

JOURNAL FOR LAW STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS**IS THE MEDIA AS THE 4TH PILLAR OF DEMOCRACY LOSING ITS CREDITIBILITY**

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INTRODUCTION:

Media is considered to be the fourth pillar of democracy not only in India but all over the world. Earlier in any republican government there were 3 pillars of democracy: parliament, administrative department and judiciary and it was like if any of these body is absent, it was difficult to run the system properly. But now the situation is different after adding media as the 4th pillar of democracy. It's one of the most powerful of all the pillars as it bridges the gap between government and general people. Media is omnipresent everywhere. Whatever is happening in different parts of country is known to us through media. There is round the clock coverage of everything happening in the country, almost everyone has now access to media these days .media is very vigilant about almost everything and extensively cover everything like if any bill passed in parliament, any mishappening etc and make general people aware about what is going on the country. But now it seems like scenario is changing, market is becoming profit oriented, everyone is in a race to mint money by any mean whether legal or illegal, whether right or wrong, so is the case with media. Has the time come for introspection of Indian media?

EVOLUTION OF MEDIA:

Media 4th pillar of democracy is also known by certain terms like “watchdog in a democracy”, voice of people”, but really does it serve as voice of people. The influence of media among general people cannot be ignored; it helped a feudal society to convert into modern one. During India’s struggle for freedom leader like Mahatma Gandhi, Bal Gangadhar Tilak etc used media extensively to make their movements and protest successful and it really played a vital role in making India free from British rule. Earlier in the rural areas radio was used by people to gather information about weather (especially farmers), warning related to flood which is helpful to fisherman etc. As time passes medium was started changing, electronic media started replacing

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print media and televisions become popular in rural as well as in urban. Now the scenario is totally different from what it would be in 90's, now even a kid is excess to all the information with one click and this fast and easy accessibility to every information influence the life of human being in negative as well as positive way. In 21st century no one can imagine their life without media (whether print or social media). Media has a close watch on every individual; every step of person is being scrutinized by media. Media now has gained such creditability among masses that it now misusing that to make money in the market or in the world where money making is the only motive. Every day, I read newspaper, I get frustrated by listening or reading one sided story, no one bother to make aware people about the real story. Rather than giving useful and productive knowledge, it focuses on influencing and controlling audience mind to believe in what it wants them to.

MEDIA AND FUNCTIONING DEFECTS:

Few years ago union government had issue some regulation regarding license for news channel. Under the Constitution of India, freedom of the media is part of the freedom of speech guaranteed by Article 19(1) (a). However, no freedom can be absolute, and reasonable restrictions can be placed on it. One of the basic tasks of the media is to provide truthful and objective information to the people that will enable them to form rational opinions, which is a sine qua non in a democracy. But are the Indian media performing this role properly? ²There are some defects of media:

➤ DISTORTED FACTS:

Media often twist facts. There are several incidences which I have read in the newspaper like in the case when judges had to disclose their liabilities and assets in that column, it was written that justice Misra has two daughters to be married. Later it was revealed that Misra never intended to consider their daughters to be liability and it was written in the newspaper to create sensation among masses.

➤ PAID NEWS:

Its one of the growing concern in the Indian media, that most of the news are paid one. They are showing us what they want to show us not what the real story behind the fake

² Judge, Media Issues in India, (21st September, 2013 13:15:14), <https://www.studymode.com/essays/Media-Issues-In-India-38815891.html>

news. During the time of elections in order to increase vote banks, politicians spend crore of rupees to telecasts those news, which are helpful in elections and attract voters.

➤ **ABSENCE OF REAL NEWS:**

There is no real factor in most of the news. It only shows one aspect of the story and other remain in the dark light, which always remain inaccessible to general people. There are many incidences where one aspect is being depicted by media in order to create sensation among masses or make people emotionally weak in areas related to communal tension. Like there was a murder in the town of U.P related to land dispute between two friends, one was Hindu and another was Muslim and that lead to murder of Hindu man, in this case media telecasted this incidence not as a land dispute but as Hindu-Muslim clash. There are many incidences everyday which are not at all real but are making people fool to mint money.

➤ **TENDENCY TO BRAND:**

The reality is that the 99% of people whether Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian are good. But media shows us that all Muslims are terrorists and evil and lead a difference in a country where unity in diversity is a slogan and appreciated by world at large.

➤ **MOUNTAINS OUT OF MOLEHILLS:**

Last but not the least...the strange habit of Indian media where it makes mountains out of molehills has proved to be the final nail on its credibility coffin. Be it the intolerance issue or human poop falling from the sky...the Indian media never fails to titillate and tickle our funny bones. Whether you're looking for the cave where Ram and Sita slept close to each other or the doorstep to the heavens, each of these news channels seem to possess all the answers...of course, credibility is not one of them!³

The World Economic Forum, which released the report, has labelled the Indian media as the second most untrusted institution in the world. The survey was conducted by Edelman trust Barometer, who is in the media business for over 20 years now and has business in over 38

³ Amrita Sen, the glory and the blemish of the Indian news media, (7th jan 2012 12:55)<http://m.dw.com/en/india-media-facing-a-crises-of-credibility/a-39120228>

countries. The survey showed that the trust of people of media, NGOs and business was in all time low and the credibility and motive of these institutions have been under question.⁴

SOLUTIONS:

- Government should make stringent laws and should cancel the license of media channels or newspapers, if they altered with the news or make money by telecasting or printing fake or brand news.
- There must be strict actions like imprisonment and fine, if such news is being published which play with the sentiments of people.
- Committees must be form in order to check whether media being independent and fourth pillar of democracy performing its function properly or not, or only play with the minds of people and make money.
- Consumers should also not trust in everything written in the newspaper or telecasted in the T.V., they must first try to know both the sides and then only reach to conclusion.

CONCLUSION:

As we know time is changing with the rapid pace so is the importance of media in day to day life of individual. But today media is taking advantage of its independence and instead of providing reliable information it turnout to be a gossip box. Its started losing its creditability among masses and the best example is some T.V. channel fallen their TRP in recent times. The condition of media is becoming very pathetic, no reliable sources are being used only money making is ultimate goal and not to provide real information. There are so many news channels which are being run by top politicians and they are making their vote bank by using this means. In a democratic country like India, this type of negligence from such a big institutions are not appreciable. The media should ne effective one, it should provide real news, it should report a matter after knowing the depth of the same not forming its own opinion and try to impose them on people. It should be transparent, it should not misuse its power and work for the wellbeing of people not for the profit making. At last I would like to say that if the trend will continue and media remain the way it is now and exploit the people the way it does then the days are not far, when this 4th pillar will be

⁴ Aishwarya S, World Economic Forum releases survey on Indian Media, (11 March 2018 15:38:45), <https://postcard.news/must-read-world-economic-forum-releases-survey-indian-media-results-shameful/>

removed and come at the point where no one would watch news channels and read newspapers and will stop rely on such fake sources.

