Chapter 3

Development Journalism: Past, Present and Indian Perspective
The third chapter ‘Development Journalism: Past, Present and Indian Perspective’ begins with a brief introduction on development journalism. The chapter then proceeds to discuss the origin and growth of development communication and its various approaches. This chapter also talks about multiple definitions of development journalism and provides a general idea on development journalism by discussing its various forms, principles, objectives and the purpose of development journalism as explained by several scholars. This chapter also deals with the practice of development journalism by Indian press and problems of development reporting in Indian newspapers.

3.1. EMERGENCE OF DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM

Development is a complex phenomenon to define and measure. Each society should identify its development goals and should strive to meet the needs of its people. Development communication is the systematic use of communication for national development (Lent, 1979). It is oriented towards development whether it is in rural or urban areas or in agriculture, family planning, industrial production sectors etc. Thus a journalistic concept dealing with development through communication is termed as ‘development journalism’.

The importance of communication as a tool to motivate and persuade people for eliciting positive response to various development programmes took shape in the early 1960s in most of the developing countries. Thus the origin of development journalism dated back to the origin of development communication, widely used for the development of Third-world nations. The term development journalism came into being through the efforts of journalists such as Juan Mercado and Alan Chalkley (Lent, 1986) in the international discussion at the Phillipines University of Los Banos. In the beginning, development journalism was equated with economic reporting as economic development was deemed to be the sole indicator of development. During 1970s, development journalism was more effective as commitment journalism because it was believed that journalism can accentuate the development process of a country by promoting ideologies and campaigns of the State (Murthy 2001).
According to Allan Chalkley, development journalism is more than just presenting facts; it gives a critical estimate of various development projects and plans adopted by the government agencies. Development journalism should connect to the people and open reader’s eyes to the practical problems and also give solutions for these problems. In essence, this type of journalism endorses the principle of participatory development approach, by ensuring people’s participation in the planning and shaping of development projects. For this the credibility of media is an essential condition which is to be achieved by giving expression to people’s voice, and practicing just, accurate and objective reporting of important socio-economic problems of a country. It is assumed that journalism is able to influence the development process by reporting on development programmes and activities. Accordingly it is the journalists duty to critically examine and evaluate the relevance of a development project to national and local needs, the difference between a planned scheme and its actual implementation, and the difference between its impact on people as claimed by government officials and as it actually is’ (Aggarwala, 1979).

Sunetra Sen Narayan stated that the concept of development journalism is closely related with the concept of development communication, though the latter is a broader term. But both the concepts are linked with the idea of information dissemination for development (Narayan, 2011).

3.2. ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

During the second half of the twentieth century communication scholars from the developed countries became interested in the development of the Third World countries. Narula and Pearce say, “Economically the third world comprises those nations whose gross national product and per capita income fall below the standard set by the industrialized nations. Politically, the Third World comprises those nations, who have made a deliberate decision to remain non-aligned in the struggle between Capitalist or Democratic West and Communist East” (Narula and Pearce, 1986). Many academicians and policy makers were engaged in developing the third world and in turn formulated research and studies to analyze the relationship between mass communication and national development. All those communication research and
practices geared towards Third World development needs came to be known as 'Development Communication' (Melcote and Steeves, 2001). Nora Quebral of Los Banos University in Philippines, where the term Development Commission originated in the 1960s, defines development communication as "the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a nation from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater economic and social equality and the larger fulfillment of human potential" (Quebral, 1975). Development communication refers to the use of communication media to bring about positive socio-economic change in a society.

3.2.1. THE DOMINANT PARADIGM OF DEVELOPMENT AND ITS CRITIQUE

During 1950s and 1960s the research and ideas of the communication scholars formed the basis of the development communication discourse. Daniel Lerner and Wilbur Schramm were instrumental in assessing the influence of mass media on the socio-economic change to be brought in underdeveloped nations. They postulated that increasing urbanization would raise literacy rate which in turn increase the mass media exposure that will lead to wider economic and political participation (Lerner, 1958). Thus according to them increasing mass media facilities will facilitate development of a nation. This approach of allocating too-much emphasis on mass media for development became popular as the Dominant Paradigm of Development (Singhal and Rogers, 1989). Poverty was taken as another name for underdevelopment in the dominant paradigm of development. The only way through which underdeveloped countries of the 1960s could get rid of their underdeveloped status was to follow the western model of development. Mass communication received the most important priority in the development discourse. Mass media were considered as the magic multipliers facilitating development. By disseminating informative and persuasive messages, mass media was to act as one-way, linear transmitter of information from governmental development agencies to a nation’s people (ibid).
In 1970s the dominant paradigm was subjected to criticism by many researchers with E.M. Rogers on the forefront. (Beltran, 1975; Rogers, 1976). The structural or dependency theorists claimed that mass media has only a contributory and indirect role in development process. Many forces contributed to the underdevelopment of the third world countries like traditionalism, widespread poverty, illiteracy, a burgeoning population, and the lack of an adequate infrastructure to utilize natural resources and it was realized that mass media could not alone bring development. The structural theorists considered the role of mass media for social good. The general aim of structural theories is to create development in a form which is unique to the Third World. These theories advocated for political consensus and cultural autonomy (Menon, 2004). There emerged a new paradigm of development. Singhal and Rogers mention the following key elements in the ‘new paradigm of development’:

1. Greater equality in the distribution of development investments, information, and the consequent socio-economic benefits focusing on weaker sections of the population like the poor, women, and racial and ethnic minorities.
2. Popular participation, knowledge-sharing, and empowerment to facilitate self-development efforts by individuals, groups, and communities.
3. Self-reliance and independence in development, emphasizing the potential for local resources. Self-reliance became a key concept at both the national and local levels, implying that every nation, perhaps every village, could develop in its own way.

In the new paradigm of development, communication played a facilitative role in development. Self-development approaches to development communication led to more popular participation, mass mobilization, and group efficacy, with responsibility for development planning and execution at the local level. The main roles of mass communication in such self-development are (Singhal and Rogers, 1989):

1. To provide technical information about development problems and possibilities, and about appropriate innovations, and
2. To widely circulate information about self-development accomplishments by local groups, so that other such groups could profit from formers' experiences.

3.2.2. DIFFERENT APPROACHES OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

Since 1950s development communication discourse has been going through several approaches, and there has been thinking and rethinking, how communication should be used for the betterment of society and socio-economic development of its people. With changing social milieu and with technological, industrial, economic and political growth the development communication field is getting newer concepts, and evolving into an all-compassing area of using communication media for facilitating development.

Modernisation Approaches

Development Communication emerged as a field of mass communication during the post-World War II when the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America were asserting their right to independence, self-reliance and non-alignment. At the same time, these countries were trying hard to meet the basic needs of their societies such as the eradication of poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment. During 1960s and 1970s, Daniel Lerner, Everett Rogers and Wilbur Schramm came out with path-breaking research studies in the area of development communication. In his seminal work The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle-East (1958), Lerner held that development can be achieved by changing the traditional societies into a modern one. Lerner suggested that development or modernization required large-scale investment on the part of the under-developed nations in developing modern communication system. Mass media exposure and literacy were seen as related to economic and political participation. The role of mass media, were, therefore, to mobilize human resources by motivating change in attitudes, beliefs and behaviours. So the mass media were seen as mobility multipliers capable of producing empathy that allows one to be able to relate to a rapidly changing environment, and to be future oriented, ambitious, competitive, rational with a desire to progress and consume (Kumar, 1994).
Everett M. Rogers adopted Lerner’s notions of empathy and attitude change in his famous work *Diffusion of Innovations*. Rogers stated that technological innovation is communicated among the members of a social system through various stages like knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation and confirmation. Here, mass media channels were considered highly important in providing exposure to the existence and functioning of the innovation.

In *Mass Media and National Development* (1964), Schramm termed mass media as ‘magic multipliers’ and claimed that mass media, as agents of social change have miraculous power to bring about development. He argued that the mass media had the potential to widen horizons, to focus attention, to raise aspirations, and to create a climate for development. He also conceded that mass media can help only indirectly to change strongly held attitudes and valued practices (ibid.).

**Dependency or Structuralist Approaches**

Dependency theories appeared in the early 1970s as a reaction to modernization models. These new theories were the product of the application of Marxist theories of imperialism, though both Marxists and non-Marxists were instrumental in articulating them. Paul Baran (1967) and Andre Gunder Frank (1967) outlined the main concept of dependency theory. The dependency theory assumed that under-development was due, not to some original state of affairs, but the result of the same historical process by which the new developed capitalist countries became economically advanced and industrialized. Emile McAnany argued that social, economic and political structures contributed to the problems of the poor. He believed that communication had a modest role to play in development and this role would require bringing some directed positive changes in the environment other than the passing of information. McAnany was skeptical against placing too much importance on media to foster development (Kumar, 1994).
Alternative Approaches

During 1980s some critical scholars proposed alternative approaches to development communication rejecting both modernization and dependency approaches. These influential works were liberation theology or Freirian thinking on the pedagogy of the oppressed through conscientization, Schumacher’s advocacy of appropriate technologies, popular grassroots movements (e.g., formation of base Christian communities in several Latin American countries, and the Sarvodaya Shramdana Movement in Sri Lanka), and alternative communication strategies (e.g., radio schools in Latin America, and people’s theatre in India). The focus of these alternative approaches is on the social and cultural identities of nations as well as on the external factors that inhibit all-round development. Participation is another key factor in the new approach to alternative mode of development (Kumar, 1994).

Goran Hedebro (1982) and Jan Sarvaes (1988) believed that a new paradigm of development communication has emerged from the criticism of the modernization and dependency paradigms. This new paradigm or concept of ‘another development’ can be traced back to Inayatullah (1967) and to the 1977 anthology of papers by Latin American and Asian scholars in the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation’s journal, Development Dialogue. The most striking assumption in alternative approaches is that there are no universal models of development, and that development is an integral, multidimensional, and dialectical process that can differ from society to society. Thus each society must attempt to define its own strategy for the development as development itself is looked at holistically, as inclusive of social, economic, cultural, and religious elements (ibid).

The ‘communitarian’ approaches of Mazid Tehranian and Hamid Mowlana and Wilson are based on the concept of ummah or community. Being based on the fundamental concept of West Asian worldview, the communitarian approaches emphasis on community rather than the nation state, on monistic universalism rather than nationalism, on spiritualism rather than secular humanism, on dialogue rather
than monologue, and on emancipation rather than alienation. According to Jacobson, participation and cultural identity are vital elements of this approach (Kumar, 1994).

The need for self-reliance has not been recognized in any discussion about development (Mattelart, 1983). Self-reliance models press the need for national development strategies based on autonomous development. In self-reliance approaches, development is envisaged as a process of mobilization of local resources with a view to satisfy local needs. The success of the non-aligned movement, China’s great leap forward, and the writings of Mahatma Gandhi, Mao Zedong, and Paulo Freire have provided inspirations for self-reliant movements across the world. Stressing the need for self-reliant development, the new movements are focused on ecological issues, feminism, world peace, self-determination and democratization. It also incorporates human rights movements that focus on liberation of human beings from bondage and on securing dignity of human life.

**Revival of Modernization Approaches**

In the early 1990s modernization approaches has got a revival with the recent developments in telecommunication and technology. These developments have given fillip to broadcast media and telephone and related technologies such as teleconferencing, audio conferencing and satellite communications. The new technologies offer governments’ greater means of control and surveillance over their large populations, and of attracting international investment and capital.

**3.3. DEFINITIONS OF DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM**

Development is a vague concept in today’s world. It is practically impossible to arrive at a universal definition of development. In the same way development journalism is defined differently by different scholars.

Vilanilam (1975) defines development journalism as ‘journalism that deals with the process of development in developing nations’. He defines development news as news relating to administrative reforms, agricultural development and food production, economic activity, education, employment and labour welfare, family planning,
health, hygiene and medicine, housing, scientific and technological development, mass communications, national integration, rural and urban development, social reforms, telecommunication, tourism and transport development (Murthy, 2001). Again Vilanilam (2009) added some new indicators to the definition of development news such as energy issues, environment and ecology, foreign news and features, globalization and global markets/stock exchanges/share markets, governmental news, cultural matters, crimes, dalits, chess, cricket and other games and sports, human interest stories, Iraqi situation, judiciary, land reforms and land acquisition, Mullaperiyar and other dam in India, national development, nuclear energy and development, political news, reservation, Sachar committee report, terrorism, and toilets (Vilanilam, 2009).

Aggrawala argues that development journalism should bring to light an alternative viewpoint. According to him, in development reporting “the journalist should critically evaluate and report the relevance of a development project, the difference between the planned scheme and its actual implementation; and the difference between its impact on people as claimed by government officials and as it actually is” (Aggrawala, 1978). He said that development journalism basically reports the development process rather than events. The emphasis in development journalism is, therefore, not on what happens at a particular moment or on a given day but on what is happening over time. Thus, development journalism covers the entire gamut of socio-economic and cultural development and does not differ drastically from regular news coverage. Rather its emphasis is more on development aspects keeping in view the contexts of development; and it examines critically and reports the relevance, enactment and impact of development programmes (Aggarwal, 1978; Ogan, 1982).

Shelton Guneratne states that developmental journalism involves analytical interpretation, subtle investigation, constructive and sincere criticism, and direct association with the grassroots rather than with the elite (Gunaratne, 1980). Development journalism is pro-Third World, pro-development/liberation and pro-marginalised and poor groups. The main sources of information in development journalism are the poor, the rural, the weak, the marginalised, the voiceless, not the
powerful, the elite or the rich. For the development journalist it’s not the sound bite or the scoop or the information leaks that make for news as much as social issues and development in their global and national contexts.

The Second Press Commission of India (1982) stated that “development reporting should tell the story of what is going wrong. The press should investigate the reasons for success as well as failure of various development programmes affecting the lives of common people at different places under different conditions” (Murthy, 2001).

Mazharul Haque (1986) categorized development news into health, education, literacy, communication, agriculture, industry, housing, population planning, national integration, energy and ecology (Murthy, 2006). Hemant Shah (1988) in his analysis of development news in radio programmes includes agriculture and rural development, education, employment and labour, health and medicine, trade/tariffs/cost of living/five year plans/prices/aid/economic performance, social welfare/nutrition/food/family planning/environment/caste issues, energy/industry/science, culture and religion, national integration, transport and communication, politics diplomacy/internal conflicts/international treaties/military matters and human rights (Murthy, 2006). Hemant Shah defines development journalism as consisting in ‘news’ that examine critically, evaluate and interpret the relevance of development plans, projects, policies, problems, and issues. It should indicate the disparities between plans and actual accomplishments, and include comparisons with the nature and progress of development in other countries and regions. It should also provide contextual and background information about the development process, discuss the impact of plans, projects, policies, problems, and issues on people, and speculate about the future of development. And development news should refer to the needs of people, which may vary from country to country or from region to region, but generally include primary needs, such as food, housing, employment; secondary needs such as transportation, energy sources and electricity; and tertiary needs such as cultural diversity, recognition and dignity (Shah, 1989).
Stevenson (1994), Hachten (1996) and Righter (1979) viewed development journalism as advocacy journalism or propaganda journalism. They stated that development journalists depend on government sources for collection of news and information. Thus, there is every possibility that development journalism can be misused by government for garnering mass support for the policies and actions taken by the government.

But in general, development journalism cannot be equated with propaganda journalism. As according to Aggarwal, developmental journalism in the developing countries makes way for the highly urbanized and elitist media to connect to their rural masses (Murthy, 2001). Bourgault (1995) says, the goals of development journalism involve “promoting grassroots, non-violent, socially responsible, ecologically sensitive, personally empowering, democratic, dialogical and humanistic forms of communication.”

Murthy (2001) defines development news as news relating to health, education, literacy, transport and communication, agriculture, industry, housing, population control, energy, ecology, human rights and national integration (Murthy, 2001).

These diverse definitions of development journalism sum up the basic features of development news. Development journalism aims at mobilizing people for national development. News and information about development needs and problems helps to stimulate further development. The duty of a development journalist is to present the facts as they are, interpret and analyse them, draw conclusions and place it before public in a way so that they can understand them clearly. The main goal of development journalism is to actively press for change and it also includes providing constructive criticism of various government and development projects and informing readers about the impact of those projects on people both in the short and long run.
3.4. DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM: AN OVERVIEW

Development journalism owes its origin to the field of development communication which emerged after the World War Second to develop the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America (Murthy, 2001). Development communication is described as the systematic use of communication in support of national development. The new definition of development communication identifies the role being played by mass communication in the beginning of the 21st century. It will facilitate in making people understand their environment (Murthy, 2006).

Golding (as quoted by Murthy, 2001) pointed out the origin of development journalism in four ways in which it was produced:

First, by stressing the generally educative function of news either about specific pieces of information or by arousal of general awareness of events and their implications.

Second, by producing stories which displayed particular social needs or problems it was hoped that government would be provoked into action.

Third, by giving prominence to local-self projects, news could encourage emulation of such activities in other communities.

Fourth, the news could tackle specific problems, such as elite corruption, often with prudent obliqueness.

The literature of development journalism is abundant with various forms and concepts of journalistic practice that directed towards development. One form is equivalent to ‘western style investigative journalism’ where news reporting critically examines development projects and also checks government activities. For this the press should be granted ultimate freedom. Another form is called ‘benevolent authoritarianism’. It advocates systematic manipulation of information in favour of a subtle development serving the common welfare. Examples include the Chinese version of development journalism or intellectual development journalism. The normative form of development journalism adheres to the needs of the people, and encourages them to
take active part in the development process. This form of development journalism motivates people to co-operate in the development projects and also take care to safeguard the interest of the people concerned. There is a healthy and frank interaction between the various agents of development like government, people and journalists. The journalists should evaluate the development projects and inform people about the pros and cons, profits and risks involved. Also journalists should find solutions for the practical problems confronting the people. This type of reporting should cover success stories of people which can act as role model for people to emulate and inspire them to achieve success overcoming difficulties and a place in decision making process.

According to some critics in the third world countries development journalism is practiced in a way where journalists depend heavily on official sources in collection of information about development news. As a result in such kind of reporting government’s projects receive positive presentation. Critics allege that this type of journalism is a disguised effort to manage news content in order to give flattering publicity to political personalities. Lent (1978) termed the Asian development news as “government-say-so journalism.” Similar arguments are echoed in the Manual of Development Communication, the text that is widely used to train development communicators in Asian countries.

Development journalism in some countries is also criticized as publicity for government projects. The government as the chief designer and administrator of a country’s development plans should rightfully tell people what is being done for them. To retain objectivity, development journalism should not act as mouth-piece of the government and must refrain from propagating government ideologies. People must be informed about planning, execution and implementation of development projects and the consequences of such projects in the long run. Development journalism is accountable to the people, as journalism is a social institution entitled to perform its duty of being a ‘fourth-state of democracy. But it is also true that the function of development journalism is not merely to keep a watch on government actions, but to promote the development of the country by maintaining a healthy connection between government and the people.
Kamath (Kamath, 2005) listed the main purpose of development reporting as described in the *Manual for News Agency Reporters* published by the Indian Institute of Mass Communication as follows:

1. The purpose of development reporting is to create a sense of involvement, to spread the realization that the future comes out of present efforts, that development can be nobody's gift, least of all of the aid given by affluent countries, but is the result of one's own labour.

2. Development reporting must concern itself with the people. It must show them how to improve their bargaining power with society. It must make them realize that their future is in their hands. It must describe the process of backbone building.

3. Development reporting must describe the people actually at work in new projects and processes. It must describe the process of change and modernization, the new discoveries and the products. It must describe terms and conditions of development.

4. An important aspect of development reporting is success stories of people who have adopted new technologies, tried new methods, and benefitted themselves and helped society.

5. Development reporting, by its very nature, is devoid of the kind of sensational interest that an eruption or a calamity or a political confrontation produces. It does not carry the stamp of immediacy that 'events' do.

6. Development reporting, to be effective, requires considerable investigative and research skill on the part of the journalist, apart from firm grasp of trends in economic thought, planning and development.

Forsythe (as quoted by Murthy, 2001) outlined the objectives of development journalism as follows:

1. Development journalism has a basic purpose: to inform, to educate and to entertain.

2. Its objective is to investigate, analyze, interpret, and to commit oneself to development.
3. It should give accurate development information that facilitates the development process itself;

4. It should aim at promoting mutual understanding between the leaders and the people by carrying policy and other messages of the state to the people and relaying people’s needs and aspirations to the people;

5. It has to motivate people and policy towards what people need, and to stimulate people for maximum participation in development;

6. It should encourage and inform people about productive attitudes, i.e., co-operation in long-term national efforts, attitudes favourable to work such as agriculture, good health practices, acceptance of new innovations, etc., and

7. It should help to build a common fund of knowledge and ideas that favour the cohesion of the social structure and enable people to become actively engaged in national development.

Thus from the above discussion we can sum up the basic principles of development journalism as stated by McQuail (1987). These are:

1. The mass media should make a positive contribution to the national development process;

2. The state or government should be able to restrict the freedom of journalists and the mass media.

3. The freedom of the media should be subordinated to their responsibility to contribute to nation-building, promote economic growth and the development needs of the society.

4. The mass media should give priority to information about national, cultural and language issues and encourage national autonomy.
3.5. INDIAN PRESS AND DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM

Journalism for development is practiced by the Indian press even before the term development journalism came into existence (Murthy, 2001). The era of journalism in India began with the publication of first newspaper by James Augustus Hickey on January 29, 1780. It was named ‘The Bengal Gazette’ or ‘Calcutta General Advertiser’ and it was a weekly newspaper dealing with the arrivals, departures and other social, economic and cultural activities of the British settlers in Kolkata (Vilanilam, 2003).

Raja Rammohan Roy, the early social reformer of British India, through his publications-Sambad kaumudi, Mirutul Akhbar, Brahminical Magazine, and others tried to educate people and reform Hindu society. His efforts were directed towards the abolition of the practice of Sati (Parthasarathy, 1989). His efforts paid dividend when Lord Bentinck abolished this social evil in 1829 (Vilanilam, 2005). He also founded the Brahmo Samaj and inspired many intellectuals to fight against social evils (ibid). Between 1860 and 1899, both the Anglo-Indian and language newspapers came to the foray, and started to inculcate nationalism among people and adorned Indians with the spirit of freedom. During this period, prominent freedom fighters Surendranath Bannerjee, Bipin Chandra Pal, G. Subramania Aiyer, Motilal Ghosh, Narendranath Sen, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Dadabhai Naoroji were actively engaged with journalism. To Mahatma Gandhi, the main function of journalism was to serve the people. He believed that a newspaper is a social institution and that its success depended on the extent to which it could educate the readers. He said, “I have taken up journalism not for its sake but merely as an aid to what I have considered to be my mission in life” (Vilanilam, 2003). Gandhiji’s mission was to “teach by example and precept under severe restraint, to use the matchless weapon of satyagraha, which is direct corollary of non-violence and truth. Through his writings in Indian Opinion, Young India and Harijan, he tried to educate the people on various contemporary issues such as communal harmony, removal of untouchability, prohibition of evil practices, promotion of khadi and village industries and other important social issues (Murthy, 1966). After Independence when the Five Year Plans were initiated by the
government for planned development, it was the newspaper which gave great importance to development themes. They wrote on various government development programmes, and how the people could make use of them.

**Development Reporting by Indian Newspapers: A Few Instances**

There are some outstanding examples of reporting development messages by the press which have become successful in spreading development messages to the rural and common people. The press as an agent of mass media has a vital role to play in development by informing people on important development issues confronting the society.

*The Hindustan Times* feature “Our Village Chhatera” was brought out in February, 1969. It was one of the best documented rural feature series in the Indian press. For years, a team of enterprising reporters wrote about the village with rare zeal and enthusiasm. They made an attempt to familiarize the urban population with the problems faced by their counterparts residing in villages. They covered extensively the rural scene in depth and in all its versatility. The series became hugely popular among all sections of society and Chhatera had become a household name for thousands of urban readers of the newspaper.

Newspapers from Kerala played a pioneering role in reporting rural development. *Malayala Manorama* and *Mathrubhumi*, these two were perhaps the first newspapers in the country to start farm features, allotting one page every week exclusively.

*The Hindu*, one of the widely circulated national dailies in India, took an important initiative in the area of rural reporting by appointing a special correspondent for agricultural reporting. The newspaper reported imported news about project implemented in different states as also the attitude of government officials, farmers and businessmen towards the different projects and their implementation. Subsequently, a regular column, “For the Farmers Note-Book”, was started containing latest research findings and their scope for utilisation in different regions, innovation by the agricultural input, industry, etc. the column proved to be extremely successful in spreading out information about agricultural innovations to the farmers community.
The famous development journalist, P. Sainath after getting *The Times of India* fellowship, visited ten poorest districts of five states and reported on the actual condition of people living in remote and far-off land in India which the mainstream Indian newspapers were ignoring or were unwilling to focus on. The paper brought out 84 reports by Sainath across 18 months, and highlighted issues of extreme poverty, health in rural areas, rural education, the problem of forced displacement, survival strategies of the poor, usury and debt, water problem, etc., (Sainath, 1996). Many of these news reports were later reprinted in his book, *Everybody Loves A Good Drought*.

Several universities, co-operative societies and even individuals have done pioneering work in promoting the rural press. They have used the medium for conveying the message of improved agricultural technology to the farmers, livestock keepers, homemakers, etc. *Shetkari*, a Marathi monthly exclusively devoted to the problems of agriculture, sold over 100,000 copies (Khemchand, 2000).

In the same way, *Punjabi Kheti* and *Haryana Kheti* are two monthly publications brought out by the Punjab Agricultural University and Haryana Agricultural University, respectively, have been selling more than 10,000 copies, and have a committed group of readers.

*Krishak Jagat*, another rural magazine from Bhopal, is one of the oldest and pioneering farm journals in the country. It has been published since 1946. As a Hindi weekly publication, it enjoys a readership of over half a million. It is widely circulated amongst progressive farmers, cattle breeders, dairy owners, poultry keepers, members of co-operative societies, and other stockholders. It is exclusively devoted to development activities covering all aspects of crop sciences, animal husbandry, dairy, poultry, rural development and allied subjects (ibid).

‘*Grassroots*’ is a monthly journal published by the Press Institute of India in both Hindi and English language to disseminate and to promote reportage on the human condition. The Tamil edition of this journal has also been started from March, 2005. ‘*Grassroots*’ contains a wide range of articles on development issues like unemployment, agricultural, job schemes, success stories, etc.
Problems of Development Reporting in Indian Press:

However, apart from some very few instances of development reporting in Indian newspapers, the common consensus is that development reporting is not gaining the deserving attention in Indian press that it should have. Some scholars blame it on corporatization of the press, launching of multiple editions, development of printing technology, ownership pattern of the press, and many more. According to Bhattacherjee (as quoted by Murthy, 2001) the following causes are responsible for inadequate reporting of development issues in Indian newspapers:

1. Inadequate information and poor understanding about the subject of development among practicing journalists,
2. Absence of training in marshalling and presentation of facts in an attractive format,
3. Poor interest shown by newspapers in development coverage, and
4. Lack of funds and support from the newspaper establishments.

As discussed earlier, the practice of development reporting is highly beneficial for the overall development of a country, and for its people. Golding states that development journalism can promote a nation’s progress by

1. Stressing the educational function of news and by raising the awareness about events and issues,
2. Producing stories about social needs or problems in the hope of stirring governments into action,
3. Highlighting self-help projects that can be implemented by other communities, and
4. Reporting on obstacles to development (Guneratne, 1980).

Thus in development journalism people are involved in all stages of reporting. People determine what is important for the media to cover. In dialogue between development journalists and readers, the core issues of reporting should come out. Journalists should identify the problems of the poor, write them in their reports and also find out
all possible measures to give solution to them. In this way, journalists become the change agents and play an active role in catalyzing positive social change.