



Coverage of News Stories Related to North East people Residing in Delhi in National Dailies : A Study based on Content Analysis of The Hindu and The Times of India

Dr. Rabindranath Manukonda

Associate Professor, Head Department of Journalism and Creative Writing, Former Dean, School of Mass Communication, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, P.B. 21, Dharamshala, Distt. Kangra-176215 (H.P).

M. Bimolchandra Singh

Research Scholar, Dept. of Journalism and Creative Writing, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh-176215.

ABSTRACT

North-eastern people consider them different from the mainland India. The reason behind that they are always mistreated by mainland India due to their looks, dressings and more about the culture they follow. They are given different names such as Chinki, Nepalese, Chinese, and Bhutanese etc. due to their looks and it really raises a question mark to their identity. If we look into the situation in the capital of India, Delhi, which is considered as the city of civilized and educated people and such kind of discrimination, is not expected from the citizens of Delhi and moreover the problem is more critical in Delhi. In this situation the role of media becomes more important as it is the fourth pillar of democracy. This made the researchers curious as it is quite important to study the part played by media in coverage of North east people's issues and problems. This paper tries to analyze how many news items have been published about North east issues of Delhi and NCR in two major national dailies in the month of June 2015.

KEYWORDS : North east people, discrimination, national dailies, atrocities, media.

Introduction

North east India is a cultural and social mosaic and also a mini India. North East Indian states comprises of Assam, Sikkim, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh which is commonly known as seven sisters. These states are officially recognized under the North Eastern Council (NEC) 1971. The geographical aspect of Northeast India constitutes about 8% of the total India's size. The North East is a frontier region sharing over 2000 km of border with Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar and is connected to mainland India by only a narrow 20 km wide corridor of land. North east is also ethnically and linguistically diverse region having more than 166 distinct tribes with each tribe having distinct culture and separate language.

The role of media is indispensable and undeniable, particularly in India with diverse cultures, traditions and different physical look. Media serve as a facilitator of dissemination of information, news, and thoughts. Media includes mass media like journals, magazines, news channels, news papers, radio, TV and internet and email. Now, the influence of media is getting more and more powerful as it can spread any story in wide scale. Among them, national dailies are the most reliable and dependable communicators. They have very crucial role in bringing and preserving peaceful and cordial environment.

In the last ten years, the crime against the north east people in Delhi has drastically increased. North easterners are unsafe even from their own fellowmen in their own country. The north-east people in Delhi and NCR are now subject to different forms of racial discrimination, abuse, racial attack, molestation and rape and even killing. Sadly, some of them have even lost their lives in racial attack.

A 19 year old Mizo girl gangraped in Dhaula Kuan in 2005, seven year old girl from Nagaland gang raped, murdered and dumped in a water tank in Mahipalpur in 2009, a 19 year old Manipuri girl murdered after attempted rape by an IIT student at Munirka in 2009, Dhaula Kuan gang rape case of 30 years old Mizo girl on November 23, 2010 and the brutal killing of Nido Tania, 19 year old student from Arunachal Pradesh in the heart of Delhi on 29th January 2014 had shocked the entire nation. This racial killing of Nido Tania, is one such poignant story. He lost his life as he protested their taunts on his 'mongoloid' look and punk hairstyle.

There are many incidents and some are really very poignant. And here the role of media is in moot question. Because media is known as the

fourth pillar and it is the responsibility of the media to highlight such issues coming anywhere from India. However, media focuses more on the power dynamics of politics. There are very few National newspapers, which actually give due coverage to the north-eastern issues.

It is observed that in Indian scenario, any issue related to any area or any individuals turn into more significant only if the news story is covered in national daily and recognized on national level. As more people are attached to it and there is a great chance for the improvement of that issue. No issue is taken seriously unless and until national media takes up the issue. Government also takes up the issue seriously only when the issue is dominated in the public platform through media. Newspapers provide us this opportunity to help us to understand one another. For the last five years, the people from north east states are continuously attacked in metropolitan cities in India.

One of the important reasons for people of North eastern states barring Mizoram and Sikkim to migrate to metropolitan cities is, all are facing the militants and insurgency problem. People in this region are the victims of parallel government. With the lack of adequate educational infrastructures, employment opportunities and prevailing socio-political unrest and conflict force them to migrate in search of good-quality of education, jobs and other purposes. A study 'North East Migration and Challenges in National Capital: City's silent Racial attack on its own countrymen' conducted by the North East Support Centre and Helpline (NESCH) found that about 200,000 youths from the northeast reside in Delhi alone, while over 414,850 have migrated out of northeastern states into various metro cities during 2005-2010. The annual average increase in the number of migration is 13.62 per cent. Delhi is one of the most preferred destinations for North-East migrants with almost 48.21 per cent of the migrants moving to the Capital.

The project report also reveals that 78 percent of the North east people living in Delhi face different forms of racial discrimination and humiliations because they belong to north east states and have different look. Now the issue is not only concern on the problems of north east people in Delhi and NCR but also preservation of integrity and unity of India with amazing diversity. Here, the role of National Newspapers is significant and indescribable. As we know that misconception and misunderstanding are key elements that cause us to think bitterly and misbehavior towards one another. So, through newspapers message can be disseminated reducing the misconception and misunderstanding among us.

However Indian government is considering introducing two new Sections: Section 153-C and Section 509-A under IPC to ban the words like Chinkii. The Ministry of Home Affairs constituted a committee on 5th February 2014 under the chairmanship of Shri. M.P Bezbaruah to look into the concerns of the people of north east living in other parts of the country, but the problem still exists.

People from north east in Delhi and NCR work as teachers, nurses, doctors, engineers, waiters and BPO employees (business process outsourcing). They also have similarities in the context of social, economic and political with the rest of India. The irony is that issues of north east people in Delhi and NCR hardly come into the purview of mainstream media, depriving of recognition though it is an integral part of India. However, for the last ten years, they are facing different forms of racial discrimination, attacks and harassments both in public places and workplaces thereby making feel them insecure and alienated from mainland India.

However, how far the national newspapers cover north east issues in Delhi and NCR in their contents would be interesting area to study. As Delhi is the capital city public from different corners throng to Delhi for different purposes particularly for studies and jobs. In India, we can identify media at local level and at national level. The local media remain limited only to a particular geographical area. Their audience is also limited and thus their impact is also limited. The national media have amazing impact on national and international scenario.

How often do we read the news of north east people residing in Delhi and NCR in our national dailies? Is enough space provided for north east issues in Delhi? Unless there is a significant event, the space given in the national dailies is small enough to be ignored by readers. Enough space is given only when it is of political issue and celebrity involvement. For instance, the unfortunate death of Nido Tania. He is the son of MLA of Arunachal Pradesh. This shocking accident happened just before the Parliament Elections. This accident was made political issue and attracted Media.

Objectives of the Study:

The present research article is designed to study the following objectives:

1. To analyze the coverage of news items of north east people settled in Delhi in two national dailies: *The Hindu and The Times of India*.
2. To identify what types of issues are covered related to north-east in two national dailies: *The Hindu and The Times of India*.

Methodology:

Researchers studied the coverage of the North eastern issues in two national newspapers namely *The Hindu and the Times of India*. These newspapers are selected on the basis of circulation. For this purpose one month newspapers have been studied i.e. June 2015 newspapers. The Research method applied is content analysis.

Researchers studied how many news items appeared daily on north-eastern issues and how much space is provided to these issues. For this study, content analysis of *The Hindu and The Times of India* are selected as they are national dailies and they are popular and have good circulation in Delhi and NCR. The duration of the study has been selected from 1st June 2015 to 30 June 2015, i.e. one-month newspapers are selected for content analysis. The researchers tried to find out the issues related to North east news items besides secondary data collection from different reputed research articles, journals, and relevant sites related to north east issues in metropolitan cities in India.

The parameters selected for Content Analysis are-Number of words per news item and the page number of that news item.

The number of words will reflect the space provided for that news item and the page number will reflect the importance of the news item covered.

Content Analysis: *The Hindu* - The Hindu mostly covers issues related to national and international. The coverage is less with regard to the news of north east peoples particularly those residing in Delhi and

NCR. During the June 2015 Delhi edition, there is only one news item which is directly related to issues of north east people staying in Delhi and NCR. But other stories headlines related to northeast are given below. The Headline "*Special Cell for NE people in Delhi: Rijju*" on 4/06/2015 is the only content that is directly related to the issue of people of north east in Delhi and NCR.

Date: 4/06/2015 -Page Number: 5 - Number of words: 192

Headline: "*Special Cell for NE people in Delhi: Rijju*"

News: Here Rijju, the Minister of State for Home Affairs, explained the need of incorporating the lessons and subjects about the north east region in CBSE syllabus and college and university level. He also informed that concerning about the north east people in Delhi and NCR, Centre has set up special security cell and started separate helpline number for north east people. He expressed the need of inducting more people from north east states in Delhi Police Services which are presently only 43 out of 90,000 strong forces. He asked Delhi University and JNU to construct hostels serving 50% of their hostel for north east students. North east centre would be established to popularize the regions and to promote culture and harmony.

Analysis: The story contains only 192 words including heading and reporting place. The story is printed in page 5.

Some of the other important coverage of North east region during the June 2015 in the Hindu (Delhi) edition are: *Stabled Visa issue with China still unresolved* (1/06/2015), *Kolkata-Dhaka-Agartala bus service trial run begins* (2/06/2015), *PG in N-E studies at Jamia* (3/06/2015), *20 soldiers killed in Manipur ambush* (5/6/2015), *Court to record Irom's statement in August* (7/06/2015), *LAC differences may stall India-China CBMs*(8/06/2015), *Army, Assam Rifles kill 50 'ultras' on Myanmar Border* (10/6/2015), *Hot pursuit a message to all, says govt.* (11/06/2015), *High alert sounded in North East* (12/06/2015), *Manipur ambush: NIA arrests NSCN regional chairman* (30/06/2015).

Content Analysis: *The Times of India* - Four issues that are directly related to the issues of North east people residing in Delhi and NCR are exposed in The Times of India (Delhi), June 2015 edition. All the news items are related to discrimination, molestation, assaulting.

Date: 1/06/2016 -Page number: First page (1) - Number of words: 687

The Headline: "*Manipuri man beaten up and abused, 3 held*"

News: Manipuri named Brilliant Horam landed in hospital with a broken skull and injured limbs for objecting to a man for spitting on him. The youth was racially abused, chased and beaten with a wooden stick by three men near his house in North Delhi's Burari. In connection with this accident, Police have arrested two people, identified as Vinod Kumar and Dinesh and are searching to arrest the remaining accused. A third person, Devender Kumar, is also arrested for abusing them for lodging a complaint," said additional DCP (north), Brijender Yadav. Police have registered an FIR under IPC Section 308 (attempt to commit culpable homicide), Section 34 (common intention) and under sections of disrupting communal harmony. The CCTV footage from the area has also been recovered to identify the other accused. On coming Monday Brilliant Horam has to write his Diploma entrance examination. There is less chance for him to sit for the examination.

Analysis: The report contains 687 words including headline and reporting location. The story is highlighted in the front page. There is one photograph of passport size.

Date: 14/06/2015 -Page number: 3 - Number of words: 261

The Headline: "*Assam youth thrashed*"

News: A youth named Hillary Sangma from Assam was beaten up by his neighbour at Uttam Nagar, Delhi. His neighbor accused him that he was allegedly trespassing his neighbor while he was sleeping and he was trying to put something in his daughter's mouth. Hillary Sangma denied these allegations. When the police asked his daughter to

identify, she refused to recognize him. Now the police have registered a FIR and further investigation in going on.

Analysis: The report contains 261 words including title and reporting location. It is printed in page 3.

Date: 23/06/2015 - Page number: 5 - Number of words: 118

The Headline: "21-yr-old molested in Dwarka"

News: Tulakant Thakur, who is a caretaker of her PG accommodation, allegedly molested 21-year-old woman from Arunachal Pradesh in Dwarka, South West Delhi. She also said that it is not the first time he tried to molest her. He misbehaved and tried to molest in the past also.

Analysis: The news item carries 118 words including heading and reporting place. It is highlighted in page 5.

Date: 25/06/2015 Page number: 6 - Number of words: 129

The Headline: "Women from Arunachal Pradesh molested"

News: This is the expansion of the previous story, the headline: "Women from Arunachal Pradesh molested" in page 6 on 25/06/2015. The woman from Arunachal Pradesh is a trainee beautician at VLCC institute in Delhi. The caretaker tried to rape her two times earlier.

Analysis: The story contains 129 words including headline and place. It is printed in page 6.

Some of the other important news stories of North east region during the June 2015 edition in The Times of India are: *20 soldiers killed in Manipur ambush in deadliest attack on Army in 33 yrs (5/06/2015)*, *Safety code ignored, jawans rode into trap (6/06/2015)*, *Can't call this hot pursuit: MoS Def (11/06/2015)*, *NSA, Myanmar Prez discuss NE insurgents (19/06/2015)*, *trafficked Assam girl rescued (21/06/2015)*, *Myanmar turns heat on NE rebels, chokes supplies (26/06/2015)*, *North-east to get major health boost (27/06/2015)*, *Dimapur blast kills 2 (28/06/2015)*, *NIA makes first arrest in Manipur ambush (30/06/2015)*.

Conclusion

The Hindu daily covered the Northeast issues mostly related to national security and political issues. It is clear from the content analysis that The Hindu gives coverage to issues particularly on Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Assam. The Hindu highlighted issues that are of national issue. The Hindu did not cover the issues of the people of North east in Delhi and NCR. When compared to The Hindu, the Times of India gave more coverage to the issues of people of North east in Delhi and NCR. Still, they neglected the issues of the North east people in Delhi and NCR. It would be very important to give coverage to the issues of North east people in Delhi and NCR as only the National Dailies can highlight the issues on national platform and to get attention of government, political leaders and the public at large. The mainstream media have to take into consideration about these issues to bring social change and understanding among the public.

REFERENCES

1. <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/report-says-north-east-residents-in-delhi-face-humiliation/1/135561.html> | 2. <http://epaperbeta.timesofindia.com/> | 3. <https://epaper.thehindu.com/index.php?rt=login/loginAction> | 4. Longkumer Wapangsungra (2014). Coverage of North east issues on national daily: A Comparative study of Nagaland Post and The Hindu (unpublished Master's thesis). Lovely Professional

University, Punjab, India. |