



Sadhana Education Society's
L.S. Raheja College of Arts & Commerce

Bachelors of Mass Media

“PEP TALK”

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The watchdogs

India is a democratic country. Its government is of the people, for the people and by the people. Legislative, Executive, Judiciary and Press are the four pillars of a democracy and in this write-up we shall be discussing the fourth pillar of democracy, i.e., press or media.

Role of media in any society is very crucial. It ensures and safeguards transparency in the working of the other three pillars. While people seek information through media sources, Governments have been using media to spread their agenda to make it a mass agenda. During the world war II, Nazi government used it spread and justify their propaganda against Jews. In present times regimes in China or North Korea have controlled it to ensure only filtered information seeps in to people. Election campaigns and agendas are meticulously crafted to ensure the desired impact. Thus, whether in past or present, power of mass media is well realized and utilized.

In a democracy where the government is formed by the representatives of the people, media function becomes all the more important. Media not only acts as an informative bridge between the governing body and the general masses but also keeps a watch on the activities and functioning of the government. And thus, comes its most important function of being a watchdog.

Media plays a significant role in shaping a healthy democracy and keeping its spirit alive. The same has also been apprehended by our constitution by guaranteeing the freedom of press in India.

Media alerts the citizens of various social, political and economic activities happening within the country and around the globe. It is like a mirror that bares truth about the society we live in to the naked eyes. Unforgiving and withholding nature of media ensures that promises made by the leaders of the political party are not forgotten. It identifies and highlights the loopholes in the system for all to see. The rise in media channels over the period of years has spiraled them into a competitive zone whereby every channel wishes to

raise their readership / viewership. This competition has propelled the media workers to move around with a magnifying glass to unearth controversies and scandal.

There have been cases where media has raised general awareness amongst masses and have played a critical role in bringing the perpetrators to justice. Jessica Lal case or quite recently the Bihar topper scandal will stand a testimony to this. Media has also played the role of uniting people to bring them together on issues of common interest and welfare. After Delhi rape case, Media took up the issue of women safety and led masses to introspection. It drove people to demand fundamental reforms and kept the tempo alive by their impeccable reporting. It acted as a responsible estate raising concerns to ensure people's welfare. Time and again Media has taken up social issues to generate awareness and propel the government into action. It has highlighted the cause of farmers, environment, safety, etc. and has helped in identifying the real issues preventing the growth of our country.

Imagine a scene where there would have been no media or a media that would turn away its eyes from the wrong doings of the people in the influential positions. Who shall govern them and keep a watch on them then? What will happen to the corruption in the country? In past there has been instances where media has conducted sting operations or have indulged in investigative journalism and brought to fore the skeletons those were hidden behind the closet. It has been a proven fact that countries who create provisions for free press find it easier to curb corruption.

Of course there are apprehensions too that spoil the media landscape in the country. The ownership, control and the ability of censorship seized by interest groups speak volumes about the way media works in this day and age. In such an event, Media has sometimes fallen prey to biases and instead of assuming its duty as a watchdog have reduced to become the lapdog of such corrupt executives.

However, with the changing dynamics of media and evolution of new media, media is now becoming more active rather than being passive. Citizen journalists, Social media, internet, digital media has only accelerated the speed at which information travelled. Where the media representatives can't reach or fall short, people from within the system has taken the

onus upon themselves to become the broadcasters and ensure widespread coverage of the message. Unlike the traditional media, these new media sources target individuals and thus make it more participative.

To conclude, we can say that media needs to understand the role it plays in the welfare of the society and should act more sensibly. People in India put their faith in media believing most of what they see. Media should realize this and should work towards goals which form the crux of its establishment.