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HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEWSPAPER IN INDIA – A STUDY



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Abstract: *Today the newspaper in India is a proud institution of our society. While working as a vehicle of persuasion its basic function is to provide info-Edu-tainment. It can be defined as a printed means of conveying current information. This paper discussed the history of Newspaper, how it has evolved from the past till now, what impact they paved in society etc.*

Keywords: *Newspaper, History, Development, Freedom of Press*

Introduction

A newspaper can be defined as a printed means of conveying current information. Today the newspaper in India is a proud institution of our society. While working as a vehicle of persuasion its basic function is to provide info-Edu-tainment (information, education and entertainment). It also plays the role of 'watchdog' of society.

Man is a social animal and every human being has an unquenchable thirst to communicate. Now a day's man has evolved various systems and technologies for communication. From the development of language and scripts to printing and finally, to the world-wide-web of internet, we have developed an impressive array of communication systems. With the help of these systems only, we can send messages instantaneously across vast distances and arouse similar meanings in millions of people simultaneously. Be it newspapers, magazines, books, radio, television etc.

History of Newspapers in India

The first newspaper in India was published on 29 January 1780 by James Augustus Hicky under the British Raj and its name was *'The Bengal Gazette'*. It was also called *'Calcutta General Advertiser'* and people simply remember it as *'Hicky's Gazette'*.

It was a very small two-sheet weekly newspaper. And the paper was filled with lots of advertisements with the name- The Calcutta General Advertiser. Its front page was filled with advertisements only.

After a few months of Hicky's paper Messer B Messinck and Peter Read brought out the *'Indian Gazette'* in November 1780. Many other newspapers were also started, namely Calcutta Gazette (1784), and The Bengal Journal (1785).

In 1785, Richard Johnson in Madras brought out *'Madras Courier'* in the English language. R. William's *'Madras Gazette'* in 1795 and Humphrey's *'India Herald'* in 1796.

In Bombay first newspaper was *'The Bombay Herald'* in 1789, the *Bombay Courier'* in 1789 and *'The Bombay Gazette'* in 1791.

History of Modern Education during British India

This period was marked by strict government control and censorship. If some newspapers print any news against the government, then strict punishment was given.

Golden Era of newspapers in India

Therefore, in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, no reputed journalist or newspaper emerged. Then some merchants of Calcutta 1811 started the *'Calcutta Chronicle'* and the editor was James Silk Buckingham. He had introduced a new approach to Journalism in India. He initiated clear journalistic practices and covered the problems of local people and their lives. Even he had started a movement against the evil practice of 'Sati'.

Then, Raja Ram Mohan Roy a social reformer recognized the power of newspapers and started a Bengali newspaper *'Sambad Kaumudi'* in 1822 and a Persian paper *'Mirat-ul-Akhbar'* in 1822. Fardaonji Murzban 1822 started *'Bombay Samachar'*, he was a pioneer of the Vernacular Press in Bombay.

On 3rd November 1838, the Times of India issued its first edition as *The Bombay Times and Journal of Commerce*. 1857 is known as the year of the emergence of journalism in India. In 1857, newspapers owned by Indians and British were divided and the government passed the Vernacular Press Act in 1876. In 1861 the first edition of The Times of India was published by Robert Knight. Up to 1947, this newspaper continued to support the causes of Britishers. Now, after more than 150 years of service Times of India has grown into the biggest English daily in the country. In 1868 *'Amrit Bazaar*

Patrika was started by two brothers, Shishir Kumar Ghosh and Motilal Ghosh. This was the time when social reformers and political leaders started contributing to the field of journalism, including C.Y. Chintamani, N. C. Kelkar, and Ferozeshah Mehta was prominent. In 1878 The Hindu was started in the English language, which was mainly distributed in Tamil Nadu and Kerala. In newspapers, many changes took place after Independence. Even the working style of journalists changed. After independence, most of the newspapers were brought into the hands of Indians. News agency services became available regularly with the Press Trust of India which was started in 1946.

The History of the Indian Currency Notes and its Evolution

Now missionary phase of the newspaper was replaced with a professional approach. It started providing employment to the public and so, the newspaper agency became profit-oriented. Various technological developments took place, it involved a readership battle, literacy level rises, interest to know what is happening in the surrounding made grow newspaper. In India by the 1970s newspapers acquired the status of an industry. The Indian newspaper industry is one of the largest in the world. It has a long and rich heritage. All through these years, the Indian newspaper industry has evolved into a powerful force. It informs, entertains and also educates the readers so that they can fully participate in the affairs of the state.

Role of Newspapers

During British rule, Indian newspapers came into existence and played an important role in the country's freedom struggle. Newspapers worked as 'mouthpieces' of the freedom struggle whether at the national or regional level. Bal Gangadhar Tilak brought *Kesari* and *Mahratta* newspaper, and M.K. Gandhi started *Young India* and *Harijan*. Jawaharlal Nehru started the *National Herald*. Now, after Independence, Indian newspapers started playing the role of a 'watchdog' and also have been playing the role of catalytic agent to hasten the process of social and economic development in the country.

Ram Mohan Roy Brahma Samaj: Significance & Objectives

However, Indian newspapers are characterized by their overt emphasis on politics and crime. But now, Indian newspapers have a lot of entertainment content in their columns, with colour pages and new designs.

Freedom of Press

From the trials of Tilak in 1897 and 1908, Mahatma Gandhi in 1922, Vernacular Press Act of 1878, the Newspapers Incitement to offences Act of 1908, the Indian Press Act 1931, the Press Objectionable Matter Act of 1951, the Newspaper Price and Page Act of 1956 bear testimony of the suppressive and oppressive measures taken against the Indian newspapers.

However, all these suppressions and oppression reached brutal heights during the 1975-77 *Emergency regime of Indira Gandhi*. But later the conditions of the Press changed and reached their zenith. Freedom of the press is very important and also newsmedia, the press enjoys greater freedom in a democratic country.

Current Scenario and Future of Newspaper

As television and the new media, internet emerges, it is said that newspapers are becoming irrelevant in terms of providing the latest news. But now a day's many newspapers in India and the world to some extent started providing analysis of news as well.

Daily newspapers like Times of India, The Hindu, Hindustan Times, The Statesman, Economic Times, The Tribune, Dainik Jagran, Dainik Bhaskar, Amar Ujala, etc. have become the most circulated newspapers in the country.

Conclusion

We all know that the newspaper acts as an important check on Government and Administrators' plans and policies. Press also raise their voice if anything went wrong in society. They raise their voice against dictatorship, corruption and malpractices. They also keep us informed of what is happening in the country. It plays a vital role in strengthening the sovereignty and integrity of a nation. It also makes us aware of the problems faced by the people.

With the help of several agencies, information is fed to the newspapers. The press Information Bureau gives information to the Press on government policies, programs and activities. It also receives feedback from people. Do you know that India has four major news agencies namely Press Trust of India and United News of India? Samachar Bharti and Hindustan Samachar. Also, the newspapers are published in English, Hindi and other regional languages. The need for print media is to understand the importance of its power and reach. So, they should provide the true picture of society as a whole.

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