

**CLASS- B.A.LL.B IIIrd SEMESTER**  
**SUBJECT- MEDIA LAW**  
**PAPER CODE- BL- 3002(A)**

**EVOLUION OF MEDIA**

"A well informed citizenry is the foundation of our democracy, then newspaper must be saved." –

**Thomas Jefferson**

Media is the fourth pillar of democracy. Media plays a very important role in shaping a democratic country. Media is a tool in hands of citizens through which they can ask question to their government officials. Media consistently guard the public interest against illegal practices, misconduct, negligence and corruption seeping into the roots of the country at a higher rate. Media stands for public rights and create public awareness. The Indian media is among the oldest and largest media in the world.

**Media during the British Raj:**

The print media came to India during the period of British East India Company's rule. The Indian Press has been a private, commercial enterprise from the days of its pioneers. The **history of media in India** dates back to the late 18th century with the emergence of print **media in India** 1780 followed by the screening of **Auguste and Louis Lumière** moving pictures in Bombay during 1895 and radio broadcasting which initiated in 1927. The history of media in India has always been considered 'free and independent' becoming the voice of the masses.

*H I C K Y' S*  
**BENGAL GAZETTE;**  
*OR THE ORIGINAL*  
*Calcutta* General Advertiser.

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*A Weekly Political and Commercial Paper, Open to all Parties, but influenced by None,*

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From Saturday March 3d to Saturday March 10th 1781.

No. VII

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James Augustus Hicky, the founder of India's first newspaper, started the Calcutta General Advertiser, also known as Hicky's Bengal Gazette, on January 29, 1780. The journal claimed to be impartial. It proclaimed itself under the masthead, as "A weekly political and commercial paper open to all parties but influenced by none."

Mainly carrying the news about the private lives of the Sahibs of the company, this two-sheet newspaper spilled out some of the secretive facts of major events back then. He even took the risk of passing offensive allegations on the wife of Governor-General, Warren Hastings. This landed the printer in trouble as he was sentenced for a period of 4 months in jail and had to pay a fine of Rs 500. But this didn't stop him and his continued attacks on Governor-General and the Chief Justice resulted in one-year imprisonment and also a penalty of **Rs 5,000** that drove him to poverty. Other newspapers that were started under the British Rule were The India Gazette published **B. Messink** and **Peter Reed**, Calcutta Gazette, Madras Courier which was started in 1785 by Richard Johnson and Bombay Herald which was later renamed as Bombay Gazette. Similar to Madras Courier, Bombay Gazette was known for carrying "official notifications and advertisements";

The famous Times Group launched their own newspaper, The Times of India (TOI) in 1838 and is the oldest **English newspaper** in India which is still published. In 1878, one of the leading newspapers and the most circulated newspaper was established

Kasturi Ranga Iyengar – The Hindu. In 1996, The Hindu became the first newspaper in India to have a website. In Hindi, Udant Martand was the first ever Hindi newspaper published in India by Pt. Jugal Kishore Shukla. Besides, Gujrati- printed Bombay Samachar was established in 1822 and is the oldest newspaper in Asia still in circulation.

### **MEDIA AND PRE- INDEPENDENCE:**

Raja Ram Mohan Roy, considered as the father of liberalism in India as well as founder of modern India. A multi-lingual, social and religious reformer and champion of civil rights and freedom of press, he himself started many newspapers as the carrier of liberal and rational ideas. It was in order to counter the attacks on Indian religions which some of the journals carried and to assert national self-respect that the first truly Indian newspapers were established by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the initiator of India's renaissance in the modern period. Raghavan considers him as the father of the Indian press

In a leading article in Kesari on January 4, 1881, Tilak compared the newspapers with night watchmen keeping executive officers in fear of public opinion. Further, he expected the newspapers to help bring about improvement in social conditions of the people by exposing what was evil and harmful. According to Gandhiji, the newspapers have three main objectives:

1. To understand the popular feelings and give them expression.
2. To arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments.
3. To fearlessly expose defects in public life.

### **MEDIA DURING THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE:**

During the struggle for Independence, journalists and political writers became important carriers of dynamism in the process of socio-political change. The goal of journalism was to assist in the objective of gaining freedom for India. During the period 1939-1945, there was little or no journalistic activity because of World

War II. Two years after the war ended, the country became free. The historic role of the Press in the fight for India's freedom came to a close, winning glowing tributes from many the world over including Lord Listowell, the last Secretary of State for India.

#### **MEDIA DURING THE POST- INDEPENDENCE:**

Post-independence, the newspaper industry has grown exponentially and presently India publishes approximately 1000 and 250 Hindi and English dailies respectively. Some of the renowned Hindi newspapers are Dainik Jagran, Amar Ujala, Navbharat Times, Dainik Bhaskar, Punjab Kesari, and Rajasthan Patrika. Another significant tool of **Indian Media** is radio. All India Radio, officially known as Akashvani is the national public radio broadcaster. Started in 1927, radio broadcasting has played a major role in the history of Indian media. independence, AIR had only six radio stations in Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Lucknow, and Tiruchirappalli. Television broadcasting started in India in 1959 as Doordarshan (DD) which was a part of AIR initially but was later separated from radio in 1976. DD provided radio and television throughout India. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting owned both AIR and Doordarshan until the establishment of Prasar Bharti, an autonomous body set up in 1997 by an Act of Parliament. Doordarshan currently has 6 national channels, 16 Regional language satellite channels, 12 regional state networks, and 1 international channel.

#### **PRESS COMMISSION OF INDIA:**

The establishment of the first Press Commissions in October 1952. The Commission recommended the creation of two institutions – a Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI), a central government body intended to monitor the industry and collect statistics, and a Press Council to oversee ethics and hear complaints.

#### **THE PRESS COUNCIL**

The first Press Commission recommended the setting up of a Press Council ‘to safeguard the freedom of the press’ and ‘to encourage the growth of the sense of responsibility and public service among all those engaged in the profession of journalism’. The Press Council Act was passed by the Parliament in 1965 and the Press Council was set up on 4th July, 1966. However, the Press Council was made the victim of emergency and the Press Council Act, 1965 was repealed with effect from 1st January, 1976. The reason was cited to abolish the Press Council that it was not able to carry the functions to achieve the objects for which the Council was established.

### **RADIO: NEW BEGINNING OF COMMUNICATION**

Radio is the first form of broadcast which can communicate to the literate and illiterate group of the society. It has the ability to reach through airwaves and address people sitting near as well as far off places. This technology of mass communication started its journey in colonial India in the 1920s. Radio clubs began in Calcutta and Bombay in 1923. The AIR, established under British Rule in India was used for strengthening the role of the empire in India. AIR works for the government agencies.

The story of the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Bill is a good example of the paralysis that seized Indian political parties on gaining power. Even the very first committee that was set up in 1964 to enquire about future broadcasting possibilities, the Chanda Committee, recommended in 1966 that AIR be converted into a public corporation which was not implemented.

### **TELEVISION: INCARNATION OF NEW MEDIA**

In 1959, the first television transmission was started in India. Television is ‘the transmission of visual images of moving and stationary objects, generally with accompanying sound, as electromagnetic waves and the reversion of received waves into visual images. The experiment started with one-hour program, broadcast

twice a week, on community health, citizen rights, education and traffic sense etc. First multi-color programme was the Prime Minister's address to the nation from Red Fort in Delhi on India's 35th Independence Day at 1982. In the same day, DD National channel was launched. The aim of launching the National channel is nurturing national integration, and inculcating a sense of pride in Indians.

### **DIGITAL ERA:**

Now we are living in the information technology era. Everything news, newspaper, entertainment, games, political view, economic news we have in our mobile phones and laptop through internet. It makes our life easy .Most of the newspaper and magazines companies have online news portal which can be easily accessed on mobile phone or laptop through the internet. The power of online media is quickly expanding. Digital-only newspaper, blogs, websites and social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter have gained immense popularity. Some of the popular digital-only newspapers are Daily hunt, Firstpost, The News Minute, and **Youth Ki Awaaz**. This is a very crucial time for the Indian media as it has become a very potent source of informing, educating, entertaining and directing the citizens of India. Along with traditional print media, all the audio-video and social media platforms cater to a richly diversified audience of India still unfolding new chapters in the History of media in India.

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