Preface

The thesis, as the first attempt at a comprehensive and critical study of the newspaper industry in Assam, or of the entire north-eastern region, had been aimed at investigating into the stages by which the industry had made its stride since Independence. Obviously, the study had put more stress on investigating the economy of the industry as a whole. The various aspects like the cost-structure, tariff rates, circulations, revenue yield had also been gone into. The structure of the industry—whether it is competitive and if so to what extent—formed an important part of the investigation.

A senior journalist, Mr P.B. Gadgil, has been saying for many years that unless the English newspapers are closed down completely, the rural areas of the country will never be developed. The growth of the lan...
newspapers is of primary importance for the progress of the country as they are published in the languages which the masses understand. In this thesis, an attempt has been made to examine the role of the language newspapers in the region.

The policies of different newspapers in the State, with special reference to the editorials had been studied. The relation between the Government and the Press in the State had also been studied. The services rendered to the society by the Press in Assam had been examined.

The thesis contains a chapter on inter-State comparisons in regard to the newspaper industry. The comparisons had been made particularly with similar newspapers in other States. The main source of data had been the materials available in the offices of the different newspapers in the State. The methodology had been based on the usual statistical techniques.
Dr B.K. Bhattacharyya, who teaches Journalism at the Gauhati University, once remarked: "Being a poor State with no multimillionaire to sponsor a costly venture and the bulk of the potential readers being illiterate in addition to the known disadvantages, journalism in Assam had to wait for better days; i.e. to ushering in of a democratically elected Government". There has been expansion in the newspaper industry during the last three decades of post-Independence; but the growth is mainly quantitative; quality had not risen commensurately; in some instances, it had declined. An attempt had been made here to study such problems. The central hypothesis of the thesis had been that the newspaper industry in Assam should have had greater degree of competition.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not place on record my deep sense of gratitude to my research guide Prof. S. Sarangapani of Gauhati University who gave me expert and inspiring guidance throughout the period.
of my work. I must also thank the offices of The Assam Tribune and other newspaper organisations for giving me access to valuable source material.

My association with the Assam Tribune group of newspapers in the capacity of Special Representative has given me a special advantage to study the various problems of the newspaper industry in Assam at first hand.

Place: Shillong