Chapter VI

Summary of findings and recommendations

The newspaper industry in Assam, as in the case of the entire country, has enjoyed phenomenal expansion during the last three decades of post-Independence. The number of newspapers, both in English and Assamese, their circulation, readership and advertisement revenue have all risen impressively along with the growth of population and the literacy in the State and in the whole of north-eastern region. But one must admit that, by and large, the growth of the newspaper industry in Assam is mainly quantitative; quality has not risen commensurately; in some instances, it has declined. Even where journalistic skill has improved, as reflected by the increasing number of big-name journalists, quality is missing.
It is generally complained that "The Press in India suffers from two main weaknesses. One is lack of integrity and the other is monotony of contents and style". (1) This is equally applied to the Press in general in Assam. As in the all-India case, in Assam also, the major newspapers are owned by business houses. In the first place, newspapers are money-making enterprises to their owners: thus considerations of journalistic excellence, social service or dedication to truth and justice, are irrelevant to the owners of the newspapers. Hence, journalists in Assam, as in the case of all-India level, are often exploited.

"The essence of the problem of the Press in India, as elsewhere, is how freedom of expression, of which freedom of the Press is a part, can operate within the

framework of an industry. The newspaper proprietor, who is essentially the owner of the press and who provides the capital, is essentially a manufacturer, and freedom of the Press consists partly of his freedom but not solely. (1)

Journalism is a profession and if it is a worthwhile and useful profession, it has to survive the assaults of commercialisation. It is said and believed that in developing societies, the Press has to serve the cause of social change, apart from meeting the deep social need for discussion. The practice of journalism is also a political occupation; it involves not only ability but beliefs and judgement.

Poverty in Assam is equally acute as in some parts of the country. Over 60 per cent of the total population...
in Assam and in the north-eastern region live below the poverty line. "India's seven north-eastern States resemble, economically, a chronically ill patient who leaves the doctor scratching his head. The transfusion of Rs 6,000 crore as assistance from the Centre into this region since Independence has failed to have the desired effect. During 1978-79 alone, the Centre poured Rs 500 crore into these States. In spite of this, six out of 10 families in Assam, and every second family in Meghalaya, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Manipur and Nagaland lives below the poverty line as against the nationwide average of four families. (4)

As in the case of the whole country, in Assam also, the poor are virtually non-existent for the Press. The poor are generally not a part of its constituency. Advertisers are not concerned with the poor who bay

Prabhu Chawla: in India Today, February 16-23.
few goods. The poor, by and large, do not buy and read newspapers. "In fact, the social universe in which the newspapers and journalists circulate comprises no more than 25 per cent of the nation's population. The remaining three-fourths inhabit the outer darkness. What the newspapers present as public opinion reflects at best the interests of this 25 per cent—more often of its upper reaches". (1)

The former editor of The Statesman, Mr Pran Chopra, once lamented: "The Press is becoming more and more city-oriented, more and more distant from its primary function, which is to be the voice and conscience of the whole community". (2) A study conducted by the Press Institute of India reveals that less than 2 per cent of the country's total population living in rural areas

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(2) Economic and Political Weekly, September
read newspapers. According to the study, 80 per cent of the population in the rural areas in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Assam are not yet concerned at all about what was or is happening in the world or in India or in their respective States.

The newspapers in the country and also in Assam remain, by and large, in content and style, what they were prior to Independence. This is in spite of the fact that circulations have gone up, advertisements are taking up more space than ever before and the newspapers are riding a wave of prosperity. As in the case of other newspapers in the country, including these national newspapers, the newspapers in Assam also remain as a vehicle of communication and continue to be owned by our social and political elite. This small segment of the society sees a reflection of itself in the Press, whether in the news or editorial columns and generally feels elated with what is sees.
The main trouble with the newspapers of Assam, as in the case of the all-India level, is their over-emphasis on politics, which is partly due to the hangover from the colonial past, when political action was a dominant social theme—and rightly so—and partly due to the tastes of the elite today. "Politics in India is a middle-class vocation, you might even say obsession...Politics remains the obsessive neurosis of the Indian Press, and the type of politics one reads about is middle-class politics, the power game as it appears to the middle-class." (1)

The function of the Press—and for that matter of all media of mass communication—in a developing country like ours is primarily to explain to the people the tasks of development and thereby to gain their active support for and participation in the development

process. Even if, because of widespread illiteracy and economic stringency, many readers of newspapers continue to be members of the elite, the duty of the Press is to convey to its mass readership the implications of development and prepare them for the sacrifices they must make in the larger interests of the nation to fulfil the goals of social re-structuring. But instead of having a virile Press which takes pains to stress the aims of development and explain them to the people, so as to ensure their total commitment to these aims and participation in the task of achieving them, we find the opposite in practice. Issues are, more often than not, presented to the people in a distorted form, in a form designed to promote the interests of the proprietors.

The advertisements which appear in the newspapers are an illuminating example of the dangerous type of thinking that is being generated in the name of progress by the combined interests of the newspaper proprietors.
the private-sector industry. Instead of striving for a producer-oriented society whose basic aim is to meet the minimum subsistence needs of the lower stratum, the legitimate aim of social justice, we find a strong consumer-oriented bias in the bulk of advertisements. And most of these consumer goods are luxuries designed for the leisured class.

The crucial task facing the nation is development in all its aspects, particularly economic growth as an effective instrument of social change. Political stability, security from external aggression and similar national needs flow from the creation of firm socio-economic underpinnings, and the first task of an effective Government is to create this infrastructure. The newspapers, throughout the country, including those from Assam, as the most important medium of mass communication, in spite of comparatively
limited circulation, they have a vital role to play in the fulfilment of this task, and one must admit that they have to a very large extent failed in it. In the hands of their private owners, a good many of them are associated with the monopoly business houses, and as such they have continued as an instrument of opinion-making of the elite, super-imposing the views and interests of the elite on the nation and neglecting the interests and aspirations of the vast masses of the people.

The basic problems of the people are unemployment, the provision of minimum living standards, a diet that can guarantee the basic requirements of nutrition for physical and mental health, and adequate shelter and education. Equally important is the removal of discrimination on grounds of caste and religion. When some incident occurs in an obscure village such as the harassment, of even killing, of people belonging to a depressed group, there are shocked
protest in the Press and the legislative organs. Homilies are delivered on the need to eliminate such behaviour, an official inquiry is held, and the affair is quietly forgotten. Such incidents are a nine-day wonder, and that is about all. There is no sustained effort to pose the basic problems which underlie such acts. The attitude of the newspapers in the entire country to the fundamental problems of growth and change, by and large, is dilettantish.

In Assam, of the total population of 14,625,000 (1971 census), 13,336,000 live in the rural areas while only 1,289,000 live in the urban or semi-urban areas. This clearly shows, how many people of Assam do read newspapers. There is again the problem of literacy in the rural areas where the English newspapers are rarely read and subscribed. Therefore, the English newspapers published in Assam are generally read by readers who mostly live in the urban areas.
One cannot overlook the population structure in Assam while considering the readership of the newspapers in the State. The Assamese newspapers are being read by those who are Assamese and know the language. But the number of Assamese-speaking population in Assam is not encouraging. Only in the plain districts, there are the Assamese-speaking population; in the Cachar district of the State, the entire population (1,713,318) speak Bengali. The two largely populated districts, Goalpara (2,225,103) and Kamrup (2,854,183) have mixed population: in certain parts of these two major districts, the people are allegedly from Bangladesh and they do not speak Assamese. There are again large number of Nepalis in different parts of Assam and these people also do not read, write or speak Assamese. Only those Muslims who were the permanent citizens of the country and who have been living in Assam for century are all assimilated Assamese and they read, write and speak the language of the State.
According to a rough estimate, in 1961 there were 10 lakhs foreign nationals, mostly from the East Pakistan and now Bangladesh, in Assam and next year, their number rose to 12 lakhs of whom 5 lakhs had managed to enter their names in the voters' list. By 1979, the number of foreign nationals in Assam rose to 35 lakhs of whom 18 lakhs had managed to get their names enrolled in the electoral rolls. 

The estimate further maintains that up to the year 1971, Assam's population figures are taken from the census figures and the 1979 population has been taken as per the Government's projection.

Assam's growth rate (for population) from 1941-51 period has been 20.10% as against an all-India growth rate of 13.31%. This is because Assam absorbed large

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(1) P.K. Bhuyan: Foreign infiltration into Assam and impact on the electoral rolls, in *Assam* 1971, by North East Federation of Neter Assa.
influx of immigrants during the days of partition, i.e. 
up to January 26, 1950 and these people automatically 
became Indian citizens. This 20.10% growth rate also 
includes normal inter-State migration of Indian citizens 
into Assam. Hence the assumption of 23% normal 
growth rate of population of Assam for 1951-61 period 
is on the high side which adequately caters to any 
heightened inter-State migration of Indian citizens 
into Assam. The all-India growth rate during this 
period is 21.64% and for 1961-71 period is 24.66%. 
Hence the above normal growth rate assumptions 
for Assam are reasonable but on the high side which give 
only a conservative assessment of the problem created 
by influx in Assam.

"The problem of large-scale foreign invasion of a 
part of India does not become a national problem merely 
because the area invaded happens to be Assam, situated
far away from Delhi. Complacency or neglect on the part of the Union Government can serve only to reinforce the feeling among the Assamese that the Centre is apathetic to its problems and aspirations. That there is the imminent danger of the Assamese being swamped by an alien population is an undisputable fact.\(^{(1)}\)

These huge number of foreign nationals, by and large, do not subscribe to any newspapers published from Assam, particularly either in Assamese or in English. The sizable number of Bengali speaking population, both permanent settlers and infiltrators, do read the Calcutta newspapers. This has directly affected the growth of circulation of the newspapers published from Assam. This is one of the main reasons for any newspaper in Assam so far not being able to cross

\(^{(1)}\) Eclipse in the East: pamphlet published by the Asam Sahitya Sahha, 1980.
the circulation figure beyond 50,000 copies. The Calcutta newspapers which are generally bigger in size and which are meant to cater to the various needs of the different readers have hitherto been the big challenge to the newspapers published from Assam. The newspapers in Assam cannot compete with the outside papers because not a single newspaper in Assam is still considered to be a national one. All the newspapers in Assam are either small or medium. They are smaller in size (mostly of six pages in case of daily) and cannot cater to the different taste of different readers.

The newspapers in Assam are facing the acute problem of newsprint since there is no distributing centre in the entire north-eastern region. The State Trading Corporation, which is responsible for distribution of newsprint to the various newspapers in the country has so far been functioning its duties in respect of the entire north-eastern region from Calcutta.
been several moves from different quarters from the region urging the Centre to set up a unit of the STC at Gauhati to distribute newsprint to the newspapers of Assam and of the region; but except promise nothing concrete has come out so far. The newspapers are still bringing their quota of newsprint from Calcutta and incurring additional expenditure on transport. Since the Assam Tribune group, the only group of newspapers utilizing reel newsprint for rotaries, has been bringing the reels through road transport from Calcutta to Gauhati, the transport cost has been going up even daily. Sometimes, due to shortage of diesel, the quota failed to arrive in time thereby affecting the overall production of the papers.

The newspaper industry in Assam has been handicapped at all stages by such factors as shortage of newsprint, capital, step-motherly treatment from the advertising agencies and the cut-throat competition from
business metropolitan newspapers. The cost of production of newspapers in Assam was and is abnormally high, every material costing almost 10 to 25 per cent more in Assam in comparison to other parts of India.

The region as a whole is backward in telecommunications facilities. Sometimes Press telegrams sent from even State capitals like Aizawl, Imphal or Itanagar, reach newspaper office at Guwahati after two-three days. Moreover, there is at present the STD system for the telephone subscribers between Shillong and Guwahati, Kohima and Shillong and Shillong and Aizawl, it is very difficult to get the line in order.

The regional has been suffering from lack of proper road, rail, water and air communications. The entire region, covering seven administrative units, which are now politically disintegrated are economically interdependent and more so on matters of transport and communication. But during the long span of
Independence, the region has remained sadly neglected so far as the problem of communication is concerned. The areas like Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh are yet to have any rail-head. Tripura and Nagaland have only 12 kms and 9 kms of metre gauge railway lines respectively. Assam has so far only 105.22 kms of broad gauge and 2088.43 kms of metre gauge railway lines. Of the total route length of 3625 kms (626 kms BG, 2901 kms MG and 87.5 kms MG) under the N.F.Railways, the region has 2215 kms, that is about 60.6% kilometrage on the N.F.Railways, which in turn, works out to 0.87 kms per 100 sq.kms against all-India average of 1.8 kms. (1)

One of the glaring deficiencies in the region's (particularly of Assam) railway transport system is the lack of a multi-point contact between the districts.

(1) Basic statistics of north-eastern region, 1980, published by the Secretariat of the North East Council, Shillong.
on the north bank of the Brahmaputra and those on the south bank. To strengthen the link between Assam and the rest of the country, it should be an urgent national policy to construct an additional bridge over the Brahmaputra. Besides to cater to the growing needs of the region as a whole, extension of the BG railway lines upto Dibrugarh connecting all the district headquarters as a supplement to the existing metre gauge lines is getting imperative.

Although efforts have been made towards accelerating the development of road communication, particularly after the Chinese aggression in 1962, compared to all-India figure of 29 roads per 100 sq.kms, the average availability of roads in the region is as follows: Assam-18, Manipur-12, Meghalaya-13, Nagaland-26, Tripura-22, Arunachal Pradesh-5.6 and Mizoram-6.8.(1)


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It is a known fact that one of the major factors inhibiting the development of the region is the inadequate system of transport and communication. Much of the difficulties of rail transport is due to the absence of the BG system throughout the region. There are also the difficulties on matters of transhipment delays and attendant problems during transit, operating difficulties due to terrain, floods, earthquakes, landslides, and other factors. In the hill areas of the region, the major part of movement of goods and traffic is by road; but here the cost of transport is very high because of high operating costs. In the Fifth Plan document of Arunachal Pradesh, it was mentioned that the landed cost of nearly all essential commodities was 40 per cent higher in the territory as compared to any part of Assam. The road transport costs continue to go up with the rise in the cost of vehicles, spare parts and above all of fuel. The state of affairs has badly affected the growth of the newspaper industry in Assam and in the region.
The newspaper industry in Assam is still facing the problem of getting trained man-power to run its various departments. Even for the editorial department, there are shortage of trained people in Assam. The Assam Tribune in its editorial department has only three persons who possess diploma in Journalism of whom only one (now based in Shillong as Special Representative) has attended higher training in Journalism (the Cardiff course, U.K.). The Dainik Asam, the highest circulated Assamese daily is yet to have anybody in the editorial department possessing any diploma in Journalism. The newspaper industry in Assam is also facing problem of getting trained man-power in departments like proof-reading, composing, make-up, processing, block-making, accounts, distribution, circulation, advertisement, etc. The industry also lacks efficiency in overall management. So far there is not a single magazine in Assam printed in colours. Even the Advertising Manager of The Vflmil
Tribune is reported to have commented that since there is no publication in colour, he had to refuse a number of colour advertisements received from some all-India concerns. This shows how the industry as a whole in Assam remains backward.

That the newspapers in Assam are more often than not born to die untimely has of late become a plain, accepted but cruel fact. And that is why some have felt tempted to term the entire north-eastern region as the "graveyard of newspapers"(1), as hundreds of newspapers of different shapes, colours and periodicity came to light during the long span of last 134 years since 1846 when the first Assamese newspaper, The Orunodoi (Sun-rise) was published under the initiative of some American Baptist Missionaries. What is more striking is the fact that not a single newspaper in Assam, whether a daily, weekly or of any periodicity, has hitherto been able to command a total

(1) Dr B.K. Bhattacharyya: Journalism In Assam, article in souvenir of Gauhati Working Journalists' Association, Feb. 27, 1966
circulation beyond 50,000 copies. While this makes a very sad commentary on the part of the overall readership in Assam, an accusing finger is often seen pointed towards the poor, ill-clad, ill-fed and unintelligently edited newspapers and journals which, for obvious reasons, have failed to attract the attention of the general readers. Some of the self-appointed editors of Assamese newspapers and journals do not have the minimum educational qualification or experience on the line and as such what they dish out as editors are generally certain literary pieces which are badly edited, badly printed, making them more insipid and colourless.

Number of cogent arguments have often been put forward as to why newspapers in the north-eastern region are, by and large, born to die. One of the major causes may be the pitiable growth of literacy in the region. Next comes the peculiar location of the region, then availability of required printing materials at cheaper rates, availability of trained personnel for various departments of the newspaper industry, system of and conditions
for proper distribution of newspapers, financial backing, Government patronage, motive behind publications, etc.

In Assam there is no multimillionaire to sponsor a costly venture and the industry cannot grow rapidly in the region as bulk of the potential readers are still illiterate.

The Press in Assam which has completed its 134 years of service by 1980 to the people of the State and of the region is slowly emerging from a state of stagnation and frightening rate of mortality to a position of responsibility. We had already referred to the poor readers' response in Assam and elsewhere in the entire north-eastern region in the text of the thesis. We have also said how the readers in Assam are not interested to buy and read any newspaper published from the State. According to an extensive readership survey conducted recently in Assam, covering all areas, under the auspices of the
Directorate of Information and Public Relations, Assam. The survey says that the average newspaper readers in Assam are satisfied with the existing standard of newspapers published from Assam. It says that as many as 65 per cent of the newspaper readers in Assam read more than three newspapers and journals. Four per cent of them read only one newspaper, 17 per cent two newspapers while 19 per cent read three newspapers.

An interesting point revealed in the survey covering 1,659 men and women, both of the urban and rural areas, is that only 55 per cent of the readers personally subscribe to the papers published from the State. 16 per cent of the readers get the newspapers from the Government-run district and sub-divisional libraries, 12 per cent from their friends and relatives, 10 per cent from neighbours and 7 per cent from the offices they work.

Only 65 per cent of the readers read the whole newspaper thoroughly, 90 per cent of the readers read at first the main news, 60 per cent people read the editorial regularly while
10 per cent do not read editorials at all. Letters to the editors are read by 62 per cent people regularly while another 30 per cent read them casually. Eight per cent of the people do not read letters to the editors at all.

Advertisements in Assam Tribune group of newspapers and also in other papers, according to the survey, are regularly read by 60 per cent of the people. 15 per cent of the readers never go through the advertisements. 78 per cent of the people like cartoons and stories accompanied by relevant pictures or sketches and 15 per cent of them go through such materials regularly. 55 per cent readers like to read news on crime and accidents while 45 per cent readers are not interested in such stories. Political news of foreign countries is liked by 50 per cent of the readers in Assam while 20 per cent do not like to read foreign news at all.

All the readers in Assam like to read more about developmental activities in the country.
cent of the readers like to read news about Harijans and tribals, while 55 per cent like to read news on strikes, hartals, and political squabbles either in Assam or in the country. 7 per cent readers want that their favourite paper should contain more pages while only 53 per cent of the readers are prepared to pay higher subscription for such enlargement. All the readers are of the same view that their papers should carry more news.

Certain places in Sibsagar district of Upper Assam reveal that there is a very high percentage of newspaper readership comparable to any of the most advanced pockets of the country. Readership is found very low in the Goalpara district, Mangaldoi sub-division, Mrigaon sub-division and in many places in N.C. Hills, Lakhimpur and Karbi Anglong districts where not a single newspaper or journal published from.
Assam reaches vast population by way of subscription. The areas where there are very few newspaper readers are generally dominated by non-Assamese people, particularly people from Bangladesh. Large number of Nepalis and tea garden workers, now settling in vast areas of Assam in different districts are also not newspaper readers. The Bengali speaking population, settled in Assam without accepting the language of the State as their own, do not read newspapers published from Assam simply because most of them do not feel attached to the State. But most of them read and subscribe to the newspapers coming from Calcutta. The overall circulation of the newspapers from Assam could not go up during the last three decades of post-Independence due to these factors.

However, there are other factors also responsible for the poor circulation of the newspapers in Assam.
First, the newspapers in Assam are all either small or medium carrying less pages, less news and views and less advertisements. Hence less readership for them. Secondy, the newspapers in Assam are, by and large, produced badly without proper planning and cost. The papers, including those commanding the highest circulation in the State, are also found not properly edited. Thirdly, the newspapers in Assam cannot carry more news as there are less pages and hence they are not popular. Fourthly, there is less touch of technical efficiency in the newspapers published from Assam. The overall printing is not up to the mark, sometimes some portion of news of editorial of article are not properly visible, the blocks are not clear and there are lot of printing mistakes. Fifthly, the distribution system of the newspapers in Assam is very poor. The regular subscribers of the papers are sometimes found disgusted with the distributors who fail to supply the paper regularly at proper time. Some of
had to stop subscribing to the Assam paper because they failed to get it regularly. The situation is worst in places outside Gauhati and in those places people can see newspapers published from Gauhati after two-three days. The readers lose their interest in the paper due to irregular supply.

The newspapers in Assam, particularly The Assam Tribune, cannot cover more news concerning the region. This is because of inadequate staff in the news gathering department. The paper does not have its own correspondents in the State capitals like Kohima, Imphal, Aizawl, Itanagar, etc. It has only a news office at Shillong and this office manned by only one reporter has to cover all the hill areas where the paper is considered very important. Since the paper does not have its own correspondents in those State capitals, the areas remained generally uncovered through news in the paper. The readers in those...
feel disappointed when they cannot find news concerning their own areas in the paper. This has directly affected the growth of circulation of the paper in those areas.

The future of the newspapers in Assam can never be termed as gloomy although the circulations of almost all the papers remain, for the last three decades of post-Independence, at a discouragingly low figure.

Had there been proper planning and initiatives by the publishers, the newspapers in Assam could have had better circulation by now. But it is not yet too late to start a drive to improve the circulation and thereby the overall economy of the organizations.

However, before taking any initiative to boost circulation of the paper, there must be initiatives to improve its quality. For instance, The Assam Tribune, being the premier English in the region, should make sincere efforts towards qualitative improvement of the paper.

The management should improve the working conditions.
in the press so that all the workers, both the journalists and the non-journalists, can work in a satisfactory atmosphere. Such improvement in working condition in the press will indirectly help improve the quality of work, both inside the press and in the news-room.

Secondly, the management should try to keep adequate staff, particularly in the editorial department and also in the production sections. There should be occasional encouragement to the working journalists by way of sending, at least few of them, for higher training wherever possible. An atmosphere should be created in the news-room where the journalists can feel part of the entire organization.

Thirdly, the part-time correspondents or the stringers, who are based at different places, should have a fair deal. The contribution of the part-time correspondents to the newspapers can hardly be over-emphasised. The management can organise occasional get-together.
training courses so that they feel encouraged to work with more interest and dedication. In return of their stories these part-time correspondents should get better financial benefit.

Fourthly, the management, particularly the management of The Assam Tribune, should open news office at all the State capitals, like Kohima, Imphal, Aizawl and Itanagar, in the region and efforts should be made by the editorial department of the paper to give equal treatment to all the State and Union Territories of the region.

Fifthly, there should be efforts towards improving the existing system of distribution of papers through the region. Even in Gauhati, the distribution system should be improved so that the readers, who number more, can get the benefit of reading the newspaper in time. There can be occasional dialogues with the agents based at various places in the region so that
problems on both sides can be studied in proper perspective. Steps should be taken to exploit the existing transport facilities to improve the system of distribution.

Sixthly, there should be sincere efforts by the newspapers to cater to the needs of the readers and also to project the hopes and aspirations of the people of the region. The people and the readers should have faith on the newspapers.

The efforts made by the newspaper organisations alone cannot be of much help to the industry as a whole unless there is adequate help and encouragement from the Governments, both at the Centre and in the States and Union Territories. The Central Government can help the newspaper industry in Assam in a big way if it so desires. The major constraint on way of development of the industry in Assam is the
difficulties in getting newsprint in time and at rate. There are the perennial problems of transport between Calcutta and Gauhati as a result of which the newspaper industry has been suffering in Assam. The centre can easily set up a newsprint distributing unit at Gauhati through the State Trading Corporation to help ease the situation. The Centre can also help the newspapers in Assam by way of giving some financial benefits exclusively meant for them, like better rates for all advertisements released through the DAVP to the newspapers in Assam.

Both the Centre and the State Governments should not try to put economic pressures on the newspapers in Assam simply on political grounds. All the newspapers should be treated equally and there should not be any discrimination towards any newspaper on matters of giving advertisements from the Government quota. The State Governments also can help in different ways.
the newspaper industry in Assam by way of giving financial incentives, whatever possible.

However, the ultimate responsibility lies with the newspaper industry itself. There must be a joint endeavour of both the management and the workers of the industry for its overall improvement. One can hope that there will be more organizations like the Assam Tribune group in Assam so that the newspaper industry as a whole in the State get better opportunity to grow in the face of competition. The Assam Tribune, as the only major English daily in Assam, is yet to face any competition from any English daily published from the State. The newspaper industry in Assam should have had greater degree of competition for its growth.