

CHAPTER 36

NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

India is the world's largest democracy. Its print media culture, a system that has evolved over centuries, is comprised of a complex framework. Modernization has transformed this into a communications network that sustains the pulse of a democracy of more than one billion people. India's newspaper evolution is nearly unmatched in world press history. India's press is a metaphor for its thriving democracy.

Print media in India grew because entrepreneurs detected a growing hunger for information among ever-widening sections of India's people, who were potential consumers as well as newspaper readers. It was in 1674 that the first printing apparatus was established in Bombay followed by Madras in 1772.

James Augustus Hicky was the founder of India's first newspaper, the Calcutta General Advertiser also known as Hicky's Bengal Gazette, in 1780. Soon other newspapers came into existence in Calcutta and Madras: the Calcutta Gazette, the Bengal Journal, the Oriental Magazine, the Madras Courier and the Indian Gazette. While the India Gazette introduced in November, 1781 enjoyed governmental patronage including free postal circulation and advertisements, Hicky's Bengal Gazette earned the rulers' wrath due to its criticism of the Government. In November 1780 its circulation was halted by government decree. Hicky protested against this arbitrary harassment without avail, and was imprisoned. The Bengal Gazette and the India Gazette were followed by the Calcutta Gazette which subsequently became the Government's medium for making its general orders. The Bombay Herald, The Statesmen in Calcutta and the Madras Mail and The Hindu, along with many other rivals in Madras represented the metropolitan voice of India and its people. While Statesman voiced the English rulers' voice, The Hindu became the beacon of patriotism in the South. The Hindu was founded in Madras as a counter to the Madras Mail. The first Hindi daily, Samachar Sudha Varshan, began in 1854. The evolution of the Indian media has been fraught with developmental difficulties.

For regulation and registration of the printing presses, the Union Government enacted Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867 (PRB Act). The Registrar of Newspaper for India (the Pres Registrar) is the statutory authority under section 19A of the PRB Act to verify and register the titles of newspaper. The coverage of this PRB Act is through out the country. Under Section 19B (1) of this Act, the Press Registrar maintains a Register of newspaper in the prescribed manner. Under Section 19B (2), the Register maintained by Press Registrar, as far as may be practicable, contains the following particulars about every newspaper published in India:

- the title of the newspaper;
- the language in which the newspaper is published;
- periodicity of the publication of the newspaper;
- the name of the editor, printer and publisher of the newspaper;
- the place of printing and publication;
- the average number of pages per week;
- the number of days of publication in the year;
- the average number of copies printed, the average number of copies sold to the public and the average number of copies distributed free to the public, the average being calculated with reference to such period as may be prescribed;
- retail selling price per copy;
- the names and addresses of the owners of the newspaper and such other particulars relating to ownership as may be prescribed;
- any other particulars, which may be prescribed.

According to the Registration of Newspaper (central) Rules, 1956, within 48 hours of the publication of a newspaper, one copy of the issue is to be sent to the Press Registrar, either by post or by a messenger. In the case of multi-edition newspapers published under the same declaration, one copy of each edition is required to be sent if the retail selling price or the number of pages in an edition is different from another edition. The copies of newspapers published in English, Hindi or Urdu or in languages other than those mentioned below are to be sent to the Press Registrar, Office of RNI, West Block 8, R.K.Puram, New Delhi 110 066. The copies of newspapers published in the following languages are to be sent to the Office of the Press Information Bureau at the places mentioned against each:

- Punjabi -Jallandar
- Bengali -Kolkata

- Oriya -Cuttack
- Assamese -Guwahati
- Tamil -Chennai
- Telugu -Hyderabad
- Malayalam -Trivandrum
- Marathi -Mumbai
- Gujarati -Ahmedabad
- Kannada -Bangalore
- Marathi, Konkani, Portugese -Mumbai
- Kashmiri -Srinagar

The source of data is the Annual Statement submitted by the newspapers and periodicals registered under section 19B of the PRB Act. The periodicity of the data is annual with financial year as the reference period. The Registrar of Newspaper for India publishes an annual report known as PRESS IN INDIA as statutory requirement under Section 19G of the Act. It is an analysis of the Indian Press with the focus mainly on circulation as claimed by the news papers. The definitions of the terms used in this chapter are as under:

Newspaper: Newspaper means any printed (including cyclostyled) periodical work containing public news or comments on public news.

Periodical: A newspaper appearing at an interval or a week or more.

Other Periodical: Periodical other than daily, tri-weekly, bi-weekly, weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly and annual.

Periodicity: Time gap between two issues of a newspaper or periodical is defined as the periodicity of that newspaper or periodical. Such periodicity may be daily, if a particular newspaper or periodical is issued on daily basis. Similarly, the periodicity of a newspaper or periodical may be weekly or fortnightly or monthly or annual depending upon that newspaper or periodical is being issued on weekly or fortnightly or monthly or annual basis.

Daily: A newspaper or periodical issued at least four times in a week is termed as Daily.

Circulation: Average number of copies of a newspaper or periodical sold and distributed free per publishing day is defined as the circulation of that newspaper or periodical.

Other Language: This includes the languages other than the languages included in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution of India and English.

Highlights :

- The number of registered newspapers and periodicals increased from 51960 in 2001 to 69323 in 2007-08. The daily newspapers and periodicals increased from 5638 to 7710, whereas, weeklies increased from 18582 to 23414, monthlies increased from 14632 to 20948 and annuals increased from 469 to 622 during the same period.
- Out of total registered newspapers and periodicals upto 2007-08, there were 11.1% dailies, 33.8% weeklies, 13.1% fortnightlies, 6.8% quarterlies and 30.2% monthlies. Only, 0.5% and 0.9% newspapers and periodicals were tri/bi-weeklies and annuals respectively. Besides, 3.6% were other newspapers and periodicals.
- The Hindi newspapers and periodicals increased from 20589 in 2001 to 27527 in 2007-08, whereas, newspapers and periodicals of English and Urdu increased from 7596 and 2906 to 10000 and 3315 respectively during the same period. The bilingual and multilingual newspapers and periodicals increased from 3088 and 586 to 4506 and 807 respectively in the same period.
- The circulation of registered newspapers and periodicals increased from 115.26 million in 2001 to 207.11 million in 2007-08. The circulation of daily newspapers and periodicals increased from 57.84 million to 105.79 million, whereas, weeklies increased from 32.42 million to 58 million, monthlies increased from 13.42 million to 23.76 million and annuals increased from 0.9 million to 2.92 million during the same period.

- Out of total circulation of the registered newspapers and periodicals upto 2007-08, there were 51.1% dailies, 28.0% weeklies, 6.3% fortnightlies, 11.5% monthlies and 1.4% annuals. Only, 0.3%, and 0.8% circulation of newspapers and periodicals were tri/bi-weeklies and quarterlies respectively. Besides, 0.6% circulation was of other newspapers and periodicals.

This chapter contains the following tables:

Table 36.1: presents year-wise number registered newspapers and periodicals since 2001 and language-wise number registered newspapers and periodicals during 2007-08 categorized by periodicity.

Table 36.2: presents State-wise number registered newspapers and periodicals during 2007-08 categorized by periodicity.

Table 36.3: presents year-wise number registered newspapers and periodicals since 2001 and State-wise number registered newspapers and periodicals during 2007-08 categorized by language.

Table 36.4: presents year-wise circulation of registered newspapers and periodicals since 2001 and language-wise circulation of registered newspapers and periodicals during 2007-08 categorized by periodicity.