox point of view, did not attract the same measure of hostile attention.

(vi) Almost simultaneously with Raja Rammohun Roy’s reformist newspapers, a powerful orthodox Hindu Press came into being which opposed social and religious reforms at every step throughout the 19th Century.

(vii) James Silk Buckingham convinced many eminent minds in England and in India of the useful function which a free Press could perform by its exposé of lapses in the administration and its criticism of Governmental policies.

3.2 The First Press Ordinance (December 18, 1823)

Under the initiative of Governor General Adam, the first Press Ordinance was approved by the Court of Directors on December 18, 1823. The
Adam Regulations, as it was known, were a forerunner of the Vernacular Press Act of 1878. The ordinance required that all matters printed in a press or published thereafter except shipping intelligence, advertisements of sales, current prices of commodities, rates of exchange, or other intelligence solely of a commercial nature, should be printed and published under license from the Governor General-in-Council signed by the Chief Secretary of the government. It laid down the application for a licence should give the name or names of the printer and publisher of the proprietors, their place of residence, the location of the press and the title of the newspaper, magazine, register, pamphlet, or other printed book or paper.⁵

3.3 Lord Bentinek and the Indian Press

Lord Bentinek’s assumption of the Governor Generalship was marked by a significant change in the attitude of the Government towards the Press in India and the Indian language Press in particular. Lord Bentinek saw the obvious advantage of newspapers published in the Indian languages pursuing freely social controversies and of generally relaxing the restrictions imposed on all sections of the Press in the interest of efficient administration. As Lord Bentinek’s liberal attitude towards the Press became apparent, a number of newspapers came into existence. Newspapers and periodicals of 16 Indian languages published in 1830⁶ are listed below:

- Dailies ⇒ Prabhakar, Chandroday and Mahajan Durpan;
- Tri-weekly ⇒ Bhaskar;
- Bi-weekly ⇒ Chandrika, Rasaraj;
- Weekly ⇒ Gyanadarpan, Banga Dut, Sadhuranjan, Gnyan Sancharini, Rasasaguev, Rangpur Bartabahu and Rashamudgar;
Bi-monthly ⇒ Nity Dharmanaranjika and Durpan Deman Maha Naban;

Monthly ⇒ Tatwa Bodhini.

During that time, the other significant development, as the Press Commission reported, were:

- both Bengal and Bombay started publishing the official Gazette;
- few newspapers came into existence in Bombay;
- two newspapers published on govt. grant from Madras;
- Hindi and Urdu journals published on government patronage from the North West Province.

Lord Bentinck's regime was marked by a developing liberal attitude towards the Press which was greatly influenced by Sir Charles Metcalfe. In 1828, Lord Bentinck appointed Grant as Superintendent of the Government Press. On February 6, 1835 Lord William Bentinck was compelled to resign owing to ill health and Sir Charles Metcalfe as Senior Member of Council assumed the Governor Generalship.

3.4 Sir Charles Metcalfe and the Indian Press

Sir Charles Metcalfe had strong views on the freedom of the Press. He stated; 'any restraint on the native press beyond what is imposed on the European would be injudicious; and that any restraint on either, beyond that of the laws, is not requisite. A tenure dependent on attempts to suppress the communication of public opinion could not be lasting; both because such a tenure must be rotten and because such attempts must fail.'
The Governor General with the unanimous support of his Council passed the new Act in 1835. The Bengal Press regulations of 1823 and Bombay Press regulations of 1825 and 1827 were repealed. Under Sir Charles Metcalfe’s Act No.XI (1835), the Press in India developed rapidly not only in Bengal, Bombay and Madras but also in the North West Provinces. The country witnesses certain developments during this period. For example:

(i) The charter of the East India Company was renewed in 1853 for the last time.

(ii) Sir Charles Wood’s famous despatch on education was recorded in 1854.

(iii) The establishment of Committees of Public Instruction in the Provinces and the founding of the Universities of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay were proposed.

(iv) Government adopted the policy of giving grants-in-aid to private educational institutions.

(v) A beginning was made in railway transport in 1853.

(vi) A telegraph line was constructed from Calcutta to Bombay via Agra, another from Bombay to Madras and a third from Agra Peshawar. The lines were opened for general traffic in 1855.

3.5 **Rev. James Long and Indian Press**

How was Indian-language-Press during the middle of 19th century? No statement can be a better document about it than what was written by Reverend James Long, a champion of the Indian-language-press. Some of Long's general remarks on the Press of the day may be reproduced here: ‘The natives newspaper are humble in appearance. In them questions of sati, caste, widow re-marriage, Kulin polygamy have argued with great skill and acuteness on both sides. They have always opposed a foreign language being the language of the courts. To each
paper is attached a native acquainted with English and translation of many valuable English subjects are scattered through these papers on history, biography, natural philosophy and ethics. Some of the papers have correspondents and at the time of the Kabul and Punjab Wars accurate information was regularly given of the progress of events’.

“If Government wish correct news to circulate in the villages they must use the vernacular press as organs for diffusing it. The enemies of the English Government are not inactive, already ideas are rapidly spreading in various districts that the English power is on the wane, that the Russians are coming to India and would govern it better than the English do”.

“The number of newspapers in circulation is small compared with that of other publications. Their influence is great, extending at an average of 10 readers for each paper to 30,000 persons, and conveying to numbers in the mofussil their views relating to Government measures. The editors have translated the abuse freely lavished on natives by some English editors and the publication of such matter excites in the reader a spirit antagonistic to Europeans. English newspapers in too many cases cherish the spirit of antagonism of race”.

3.6 The Great Rebellion and After

The rebellion of 1857, or the War of Independence, broke suddenly and interrupted the continuing growth of the press under the freedom conferred on it by Sir Charles Metcalfe. It cannot be said that the Press played any part, however insignificant, in bringing it about. The Rev. J. Long writes in his 1859 report:

“The opinions of the Native Press may often be regarded as the safety valve which gives warning of danger, thus had the Delhi Native Newspapers of
January 1857 been consulted by European functionaries, and were expecting aid from Persia and Russia”.

A little over a year after the rebellion, the Government of India had been passed from the East India Company to the Crown and Lord Canning became the first Viceroy of India. The new act and the Queen’s Proclamation went a long way to restore public confidence, and the Press which had suffered a setback came to life with renewed vigour. Responsive to the changed circumstances, Lord Canning set up an ‘editor’s room’ where some State papers were laid on the table for the information of journalists. When the Indian Penal Code, drawn up by Lord Macaulay, came up for final adoption in 1860, Lord Canning suggested the omission of the sedition section on the ground that it may be taken as an attack on the liberty of the Press, and when the Indian Penal Code was adopted in 1860 (Act XLV) the sedition was omitted.10

3.7 Registration of the Press

The number of printing presses was growing throughout the country and books were being turned out in hundreds. Public interest in Government activity was stimulated by the passing of the India Council Act of 1861.

In 1867, an Act was passed for the (i) regulation of printing presses and newspapers; and (ii) preservation and registration of books printed in British India. All the provisions of the Metcalfe Act dealing with printing presses and newspapers were incorporated in the 1867 Act. This act was known as the ‘Press and Registration of Books Act 1867’ (amended and modifies in 1890, 1914, 1952 and 1954).
Meanwhile, the Government was becoming increasingly uneasy about the attitude of the press and its relations with the Government. It was particularly apprehensive of the Indian-language Press as preparations for the rebellion of 1857 were made with the use of seemingly harmless words and symbols. As government had to depend very largely on Indians to acquaint itself with the contents of Indian-language newspapers, there was constant apprehension in the official mind that some nefarious traffic was under way through the medium of the Press. Throughout the subsequent period it was repeatedly impressed on the local official that a most careful watch should be kept on the Indian-language Press and the complaint was frequently recorded that the annual reports submitted were inadequate and left much to be desired. The effect of all this was that a formidable document had been compiled of all the transgressions of the Indian-language Press and it hung like a nightmare over the head of the officials.

3.8 Vernacular Press Act

In 1876, the Vernacular Press Bill was introduced in the Governor-General’s Council and passed as Act IX of 1878. Briefly its objectives were to place newspapers published in the languages of India under ‘better control’, and to furnish the Government with more effective means than the existing law provided of punishing and repressing seditious writing calculated to produce disaffection towards the Government in the minds of the ignorant population. It was also claimed to be intended to prevent unscrupulous writers from using their papers as a means of intimidation and extortion.

The Vernacular Press Act was comprehensive and rigorous. It empowered any Magistrate of a District, or a Commissioner of Police in a Presidency town to call upon the printer and publisher of a newspaper to enter into
a bond undertaking not to publish certain kind of material, to demand security and to forfeit if it was thought fit, and confiscate any printed matter as it deemed objectionable. At this stage Lord Lytton expressed the desire of the Government to 'keep the Press fully and impartially furnished with accurate current information in reference to such measures or intentions on the part of the Government as are susceptible of immediate publication without injury to the interest for which the Government is responsible'.

The next year, 1880, it was noticed that, although some improvement had taken place in the style and language of the vernacular newspapers since the introduction of the Vernacular Press Act, their general tone was one of opposition to Government and Government measures. They never hesitated to impute unworthy motives to Government and were full of personalities regarding Government servants.

It was apparent from the conditions with which the working of the Act was hedged and the opposition to it both in India and in Britain that the Vernacular Press Act would not remain long on the Statute Book. When Gladstone became the Prime Minister and Lord Ripon the Governor General and even before the strong-headed Sir Ashley Eden retired from the Lieutenant Governorship of Bengal, the repeal of the Vernacular Press Act became a foregone conclusion.

The racial feeling between Indian and European British subjects reached its climax in the controversy over the Ilbert Bill (March 28, 1882), associated with the name of Sir Courtney Ilbert.

3.9 Indian National Congress

The first session of the Indian National Congress was closely related to the development of the Press because the editors of some of the leading newspapers were also prominent among the founders of the national political
organization. For example, Dadabhai Nowroji (Rast Gofler), M.G. Ranade (Indu Prakash), N.N. Sen (Indian Mirror) from Bengal; G. Subramania Iyer (The Hindu) from Madras; W.S. Apte (Mahratta) and G.G. Agarkar (Kesari) from Puna.

Other papers represented by their editors were the Navabibhakar, the tribune, the Nassim, the Hindusthan, the Indian Union, and the Crescents. 'From very early days the Government found it necessary to issue instructions to newspapers prohibiting the publication of official orders and deliberations to which they could not have had access except through the good offices of a highly placed official. Lord Ellenborough acted wisely in restraining the official instead of reprimanding the editor after the event of publication.' The laws affected the freedom of the Press during 19th and 20th centuries, were the Sections 124A and 153A of the Penal Code enacted in 1898. There was also Section 505 of the Indian Penal Code. Four new measures had been enacted between 1908 and 1913, namely, the Newspapers (Incitement to Offences) Act of 1908, the Press Act of 1910, the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act of 1911 and the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908. There was also the Official Secrets Act as amended in 1903. In 1914, the enactment of Defence of India Act added to the restrictions imposed on the Press.14

3.10 North East Region of India

Developments in the Language Press in the North East Region during 19th and mid 20th centuries are not easy to trace partly because 'there is no coherent connected record of progress and growth of the press in each of the languages'. In the 'Report of Press Commission (1955)', a very brief outline regarding 'Assamese Press' (from the whole NE region) is only mentioned. Perhaps in other states of the Region,
the press was introduced lately. A para regarding ‘Assamese Press’ may be quoted here from the ‘Report’.15

‘Newspapers in Assamese were of slow and retarded growth. Assamese has suffered because, while the language is taught in the primary stage, those who have higher aspirations take up Bengali thereafter. A few journals, some of them inspired by missionary effort, made an appearance in the latter part of 19th century. The weeklies came first and were later followed by dailies. Prior to the publication of the Dainik Assamiya and the Assam Tribune, Assam had no dailies whether in English or in Assamese except for the daily Dainik Batori of Jorhat which had a short run. The Assamese daily, the Dainik Assamiya ceased publication about 4 years ago and a new Assamese daily, Natun Assamiya, under separate ownership and management began to be published. Of weeklies and occasional publications, however, there have been several, of which mention may be made of the Times of Assam from Dibrugarh in English (now defunct), the Assamiya – the oldest Assamese language weekly of the State and the Deka Asom from Gauhati; the Asom Sevak from Tezpur, the Sranik from Dibrugarh and the Janmabhumi from Jorhat. Several papers, mostly weeklies, were published and are still being published from other parts of Assam closer to Bengal which were previously known as the Surma Valley, the more important of them being the Jugaveri, and the Assam Herald, the Sylhet Chronicle, the Janasakti, the Jugasakti and the Surma. Many weekly journals made their appearance only to meet with a premature end. One view is that this was because journalists, imbued more with patriotic fervour than with professional acumen ventured with the personal type of papers which were naturally short lived’.

3.11 Modernisation of Press and leading Personalities

During third and fourth decades of the twentieth centuries many of the Indian states have started witnessing the expansion of journalism into modernity.
The newspapers in various Indian languages, till then, became the centres of political activities, fearless exponents of public views and social-educational-economic issues and organs of progressive nationalism. It may not be irrelevant here to record the names of some of the leading personalities who had contributed unaccountable services to the growth and development of the press in the country since the sixties of the 19th century (Annexure III/1). Till then, the Indian Press has been in the process of technological change and convergence within the media sector. The new technologies have been providing great opportunities for the wider distribution of journalistic material and for the improvement of the quality of journalistic work through ‘internet’ tools for research and improvement in editing. The recent trend, due to the information technology (IT) revolution, is that the ‘journalists are being joined by thousands of others in the information processing business and there is much competition to information-on-line. New forms of work are emerging for on-line editing and data collection.’ Journalists of today are ‘increasingly required to be multi-skilled with a capacity to turn their hands to word-processing, sound-recording, camera work (moving and still pictures) and presentation to camera or microphone as required. Many of these functions were compressed into one activity as result of digitalisation’.

While positive sides are understood, the adverse impact on the quality of modern journalism has also been surfaced. The report of the International Federation of Journalist (IFJ) has recently observed these negative aspects:

‘Creativity is being marginalized in the drive to develop all round capacities that suit the converged media environment’.

Due to emergence of global media as a result of IT revolution, ‘the capacity for commercial exploitation of information is greater now than it had ever been’.
- The rise to dominance of the global commercial media system is more than an economic matter. It also has clear implications for democratic and social values. Media concentration can impede the right to know because it leads to a small number of corporations controlling the major proportion of media outlets, 'thus restricting diversity and pluralism'.

- At the heart of journalism is the notion of impartiality, tolerance and respect for truth. But ideas of 'mission', 'public interest' and ethical standards are increasingly commercialised by commercial pressure on the news agenda in favour of business interests.

- When commercial interests are set against democratic or professional values it is inevitable that the interests of the market take priority. The global media system can be best understood as one that advances corporate and commercial interest and values. These are not necessarily journalistic values.

- With this commercialism and corporate control comes political bias regarding the content of the media. While commercialism, the market and individualism tend to be taken as natural and often benevolent, there is often a negative portrayal of political activity, trade unions, and civic values and anti market activities.

- 'This form of manipulation of the media message may be subtle, but it is no less effective than centralised prior censorship. Ideas unpopular to media owners, advisers and their political friends are effectively silenced. And inconvenient facts are kept under dark. Therefore, it came as a surprise to many, for instance, this strength of resistance to globalisation revealed in the Seattle WTO incidents last year'. The global journalism of the corporate media system has been affecting the quality of journalism in most countries as 'it becomes an increasingly important source of corporate profit for media giants. Severe cuts have been imposed in editorial budgets that have reduced quality.'

3.12 Right to Information Bill, 2000

Freedom towards using government/official documents will certainly support the media persons in collection of authentic and accurate information for public consumption. In India, though late, such opportunity has been surfaced with
the ‘Right to Information Bill, 2000’. The Bill has been passed by the Loksabha (Lower House of the Parliament) during first week (3rd December, 2002) of December 2002. Late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi thought first to modify the British Act of 1923 related to the privacy of the Govt. documents for the security of the country. But, due to the reluctance of the bureaucrats, the thought remained unimplemented. In 1999, the urban development minister Ram Jethmalani took initiative to keep open all the documents related to his ministry for the use of the public. In continuation, a Parliamentarian Standing Committee was set up for the preparation of a draft of the bill in this matter. The approved current bill is the outcome of these efforts. Though there are some ‘confusions’, ‘doubts’ and ‘incompleteness’ (as expressed by some of the opposition members), no one can deny the relevance of such bill in the backdrop of any democratic set-up. That’s why all the oppositions have extended their supports to this bill. It proves the necessity of such bill towards the requirement of the modern times. To have the right to know information is the fundamental right of every citizen in a democratic state. Such right has already been established and legalised in every developed country. Unfortunately, in India, the eighty years old British Act (1923) has long denied the citizen in accessing govt.-documents (in the context of the national security). There is, however, a provision in the present bill, too, which may help the government for not revealing the documents in case it is necessary for national security. The Upper House of the Parliament (the Rajya Sabha) has approved the bill on the 16th December 2002.17

3.13 The National Media Policy

The National Media Policy, in India, is ‘governed by the provisions of the constitutions regulatory and legislative measures, policy guidelines for official media and the codes evolved by the professionals bodies’. These guidelines,
'along with the Press Council Act, the Cable Television Networks (Regulations) Act 1995, Supreme Court Judgement on Freedom of Airwaves (February, 1995)', the IT Act 2000, the Right to Information Act 2000 and the Foreign Direct Investment Act 2002, 'constitute the core of National Media Policy in the country'.

The Press Council of India is concerned with the growth in circulation, number of news interest and general newspapers as also the number of languages in which the newspapers are published. 'Some of the major policy issues confronting the Indian Press are: Entry of Foreign Newspapers in India, formulating the code of ethics particularly in the backdrop of the growing corporatisation of media, and reporting communal issues the language press'.

According to the Report submitted (March 29, 1996) by the Sub Committee of the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the objectives of the National Media Policy are –

- to lay the broad framework of the relationship of the Government with both National and International media such as Television, Video, Internet, Radio, Newspapers, Film etc.;

- to help a citizen of the country to realise his/her potential best;

- not to permit growth of monopoly in any media

- to project the developmental needs and social, cultural and economic aspirations of the people;

- to strengthen, preserve and promote our democratic traditions, culture and values, national integration and scientific temper; and

- to facilitate greater access to information and provide wider choice to the people in matter of information.
3.14 Print Media: Some Facts

As per the 1995 Report of the Registrar of Newspapers for India, the following facts are identified.\(^{21}\)

- Total number of news-interest newspapers has been increased to 35,601.
- Total circulations have been increased to 7,23,02,000 (an increase of 6.2 p.c.).
- Hindi Press continues to be in the lead both in number and circulation.
- Uttar Pradesh leads in number of newspapers as well as circulation.
- During 1994, newspapers were published in as many as 99 languages/dialects.
- Highest number of newspapers was published in Hindi followed by English, Urdu, Bengali, Marathi and Tamil.
- Over the past few decades, the Indian Press has witnessed a three-tier growth. The main line English language newspapers having five p.c. of the total readers, constitute the upper crust of the Indian Press .... Leading Hindi and Regional language newspapers constitute the second tier ..... Small newspapers coming out from district centres and having grass root contacts, mostly in Hindi and Indian languages, constitute the third tier of the Indian Press.

In 1998, the Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Smt.Sushma Swaraj has submitted to the Parliament\(^{22}\) the lists of newspapers and periodicals registered with the RNI (as on 31.3.1998), State wise and category wise, circulation number and amount sanction for advertisement to the newspapers (Annexure III/2).

3.15 The Latest Development: Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

The attempt in foreign investment to newspaper publishing was first made in the early fifties. But the Congress Government of Jawaharlal Nehru did
not permit foreign equity participation for Indian newspapers. In 1991, the then Prime Minister Narshimha Rao constituted a committee under Dr. Manmohan Singh ‘to go into the question of FDI for Indian print media’. The Committee favoured the proposal for FDI. But it was only ‘the hue and cry all over India that compelled the Union Govt. to shelve’ the proposal once again. The ‘Editors Guild of India’ too, in 1994, rejected the FDI matter. But, even then, the issue has remained alive. And, in June 2002, ‘the Union Cabinet cleared FDI for the print media as well, although it imposed some cosmetic restrictions’. The Government has decided ‘to permit upto 74 percent foreign equity in non-news and non-current affairs journals, restricting foreign equity holding in news and current affairs journals to 26 percent.’ The arguments behind FDI, as propagated, are: (i) If FDI ‘can be permitted for the electronic media, there is no reason why it should be denied to the, print media’; (ii) In the competition with electronic media ‘newspapers in India are bound to die a slow death’ unless ‘there is infusion of large dollars of both equity and technology from advanced countries’. And (iii) that ‘as long as foreign equity participation is kept fairly low, there is no risk of foreign investors hijacking our national interest.’ There are, however, counter arguments also from the critics against the FDI: ‘Once there is FDI in the print media as well, newspapers will work towards the goal of mindless globalisation and liberalizations. Apart from what this does to our economic independence and the growth of indigenous technology, the impact on our culture and traditions will be serious and irreversible’.

3.16 Conclusion and Observation

In this historical drive, some of the important issues can easily be observed in the following areas:

i) The newspaper-culture had been brought to India by the Britishers.
ii) The then great Indian scholars, too, did not remain passive in establishing and using newspapers as weapons against the evils of the society and the establishments.

iii) The newspapers, both in English and vernacular, had played very important role in the field of education, politics and social-reform by disseminating information required for the same.

iv) It also became the organ for standing against the foreign-rulers and led the freedom movement by mobilising the revolutionaries and common people.

v) The newspaper-culture was first introduced, sponsored and practiced in the big cities only by the rulers and Indian nobles.

vi) Before and after the Independence, gradually, the culture had been spread over the small places also.

vii) **Freedom of Press** had been a great issue during British period also.

viii) The importance and influence of local vernacular and English dailies to the society had been realised on many occasions during the whole British period and after.

ix) The events and the issues, mentioned above in brief, have witnessed different stages in the growth and development of Indian medias at different period including the recent time (*i.e.* 2002).

x) With current technological development, it is presumed, the information-society in India is likely to experience many more changes in the print media in the years to come.

xi) It is also understood from the recent development that the foreign direct investment (FDI) will have a great say in newspaper-industry of India in near future.

As it is observed, the name of Manipur, the extreme eastern tiny border state of the country, has not been figured in the whole description. The late entry of the state to the print-culture might be one of the reasons. But, at the same time, it is also fact that the scholars of Manipur, too, had realised long back the possible
impact of the local documents to the society. This was evident with their regular manuscript-culture on different subjects. Though late, but, they had also picked up the thread and entered to the publishing-world of the newspapers. The next chapter will deal the episode in rather details.

References


3. *Ibid*, p 8


5. *Ibid*, p 21


8. *Ibid*, p 40


10. *Ibid*, p 69

11. *Ibid*, p 80

12. *Ibid*, pp 82-85


15. *Ibid*, p 179


19. *Ibid*, p 75

20. *Ibid*, pp 53-54

21. *Ibid*, pp 74-75


24. *Ibid*, p 8