

# Media Responsibility: In effective urban governance in India.

**Reena Tukaram Jadhav**

Ph.D Student, Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth,  
(Sociology Department)

The researcher intends to show the interlinkages between media and effective governance in India through this research paper with the descriptive research methodology. Initially, the concept of media and urban governance are dealt in details by the researcher. The meaning and understanding of the word media and urban governance and the responsibility of different kinds of media towards the citizens is reflected in this paper. Both sides of the media's role in urban governance is highlighted be it public participation, public debate, watchdog of the society, accountability, legitimacy, transparency, defender of interest of the weaker section, false consciousness, imperfections of information. Views on policies, programs and matters of national interest are also discussed on this platform of media. Government then can try to understand the view points of the citizens and gather feedback. It also further tries to get the people's ideas and the contribution through all such tasks and it tries to identify talent and

expertise which can be done through successful implementation of projects with people's participation and also implement the best ideas which help in achieving the goal of good governance example Swacch Bharat mission. the constitutional framework which is there in India provides for the smooth functioning and the working of the press and the society but the concern is to provide that it should not only be in the interest of the public at large but it should also be seen to be taken care of. the state should not impede the free flow of information that will go a long way in protecting and promoting the rights of the citizens. in this age of post truth and alternative facts where advertorials and response features about editorials the researcher would like to look into nehru's vision of the press playing its role as a watchdog in a democracy and look at the ethos and the principles that powered the journalism. The major concern is the empowering of the citizens in India and restoration of the norms and val-

ues in the society. The real issue in the 21st century is to make the best use of the networked society for the benefit of the citizens for making their lives hassle-free and beautiful to live.

**KEY WORDS** Media, urban governance, legitimacy, transparency, watchdog, empowering people, false consciousness, the rise of social media, imperfection of information, networked society, benefit to citizens.

### **Media Responsibility: In the effective urban governance in India.**

**Introduction** In Latin the word “medius” means intermediate agency. It is the plural form of the word 'medium'.<sup>1</sup> In today's context media means, 'means of mass communication including publication, broadcasting, and the internet regarded connectivity'. Media includes audio, video, print, etcetera, medium to communicate to the people at large. In any form of governance especially democratic form of governance the media has a very vital role to play in the people's lives. It is considered as the 'Fourth Pillar' of democracy in India too. This clearly shows the role of media in India and also in many other countries to voice the general and public opinion of that country. Urban governance refers to how government at the local, regional and national level introducing plans, policies and how to manage the finance in urban

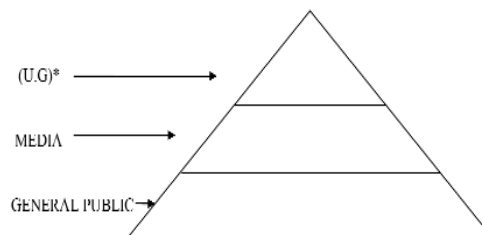
areas. It involves a continuous process of contestation and negotiation over the allocations of the social and material resources and political power. It is therefore profoundly political, influenced by the creation and operation of political institutions, government capacity to make and implement decisions and the extent to which these decision recognise and response to the interest of the poor.<sup>2</sup> On the whole the urban governance includes the social, economic forces and the institution and their relationships. UN habitat and UNESCAP has in its 2010 report<sup>3</sup> emphasized on the strategic importance of the media in the urban governance. There are various stakeholders in the interaction between the media and urban governance.

The media has different ways to express itself for showing its responsibility towards the democratic government. In India when the constitution was being drafted the question before the framers that whether to have a separate provision for including the freedom of press as it was in the American constitution or to include the freedom of speech and expression including the press as it was in England. The chairman of drafting committee Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar strongly argued that is nearly another way of giving an individual or a citizen his or her rights. The process no special rights which are not to be given or which are not to be exercised by the citizen in his individual capacity. The editor of the

press or the manager are all citizens and therefore when they choose to write in the newspaper they are nearly exercising their right of the freedom of speech and expression and in his judgement therefore no special mention is necessary of the freedom of press at all hence the right to press was included in the freedom of speech and expression that is article 19 (1)( a )of the Indian Constitution. Independent press and control free press are the prerequisite of a democracy, the need for a free press is more in a country like India in the absence of any specific article in the Indian Constitution for price or media it was the judiciary who safeguarded and promoted the independence of press at times it also restricted the same in the interest of Justice. In Romesh Thapar vs The state of Madras<sup>4</sup> the court has held that right to circulation is as important as the right to publication. In Sakal newspapers versus The Union of India an indirect effort was made by the government to restrict the freedom by passing the Newspapers Price and Pages Act,1956 which empower the government to regulate the space for advertisement was struck down by judiciary as you would have direct impact on circulation. The Indian judiciary is not only protecting the rights of press or the media but also restricted it in the interest of justice. In Bihar versus The Shailabala Devi<sup>5</sup> speeches and expression the part of the individual which incite or encourage to propa-

gate and violent crimes like murder et cetera will undermine the security of the state. In the case of Dr DC Saxena versus honorable Chief Justice of India<sup>6</sup> this court held if maintenance of democracy is the foundation of free speech society equally is entitled to regulate freedom of speech and expression by democratic action the reason is obvious that is that society accepts free speech and expression and also puts limit on the right of the majority.

\*Urban governance and the general



public are inter connected through media.

Critical analysis of media's role in urban governance. 1) Public participation the role of media be it the social media, print or other form of media the public opinion is voiced through it. Any form positive or negative criticism towards the policies of the urban governance are clearly expressed by the general and common man through media.the last couple of years various social media initiatives just like using Facebook WhatsApp they have come up where government agencies have shown proactive interest to engage with the citizens. In India there are about 187 municipal corporations

which serve different cities with the population of a million and above. All the municipal corporations are a sign of development organisation prosperity and on the other hand they are also having problems related to slums, health and unplanned progress. One thing is very clear that in any City the penetration of mobile phones is significantly high and in some of the municipality is it could be as high as for 400%. Some examples of using the Facebook for link between the government and the people the social media has played a vital role that is the Mumbai Police, the Delhi Police, the Gurgaon police etcetera. In addition to this era mobile apps for metro rail timings, bus timings and the position public grievances and so on. Another important example regarding the use of social media by the government for creating the public participation is the mygov.nic.in app. it is the initiative which is an opportunity for the citizens and well wishes from across the world to share their views on issues directly with the Prime Minister of India. It was to empower the citizens of India to contribute towards Surajya.the platform mygov encourages citizens as well as people abroad to discuss and debate. there are multiple theme based discussions on mygov where a wide range of people can share their thoughts and ideas for the any idea shared by contributor will also be discussed on these discussion forums allowing constructive feedback and interaction

among participation it also aims to establish a link between government and citizens towards meeting the goal of good governance in the country for those who wish to go beyond discussions and wish to contribute on the ground it offers several away news to do so citizens can volunteer for various tasks and submit the entries this task would then be reviewed by other members and expertise once approved these tasks can be shared by those who complete the task by other members on the same platform every approve the task would then gain credit points for completing of that task. groups and creative corners are an important part of my gov the platform has been divided into various groups namely clean Ganga Green India, job creation, girl child, education, skill development, digital India, Swachh Bharat etcetera. each group consists of online and on ground task that can be taken up by the contributors the objective of age group is to bring about a qualitative change in that sphere through people's participation.

## 2) Public debate

The media always creates the forum and gives the platform to the people to have a healthy public debate which includes the major public interest in the nation example need of Aadhar Card for the government scheme beneficiaries and its uses. Free media is not only beneficial but necessary in a free society and any

attack on the freedom of press would jeopardize the rights of the citizens. If any unjust restrictions and the threat of attack or self censorship is seen on the media then it could have the opposite effect which would create abuses and fostering frustration in the marginalized communities which was seen earlier when CBI raided the NDTV channel. The constitutional framework which is there in India provides for the smooth functioning and the working of the press and the society but the concern is to provide that it should not only be in the interest of the public at large but it should also be seen to be taken care of. The state should not impede the free flow of information that will go a long way in protecting and promoting the rights of the citizens. in this age of post truth and alternative facts where advertorials and response features about editorials the researcher would like to look into Nehru's vision of the press playing its role as a watchdog in a democracy and look at the ethos and the principles that powered the journalism. in the wake of this India also has different acts to protect the free press for example the working journalists act which tried to give a degree of protection and to all the journalists to ensure freedom of press. The media is not only the fourth pillar but also the backbone of any democratic society. This is because while the legislature makes the laws the judiciary interpret and executive employment set it is a

media which acts as a watchdog of the three pillars in order to ensure that they are performing their constitutional duties thus calling for accountability also.

### **3) Watchdog of the society.**

Media acts as the regulator of the Urban Governance on behalf of the general public example Coalgate Scam, Rafael deal scam in the UPA and NDA reigns respectively. In the last decade the media as the watchdog of the society has tried to take advantage of its role be it in the tabuladization of news, fake sting operations to settle personal scores, paid news especially during elections without any concrete action been taken against the wrongdoers. The role of the press council of India is very important in all such issues and more powers have to be issued in this case. The challenges in tackling the might of media without compromising its liberty or many. In any future legislation seeking to exit any form of control or censorship on the media need to take into account a multitude of complex factors like viability of a publication as a business national security vis-a-vis journalist anonymity competition in the media. The first major attack on the Indian media came during emergency in the late 1970s through the Prevention of Publication of Objectionable matters Ordinance 1975 was issued. This Ordinance required news articles to be censored when even before being published along

with the penalties for hostile press. At the time the media relented and crawled and when asked kneel down however they said audience was withdrawn soon after Indira Gandhi last elections held immediately after calling off of the emergency. Later Rajiv Gandhi shot to get the entered information Bill passed a legislation which came to target journalist who wrote critical articles about politicians and place the burden of proof on the accused in the family suites this bill also provided for summary trials and prescribed a minimum period of imprisonment for journalist. It took a long struggle find in journalist including a protest march for the bill to be ultimately withdrawn. It is not that there isn't any watchdog for the media too. Press council of India was first set up in the air 1966 on the recommendations of the first press commission with the object of preserving the freedom of press and of maintaining and improving the standards of the press in India. it is a statutory quasi judicial body that functions under the aegis of the press council of India act of 1978. the press council of India is headed by a chairman who has by convention been a retired judge of the supreme Court of India and there are 28 other members of whom 3 are from Lok Sabha, 2 from Rajya Sabha, 6 editors of newspapers, 7 working journalists, 6 persons in the business of managing papers, 1 person from news agency and 3 persons representing cultural,

literary and legal fields as nominees of the Sahitya Akademi, University grants commission and the Bar council of India. The press council of India also acts as an advisory authority to the government on matters affecting media freedom and has drawn opposite of norms on media reporting. World Genesis behind the formation of the press council of India was noble is existence is nearly superficial in the present day serving little or no purpose. neither is it representative of the views of the media not does it have any real legal power to take any positive or corrective action against the offending publishers but it has nearly been an authority that publishes reports analysing the actions and the words of the media reports which are not acted upon. The independent functioning of any organisation is dependent on where it derives its funds from. Press council of India is funded by revenue collected by it as fee levied on the registered newspapers in the country on the basis of the circulation. No fee is levied on the newspapers with circulation less than 5000 copies. the deficit is made good by the way of glands by the central government through The ministry of information and broadcasting however it is not an authority created by the press voluntarily and the press at large considers The council to be non reflective of its interest and stake. Wild error pros and cons for both legal regulation and self regulation in India legal regulation in the form of

statutory body which has nearly been a toothless tiger has not serve the purpose for which it was constituted. Neither has the press council of India been able to ensure press freedom evidenced by frequent attacks on the press from various quarters no has it been able to keep an effective check on the malpractices in the media evidenced by in action on several complaints of inaccurate information and paid news against some newspapers. the way forward in India could be to empower the press council of India allowing it to take punitive action in the form of punitive monetary penalties suspension of licenses and much more. Also it must be made more representative of stakeholders in the media does giving them a voice.

#### **4) Accountability**

In India the service act has been passed. It is concerned with the public service which the urban governance provides. The media act as a check through its medium on behalf of the general public. Even the Right to information and the role of media have brought in more effectiveness of the implementation of the policies of the government. Today the media is portraying known issues as the real issues are being sidelined. The real issues are the farmers dissent the unemployment issue violence against the backward communities marginalized sections of society under the garb of gau rakshaks violence against women. Also the growing economic

concerns with the falling of rupee as considered to the dollars. Still more than 80% of the people are living in poverty there is lack of housing medical Care education is needed for most of them all this major concerns and issues are ignored by the media. The major media channels are focusing on and acting as the spokesperson of the government rather than asking questions on behalf of the citizen rights. All such issues such as fit India where huge amount of money is spent for unnecessary reasons to promote such concepts. There are two ways to remove such kind of defects in the media one way is through the various kinds of discussions consultations and persuasions while on the other hand by imposing heavy fines on defaulters stopping government advertisements to them suspending the licenses.

#### **5) Legitimacy**

It is concerned with the rights of the state to exercise its power over its people i.e. citizen. The media check the actual reality and the perception of the rights of state how they are being used for the betterment of the public living in that state. Example traffic rule violation by people being monitored by media, Swach Bharat scheme.

#### **6) Transparency**

The existence of mechanisms for ensuring public access to decision making is to be done by the media in

the urban governance. Example Panama papers cobra post expose.

### **7) Defender of the Interest of the politically weak people.**

Media represents the weaker section of the society and its rights rather than representing the elite class.

Example The rights of the poor people slum dwellers in India. The recent news coverage of MAHUL resident in Bombay by the news channel Mirror Now. The protest by various farmers and their March towards Delhi which was the representative against the central government during 2018 was done several times and therefore the lack of coverage given by the mainstream media shoes the lack of awareness regarding real issues in India.

Only few media channels covered this March of the various farmers be it from Tamil Nadu Maharashtra under the garb of politicisation of certain issues. The way in which the various issues such as mob lynching or saffronisation of various institutions of the democracy is not being criticized by the media. Example the CBI fiasco.

### **8) Restoration of the norms and values.**

Any society has its own ethos. The role of the media in urban governance is to spread rationality, scientific temperament among its people. example sabarimala Temple decision given by the supreme Court of India. The media has to put forth correct, accurate facts and figures to the create opinions which are favourable to the

judicial judgment.

9) Empowering People Sassen, saskia in their studies reflects the role of media in empowering people to be actors in the urban governance. example Nannar power project in Maharashtra being opposed by the local people.

**10) Creating trust in the institution of the society.** Recently, the four judges of the Supreme Court came to the media to address the general public in order to tell that everything isn't right there. Be it the use of roster system in Supreme Court or other issues the media gave the coverage so that trust is created back in our institution.

### **11) False consciousness**

Today with the crony capitalism and the government excuses the media is been wrongly used to create the ideology of the influencing elite class which is small in number. The media that is news channels rather than giving the exact and true facts showcase the government being correct inspite of corruption, nepotism extra.

Example Recently CBI row in India government through media and few capitalist is creating its own Patronage.

### **12) Imperfection of Information**

Watson in his study has criticized the media for providing wrong information to the citizen and being to be appease and appressive the government.



### **13) Commercialization and Commodification**

Except few media houses most of them are interested in their personal interest rather than public or social welfare.

### **14) Ideology chorus line**

Michael Foucault in his study suggested that the journalist in most cases are based having their own ideological preferences creating a digital divide.

### **15) The rise of social media.**

The revolution of today's 'wired' or 'networked' society is seen even in India. The use of YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram is on the rise newer channels have come up on the social media like the Quint, wire, newsclick etc. which are doing the actual and real fact finding roles of the media at large.

### **16) Spreading Hatred**

The negative aspect of media is to spread hatred among different section of society that is religion, caste, class, gender. The editors, news reporters, publishers have to understand their role as responsible citizens of a nation and rise up to their own consciousness and in turn their jobs.

**Conclusion** The media in the 21st century has to realize its space in any Nation or Country. It has to act in a neutral, unbiased, value neutral way. This will create more faith of the citi-

zen not in them but in the entire institution of the concerned society. The role of the media is very clear today to make the people live a hassle free life without corruption, nepotism etcetera. Urban governance is the key to better and beautiful life of the citizen but it is incomplete without the media.

## **REFERENCES**

### **BOOKS**

Bell, Bernard; Brower, Jan; Biswajit Das; Parthasarathi, Vibodh and Poitevin, Guy 2005 Media and Mediation, Sage Publication, New Delhi

Curran James, Media and Power, London and New York, Rutledge, (2002)

George A Donohue, Philip Tichenor et al, 'A Guard Dog Perspective on the Role of the Media.' Journal of Communication, 45(2), 115-128 (1995)

Ram, N2001 'The Great Indian Media Bazaar: Emerging Trends and Issues for the Future', in Romila Thapar(ed.), India: Another Millennium? Penguin, New Delhi.

Miles, Malcolm; Tim H and Lain Borden (edited) 2000 The City Cultures Reader, Routledge, London.

WEBLIOGRAPHY

\*\*\*