

A decorative border with intricate floral and scrollwork patterns surrounds the central text.

# *Chapter: 03*

**Origin and development of  
Urdu Journalism in India.**

## **Origin and Development of Urdu Journalism in India**

### ***3.1 Introduction:***

Quest for knowledge and thirst for information are as old as the human being himself. On the basis of information and knowledge action is the inclination and inherent desire of mankind. Curiosity for knowledge and information made the man knowledgeable and heralds a new era of progress and prosperity of the society. Human being can live in poverty but does not live without knowledge. Food enriches the health but knowledge and information make the people capable, rational and perfect. Due to knowledge and information people can achieve great success in his own life but also can play significant role in socio-economic development of the society. Human being's natural tendency is that he acquires and exchanges the knowledge, information, ideas and views with each other. Continuous progress and hard work in this regard gave birth the media and journalism.

Before enlighten on the history of Urdu Journalism in India, researcher would like to give brief account of the communication system in India before and in the early phase of East India Company.

### ***3.2 Communication system in ancient India:***

In ancient period there was no printing press. At that time there was no efficient communication and transport system as well. The ruler used to communicate with the people through edicts and proclamations. In the period

of Asoka, one of the greatest Indian emperor he devised his own means of communication. During his regime all the imperial edict were inscribed on copper plates, rock and stone pillars which exist even today and is eminent from Afghanistan in North east to Karnataka in the south India. Daily news covering the events and happenings were published in form of small picture drawn on the walls of temple in ink or colour which could be erased easily. Policy decisions taken by the rulers were also communicated to the people through announcer who made these announcements in a crowded gathering by beating a tom tom. The same methods were also adopted in different parts of Europe to spread the network for propagation of the news.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> The press in India; perspective in development and relevance by K.S.Padhy and R.N. Sahu.p.02

### ***3.3 Communication system in Medieval India (Mughal Period):***

In the *Mughal* period news writers were appointed to various administrative units in their territory and were charged with the function of sending reports to the headquarters of the administration. These manuscript reports were submitted exclusively for official use and these are early indications of news writers working in collusion with a governor or a local administrative official presenting them in a favourable light to the central authority and covering up their tyranny and oppressive exactions. A later development was the copying of these reports and their circulation to important officials.

Still later the various administrations in the Indian peninsula kept themselves informed of events and doing in one another's territories through the medium of these manuscript newspapers. There are conflicting reports about the state of the press in time of *Aurangzeb*; for while one historian records that the emperor allowed great liberty in the matter of the news.<sup>1</sup>

During the rule of *Aurangzeb* (1618A.D to 1707A.D) his army not only received the news from headquarters but also communicated the same to it. A number of information offices were set up for circulation and dissemination of news. News writers, otherwise called *Vaqai Navis*, were appointed to supply the news covering important events and incidents. On the basis of these reports from them important decisions were taken and policies formulated at different information offices. Then these news letters were sent to Delhi, there the summary of the news was read to Aurangzeb by a woman of the place at about 9PM. Besides *Vaqai navis*, *Khufia Navis* were also appointed to collect

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<sup>1</sup> History of Indian Press, Growth of newspapers in India, by B.N Ahuja .P.01-02



the news secretly. Spies were also appointed to send weekly reports covering the activities of princes.<sup>1</sup>

All these newsletters, obviously, were handwritten and their average size was eight inches by four and a half inches. They covered different aspects, like promotions, visits of the emperor to mosques and other holy places, hunting expedition's details of the presentations made to him and items of similar nature. It is not only interesting but also heartening to point out that the news writers were given maximum freedom to cover, present and disseminate the news which were unfortunately very often inaccurate fabricated and distorted. Besides the emperor, big merchants and landlords were also appointed private news writers to procure news on those items in which they were interested. It is said that there were two wooden printing presses in India at that time with limited facilities for printing. Employment calligraphists or handwriting experts during the Mughal regime was one of the most important factors responsible for delaying the growth of printing in India<sup>2</sup>

### ***3.4 East India Company and Indian News writers:***

In the early period East India Company also appointed the news writers. Early reports were confined to the affairs of the English and on the occasion the grievances of the company's employees were ventilated through this channel and sometimes readdressed. For a number of reasons the news writers in the service of the East India Company were subject to greater control than those of the Mughal emperors.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>.Siddique,Md. Ateeque "Hindustani Akhbar Navesi Company ke Ahad me" P. 25-26

<sup>2</sup>. K.S.Padhy and R.N. Sahu"The press in India; perspective in development and relevance"  
P.No.02-03

<sup>3</sup> History of Indian Journalism by J. Natarajan, P.03

### 3.5 History of Printing Press in India:

The credit of printing press in India goes to the *Christian missionaries*, who came to India with the intention of propagation of Christianity. They set up for the first time printing press in India to achieve their desired goal. They realized that the press is most powerful medium through which they could protect and propagate their religion and faith.

In 06<sup>th</sup> September, 1556 first printing press in India arrived in Goa. In 1557 printing press was used and first book *Doctrina Christam* written by *St. Francis Xavier* was printed. *Jaao Gonslaves*, a black, was the first Indian to prepare types of an Indian script. He made types of Tamil Letters. St. Xavier's *Doctrina Christam* was published in an Indian language.



In 1578, the second printing press was set up in the Tinnevelly District in south India. In 1674, a printing press was established on Mumbai by **Bhimji Parekh**, a **Bania** (Goldsmith) of Gujarat. **Henry Hills** helped him in running the same.

In 1769 a printing press was started at **Ambalkad**, a village twenty miles away from **Trichur in Malabar**. It published the first Tamil-Portuguese Dictionary.

In 1761, the first printing was set up in Madras under peculiar circumstances' and several books published in different language.

It is interesting as well as significant to know that initially the establishment of the printing press in different parts of India was looked down with the contempt and suspicion by the Indians as their sole aim was the propagation of the Christian faith. But the subsequent unfold of the events in the Indian history demonstrated that press was a powerful medium through which any desired end, including freedom of a country, could be achieved. The Press undoubtedly played a major role in the struggle for national independence of India.<sup>1</sup>

### ***3.6 Contribution of William Bolts:***

It is significant to mention that the first printing press was set up in the third quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century but the publication of the newspaper was delayed by more than two centuries. Due to absence of a newspaper more than two centuries must have created a vacuum in the field of communication. The companies servants in India wished to withhold the news of their malpractices and abuses of private trading from reaching Whitehall London.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> K.S.Padhy and R.N. Sahu "The press in India; perspective in development and relevance" P.N04

<sup>2</sup> Tahir Mahmood "Urdu Sahafat Unnisvin Sadi me" P.No. 53.

The first attempts to publish a newspaper in India were made by the disgruntled employee of East India Company who sought to expose the malpractices of private trade. This attempt made in Calcutta (Kolkata) in 1776 by Mr William Bolts. Bolts resigned owing to censure by the court of directors of the company for his carrying on private trade beyond the company's authority. He announced his intention to embark on a writing career saying he had "in manuscript many things to communicate which most intimately concerned every individual"<sup>1</sup> this gave rise to alarm in official quarters. He was directed to quit Bengal and proceed to Madras and from there to take his passage to Europe. Hence the first attempt for journalistic venture proved abortive.<sup>2</sup>

### 3.7 Hicky's Gazette. (India's first newspaper):



<sup>1</sup> Tahir Mahmood "Urdu Sahafat Unnisvin Sadi me", P.No. 54.

<sup>2</sup> B.N Ahuja "History of Indian Press, Growth of newspapers in India" P.02

After the unsuccessful attempt of *Mr. William Bolts* no attempt was made to emulate *Mr. Bolt's* examples for 12 year. It was *James Augustus Hickey*, who actually filled the colour in bolt's plan of a newspaper, who may rightly be called the father of Indian journalism, published, printed and edited the first newspaper of India in Calcutta(Kolkata),bearing the name "**THE BENGAL GAZETTE**" or "**CALCUTTA GENERAL ADVISER**". In the first issue he introduced himself as "the late printer to the honourable company". Hickey's Gazette specialised in the exposure of the private lives of servants of the company. Hickey, who described himself as the first printer in employee of the company does not seem to have enjoyed a very high reputation. It is very interesting to know that *Hicky* had no particular passion for printing of newspapers, he had no propensity; he was not bred to a slavish life of hard work, yet he takes a pleasure in enslaving his body in order to purchase freedom for his mind and soul<sup>1</sup>. He has no pretensions to literary attainment and his two- sheet newspaper devoted considerable space to scurrilous attacks on the lives of the servant of the company including the Governor-General, Warren Hastings himself. A personal attack on Mrs Hastings and attack on one Simeon Droz, Colonel Thomas Dean Pearse and a Swedish missionary, *John Zachariah Kiernander*, soon landed Hickey in trouble.<sup>2</sup> He was deprived of the privilege of circulating his newspaper through the channel of the general post office. Kiernander against whom, Hickey's real complaint was that he had sold types to a rival newspaper the India Gazette was accused of contemplating the sale of the main Church .Kiernander secured a latter from

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<sup>1</sup>. Tahir Mahmood "Urdu Sahafat Unnisvin Sadi me"P.No. 55

<sup>2</sup>.S.K Agarwal "Press at the crossroads in India" P.No. 07

the Governor-General clearing him of any such intention and sued Hickey for liable. Hickey was sentenced to 4 months imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 500.<sup>1</sup> He was to be held in prison till the fine was paid. This did not deter him, however, from continued critical approach of bitter and abusive attack on the Governor-General and the Chief Justice, Sir Elijah Impey<sup>2</sup>. An armed band of some 400 persons led by European raided Hickey's press in order to affect his arrest under the order of the Chief Justice and instructions from the Governor-General. He beat back but appeared of his own accord before the Supreme Court soon after, and as the court has risen for the day he was promptly imprisoned and held in detention, being unable to pay the bail allowed to him of Rs. 80,000. Hicky continued to edit his paper while in prison without any change of tone. In the trial that followed he was sentenced to a year's imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 200 on one charge and on another, the chief justice awarded Warren Hastings damages to the extent of Rs. 5000 which, however, the governor general waived. Undeterred by all these setbacks, Hicky's persisted in his writing but was gradually reduced to poverty and distress which ultimately broke him.<sup>3</sup> How powerful and ruthless the company was in dealing with those who incurred its displeasure may be judged from the fact that a piece of job work which involved the printing of 16,800 sheets of proceedings of the council on a commission from *Sir Eyre Coote* for which *Hicky* claimed Rs. 35,092 plus interest, was offered to be settled at Rs. 6711 provided he accepted It as a full and final acquittal of his claims of the govt. Hicky was reduced such straits that he signified his willingness to accept the

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<sup>1</sup> B.N Ahuja "History of Indian Press, Growth of newspapers in India",P.03

<sup>2</sup> .L.J.Trater "Rulers of India" Translated by: Ibn-e- Hasan P.NO. 03

<sup>3</sup> .B.N. Ahuja " History of Indian Press" P.No.03



settlement provided the money was paid him in 24 hours. It is interesting to that it took Hicky a few years to execute the order and that he was paid less than one fifth of the sum he demanded 16 years after he undertook the job. <sup>1</sup>

Hicky's Gazette was a 4 paged tabloid and the size of each page was possibly 39 cm.× 28 cm. Advertisement especially commercial once were given much importance by the paper. The news items in the paper were distinguished from advertisements by ornamented borders. The advertisements were classified and appropriately titled, but the news items generally went without caption or headline. There was no editorial but letters to the editor, poems and other interesting items were the regular features. Extraordinary supplements, very seldom, were published by Hicky. A single copy of the Gazette cost one rupee and the annual subscription was possibly fifty rupees. The weekly, open to all parties, but influenced by none, in its subsequent issues commented on people's domestic affairs.

It is surprising to note that with no telegraph no telephone no telex, no teleprinter and with no facility for mechanical composing, Hicky always produced his Gazette in time, writing most of the editorial columns himself in the absence of a news agency service. It is again surprising that even in his imprisonment he received news from his correspondents and strive his best to make his weekly popular. And the issues during this period (of imprisonment) were the best among the 114 numbers of issues totally printed by him. His style was by all means beyond imitation. <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>. J.Natrajan History of Indian Journalism" P.No. 06

<sup>2</sup>.K.S.Padhy and R.N. Sahu "The press in India; perspective in development and relevance" P.07

### ***3.8 India Gazette (India's 2<sup>nd</sup> newspaper):***

Hicky laid the foundation stone for the growth and development of journalism in India. The trend that was in motion continued in operates with much vigour and dynamism. Soon after the publication of Bengal Gazette five more newspapers appeared within a short span of five years.

India Gazette, the second newspaper in India, published in November 1780 by Bernard Messink, who was connected with theatrical companies, and Peter Reed a salt merchant of Calcutta, after the nine months of Hicky's Gazette's first issue. It was periodical like Hicky's Gazette. The only difference in between two newspapers was that the Hicky's Gazette was anti-British and India Gazette was pro-British. It seems that it was published in opposition of Hicky's Gazette.<sup>1</sup>

Both of them (Bernard Messink and Peter Reed) were businessmen in profession they took interest in journalism for the sake of their interest. Their motive was to protect and promote their business interest with the help of newspaper. Henchmen of the East India Company they unlike Hicky, requested Lord Hasting to allow them to publish a newspaper and also implored him to grant them postal concession for the circulation of their paper. They also requested him to appoint them as printers to the East India Company. They assured him that they would not violate any rules and regulations laid down by him.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>. Siddique, Md. Ateeque "Hindustani Akhbar Navesi Company Ke Ahad me" P. 71

<sup>2</sup>. Margarita Barns, "Indian Press" P.No.44

The India Gazette, though enjoyed the support and confidence of the authorities, invited the wrath of Hicky who strongly criticised, probably out of jealousy the printers, promoters, publishers and partners of the papers.<sup>1</sup>

India Gazette was a 4 paged tabloid of three columns. It was weekly at first. After three years it became bi-weekly and then became daily. It has also same problem about the fresh news, limited resources, lack of correspondents and communication facilities. Therefore it published out dated and sterile news from abroad like Hicky's Gazette.<sup>2</sup>

### 3.9 Calcutta Gazette (India's third newspaper)



<sup>1</sup>. Siddique, Md. Ateeque "Hindustani Akhbar Navesi Company Ke Ahad me" P.No. 72  
<sup>2</sup>. Tahir Mahmood "Urdu Sahafat Unnisvin Sadi me" P.No.59

Calcutta Gazette or Oriental advertiser was the third periodical English newspaper. In 4<sup>th</sup> march 1784 its first issue was published by Francis Gladwin, who was the great scholar of Persian also. It was cent per cent governmental assistance. It has postal concession by the government and it was written in front page under the name of newspaper **“Postage free and Published under authority”** in bold letter. It published letters to editor, Poems, Court’s proceedings and decisions and social activities. Government provided materials to Ms Gladwin for the editorials. It published notices in different languages like Bengali, Persian and English. Subsequently, it became the official gazette.<sup>1</sup>

### ***3.10 Bengal Journal and Oriental Magazine or Calcutta amusement (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> newspaper in India):***

In February 1785, the fourth newspaper Bengal Journal was published by Thomas Jones, a businessman and its proprietor requested to the supreme council to grant him postal concessions and in return he would publish all government advertisement free of cost. Simultaneously in May 1785, the Oriental Magazine or Calcutta amusement was established as the first monthly publication.

It was very interesting that all these newspapers were published in English by Englishman to mostly circulate among the Englishman working in or affiliated to the British East India Company.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>. Siddique, Md. Ateeque “Hindustani Akhbar Navesi Company Ke Ahad me”.P. 73

<sup>2</sup>. K.S.Padhy and R.N. Sahu”The press in India; perspective in development and relevance”P.09

### ***3.11 First newspaper in Madras:***

After five years of Hicky's Gazette on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1785, Richard Johnson, Govt. printer founded the first newspaper, "**Madras Courier**" in Madras. This newspaper was officially recognised by the Government. A weekly, consisting of four pages enjoying the full support of government. News items stale and already published in European papers, were published in two pages. One page was reserved as the reader's forum and for Indian news. Poems and display advertisements occupied the last page. The size of each page was possibly 20x12inch. It was sold at the price of one rupee per month, which was less than other newspaper of Kolkata. The Govt. waived the postal charges for its circulation. The govt. extended its ungrudging help and unstinted co-operation as we evident from the fact that it exempted Richard Johnson from paying duty when the latter imported printing machinery from England in 1791.<sup>1</sup>

### ***3.12 Some other newspapers of Madras:***

Madras Courier was the only newspaper of Madras up to 8 years. In 1791 Hugh Boyd who was the editor of Madras courier resigned due to publishing of certain objectionable letters in the paper against East India Company. In 1793 he established his independent paper namely "Harkaru". It was 2<sup>nd</sup> weekly of Madras, enjoying every support co-operation of government like Madras Courier. It was published for two years and following the death of Hugh Boyd its publication ceased. In January 1795 Mr Robert Williams published 3<sup>rd</sup> weekly of Madras called "Madras Gazette". After the one month

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<sup>1</sup>.Siddique,Md. Ateeque "Hindustani Akhbar Navesi Company Ke Ahad me"P. 81-82

of publishing of Madras Gazette Mr Humphreys, an Englishman started 4<sup>th</sup> weekly in Madras namely “India Herald”.

In 1795 Madras courier published some objectionable news against the government, so the government was introduced censorship first in Madras. Government issued an order that Madras Gazette was required to submit all general orders of the government for scrutiny by the Military Secretary before the publication. Free postage facilities were withdrawn and both newspapers were protesting, then it was decided to impose the levy at the delivery end. Due to this cost of newspaper increased. It was first censorship in any newspaper in India.

### ***3.13 Early Press of Mumbai:***

After Kolkata and Madras Mumbai was the 3<sup>rd</sup> centre of newspapers. Mumbai’s first newspaper the **Bombay Herald** came in to being in 1789. After one year of Bombay Herald in 1790 Bombay courier appeared. Significantly the Bombay courier published advertisements in Gujarati, Marathi, Kannad and Urdu. The owner of this newspaper was Mr Douglas Nicholson and Mr Luke Ash Burner was the editor. This newspaper was printed from Rustam Ji Keshapati printing press. According to Mr William Kerry Bombay Gazette was founded in 25<sup>th</sup> June 1790. An advertisement was published about Bombay Gazette in Calcutta Gazette on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1790. After few years in 1792 Bombay Herald and the Bombay Gazette merged<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>. K.S.Padhy and R.N.Sahu “The press in India; perspective in development and relevance” P.10-11



During 1780 to 1799 almost 28 newspapers and 9 journals were published from these three centres (Kolkata, Mumbai and Madras).<sup>1</sup>

On the basis of the above mentioned list of the newspapers it is very clear that the Kolkata was main centre of newspaper at that time. Out of 28 newspapers, 21 newspapers were published from Kolkata.

These early newspapers were certainly important sources of information. In these newspapers much space was devoted to government notices, society news, the poet's corner, advertisement and fashion notes. News items relating to births, marriages, deaths, arrivals and departures of important British also found in the newspapers. However much emphasis was laid on publishing foreign news than covering Indian affairs. They were often least interested to highlight the Indian problems. Editorials hardly bothered to draw the attention of the government to problem afflicting the Indian society. Therefore it would not be wrong to observe that these early papers were mostly "British in content and nature".

### ***3.14 The Birth of Indian Language Journals:***

It is true that all newspapers till 1818, published in India were in the English language. All of them were owned and edited by Englishman. In 1818, two Bengali languages journals were started: ***Dig Darshan (Monthly Magazine) and Samachar Darpan (weekly magazine)***. A monthly periodical in English language: ***Friend of India*** also published in 30<sup>th</sup> April 1818. All above Journals were started by Baptist missionaries to propagate their faith and with a purpose to "feel the official pulse". The two journals ceased publication in

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<sup>1</sup>. Tahir Masood "Urdu Sahafat Unnisvin Sadi me" P.No.60-61 and Siddique Md. Ateeque "Hindustani Akhbar Navesi Company Ke Ahad me P.No.64-96

1827 owing to financial difficulties<sup>1</sup>. The *Samachar Darpan* continued publication till 1840. The missionaries sought to promote their own faith by deriding other religious faith in the country. *The Samachar Darpan* covered social and non-political news from over *60 Zillas of Bengal*. It remains the forerunner of modern-day concept of covering grassroots news. The governor *Warren Hasting* gave the *Samachar Darpan* postal concessions, which entitled it to post a copy for one-fourth the actual postage. His successor Lord Amherst, subscribed to a hundred copies, which he distributed to government offices. It was enthusiastically supported by government officials, both in Calcutta and the Districts.

As against these missionaries-run newspapers started a weekly *Bengal Gazette* by a teacher reformist: Ganga Kishore Bhattacharya, who had a good assistant in Hara Chandra Roy, a close associate of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. It campaigned for social reforms and was the first to publish Roy's tract on the necessity of abolishing *Sati*. The weekly however did not last long.

Another teacher-reformer and associate of *Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Gangadhar* Bhattacharya, founded the *Bengali Gazette* in 1818. It lasted till 1820. It occasionally published articles in English and Hindi.

*Raja Ram Mohan Roy* (1774-1833) was the first Indian after *Serampore Missionaries* who had tried to start a newspaper. He was man of vision and vigour, dynamism and dexterity, promise and performance, patience and

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<sup>1</sup>. J.Natrajan History of Indian Journalism" P.No. 14

persistence sincerity and integrity. He was a reformist and great scholar of Arabic, Persian, English, Hebrew, Islamic literature and comparative religion.<sup>1</sup>



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<sup>1</sup>. Tahir Masood "Urdu Sahafat Unnisvin Sadi me" P.No.73

Rabindranath Tagore has hailed Raja Ram Mohan Roy as the one who “inaugurated the modern age in India” But nowhere in history is he acknowledged to be the great journalist that he was.

He took to journalism to carry forward his social reform activities. He sought to serve society through the press, realising the interaction between the two. The press had always sought to reflect unrest in society and changes in society. He campaigned relentlessly against idolatry, child marriage and Sati and for fearlessly expression of truth<sup>1</sup>.

Following the relaxation of press laws and regulations in 1819, Roy thought in term of conducting journalism on purely Indian lines. He had already realized the power of pen and potentialities of the press. Therefore, in 1821 he founded the *Sambad Kaumudi*. Buckingham’s, Calcutta Journal gave wide publicity in its columns to this new Indian project. In 1821, Roy, a social reformer, a builder of modern India and the father of Indian journalism, founded a weekly called the *Mir-atul-Akhbar*. Published in the Persian language, the editorial reflected Roy’s deep thinking over fundamental truths and doctrines. These editorials were translated in to English and published in the *Calcutta Journal*.<sup>2</sup>

He has been described as “Hindu reformer seeker after truth, Universalist and staunch champion of freedom everywhere and in all spheres” The newspapers sponsored by him and which followed him propagated his political philosophy. His high standard of political leadership and writing became the intellectual basis of later political activity. His political doctrines were the

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<sup>1</sup>. P K Rabindranath “Indian Regional Journalism” P.No. 03-04

<sup>2</sup>. K.S.Padhy and R.N. Sahu”The press in India; perspective in development and relevance”P.13

keystone of liberalism and individualism in the nineteenth century. He believed that political progress in India could be achieved by operating within the British system.

Roy, through his newspapers, started campaigning against the prevailing condition of Hindu society, with an intention to purify Hinduism which ultimately established *Brahma Samaj*. He founded a magazine called *Brahminical Magazine* for replying the criticism of Serampore missionaries on Vedanta philosophy. The magazine not only reflected his own views on Hinduism but also forcefully challenged the *Samachar Darpan's* statements on Vedanta Philosophy. Its main purpose was “The vindication of the Hindu religion against Christian missionaries”. Twelve issues of the magazine appeared. Later Roy started a regular periodical, the *Brahmin Sevadhi*, both in English and Bengali.

Besides these newspapers several newspapers started in other Indian languages at that time. *Bombay Samachar* started (Gujarati) in 1<sup>st</sup> July 1822 edited by *Fardoonji Marzban*. First Hindi newspaper *Udant Martand* published on 9 February 1826 under the editorship of *Jooghul Kishore* (Jugal Kishore) from Kolkata. In 1832, first Marathi newspaper *Bombay Darpan* came in to existence and articles were published in both English and Marathi languages. First Tamil Journal was started in 1831 namely *Tamil Magazine*.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>. Siddique Md. Ateeque “Hindustani Akhbar Navesi Company Ke Ahad me P.No.144-65

During the period (1816-1830) 7, Indian Languages Journals (Bengali, Hindi and Farsi) came in to existence by Baptist missionaries of *Sirampur* and literate Bengalis.<sup>1</sup>

### ***3.15 Conclusion:***

The early period of English journalism in India spread out over the twenty years, has the following significant characteristics.

- The early newspapers were started by ex-servant of the company who had incurred its displeasure and their columns were devoted to the exposure of the evils and malpractices of the time. Many of the writings were scurrilous and indulged in the grossest libel. However they served a useful purpose. Later newspapers were started with direct or indirect official patronage.
- No newspapers were published until 1780 because the company's establishment in India were a close preserve and the company's servants by common consent wished to withhold from Leaden hall Street, the evils and malpractices arising from "private trading" in which all of them almost without exception freely indulged.
- They were aided and abetted by servants of the company who used these newspapers for the furtherance of their personal rivalries and jealousies.
- This was not Indian or local Journalism while the newspapers were published from Kolkata, Madras and Mumbai. All these newspapers were published in English by Englishman.<sup>2</sup>
- All these publications generally carried news about the European community in India and their social lives.

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<sup>1</sup>. Siddique Md. Ateeque "Hindustani Akhbar Navesi Company Ke Ahad me P.No.112-113

<sup>2</sup>. Siddique Md. Ateeque "Hindustani Akhbar Navesi Company Ke Ahad me" P.No.90.



- Communication technology and system was not much advanced. Therefore, fresh news could not be published and out-dated news from abroad was published.<sup>1</sup>
- The news material published in these newspapers was quite interesting. Editors and publishers showed greater interest in publishing “spicy stories of human frailties” than in giving importance to matter of public importance as such. The editorials were marked by “a clear tone of ridicule and disguised verbal attacks were many” It is interesting to observe that despite all these “spicy stories” the circulation figure of these newspapers did not exceed a hundred copies.
- While some editors incurred the displeasure of important officials from the very beginning and some others made no beginning at all for that reason, other editors were encouraged, financed and provided with material and other aid by influential senior officials of the company.
- Raja Ram Mohan Roy’s papers and generally progressive Indian Press were viewed with some apprehension in official circles while newspapers which favoured the orthodox point of view did not attract the same measure of hostile attention.

### ***3.2.1 History of Urdu Journalism:***

#### ***Forerunner of Urdu Journalism:-***

The *Persian Journalism* was flourished in Indian subcontinent, when the Persian language was taking last breath of its life and Urdu language was taking its position. The Persian newspapers of West Bengal were forerunners

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<sup>1</sup> . Abdur Razzaq, Ma’arif Azamgarh May, 1936 “Inglistan me Angrezi Sahafat”

of the Urdu press. After the decline of Persian as an official language, Urdu gained prominence<sup>1</sup>.

The first Persian newspaper was *Mir-atul-Akhbar* published by **Raja Ram Mohan Roy** on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1822. *Mir-atul-Akhbar* was the first Persian newspaper in Indian subcontinent and Iran, because the first newspaper in Iran was published in 1837 during the period of **Shah Mohammad Qachar** under the editorship of **Saleh Shirazi**<sup>2</sup>.

*Jam-e- Jahan Numa* was the 2nd Persian newspaper came out in 16 May, 1822 by **Hari Har Dutt**<sup>3</sup>.

On 6 May 1823 the 3<sup>rd</sup> Persian newspaper “*Shamshul-Akhbar*” came in to existence from Kolkata. Mani Ram Thakur was the printer of the paper and **Master Mohan Mitra** was the publisher. It was complete Persian newspaper of 12 pages. Its monthly cost was only two rupees. It covered the news from different parts of India. Apart from this it published political, judicial and business news. *Shams-ul-Akhbar* withdrew its publication in 1827 due to financial difficulties.<sup>4</sup>

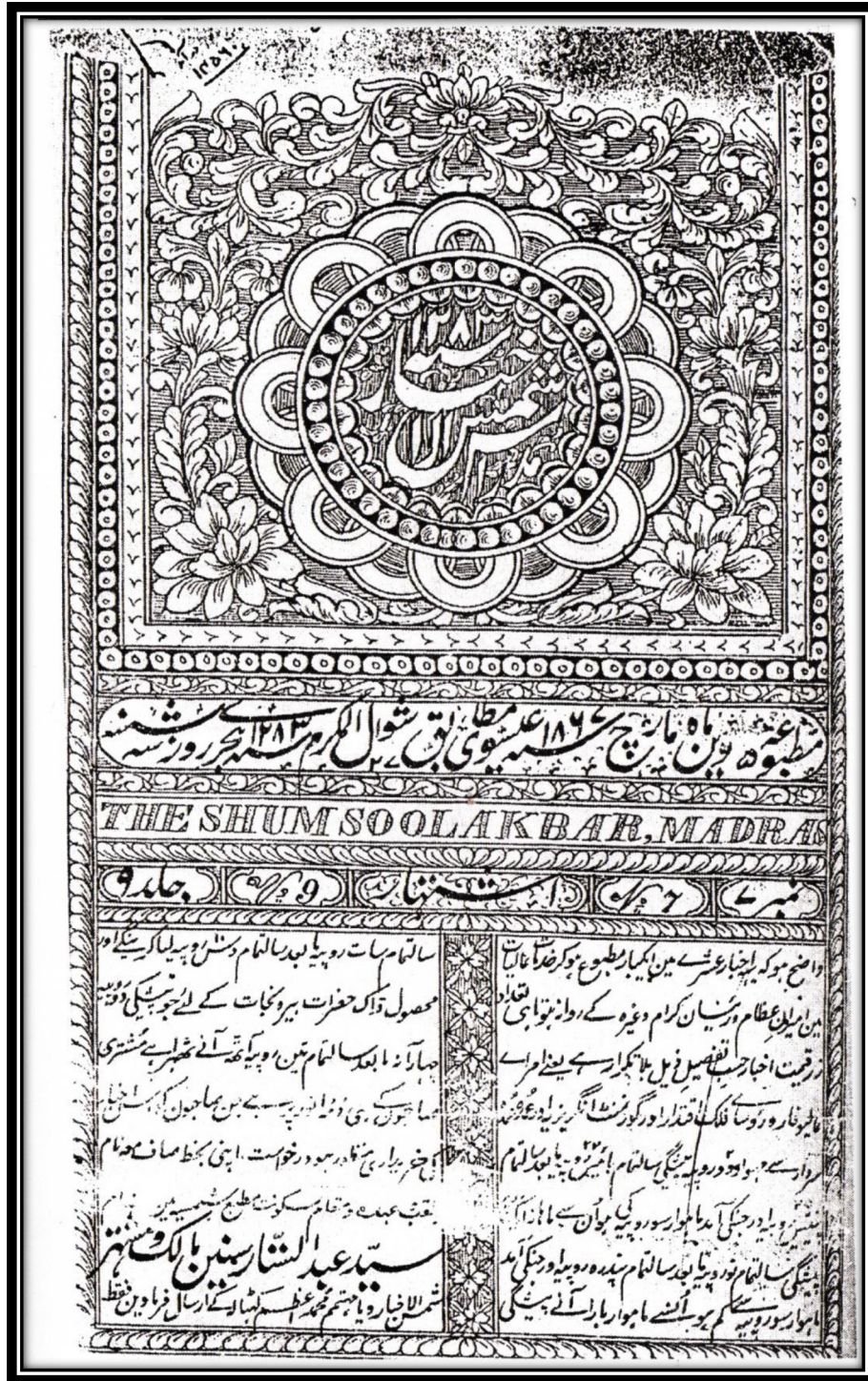
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<sup>1</sup>. Tahir Mahmood “Urdu Sahafat Unnisvin Sadi me” P.No 95.

<sup>2</sup>. Ibid P.No. 98

<sup>3</sup>. G.D.Chandan, “Jam-i- Jahan Numa Urdu Sahafat ki Ibtida” P.No.74.

<sup>4</sup>. R.R. Bhatnagar, “Rise and growth of Hindi Journalism” P.No. 21.



During 1822 to 1899 about 26 newspapers were published from different city of Indian subcontinent by different publishers and editors. In that period Calcutta was the main centre of Persian newspaper like other languages newspapers. Thirteen Persian newspaper were published only from Calcutta,

three from Delhi, three from Mumbai and one from Sirampur, Ludhiana, Agra, Karachi, Sukhar, Peshawar, and Lahore. Persian Journalism flourished under the supervision of Hindus Muslims and Christian Missionaries. Raja Ram Mohan Roy used it for social, educational and cultural reform. Christian Missionaries used it for propagation of Christianity and Mughal ruler made it use in official gazette.<sup>1</sup>

The circulation of Persian newspaper during 1822 to 1899 never exceeded forty. The circulation of *Jam-i-Jahan Numa* was 26 and *Sira-jul-Akhbar* was 34 only. The most circulated Persian newspaper was *Zubda-tul-Akhbar*. It was started by *Munshi Wajid Ali Khan* in 1833. He was its editor as well as proprietor. He commanded respect for his tact and ability. His paper dependent on the monthly subsidies from five rulers and rich merchant. They were Raja of Bharatpur, Raja of Alwar, Nawab of Jhujjur, Nawab of Joura and Nawab of Hyderabad and Seth *Lachmi Chand*. Their payments ranging from Rs. 10 to 30 followed secured the goodwill of the newspaper so that it would not publish the matter which would lower the donors in public esteem. *Zubdat-ul-Akhabr* used to publish 154 copies, the highest circulation of Persian newspaper of that time<sup>2</sup>.

### **3.2.2 Urdu Journalism from 1822 to 1837:**


A look into the pre-independence era brings forth some old memories of the glorious past of the Urdu press. Urdu journalism can be traced back to *Jaam-e-Jahan-Numa*, an Urdu weekly launched on March 27th, 1822 under the editorship of *Munshi Sadasukh Mirzapuri* founded by *Harihar Dutt*. He was

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<sup>1</sup>. Tahir Mahmood "Urdu Sahafat Unnisvin Sadi me" P.No 119

<sup>2</sup>. B.N Ahuja "History of Indian Press, Growth of newspapers in India" P.No.29-30

the son of *Tara Chand Dutt*, eminent Bengali journalist and one of the founders of Bengali weekly *Sambad Kamodi*. After English and Bengali, it was the third language newspaper in India. It continued to be published till 1888.



# جام جهان نما



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نمبر ۲۰۹ تاریخ ۱۳ جون سنہ ۱۸۶۶ عیسوی روز چہار شنبہ

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\* European Gentlemen, who may wish to be supplied with this Paper, either for their own perusal, or from a benevolent desire to diffuse knowledge among the native members of their establishment, may be supplied with it, on application to TARACHUND DUTT of Calcuttollah.

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<p>گہوارہ لیکر کاہ شدہ بود خبر است کہ نواب صاحب محترم الودر صورت نبودن طوقان تا مقلم سینہ ہر من پیشتر از کنگا سا کہ کہ جای است فوش آب و ہوا مقامی است فرحت بخش د و گلشات شریف تو اہند بردہ چندی در انجا رونق افزا خواہند بود</p> <p style="text-align: center;">خبر سنگاپور</p> <p>از ردی کاغذ اخبار لاج کشت کہ در سنگاپور اتیون خالص عظیم آباد بحساب مبلغ دو ہزار و ہشتصد روپیہ فی صندوق بفروش رسیدہ و حرب از مقام شکن کہ نواحی است دایرہ ششم از کہ چین چین دیگر اشیای تجارتی لڑا کثیر مقامات پذیرد و ہر جا در انجا آمدہ فروش کردیدہ است و اجناس از کلکتہ دانگلمہم با فراط در ایجا میدود و از سنگاپور ہم مردم اسباب کثیر بہ بلاد</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">خبر تقرر عہدہ بسا جان</p> <p>مسیرای مکدوہل صاحب جج دوم کورٹ اپیل دوائر سائر مرشد آباد</p> <p>مستور ہارمین صاحب سیوم ایضا</p> <p>کپٹن بان لوصاحب بلو تیکل اجنت جی ہور</p> <p>کپٹن جان من صاحب کلتسر ہمراہی بیسی راہ پیشوا</p> <p style="text-align: center;">خبر کلکتہ</p> <p>روز ہفتہ گذشتہ نواب مستطاب معلی القاب جناب لارڈ اہرست بہادر کورنر جنرل با اہل و عیال ہست کسب ہر اہل و عیال فرود نامی سفینہ ریاست سکر کپٹی انگریز بہادر ریاست کنگا سا کہ باو بان عزیمت برافراشتند از ردی کاغذ اخبار دریافت آمد کہ روز یکشنبہ مقام کیلا کچہا در روز دو شنبہ و قشہ ہشت ساعت روز برابر امدہ ساطن</p>
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After the decline of Persian as the official language, Urdu gained prominence. This gave rise to a series of Urdu magazines and periodicals. The British Raj, on one hand, used it as a means of communication with the masses and on the other hand, the freedom fighters used it as a rudimentary tool to generate feelings of nationalism. Urdu press was banned by the British due to its involvement in the revolt of 1857.<sup>1</sup>

*Syed-ul Akhbar* is generally mentioned as the first Urdu newspaper started in Delhi in 1837. It was honoured to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Urdu newspaper of North India. It was edited by *Syed Mohammad Khan*, elder brother of *Sir Syed Ahmad Khan*, founder of the *Aligarh Muslim University*. Soon after the newspaper was started, the editor died and *Sir Syed Ahmad Khan*, whose main interest was education, was unable to keep the paper going.<sup>2</sup>

The *Syed-ul-Akhbar* seems to have declined between 1844 and 1848, its circulation having dropped from 50 to 27 and its receipts from Rs. 78 to Rs. 34 monthly. Started in 1841, the paper was said to be the organ of the Sunni sect. Opinion is divided on the performance of the editor, one view being that his writings were bigoted and polemical and the other being that it contained items of general interest with regular notices on the buildings of Jaunpur. None of the issue is available now a day. Because of this there is a different opinion among the scholar about the date of its first issue. It was published from Syed-ul-Akhbar press.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>. Jameel Jalibi, Tareekh-e-Adab Urdu, vol.I,Page: 1-3

<sup>2</sup>. Masood, Tahir,Urdu Sahafat Unnisvin Sadi mein, Page:202

<sup>3</sup>. J.Natrajan, History of Indian Journalism, Page:58.



There were four newspapers published in 1844; the *Siraj-ul-Akhbar* (Persian), the *Syed-ul-Akhbar*, the *Dehli Urdu Akhbar* and the *Mazhar-ul-haque* the last three in Urdu. Three weeklies were added between 1844 and 1848, the *Qiran-us-Sadain*, the *Shaikh-ul-Akhbar* and the *Fawaid-Ush-Shaiqueen*. The *Zia-ul-Akhbar* of Sheikh Mohammad Ziauddin appeared in 1849.



John Lawrence, Magistrate of Delhi, writes of the first of these newspapers as follows:

*“The **Siraj-ul-Akhbar**, the king’s paper, is published in the palace. All persons connected with it were Royal servants. Only 34 copies are printed once a week (Sunday) and distributed among the King’s follower while one copy was sent to the Governor-General, one to the Lt. Governor and one to the officer commanding the palace guards. One rupee was retrenched form the pay of each person to support the paper. It was written in elegant but inflated Persian and has little in it beyond news of the palace and of the king in particular when he sleeps, eats, drinks, goes out, comes in and the like dislikes. It is hardly contained beyond the precinct of the palace”<sup>1</sup>*

The **Delhi Urdu Akhbar** improved its prospects in the four year interval (1844-1848) from the circulation of 69 copies to 79 per issue. Income and expenditure were, however, shown as having declined by 50 per cent., probably due to unrecovered subscriptions and consequent retrenchment. The paper was run by **Maulvi Mahommad Baqar** and **Moti Lal, a Kashmiri Pandit**. Apart from the general information published in this paper, a number of letters appeared against **Jafar Ali**, the Shia Arabic teacher of Delhi College, who was condemned as inefficient and thoroughly unfit for this job. A single sheet of lithographed paper, the rate of subscription was Rs. 2 per month.<sup>2</sup>

*(Detail in chapter 4)*

The **Mazhar-ul-Haq** edited by **Sheikh Imdad Hussain** was said to be owned by the proprietor of the **Urdu Akhbar** and borrowed freely from its columns. It was described as the organ of the Shia sect but in the four year period it had become so enfeebled as to be on the verge of closing down. The **Urdu Akhbar**

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<sup>1</sup>. History of Indian Journalism, Page: 58.

<sup>2</sup>. Ibid.

press also issued a small weekly. The *Fawaid-Ush-Shaiqeen*, edited by *Parbhu Dayal* which was an Urdu version of the Government gazette. It also published questions and answers for the benefit of the candidates for the *Munsif's* examination. Newly started and with a circulation of 110, it was described as having bright prospects.<sup>1</sup>

The *Delhi College* too, like the Agra College, engaged in the publication of a newspapers and periodicals. The newspaper was the *Qiran-us-Sadain* edited by *Dharm Narain*, Senior Scholar of the English Department of the College. The paper dealt mostly, with current events while scientific and literary articles were purveyed in three magazines the Urdu magazine, *Mohibb-i-Hind*, the *Fawaid-un-Nazereen*, and *Tohfat-ul- Hadaiq*-and all were printed at the *Matba-e-Uloom* press.<sup>2</sup>

*The college* authorities do not seem to have been happy about association with the press and directed its removal from the college premises. The nevertheless, supervised the four publications already mentioned. The *Maulvi's* of the *Arabic Department* were to scrutinise all matters published in the periodicals and could delete any passage if was objectionable according to them. After publications a copy of the weekly was to be forwarded to J.P. Gibbons, member of the local committee, and a copy of each of the periodicals to *Taylor*, officiating Secretary of the Committee, for scrutiny.

A Persian paper, *Sadiq-ul-Akhbar*, published in the *Dar-us-Salam Press*, Delhi, was described as having limited circulation. (*Detail in Chapter 4*)

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<sup>1</sup>. Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>. Hindustani Akhbar Nawesi Company ke Ahad me.

*Bareilly's* First newspaper, *Umdut-ul-Akhbar* was published in 1847 by Mr. *Trigger, Superintendent of the Bareilly School*, from the press owned by him of the same name. It was supported by the students and the staff of the school which was a govt. institution, as well as by eminent persons of the town and neighbourhood. The paper was edited by *Maulvi Abdur Rahman* and later by *Lachman Parshad*.

In Bareilly too there seemed difficulties about controlling other publications issued from the press and there were repeated warnings from the government as well from the committee of control to the conductors of the press and the paper insisting them for avoiding controversial subjects and provocative writing generally. The official report of 1848 complained carelessness in the selection of material for publication and the adoption of the tone (bordering on slang) which was calculated to give wrong message to educative natives. The publication of police reports and local gossip was described as out of place in a publication associated with the govt. institution. The following examples are given:

1. An attempt to ridicule the notion of the British being expelled from India is so imperfectly developed that it leaves room for misconception.
2. An article discusses the inconsistency of allowing widowers to remarry while widows are forbidden to do so and refers to a particular case in which a widow has been led astray.
3. An article on the comparative excellence of Delhi and Lucknow Urdu is objected to on the ground that it contains undesirable phrases and modes of expression.

A paper confined to current news, *Jam-e-Jamshed*, began publishing weekly from Meerut in 1847. Edited by *Babu Shivchandra*, it was said to be well produced with an average circulation of 100 copies per issue.

Special interest attached to the publication of the first three Banaras newspapers; of which two were published in the Nagari character although the language was Urdu. They reproduced the entire observations of the Assistant Secretary to the govt. in his report on the north Western Provinces Press for 1848:

“At Banaras three weekly papers are published- one in Urdu and two in the Nagree character.”

*Sudhakar Akhbar, Banaras:* - The *Sudhakar Akhbar* was lithographed in the Nagree character, but partakes more of Urdu in its language than of Hindi the article with which the paper is commenced, generally dealt with some subjects of interests, being the only portion which is written in the latter language. It was printed at the *Sudhakar Press*, by *Pandit Ratneshar Tiwari*, and it was said to have a circulation of 50 copies taken by Hindus, 22 by Europeans and 2 by Muslims. The receipts at one rupee per month are stated to be Rs. 74, and the monthly expenditure Rs. 50.

*Banaras Akhbar:* - The two remaining papers were published by the same individual, *Baboo Raghonath Fatteh*, and issued from the Banaras Akhbar Press. The Akhbar was lithographed in Nagree, although the language was Urdu. The editor usually gives in each issue some translation from Sanskrit books on law, etc. but besides this the paper contained little more than local news, and such as is gleaned from other papers. The receipts at one rupee per mensem are reported to be Rs.44

***Banaras Gazette:*** - The Banaras Gazette, in Urdu, is so badly lithographed that it was often scarcely legible. It supplied the current news, but little else.

The monthly charge was one rupee while the total expenses of the press were declared to be Rs. 99-8-0, as noted below, which would give a monthly loss upon the two papers of Rs. 29-8-0. But this may in some small degree be diminished by charges for advertisements.

In Shimla too ***Sheikh Abdullah*** started the first weekly paper lithographed in Nagari character- the ***Shimla Akhbar***. The 1848 report described the paper as very well got up but referred to the script as “clumsy” and explained that it was used to induce the Rajas and other residents of the hills to patronize it, Hindi being the language in general use. It was described as a carefully edited paper with interesting articles. Hindus subscribed to as many as 22 copies, Europeans 8 while 20 were distributed free of charge. The monthly income was Rs. 30 and expenditure Rs.40.

In the following year (1849) three papers closed down. ***The Syed-ul- Akhbar*** of Delhi, the ***Tohfat-ul-Hadaiq*** and the ***Shimla Akhbar***. There was a general complaint of declining circulation. The Agra College paper the ***Akhbar-ul-Hadaiq*** complained about the little support given to it by the people despite the useful knowledge purveyed by it. A complaint from the editor was against the high postage rates. The Delhi College newspaper and journals fared badly. One of the latter closed down and the newspaper threatened to go the same way.

The report for 1850 contained certain general observations. The ***Banaras Akhbar*** received special mention for the scurrilous language employed by the editor and disappointment was expressed that the circulation of paper declined

to 26. It was acknowledged, however, that all other people observed the proprieties of language but it was remarked that:

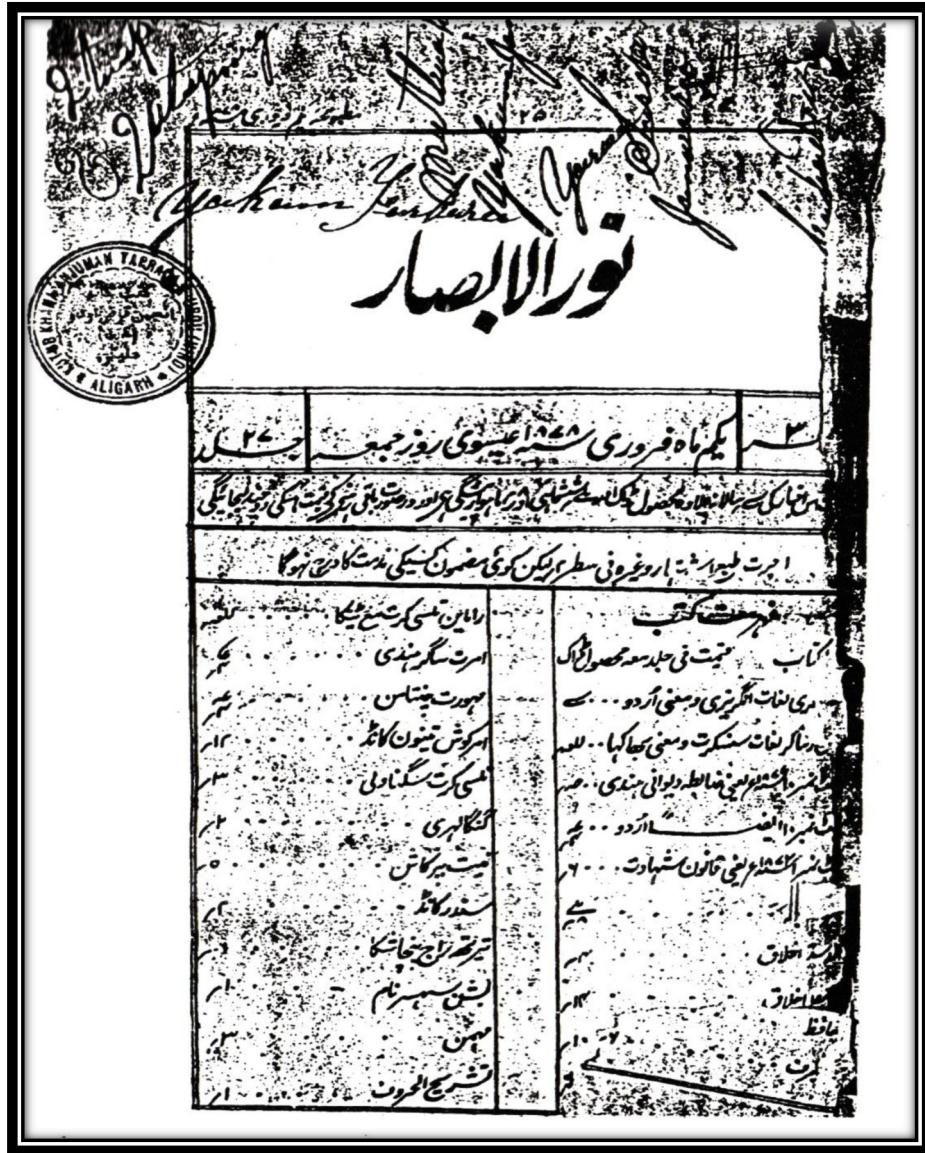
*“As tests of the state of opinion amongst the native community, as a means in any way of enabling govt. to look upon its own measures from a native point of view, or as medium of communication of their wants and wishes by the body of the people to their rulers they appear utterly valueless.”*

Two newspapers ceased publication- the Delhi ***Mazhar-ul-Haq*** and ***Fawaid-Ush-Shaiqeen***. No mention is made of the Banarasi Choundroday but the presumption is that it continued its publication as it catered especially to the Bengali community in Varanasi and was published in their language.

In the official report for the next three years, special mention was made of the allied publication from Varanasi, ***Aftab-e-Hind*** (Urdu) and ***Kashi-Varta-Prakashika*** (Bengali), Published by ***Kashi Nath*** as well-conducted periodicals containing ably written articles. Likewise ***Sada Sukh Lal's*** twin papers published from Agra, ***Noor-ul-Absar*** (Urdu) and ***Boodi Prakash*** (Hindi) were acknowledged to be well conducted and a tribute was paid to the editor for his knowledge of English, the simple Urdu of the first paper and the pure Hindi of Boodi Prakash.

The papers in the first palace (***Noor-ul-Absar***) were published at Agra where they have no less than eight rivals to compete with. Secondly, though current news is given to interest the general reader, the papers are intended more especially as tools for the introduction into schools of a supply of useful information. Thirdly, the bona fide subscription to the Urdu paper at least fully comes up to and even exceeds the average of that of other journals in the provinces the only expectations being two or three papers conducted from

large cities without any rivals. Lastly the heaviness of the postage duties necessarily confined the circulation of every periodical to such readers as could be found in the immediate vicinity of publication-this was more in the case of Hindi press.



Mention was also made of the *Kooch-e-Noor* as a paper well produced and conducted on principles advocated by the government. On 14th January 1850, *Munshi Har Sukh Rai* started this weekly *Kooch-e-Noor*, which had a remarkably high (for those times) circulation of 350 copies.



The *Malwa Akhbar* of Indore was favourably noticed for the intelligence it published on the neighbouring States gathered at first hand by the editor Dharm Narain. It was published under the patronage of *Maharaja Holkar* and Sir *R.N.C.Himolton*. The Sudhakar Akhbar of Varanasi was described in 1853 as its ranking was very high among Indian Journals of the provinces and was very well worthy of encouragement and support.

Two Delhi newspapers were noticed for their scurrility:

*Noor-e-Magharbi* was described as liberal in its abuse on covenanted servants.

*Delhi Urdu Akhbar*, was described as a scurrilous print which abounded in personalities and covert attacks on native gentlemen of respectability who differed from the editor in his religious views

“Among the dead and dying newspapers were mentioned the *Fawaid-un-Nazereen* published under the auspices of Delhi college professor which ceased publication in 1853 and *Qiran-us-Sadain*, an allied paper whose circulation was reduced to 14. The list for 1953-54 showed the *Zubdat-ul-Akhbar* published in Persian from Agra from 1833 and edited by *Wajid Ali Khan* for 20 years continuously, as having been abolished.

*Chashma-e-Faiz* of Sialkot was mentioned for the first time as having been saved from ruin by the pecuniary assistance given it by the local Assistant Commissioner. Among the other paper which began their publication during this period can be mentioned the *Huma-Bay-Bahar* of *Munshi Diwan Chand* from Lahore.

A scrutiny of newspaper lists compiled and published in 1850, 1853-54 and 1858 reveals some interesting facts. There were 28 newspapers in 1850 of

which 15 are extant in 1853. The 1853 list has 35 papers including the 15 carried over from the 1850 list. The 1858 list shows 12 publishing newspaper all the 12 was edited by Muslim.

Comments on the character and content of the newspapers make interesting reading. Throughout there was anxiety on the part of the authorities to encourage and foster the publication of book and periodicals which will bring enlightenment to the mass of people. Lack of interest in political matters and the exclusion of public grievances from the press is repeatedly deplored. In the 1851 report an instance is cited to illustrate the limited character of the press in its function of representing public opinion. In the summer of 1850 legislation was enacted for levying tolls on the high roads which the public is said to have resented particularly as it was thought that the maximum rate provided in the act would be imposed on all roads. There was no reference to this public resentment in the press. The reporting official suggests a remedy:

*“May I venture to suggest (the idea may be utopian) that perhaps if native newspaper were established under superintendence and from our side the way was led to proper allowable discussion on matters affecting native interest, some response might be elicited from theirs. And if indeed the subject community could offer no suggestions which might be deemed worthy of notice, yet at least something would be gained if merely their prejudice could be learnt whilst we, thus in possession of their misapprehensions might on our part offer some explanation.”*

Again in 1852, the report complains that newspapers are no indication of the trend of public opinion. The writer comments on the over caution of editors in discussing political subjects and regrets “that this barrier to all

communications of wants and wishes should exist in the native character and that a legitimate outlet for the expression of public opinion should be thus guardedly closed". Paradoxically enough however there is a complaint in same report of "misuse of the editorials chair" by two editors. In one instance the editor preferred a complaint against the local administration for summoning him for giving evidence as a witness in a case. In the second instance the editor was said to have published certain libellous article against a *Tahsildar* for which he was imprisoned for two months. It is not a surprise, in the circumstance, that editors were cautious about engaging in political controversies and erred on the safe side of keeping them out of the columns of their newspapers altogether. It must be remembered that the public demand for newspapers was limited and even such demand as there was not be fully exploited without postal concessions and that newspapers had to depend on direct or indirect aid from government in order to keep alive.

There were other factors peculiar to the press in the North West Provinces. There were the two communities. Persian (till 1836 the court languages) and Urdu were the current languages. The Hindus were anxious to have the Devanagari script accepted and a judicious agitation was carried on for its adoption as an alternative script. *Raja Shiva Prasad*, who was in the Educational Department, directed his efforts towards evolving a common language for Hindus and Muslims which could be written in either script (Persian or Nagari) the Banaras Akhbar which was published under the patronage of Raja Shiva Prasad was lithographed in the Nagari script. Official reports of the time ascribe the failure of the *Shimla Akhbar* to its being published in the "clumsy" Nagari script. The social atmosphere seemed to

have been such that the mildest controversy on subjects such as the comparative superiority of Delhi and Lucknow Urdu and criticism of the practice among Hindus of not permitting widows to remarry were likely to be misunderstood. The concept of the freedom of the press so ably propounded by **Raja Ram Mohan Roy** in Bengal in 1823 just did not exist in 1853 in the North West Provinces.

The progress of Urdu Journalism up to 1853 has been traced in earlier pages. During this period the means of communication were very limited and for the most part, the editors had to depend upon their own resourcefulness in putting together material for publication. There was no uniformity of language or style. The choice of subjects and the method of presentation were invariable matters of individual taste and predilection, but a heavily ornamented, pseudo-literary style abounding in metaphorical expressions and rhyming sentences was most popular, especially with the journals publishing from the U.P except to some extent in the Punjab, Politics did not attract much attention. In fact, the Journalism of this period was predominantly individual in character.

### ***3.2.3 Urdu Journalism after the Revolt of 1857:***

The introduction of lithography in 1837 gave a great flip to the growth of Urdu Journalism. The number of Urdu Journals increased rapidly after the rebellion of 1857. The Urdu Press which emerged after the great rebellion was comparatively restrained in dealing with public and political affairs.

The emphasis noticeably shifted to a utilitarian type of Journalism. Educational matters and historical and scientific information were now more in demand. The people evinced growing interest in western knowledge. This

was perhaps a natural trend after the great shake-up. The changed political climate had its effect on the language also. It came nearer to everyday speech.

The number of Journals which made their appearance during this period is very large. The important ones were the *Awadh Akhbar* (1858), *the scientific society* magazine (Aligarh) and *Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's Tahzeeb-ul-Akhlaq* (Aligarh). The main centres of publications were Lahore, Delhi, Lucknow, Agra, Aligarh and Meerut.

It might interest the reader to know the names of some of the many papers which came out during the first thirty years of this period (1854 to 1884) from the chief centres of journalistic activity. From Delhi came out: The *Sadiq-ul-Akhbar* (1856), The *Akmal-ul-Akhbar* of *Munshi Behari Lal Mushtaq* (1866); the *Nasir-ul-Akhbar* (1873), the *Nusrat-ul-Akhbar* and the *Nusrat-ul-Islam* of *Maulvi Nusrat Ali* (1873); the *Mufeed-e-Hind* and the *Kair-Khah-e-Hind* both of *Munshi Maha Narain* (1875); the *Meer-e-Darakhshan* (1875); the *Safeer-e-Hind* of *Munshi Bulaq Das* (1876) the *Rekhti Akhbar* of *Munshi Maha Narain* (1881); and the *Akhbar-un-Nisa* of *Maulvi Syed Ahmad* the famous lexicographer, which had the distinction of being intended for women readers (1884).

From Lucknow came out, in 1858, the *Awadh Akhbar* of *Munshi Nawal Kishore*, one of the most enterprising publishers in Northern India; the *Bharat Patrika* of the *Anjuman-e-Awadh* (1862); the *Kaukab-e-Hind* (1871); the *Muraqqa-e-Tahzeeb* (1874); the *Akhbar-e-Tamannai* of *Munshi Puran Chand* (1875); the *Anwar-ul-Akhbar* of *Mohammad Tej Bahadur* (1876); the *Awadh Punch* of *Munshi Sajjad Hussain* (1877); the *Musheer-e-Qaisar* of *Munshi Ghulam Mohammad Tabish* (1879).

*Meerut* came out with several papers; the *Akhbar-e-Aalam* of *Wajahat Ali Khan* (1861); the *Najm-ul-Akhbar* of *Maulvi Mohammad Hayat* (1863); the *Lawrence Gazette* of *Syed Jameeluddin* (1864); the *Shana-e-Hind* of *Maulana Shaukat Hussain* (1883).

From Lahore were published the *Punjabi Akhbar* (1865); the *Akhbar Anjuman-e-Punjab* (1870); the *Akhbar-e-Aam* (1871); the *Aftab-e-Punjab* with *Dewan Boota Singh* as proprietor and *Munshi Faqeer Mohammad* as editor (1873); the *Delhi Punch* of *Munshi Nithar Ali Sohrat* (1880); the *Reformer* of *Nathu Ram Anand* (1882); and *Rafeeq-e-Hind* of *Munshi Moharram Ali Chishti*.

By 1887, there were three Urdu dailies in circulation viz, the *Awadh Akhbar* (1858); the *Rozana Akhbar* and the *Paisah Akhbar* 1887. The *Awadh Akhbar* also published cartoons by *Wazir Ali Shauq* and *Ganga Sahai*. This journal commanded considerable influence. The opinions of *Kooh-e-Noor* (1851), the *Akhbar-e-Aam* (1871) and the *Awadh Punch* (1877) were also valued by the public and the officials.

In the earlier years of this period, *Sir Syed Ahmad Khan* and *Swami Daya Nand* introduced reformist trends in their respective communities and these trends gradually nurtured political consciousness. The *Tahzeeb-ul-Akhlaq* represented a landmark in Urdu Journalism. No Urdu paper before or after it influenced, in such measure the opinion of its readers on such a wide range of questions-social, religious and educational. As a relentless critic of the social stagnation and religious orthodoxy of the Indian Muslim, it generated a storm of opposition which was represented by a number of reactionary papers like the *Noor-ul-Afwah* and the *Noor-ul-Anwar* of Kanpur. The articles of the

*Tahzeeb-ul-Akhlaq* have gone into several editions in book form in later years. Politics, history education and religion began to find more and more space in the Urdu Press. Though the Urdu Papers generally, followed a loyalist policy they did not lag behind voicing popular demands and sentiments. Some of the important public affairs of the period were the North West frontier policy, Russia, Germany, home politics, Civil Service Competitions, educated unemployment, resentment against income tax etc. murders of Indians by European and their insistence on subordinates appearing before them barefooted, also elicited adverse comment. The Albert bill agitation also touched the Urdu Press.

#### **3.2.4. Urdu Journalism in early 20<sup>th</sup> Century:**

In the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century there were about seventy Urdu Journals being published more or less regularly? In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Urdu Press beat Hindi by its numerical strength, but within two decades of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the position was reversed so that in 1921, the total number of Urdu Journals was 151, and there were 175 Hindi journals in circulation. Most of the Urdu Publications were weekly or fortnightly. In 1902, three Urdu dailies, viz, the *Awadh Akhbar* (1858) and *Paisa Akhbar* (1887) and the *Sulah-e-Kul* were being published. The appearance of the *Indian national Congress* (1885) and the Muslim League (1905) on the Indian political scene lent force and direction to nascent National consciousness. The *Urdu Swarajya* (1907) from Allahabad had a Nationalist policy. On June 1st, 1912 *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad* launched the weekly *Al-Hilal*. Welcoming the *Al-Hilal*, Maulana Mohammad Ali wrote in his the weekly *Comrade*:

*“We can well understand the enormous labour and expense that **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad**, its talented editor, must have gone through before launching this weekly journal. It strikes a new line in journalism by including pictorial illustration as a permanent feature in its columns. The adoption of the Turkish type, though not exactly an innovation is a welcome departure from the obsolete methods which in spite of their clumsiness and tedium still retain a paralyzing hold on the Urdu Press of the country. Literary and scientific discussions and Muslim educational affairs will have a permanent space assigned to them, beside the regular presentment of the state affairs in Turkey, Persia, Morocco and the Islamic World in general.”<sup>1</sup>*

**Mahadeo Desai** commenting on this in his brief biography of the **Maulana** writes:

“This note of welcome does not indeed make any mention of the policy of the journal but the reason is obvious. The policy of the Comrade then followed the lines of the Aligarh School of thought, and anyone who started with the ambition of checking the prevailing current could not expect to find favour with it..... The Al-Hilal made its influence felt within a few weeks of its birth. Within six months its circulation had reached the figure of eleven thousand- a considerable figure if we remember that the annual subscription was rupees twelve and the bulk of its readers were Musalmans. The flutter that it had succeeded in creating in the loyal and reactionary dovecotes may be measured by the fact that Sahibzad Aftab Ahmad Khan and others started an agitation against it and they partially succeeded in affecting its circulation in Calcutta, obviously because there were few in Bengal who could follow its

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<sup>1</sup> . Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Page:27.



classical Urdu. But its influence in the United provinces steadily increased, and such was its popularity that study circles were formed where scores of people assembled together to hear the paper read out to them.

The *Al-Hila* not only made secret of its political objective, but took a bold line in matters, social and religious. There were riots in *Ayodhya* in 1913, arising out of the usual dispute over cow-slaughter, and the Maulana boldly told the Musalmans that their insistence on the right of cow-slaughter was far from conducive to communal peace. His view was so strange in those days that his intimate friend Hakim Ajmal Khan fell afoul of him and carried on a bitter controversy with him. It was only in 1920 that the good Hakim Sahib saw his error, confessed it to Maulana, and became an enthusiast in the matter, like the Maulana himself. Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar too was one of his strong opponents and critics. The influence of the paper was felt not only in India but abroad, the later European events so conspired that even its bitterest critics were convinced of the wisdom of the line taken up by the Maulana.”

Maulana Azad wielded a powerful pen and had the courage of his conviction. On April 7<sup>th</sup> 1915, the Bengal Government expelled him and he was jailed at Ranchi until the beginning of 1920.

A contemporary of the *Al-Hilal* was the *Madinah*, also founded in 1912, at Bijnor, under the editorship of Hamidul Ansari. This Journal led a significant role in the politics of the country and considerably influenced Muslim public opinion.

In the same year Maulana Abdul Bari Sahab established the *Hamdard* at Lucknow. Maulana Ali shifted the *Comrade* to Delhi and the *Hamdard* commenced its publication. Both the *Comrade* (English) and the *Hamdard*

edited by Maulana Mohammad Ali were powerful exponents of the Muslim Nationalist cause marked by his individuality and the editor filled the columns of the two papers with rigorous exhortations from his tireless and trenchant pen. Frequent prosecutions and protracted periods of detention of the editor resulted in irregular publication, but they did not damp the political fervour of the editor who went to reason to come out again and write with renewed vigour. S.S. Nigam brought out the weekly Azad from Kanpur.

In the year 1913, the Patna Akhbar was brought out under the editorship of Haji Sajjad Jan. It was a weekly. In the same year the Ittehad and the star of India were brought out from Patna. In 1913 Maulana Abul Kalam Azad started another paper Al-Blagh.

With the broke out of World War I, restrictions on the Indian language press were tightened and no fresh enterprise appeared noticeable till 1919, when the Haqeeqat was brought out from Lucknow and the Pratap from Lahore. Both were dailies. The first issue of the Pratap came out on March 30<sup>th</sup> 1919, under the editorship Mahashe Krishna. The Punjab was politically disturbed at the time. The agitation against the Rowlett Bills was gaining momentum. Gandhi's call for passive resistance was taken up by the press. The Pratap also joined the opposition. The government promptly suppressed it after a brief resistance of barely ten days, and Mahashe Krishna, its proprietor/editor, was arrested on April 18<sup>th</sup> 1919. The Pratap reappeared in February 1920, but its security was forfeited a couple of Months later. Between 1919 and 1936, it was suppressed a number of times. Its securities were forfeited in 1919, 1930 or 1932. It did not fare any better during the unionist regime. Gradually, it leaned more towards communalism.

In 1920, Lala Lajpat Roy started Vande Mataram under the editorship of Sardar Mohan Singh Sawhney. It was a popular newspaper but it ceased its publication after the death of Lala Lajpat Roy. It was later in irregular publication from Delhi.

The Zameendar, founded by Maulana Zafar Ali Khan was a pioneer effort in the field of Urdu daily journalism. It followed a completely nationalist policy and weathered many storms of repression.

The Milap was founded on April 13<sup>th</sup> 1923, by Mahashe Khushal Chand. Before launching the Milap, Mahashe Khushal Chand was editing the Arya Gazette, an Arya Samajist weekly. The Milap and the Pratap were in fact organs of the Arya Samaj, the former representing the views of the collage section and the latter of those of the Gurukul section. But both these papers sided with the nationalist forces. The Milap followed a policy in substantial agreement with the policies of the Congress. It was subjected to the usual repressive measures of forfeiture of securities, searches and CID vigilance. The Milap gave unstinted support to the *Khilafat movement* but it criticised the communal award. It condemned the agitation for the boycott of legislature by the Congress and opposed concessions to the Muslim League.

There were several forfeitures of security in the case of Milap. Its editor Chaudhry Gauri Shankar was at one time arrested. Shri Ranbir, who was now the managing editor of the paper at Delhi, had close association with revolutionary movement. The activities of the revolutionaries, therefore figured prominently in the Milap. Shri Ranbir was sentenced to death in the Governor shooting case, but the Lahore high Court acquitted him. Just before the partition the Milap ran in to serious trouble. Its offices were several times

raided by riotous mobs. The godown and the block making department were set on fire and Shri Ranbir was stabbed but survived. The paper had to suspend publication for about a month and a half.

In 1923, Swami Shardhanand founded the Tej at Delhi with Deshbandhu Gupta as its managing director. It was being published under the editorship of Shri Jamna Das Akhtar. The Tej Consistently followed a nationalist policy. It had also worked to eradicate social evils.

About 1925 and 1926 the two Urdu Dailies, the Siasat and the Inquilab appeared. These papers were completely communal in outlook, and eventual aligned them with the Muslim league.

In 1925, the All India Shia Conference brought out the Srafraz from Lucknow. The same year the Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind launched the Al-Jamiat under the editorship of Maulana Mohammad Osman.

To meet the demands of the Sanatanist Goswami Ganesh Dutt brought out the veer Bharat from Lahore in 1928. Like other language dailies it too joined the struggle for freedom and threw open its columns to the Congress. In the lifetime of Madan Mohan Malavia it was practically under his influence and followed whatever policy he persuades in politics. It was also gagged once or twice and its securities forfeited. When the Muslim League agitation grew, the Veer Bharat took up the cause of the Hindus.

In 1930, R.R. Malihabadi and S.M. Usmani founded the daily Rozana Hind at Calcutta. In 1936 Mohammad Usman Azad brought out the daily Anjam from Calcutta.

Between 1931 and 1937, a large number of periodicals appeared. Shri Deena Nath brought out the Rahbar from Srinagar in 1931 and Sri Khalil Badar

brought out the Al-Hamra from Bhopal in 1936. An important weekly which started its publication during this period was the Riasat under the editorship of Sardar Diwan Singh Maftoon. It was concerned itself mainly with the Indian states. In 1936, Sardar Gurbax Singh started Preetlari, an Urdu monthly, which had constructive socialism as its policy. Lately this journal has aligned itself completely with the policies of the communist party.

In 1937, Khushtar Garami brought out Beeswin Sadi from Delhi. In 1938, the Urdu dailies in circulation in the Bombay presidency included the Khilafat, the Hilal, the Al-Hilal and the Ajmal. The Khilafat, the mouthpiece of central Khilafat committee, was the oldest of these but by 1938, it had aligned itself with the Muslim League. The three others did not belong to any political group and institution but were owned by private individuals. The Hilal was a strong advocate of the Muslim league while the Ajmal was on the side of the Congress.

Among the periodicals, the Khatoon, the Musawwir, the Sarosh, the Tanveer and the Subh-e-Ummeed were prominent. The Tanveer was edited by Asgari Begum Sahar and the Subh-e-Ummeed was edited by Shri Abdul Hamid Babri.

Other journals in existence at this time were the Deen-o-Dunya, The Sidq, the Malvi, Paras etc.

This decade in the history of Urdu Journalism marked the birth and growth of a large number of literary magazines like Adabi Dunya (Lahore), The Adab-e-Lateef(Lahore), the Humaun (Lahore), The Shahkar (Lahore), The Saqi (Delhi) etc.

In 1939, Usuf Dehlavi brought out the Shama, a monthly, from Delhi. The journal had a very good circulation now. Its main appeal remained its exposure of personal details about film stars and others.

In the same year, the Hindustan daily began to publish from Bombay. It was owned by Ghulam Mohammad Khan and edited by Raja Saeed. Another daily to start publication from Bombay in 1939 was the Inquilab-e-Jadeed edited by Abdul Hameed Ansari.

The important journals being published in Bihar at this time were following: *Alliham (Sasaram)*, *Alaeen (Bihar Sharif)*, *Al-Ikram (Bihar Sharif)*, *Al-Haq (Siwan)*, *Arsh (Monger)*, *Al-Adl (Patna)*, *Al-Muddahir (Patna)*, *Baibak (Patna)*, *Panch (Bihar)*, *Taj (Gaya)*, edited by *Shri Jagadiswar Prasad, M.L.A.*, *Fitrat (Rajgir)*, *Nadeem (Gaya)*, edited by *Anjum Najeeb (Phulwar Shreef)*, *Aftab (Purnea)*, *Hosn-o-Ishq (Dehri)* edited by *A. Qaium Ansari*, *Mojallah Salafia (Darbhanga)*.

After 1940, nearly a dozen daily, weekly and monthly journals started their publication from Patna.

The Ajit was started in 1940 from Lahore. It claimed to be the spokesman of the Sikh Community and had the blessings of Akali Dal. After the partition, it was dominated by Giani Kartar Singh and his group. Even when Giani joined the Gopichand Ministry, his influence on the editorial policy of the paper continued though now and again differences between the Minister and the editor were visible. The Minister opposed the demand for the formation of a Punjabi-speaking province and this policy was supported by the paper. The paper was critical of Master Tara Singh for as long as Giani Kartar Singh remained a member of the Punjab cabinet. After he left the Ministry the paper

changed its policies and supported a demand for Punjabi-speaking province. Its policy at present continues pro-Akali and anti-Hindu where keeping the interest intact on the Sikhs clash with those Hindus and anti-Congress and anti-government as far as possible.

In 1942, the Prabhat was brought out from Lahore under the editorship of Shri Nanak Chand Naz. It was the first paper in the united Punjab to be started on a cooperative basis by working journalists. It followed an independent policy but was conservative and inclined to favour the Hindu cause from the very beginning. The Prabhat was an independent pro-Congress paper till it was purchased by Master Tara Singh who owned it and directed its policies.

In 1942, Syed Nazir Haidar founded the Sada-e-Aam at Patna. The Nawjawan weekly from Patna was an educational journal. The Sathi daily was founded by Suhail Azimabadi who himself edited it for two and half years and then passed it on to Ghulam Sarwar and Wilayat Ali Shah. An Urdu edition of the people's war published by the communist party of India the Naya Zamana appeared from Bombay in 1942.

In 1945 the Qaumi Awaz was founded by Jawahar Lal Nehru at Lucknow and was edited by Hayatullah Ansari, formerly editor of Hindustan of Lucknow. Chaudhry Khaleeq-uz-Zaman brought out the Tanveer in the same year.

The partition affected the Urdu Press in the Punjab and large number of journals were uprooted Lahore, the nerve centre of all popular activities, was lost and most of the Urdu papers found a home in Delhi.

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