

THE VANISHING POOR

A study of the shrinking coverage of pro-poor issues in the print media



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THE VANISHING POOR

*A study of the shrinking coverage of
pro-poor issues in the print media*

cysd

Centre for Youth and Social Development

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INTRODUCTION

What is, and what should be, the function of the print media in a poor, developing country? The gulf between reality and expectation in this regard is an index of the near-failure of a once-respected means of mass communication to fulfil the role expected of it, a role of vital importance to a society pledged to democratic functioning. Recently, the scandal of a major newspaper openly selling space in its news columns has aroused widespread concern. So has the increasing practice of blurring the line between news and advertising in many more papers and newsmagazines. Profit is taking precedence over credibility. An unhealthy consequence of this trend, judged from the standpoint of the responsibility of the press to promote democratic empowerment, is the neglect of issues that do not attract advertising and providing excessive space to those that do.

In our country, this means that the living condition and concerns of 70% of our people tend to be ignored, except for occasional, superficial reports, though their problems need to be reflected in depth in the media if electoral democracy is to work. It needs reporting skill and study to make their lives reader-friendly, and perhaps a marginal loss of revenue, but field reportage of conditions at the grassroots of society is a must if India is ever to rise above the lowest levels of basic human development in the world. Occasionally, newspapers do publish reports that illumine conditions at the grassroots, but they are far too few. The Press Institute of India reproduces a selection of them in its monthly publication *Grassroots: Reporting the Human Condition*, with the permission of editors, to show what the press can do to arouse the awareness needed to provoke action. For example, there was the moving report in *The Indian Express* of Katkari tribal children of Mirchipada rushing, slate in hand, to their first school. No lecture on the need to spread literacy could have got across the yearning for knowledge in remote communities more effectively.

Regrettably, such reportage is infrequent, although the continuing fall in standards of governance in our country cannot be rectified without the media fulfilling its responsibility to arouse public awareness of its consequences, particularly on the less privileged. Equally, of steps by individuals and groups that counter the fall and bolster local self-confidence. This is the challenge facing the media in a developing country like ours. For us, the entertainment-oriented

media of the affluent West is no model. But considerations of unfair distribution and social justice do not figure in the GNP-driven doctrine of globalisation and liberalisation, in which maximising material return is the primary objective. This has encouraged our media, too, to allow commercial considerations to blur its commitment to social responsibility. The erosion of the role of editor, and dominance of the manager, in many newspapers indicates this shift from professional to commercial priorities. *The Times of India* has abolished the office of editor-in-chief altogether. Local editors are described as Editor Delhi or Mumbai Market, to emphasise their deference to the market. One of their senior executives is reliably reported to have rubbished a suggestion for a report on conditions in a Mumbai slum with the remark, "Such people don't read our paper".

Grassroots was designed to counter this trend. It prefers the term 'empowerment' to 'development' since development has come to mean patronising disbursements by governments to local communities via a porous network of officials; not the response to demands from below. It emphasises the need for field reportage because first-hand accounts for which the reporter takes responsibility exude a credence that exaggerated reports of plans and achievements inspired by official handouts have lost over the decades.

At the inauguration of *Grassroots* nearly four years ago, I welcomed reports in *The Week* newsmagazine and *The Indian Express* that publicised the success of the campaign waged by Rajendra Singh to recharge drying rivers and wells in the drought-prone Alwar district of Rajasthan. It was also featured by New Delhi TV. This accomplishment was replicated elsewhere and later won Rajendra Singh the Magsaysay Prize. But media notice of such developments is rare, disfiguring the picture of society it is presumed to mirror. My comments remain relevant:

"These are tiny glimpses of what the media can do to keep us abreast of conditions in which the non-privileged bulk of society live. Why is this responsibility shirked? Simply because good field reportage takes extra editorial effort and costs the management more money, which the major papers can easily afford. But they find it easier, quicker and cheaper to fill the paper with personality politics, urban crime, society gossip and the rest. Most of the information is secured on the phone without leaving air-conditioned offices. And advertisers are not too keen on projecting poverty.

"Thus the overall picture projected by the national press is ugly. It portrays an acquisitive, conflict-ridden, middle class society, eager to

achieve western standards of affluence, but unconcerned with the condition of the human infrastructure at its base. And so we find little or nothing in the papers about panchayats and empowerment, agriculture and the rural economy, literacy, unemployment, social tensions... the list is long. Yet, without such coverage, the press fails in its democratic function of monitoring the condition of society as a whole, not just a privileged segment. It cannot claim the status of the Fourth Estate." Former President R Venkataraman has put it more strongly. "Not only the owner's personal and business interests have started colouring the contents of the press," he said, "but also the institution of the editor has suffered grievous erosion of both authority and prestige. Craven consumerism and reckless pursuit of elitist fads and fancies occupy more space in newspapers than even the most serious issues confronting the country."

The detailed data provided by the CYSD study *The Vanishing Poor: A study of the shrinking coverage of pro-poor issues in the print media* confirms these unhappy views with matching data. It is a valuable survey, more so because it confines itself to a limited, but significant target group. The content analysis goes beyond providing figures of the amount of newspaper space given to various aspects of development, which is often misleading. The methodology takes account of comprehensiveness, originality, remedial factors and other aspects of content. Prominence and placement are also given weight.

The classification of the material under five categories — social development and poverty, women and development, child rights and situation, indigenous peoples and human rights — covers a fair amount of relevant issues, but could be more comprehensive. The limited space given to panchayats and other organs of popular empowerment merits particular notice. They are the primary instruments of development and democracy viewed as arising from below rather than seen as patronage from above. Yet they get minimal coverage.

Since indigenous-language papers are rapidly outstripping those published in English in circulation and influence, the comparative study of English and Oriya dailies indicates emerging trends. As may be expected, papers in the local language gave more space and carried more stories about human development issues than the English newspapers, and the lead is likely to increase. Even so, the coverage is minimal. In six months, *The Prajatantra* gave less than 4% of its total space to, and put out 709 stories in this category. Among the English papers, *The New Indian Express* led with a mere 1.566% of space and 520 stories. The overall performance is most unimpressive.

Space and numbers, however, provide an inadequate picture of the reportage. Quality counts. The study notes that most of the stories are situational reports and lack in-depth analysis. They deal superficially with development issues and are usually given low prominence. Though more stories appear in Oriya papers, those in English papers contain more background. Follow-up stories, so important to evaluate change or stagnation, are rare. Interviews with journalists and the readers have not yielded much more than the obvious and predictable responses.

More periodic surveys on the CYSD model will help to trace the response of the press to fulfilling the vital challenge to its responsibilities to society. We can only hope that future data will be less discouraging.

Ajit Bhattacharjee

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OVERVIEW OF THE MEDIA STUDY

1.1 Structure of the study

There is no escaping the media in today's world. It affects our everyday lives and plays an important role in our culture and society. One cannot conceive of initiating social change on a large scale without enlisting the support of the media. Since people's interest in eradicating poverty at all levels cannot be aroused unless they are informed, the media has an important role to play in providing that information, in creating awareness, influencing public opinion and educating the masses to contribute their bit to the process of bringing about a socio-economic transformation.

Against this backdrop, the Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD) undertook the present study, *The Vanishing Poor: A study of the shrinking coverage of pro-poor issues in the print media*, as part of its advocacy endeavour. The project was launched with the assumption that media creates awareness and generates public opinion which, in turn, contributes to the process of eradicating poverty and social disparities.

The study has been organised in three parts. The first part deals with the qualitative and quantitative content analysis of nine newspapers — four English dailies and five Oriya dailies. The second maps the perception of media professionals — journalists, editors and the management of some newspapers — regarding the shrinking coverage of social development and pro-poor issues, the commitment of the media to highlighting social development issues, and the constraints it faces in doing so. The third part deals with the perception of newspaper readers belonging to the underprivileged sections of society regarding the space allotted to various subjects by newspapers, and how newspapers reflect their problems.

The findings of the first part of the study, which was conducted over a period of six months from August 15, 1999, to February 14, 2000, revealed that the Oriya and English dailies surveyed had devoted less than 4% and 1% respectively of their total space to social development issues. In order to find more supportive evidence, the newspapers were studied for a further one week, between November 19, 2000, and November 24, 2000, and a comparison was made between the

quantum of space allotted to pro-poor issues and that given to issues such as politics, sports, business, entertainment and advertisements.

In order to further substantiate our findings and identify the perception of those belonging to the Fourth Estate, we carried out a perception-mapping study of the media in June 2001 as the second part of our study. Irrespective of their designation and responsibility, we sought the views of mediapersons on a key question of the survey: Why is there progressive shrinkage of social development-related news in the media? A majority of those interviewed attributed it to market forces.

For the third part of our study, focusing on how the poor and socially disadvantaged perceived the media, we spoke to 70 readers from three districts of Orissa. These areas are the slums of Salia Sahi and Bharatpur in Bhubaneswar city, three tribal-dominated villages in Chowdwar in Cuttack district, and a few villages in the supercyclone-affected coastal blocks of Ersama, Tirtol and Kujang in Jagatsinghpur district in Orissa. The consensus of opinion of readers was that the media gave wide coverage to politics, advertisements, entertainment and sports while ignoring the issues that affected them. Their villages and districts make news only when some crime takes place or when calamity strikes. But dissemination of information about welfare schemes, follow-ups and solutions to their real problems are seldom written about.

Based on its findings, CYSD intends to launch a collaborative advocacy movement for the uplift of the poor and to ensure social justice to the disadvantaged classes. This is indeed a stupendous task, which cannot be achieved single-handedly. It requires the co-operation, support and involvement of other civil society actors — the media, individuals, voluntary agencies and NGOs. A common platform has to be built for a crusade against hunger, malnutrition, disease, illiteracy and social disparity to enable civil society to grow from strength to strength.

1.2 Summary of the findings

The Vanishing Poor: A study of the shrinking coverage of pro-poor issues in the print media indicates that pro-poor and social development issues do have some presence in the mainstream media. But, with just 4% of the total space in Oriya newspapers and 1% of space in English-language papers devoted to social development issues, and a much larger percentage devoted to sport, business, entertainment and advertisements, it is clear that the coverage of these issues is inadequate. The variety and magnitude of the problems affecting the poor and marginalised are so vast that the proportion of space devoted to these

problems must increase if the stories are to have any impact.

Orissa, which has a sizeable tribal and dalit population, faces a piquant situation on the media front. The regional editions of the national dailies cater to the requirements of Orissa. Very few stories related to Orissa find place in other editions, particularly those published from Delhi. As a result, the voice of the people of Orissa fails to reach policymakers at the national level. Moreover, while trivial issues of other states dominate the pages of national dailies circulated in Orissa, important stories on Orissa are relegated to the background. This does nothing for the cause of Orissa, which finds itself almost at the bottom of the human development index (see the socio-economic profile and social development indicators for Orissa in the Appendix).

Our media analysis showed that during the six-month study period, *The Prajatantra* displayed a degree of concern for the deprived classes by devoting 3.989% of its total space to 709 stories on them, the highest among all papers surveyed. Of these, 13 stories were given high prominence, 415 medium, and 281 low prominence. *The Dharitri* spared 2.462% of its total space for development stories (420 stories), the lowest percentage. In *The Sambad*, *The Pragativadi* and *The Samaj* the space devoted to these stories was 2.926, 2.890 and 2.794% of total space respectively.

Amongst English dailies, *The New Indian Express* devoted 1.566% of its total space to such issues. This amounted to 520 stories, with 29 of them being very prominent, 313 less so, and 178 only briefly reported. *The Asian Age* allotted the smallest amount of space to these issues (0.530%). *The Telegraph* and *The Times of India* allotted 0.768% and 0.589% of space respectively.

The frequency of coverage and percentage of space alone does not determine the importance a newspaper attaches to a particular issue. How the issue has been projected and how well it fares in the "prominence rating" is more important. Most of the stories were situational reports and lacked in-depth analysis. For example, in reporting a welfare scheme, the flaws in the scheme and feasible remedial measures that should be taken were not adequately highlighted. Most of the news items dealt only superficially with development issues relating to the weaker sections of society. The reports also appeared staid or lackadaisical and would most likely fail to engage the attention of readers or influence policymakers by alerting them to the existence of possible solutions and alternatives.

On the whole, publications in Oriya gave comparatively greater

coverage to development stories than their English counterparts, even though the latter had more pages. However, in both the English and Oriya press, the percentage of total space devoted to development stories was quite low — below 5% in both cases.

The findings of the second part of the survey were also very interesting. Though the mediapersons interviewed did not agree with our definition of what constitutes a development story, and disputed the contention that these did not get the space they deserved, most agreed that the present quantum of space allotted to development stories was not adequate. Editors, news editors and management claimed that politics, crime, corruption and many other issues should also be looked upon as development issues, since in various ways they affected the lives of the poor and deprived. If there is less coverage of development issues, they argued, it is because a growing number of readers have élitist tastes and are not interested in reading about issues that don't affect them.

Sub-editors attributed the shrinking development coverage to lack of awareness on the part of reporters and faulty editorial policies. The reporters, for their part, said that their inability to access development issues, and the tendency of the newsdesk to select sensational stories, was responsible for this state of affairs.

It was generally agreed by all media respondents that market forces are dictating what news is carried. Newspapers are vying with one another to dominate the market, so, in order to remain competitive, more sensational news, which is likely to appeal to readers, is being published. Except for a very few, all the respondents acknowledged that development coverage was neglected.

In the third part of the study, readers in rural areas and urban slums unequivocally stressed the need for expanding coverage of development stories. Irrespective of status or occupation, they felt that the space given to development issues was meagre compared to the prominence given to advertisements and stories on entertainment, politics or crime. Though the respondents were not educated enough to comprehend the role of the media and the government in good governance, they were nevertheless able to point out the deficiencies in poverty alleviation programmes and the way these were implemented. It was obvious that they did not think this information was being carried to the right quarters because many of the respondents observed, before answering this questionnaire: "Since we are small people in this age of 'might is right', our voice has remained unheard by the government

and newspapers."

Some respondents were sceptical about whether this study would make any difference to their lives. Many were not aware of the government's development programmes and how to benefit from them. In the remote tribal villages in Chowdwar and the cyclone-affected coastal blocks, respondents maintained that issues affecting their lives such as unemployment, poverty alleviation schemes, vocational training schemes, empowerment of women, were important and should find space in the newspapers. In the urban slums, respondents, particularly men, because of their location, liked to read about cinema, drama, crime, politics and sensational advertisements, in addition to development articles, which they still considered important. Respondents in the cyclone-affected areas were anxious about the construction work and repair of roads in their villages and districts.

It was clear that problems relating to socio-economic development were important to respondents because they affected them all. Though many felt the media fell short in highlighting their plight, they continued to repose faith in its ability to be a powerful agent of change. More balanced reporting, which would give rural issues the space and analysis they deserved, is an urgent requirement.

1.3 Background

We are living at a critical juncture of human history. On the one hand there is the discriminatory international economic regime dictating terms of trade and commerce, and on the other, the poorest of the poor in debt-ridden developing countries live in absolute misery and struggle to get two square meals a day. The growing disparities alert us to the urgent need to pay more attention to issues such as social development and poverty alleviation, since a large chunk of the world's population continues to be in the grip of material deprivation and social injustice.

This is also exercising the minds of many front-ranking policymakers around the world. It echoed in the speech made by former US President Bill Clinton during his last official visit to India, and in the addresses of both, our then President K R Narayanan on the eve of Republic Day in 2000 and of Prime Minister A B Vajpayee on Independence Day in 2000. It is, therefore, imperative that substantial alleviation of poverty is essential for a perceptible rise in the global human development index.

Issues concerning social development and poverty alleviation have to

be examined and the structural causes of poverty, oppression against women, children, dalits, tribals and violation of human rights have to be identified. No government can combat these disparities by itself. Non-government organisations, voluntary agencies, civil society organisations, individuals and the media must forge a strategic alliance in order to overcome these socio-economic disparities. Development, defined in terms of growth, equality, and the emancipation of the deprived and underprivileged, has to be a process involving groups and individuals from various quarters.

1.4 Role of the media

The reference to the press as the Fourth Estate is a tacit acknowledgement of the tremendous influence it wields in matters concerning the State. Newspapers around the world have exposed lapses in government or in those who head governments, such as the Watergate scandal, which drove US President Nixon from office, or the Lewinsky sex scandal that shook the Bill Clinton government. In India, prominent media exposés have included the Bofors gun scam which tarnished the image of then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, the match-fixing allegations against celebrated cricketers, and the Tehelka exposé of corruption in the political and military hierarchy.

The Indian press came into being in 1861 at the initiative of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. The press was consequently preoccupied with coverage of issues such as the rights of widows, widow remarriage, the campaign against female infanticide and other such social evils. It espoused the cause of a large section of society, rather than serving narrow sectarian interests. The question we need to answer today is whether this description still applies. Though many social evils and injustices persist in our modern society, does the press take sufficient note of them? The answer to this question is best summed up in the words of journalist P Sainath, a crusader for more space for pro-poor issues: "Today, a gigantic press serves a much narrower social function." (See P Sainath's comments on the media and the marginalised in Appendix I.)

But this pilot study conducted by the Centre for Policy Research and Advocacy of CYSD in 1999 reveals that the space devoted to pro-poor issues in newspapers does not exceed 5% of the total print area.

1.5 Impact of the print media

In a democratic system, the print media plays a crucial role in shaping

opinions on vital issues. The right of citizens in any democracy to free information on matters relating to the governance of the country should be mandatory. For developing nations, it becomes all the more important that this information is accessible to common people, and providing this information is a crucial function of the media. The print media is uniquely positioned to highlight certain issues and sustain the momentum of discussion and debate on social and legislative changes.

Dr J B Ambedkar in his book *Communication and Development: A Village of North Karnataka* shows how the media can transform the character of a backward area. During 1975-76, Dr Ambedkar conducted a socio-anthropological study of media communication and its impact on rural development. This was a baseline study. A further study was conducted in 1988 in Ponthal, a village in the Raichur district of Karnataka, to assess the character of the transformation that may have occurred in the village. Over the decade, Ambedkar found that immense changes had taken place in Ponthal with regard to the use of agricultural technology, innovation and the adoption of new farming methods, and much of this was through the dissemination of information by the media. There were significant changes concerning cropping patterns, average expenditure and production per acre of cultivated land as a result of the dissemination of information by the media, which proves that it is an effective tool in the sharing of development information and in social uplift and innovation.

1.6 The print media *vis-à-vis* electronic media

Despite the phenomenal growth of the electronic media in recent years, the print media — newspapers in particular — continues to be the most effective means of mass communication. Its reach is wider and therefore it can be utilised for the greatest good of the greatest number.

Newspapers are read by a cross-section of people comprising policymakers, policy implementers, think-tanks, the poor, the underprivileged, the vulnerable and people living in remote areas. For many, the newspaper is the primary source of information and education. The policymaking and implementing process is also highly amenable to the influence of newspapers. The legislature, executive and the bureaucracy are sensitive to what is published about them. In this survey, we have therefore confined ourselves to the print media and to newspapers only.

1.7 Media as a strategic partner

Civil society organisations working for social development see the media as a potential partner in the effort to eradicate poverty, illiteracy and social injustice.

Through its role of advocacy, the media can sensitise policymakers to these problems and influence their policies. It can highlight the problems of the poor and downtrodden through its columns and instill a sense of urgency in policymakers as they attempt to find solutions to these problems.

However, as things stand now, the common man's perceptions find little space in the media. However, there is little quantification of the extent to which coverage of development and pro-poor issues has shrunk. This study was conducted to ascertain the ground realities. But, *The Vanishing Poor: A study of the shrinking coverage of pro-poor issues in the print media* should not be construed as a purely academic exercise. What we have tried to do is project a qualitative and quantitative content analysis of newspaper coverage on pro-poor issues *vis-à-vis* the totality of newspaper coverage of all issues taken together.

It is not our intention to find fault with anybody or to arrogate to ourselves the role of advisers; we only intend to present facts as they are, in order to facilitate a meaningful discussion on the present status of the coverage of pro-poor issues and to consider whether the situation can be improved.



BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

2.1. Background of the study

The present study entitled *The Vanishing Poor: A study of the shrinking coverage of pro-poor issues in the print media* was conducted by the Centre for Policy Research and Advocacy (CEPRA), the research wing of CYSD. The study was carried out in three phases. In the first phase, it assessed the performance of five Oriya and four English dailies in terms of the coverage of pro-poor issues between August 1999 and February 2000. It assessed the space given to news related to social development *vis-à-vis* advertisements, sports, entertainment, business etc in an attempt to obtain a clearer view of the local and national media and their projection of poverty and related topics.

Our research was confined to the study of five regional (Oriya) dailies: *The Samaj*, *The Prajatantra*, *The Pragativadi*, *The Dharitri*, *The Sambad*, and four national English dailies: *The Times of India*, *The Telegraph*, *The Asian Age* and *The New Indian Express*. The study involved an exhaustive statistical survey of the number of pro-poor issues covered in the print media and a study of the style of reporting and manner of presentation of pro-poor issues.

In the second phase, the study compared the viewpoints of press representatives with the findings of the first phase. The perceptions of press representatives (editors, management members, sub-editors and reporters) regarding the commitments and constraints of newspapers in highlighting issues affecting the poor and deprived were mapped.

Realising that it was essential to find out if newspaper coverage really made any difference to the lives of the underprivileged, and to ascertain what readers expect from the media, a third study was undertaken. In this survey, slumdweller of Bhubaneswar, newspaper readers of Ersama block in Jagatsinghpur district — the worst-affected area in the supercyclone of 1999 — and newspaper readers in a tribal pocket of Chowdwar block of Cuttack district were interviewed.

2.2 Objectives

The study was undertaken with the following objectives:

- To gain a deeper understanding of the problems of development reporting.
- To sensitise the press to pro-poor and related issues.
- To influence policymakers to enact and implement more pro-poor policies for the benefit of the weaker and underprivileged sections of society.
- To make people aware of the miseries of the poor and deprived.
- To build an advocacy network to address various social maladies.

2.3 Methodology

In the first phase of the project, five broad themes were selected for the purposes of our study: 1) Social development and poverty alleviation 2) Women and development 3) Child rights and situation 4) Dalits and tribal/indigenous people and 5) Human rights. Under these five broad issues, 41 thematic issues or sub-issues were grouped. Under the first come as many as 20 sub-issues, under the second, eight sub-issues, under the third, three, while the fourth has seven and the fifth three sub-issues.

The content of the selected dailies was analysed qualitatively as well as quantitatively with the help of a few composite indicators. The indicators for qualitative analysis were:

- Type of story: For example, news reports, news analysis, editorials, issue-based articles, follow-ups, description of any event, allegations or criticism of government or other agencies.
- Whether the story is comprehensive or elaborate.
- Whether the story contains anything new or merely repeats some trivial matter.
- Whether the news item suggests any possible remedial measures or only highlights the problem/issue.
- The existence or otherwise of a larger perspective on the problem.
- Whether the story contains necessary data and substantial evidence (such as photographs, statistics or illustrations) or is no more than a literary presentation.
- Whether the report is impartial or displays any prejudices in favour of or against the intended beneficiaries.

- What the report aims to achieve/implications thereof.

All the stories/reports were also quantitatively analysed in terms of the space and prominence attached to them. In order to do this, the length and width of every news item included in our study was measured in column centimetres. Adding the space for each item under one particular sub-issue, the total space given to an issue was calculated. Accordingly, the total of all the themes under a broad issue was calculated to determine how much space a particular newspaper has devoted to a given issue.

By taking note of how many times a sub-issue has been addressed in a particular newspaper, the frequency of coverage of that sub-issue was ascertained. Subsequently, the frequency of coverage of each issue in a particular newspaper was calculated.

Depending on the placement, attractiveness and effectiveness of a particular story, points were given to it. Points were given on the basis of:

- 1 Page in order of importance.
- 2 Placement.
- 3 The effectiveness/significance of the story.

The prominence of each news item was measured and rated as high, medium or low prominence in the manner indicated below:

Importance:

- Front/editorial page.....4 points
- Opposite-editorial page.....3 points
- Right-hand page 2 points
- Others/Special section.....1 point

Placement:

- 1st/2nd lead story..... 4 points
- Box item..... .3 points
- Anchor.....2 points
- Others.....1 point

Display:

Very eye-catching (with photo).....4 points

Eye-catching 3 points

Plainly highlighted.....2 points

Almost invisible.....1 point

Following this method, the importance accorded to each pro-poor item was measured. Each item was given scores in terms of its positioning and attractiveness. The combined score for all the three indicators was taken for rating and then described as:

3-5 points.....Low prominence

6-9 points.....Medium prominence

10-12 points High prominence

We rated a story as 'almost invisible' when it was a single-column story with equal length and breadth, or a little more, and with 'almost invisible' headlines. A story was regarded as 'plainly highlighted' when its positioning was slightly better than the 'almost invisible' category but less than two columns in breadth and equal to that in length, or a little more. Similarly, a story was regarded as 'eye-catching' only when it occupied more than two columns in breadth and was of equal length or a little more. A story was rated as 'very eye-catching' with 4 points—which is the maximum — only when it was accompanied by a photograph. A story classified as 'plainly highlighted', when published with a photograph, was rated 'very eye-catching' and given 4 points.

The total percentage of space given to all the issues in comparison to the total print area was calculated for each newspaper separately with the help of a simple formula:

Total space given to the particular issue x 100

Total print area in the entire study

2.4. Problems in classification

During the study, categorisation of the various issues/sub-issues proved difficult. As explained earlier, we classified the issues under five groups and 41 sub-groups (listed in Annexure 1).

- News stories were grouped under different categories. Under *Social development and poverty alleviation*, a story which may have touched on a variety of issues was categorised as *Basic services (general)*. But one that focused on the overall picture was placed under the category of *Social development and poverty alleviation (general)*. Similarly, on *Literacy and primary education*, some stories with headlines on education dealt with higher and primary education. In that case, we placed the story under the category depending upon its thrust. In *Primary health care*, stories on diseases like cancer and others have not been taken up for our study whereas HIV/AIDS stories have been included. This is because our purpose was to pick up stories on primary health care that affect deprived people. But, at times, stories pertaining to the availability or otherwise of specialised medical attention for the poor have also been covered. Similarly, under *Sanitation and drinking water*, we have included stories that, rather than discuss the non-availability of drinking water, focus on other aspects like sewage-pipe leakage causing inconvenience to traffic etc. As for *Wages/rights/workers issues*, the stories are a little difficult to classify as rural/industrial/urban/employment/labour, because most of the stories encompass several issues simultaneously. We have adopted a very careful approach while classifying the news features/reports/stories etc, subject to the limitations stated above.

- In the *Women and development* category, many stories bearing titles such as 'Minor girls raped' had us in a quandary because the age of the girl was not mentioned. Thus we were unable to decide whether to put the story under the *Child rights and situation (abuse)* category or *Women and development (violence/rape of women)*, because a girl is considered a major after 18 years of age but she is a child till she reaches 14 years of age. In such cases, we have put the report under an appropriate issue depending on the thrust of the story. On dalits, tribals and indigenous people, some stories pertaining to livelihood/employment/resource rights etc have been merged with issues such as child rights or social development. We have classified the stories under that category which has utilised maximum space on the subject.

- The stories under the five broad categorisations in our study sometimes deal with more than one issue at a time. In that case we have placed the story under the issue/sub-issue on which the news item places greatest emphasis.

- Apart from analysing the content of the news items of the above-mentioned issues, we attempted to form a general idea of the absolute quantum and relative proportion of coverage of various categories

such as hard news, features, editorial write-ups and advertisements in the newspapers. In the course of the study, spanning six months, we analysed newspapers for 150, 171, or 165 days, depending on individual newspapers.

2.5. Limitations of the study

- Our definition of development reporting may not be acceptable to others.
- The media influences people's opinions and attitudes. Our study does not aim to assess or measure its impact. An assessment of the impact would call for determining the circulation of a newspaper and in the absence of reliable data on circulation figures it is difficult to come to any conclusion.
- This study does not claim to be quantitatively exhaustive. All the national and regional dailies and all readers and media experts have not been included in this study. Many illuminating examples have perhaps been left out. The study is primarily intended to stimulate more thought, research and action in the areas covered.
- Keeping in view the lack of time and other practical considerations in the second part of our study, the respondents from the press have been selected from within the twin-cities of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar.

2.6 Media perspective on development reporting

In the second part of our research we conducted a perception-mapping study of the media in June 2001. The survey covered a sample of 30 mediapeople working in various capacities in Orissa.

The objectives of the study were:

- To document the media's perceptions regarding poverty alleviation programmes.
- To understand the constraints experienced by the media, and the conditions affecting the publication of articles on social development issues.
- To explore the media's attitude towards building an advocacy network, which is needed to address various social problems.

2.6.1 Methodology

In order to study media attitudes towards development reporting, its mindset and the constraints it faces, we took a sample of 30 respondents from various national English and Oriya newspapers and news agencies in the state. The respondents included editors, proprietors, news editors, bureau chiefs, sub-editors, reporters and media experts. We placed the editors, managing directors, news editors and management in Category 1 (13 respondents), special/principal correspondents/reporters in Category 2 (9), and sub-editors, special and chief sub-editors in Category 3 (8). Some of the respondents filled in a questionnaire. With some senior respondents like editors, news editors, bureau chiefs and proprietors, we held discussions based on the questionnaire and recorded their views. Afterwards, these were coded to keep the individual responses secret, and were subjected to analysis. Finally, the perceptions of all the respondents were summed up and placed against each question and conclusions were drawn.

2.6.2 Limitations of the study

The selection of respondents was based on their experience and seniority. However, due to lack of time we decided to record the responses of the first 30 mediapersons on our list. In the process we might have left out some mature and qualitatively more illuminating responses. Also, some of the media respondents, while responding to the questions, failed to distinguish between questions which sounded similar but were subtly different from each other.

2.7 What readers want

The third part of our study focused on how the poor, downtrodden and socially disadvantaged perceive the media, and whether media coverage makes any difference to their lives. We chose 70 readers from three districts in Orissa representing both urban and rural populations. From the slums of Salia Sahi (Nilachakra Nagar, Janata Nagar and Nirankari Nagar) we took 12 respondents — 10 male and 2 female, between 18 and 38 years of age. Nine of them were educated up to matriculation or above. They belonged to professions such as teaching (4), business (4), barber, electrician, social worker, and one was an unemployed youth. From Bharatpur, which comprised Jokalundi and Ranganisahi, we took nine readers, all male, between 21 and 60 years of age. Two of them were educated up to 10+2 standard, the rest had not finished school. Three of them were in business, three were daily-

wage workers, one was an electrician and two were unemployed.

From the four tribal-dominated villages of Ramchandrapur, Mangarajpur, Kochilanuagaon and Bagdhara, we interviewed 22 respondents in the 18-66 age-group (15 males and 7 females). The villages fall in the Chowdwar block of Cuttack district. The educational qualifications of nine of them varied between matriculation and MSc and the rest had not finished school. Seven of them were farmers, three were government servants, two were students, one was a tailor, two were retired government servants, one was a social worker, two were housewives and four were unemployed youths.

We also interviewed 26 males and one female in the 14-74 age-group, from some of the villages in the supercyclone-affected Ersama block (Mahimadeipur, Nokeipur, Nuadihi, Patapur, Japa, Deiga, Iribina, Bhuansahi, Pallikanta, Mallipura, Mathasahi villages). They were teachers (7), students (2), businessmen (2), farmers (6), one housewife and the rest were traders and shopkeepers.

2.7.1 Objectives of the study

- To understand the expectations of the poor and disadvantaged from the media.
- To identify the trends in media coverage *vis-à-vis* development reporting from the point of view of poor readers.

2.7.2 Methodology

As enumerated above, the 70 respondents belonged to different occupations and social strata. The sample also included a few unemployed youths.

We briefed the respondents individually and explained what they were to do with the questionnaire without trying to influence or manipulate their independent perceptions. The team tried its best to get respondents to write down their answers themselves. The answers were then coded and classified. They were later analysed and summarised.

2.7.3 Limitations

Because of their low literacy levels and backwardness, many of the respondents were not able to approach the questions from the right perspective. Even the educated among them failed to understand the

questions fully. Without understanding the dynamics of poverty alleviation programmes, the role of the press, the government and voluntary agencies, they stated only what they felt. Some of the respondents expressed themselves eloquently and forcefully in spite of their limited communication skills. Some respondents could not place their answers in a broader framework and confined themselves to their individual problems and those affecting their community/village/family. Given their limited educational attainments, many respondents were unable to discriminate between different items in newspaper coverage. This made it difficult to ascertain their views.



COVERAGE OF PRO-POOR ISSUES: DETAILED CONTENT ANALYSIS

3.1 Issue: Social development and poverty alleviation

3.1.1 English dailies: *The Times of India*, *The Telegraph*, *The Asian Age* and *The New Indian Express*

All these newspapers have covered the pro-poor dimension of a variety of issues such as poverty alleviation, literacy and elementary education, primary health care, food security, displacement etc in some way or other. All the four English dailies have laid more emphasis on primary health care, which included, among other things, reproductive and maternal health care and HIV/AIDS.

The New Indian Express is the English-language newspaper that has given these issues the most prominence (2918 col cm and 0.264% of total space), followed by *The Times of India* (2455.75 col cm and 0.149% space). *The Telegraph* has given the least amount of space to these issues (695.5 col cm and 0.061%), and has not addressed food security, starvation, shelter and displacement problems during the period of analysis. *The Asian Age* has almost completely ignored issues like sanitation and drinking water, and reports on basic services are conspicuous by their absence in *The Times of India*.

Illiteracy is usually perceived as an outcome of paucity of financial resources. However, this is not true as is evident from the fact that though the per capita income in India is higher than that in Vietnam, the corresponding literacy rates are 52% and 94%. India is making some progress in the area, but the Literacy Mission has not yet gathered momentum. The high dropout rate can also be attributed to the pupil-teacher ratio, which is 64:1. The seriousness of this problem is not reflected in the newspapers as is evident from the fact that *The Times of India* devoted only 0.046% of its space to this critical issue, *The Telegraph* 0.055%, *The Asian Age* 0.023% and *The New Indian Express* 0.059%.

Of the 41 stories addressing the sub-issue of *Literacy and primary education* that appeared in the four English dailies, only 15 analysed the state of primary education from various angles. For example, 'Education without uncertainty' in *The Telegraph* dated 31.01.2000 analysed

whether exams are a blessing or a curse for society. A story in *The Times of India* on 06.12.1999, entitled 'Elementary Education Bill: Much ado about nothing', critically analysed the 93rd Constitutional Amendment that makes elementary education a fundamental right for all children in the 6-14 age-group. Most of the news items broadly highlighted subjects such as education for the girl-child, examinations, compulsory elementary education, interspersed with suggested remedies, but many were mere reports, gathered mostly from workshops/conferences/seminars. Whether analytical or descriptive, a majority of the reports were brief. Only nine were reports from the field, focusing mostly on the poor quality of education, which is shown to be the result of lack of teachers, school buildings and funds etc.

A total of 181 news items relating to health issues appeared in the four newspapers over the six-month period. Fifteen of them were centred around HIV/AIDS cases. Considering the seriousness of the problem and its repercussions for society, the effort of the press to highlight the issue is laudable. Most of the articles were informative and about research findings and breakthroughs. But none of them dealt in detail with the effects of AIDS on family life and society. Family planning, malaria and polio control programmes are among other major health sub-issues reported in these newspapers. The stories, though few in number, are based on field data and substantiated with quotes from experts. Most are without any photos, which would have made a greater impact on readers.

The labour issue as a whole did not receive much attention in the print media. Government schemes targeting fishermen and bonded labourers are yet to catch the attention of the English press. *The Times of India* accorded high prominence to 20 stories, while *The Telegraph*, *The Asian Age* and *The New Indian Express* published 14, 6 and 4 stories respectively in this category during the period of analysis. *The New Indian Express* gave medium prominence to 139 stories on this issue, *The Times of India* 89, *The Asian Age* 46 and *The Telegraph* 16. In the low prominence category, *The New Indian Express* published 70 stories, *The Times of India* 50, *The Asian Age* 30, and *The Telegraph* 6.

The Times of India and *The Telegraph* ignored problems such as unemployment, livelihood, special employment and the plight of mine workers. Only *The Telegraph* gave any space to the global labour situation. No report on unorganised labour appeared in either *The Times of India* or *The New Indian Express*. There was no report on the policy on bonded labour in India in *The Times of India* and *The Telegraph*. The sub-issue concerning wages/rights of workers in urban and rural areas was

ignored in *The Telegraph* and *The Asian Age* while none of the four English dailies gave any coverage to the victimisation of construction workers. The English dailies under review have overlooked issues which are central to the socio-economic development of the country.

3.1.2 Oriya dailies: *The Samaj*, *The Sambad*, *The Prajatantra*, *The Pragativadi* and *The Dharitri*

Our study revealed that *Social development and poverty alleviation* occupied the largest amount of space in Oriya dailies during the study period. This issue (which has 20 sub-issues under it), was written about 473 times in 153 study days within the study period August 15, 1999, to February 14, 2000. In *The Prajatantra*, 2.993 stories appeared per day on an average, followed by 2.314 (ie 375 times during the study period) in *The Samaj*, 2.24 stories per day (336 times in 150 days) in *The Pragativadi*, 1.894 stories per day (322 times in 170 days) in *The Sambad* and 0.967 stories per day (151 times in 156 studied days) in *The Dharitri*. In terms of frequency of appearance, *The Pragativadi* occupied first place in the first five months of the survey and *The Samaj* in the last month. Similarly, the trend in *The Dharitri* remained unaltered — it continued to devote the least amount of space to coverage of this issue.

During the six-month study period, *The Prajatantra* gave maximum coverage to social development and poverty alleviation issues, which amounted to 13741.50 column centimetres (col cm) in 159 study days (that is, 86.427 col cm per day on an average), followed by *The Samaj*, 54.095 col cm per day (8763.50 col cm in 162 studied days), *The Pragativadi* 53.331 col cm per day (7999.75 col cm in 150 studied days), *The Sambad*, 45.337 col cm per day (7707.4 col cm in 170 studied days). *The Dharitri* has devoted the least amount of space to the issue, 30.416 col cm per day (4745 col cm in 156 studied days).

Over the six-month survey period, *The Samaj* published 30 stories in the high prominence category, *The Sambad* 23, *The Pragativadi* 12, *The Dharitri* 10 and *The Prajatantra* 7. In the medium prominence category, *The Prajatantra* carried 279 stories, *The Sambad* 215, *The Samaj* 175, *The Pragativadi* 160 and *The Dharitri* 109. In the low prominence category, *The Prajatantra* brought out 187 stories, *The Samaj* 170, *The Pragativadi* 162, *The Sambad* 84 and *The Dharitri* 32 (over 170 study days).

The stories dealing with social development and poverty alleviation carried in these newspapers contained very little analysis, however.

They mostly blamed political parties, their lack of will and the present system of governance.

The Oriya dailies also dwelt on social evils like casteism, dowry, apathy towards senior citizens and other social evils. They also touched upon incidents of religious conversion in the remote tribal districts of the state by Christian missionaries. All these stories blame poverty, ignorance and backwardness for the tribals' vulnerability to proselytising efforts. Stories also appeared on the brewing of country liquor and its effect on the families of drinkers, stray incidents of lawlessness, and the degeneration of social values. In the category *Social development (general)*, we have also included cases of corruption that were seen to be retarding the development process.

With regard to the basic services category, all the stories dwelt on the absence of basic services, particularly roads, in different areas of the state, especially in the far-flung tribal pockets. All the papers highlighted this issue regularly, but only occasionally were photographs used to drive the point home. However, *The Samaj*, *The Pragativadi* and *The Sambad* carried cartoons that enlivened the reports.

Stories on literacy and basic education highlighted the sorry state of primary education and called for government action. Most of these stories took a soft stand, with only a few worthy of being considered action-provoking. Again, only very few follow-up stories appeared.

The newspapers have highlighted the pitiable plight of non-formal teachers and anganwadi workers and the deplorable failure of various literacy drives in achieving their stated objectives. However, they offered no solutions or alternatives and were devoid of photographs. Familiar complaints about the absence of school buildings, books and teachers were also carried.

Reports have appeared on workshops on literacy campaigns/movements, and initiatives of the District Primary Education Programme. This is mostly on the basis of data provided by the authorities/organisers, and offers no in-depth analysis of the situation and ground realities at that point of time; they merely describe the events or highlight the deficiencies without indicating solutions. Citizen participation and mobilisation, so necessary for social development, was in little evidence.

Of all the social issues, the issue of primary health care, including reproductive and maternal child health care, has got the maximum amount of space in all the newspapers. Apart from regular news items, special articles on particular diseases have appeared, as have stories highlight-

ing the mess in health care administration. The non-availability of doctors, paramedics and medicine in remote areas, the lack of interest in eradicating polio or preventing AIDS, the unhygienic living conditions of the people and the lack of any commitment to various government health programmes, as also the poor health infrastructure, have generally received a great deal of attention. Most of the reports have pointed out the government's apathy in handling health issues, but they contained no in-depth analysis and data. Suggestions for adopting long-term measures in order to control these problems are conspicuous by their absence.

There was comparatively less coverage of sanitation and drinking water. The stories that did appear mostly focused on the unavailability of safe drinking water in rural and urban areas, alleged corruption in tubewell installations, and the hardships faced by villagers in the absence of safe drinking water facilities. None of the stories were accompanied by photographs. *The Prajatantra* devoted the largest amount of space to this issue.

The response of the press to the food security/food distribution/starvation issue is commendable. In Orissa, where hunger, malnutrition and poverty are matters of serious concern, the media has played a key role in raising people's awareness about these problems. A majority of the stories seek to expose irregularities and acts of misappropriation in the public distribution system (PDS), poor quality of PDS foodgrain and its unavailability, alleged corruption in the preparation of below poverty line (BPL) lists, and starvation deaths. The stories are critical of black marketers and the apathetic government machinery. All were situational reports, which did not suggest solutions.

On shelter, housing and displacement, there were good analytical pieces, especially on the condition of retrenched employees of various development projects like hydel projects, thermal power plants, railway line constructions, defence establishments etc. The government's failure in executing the Indira Awas Yojana properly has been exposed relentlessly and attacked vigorously. The news reports also focus attention on instances of corruption and embezzlement in the construction of houses for the poorest of the poor. Most of these stories were given a lot of prominence, though again no photographs accompanied these stories.

The issue of labour, employment and livelihoods elicited a variety of stories: news reports, news analysis and editorials, all of them openly critical of the government, its callousness and incompetence in ad-

addressing the issue. A majority of the stories are news reports and are accompanied by photographs. A striking feature of these stories is that they deal with people's grievances and seek redressal. The stories publicise the plight of the unemployed and jobless, but they are often simplistic, lacking a thematic base and failing to provide a larger perspective on the issue. Barring a single story each in *The Sambad* and *The Prajatantra*, they did not reflect an awareness of the global labour situation, of employment and labour problems in the country.

The stories on migrant labour (policy and situation in India and other countries) were of much better quality. They eloquently exposed the exploitation of innocent labourers by racketeers of all kinds. Some stories suggested practical methods to keep track of the movement of migrant labourers and thus safeguard their interests. Photographs, which would have augmented the appeal of these stories, were unfortunately not used.

There was very little coverage of the bonded labour issue. Except for *The Pragativadi*, the other four dailies under review left this issue untouched during the study period. On wages/rights/workers' benefits (rural) the stories mostly touched upon the wages of agricultural, daily and *kendu* leaf workers and the government's apathy towards them.

Stories based on individuals seeking redressal of their grievances were also published. The plight of health assistants working in rural areas, *bidi* workers, and wages of anganwadi workers were also described. The stories were few in number, but they make their points forcefully. News reports substantiated their claims about official callousness with relevant data and evidence. The stories contained an element of analysis as well.

On the issue of victimisation by employers (closures/lay-offs/harassment) the coverage was relatively poor and they were mainly situational reports. There was no story in any paper on construction workers, though some attention was devoted to the problems of fishermen, given the fact that Orissa has a long coastal belt and that the introduction of mechanised prawn cultivation has given rise to a lot of tension. The stories were data-based and elaborate. Most of them contained allegations against government officials or policies. They gave information on activities of the mafia and the atrocities they committed on the traditional fishing community. All these stories combined to give a vivid account of the processes that have led to traditional fishermen losing their livelihood.

Similarly, stories on miners attacked the mafia dons, unscrupulous

officials and local exploiters. The presentations were comprehensive but were again unaccompanied by photographs. On special employment and livelihood support programmes, all the stories were critical of the government machinery for its failure to implement these. However, they failed to report successes achieved by some government schemes.

3.2 Issue: Women and development

3.2.1 English dailies

Women's rights are internationally recognised as an important aspect of human rights. Legislation has been enacted in favour of women; the feminist movement has gathered momentum and women have surged ahead in several spheres of human activity. In recognition of their success, the media today gives as much importance to women's issues as to issues such as politics, sports, business etc.

Newspapers no longer present women exclusively as mothers, daughters or sisters. Neither do they confine women to the glamour and beauty pages. The younger generation of journalists draw the attention of their readers to issues of vital importance to women, though such stories still do not appear frequently enough. Atrocities on women like rape, dowry death, eve-teasing, sexual harassment and other forms of persecution have begun to receive media attention, although the number of such cases being reported is very small. Those cases that had political overtones were noticeably placed in the lead sections of the first or second pages while those with a bearing on the lives of the poor and underprivileged were pushed to insignificant corners of back pages.

During the study period, *The New Indian Express* devoted the maximum amount of space and *The Asian Age* the least, to the *Women and development* issue. In all, 431 stories appeared during the study period.

In *The Times of India* (TOI) and *The Asian Age* (AA), the sub-issue of violence on women figured most prominently, getting 0.051% of total space (TOI) and 0.099% (AA), occurring 34 and 63 times respectively. In TOI, this was followed by general stories on the *Women and development* issue comprising profiles of courageous women, achievements of women in education and other fields, and on gender-related issues. Women's role in party politics and panchayati raj got 0.021% of space and were covered 12 times over six months. Reports relating to women's access to basic services such as health, education, sanitation and

drinking water were very few, occupying only 0.0004% of space and appearing only three times.

The Asian Age did not publish a single story on this sub-issue during the study period. Dowry harassment cases got a mere 0.021% of space, with 32 stories, while news on women's role in politics occupied 0.031% of the total space available.

While dowry-related harassment and deaths figured very prominently in most newspapers, *The Telegraph* reported no such incident during the study period. The paper devoted maximum space to stories related to women and development in sectors other than politics, that is, 0.174%, appearing 19 times. *The New Indian Express* allotted the maximum amount of space to the *Women and development* issue (0.195%), followed by atrocities on women (0.171%). Dowry-related harassment/torture/death got 0.041% of space over six months.

News stories on rape/dowry deaths were fewer in number, tended to be short, and were basically situational reports. News on violence against women appeared only 39 times in the four newspapers taken together over the study period. Of these, only 10 attempted an analysis of rape and general harassment as serious social problems. These analytical reports were supported by photographs, data, and views of experts. Most of the features/news analysis focused on the legal and social aspects of sexual harassment (real life cases), legal battles, the plight of widows, domestic rape and gender bias. The news reports seemed to have been sourced from the police and were only occasionally gathered by reporters themselves from the field. Hence they lacked depth and conformed to a set pattern.

Regarding the prominence score of the stories on this issue, *The Telegraph* gave 21 stories high prominence, *The Times of India*, 17, *The New Indian Express*, 16 and *The Asian Age*, 8. *The New Indian Express* gave 89 stories medium prominence, *The Asian Age*, 52, *The Times of India*, 44, *The Telegraph*, 36. In the low prominence category, *The New Indian Express* had 70 stories, *The Asian Age* 49, *The Times of India* 22 and *The Telegraph* 7.

3.2.2 Oriya dailies

The Sambad gave the maximum coverage to the *Women and development* issue in the period August 15, 1999, to February 14, 2000. It featured 1.429 stories per day on an average (ie 243 stories in 170 studied days or 1.212% of its total coverage), *The Dharitri*, 1.294

stories per day (202 stories in 156 days, or 1.074% of coverage), *The Pragativadi*, 1.266 stories per day (190 stories in 150 days, or 0.936%), *The Prajatantra* 1.081 stories per day (172 stories in 159 days, or 0.938%) and *The Samaj* 1.055 stories per day (171 stories in 162 days, or 0.735%).

An analysis of the pattern of coverage reveals that among the Oriya dailies, *The Sambad* gave 22 stories high prominence, *The Samaj*, 18, *The Dharitri*, 16, *The Pragativadi*, 15 and *The Prajatantra*, 5. *The Sambad* gave 167 stories medium prominence, *The Dharitri*, 132 stories, *The Samaj*, 104, *The Prajatantra*, 101 and *The Pragativadi*, 93. In the low prominence category *The Pragativadi* carried 82 stories, *The Prajatantra*, 60 stories, *The Dharitri* and *The Sambad* 54 each, and *The Samaj*, 50.

The issues written about most under the *Women and development* category were dowry torture, women's role in politics and governance, their development and basic services. All the dailies unequivocally expressed concern over these issues. They also picked up issue-based stories on the introduction of the controversial Women's Bill and the immoral trafficking in women and minor girls.

Of all the issues studied, the *Women and development* issue generated the largest number of editorials, special and analytical pieces accompanied by photographs. This reflected the newspapers' deep concern for the cause of women and their development. All the special stories were qualitatively and quantitatively sound and balanced. They were based on facts and contained an element of analysis. Stories criticising social evils like sati, the dowry system, sex determination tests and female foeticide were also carried though they were supported by very few photographs. *The Dharitri* publishes a full page exclusively on women once a week with good presentations on women's issues but there is little follow-up except in some sensational cases. Issues such as women's role in politics, and their empowerment through panchayati raj have received media attention, but not frequently enough. Similarly, on the *Women and basic services* issue, the five Oriya dailies under review neglected to report on women's access to various services which is a prerequisite for their empowerment.

While instances of atrocities/violence on women in remote and far-flung areas were well covered, the reports were mostly situational and just informed the reader of the happening or event without going deep into the cause. However, the fact that the media seeks to highlight evils like dowry torture is welcome and has created awareness of the legal and social consequences of such actions, teaching girls and women to become self-reliant and fight these evils.

Also receiving greater media attention is violence on women by the State, police, army and government officials. All the dailies presented the stories with sensational headlines, which is also one of the characteristics of other sub-issues relating to women and development.

3.3 Issue: Rights and condition of children

3.3.1 English dailies

Children comprise another exploited segment of our society. Violence and discrimination against them is alarmingly on the rise. In all, 114 cases have been reported during the study period. *The New Indian Express* gave the maximum coverage to the sub-issue of child labour and child abuse (47 stories), while *The Telegraph* published the least number (12 stories).

With India having the highest incidence of child labour in the world, and given that child workers in Orissa account for 4% of child labour in India, this is an issue that the media needs to tackle much more vigorously than it has.

Stories on child labour have appeared the most number of times (47 stories or 0.105% of coverage) in *The New Indian Express* and the least (12 stories) in *The Telegraph*. In *The New Indian Express* 0.028% of space was devoted to child labour (6 stories), and 0.032% of space to child abuse and trafficking (12 stories). *The Times of India* allotted only 0.029% of space to this issue, *The Asian Age*, 0.026% and *The Telegraph*, 0.024%.

In terms of prominence, *The Times of India* gave four stories high prominence, while *The New Indian Express* gave 2 stories high prominence, and *The Asian Age* and *The Telegraph*, one story each. Medium prominence was given to 28 stories in *The New Indian Express*, 25 in *The Asian Age*, 15 in *The Times of India* and 6 in *The Telegraph*. In the low prominence category, *The New Indian Express* published 17 stories, *The Asian Age*, 7, *The Telegraph*, 5 and *The Times of India*, 3.

3.3.2 Oriya dailies

The Sambad covered child rights at the rate of 0.247 stories per day (42 stories in 170 study days), *The Dharitri* 0.211 stories (33 stories in 156 days), *The Samaj*, 0.148 stories (24 stories in 162 days), *The Prajatantra* 0.088 stories (14 stories in 159 days) and *The Pragativadi*,

0.066 stories (10 stories in 150 days). Percentage-wise, *The Sambad* gave 0.151% of space to these stories, *The Samaj*, 0.117%, *The Dharitri* 0.150%, and *The Pragativadi* and *The Prajatantra* 0.082%.

The Pragativadi published 3 stories with a high prominence score, *The Samaj*, 2, *The Sambad* and *The Dharitri* 1 each, and *The Prajatantra*, none. *The Sambad* carried 25 stories in the medium prominence category, *The Dharitri*, 24, *The Samaj*, 12, *The Prajatantra*, 9 and *The Pragativadi*, 4. *The Sambad* accorded 16 stories low prominence, *The Samaj*, 10, *The Dharitri*, 8, *The Prajatantra*, 5 and *The Pragativadi*, 3.

Abuse of children, violence against them and trafficking in children is widespread, but the reaction to this has not been vigorous. Hunger and misery are driving more children into the workforce, but the press is yet to treat this with a sense of urgency.

Child abuse, a heinous crime, has received some coverage. But a lot more can be done. Stories dealing with the role of law-enforcing agencies in fighting this evil and suggestions on the role of government and non-government agencies in eradicating this problem could have made a real impact on society. All the newspapers under the study covered certain incidents, but the quality of presentation left much to be desired. Some of the reports aimed at causing a sensation, and contributed little to the process of finding a solution. The special articles or analytical pieces were comprehensive, whereas the news stories were precise. No follow-up stories appeared. The stories, backed by data, only spoke of the problems without discussing what should be done about them in future.

3.4 Issues: Dalits and tribal/indigenous people

3.4.1 English dailies

The welfare and development of persons belonging to the schedule castes and schedule tribes who together constitute 38.41% of the total population of Orissa (1991 census) is a major responsibility of the state. The government has launched several welfare programmes for their uplift and socio-economic development. But the conditions in which they live, in spite of all these programmes, has not attracted adequate media attention. During the study period, *The New Indian Express* contributed the maximum number of stories (77) and *The Telegraph* the fewest (15 stories), on this issue.

The New Indian Express published 18 high prominence stories, *The*

Telegraph, 4, *The Times of India*, 2 and *The Asian Age*, 1. In the medium prominence category *The New Indian Express* published 45 stories, *The Times of India*, 12, *The Telegraph*, 9 and *The Asian Age*, 8. *The New Indian Express* accorded 14 stories low prominence, *The Asian Age*, 6, *The Times of India*, 4 and *The Telegraph*, 3.

3.4.2. Oriya dailies

A study of the coverage on dalit and tribal/indigenous people revealed that the number of stories appearing per day in *The Samaj*, on an average, was 0.339 (ie 29 stories in the 170 study days), *The Prajatantra*, 0.289 stories (46 stories in 159 study days), *The Pragativadi* 0.266 stories (40 stories in 150 study days), *The Dharitri* 0.192 (30 stories in 156 study days) and *The Sambad*, 0.170 (29 stories in 170 study days).

In terms of the prominence of the stories on this issue, *The Samaj* topped the list with 10 stories in the high prominence category, followed by *The Dharitri*, 7, *The Pragativadi*, *The Prajatantra* and *The Sambad*, 1 each. In the medium prominence category, *The Samaj* carried 32 stories, *The Prajatantra*, 31, *The Pragativadi*, 26, *The Sambad*, 25 and *The Dharitri*, 15. *The Prajatantra* and *The Samaj* each accorded 14 low prominence stories, *The Pragativadi*, 13 and *The Sambad*, 3.

All five Oriya dailies devoted a substantial amount of space to issues concerning dalits and tribals. A remarkable finding is that during the study period not a single newspaper excluded any story that had been covered by the others. Most of these stories were issue-based and painted a grim picture of the fate of dalits and tribals. However, stories focusing on the plight of individual victims were few and far between.

On issues relating to basic services, food security, employment, livelihood and resource rights, the media response was adequate. It is commendable that an attempt has been made to report events that occurred in remote areas. Some stories depicted particular incidents that exposed the pitiable condition of tribals and dalits. Very few stories were supported by photographs.

The thematic focus of the media coverage was on flawed government policies and the failure of the implementing agencies to address tribal/dalit problems. In these stories much stress was laid on education of tribals/dalits and on extending communication facilities to the areas where they live, to bring them into the mainstream. Since the tribals are poor and economically backward, malnutrition, hunger and unhygienic living conditions define their existence. Some comprehensive

stories on specific cases related to these problems appeared along with photographs. However, the backdrop and local conditions could have been described in fuller detail. Some of the reports were very critical of the government's development policies and emphasised that welfare measures have not brought benefits to the targeted communities.

On the issue of shelter, displacement of dalits and tribals, none of the dailies under study devoted any space except *The Prajatantra*, which occasionally dealt with stories on this issue in a very general way. There were many situational reports on discrimination and violence against dalits, tribals, and indigenous people. Some reports described police atrocities on dalits.

3.5 Issue: Human rights

3.5.1 English dailies

Globally, the denial of natural justice continues to be a very important area of concern. In recognition of the fact that human rights are vital to the development of a free democratic process, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) was set up in 1992. People's faith in the NHRC is evident from the fact that as compared to 500 complaints received by it during the first six months of its existence, it received more than 40,000 complaints between April '98 and March '99. In the interests of equity, justice and fair play, the media needs to play a more proactive role in generating awareness about human rights and the steps that have to be taken when those rights are violated.

All the news reports on human rights were reports from conferences and workshops. They did not expose the brutality of the police and the administration, nor did they show evidence of independent investigation.

The Times of India gave just one story high prominence; other papers gave no stories this treatment. *The Times of India* gave medium coverage to 10 stories, *The New Indian Express*, 7, *The Asian Age*, 6 and *The Telegraph*, 1. *The Times of India* gave 2 stories low prominence, *The Telegraph* and *The New Indian Express* 1 each and *The Asian Age* none.

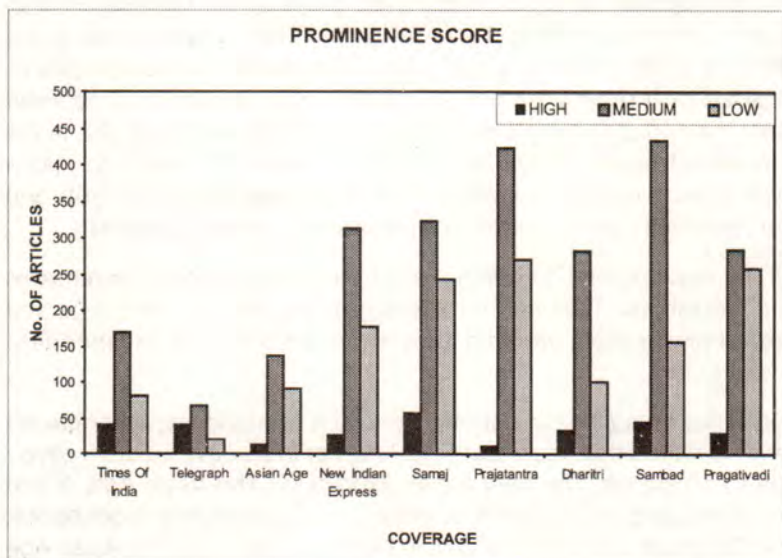
3.5.2 Oriya dailies

A number of stories on human rights appeared in the Oriya dailies

during the six-month study period. *The Dharitri* and *The Prajatantra* carried 0.025 stories per day on an average (4 in *The Prajatantra* in 159 days, and 4 in *The Dharitri* in 156 days). *The Sambad* had 0.017 stories (3 stories in 170 days), *The Pragativadi*, 0.013 stories (2 stories in 150 days) and *The Samaj*, none.

In terms of prominence, *The Pragativadi* and *The Dharitri* each gave one story high prominence but the others gave none. *The Prajatantra* gave 4 stories medium prominence, *The Dharitri*, 3, *The Sambad*, 2, *The Pragativadi*, 1, and *The Samaj* none. *The Sambad* gave one story low prominence, and the others none.

General discussions on policies and laws regarding human rights issues are almost totally absent in the stories published in the Oriya dailies, except in *The Prajatantra*. This is strange considering the fact that human rights violations by the State, the police, civil and military authorities is widespread. Except *The Samaj*, all the other papers gave some coverage to this aspect. *The Dharitri* and *The Sambad* carried a few stories on denials and miscarriages of justice.



COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SPACE ALLOTTED TO ADVERTISEMENTS *VIS-À-VIS* NEWS

In order to determine the quantum of space assigned to social development *vis-à-vis* other sectors, we undertook a sample analysis of newspapers published over a week, from November 13, 2000, to November 19, 2000. The attempt was to determine the space allotted to pro-poor issues *vis-à-vis* various beats like sports, entertainment, trade and business, special reports on health, environment, science and technology and advertisements (display and classified).

In the seven-day period, a total of 170 pages in *The Times of India* were analysed covering 70720 sq cm. The findings revealed that 3,1739 sq cm were devoted to advertisements, which constitutes 44.879% of the total print area as against nearly 3.380% devoted to politics, 6.897% to trade and business, 5.067% to sports, 6.494% to entertainment and others (environment, science and technology etc). We found that during the study period, *TOI*, on an average, devoted 0.589% of its space per day to social development and related issues. This shows that stories pertaining to social development and poverty alleviation, women, children, dalits/ tribals, human rights etc are accorded lowest priority.

In *The Telegraph*, as against 0.768% of space devoted to social development and related issues during the period, 39.696% of space was devoted to advertisements. Politics got 3.114%, crime 3.442%, trade and business 8.403%, sports 7.836%, and entertainment 7.368%.

The New Indian Express allocated 1.566% of space to social development coverage (see Annexure 2), while 22.082% of its print area was set apart for advertisements, 8.646% for trade and business, 8.054% for features and comments, 2.709% for entertainment and 41.638% for science and technology, higher education, environment etc.

The Asian Age gave 0.530% of space to social development and other issues, 2.617% to advertisements, 11.395% to sports, 5.818% to politics, 13.371% to entertainment and 33.790% to health, education, science and technology and environment etc.

Among the Oriya dailies, advertisements in *The Samaj* occupied 27.86% of space, sports 6.899%, editorials, features, comments, special reports (other than on social development) 11.147%, crime 5.044% and issues such as social development, women and development, child rights,

dalits/tribals etc 2.794%.

The Sambad devoted 14.094% of space to advertisements, 5.715% to crime, 15.574% to entertainment, 7.942% to sports, and 43.357% to other issues. This was against 2.926% to pro-poor and development issues as defined by us.

In *The Prajatantra*, advertisements took up 10.778% of the space. Crime took up 4.494%, entertainment 16.496%, and sports 12.122%, while environment, higher education, science/technology etc took up 26.6824%. As against this, only 3.989% of space was devoted to social development and related issues.

The Pragativadi devoted 7.889% of space to advertisements, 8.838% to politics, 5.679% to crime, 5.970% to entertainment, 9.581% to sports, 39.195% to health, education, science/technology and environment. That left just 2.890% of space for social development.

The Dharitri devoted 21.387% to advertisements, 3.549% to crime, 6.578% to sports, 10.739% to features, comments and special reports on issues other than developmental coverage, and only 2.460% of its space to social development and related issues.

The trend clearly shows that a big chunk of space in all newspapers is occupied by advertisements. Political stories dominate the editorial pages, with trade, business and sports also receiving considerable attention. This leaves stories dealing with social development and poverty alleviation, women, children, dalits/tribals and human rights very little space and prominence and is indicative of the low priority accorded to these issues.



SHRINKING COVERAGE: A SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

Pro-poor and social development issues are not invisible in the mainstream media. While the facts and figures given in the paragraphs that follow prove this point, one comes to the undeniable conclusion that a lot remains to be done. The magnitude of the problems affecting the poor and the downtrodden is vast, yet the print medium does not seem to be doing very much to highlight them. Orissa, which has a sizeable tribal and dalit population, faces a piquant situation on the media front.

The regional editions of the national dailies cater to the requirements of the concerned region. Very few stories relating to Orissa find place in other editions, particularly those published from Delhi; as a result, the voice of the people of Orissa fails to reach policymakers at the national level. While the trivial issues of other states dominate the pages of national dailies circulated in Orissa, important stories on Orissa are relegated to the background, harming the cause of Orissa, which finds itself almost at the bottom of the human development index.

Our media analysis showed that during the six-month study period, *The Prajatantra* displayed a degree of concern for the deprived classes by devoting 3.989% of its total space to 709 stories, with 13,415, and 281 as high, medium and low prominence stories respectively. *The Dharitri* spared 2.462% of total space for them. In *The Sambad*, *The Pragativadi* and *The Samaj* the percentage of space devoted to these stories are 2.926, 2.890 and 2.794 respectively.

Amongst the English dailies, *The New Indian Express* devoted 1.566% of total space to these issues, with 520 stories and a prominence score of 29, 313 and 178 stories as high, medium and low respectively. The least amount of space was devoted by *The Asian Age* (0.530%) to these issues. *The Telegraph* and *The Times of India* have allotted 0.768% and 0.589% of space to these respectively.

In terms of frequency of coverage, *The Prajatantra* has topped the chart, publishing a total of 709 stories on development issues. *The Dharitri* has published the lowest number of stories on these issues: 420. Among the English dailies, *The New Indian Express* has published the highest number of news items (520) and *The Telegraph* the lowest (130).

But the frequency of coverage and space alone does not determine the

importance, a newspaper attaches to a particular issue. How the issue has been projected and how well it fares in the "prominence rating" is more important. After calculating the prominence scores, it has been found that amongst the Oriya dailies *The Samaj* published 60 stories under the high prominence category, followed by *The Sambad* (47), *The Dharitri* (35), *The Pragativadi* (32) and *The Prajatantra* (13). In the medium prominence category, *The Sambad* carried 434 stories, *The Prajatantra*, 424, *The Samaj*, 321, *The Pragativadi*, 284 and *The Dharitri*, 283. In the low prominence category, *The Pragativadi* had given 272 stories, *The Prajatantra* 260, *The Samaj* 244, *The Sambad* 158 and *The Dharitri* 102 on all the issues during the study period.

Similarly, among the English dailies *The Times of India* and *The Telegraph* published 42 high prominence stories each, *The New Indian Express*, 29 and *The Asian Age*, 16. In the medium prominence category, *The New Indian Express* brought out 313 stories, *The Times of India*, 170, *The Asian Age* 137 and *The Telegraph*, 66. In the low prominence category, *The New Indian Express* published 178 stories, *The Asian Age*, 92, *The Times of India*, 81 and *The Telegraph*, 22. To gain a deeper understanding of the subject, we have dealt with individual issues and the findings have been recorded.

Most of the stories are situational reports and they lack in-depth analysis. The flaws in various schemes and feasible remedial measures were not highlighted adequately. Most of the news items dealt superficially with development issues relating to the poor, destitute and weaker sections of society. They also appeared staid or lackadaisical and therefore were unlikely to engage the readers or influence policymakers by alerting them to the existence of possible solutions and alternatives.

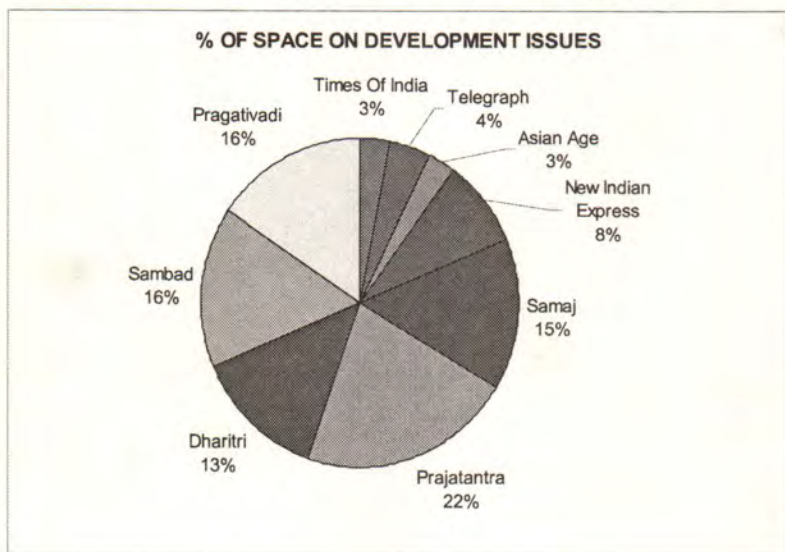
Most of the women- and child-related stories pertaining to rape and molestation were not comprehensive. Follow-ups of such stories were infrequent. The study reveals that the rights of women workers (policies, laws etc) in both the formal and informal sectors, especially involving agricultural workers and construction workers, have not received adequate coverage.

The Oriya dailies have covered a larger number of individual local problems whereas the English dailies have given the overall picture in a broader framework. The news articles in the Oriya dailies demand urgent government redressal of grievances, which is not the case with their English counterparts.

Because of their wider reach and accessibility, Oriya dailies are read by readers ranging from policymakers based in the state capital to the

poor living in remote areas. The readership of English dailies is limited and mostly consists of the elite. The presentation of issues in the Oriya dailies has a greater impact. Stories in the Oriya dailies touch upon issues or problems affecting people in every corner of the state, as our analysis confirms. Among the English dailies, *The New Indian Express* has given a lot of coverage to social development and related issues.

Our analysis shows that the more famous newspapers, with large circulations, tend to devote less space to social and development issues. All the prominent English and Oriya dailies in our study apportion a major share of space to advertisements and subjects such as sports, entertainment and crime, while relegating issues relating to social development and the environment to the background. Interestingly, the English dailies, despite having more pages, give less coverage to these issues than their vernacular counterparts.





MEDIA PERSPECTIVE ON DEVELOPMENT REPORTAGE

The responses of 30 mediapersons interviewed on the adequacies and inadequacies of development reportage follow:

6.1 In view of the growing discrimination against weaker and underprivileged sections of society, and burgeoning poverty, is there adequate coverage (2-4% of total space) of issues like social development and poverty alleviation?

All the 30 media respondents unequivocally agreed that the quantity of coverage was not adequate.

In Category 1, comprising editors, news editors and management, six respondents said that they did not agree with our definition of social development or development coverage. A few respondents argued that stories relating to corruption should be considered development coverage since corruption is anti-poor. Some others contended that crime, violence and many political stories also constitute development coverage since all of them aim at the well-being of the masses, particularly the underprivileged and vulnerable. However, on being asked what percentage of space development news should occupy, they replied that more space should be allotted, but did not mention a reasonable percentage.

Respondents in Category 2, comprising correspondents and reporters, acknowledged that the coverage of social development had been meagre, but did not disagree with our definition of social development.

In Category 3, comprising sub-editors, all the respondents except one, accepted the definition and said that the coverage given was not adequate. One of them suggested that it should be more than 15% of the total print area of newspapers.

6.2 What are the reasons for the low coverage of development news?

Category 1 respondents attributed the low coverage of development issues to various factors such as consumerism, market forces, readers' expectations, unfair competition among dailies, saleability, the need to push up circulation figures and commercialisation of the media.

Category 2 respondents cited reasons like the media's perception of social development issues, its tilt towards glamorous stories, lack of sensitivity of mediapersons, badly written development stories, lack of in-depth news analysis, the media's shifting trend towards publishing feel-good stories, failure of the government to highlight its success stories, the partiality of the management towards political reporting. Being soft, development stories fail to hold readers' attention. The stories are also considered uninspiring. One respondent was of the view that newspapers believed that sex, violence and sensational news sell better. Another said that managements regarded newspapers as a commodity. Another said that the content of the newspaper was largely influenced by the taste of its readers. Since the survival of the newspaper depends on revenue from advertisements, the interests of advertisers are accorded top priority. One respondent maintained that the focus of newspapers was on 'spot' news. Development stories are ignored on account of the limited number of pages in Oriya dailies.

Category 3 respondents said that usually stories on development issues were not given due importance because the top brass in newspapers did not evince any interest in them, that people in the field and the proprietors are least concerned. One respondent said English newspapers have an élitist bias, while Oriya newspapers are run by people who belong to the power élite, and have little understanding of social issues. Some said journalists have little sympathy for the weaker sections. Giving publicity to the rich and powerful brings personal benefits to the journalist and helps the paper receive more advertisement revenue. Ignoring social issues is therefore deliberate and a result of silence among people who matter.

6.3 What are the reasons for this progressive shrinkage in newspaper coverage of development issues?

Among Category 1 respondents, three did not accept that there is a progressive shrinkage. The remaining nine agreed that shrinkage had taken place and cited several reasons for this: lack of exposure to such issues, lack of trained writers, and market forces. One respondent

said that newspapers were not mission-oriented any more. A majority of the respondents in this category replied that the expectations of modern readers, who prefer sensational news to development stories, have to be satisfied. An editor and managing director of an established regional daily added that, because of the perception that sex, politics and crime sold more, and because one could not afford to lose advertisement revenue, development issues got neglected. Another news editor observed that this imbalance needed to be remedied. A bureau chief in a national daily said: "It is difficult to train and sensitise journalists with the limited resources available. The situation will improve as a result of awareness." A news editor in a prominent regional daily said that journalists were helpless due to the policies followed by the newspapers.

Respondents in Category 2 attributed the shrinking of space for development issues to lack of interest on the part of journalists, and also readers who prefer exciting stories on crime or sports to long social development stories. They said journalists do not get the opportunity to discover the problems of remote areas and therefore they need to be sensitised. Development issues get neglected as more corporatisation and commercialisation of newspapers occurs and the tastes and sensibilities of readers undergo a change.

All respondents in Category 3, except one, said that the progressive shrinking of coverage was due to lack of interest on the part of reporters and lack of awareness on the part of the people who matter. Readers send little feedback on development stories, so they are not perceived as having much of a readership. Only one respondent out of eight in this category said that he did not think that there was any progressive shrinkage of print area available for development reporting. A majority of the respondents were unanimous that newspapers had become commercialised.

6.4 Why is more space allotted to advertisements, politics, entertainment, sports and crime stories than to social development-related stories?

Respondents in Category 1 cited the following reasons: there is no daily development in social development news; readers want more happening news; without stories on sports, crime, sex and glamour, the circulation of newspapers may be reduced drastically. They said that the contents of a newspaper must be acceptable and attractive to its

readers and therefore editors and management have no option but to please readers. Changes in social values and the modern psyche have resulted in readers being drawn to flashy advertisements. Also, as newspapers are engaged in a price war, they are looking to make up the figures with enhanced advertising revenue.

Category 2 respondents advanced several reasons: the media is in the clutches of vested interests who do not want to give priority to people's issues; development stories demand research and no one has the time for it.

A majority of the respondents in Category 3 said that development news finds less favour with readers, and that ads are essential for the survival of newspapers and there was nothing they could do about it. One senior sub-editor maintained that reporters did not work on development stories regularly and did not send follow-ups, adding that the person manning the copy desk also played a decisive role in the allocation of space to various stories.

6.5 What priority does the media give social development-related stories?

Seven Category 1 respondents said that social development stories were given priority, while six respondents said that to ensure the paper's economic survival, readers' preferences were decisive. They were of the view that social development stories with a politico-economic angle would be more acceptable. Only two respondents from this category said that most of the coverage did have a bearing on development.

In Category 2, five respondents said that social development and poverty-related issues were a priority, while four respondents said that they were much less important than issues related to politics, sports and entertainment. A respondent from a national business daily added that reporters are instructed not to do stories on 'outdated' topics like poverty.

Four respondents belonging to Category 3 said social issues are no more a priority, whereas the remaining four said they are still a priority despite pressure from the market and editorial policies.

6.6 Is there a specific guideline to devote a certain percentage of coverage to social development stories?

All 30 respondents in all three categories said that no such guidelines existed.

6.7 Do managements of newspapers have any preferences for or against development stories?

Ten respondents in Category 1, seven in Category 2 and five in Category 3 said that they did not express any preference, while others did not answer this question. Some in Category 2 and 3 observed that editors and news editors did not discourage publication of stories on these topics. However the managements of newspapers have no position on development issues.

6.8 Is the decision to ignore development stories employer-driven or reader/market-driven?

In Category 1, six respondents said that they have never ignored any development story that was worth reporting, but the interest of the reader has always to be kept in mind. Out of 13 from this category who admitted that development stories were ignored, two held market forces responsible, two considered readers responsible, and two thought both factors were responsible.

In Category 2, six said they did not ignore development stories. Two of those who said that they ignored them blamed the editor/employer, and one, the market.

In Category 3, four respondents said they did not ignore development stories, three blamed the employer/editor for ignoring such stories; one claimed that neither of the two was responsible.

6.9 Is a special reporter appointed for the social development beat?

Among Category 1 respondents, seven said yes, six said no. Of those who answered in the negative, two respondents added that sub-editors/reporters are always encouraged to do such stories.

In Category 2, four said no, three said yes and two did not answer the question.

In Category 3, six said no and two said yes.

Respondents belonging to the English press said they had reporters to cover social development stories, while respondents belonging to the regional dailies said that they did not have such reporters. Some of the junior-level respondents said that the problem lay with the news editor. Reporters said they should be trained to report on such news. Many

also felt that no effort was made by the government to sensitise the media to development issues.

6.10 Perceiving development: Should it be top-down, interactive or a people's process?

In Category 1, five respondents said it was a people's process to be initiated with a bottom-up approach, two described it as interactive, two described it as top-down, two said it was an interactive as well as a people's process, while one respondent said that it was all three.

In Category 2, three respondents said it was a people's process, three said it was interactive, two said it was both interactive and a people's process, while one respondent said that it should be a combination of all three.

In Category 3, three respondents said it was a people's process, three said it was interactive and others did not answer the question.

Only a few from the whole sample of 30 said that initially it had to be a top-down process, later on it would become interactive and a people's process.

6.11 Is there a need for development reporting in the mainstream media?

All respondents agreed that there is a need for it.

6.12 Why do the front, editorial and op-ed pages contain so few development stories?

In Category 1, three respondents said they had never ignored these stories on the front page, one said its positioning depended on the standard of the development story. Others felt that since political news stories were more happening and came in more frequently, and because development stories needed in-depth analysis and brainwork, the poor and underprivileged in a capitalist society get ignored. They also cited paucity of information content and unreadability of development stories as a reason for them being pushed off the front pages of newspapers.

In Category 2, respondents cited various reasons: development stories are less saleable and sensational; feel-good stories are preferred; front pages are meant for hard and critical news/issues; there is less man-

power to deal with development stories which require special skills etc.

In Category 3, only one respondent said that his newspaper gave space to development stories on the front page. Others said that political, cricket, film or some sensational news is more attractive to readers and is thus highlighted. They said there is a lack of will and vision on the part of reporters, editors and the management, which relegates development stories to inside pages. Traditionally, the front/editorial pages are reserved for hard/critical news.

6.13 Why are development stories usually not accompanied by photos and accorded very low prominence?

Five respondents in Category 1 did not agree with this observation and said that they gave due coverage to these topics. Those who agreed gave the following reasons: editors/copy desk not sensitised, the flow of news on a particular day and relative importance of the story determines its prominence. They admitted that they were not encouraged to commission development stories.

Six respondents in Category 2 said that the stepmotherly treatment given to development stories was because of the news editor's lack of interest in choosing those stories for publication, the poor quality of the story, and its irrelevance to readers. Others ignored the question.

Respondents in Category 3 laid the blame on the pre-eminence of the profit motive for newspapers, and editorial policies which are determined by the findings of readers' surveys. Two respondents chose not to answer this question.

6.14 What is your opinion about the performance of poverty alleviation programmes?

All respondents in all three categories said that poverty alleviation programmes had failed miserably. They cited many reasons. They failed because the government was not able to implement them properly, and because there was lack of coordination and sincerity in government departments. They were handicapped by corruption at every level and a lack of political will.

6.15 As a journalist, what role do you think the media can play in poverty alleviation?

All the respondents said the media could play a watchdog role. It should point out mistakes and irregularities. It should also highlight success stories. The press should give publicity to development programmes and how they are being implemented. All the respondents wanted the media to play its role as an agent of social change.

6.16 What is the impact of media coverage on the people and the government?

All the respondents said people do get sensitised about welfare programmes designed for them. Media coverage makes people aware of their rights and their situation; it also mobilises communities, helps them form opinions. Most important of all, it alerts the government to its own failures. One each in Category 1 and two in Category 2 felt that the government took note of media reports.

6.17 Should there be an alliance between the media and NGOs to remove social disparities?

The question elicited many interesting answers. Two respondents in Category 2 said they could never come together. The remaining 28 said that NGOs and the media can have a strategic alliance, but pre-conditions for this should be that the NGOs are credible, a common agenda is set, and a dialogue initiated. The answers were varied but all of them pointed to the fact that the media could come forward to advance such a noble cause in association with NGOs if they trust each other. NGOs, as facilitators, should provide information about rural areas to mediapersons and organise platforms for common meetings.

Summary of response

Interestingly, though the respondents did not agree with our definition of what constitutes a development story, and disputed our contention that these did not get the space they deserved, they said that the present quantum of space allotted to development stories was definitely not adequate. Editors, news editors and management claimed that stories on politics, crime, corruption and many other issues should also be looked upon as development stories since in various ways they affect the lives of the poor and deprived.

In general, the respondents attributed shrinking development coverage to the attitude of readers, whose tastes are élitist, and who no longer

have an altruistic outlook on life. A large number of newspaper readers live in urban/semi-urban areas, and their preferences supersede those of rural readers.

While the editors, news editors and management attributed the marginalising of pro-poor issues to market forces, sub-editors attributed it to a lack of awareness on the part of reporters and faulty editorial policies. Reporters, for their part, said that development issues and stories are inaccessible, and that the news desk has a tendency to select sensational stories. With newspapers vying with one another to dominate the market, more sensational news, which will increase the circulation and hence attract more advertising revenue, is given preference. However, they said that if a development story meets the expectations of the editors, it is given priority, but stereotyped development stories do not merit attention. Except a very few, all the respondents acknowledged that development issues were neglected in the media.

Mediapersons want poverty alleviation programmes to be formulated and implemented with sincerity. In their opinion corruption at all levels and in every sphere — government as well as non-government — hinders social development and wrecks poverty alleviation programmes. They also felt that mutual trust, sincerity, transparency and integrity on the part of voluntary agencies facilitates collaboration with the media and enables poverty alleviation programmes to succeed.

A few other points emerged from this study. They are: 1 Understanding of development issues (on the part of reporters and sub-editors) needs to be deeper and more humane. 2 The management's perception of development issues should change. 3 The management and the news desk have divergent perceptions and visions. Internal (cost of production of a newspaper) and external (saleability of a newspaper) factors determine the extent of coverage of development issues.



WHAT READERS WANT

How do the poor and disadvantaged perceive the media? Does media coverage make any difference to their lives? The responses of 70 newspaper readers follow:

7.1 Are you a regular newspaper reader?

There were mainly two categories of readers among the respondents: those who read newspapers every day and those who read newspapers for 15-20 days on an average in a month. In addition, a few read newspapers for about 5-10 days in a month or whenever they got the time and opportunity.

7.2 What newspapers do you generally read?

Most of the respondents said they read the Oriya newspapers, *The Samaj*, *The Prajatantra*, *The Pragativadi*, *The Dharitri* and *The Sambad*. Only three said that they read English dailies.

7.3 What kind of news gets highlighted most?

Out of 70 respondents, 56 felt that politics got highlighted most, 27 said crime (theft, rape, violence against women, accidents and scams). Twelve of them said advertisements got the most space, 4 said business and trade, 16 said sports, 14 said entertainment (gossip, film stories). All the answers touched on more than one area of newspaper coverage as mentioned above.

7.4 Are advertisements and entertainment given more space than they deserve?

Fifty-one respondents said 'yes', 16 said 'no' and one gave a mixed response. One of them said that he liked advertisements.

7.5 What kind of news/stories should be highlighted in newspapers?

Twelve mentioned employment/job opportunities, 6 wanted to see more on agricultural developments, 16 on welfare of women, 35 on income-generation schemes/benefits/vocational education/constructive development stories/social security/problems in rural/slum areas. Only one said politics should be given more coverage.

7.6 Are stories about the poor reported less frequently?

Sixty-two respondents answered in the affirmative, 5 said 'no', 2 took a neutral stand and 1 did not answer.

7.7 Should the problems of the poor and vulnerable be reported elaborately in newspapers?

All the respondents except one said that the problems in their local areas should definitely be highlighted in newspapers. Instead of reporting events like murder or wife-beating, newspapers should focus more on their persistent difficulties like liquor, dowry torture, children's education, employment, sanitation, roads, water and electricity. The older newspaper readers complained that newspapers no longer cover issues affecting the vulnerable and disadvantaged.

7.8 Would more reporting on development issues serve any purpose?

Many younger readers, and even those below 45 years of age, said that even if issues concerning them were highlighted, they would derive little or no benefit. The older generation felt that if these issues are brought to light, the government might change its policies in their favour.

7.9 Has there been any change in government welfare schemes implemented in rural areas?

A majority of respondents replied that government schemes are operational in their areas, but wherever they are, they are badly executed and not beneficial at all as either there is nobody to supervise them or they are manipulated by vested interests. A majority of the respondents said that the schemes should be modified to suit people's needs and should be area-specific and need-based. The monitoring system must be strengthened.

7.10 What role can the media play in reducing poverty? Can it:

a) Persuade policymakers to reform policies?

Thirty-seven respondents said 'yes', three said 'no use' and others chose not to answer.

b) Formulate programmes/schemes as per your area's requirements?

Fifty-five said 'yes' and the others did not respond.

c) Any other view?

A majority felt that the media should strive for the greatest good of the greatest number.

Summary

The respondents, irrespective of their occupation or status, unequivocally stressed the need for expanding coverage of development stories. They felt that advertisements, entertainment, politics, crime and other such subjects have taken up space that should have been devoted to development issues.

As the study involved respondents from various occupations and strata, responses to questions regarding their expectations from the media were varied. Though the respondents were not educated enough to comprehend the role of the media in good governance, they were nevertheless able to point out the deficiencies in poverty alleviation programmes and the way they were implemented, with plenty of examples. Many of the respondents, before answering this questionnaire, observed: "Since we are small people in this age of 'might is right', our voice has remained unheard by the government and newspapers."

Some of the respondents wondered if this study would make any difference to their lives. They were not aware of the government's development programmes and how to benefit from them. In far-off areas like tribal villages in Chowdwar and the cyclone-affected coastal blocks, the respondents maintained that issues affecting their lives, such as unemployment, various poverty alleviation schemes, facilities for vocational training, empowerment of women, were important and should find space in the newspapers. Respondents in cyclone-affected areas were anxious about the construction work and repair of roads in their villages and adjoining areas.

In the urban slums, the respondents, particularly men, liked to read comments on cinema, drama, crime, politics, and also advertisements, in addition to articles on development.

Problems relating to socio-economic development agitated the minds of all the respondents since it affected them all. Even though they felt they had not got adequate media assistance in resolving their problems, a majority of them continued to repose faith in the role of the media as a powerful agent of change. The media should therefore be animated by ethical values and should devote adequate space to issues affecting the poor and deprived. All the respondents wanted to see a change in this direction soon.

CONCLUSION

The three complementary phases of our study comprising three parts have conclusively proved that stories on development do not get the space they deserve in newspapers. The findings of the detailed content analysis may not be what media barons want to hear, but the fact remains that the present coverage of development issues is not contributing to the process of ushering in an egalitarian society.

In Chapter 6, the management, editors, news editors, proprietors, sub-editors and reporters state that the media has a social responsibility and this must be reflected in newspaper coverage. Sub-editors and reporters, despite being interested in development issues, can do little to improve the situation, as social development stories are not readily available. The stories that do appear on pro-poor issues are often not news-breaking ones and therefore unlikely to attract more readers if placed on the front page or on other strategic pages. Media managers contend that the absence of sensational and élitist stories pertaining to politics, crime, entertainment etc may affect newspaper circulation adversely, and their very survival would be at stake.

Our view is that given the present situation, there appears to be plenty of scope for newspapers to expand their coverage of pro-poor issues and devote space to the problems and aspirations of the poor and downtrodden.

The voice of the poor and disadvantaged must reach policymakers and implementers who can bring about a change in their lives.

The final part (Chapter 7) of the study reflects these sentiments. Nobody can deny the role of the media as a powerful agent of change and development. For the poor and deprived, development coverage is important, as it provides information on the quality of their lives. For the rich and affluent, the sensational and glamorous feature articles that proliferate can be termed 'luxury consumption'. The gulf between the two can be bridged only through the adoption of an appropriate code of ethics for newspapers, formulated by the newspapers themselves. The age-old role of newspapers in fighting poverty and social injustice has lost none of its urgency.

The success of democracy depends to a large extent on the free flow of information to and from the people. Newspapers are an important

source of information, so it is imperative that they cater to the needs of the poor through greater coverage of issues affecting the poor.

Joseph Pulitzer, after whom a well-known and prestigious prize for outstanding contribution to journalism is named, once commented: "There is not a crime, there is not a dodge, there is not a trick, there is not a vice which does not have to face the light of day. Get these things out in the open, describe them, attack them, ridicule them in the press, and sooner or later public opinion will sweep them away."

That may be what newspapers believe they are doing but as our study proves, all the issues do not come to light. This may be due to constraints of space, selection, editing and on the choice and compulsions of the editor. Today, newspapers have turned into profit-making industries. In a situation like this, we cannot do better than remind ourselves of what Henry Wickham Steed, a former editor of *The Times* (London), said: "The ideal newspaper should be able to make both ends meet without conceding its journalistic integrity in preference to money-making."

APPENDIX 1

The media and the marginalised

By P Sainath

Step back to November-December 1997. That was the period when I spent two months at home. I did two exercises. One, I watched a few television programmes. And I tore off the covers of the first 30-40 magazines that were lying around and spread them around to see what was being covered.

Well, there were two very well-done stories on TV. Good stories and yet, an irony for that. The story was about the unbelievable proliferation of weight-loss clinics in the big cities of India. All the stories noted that the clinics had mushroomed since '91. They did interviews with those who were being conned by these clinics. You lose 10 kg and you put on 25. You have severe physical and emotional problems because of the drugs they use. Moreover, you have shelled out anything between 5,000 to 10,000 rupees for this. It was a necessary story. It was a well-deserved exposure of a very unscrupulous practice. Now, I found that very interesting because another story was unfolding at the same time, between '91 and '96. At the time when the 'war on obesity' was going on, hundreds of millions of Indians were eating less than they did before 1991. They were fighting to not lose any more weight than they already had. The net per capita availability of pulses available to the majority declined from 510 gms to 461 gms per capita. Food prices had ballooned. The Public Distribution prices, between 1991 and '94 alone increased by 87%. Millions of people were eating less. So you have this tremendous story on weight-loss clinics — thousands of urban Indians trying to lose weight. But you also have this story about millions of Indians trying not to lose any more weight. But that didn't make a story.

Another set of covers that I found very interesting — and I found at least 14 on this subject — spoke about rising executive salaries, particularly the gigantic packages taken by CEOs. Youngsters in the corporate world were getting salaries that their parents could not match in 30 years of work — the Rs 1 crore, 1.5 crore salaries. Both the Indian

and foreign media revelled in such success stories of post-liberalisation India. In many regions of this country, the real wages of agricultural labourers fell in the same period. It was not treated with the same importance. But it was the rising salaries of the CEOs and the executives that held the attention.

There are other themes in the cover stories I saw, Themes like the 10 best colleges, or the 10 best schools. Or the 10 best hospitals in India. This is interesting. It is a good story because the higher education you are getting is the best anywhere in the world. But in the same society, of every 100 children of school-going age, 65 drop out by class five. Of the remaining 35 only ten make it to class eight. And only five make it to high school. In other words, the efficiency of your massive education system is 5%. But that doesn't get the same coverage.

Now, what makes it impossible for certain kinds of things to be covered? Let us consider the beats that are in the newspapers today. If you look at the beats, you find that certain beats have become virtually extinct. The labour correspondent is now virtually extinct. Find out how many newspapers have full-time agricultural correspondents. The interaction you have professionally is also shaped by the beat you cover. The extinction of these beats means that journalists are not interacting with very important classes of our society in an organised and structured manner. And if you have not interacted with 60 per cent of your society I don't think you can do a very good job of reporting what's happening in your society.

What's happened to the beats? I found a non-financial daily had specialised correspondents for covering aspects of business. The political correspondents were being overtaken in leaps and bounds by business correspondents. Then come sports correspondents, which, in India, means largely cricket reporters. One newspaper actually had a full-time golf correspondent. There are also, apart from the usual beats, the emergence of fashion, design and society correspondents. There are also glamour correspondents. My favourite, which I have tried unsuccessfully to land, is to become the eating-out correspondent.

I have no problems with this. If it has something for everybody, fine. You want to have a full-time golf correspondent, be my guest. But in all the large publications in the country there is not a single full-time correspondent on the beat of rural poverty. I don't mean assistant editors doing analysis from their heads, I mean reporters. This in a country with the largest number of reporters in the world. In the few newspapers that have attempted any kind of systematic coverage of education, for

example, the focus is on the college campus. Not on primary or adult education. The focus is on the campus beat and the education correspondent is usually loaded with six or seven other responsibilities.

Now how does this breakdown of beats and the lack of specialisation affect us? If you were sent out to cover Enron, your editors would grill you with a thousand questions before publishing the story. But if you are sent out to cover poverty, you can write anything. The modes of covering poverty are many. One of the great ones is the Messiah mode. The visionary with a faraway look in his eyes, solving all the problems in the village, and the transformation in that village will spread to 5 lakh other villages and the country will be saved. Another mode is the poor-as-unending-victims — poor, helpless, desperate people, sometimes reaching very close to the Noble Savage view of people. The other is the poor as unvarnished romantic heroes. Another mode is: here time has stood still. Time has never stood still in the planet anywhere, but in the village it always stands still.

One of the problems is the inability to look at poverty, not as an absolute, but to look at poverty in terms of disparities, in terms of class and in terms of exploitation. So if you find poor people you write that this district has this terrible poor. A few days ago I read a story — 'Bundelkhand: a place without any hope'. Poverty has entrenched everyone. Then it names Tikamgarh as one of the four worst districts of this nine-district region. It says that this area is barren, infertile and nothing will grow. Now, Tikamgarh has topped wheat production in Madhya Pradesh for many years. There is enormous affluence and prosperity alongside that poverty which the correspondent had clearly recorded. The inability to link the incredible prosperity of a few with the unbearable miseries of many robs these stories of their real usefulness. Every feudal chief in Tikamgarh has his private fort. It's a land of fortresses. There are lots of poor people in Tikamgarh. But it has nothing to do with the area being unproductive. Tikamgarh is one of 45 districts in Madhya Pradesh, it is number one in wheat production, it had an infant mortality rate of 195 according to government of MP figures. Now this is a story. The disparity, this incredible wealth and the poverty. So this fake sensationalisation actually robs you of the really sensational.

The problem with the way we cover poverty is that there is no distinction, because you have got slotted into reporting events rather than problems. There is definitely no distinction in the Indian press between hunger and starvation, between drought and famine. Every story of hunger becomes a story of starvation. Larger than Orissa, larger than

Bihar, larger than Madhya Pradesh, the largest number of hunger deaths, in the period between 1991 and 1996, took place in the richest state, Maharashtra. It took place in Belgaum. About 1,000 children died of hunger-related causes. The largest number of hunger deaths are taking place within 90 or 100 km of the country's richest metropolis. Look at it in those terms. This happened as the Sensex was crossing the 4000-mark. You have to get into the question of politics, class structures, exploitation, these sort of areas.

Some very good stories are being done on villages without water, without electricity. I think it is excellent. But I also think that we need to go a bit beyond that: if a village has been around for 200-300 years and had plenty of water in the past, what happened to the water now? Try finding out what happened to the water. Who got the water? If you go to most villages in the country which have water, you'll find a definite caste-geographical distribution of water resources. We should try looking at poverty in terms of a struggle over resources in the village. Not everybody in the village is poor.

This sort of blindness leads to stories like you see on Kalahandi, where everybody is dying and is miserable and so on. This story has been written for 20 years when Kalahandi has been a superb food surplus district. It is a district which, it is stated, has had no rain for 20 years when it had an average rainfall of 1300 mm. In 1996 it was declared to have the century's greatest drought. In the period it was reported as the greatest drought, Kalahandi got more rainfall than Gujarat, Haryana and Punjab. So you have to look beyond the thesis of natural calamity. During the reported period of the 'century's greatest drought', Kalahandi got 2,400 mm of water which is kind of the situation in which Noah builds his Ark. But when you say Kalahandi, it becomes distended bellies, 'starvation stalks Kalahandi', '20 years no rain', etc. It's a very set pattern.

The gigantic problem with the way we cover poverty is that there is no distinction. Look at the Bundelkhand story, look at the earlier stories, there is definitely no distinction in the Indian press between hunger and starvation, between drought and famine. In 1986 an editor argued, in a piece, that the difference between drought and famine is merely semantic. And then declared that two-thirds of the country was facing drought in which case 500 million were facing starvation. Every story of hunger becomes a story of starvation. Because you have got slotted into reporting events rather than problems. If you had done your work, if you had organised your beat, if you had covered the issue of poverty, you may not have had those hunger deaths.

What do you end up covering when you organise your beats like this? I did another test. A small test, again *prima facie*. I removed the very big, earth-shaking issues like general elections. I removed natural calamities like the Latur earthquake. And then started looking at what were the stories that were occupying enormous amounts of space between 1992-96.

In 1994 the one big story was the plague, of which 54 people died. Whereas half a million people die of tuberculosis each year. In 1994-95 the story outside the colossal stories like the elections and the Latur earthquake, which commanded maximum space, was Ms World and Ms Universe. It actually commanded the maximum amount of space from very big newspapers. The coverage of that by these newspapers exceeded coverage of the entire social sector by the same newspapers during that period.

In 1995, one of the issues getting enormous space in the magazines was the wedding of the cricket superstar Imran Khan. In one fortnightly it got nine pages which in the same issue gave 2 pages to 29 starvation deaths of children in the Dhule area. The report of the starvation deaths was brilliant, absolutely brilliant. But nine pages for the cricket superstar, and two pages for deaths!

Now who are the marginalised? Do they have a face? Who are they? Forty per cent of India's poorest citizens are landless agricultural labourers, 45 per cent are small or marginal farmers. A further 7.5 per cent are rural artisans. All the remaining groups together fall under the last 7.5 per cent as 'others'. Within these groups you can further break them down to get a predominance of women, dalits, adivasis, children. Within these groups you can find people ranging from the merely poor to the totally destitute, the completely marginalised. These disparities do not seem to attract the attention of the media any longer.

Now, why do we make different demands of the Indian media? I must say that despite all the criticisms I have been making I am proud to be an Indian reporter, because we have one of the finest reporting traditions. What is the difference between the emergence of the media, say in Europe or Britain, and its emergence in India? There are huge differences. They didn't emerge as news-gatherers, they emerged as agents of commercial interests. At the time when transatlantic trade between the US and Europe was going on it became necessary to know what the markets in the US demanded, what the markets in the UK demanded. Therefore, the news agencies came up to service the stock-markets of London.

The Indian media did not emerge in that fashion. It emerged out of the freedom struggle. It tried to give a voice to those who didn't have a voice. Let me give you an example. In 1893, the Reuters correspondent was sent to India to write about the noble work being done by the British administrators and, more importantly, to counter the noise of the nationalist press and wild propaganda. I was stunned by that. In 1893 Congress was eight years old. There were no national level political movements. But the press was already playing the role of the opposition. And the world's mightiest empire felt compelled to respond to it. The Reuters' correspondent goes on to record: "The suppression and censorship and the closure of the riff-raff of the nationalist press was not only expedient but absolutely desirable and necessary." This is the great champion of the freedom of expression from Reuters who said: "Yes, we will clap and cheer when the administration closes off the Indian press." Here is the paradox. A tiny narrow press, in terms of India's extremely low literacy level, served a much wider social function. Today a gigantic press serves a much narrower social function. That's what has happened, between 1893 and 1998.

If you said that the development of the Indian media is parallel to that of the American media, I would not agree. The Indian media had three streams. From the 1920s onwards it had the pure colonial press, totally represented by *The Times of India*. The other was the fundamentalist stream of journalism of the Hindu Mahasabha and Muslim League. It had the nationalist, secular mainstream. But the nationalist secular mainstream had ideals represented by visions so noble that the American press of the late 1700s and 1800s could never match them. If you look at it, when the American press spoke of freedom — with one or two glowing exceptions like Thomas Paine — they meant freedom for the white, adult, propertied male. There was no question of women or blacks figuring in the freedom of speech or in the bulk of the press.

In your place, from 1861 when the first Indian press comes into being with Raja Ram Mohan Roy, you had people who were talking of the rights of widows, widow remarriage, against female infanticide, people who were speaking for much wider classes than themselves. It is absolutely false to say that people are not interested beyond their class interest. It's not been true of the history of the Indian press. And you have journalists like one Mohandas Karamchand who showed you that he could make a very high impact with very low circulation figures.

There are many positive things in our tradition. And also the fact that the illiterate, the so-called illiterate, uneducated public of this country, have created spaces for freedom for people like us. When Tilak was

tried and sentenced for sedition, it was the unlettered workers of the textile mills of Bombay who came out. Twenty-one of them were shot and died on the streets to defend the freedom of expression of the man whom they could not read. But they said: "He has the right to freedom of expression like anyone else." In the Emergency so many great people crawled. Finally, the Emergency was brought down by the people of this country through a democratic process. And that opened spaces for the media like never before. The people of our country have fashioned a space for us. We must use it.

One great statement that I read on a flyer seemed to be an excellent definition of what the press can do, at its worst. It's the minimum duty of the press. Reflecting on the hysteria created by the American press at a particular period of time which led to the execution of two innocent people, the flyer said: "The press failed to signal the weaknesses." I think that is an excellent minimum duty definition for the media — to signal the weaknesses of society.

P Sainath is a well-known journalist whose recent projects have been on the poorest districts of India and the dalits. He is the author of the bestselling Everybody Loves a Good Drought. This is an excerpt from P Sainath's A C Sen Memorial Lecture, organised jointly by PEACE, Vikalp and the Magic Lantern Foundation

APPENDIX 2

Orissa: Demography and socio-economic profile

Orissa makes up 4.74% of India's landmass and with 36,706,920 people (according to the 2001 census) accounts for 3.57% of the population of India. Orissa has one of the largest concentrations of tribal populations in India. Over a fifth of the state population is tribal. Nearly 85% of Orissa's population lives in rural areas and depends mostly on agriculture for a livelihood.

Demography

The population of Orissa increased from 316.60 lakh in 1991 to 367.07 lakh in 2001. The population density increased from 203 persons per sq km in 1991 to 236 per sq km in 2001. The total rural population is 31,210,602 and the total urban population 5,496,318.

According to the 1991 census, scheduled castes make up 16.20% and scheduled tribes 22.21% of the total population. The sex ratio for Orissa according to the 1991 census is 972 females per 1,000 males. Orissa ranked 27th in the Gender Disparity Index in 1991 with a value of 0.639.

According to the latest estimates of the Planning Commission available for Orissa, the percentage of population below the poverty line was 48.01 in rural areas and 42.83 in urban areas in 1999-2000. According to the 2001 census, 47.15% of people live below the poverty line. This gives the state the dubious distinction of being the second poorest state in the country.

Economy

Orissa's economy is characterised by poverty, unemployment, low per capita income, low capital formation, under-exploitation of abundant natural resources and inadequate development of socio-economic infrastructure.

The economy of Orissa is basically agricultural. The majority of the workforce is composed of cultivators and agricultural labourers

(44.2% and 28.9% respectively). The rest are engaged in household industries and other occupations.

State income

The Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) increased from Rs 15861.30 crore in 1993-94 to Rs 18690.25 (quick estimate) in 2000-01 at 1993-94 prices. The per capita income at 1993-94 prices has been estimated at Rs 5187.00 in 2000-01 as against Rs 4797.00 in 1993-94.

Orissa has had huge revenue deficits year after year, leading to repeated borrowings. The outstanding debt burden at the end of 2000-2001 was Rs 21,035 crore and this is likely to go up to Rs 37,063 crore by 2005-2006. At present, the state's own revenue together with its share of central taxes and grants from the Centre falls short of the expenditure on salary, pension, interest payment and repayment of principal by more than Rs 150 crore and to meet this deficit and other expenses, the state is borrowing heavily.

According to a Government of Orissa white paper on Public & Cooperative Enterprise reforms, Department of Public Enterprises, April 2002, the state is no longer in a position to pay for the increasing needs of Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs), which have accumulated heavy losses and require heavy doses of fresh equity capital and loans to survive. The government cannot afford such expenditure, which would be better used for social development.

The social sector in Orissa is in urgent need of investments in education, health, housing, infrastructure etc. Independent professional estimates show that if only the hidden subsidies enjoyed by the PSEs were diverted to these sectors, it would have led to the creation of about 21,000 new primary schools, 26,000 kilometres of new metal roads, 17,000 new doctors, nearly 100,000 resettlement houses or 500,000 new jobs over the three years, 1997-2000.

Employment

With the increase in population and consequent addition to the labour force, the supply of labour continues to outstrip demand, accentuating the problem of unemployment and under-employment. This problem poses a formidable challenge to the state. It has been estimated that the total backlog of unemployment at the beginning of the year 2001-02 was in the order of 7.72 lakh.

Agriculture

Over 76% of the people are dependent on agriculture. According to 1995-96 figures, 81.97% are small and marginal farmers and 18.03% are semi-medium, medium and large farmers.

The major crops in Orissa are rice, pulses, oilseeds, jute, sugarcane, coconut and turmeric. Sugarcane is the chief cash crop of the state.

Drinking water and electricity

In 1981, only 14.58% of households in Orissa had a safe drinking water supply. The number increased to 39.54% in 1991. The percentage of households with electricity was 17.75 in 1981, which rose to 23.54% in 1991.

Note: All figures are from the National Human Development Report 2001, prepared by the Planning Commission and Economic Survey 2000-2001, Government of Orissa

APPENDIX 3

Orissa: Social indicators

Poverty

Orissa is one of the poorest states in India. In 1993-94 about 48.56% of the population of the state was below the poverty line. The 2001 census did not record any significant difference, with 47.15% of the population below the poverty line. In the Human Poverty Index (HPI) for 1981, Orissa ranked 31st, with a value of 59.34. In 1991 it still ranked 31st with a value of 49.85. In the 1991 Human Poverty Index (not comparable to 1981), Orissa ranked 27th with a value of 45.22.

Health

The Maternal Mortality Rate in Orissa was 367 per hundred thousand in 1998 as against an all-India figure of 407. The Infant Mortality Rate for Orissa in 1991 was 125/1,000 live births as against all-India figures of 77/1,000.

The crude death rate according to social development indicators of 2000-2001 is 10.60.

The all-India figure for under-five mortality was 152/1,000 live births in 1981 as compared to 94/1,000 live births in 1991. In 1981, under-five mortality in Orissa was substantially higher than the all-India average at 175-200/1,000 live births. By 1991 under-five mortality in Orissa was still in the range of 130-150/1,000 live births.

Literacy

The literacy rate in the state increased from 49.1% in the 1991 census to 63.6% in 2001. The male and female literacy rates were 63.1% and 34.7% in 1991. They increased to 76.1% and 51.0% respectively in 2001.

Vulnerability to natural disasters

Natural calamities — drought, cyclones and floods — strike Orissa with

grim regularity year after year.

The entire east coast of Orissa is vulnerable to cyclones of varying frequency and intensity. A supercyclonic storm of great intensity hit Orissa in October 1964. In 1971, a cyclone killed 10,000 people in Kendrapara. The supercyclone in October 1999 left the state paralysed, with its communication system and infrastructure totally wrecked. It severely affected 13 million people in 97 blocks; 9,885 people were killed.

In Orissa, almost every year more than 10 million people reel under drought. Since 2000, severe drought has led to several starvation deaths in the state. Around 11,914 villages in various districts of the state are currently drought-affected. The 1996 drought affected 26 districts and 293.48 lakh people. Orissa has faced drought several times in the past few decades but the drought in 2000 was the worst in current times. Bargarh, Nuapada and Bolangir were the worst-affected districts. The recurrent annual droughts are caused by erratic rainfall and improper water-harvesting systems.

The river Mahanadi causes regular floods in the state. In 1999, the supercyclone was followed by torrential rains leading to severe floods. During the 2001 flood, 24 districts and 18,790 villages were affected: 99 lives were lost and 96.78 lakh people affected.

Disparity amongst the districts

The coastal districts of Orissa are better-off compared to the southern districts. However, in the southern district of Malkangiri 79% of the population lives below the poverty line (BPL). In Koraput the BPL percentage is 69, in Rayagada it is also 69. In Kalahandi the BPL percentage is 79. All these districts also show lower literacy rates. In Koraput the literacy rate is 36.2%, in Rayagada it is 35.61%. However, the coastal district of Puri has a literacy rate of 78.4%, and Khorda 80.3%.

Development-induced displacement

In the last 50 years, the local population of Orissa has been dispossessed of thousands of hectares of land in the tribal regions. These lands have been brought under dam projects, industries and mines. The displaced have been poorly compensated, if at all, and many have lost their livelihoods and their homes.

Estimates claim that about 1.5 lakh people have been deprived of their livelihood in the name of national development between 1951 and

1995. Forty-two per cent of these people are tribals. A total of 2.3 million acres of land have been acquired for dams, industries, mines and miscellaneous projects in Orissa between 1951-1995. Of this, 107,000 acres were for industries. Recent trends show that a further 200,000 acres will be acquired in Orissa for industries alone during the next 10 years (Indian Social Institute, 1996).

Note: All figures are from the National Human Development Report 2001, prepared by the Planning Commission

STATISTICAL APPENDIX

Thematic coverage

Coverage of social development and poverty alleviation

	SAMBAD	SAMAJ	DHARITRI	PRAGATIVADI	PRAJATANTRA	THE TIMES OF INDIA	THE ASIAN AGE	THE TELEGRAPH	THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS
Total No. of Times Appeared	322	375	151	336	473	139	82	36	213
Total Days Studied	170	162	156	150	159	165	158	171	166
Total Space Allotted	7697.4	8763.5	4745	7999.75	13742	4989.25	2612	2711.75	6838.5
Prominence									
High	23	30	10	12	7	18	6	16	4
Medium	215	175	109	160	279	89	46	16	139
Low	84	170	32	162	187	50	30	6	70

Women and development

	SAMBAD	SAMAJ	DHARITRI	PRAGATIVADI	PRAJATANTRA	THE TIMES OF INDIA	THE ASIAN AGE	THE TELEGRAPH	THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS
Total No. of Times Appeared	243	171	202	190	172	83	109	64	175
Total Days Studied	170	162	156	150	159	165	158	171	166
Total Space Allotted	8659.55	3863.55	5577	4675.95	4965.5	2783.75	2721	4786.75	5746
Prominence									
High	22	18	16	15	5	17	8	21	16
Medium	167	104	132	93	101	44	52	36	89
Low	54	50	54	82	66	22	49	7	70

	SAMBAD	SAMAJ	DHARITRI	PRAGATIVADI	PAJATANTRA	THE TIMES OF INDIA	THE ASIAN AGE	THE TELEGRAPH	THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS
Total No. of Times Appeared	42	24	33	10	14	22	33	12	47
Total Days Studied	170	162	156	150	159	165	158	171	166
Total Space Allotted	859	633	780.5	411	434.5	832	1021	470	1844.5
Prominence									
High	1	2	1	3	0	4	1	1	2
Medium	25	12	24	4	9	15	25	6	28
Low	16	10	8	3	5	3	7	5	17

Dalits and tribals/indigenous people/minorities

	SAMBAD	SAMAJ	DHARITRI	PRAGATIVADI	PAJATANTRA	THE TIMES OF INDIA	THE ASIAN AGE	THE TELEGRAPH	THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS
Total No. of Times Appeared	29	55	30	40	46	18	15	16	77
Total Days Studied	170	162	156	150	159	165	158	171	166
Total Space Allotted	723	1632	1028	1212.3	1825	646.5	384.5	721	2594.25
Prominence									
High	1	10	7	1	1	2	1	4	
Medium	25	32	15	26	31	12	8	9	
Low	3	14	8	13	14	4	6	3	

Human rights

	SAMBAD	SAMAJ	DHARITRI	PRAGATIVADI	PAJATANTRA	THE TIMES OF INDIA	THE ASIAN AGE	THE TELEGRAPH	THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS
Total No. of Times Appeared	3	0	4	2	4	13	6	2	8
Total Days Studied	170	162	156	150	159	165	158	271	166
Total Space Allotted	91.5	0	163.5	128.5	132.5	458.5	237	52.5	281
Prominence									
High	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Medium	2	0	3	1	4	10	6	1	7
Low	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	1

		DHARITRI		SAMBAD		SAMAJ		PRAGATIVADI		PRAJATANTRA		THE TIMES OF INDIA		THE TELEGRAPH		THE ASIAN AGE		THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS	
		Total Space given	Total %	Total Space given	Total %	Total Space given	Total %	Total Space given	Total %	Total Space given	Total %	Total Space given	Total %	Total Space given	Total %	Total Space given	Total %	Total Space given	Total %
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT and Poverty Alleviation (General)	3.00	277	0.055	540	0.097	681.5	0.126	350	0.07	375.5	0.07	793	0.048	839	0.073	471.5	0.035	814.5	0.073
	3.01	494	0.098	1073.3	0.193	1154	0.213	1560.5	0.312	2751.5	0.519	0	0	145	0.012	78.5	0.005	94	0.008
	3.01a	552.5	0.11	834	0.15	1154	0.213	693	0.0138	1897.5	0.358	770.5	0.046	630.3	0.055	305.5	0.023	654	0.059
	3.01b	930	0.186	1052	0.189	1713	0.317	1409	0.282	2930	0.553	2456	0.149	695.5	0.061	1148.5	0.087	2918	0.264
Sanitation and Drinking Water	3.01c	147.5	0.029	256	0.046	163.5	0.03	47	0.009	530	0.1	424.5	0.025	119	0.01	0	0	177	0.016
Food Security/ food distribution/ starvation	3.02	861.5	0.172	1013.5	0.182	1180	0.218	1185	0.237	1705.8	0.322	253.5	0.015	0	0	260.5	0.019	674	0.061
Shelter/ Housing/ Displacement	3.03	94.5	0.018	338	0.06	285	0.052	231.5	0.046	405.5	0.076	33	0.002	0	0	44	0.003	230	0.02
Labour/ Employment and livelihood (policy, planning and situational information)	3.04	490	0.098	1147.5	0.206	650.5	0.12	968.25	0.193	940.75	0.177	0	0	0	0	123.5	0.009	247.5	0.022
Global Labour Situation; employment and labour in other countries	3.04a	0	0	8.5	0.001	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	184	0.016	0	0	0	0
Unorganised Labour (General)	3.04b	0	0	0	0	23.5	0.004	0	0	14	0.002	0	0	27	0.002	34	0.002	0	0
Migrant Labour (policy and situation in India and other countries)	3.04c	0	0	34.5	0.006	61	0.011	54	0.01	173.5	0.032	132	0.008	42	0.003	21	0.001	64	0.005
Bonded labour (policy situation in India)	3.04d	44	0.008	82.5	0.014	54	0.01	0	0	104	0.019	0	0	0	0	33	0.002	19	0.001

Wages/ Rights/Workers benefits (Rural)	3.04 e	74	0.014	238	0.042	155	0.028	94.5	0.018	192.5	0.036	54	0.003	0	0	0	0	28	0.002
Wages/ Rights/Workers Benefits (Urban / Industrial)	3.04f	194.5	0.038	198	0.035	715	0.132	477.5	0.095	830	0.156	42	0.002	0	0	0	0	254	0.02
Offensives / Victimisation by employers (Enclosures, Lay-offs, harassment etc)	3.04g	29	0.005	26	0.004	0	0	90	0.018	69.5	0.013	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Construction workers	3.04h	0	0	0	0	9.5	0.001	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fish workers (including traditional fishermen)	3.04i	258.5	0.051	575.8	0.103	110	0.02	373.5	0.074	307.5	0.058	0	0	24	0.002	54	0.004	422	0.038
Mining Labour	3.04j	98.5	0.019	141	0.025	81.5	0.015	74	0.014	85	0.016	0	0	0	0	14.5	0.001	14.5	0.001
Special Employment and Livelihood Support Programmes	3.04k	147	0.029	122	0.021	191	0.035	160.5	0.032	163.5	0.03	0	0	0	0	10	7E-04	178	0.016
Social security / protective measures (old age, destitutes, senior citizens problems)	3.05	52.5	0.01	27	0.004	382.5	0.07	231.5	0.046	266	0.05	31	0.001	6	0.0005	33.5	0.002	50	0.004
Women and Development (General situation)	7.00	718	0.143	1243.5	0.224	374.5	0.069	524.75	0.0105	593	0.112	1204	0.073	1985	0.174	588.5	0.044	2156	0.195
Rights of Women Workers (policies / laws and the situation both in Formal and Informal Sector i.e. agricultural workers/ construction workers/ others)	7.01	32	0.006	80	0.014	0	0	124.5	0.024	273	0.051	240	0.014	420.8	0.036	48	0.003	379	0.034
Women's Role in Politics (in party politics, panchayati raj)	7.02	625.5	0.125	244.5	0.044	96.5	0.017	212	0.042	201.5	0.038	360	0.021	353.5	0.031	41	0.031	558	0.05
Women and basic services (health, education, sanitation and drinking water)	7.03	0	0	86	0.015	62	0.011	180	0.036	0	0	8	0.0004	181	0.015	0	0	24	0.002

Violence Against Women (eve-teasing/ rape/ genital mutilation/ wife-battering/ battering)	7.04	2957	0.592	3766.5	0.678	2251	0.417	2468.5	0.494	2657.5	0.502	849.8	0.051	195.5	0.105	1314	0.099	1894	0.171
Downy Related Harassment/ Torture/ Death	7.05	1003	0.2	955.05	0.172	827	0.153	1060.2	0.212	1096.5	0.207	56.5	0.003	0	0	288.5	0.021	463	0.041
Violence by State, Police, Army, Govt. Officials	7.06	41	0.008	353	0.063	106	0.019	76	0.015	84	0.015	30	0.001	42.5	0.003	42	0.003	83.5	0.007
Women's Movement	7.07	200.5	0.04	131	0.023	247	0.045	30	0.006	60	0.011	35.5	0.002	608.5	0.053	29	0.002	108.5	0.009
Child Rights and Situation (including the girl-child)	8.00	176.5	0.035	127.5	0.022	103	0.019	0	0	0	0	487.5	0.029	274.5	0.024	350	0.026	1165	0.105
Child Labour	8.01	107.8	0.021	184	0.033	320.5	0.059	309	0.061	295	0.055	130	0.007	41	0.003	182.5	0.013	315	0.028
Abuse or Violence on / Trafficking in Children	8.02	496	0.099	547.5	0.098	209.5	0.038	102	0.02	139.5	0.026	214.5	0.013	154.5	0.013	488.5	0.037	364.5	0.032
Dalits and Tribals/ Indigenous People	9.00	233	0.046	380.5	0.068	593	0.109	223	0.044	222	0.041	231	0.014	340	0.029	149	0.011	781	0.07
Access to Basic Services (health, education, sanitation and drinking water)	9.01	210.5	0.042	79.5	0.014	169	0.031	414.3	0.082	686	0.129	41	0.002	142	0.012	70.5	0.005	498	0.045
Food Security	9.02	0	0	85.5	0.015	104	0.019	0	0	11	0.002	28	0.001	0	0	0	0	151.75	0.013
Employment/ Livelihood/ Resource Rights (Rights to land, forest etc) / Situation/ Policies/ Practices)	9.03	143	0.028	30	0.005	49.5	0.009	163.5	0.032	231.5	0.043	54	0.003	114	0.01	26	0.001	101	0.009
Shelter/ Housing/ Displacement	9.04	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	160	0.03	0	0	0	0	0	0	64	0.005
Discrimination/ Violence Against Dalits and Tribals/ Indigenous People	9.05	267.5	0.053	103	0.018	432.5	0.08	281	0.056	318.5	0.06	98.5	0.005	56	0.004	10	0.007	380.5	0.034
Minorities	9.06	174	0.034	44.5	0.008	284	0.052	130.5	0.026	196	0.037	194	0.011	69	0.004	129	0.009	654	0.059
Human Rights (General discussion, international/ national instruction/ policies/ laws etc.)	10.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	80	0.015	328	0.019	150.001	0.001	237	0.018	136	0.012

Human Rights Violation by State (civil, police and military authorities/ personnel)	10.01	133.5	0.026	66.5	0.011	0	0	128.5	0.025	62.5	0.011	130.5	0.007	37.5	0.003	0	0	0	0	0.013
Denial/ Miscarriage of Justice	10.02	30	0.006	25	0.004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

NAME OF THE NEWSPAPER : THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS													
13.11.2k	18	7488	1681	180	1861	517	293	856	652	52	54	424	2779
14.11.2k	20	8320	1415	0	1415	56	249	832	900	124	148	450	4146
15.11.2k	18	7488	1558	192	1700	74	53	832	469	132	102	993	3133
16.11.2k	18	7488	1210	400	1610	250	191	832	760	509	103	424	4679
17.11.2k	24	9984	1467	534	2001	15	172	852	408	2936	139	727	2734
18.11.2k	18	7488	1710	476	2186	191	169	832	524	24	106	425	3031
19.11.2k	24	9984	2088	0	2088	44	76	0	1618	236	926	1248	3748
7 days	140	58240	11129	1782	12861	1147	1203	5036	5331	4013	1578	4691	24250
			19.108%	3.059%	22.082%	1.969%	2.070%	8.646%	0.915%	6.890%	2.709%	8.054%	41.638%
NAME OF THE NEWSPAPER : ASIAN AGE													
13.11.2k	16	6656	158	10	168	524	180	576	813	910	936	832	1717
14.11.2k	16	6656	94	169	263	155	47	1005	812	246	520	1248	2360
15.11.2k	16	6656	199	70	269	599	249	738	799	685	776	936	1578
16.11.2k	16	6656	125	40	165	258	184	416	1149	434	520	1308	2222
17.11.2k	16	6656	102	120	222	600	320	762	775	717	936	416	2279
18.11.2k	16	6656	80	9	89	336	256	448	424	636	936	1248	2279
19.11.2k	32	13312	108	110	218	626	548	0	1296	470	2496	2080	5558
7 days	128	53248	866	528	1394	3098	1804	4445	6068	4098	7120	8068	17993
			1.626%	0.991%	2.617%	5.818%	3.387%	8.347%	11.395%	7.696%	13.371%	15.151%	33.790%
NAME OF THE NEWSPAPER : THE SAMAJ													
13.11.2K	8	3328	768	794	1562	345	138	0	142	0	0	425	716
14.11.2K	12	4992	685	295	980	169	217	0	260	112	0	416	2838
15.11.2K	8	3328	757	201	958	130	185	0	269	0	0	425	1361
16.11.2K	8	3328	671	213	884	101	142	0	358	32	0	425	1386
17.11.2K	8	3328	684	312	996	197	229	0	254	106	75	430	1041
18.11.2K	8	3328	466	583	1049	149	149	0	289	0	0	431	1261
19.11.2K	12	4992	695	295	990	175	283	0	265	110	0	416	2753
7 DAYS	64	26624	4726	2693	7419	1266	1343	0	1837	360	75	2968	11356
			17.750%	10.114%	27.865%	4.755%	5.044%	0.000%	6.899%	1.352%	0.281%	11.147%	42.653%

NAME OF THE NEWSPAPER : THE PRAJATANTRA

13.11.2k	8	3328	104	84	188	169	108	416	0	90	0	882	1475
14.11.2k	8	3328	198	158	356	54	115	48	416	461	452	416	1010
15.11.2k	8	3328	208	165	373	36	191	64	396	416	0	842	1010
16.11.2k	8	3328	120	252	372	241	102	0	796	113	1110	416	172
17.11.2k	8	3328	296	106	402	16	200	36	384	482	416	426	966
18.11.2k	8	3328	418	160	578	24	146	0	416	34	0	841	1289
19.11.2k	8	3328	242	0	242	72	185	22	416	100	1365	632	294
7 days	56	23296	1566	925	2511	612	1047	586	2824	1696	3843	4455	6216
			6.808%	3.970%	10.778%	2.627%	4.494%	2.515%	12.122%	7.280%	16.496%	19.123%	26.682%

NAME OF THE NEWSPAPER : THE DHARITRI

13.11.2k	10	4160	378	422	800	245	131	346	209	0		416	1909
14.11.2k	10	4160	500	503	1003	86	52	431	211	0		542	1183
15.11.2k	10	4160	428	410	838	63	167	416	163	0		416	1985
16.11.2k	10	4160			688	98	180	416	200	416		416	1080
17.11.2k	10	4160			943	106	207	416	596	0		416	1309
18.11.2k	10	4160			642	59	171	416	279	28		416	2021
19.11.2k	8	3328			1136	128	96	32	203	0		416	1206
7 days	68	28288			6050	785	1004	2473	1861	444		3038	10693
					21.387%	2.775%	3.549%	8.742%	6.578%	1.569%		10.739%	37.800%

NAME OF THE NEWSPAPER : THE SAMBAD													
	10	4160	159	204	363	88	374	0	292	16	416	426	2190
13.11.2k	10	4160	501	359	860	58	199	72	237	9	108	698	1919
14.11.2k	10	4160	195	391	586	26	138	27	334	0	356	493	2200
15.11.2k	10	4160	530	149	679	170	75	0	316	0	416	492	2012
16.11.2k	10	4160	676	222	898	93	225	112	302	0	72	509	1949
17.11.2k	10	4160	240	84	324	122	472	0	296	30	416	426	2080
18.11.2k	10	4160	445	301	746	56	324	72	734	0	3140	226	1358
19.11.2k	16	6656	2746	1710	4456	613	1807	283	2511	55	4924	3270	13708
7 days	76	31616	8.685%	5.408%	14.094%	1.938%	5.715%	0.895%	7.942%	0.173%	15.574%	10.342%	43.357%
NAME OF THE NEWSPAPER : THE PRAGATIVADI													
	8	3328	183	0	183	343	185	129	296	516	179	416	1080
13.11.2k	8	3328	177	0	177	163	235	15	313	16	73	416	1918
14.11.2k	8	3328	249	196	445	273	230	106	292	0	473	416	1092
15.11.2k	8	3328	225	40	265	190	137	99	317	42	536	416	1324
16.11.2k	8	3328	0	101	101	565	179	111	280	50	69	832	1140
17.11.2k	8	3328	251	71	345	234	249	80	414	0	51	716	1238
18.11.2k	8	3328	251	71	322	291	108	320	320	416	10	520	1339
19.11.2k	8	3328	1085	408	1838	2059	1323	540	2232	1040	1391	3732	9131
7 days	56	23296	4.657%	1.751%	7.889%	8.838%	5.679%	2.317%	9.581%	4.464%	5.970%	16.019%	39.195%

ANNEXURE 1

Categorisation of development issues for this study

The following five broad issues have been included under development coverage. Each issue has several sub-issues.

1.0 Social development and poverty alleviation (general)

- 1.01 Basic services (general)
- 1.01 a. Literacy and basic education
- 1.01 b. Primary health care (including reproductive and maternal/child health care)
- 1.01 c. Sanitation and drinking water
- 1.02 Food security/Food distribution/Starvation
- 1.03 Shelter/Housing/Displacement
- 1.04 Labour/Employment and livelihood (policy, planning and situational information)
 - a. Global labour situation; employment and labour in other countries
 - b. Unorganised labour (general)
 - c. Migrant labour (policy and situation in India and other countries)
 - d. Bonded labour (policy, situation in India)
 - e. Wages/Rights/Workers' benefits (rural)
 - f. Wages/Rights/Workers' benefits (urban/industrial)
 - g. Offensives/Victimisation by employers (enclosures, lay-offs, harassment etc)
 - h. Construction workers
 - i. Fish workers (including traditional fishermen)
 - j. Mining labour
 - k. Special employment and livelihood support programmes

- 1.05 Social security/Protective measures (old age, destitutes, senior citizens' problems)

2.0 Women and development (general situation)

- 2.01 Rights of women workers (policies/laws and the situation) both in formal and informal sectors i.e. agricultural workers/ construction workers / others
- 2.02 Women's role in politics (in party politics, panchayati raj etc)
- 2.03 Women and basic services (health, education, sanitation and drinking water)
- 2.04 Violence against women (eve-teasing/rape/genital mutilation/ wife-buying/battering)
- 2.05 Dowry-related harassment/torture/death
- 2.06 Violence by State, police, army, government officials
- 2.07 Women's movement

3.0 Child rights and situation (including the girl-child)

- 3.01 Child labour
- 3.02 Abuse of/violence on/trafficking in children

4.0 Dalits and tribals/Indigenous people (general)

- 4.01 Access to basic services (health, education, sanitation and drinking water)
- 4.02 Food security
- 4.03 Employment/Livelihood/Resource rights (right to land, forests etc) /Situation/Policies/Practice
- 4.04 Shelter/Housing/Displacement
- 4.05 Discrimination/Violence against dalits and tribals/Indigenous people
- 4.06 Minorities

5.0 Human rights (general discussion, international/national

instruments/policies/laws etc)

- 5.01 Human rights violation by the State (civil, police and military authorities/personnel)
- 5.02 Denial/Miscarriage of justice

ANNEXURE 2

Newspaper monitoring parameters sheet

ITEM	TYPE COVERAGE	PAGE IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE	LOCATION IN A PAGE	EXTENT OF HIGHLIGHT		ANALYSIS OF PRESENTATION
PARTICULAR ITEM TO BE DESCRIBED	News Report (NR)	Front / Editorial Page : 4 points	Lead: 4 points	Very eye catching photo: 3 Points	SPACE ALLOTTED IN TERMS OF COL.CM	Informs in what detail
	News Analysis (NA)	Opposite Editorial Page: 3 points	1 st /2 nd story: 3 points	Eye-Catching: 2 points		Informs / Disinforms Selectively
	Socio Economic Analysis (SEA)	Right Hand Page: 2 points	Anchor: 2 points	Plainly Highlighted 1 point		What could be the implication/ Language used
	Political Commentary (PC)	Special Section: 1 point	Others: 1 point	Almost Invisible: 1 point		Analysis of the News Item
	Letter to Editor (LE)					

About CYSD

The Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD) has been working to improve the lives of the poor and deprived in Orissa since its inception in 1982.

CYSD carries out community development programmes in direct partnership with the poor and marginalised in remote tribal districts of the state. Its grassroots activities are aimed at enabling people to create their own institutions to fulfil their needs and secure their entitlements. It extends capacity-building support to primary-level community-based organisations (CBOs), secondary-level NGOs and other tertiary development organisations and networks to accelerate the process of social change. It also engages in policy research and advocacy on issues concerning the poor, trying to reorient development policies and paradigms along their needs and aspirations.

CYSD strategic wings include the Centre for Human and Sustainable Development (CHSD), the Development Resource and Training Centre (DRTC), and the Centre for Policy Research and Advocacy (CEPRA). RACHANA, a centre for disaster response and preparedness, was formed in the aftermath of the 1999 supercyclone.

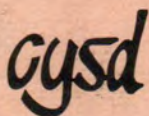
CYSD's development projects span 373 villages and 7 slums in nine districts of the state, from the tribal districts of Koraput, Sundargarh, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj to the urban slums of Bhubaneswar and the coastal districts of Puri and Jagatsinghpur, which are most vulnerable to natural disasters.

The Centre is part of several alliances including Social Watch, and was awarded the National Environment Award in 1989.

Forty-seven per cent of Orissa's people live below the poverty line. Yet, this study of five Oriya newspapers and four English-language papers reveals that Oriya newspapers devote less than 4% of their total space to pro-poor and social development issues. The English-language newspapers devote less than 1% of their space to issues concerning the poor. The few stories that do appear lack depth and analysis.

Clearly, politics, business, entertainment, sport and advertisements are edging the poor further and further into the margins. Newspapers have reporters on the food and fashion beats, but few have correspondents to cover rural poverty or labour issues any more. Though it is the democratic function of the media to monitor and reflect the condition of society as a whole, the poor seem to be vanishing from the news pages.

What happens when the press fails to signal the weaknesses of society? Why has the Indian press, which arose out of the freedom struggle, abandoned its activist role? What do publishers and mediapersons feel about the diminishing coverage of pro-poor issues in the Indian media? Do readers themselves feel that the press is representing their concerns and needs adequately?



Centre for Youth and Social Development