

PRINT MEDIA COMES TO NORTH EAST INDIA

by

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Abstract

The geographical, demographic and historical isolation of the region have exercised considerable influence on the growth of print media in North East. History of Print Media for the North East however remained less documented and read till today. Scholars of mainland India have less interest of conducting research on this area, while scholars of North East lack in terms of resources and scope. In this context, this paper seeks to offer a fundamental reading of the history of print media in the seven states of North East India. It is however by no means, a complete compendium of the history of press in North East India. It does offer only a rudimentary level of historical documentation and attempts to reflect the specificities of advent of print media in the seven sisters of North East India. It is a documentation of the summary of the advent of Print Media in North East both from primary and secondary data.

Keywords: north east; print; newspaper; colonial; post-colonial; public space; nationalism, sub-nationalism, identity, tribe, culture, language.

Introduction

Almost in every society, there would be a public space in the realm of people's communication which would also provide the ordinary citizens a scope of participation in public communication shaping the 'public life'.⁽¹⁾ This public space in ancient times and mediaeval times could have been the common spaces like after food common recreation place or the common kitchen in ancient times, or the cafes and restaurants in not so ancient times, in the modern age this public space has been constructed and reconstructed through various media of modernity. In the modern age, this public sphere emerges in which ordinary citizens to a great extent can participate in political discussion and organize and struggle for social change, which is to an arguable extent, but no doubt, dependent on the modern media.

Print, as we know, is the first of modern media. During its initial days, newspapers were read together at one place for many listeners. Thus newspapers acted to redefine the traditional

public space and a modern public sphere was being created even in the village in the court yards of such houses or places, tea shops or other shops or *baithak-khana* of eminent peoples, stations, steamer-*ghatas* etc. of the colonial India. It is an almost undeniable fact that modern media and political fabrics such as democracy and the rise of nationalism are related. Whereas this dynamics of advent of print media and nationalism is well recorded for the mainland India by and large, the scholarly world for reasons such as unavailability of data and remoteness have so far neglected the media history of the remote conflict ridden North East India. Media, particularly modern media, both print as well as electronic, in North east India have no well-documented history.

Vilanilam, for example, discusses ‘the flowering’ of other Indian newspapers but mentions only Assam from the entire North East India.⁽²⁾ Renowned chroniclers like S Natarajan or Vilanilam in their well respected accounts said that very little was written, if not even lesser, about the press of North East India.^{(3)& (4)} Even in 2005, Bhargava writes: “Getting information about Assamese publications is a tiring task. First in the pre-1970 publications, there was no mention at all of Assamese newspapers, although there was reportedly an English publication entitled 150 Years of Assamese Journalism. My most diligent attempts didn’t get me a glimpse of it”.⁽⁵⁾ After almost a decade, Gyan Prakash Pandey, who was writing in 2012-13, has also acknowledged that writing about an unexplored area of the press in North East was a difficult task due to lack of authentic and detailed information.⁽⁶⁾

This paper in this context proposes to present just a snapshot of the beginning of the mediascape of North East India showing when modernity started to usher in for the first time in this part of the world.

On the History and Demography of North East India

During the pre-colonial days, most of the geographical area under the present North East states were ruled by Tribal Chieftains, in some places under a monarch like the King of Tripura, Manipur or Assam or Dhimasa. In some places, the Tribal Chieftains were directly ruling without any functional monarch- for example the Mizo Lusai Hills, Naga Hill Tracts, and most of the areas under present day Arunachal Pradesh.

Most of the region fell under British domination after the treaty of Yandaboo with the King of Ava. However, complete annexations of different areas of North East by the British

colonizers, that are separate Indian states now, have been a gradual process. The Kings of Assam who had reigned over thousand years⁽⁷⁾ and the Dimasa Raja fell before others while in Manipur and Tripura monarchy continued for some more time. However, after independence, the political and administrative systems of these two states were also brought at par with the rest of the country.⁽⁸⁾

Tribes living in the northern area of present day Assam were subjugated one after another during the latter half of nineteenth century.⁽⁹⁾ After Independence, this larger tract of North East was continued to be called NEFA (North East Frontier Agency) and entire North East was controlled from single capital Shillong serving all jurisdictions for some more time till one after another separate state was carved out.⁽¹⁰⁾

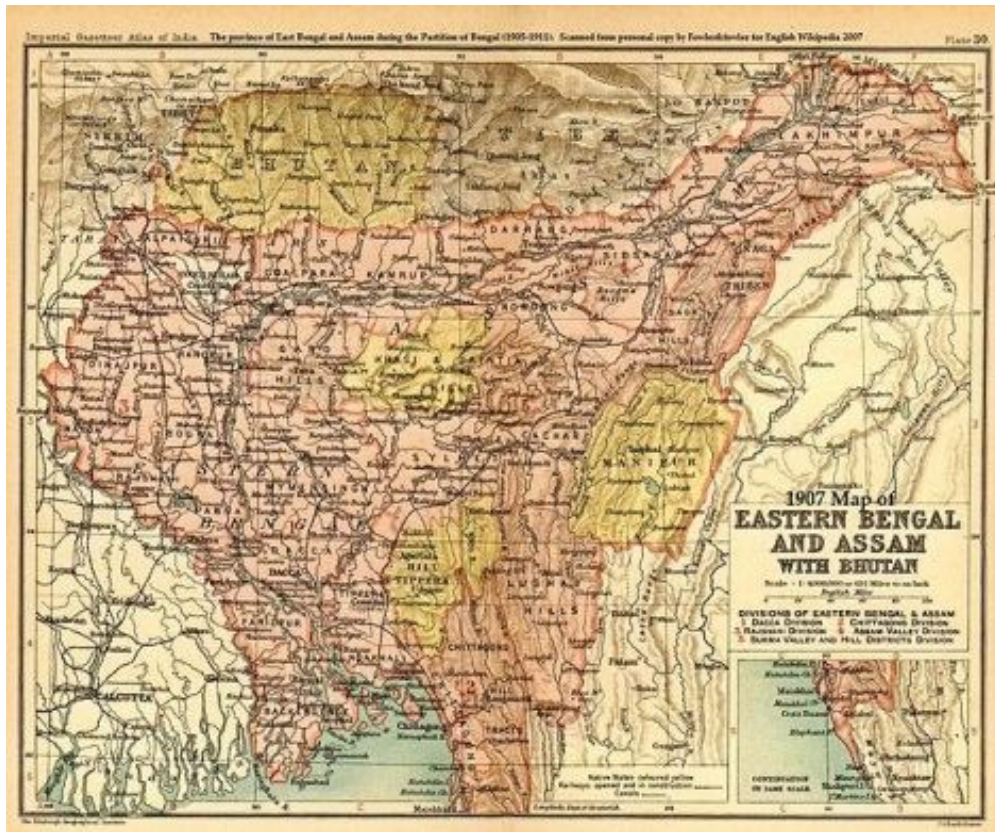
The chequered history of North East has many contentious areas and dispute over territorial identities.⁽¹¹⁾ The Ahoms of the Tai or Shan group Mongoloids entered Assam in the early part of the 13th Century. The Khamtis, Phakials, Aitongs, Khamjangs and Turungs who are of the same origin came to Assam in the 16th Century or a little later.⁽¹²⁾

A reference should be made here on the Burmese War which occupies an important place in the history of Assam in general and North East in particular. The whole of North East fell under the sole domination of the British administration after the Yandoboo treaty (1826) with the King of Ava.

In the post-Burmese aggression period, condition of the Brahmaputra valley was most deplorable. The Burmese had now been finally ejected from Assam but still it remained to be decided how the country which they had evacuated should be dealt with. Manipur was resorted to Gambhir Singh, who was chief architect in driving the Burmese out of the state. The Jaintia king Ram Singh retained his possession both in the hills and in the surrounding tracts on the north bank of the "Surma River". Gobinda Chandra was reinstated as the king of Cachar. By a treaty executed at Badarpur on 6th March, 1824, he acknowledged his allegiance to the East India Company agreeing to pay a tribute of Rs. 10, 000 a year and submit to the company's arbitration in the case of disputes with other Rajas as part of the agreement. On the other hand, the Company undertook to protect him in case of any eventuality.⁽¹³⁾ With the exception, of two tracts in Upper Assam i.e. Sadiya and Matak, British East India Company officials decided to administer the valley.⁽¹⁴⁾

Baptist Missionaries from this period started playing a very important role in modernization of the people of North East, not only to the larger tract of the territory known as present day Assam but also such tracts as presently known as Mizoram, and Nagaland. ⁽¹⁵⁾

Figure 1: Map of North East India during Colonial Period



Original Source: Imperial Gazette Office of India, sourced from English Wikipedia.

Syllhet district of Bengal was once annexed and subsequently taken off from Assam, only to be bifurcated finally during partition and the present Barak valley made part of Assam in 1947. The tribal areas of Garo, Khasi and Jaintia Hills which constitute present day Meghalaya was under the British Assam and with headquarter situated in Sillong.

Sillong was also the Headquarter of NEFA or North Eastern Frontier Areas. Different regions of North East was under various levels of British officials – whereas the Assam Province was annexed and brought under direct rule, for the tribal and princely states certain concessions were given.

Ultimately all these regions became separate states of Independent India through a long drawn process. The political time line of this process is compiled and presented in the following Table-1.

Table 1: Time-line of Colonial to Post Colonial North East

1826: February 2: Yandaboo Treaty: ‘His majesty the King of Ava renounces all claims upon, and abstains from all future interferences with the principality of Assam and its dependencies and also with the contiguous petty states of Cachar and Jyantea. With regard to Munnipore it is stipulated that, should Gumbheer Singh desire to return to that country he shall be recognized by the King of Ava as Rajah thereof.’
1873: The Assam Inner Line Permit Regulations
1874: Cachar, Jaintia and Sadiya were tagged to Assam and those were brought under direct British rule
1905: Assam was combined with East Bengal
1907: Manipur agreement
1911-12: Expedition to Adi territory in Siang: the term NEFA was coined for the first time
1912 Assam restored again, Government of India Acts 1919 and 1935
1948: September-21: Manipur merger
1949 September 9: Tripura Merger Agreement: Part–C State ruled by a Chief Commissioner on behalf of the President of India
1956: Tripura became Centrally Administered Territory, Also Manipur.
1963: Nagaland became a separate state.
1971: North Eastern Reorganisation Act.
1972 NEFA and Mizo district became Union Territory, Tripura, Manipur and Meghalaya became full state.
1986: Arunachal Pradesh became a full state and Mizo treaty was signed:
1987: Mizoram became a full state.
<i>Compiled by the author from various sources.</i>

Present Day North East

Less than 4 per cent (3.716 per cent) people of India inhabit in the seven states of North East which together constitute 8 per cent (7.977 per cent) of the of Indian territory. ⁽¹⁶⁾ North East India consists of seven sisters of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura and (after the post-twentieth century inclusion of the eighth state into this league of seven states) Sikkim. Each one of them has got a unique history of their own. However, one common characteristic of all these states is that the larger part of the North Eastern states of India is inhabited by tribal population for which recorded history is really very scanty. Sikkim, the twenty-first century inclusion in the league of seven sisters, is neither contiguous with the rest of North East India nor historical part of North East dynamics, and is therefore excluded from the purpose and, therefore, from scope of this paper as well. ⁽¹⁷⁾

It is, however, interesting to note the per capita income (as of 2003-2004) for the states of North East as follows: “Sikkim has a per capita income of Rs. 22,062, and is free from terrorism, but Assam has Rs. 6,466, Arunachal Rs. 9,678, Manipur Rs. 8,751, Meghalaya Rs. 10,795, Nagaland Rs. 12, 292 and Tripura Rs. 9,969”.⁽¹⁸⁾

If we consider population density, then Assam and Tripura, - these two states are having highest and second highest population density among the states of North East. Also, only these two states are having more than the average population density among the seven sisters.

Population densities of the remaining five states are below the North East average while Arunachal Pradesh is having lowest population density followed by Mizoram. Meghalaya, Manipur and Nagaland are somewhat in the same bracket in this matter. It is interesting to note that Arunachal Pradesh, the second largest state after Assam and also the most thinly populated state in North East is also having the lowest sex ratio whereas Meghalaya, a state known as homeland of the matrilineal tribe Khasi has got the most impressive sex ratio.

Figure 2: Population Density (per sq. KM) of North East states and India

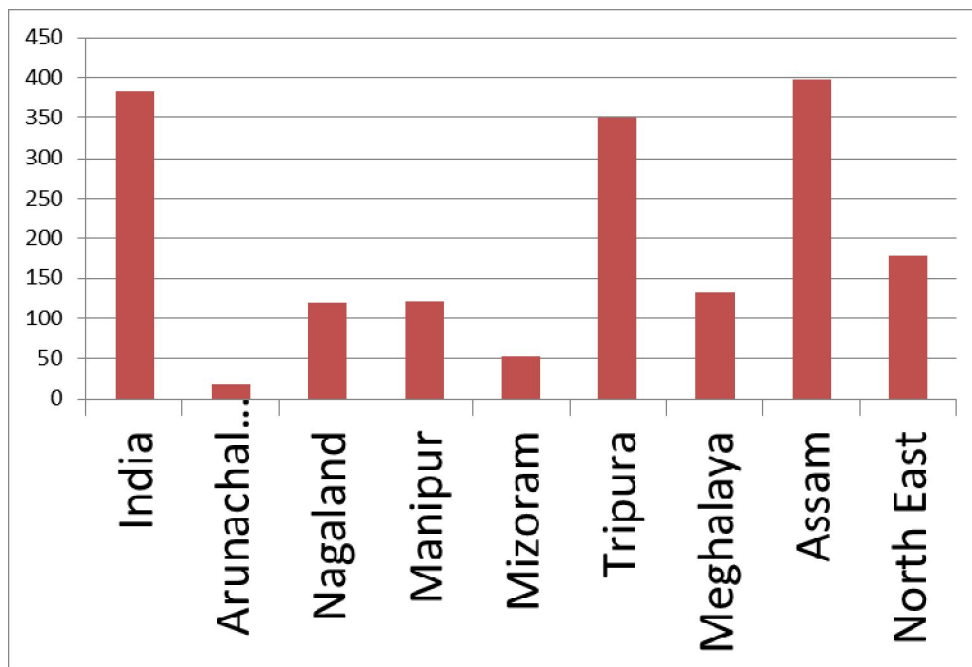
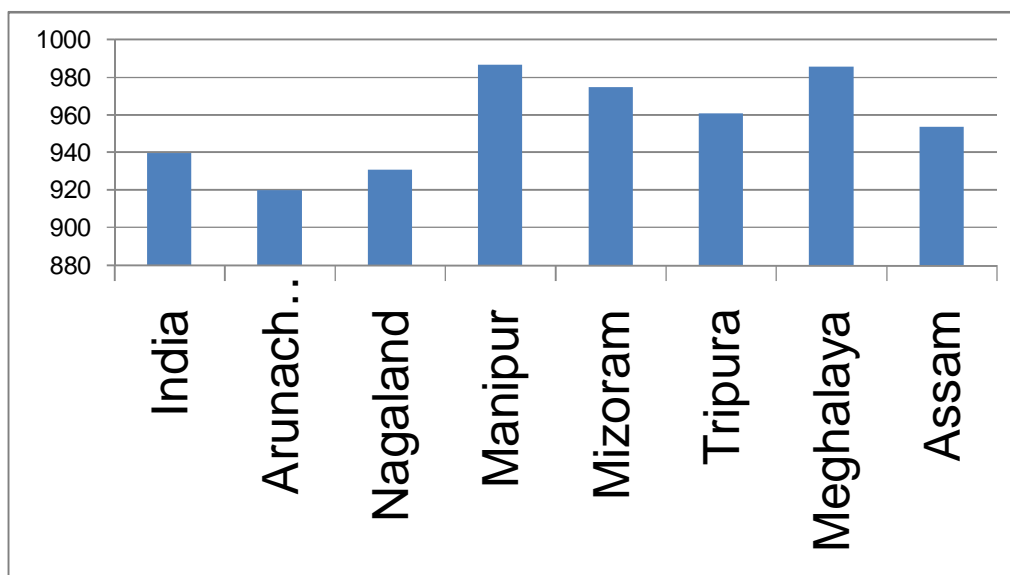


Figure 3: Sex Ratio of North East states and India.



In absolute number of population, Assam is highest; more than half of entire North East alone while Tripura comes as the distant second. Here again, Tripura, Meghalaya and Manipur are almost in the same league.

Table 2: Population, sex ratio, and population density: 2011

		Population	Sex ratio	Density
1	Arunachal Pradesh	13,82,611	920	17
2	Nagaland	19,80,602	931	119
3	Manipur	27,21,756	987	122
4	Mizoram	10,91,014	975	52
5	Tripura	36,71,032	961	350
6	Meghalaya	29,64,007	986	132
7	Assam	311,69,272	954	397
	North East India	449,80,294	957	178
	INDIA	12101,93,422	940	382

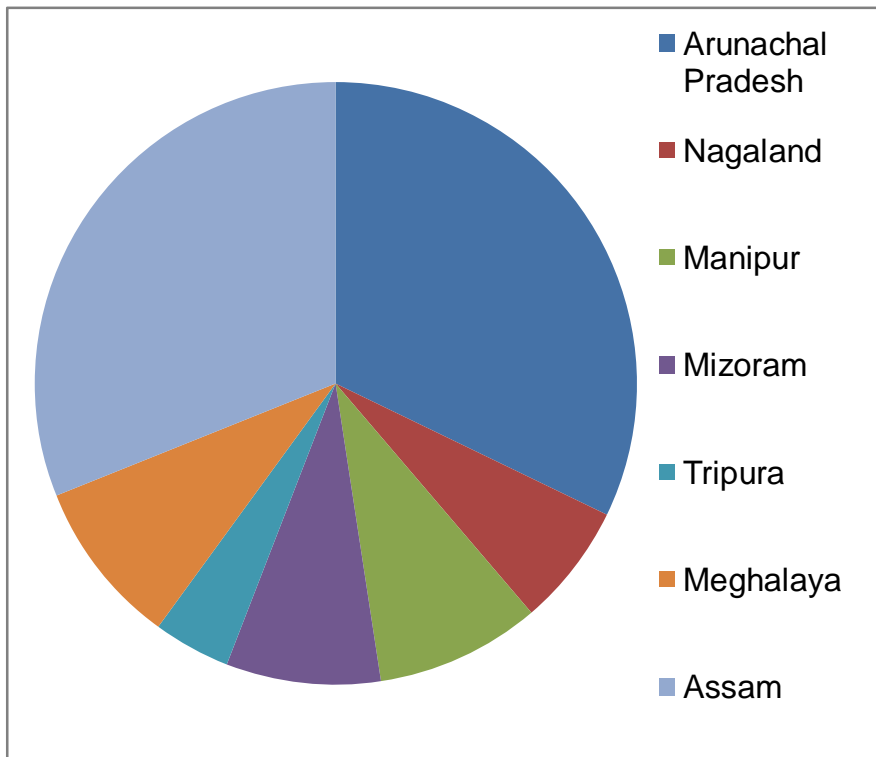
The linguistic landscape of North East India is also very interesting. Only one language from the entire North East region – Assamese, could position itself among the 18 odd official languages of India at the time of independence. Only one other Indian recognized official

language – Bengali is having a considerable number of speakers in the North Eastern states.

Their presence in North East, however, has historically become another complicated issue in terms of formation of nationality and sub-nationality in the context of modernity. ⁽¹⁹⁾

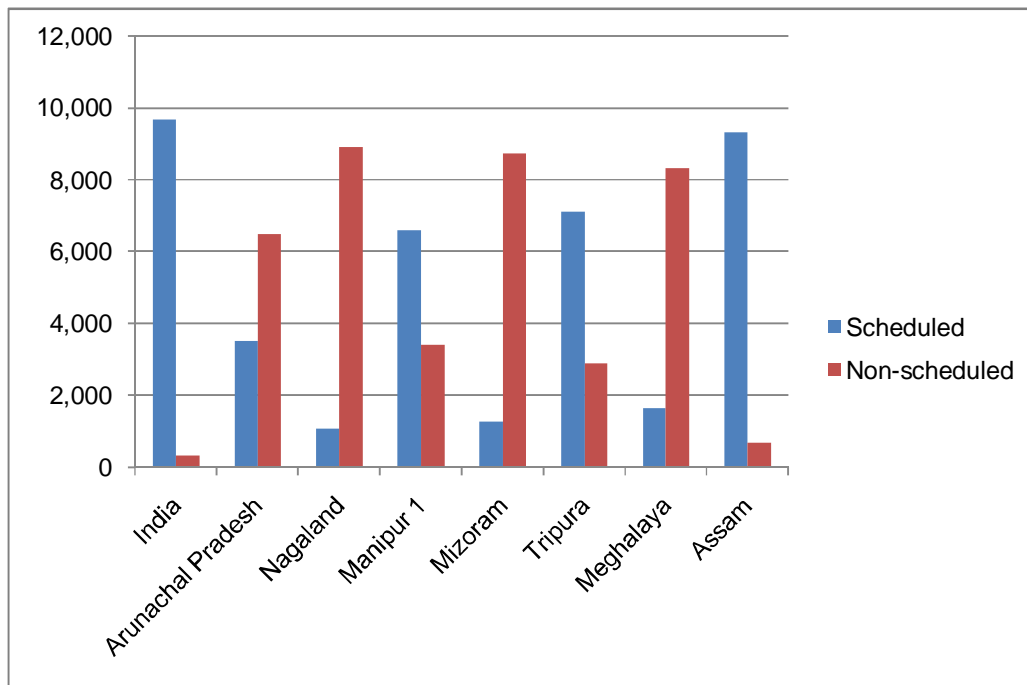
Area-wise Arunachal Pradesh is the largest state with 32% of the seven states put together closely followed by Assam (31%). By population, Assam is having highest population followed by a distant Tripura. This explains the dichotomy of population density in the seven states of North East.

Figure 4 : North East States - Distribution of Area



After considering population density, let us have a look into the linguistic characteristics of North East India.

Figure 5: Proportion of Scheduled / Non-scheduled Language speaking population per 10,000 persons



The linguistic division of the states remaining incomplete in India, a large number of disputes remain in North East. “India’s multi-lingual polity is a laboratory of language policies....after the linguistic reorganization of rural India, the territorial sub division of the Union into federated states mirrored the linguistic diversity to some extent, but the issue of smaller language groups was territorially not addressed. ⁽²⁰⁾ In this context, it is to be noted that whereas in India the population speaking different scheduled languages are very large compared to the population speaking different non-scheduled languages, in North East the same is true only in the cases of Assam, Tripura and Manipur. For the states like Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, and also to a lesser extent Arunachal Pradesh the vast majority of the population is Non-Scheduled language speaking.

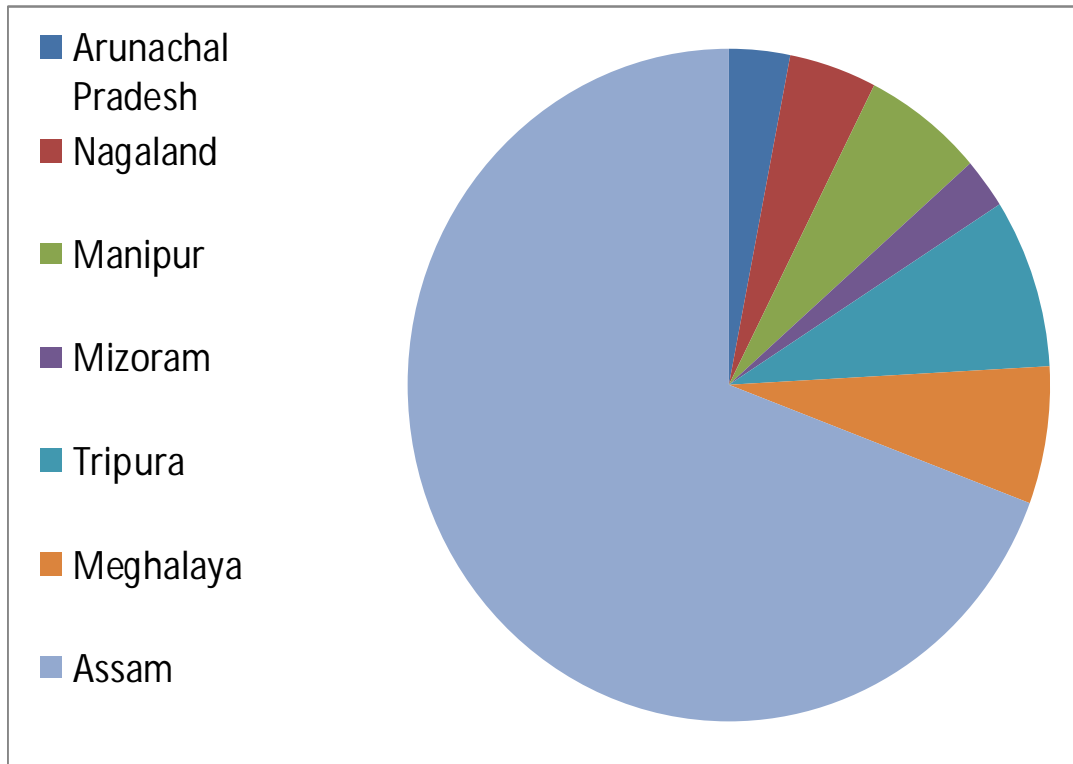


Figure 6: North East States – Distribution of Population

Having been the border region between three nations – China, India and Myanmar historically, finally now this has turned to be a confluence of four nations.⁽²¹⁾ North East India has its political boundaries defined and redefined again and again throughout the ages. As a consequence, few historically complicated phenomena have arisen in case of the political identity of the North East. In some areas, anthropological identities and/ or linguistic identities are split over two or three political boundaries of modern nation state creating fragmentation and subjugation of potential political identity.⁽²²⁾ In some other areas, many potential national or sub-national identities are engaged in a complicated fix of territorial domination and identity formation-related conflicting positions.⁽²³⁾

Table 3: Formation of Modern Indian North East States			
State	Pre-colonial Socio-political system	Time of Colonization	Formation of Indian State
Tripura	Princely with Tribal Chieftains	1761 but British no political agent till 1871	January 21, 1972
Manipur	Princely with Tribal Chieftains	Political Agent after Manipur Agreement 1907	January 21, 1972
Meghalaya	Tribal Chieftains	British domination after Yandaboo Treaty in 1826 incorporated into British Assam in 1835	January 21, 1972
Assam	Kingdom with Tribal Chieftains	After Yandaboo Treaty in 1826	August 15, 1947
Mizoram	Tribal Chieftains	After Yandaboo Treaty in 1826	February 20, 1987
Nagaland	Tribal Chieftains	Gradual annexation after Yandaboo Treaty in 1826	December 1, 1963
Arunachal Pradesh	Tribal Chieftains / Tribal Kingdom/ Religious Chiefs	Gradual annexation after Yandaboo Treaty in 1826	February 20, 1987
Data compiled from Bandyopadhyay 2005, Goswami 2013 etc. (Column I & II), Column III: Official State Government Websites			

Population of Nagaland, which became a full-fledged state on 1st December, 1963, comprises sixteen major tribes, each having a distinct characteristic of their own. A part of the population and jurisdiction of people traditionally known as Naga, was annexed to present day Myanmar as a colonial arrangement of British provinces (similar fracture also happened to Manipur and Bengal map with respect to Sylhet).

To some extent some parts of the North East, especially present day Nagaland was a buffer jurisdiction declared by the British as the East India Company was not able to exert their influence on the Nagas which rather created a ground for Naga insurgency as the state was incorporated with the Indian union against the wish of a considerable part of the inhabitants of Nagaland. ⁽²⁴⁾ Whereas historically the North East region was a remote marginal space to begin with during the colonial period, virtually a no-man's land between Ava, later to be known as the British province of Myanmar and the British India, in the post-colonial period, to be specific, at present it has integrated within the national 'pan-Indian' project of post-

colonial nation state to a great extent.

For example, if we consider the educational indicators which, we shall see that North East now is in almost same place at par with the national level in terms of gross enrolment ratio, distribution of schools in rural areas, student-classroom ratio, percentage of single teacher schools, gender parity index and girls' enrolment, average number of teachers per school and in-service training of female teachers.

However, even in education, indicators, some of which are having more serious implications by nature, e.g., spread of literacy, access/habitations having primary schools within one KM and upper primary schools within three KMs, type of school building, facilities in schools such as drinking water, girls' toilets, common toilet, percentage of enrolment in rural areas, survival rate, students' performance in examinations, academic qualification of teachers and training of teachers, are not satisfactory in comparison to the national average.⁽²⁵⁾

Press in North East India: A Survey of Literature

Vast areas of North East India had been actually covered by newspapers printed and mailed, from the Capital (of Company's British East India and the Province of Bengal) Calcutta. It took some time for the print media to really become a media of North East India. Banik's work is one rare instance of very brief documentation of journalism in Tripura. It is a total 13 page paper on history and journalism of Tripura, nevertheless it provides some important dates and names of the first newspapers of Tripura.⁽²⁶⁾

Authors like even Mohit Moitra couldn't find the establishment of *Orunodoi* in 1846 to mention in his narrative, even just as a point in between the closure of *Samachar Darpan* in 1840 and establishment of *Bengal Recorder* by Girish Chandra Ghosh in 1849, which was later rechristened by Harish Chandra Mukherjee as *Hindoo Patriot*.⁽²⁷⁾ Vilanilam also limits his reference to one line mention of the name of the *Orunodoi* (Vilanilam spells as Arunodaya) and a brief sweeping mention of the then present status without any history. G. Bhargava has been very honest to concede his defeat in clearest terms when he writes "getting information about Assamese publication is a tiring task. First in the pre-1970 publications there was no mention at all of Assamese newspaper, although there was reportedly an English publication entitled *150 years of Assamese journalism*. My most diligent attempts did not get me a glimpse of it."⁽²⁸⁾ A casual approach towards the North

East is also reflected when he says, 'Nagaland Publications', categorizing publications on territorial basis in the same bracket with 'Mizo', 'Khasi', 'Manipuri Publications' – mixing up categorization on territory and linguistic basis. All the 'Noted Senior editors' he mentioned were from Assam alone whereas print media in Shillong (by then which had become capital of Meghalaya), Agartala and Imphal was very active from a time earlier to this. North East was apparently known, even to G.S. Bhargava, only by its large state, i.e. Assam and its capital city Guwahati per se even in 2005. ⁽²⁹⁾

The only brief account on some select North East print media doyens existing in the form of a book is *Press in the North East India* by G.P.Pandey.⁽³⁰⁾ A 16 page brief overview of journalism in North East presented as the first chapter of the book provides few paragraphs of chronological summarization of the history of first few decades of Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya, a paragraph or two on Sikkim and Manipur, however relatively little on Nagaland and Arunachal have been mentioned in this overview. ⁽³¹⁾ In the remaining part of about 150 pages, the states one by one and also briefs on the noted journalist of each state has been provided. Many of these selected journalists mentioned therein are quite contemporary, while some journalists (founder editors of first few daily newspapers, some of whom had even been imprisoned for their journalistic activity during times of repression), are inadvertently not mentioned most possibly for lack of information on them. About one-third of this book describes history of some of the presently important newspapers of the states. ⁽³²⁾ Earlier, Partha Sarkar in his book, *The Press in India*, had mostly focused on the press of Barak Valley, except in one chapter, where the history of the press in Assam was dealt with. ⁽³³⁾

The only exhaustive collection of essays on different newspapers, journals and different aspects of journalism in any state of North East pertains to Assam. This collection, while vaguely mentioning Prof. Bhargava has also confessed in his 'Appendix II', that he couldn't lay his hand or get a glimpse of it, ⁽³⁴⁾ is actually is in fact a Media Trust published book which was edited by Gobinda Prasad Sarma⁽³⁵⁾. Most of the essays of this collection are not properly referred as the writers were journalists, not academic scholars.

The role of press in the nationalist upsurge is one aspect for which there is at least two discreet works available only for the state of Assam. Sunil PawanBaruah wrote an article ⁽³⁶⁾ on role of the press in a nationalist upsurge for the Brahmaputra Valley, while Amit Kumar Nag wrote on the same issue with respect to the Surma Valley ⁽³⁷⁾. While Boruah started

tracing the history of role of press in the nationalist upsurge of Brahmaputra Valley from Hickey's *Bengal Gazette*, Amit Kumar Nag from Silchar, Barak valley starts his journey from *Orunodoi* published by the American Baptist Missionaries from Sivsagar located in Brahmaputra Valley of Assam. Surma Barak Valley had a rich history of Bengali press starting with *Shrihatta Prakash*, first printed in 1857 from Calcutta and brought from there every week by its energetic editor PyariCharan Das. ⁽³⁸⁾

Beginning of print media in Assam with the *Orunodoi* – ‘sun rise’

After the passing of Charter Act of 1793, the British colonial power made an attempt to promote ‘religious’ and ‘moral education’ among the Indians. With a distinct aim to achieve this goal, Christian missionaries were sent to distant parts of Assam. In 1813 “*Assamese New Testament*” was printed.⁽³⁹⁾ Till 1826, Assam was under the Ahom's.⁽⁴⁰⁾ The British established their dominance in the whole of Assam from 1826 onwards. British missionaries left all Assam to the American Baptists. Two American Baptists Nathan Brown and Oliver T Cutter arrived with their families at Sadiya. Their intention was to reach the Golden Gate of the Celestial Chinese Empire and reach to the Shan tribes of Northern Burma and South China which they could not do and remained Assam for proselytizing the Assamese people as far as they could. ⁽⁴¹⁾

Nathan Brown and Oliver Cutter had this idea of printing press. Brown discovered ‘a new sweet thing at Sadiya - the Assamese language which at the first appearance looked like a dialect of Bengali’. Brown soon realized this “initial mistake” and began loving and learning Assamese. ⁽⁴²⁾ Had Brown would have continued with the same assumption, history could have different. The very next year he was joined by another linguist, Miles Bronson. The missionaries learnt the Khampti and Singhpo tongues and prepared to write books in them and a school was started by Mrs. Eliza Whitney Brown and Mrs. Harriet B. L. Cutter for teaching Assamese to children. This was the backdrop of publication of the first Assamese newspaper – *Orunodoi* by Reverend Nathan Brown and Oliver Cutter in 1846.

The main aim of the *Orunodoi* was to spread Christianity and it was because of this ‘religious need’ that the Baptist missionaries took refuge to the printing press.⁽⁴³⁾ During those days, the newspapers usually published news on special and particular events. The headlines were rare if any at all, just briefly stating the nature of item / events. It was only in the next stage, news came to be systematically arranged and serialized by headlines. In the third stage

depending on the importance of an event, news was published without fixing any time limit for it. In the fourth stage, news was published in journals.

***Orunodoi* and the emerging modern ‘public space’**

Orunodoi has been to a great extent influenced by the then Bengali Newspapers which were about 20 in number.⁽⁴⁴⁾ In a content analysis of the 12 issues of the first year of publication i.e. 1846, this author has found that 32 percent space was devoted to small news items presented under a category ‘*General Intelligence*’. A substantially lower but significant amount of space – 2.5 percent was devoted to certain news items which were related to religion as ‘*Religious Intelligence*’. Almost 66 percent of the issues were devoted to articles ranging from basic astronomy, science, scientific and technological inventions and innovations, natural calamities well as religious issues. This 66 percent had got their headlines.

News from the empire, Africa, America, rest of the British colony including India as well as of North East for the first time was catered on a regular basis to the neo-literates of Assam. Examples side by side with North East and Africa-America in the on-going proselytization was too good examples to be catered to the burgeoning Assamese readership of *Orunodoi*. Items from the Empire also had their place side by side in a significant way. But articles of *Orunodoi* were most important and relevant sources of information beyond any time-frame. This was the first time perhaps the readers were leaning how sun and moon is located with respect to the earth to how they all are revolving to stories related to North East and *Mon* – present day Myanmar. Here North East was given considerable importance with highest number of items followed by the Empire/Europe, rest of India and colonies of Asia and Africa-America.

Construction of identity in the colonial age as shaped by *Orunodoi* was not a linear model- it had multi-dimensional structure cutting across differential thematic area related to different aspects of this identity construction. A study of the proximity angle of the items of *Orunodoi* by this author unfolded this multi-dimensional construction of identity by the missionaries. Thus *Orunodoi* created notions about ‘self’ and the ‘other’ – of ‘our own area’ and the ‘other countries’ including the Empire and its ‘other colonies’, apart from bringing basic science and social science to the readers as another important aspect of modernity.

In another study, only the scientific articles of *Orunodoi* have been categorised as: Natural Science and Geography; the Solar System; Physics, Chemistry and Technology and the Science of Health by ParamanandaMahanta⁽⁴⁵⁾ He has found out that those articles were very useful to dispel superstition and emphasised on practice and applicability.⁽⁴⁶⁾

An interesting feature of the *Orunodoi* was that its “pages are illustrated with wood-cuts copied from the engravings of the *Illustrated London News*” – as observed E.A. Gaits in 1897.⁽⁴⁷⁾ It is also interesting to analyze how wood-cut photographs and graphics were used in *Orunodoi*. Mazinder has discussed the historical and aesthetic aspects of these wood-cut prints⁽⁴⁸⁾, however here we present a content analysis of the first year pictures according to their association with thematic news / articles.

Overall, the varied distribution of geographical emphasis for different types of thematic items published in *Orunodoi* reminds us what Mitchell has written: “[T]he modern age presents a particular view of geography, in which the world has a single center, Europe,...that imagines itself a continent-in reference to which all other regions are to be located; and an understanding of history in which there is only one unfolding time, the history of the West, in reference to which all other histories must establish and receive their meaning”⁽⁴⁹⁾

Chandra Prasad Saikia has written about the role of the missionaries in formation of the language and identity of the Assamese people: “The *Orunodoi* created mother-tongue awareness in the psyche of those Assamese people who began to consider Bengali as the language of the rulers. News from home and abroad published in the journal widened the frontier of the Assamese mind....The *Orunodoi* consolidated the foundation of journalism in Assam on a broad agenda”.⁽⁵⁰⁾

This overwhelming gratitude to the missionaries in fact is a common thread of a number of articles of this collection. For example, Borua had said: “The contributions made by the missionaries to the establishment of the Assamese language and literature, constitute a very remarkable chapter in the Assamese literary history”.⁽⁵¹⁾ Same perspective was also supported by Maheswar Neog, who concluded that modern life required a modern medium of expression, and a down-to-earth prose developed through the Baptist journal. “We know that in Assamese, a kind of rhythmic prose was employed in the plays of Sankaradeva and Madhavadeva, early in the sixteenth century, that another variety of rhythmic utterance was there in the religious writings of Vaikunthanath ‘Bhattadeva’ and Gopalacharan Dvija

(16th century) and that two varieties of real prose evolved in the seventeenth century in the two dignified circles of the *Vaishnava sattras* (in the *katha-charit* or prose biographies) and the Ahom royal court in the form of the Buranji (chronicles); but now in contact with English speaking people, Assamese developed modern prose style; and this should perhaps be considered the greatest contribution of the Baptists to Assamese literature and culture. The everyday language of the people could now be the medium of literary expression, which now began to imbibe the qualities of English rhythm and syntax”.⁽⁵²⁾

Discussing some of the content of the first volume of the ‘*Orunodoi*’, Bhattacharyya concluded that the “*Orunodoi* was not only a newspaper; it used to carry items on morality and religious teachings also... For a long time, all that the people meant by a newspaper was the *Orunodoi*”.⁽⁵³⁾

Another author Saikia’s praise for the missionaries was not only full of gratitude but also with a tinge of hostility towards the critics of the missionaries: “Those who want to regard the missionaries merely as promoters of the British imperialism and ignore this contribution would rather prove to be detractors to both history and truth. Be that what it may, the most praiseworthy of the missionaries’ contributions was *The Orunodoi, Volume I* of the first part of *OrunodoiSambadpatra* got published from the place, Sibsagar in January, 1846...The *Orunodoi* truly affected a dawn of modern Assamese language and literature alongwith a modern approach to it. MaheswarNeog rightly observes that the *Orunodoi* affected an expansion of the horizon of the Assamese mind”.⁽⁵⁴⁾

However, Satish Chandra Bhattacharyaa recognised that there is “no gain saying the fact that just as Bengal has had some influence on different aspects of the social and cultural life of modern Assam, in the matter of bringing out a newspaper too, Bengal might have offered Assam a model for such a venture”.⁽⁵⁵⁾

Narrating the setting up of the missionary press of Sadiya, which subsequently was shifted to Sivasagar by Nathan Brown and Oliver Cutter, Bhattacharyaa posed the question “who or what inspired them to bring out a newspaper?”⁽⁵⁶⁾ The answer is : The popularity of the Bengali newspapers among the educated classes of the state. The Bengali newspapers - *Digdarshan* and *SamacharDarpan* enjoyed popularity among the educated people”. Bhattacharyaa further quotes a *SamacharDarpan* statement dated July 30th, 1831: “No single district of Bengal has so many subscribers (of *SamacharDarpan*) as there are in Assam.

There is hardly a week when letters from Assam don't reach us or other newspapers of this province. *SamacharDarpan*, July 30, 1831)." ⁽⁵⁷⁾

Before closing his arguments, Bhattacharyya observes: "It is clear that the *Orunodoi* was shaped on the model of the popular Bengali newspaper *SamacharDarpan*. The compiler and editor of the collected volume of *Orunodoi* Dr. Maheswar Neog observed, 'In *Orunodoi*'s planning, *SamacharDarpan* was a model worth emulating". ⁽⁵⁸⁾ Elsewhere Mahanta has given a detailed analysis of the scientific writings, information about innovation and scientific development published in *Orunodoi*. ⁽⁵⁹⁾

Print Media in Assam after Orunodoi

Sri Sri Dattadev Goswami, the *Satradhikar* of Auniati *Satra* of Majuli had setup a printing press at Majuli which was inaccessible from the point of view of communication and started publishing *Assam Bilasinee* in 1871. ⁽⁶⁰⁾ The press was named as 'Dharma Prakash'. Actually, he was inspired by the missionaries who established a printing press to propagate Christianity. ⁽⁶¹⁾ This paper can claim to be the first Assamese daily established by an Assamese. The founder of this newspaper Krishna Kumar Bhattacharya started the second edition of it from Tarajan in Jorhat. It had made significant contribution to the freedom struggle. Some news items were published in English to directly attract the attention of the Englishmen.

The first weekly newspaper from Assam was, however, *Assam Mihir*, published from Guwahati in 1872, founded and edited by Chidananda Choudhury. This was also the first Bengali newspaper of Assam. ⁽⁶²⁾

Hem Chandra Barua started *Assam News* in 1882. ⁽⁶³⁾ *Assam Bandhu* (published in 1885) was initiated from Nagaon, though it was printed in Kolkata (Calcutta), the capital of the Bengal province. ⁽⁶⁴⁾

Bolinarayan Borrah and Haranarayan Borrah published four issues of a monthly paper *Mou* from December, 1886 to March, 1887. ⁽⁶⁵⁾ This monthly paper was hailed by almost everybody who worked on the history of print media of Assam including Maheswar Neog. The very first article published in the inaugural article of *Mou* was 'What are the duties of women?' ⁽⁶⁶⁾ Balinarayan's acknowledgment of the modernization process as a consequence of

colonial rule was very clear in his writings. His worries related to the process of modernization also came clear. His confusion or self-contradiction was well expressed when he wrote “There is nothing wrong in providing women with education but this doesn’t mean that it is desirable for her to sit for degree and post graduate examinations or get into business as a doctor or a lawyer.”⁽⁶⁷⁾ The education of women is acceptable for him as long as they are not becoming independent and ‘bread earners’.

Mou is memorable in the history of Assamese journalism not only for the socio-economic analysis but also for the political journalism brought forth by the paper. However, certain analysis of *Mou* on different critical issues brought accolades from the anti-Congress English newspaper – *The Englishman*. Nationalist students and youths started not only boycotting but also conspiring against *Mou*. The paper abruptly stopped after only four issues.⁽⁶⁸⁾

RadhanathChangkakati started editing and publishing *The Times of Assam* from January 05, 1895. This paper had the longest run, without a break till September, 1947.⁽⁶⁹⁾ Even *The Statesman* was born an year after the *The Times of Assam*. The hallmark of Changkakati’s journalistic endeavours was that he had made a perfect blend of editorial responsibilities and business interests of the paper. Even a British lady, apart from an Englishman from Calcutta regularly contributed to the newspaper.⁽⁷⁰⁾

Apart from Bolinarayan Borah and RadhanathChangkakati, PadmanathGohainBorooah was another important forerunner in the field of journalism. He started *Bijuli* in 1890 and published till 1893 and *Usha* from 1905 to 1912. In between this period, he started editing *Assam Banti* from January 14, 1901 and continued to edit it for next four decades.⁽⁷¹⁾ GohainBorooah was the first president of the Assam *Sahitya Sabha*.

Gourishankar Bhattacharyya⁽⁷²⁾ has highlighted few important milestones in relation to the role of newspapers in Assam as follows:

1. The historical initiation with a missionary character
2. The role in freedom movement
3. The role supportive of working class movements
4. The role during the Quit India Movement of 1942
5. The role with respect to freedom of press and Assam Special Powers Press Act, 1960.

Much after six years of lifetime of this weekly newspaper, Surma Barak Valley had its first newspaper – *Paridarshak* which was printed in the Surma Valley itself in 1888 under the editorship of Bipin Chandra Pal and Radhanath Chaudhury. It was first a fortnightly and then a weekly, under the editorship of no other than Bipin Chandra Pal, who was later to be counted as one of the distinguished trinity – Lal-Bal-Pal (Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Bipin Chandra Pal). The press in Surma Valley was, thus, full of national consciousness when the press of Brahmaputra Valley was, by and large, continued to be an appendage of the missionaries under the patronage of the colonizers.⁽⁷³⁾

Table 4: Advent of Print Media in Assam			
Sl	Name	Editor / Publisher / Founder (s)	Year
1	Orunodoi	Nathan Brown, Oliver T. Cutter	1846
2	Assam Bilasinee – M	Duttadev Goswami	1871
	Shrihatta Prakash	Payeri Charan Das	1875
3	Assam News	Hem Chandra Baruah	1882
4	Assam Bandhu	Goonabhiram Borooah	1885
	Paridarshak	Bipin Chandra Pal	1886
	Shilchar	Babu Bidhu Bhusan Sen	1989
5	Assam Banti	Mahendra Mohan Baruah	1900
	Surma	Babu Nagendra Shyam	1911
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>M denotes monthly; Only newspapers of Brahmaputra valley have been assigned serial number. Remaining were from Surma – Barak valley.</i> 			

Print Media in Surma-Barak

It is important to note that Bengali was the most important language of North East in its relation to the then state powers – be it courts of princely states like Tripura or King of Kamakshya till 1872. Most of the officials – of either princely governments or colonial governments were Bengalis. Assamese language did not have a strong existence as a separate language, and as the missionaries had almost mistaken it to be – its status was almost equal to a dialect of Bengali. Thanks to the missionaries of Sadiya that Assamese got a separate script for print albeit however similar it may be with the Bengali language and a separate vocabulary was coined through publication of dictionary, grammar was written. Finally with Orunodoi and the newspapers following it, the new language started setting in among the intelligentsia of the community. This was also the time of first emergence of sub-national identity of Assamese. The first Assamese newspaper brought out by Assamese

people - *Assam Bilasini* did start speaking about anti-colonial nationalism and earned the wrath of colonial rulers.

It is interesting to note that the Surma-Barak valley of Assam had a parallel initiation and growth of print media which goes back to 1875, and do have a direct inheritance of social-reformer and freedom fighter like Bipin Chandra Pal. ⁽⁷⁴⁾ Presently only the Barak valley part of this region is included in the Indian state of Assam, while the Surma part has become part of East Pakistan during partition and subsequently became a part of present day Bangladesh.

1	Shrihatta Prakash	PyariCharan Das	1875
2	Paridarshak	Bipin Chandra Pal	1886
3	Shilchar –W	BabuBidhuBhusan Sen	1989
4	Surma	Babu Nagendra Shyam	1911
5	Surma –D	Pt. Bhuban Mohan Vidyarnab	1914
Source: Data collected and collated from various sources mentioned in the text.			

A time-line of the important newspapers of this region compiled by the researcher from his field-work is presented in the Table 4. The Paridarshak was known for its devoted nationalist / anti-colonial journalism for which many of those had to suffer at the hands of the then colonial rulers in some or other occasion.

Print Media in Tripura

Tripura had witnessed several phases of geographical realignment over the century following changes in royal regimes. Till merger of Tripura with the Indian Union in October 1949, newspapers were published from Coomilla, Dhaka and Kolkata with patronization of the then princely rulers of Tripura. The major events of Tripura’s Royal dynasty had been substantially covered by those newspapers. *SamacharDarpan* established in 1818 was published from Kolkata in undivided Bengal. It had made first page coverage of Tripura ruler MaharajRamgangaManikya’s wedding and his coronation in 1821. ⁽⁷⁵⁾

According to Late Ramaprasad Dutta, *Tripura JnanPrasaranai* is the first newspaper published in 1860 from Bikrampur of undivided Tripura under the editorship of Kailash Chandra Sarkar. Since it dealt with literary activities, frequency of publication was monthly but it could not sustain for a long time. ⁽⁷⁶⁾ The newspaper used to be published under the

patronage of Maharaj Ishan Chandra Manikya Bahadur (b.1828-1862).

The year 1860 is memorable in the history of Tripura for other reasons as well. People from the Kuki tribe organized a rebellion against the king in that year itself. Even Jamatias (one of the tribes of ancient Tripuri clan) also rebelled in the same year. In fact, Maharaj Ishan Chandra Manikya Bahadur, who assumed the throne in 1849 at an age of 21, had turbulent days all along his reign. In 1857, despite not aligning himself with the rebel royalties of *Sepoy Mutiny* aka the first national struggle for liberation of India, Ishan Chandra Manikya Bahadur found himself at odds with the British East India Company. This background is interesting to take note of considering the fact that this young king, who died at an early age of 34 in 1862, was the patron of the first publication of Tripura during its princely period.

The second newspaper *Pakshiya Tripura* was published in 1876 and only three issues were published. It was published during the reign of MaharajBir Chandra Manikya. However, the editor (s) or patron (s) of the newspaper couldn't be traced back in history. In 1876, another newspaper *Barshik* was published with direct sponsorship of 16 years old MaharajRadhakishoreManikya where Radhakishore himself had written a piece of article titled – Nababarsha, in the maiden issue. This newspaper is considered as the first literary newspaper of Tripura's Royal family. ⁽⁷⁷⁾ It was being edited by the royal tutor Radharaman Ghosh.

In 1879, Late Lalit Kumar Chakraborty had published a 16-page newspaper *Tripura Bartabaha* also during the reign of MaharajBir Chandra Manikya and was patronized by the king; the newspaper was printed from Coomilla. Its annual subscription was Rs. 2 and advertisement space was devoted at 12.5 paisa per line. *Tripura Bartabaha* was the first newspaper of undivided Tripura that had introduced the concept of advertisement in newspapers and journalism in true sense.

Thus, undoubtedly the advent of print media in Tripura had the royal connection from its very inception. In contrast to Bengal or Assam, it was not the missionaries who had any role to play in bringing the concept of fourth estate in Tripura; rather the 'benevolent' royalty itself acted as the harbinger of modern media in the princely state of Tripura.

It had uninterrupted publication across 10 years. In 1883, Ramkanai Ghosh started publishing a weekly *Tripura Hitaishi*. It was edited by Sri GurudayalSingha. The newspaper continued

to be published in four full scaled sizes till 1948 by his wife Urmila Singha. ⁽⁷⁸⁾ The newspaper was priced at Rs. 3 annually; each issue was priced at 2 annas. This newspaper claimed to be a political and social newspaper.

In 1890, Maharaja Radha Kishore Manikya had published a monthly- *Panchapandit*. One Nabakumar Dutta had published a fortnightly- *Tripura Prakash* from Coomilla in 1893. Though it was published from Coomilla, '*Tripura ChattogramNoyakhalirMukhapatro*' was written in the mast-head. Ramkanai Dutta published two forma (32 Page double demi white print) newspapers- *Usha* from Brahmanbaria in 1893 too. Perhaps, *Usha* was the first newspaper in bigger size in undivided Tripura. ⁽⁷⁹⁾

In 1894, Anukul Chandra Chakraborty published a 36-page double demi white print newspaper *Hira* under the editorship of Bhagaban Sen from Brahmanbaria. This particular newspaper wrote '*suchana*' (introduction) instead of editorial. One March 05, 1897, MaharajRadha Kishore Manikya was officially coroneted. The *Tripura State Gazette* started publication as the state journal since then. In 1899, another newspaper *Hitobartaw* was published under editorship of Nil Kamal Dutta in 1899 from Brahmanbaria. But the publication could not continue for a long time. In 1901, SashibhusanDey published a monthly *Pratinidhi* from Coomilla under editorship of RajaniNath Nandi. According to the opinion of late Rama Prasad Dutta, this particular newspaper was the first publication that had given coverage on agriculture industry and commerce on priority basis. *Pratinidhi* was published in a 24 page in double demi size. The newspaper carried a tagline under the masthead which read 'the largest circulation in Eastern Bengal. An issue of *Pratinidhi* highlighted that the BOC Company had paid Rupees 1 Lakh as an advance and agreed to pay Rupees 10 thousands per annum as tax to the then ruler of Tripura for allowing the Company rights of petroleum exploration in the forests of Tripura. ⁽⁸⁰⁾ Two literary newspapers *Dhumketu* and *Bangabhasha* were published from Tripura in 1903. While *Dhumketu* was edited by Prince MahendraDebbarman ⁽⁸¹⁾; *Bangabhasha* was edited by SurendramohanDebbarman. Both the newspapers were published and circulated under direct patronization from the Tripura Royal Family. *Dhumketu* was the first newspaper of Tripura to be published in cyclostyled format. Prince MahendraDebbarman, who used to be a judge of the court of Tripura under monarchal rule, used to write satiric and critical pieces in *Dhumketu* (*meaning comet*) under a pen-name 'Dhumketu-da' against government officials. *Dhumketu* continued publication for two years.

Bangabhasha was priced at 4 annas per issue. It claimed to be published from the address of

Agartala, the capital of 'sovereign Tripura'. The newspaper was being printed from Kailash Press in Coomilla.

Biren Dutta has opined that possibly Kumar MahendraDebbarman had to stop his publication out of pressure exerted upon him by the British colonials and it was his inspiration which led SurendraDebbarman to publish *Bangabhasha*.⁽⁸²⁾

On April 14, 1905, PanditChandradayBhattacharjee had published *Arun* from Rajmala press in Agartala. Bhattacharjee himself edited the newspaper at the time. It is believed that the upsurge against dividing Bengal in 1905 was the main inspiration for publication of *Arun* and as a result, it stood firmly against the British regime since its birth. But unfortunately, it was closed only after two years of its publication. The newspaper was named by MaharajRadha Kishore Manikya Bahadur himself. The newspaper started publishing with the price of the first issue fixed at 1 paisa. In 1907, Ramkanai Dutta published another fortnightly *Santan* to carry forward the zeal of *Arun*. In 1911, Rajanikanta Gupta of Coomilla published *Tripura Guide* under the editorship of Kadambini Gupta.⁽⁸³⁾

Arun carried an editorial in it which read, 'MaharajManikya Bahadur realized the importance of publishing newspapers during his tenure as prince. So, he took initiatives for publishing a newspaper called '*Giribashi*'. However, the plan couldn't be realized at the time. Maharaj felt the unavoidable necessity of publishing and circulating a newspaper during the latter years of UmakantaDasgupta's stint as minister'.

Arun chose to describe the eagerness of MaharajRadha Kishore Manikya Bahadur in the following way – 'The absence of a newspaper is being severely felt in sovereign Tripura in the current context. The different welfare activities that the kings undertake here for the wellbeing of the citizens and the feedback elicited from the latter out of excitement originating from respect towards the throne aren't able to interact properly. Under these circumstances, a newspaper is the proper medium for expressing the feelings of both stakeholders to each other'.

The newspaper continued to state in the concerned editorial column, 'Population is rising in Tripura by the day. Tripura is gradually developing relationship with the British Raj. Hence, eagerness to know the real condition of citizens and the royal programmes in both States among the people is natural. Nothing can suit the purpose of disseminating this information

better than a newspaper’.

‘Problems, complaints and other issues of citizens within the State should reach the ruler. The job can be very easily achieved through the mediation of a newspaper. For several reasons like these, the necessity of publication of a newspaper from here (Tripura) was being felt’, the editorial added. Publication of *Arun* continued for two years till 1907.

When Lord Curzon brought forth his Partition of Bengal on October 16, 1905, *Arun* published many news items related to the Anti-Partition Movement throughout the country. Poems and satirical verses took special role in forming a significant public opinion against the British mandate of Partition.

Prince MahendraDebbarman used to write pieces in *Arun* under his pen-name ‘Dhumketu-da’ as well. A short-lived magazine named *Sankha* was published during this time which was an effort of garnering public support in favour of extremist nationalist movements at the time.

In 1907, a fortnightly newspaper started publishing from the sub-divisional township of Brahmanbaria under the then Tripura under the editorship of nationalist poet Advocate Ramkanai Dutta. MaharajRadha Kishore Manikya passed away in 1909. The throne went to Birendra Kishore Manikya as the next king of Tripura.

1	Tripura JnanPrasarani	Kailash Chandra Sarkar	1860
2	Barshik	Radha Mohan Ghose	1876
3	Pakshiyaka Tripura	-	1876
4	Tripura Bartabaha	Lalit Kumar Chakraborty	1879
5	Panchapandit	Maharaja Radha Kishore Manikya	1890
6	Usha	Ramkanai Dutta	1893
Source: Data collected and collated from fieldwork.			

Print Media in Meghalaya

Journalism in Meghalaya started with *Lielieh* (Lighting), a daily newspaper edited by Erwin SyiemSutnga. *Lielieh* was a Khasi newspaper, the origin of which can’t be traced back in the historical records. The first ever secular newspaper of the state was, however, *U Khasi Mynta* (Khasi Today), which started publishing in 1896. This newspaper was being edited by HormuraiDiengdoh.

Shillong, the capital of Meghalaya, being the capital of then then Assam and also North Eastern Frontier Areas (NEFA) during colonial time, witnessed the presence and activity of the correspondents of few of the nation's best and widely circulated dailies.

1.	Lielieh	Erwin SyeimSutnga	
2.	U Khasi Mynta	HormuraiDiengdoh	1896
3.	KaPateng Kristian	IdonkhaLyngdohNonglait	1896
4.	U NongialamKatholik	Rev. Fr. G. Abelle	1902
5.	U Nongphira	Sib Charan Roy Dkhar	1903
6.	U Jaintia	-	1904
7.	KaJingshaika Gospel	Rev. J. J. M. Nichols	1905
Source: Data collected and collated from fieldwork.			

Print Media in Mizoram

Emergence of Print Media in Mizoram can be traced as early as the late 1890's. In those early years of Mizo journalism, however, the publications weren't printed in printing machines since they weren't available in the jurisdiction of present day Mizoram till that time. So, most of the literatures, publications or such had to be printed from outside the region. When it came to local publications, they were handwritten or typed with a typewriter in most cases.

	Name	Editor / publisher	Year
1	Mizo ChanchinLaishuih	Captain J. Shakespeare	1898
2	Mizo LehVaiChanchinLekhabu	Captain J. Shakespeare	1902
3	Kristian Tlangau	-	1911

Captain J. Shakespeare, the then Assistant Political Officer/Superintendent of the Lusai Hills published and edited the first ever Mizo dialect Journal *Mizo ChanchinLaishuih*. The newspaper started publication in August, 1898. People from the local tribes were exposed to modern education and literature by then, courtesy to the Christian Missionaries. It was felt by many at this time that time wanted them to hone their skills and intellect through investing energy in constructive writings. Thus, the first Mizo journal came into being. This journal was a handwritten cyclostyled newsletter. The publication was soon wrapped up. In a short while, a new monthly journal *Mizo lehvaiChanchinLekhabu* started publication, once again Captain J. Shakespeare. The first publication came out in the month of November, 1902. It was printed at Dina Nath Press, Sylhet (in present day Bangladesh). *Mizo lehvaiChanchinLekhabu* was the first consistently publicized monthly Journal in the Mizo

dialect. Makthangaserved as the first Mizo editor of the journal from 1911 to 1936. The 14 pages journal (*Mizo lehvaiChanchinLekhabu*) offered human interest stories, accounts of government activities, articles and prose by the first generation of literate Mizos. Its contributions to the people particularly among the Mizo intellectual circle were immense. Shortly afterwards, *Kristian Tlangau*, a monthly mouthpiece published by the Presbyterian Mission from Aizawl started in 1911. With a legacy of over a hundred years, *Kristian Tlangau* is still in publication as of today. It is, in fact, the biggest monthly magazine in the state of Mizoram as far as circulation figures are concerned. The first printing press *Loch Printing press* wasalso started in 1911. The inception of this press set the foundation for a quantum leap in media and publication in Mizoram. The press later underwent a name-change and was renamed as *Synod Press*. The Christian community or the Churches published a number of community magazines beside government publications, journals during this entire phase of Mizo media. Notable among them are *Tlawmngaihna*, *KohhranBeng etc.*

Print Media in Manipur

Print media started in Manipur relatively later, with *Meitei Chanu* edited by HijamIrabat in 1920. The major newspapers and magazines of Manipur include *MasikJagaran* in 1924, *Dainik Manipur Patrika* in 1933, *Lalit Manipuri Patrika* in 1933, *Yakirol* in 1933, *Shrigouranga* in 1934, *Tarun Manipur* in 1938, *Manipuri ShaityaParishadPatrika*, *Meitei* and *Naharolin* 1941; *Ngasi*, *ChhatraJagat*, *BhagyabatiMasik*, *Bhagyabati Kala*, *The Prajatantra* in 1946; *Anouba Jug*, *Bhagyabatee*, *Praja*, *Khonjel*, *Meenjaidabee*, *Palem*, *Imarol*, *Eikhoigi Manipur* and *SandhyageeBhagyabateePatrika* all in 1947.

Table 9: Advent of Print Media in Manipur			
Advent of Print Media in Manipur			
1	Meitei Chanu	HijamIrabat	1920
2	MasikJagaran	Arjun Singh	1924
3	Dainik Manipur Patrika	Th. Gokulchandra Singh	1933
4	Lalit Manipuri Patrika	ArambamDorendrajit Singh	1933
5	Yakirol	Dr.NingthoujanLairen Singh	1933
6	Shrigouranga	Lalita Madhab Chatterjee	1934
7	Tarun Manipur	R. K. Shitaljit	1938
8	Manipuri ShaityaParishadPatrika	ThokchomMadhu Singh	1941
9	Meitei	PhurailatpanGourachandra	1941
10	Naharol	Laishram Gopal	1941

The state saw a rapid proliferation of print media henceforth with the advent of a number of other newspapers and journals with new newspapers registered with the RNI. However, some researchers claim *Meitei Liema* as a hand written magazine brought out during 1917-1918 as oldest possible publication in Manipur. Some others argue that real credit of pioneering printed media journalism in Manipur to Thongjam Gokulchandra Singh who started publishing the daily newspaper *Dainik Manipur Patrika* on 23rd March, 1933. The historical print media policy in Manipur started with an order issued by the Manipur state Durbar granting acceptance to publication of *Dainik Manipur Partrika* on 6th July, 1932 and was printed at the Churachand Printing Press.

It is believed that this newspaper was widely read not only in Manipur but also in Assam and neighbouring states. *Dainik Manipur* was against the supremacy of the British rule and fought for freedom struggle. It criticized the British government policy and programs and caused much displeasure to the then British Political Agent in Manipur. It also discussed about religions, custom and traditions of the time. With a daily circulation of about 1,000 copies was known for its critical views against the British Government in Manipur. As a result, the government of Manipur declared to ban its publication. *Dainik Manipur Patrika*, apart from its political writings, adopted the cultural and religious views of the people. The paper rendered service to the people for five years continuously. The paper was a powerful organ in shaping the public opinion.

Print Media in Nagaland

In Nagaland, newspapers were introduced only in late 1960s. The first newspaper that can be traced back to Nagaland was in Angami language, - *Ketho Mu Kevi* was a quarterly, registered on 1957, with a Registration Number 5226 was published from Imphal, by Ms. Beilien of Kohima Nagaland. This was being printed at Bina Printing Works, of Poona Bazar Road Imphal. However, The first English newspaper that can be traced back to Nagaland is *Naga Chronicle* in which was published by Dulal Chandra Dutta from Kohima, Nagaland with the Registration Number 12189/66 in English as a fortnightly in 1966.⁽⁸⁴⁾ The first known newspaper by Naga people as mentioned earlier was the *Citizen Voice* introduced in 1967, by a group of educated young men who felt the need for a proper form of communication in the capital. This paper was initially introduced as a bi-weekly and later it

went on to become a weekly. The editor of this paper was Mr. NeituoAngami.

Table 10: Advent of Print Media in Nagaland		
Name	Year	Editor / publisher
<i>Ketho Mu Kevi</i>	1957 (Imphal) 1960	Ms. Beilien
<i>Naga Chronicle</i>	1966	Dulal Chandra Dutta
<i>Citizens Voice</i>	1967 – 1978	NeituoAngami

Print Media in Arunachal Pradesh

Arunachal Pradesh, which was earlier known as North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) attained separate statehood on February 20, 1987. Print media started in the state with the *Echo of Arunachal*, which was initiated in 1987 and registered with RNI in 1988. The newspaper was edited by Nanni Dai.

Table 11: Advent of Print Media in Arunachal Pradesh		
1	Echo of Arunachal	1988
2	Arunachal Times	1989
3	Arunachal Express	1990

CONCLUSION

From the documentation of the history of Modern Media in North East India through our study, we can now safely conclude that Missionary initiatives, commercial colonial, and nationalistic / sub-national identity formation, apart from royal patronage and anti-monarch movement fuelled the growth of Print Media significantly in that order, if we analyse the formation of print media right from the beginning.

Modern Assamese, or even the tribal languages of Meghalaya like Khasi, Garo etc. could develop up to its modern shape only for the Missionary initiative that were instrumental in standardizing those languages through Print Media. Advent of Modern Media in the shape of its first Avatar that is Print Media, courtesy to the Missionaries, has thus contributed to the rebirth or birth of some of the North East languages.

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