

SUMMARY

Public heritage is a virtue. To attain that virtue, media or mass media has certainly a major role to play. In the 21st century, mass media with its ever growing outreach arms, have made a deep impact on the larger public psyche in almost all the spheres including heritage. However, in this context, as a corollary, a question comes to the mind; is public awareness is the only role played by media *vis-a-vis* heritage? Or has it a wider role to play? The relationship between the heritage and media is not so simple as it seems from its face value. They have critical inter-relationships which have not yet been explored properly. Public awareness or dissemination of information to the masses is the basic role of the media. However, the present study is a humble attempt to study the role of the media in the sphere of heritage even beyond the public awareness paradigm. More specifically, the present research tries to assess the role of some selective highest circulated English and Hindi print media of Delhi on the built heritage issues of National Capital Region.

In the first part of the study, media and heritage have been defined elaborately with their wider scopes in the form of their typologies which are ever expanding. While defining the heritage, along with its lexical meanings and definitions, all other definitions given in the international conventions, charters, recommendations, declarations and guidelines; national and state legislations, rules and regulations; definitions given by reputed scholars, academicians, professionals and experts have been taken into account. Naturally, the definitions led further to discuss the typologies of heritage to know the scope of this ever growing subject. Then, it is followed by a brief definition of media and its typologies and a short summary of the role of media in the sphere of heritage.

The second part of the study reviews the existing literature on the subject. Secondary sources of the study are reviewed to know the different perspectives by various scholars working in the same or closely related subjects. It is also reviewed to show what was lacking in the existing research and how with the new tools of analysis and new way of looking at things and new paradigms, new perspectives could be emerged. For that, the literature directly linked to the present study are reviewed comprehensively while the literature indirectly linked to the subject are reviewed very briefly.

Review of the literature on the subject reveals that in most of the cases the approach is media-centric-heritage rather than the *vice-versa*. Secondly, the reviewed monographs are more concerned with the theoretical issues than practical ones. Third, many times, the discussion hovers around heritage being the communicating medium itself whereas the actual focus should be, heritage as revealed to the masses through mass media. Fourth, the complexities of heritage centric media, i.e. the complex role of media on heritage issues, have never been taken up seriously by any of the literature reviewed. Fifth, role of print media in heritage issues in general and built heritage in particular with special emphasis on frequency, space, location, themes, impacts and feedbacks has not been explored properly in any of the related literature till date. To fill that gap and to make the media-heritage interrelationship more dynamic, this study is ventured upon.

Third part of the research is the built heritage of Delhi. Since we are dealing with the built heritage of Delhi, it is necessary to know what constitutes the built heritage of Delhi. From pre-historic period upto the end of the British rule, the built heritage of Delhi have been discussed comprehensively.

Delhi has layers of material culture in the form of multiple cities which have developed and declined in successive phases. As many as eighteen small and big cities with their monumental architecture evolved, enriched, pillaged and rebuilt anew in and around Delhi from the Mahabharata era Indraprastha upto the Lutyen's New Delhi. The built heritage in and around Delhi includes religious and secular structures in the forms of temples, mosques, churches, gurudwaras, forts and fortifications with walled cities, wells and *baolis*, man-made lakes and ponds, gardens, tombs etc. have been discussed with their outstanding architectural and other features that shape the character of the city. The three World Heritage Sites of Delhi—Qutub Minar and its Monuments, Humayun's Tomb and Red Fort—along with heritage-walk areas, heritage zones and archaeological parks have been touched upon in this part. Built heritage of Delhi, as documented by various scholars from time to time and latest statistics of the monuments and sites of Delhi under various public organizations and agencies also included in this part.

The fourth part is the core of the research i.e. role of the print media on built heritage issues of Delhi. A quadrilateral approach has been followed to assess our primary sources i.e. structured questionnaire survey with print newspaper readers of Delhi, structured questionnaire survey with print newspaper working journalists, personal interview with media academics and senior journalists with heritage beat and finally, newspaper content analysis. On the basis of that quadrilateral approach, the role of print media *vis-à-vis* built heritage of Delhi has been measured in the fact-presentation-impact matrix.

So far as the newspaper readers are concerned, it emerges with clear contour that media plays an important role in shaping the meaning of the

heritage in the minds of the readers. Second, there is lack of awareness among the people at large about the heritage value of the monuments and sites. It is only high profile monuments that media focus. Lesser known monuments are not presented in the media. Due to this apathetic attitude of the media as well as the public authorities, many little known built heritage sites are encroached, vandalised, misused and even demolished. Third, newspaper reporting on heritage is inadequate. Out of the four highest circulated English and Hindi dailies of Delhi, two newspapers i.e. Dainik Jagran in Hindi and Hindustan Times in English have more heritage stories compared to Times of India and Hindustan. Although Times of India has some reporting on heritage issues, Hindustan's reporting is abysmally poor. Prioritization of political and crime stories are the reason for this apathetic attitude towards development stories like heritage. Fourth, corporatization of media houses has seriously impaired the editorial autonomy where editors were bound by their corporate masters to do the sensational stories on crime, politics, entertainment etc. but not heritage stories. Fifth, lack of editorials on the heritage issues clearly show editorial apathy towards built heritage, may be due to lack of editorial autonomy as discussed above. Sixth, more often media attention is largely focused on built heritage without taking into account the intangible aspects of that built heritage with which the local community and/or people of the neighborhood have been intimately attached. Seventh, media does not have a comprehensive understanding of the management of heritage. Therefore, there are flaws in the reporting on heritage issues by which the media is creating a false public perception about heritage management. Eighth, regular writings on the built heritage in the form of report, column, feature, editorial etc are lacking. Hence, there should be weekly column or some sort of regular features in the print media on heritage issues. Ninth, media act as a pressure on public policies and it plays an important role in raising critical issues on

built heritage by which public authorities take concrete measures to address those issues.

From the structural interview of the working journalists, some generalisations have been made. First, the issue of the frequency and continuity of heritage related news stories and its salience and impact is a multidimensional one. They are related to nature of newspaper, the autonomy of the editor in deciding the content, personal bias of the editor, sensational aspect of the news etc. Second, if heritage reporting is made a special beat, then a lot more things would come to the public domain through media reports and discussion. Third, there are several issues involved with regard to the built heritage i.e. revenue, urban planning, legal issues, public awareness and social aspects. Fourth, maximum focus of the stories are fact finding and community centric. They also mainly focus on conservation and encroachment issues. Public authorities take corrective actions due to the impacts of their stories on heritage. Fifth, rather than projecting heritage-development relationship in conflictual paradigm, many working journalists opined that a sustainable development incorporating heritage preservation within the ambit of development plan is possible. Sixth, globalisation of economy has increased the commercial viability of heritage structure which in turn could have positive effect on local communities if a comprehensive management plan is in place. Seventh, the journalists do follow up stories on heritage issues to improve the condition of the monuments and sites by concerned authorities. But again, it depends on the autonomy of the editors and the news value of the story.

Personal interviews with senior academics and senior journalist of heritage beat revealed that due to sensationalization and marketability, negative journalism is gaining ground and hence development journalism like

heritage is the casualty in that form of journalism. They also advocated that peoples' psyche must be changed to adapt to development journalism. Then can only the media house respect the peoples' choice and change their focus to developmental journalism. Frequency of heritage stories and space given to it in the newspapers are very less in the context of Delhi. It is also opined that frequency and space depends on the heritage character of the city. Conservation, preservation, restoration, encroachment, vandalism, demolition etc. of heritage buildings are the main focus areas for the journalists but the journalists should also focus on the heritage awareness aspects or other heritage related soft news in the print media which they are lacking in the current scenario. Another consensus is that journalists of the heritage beat must do their home work very well i.e. consult libraries, archives, talk to the historians, archaeologists and experts before visiting the heritage site to know about its history, architecture, conservation and management aspects. In the field, a journalist must talk to the people regarding the built heritage to understand the building and its surroundings. Most importantly, it is not only the prominent built heritage sites that should be highlighted by the media. Media should give equal priority to the lesser and least known monuments and sites in every nook and corner of the city along with the well known ones. As part of the impact of the reporting on the built heritage, it was opined that the public authorities have taken a lot of corrective measures in the sites. The journalists get good feedback through mail where the newspaper readers say that they subscribe a particular newspaper due to its brilliant heritage content. Again some readers say that after reading about a heritage site in the newspaper he/she himself/herself has visited the heritage site and they are going to take their family for the site visit.

The content analysis of the newspapers have revealed that media has represented built heritage issues in four broad paradigms i.e. heritage as

shared history, heritage as a representation of ‘agonizing’ history, heritage as tourism and economic development, heritage and community: syncretic and contested relations. Issue of built heritage encroachment by local communities or disappearance of the protected or unprotected monuments, appear very frequently on the pages of the newspapers. Images, pictures, maps and other illustrative visuals speak louder than the texts. Most of the built heritage stories in the print media are accompanied by multiple of colour photos, maps and other illustrations which gives a better reading of heritage stories.

The overall synthesis of the study in terms of perspectives is that the representation of heritage in media is neither homogenous nor is the reader a passive consumer of the news. Further, the emergence of new social media have also made information free-flowing and opinion free. In such a situation print or electronic media’s capacity to mould, influence or reinforce public opinion has not been diminished as the responses show.

However, the representation of the heritage begs the question: whose heritage is it? Do all the citizens of the nation state share the same shared level of consciousness? At a time when past is a scarce commodity, people cling to one form of past at the expense of the other. Heritage, if shared by same consciousness, can be a major marker of the identity. Thinking of oneself as a member of a national public - envisaged like a large ‘team’, ‘family’ or ‘community’ but made up of thousands or millions of people most of whom one would never meet – entailed a particular feat of the imagination, brought about by a sense of belongingness, by a common vision of the past and its resources. Further, inscribing world heritage tag to built heritage also brings in the international dimension to discussion as well. Chapter 4 of the dissertation discusses the issue of representation of

built heritage in print media. The media highlights the role of built heritage as further reinforcing the composite culture of India. At the same time media also highlights the contestation and conflict among communities on the nature and ownership of the built heritage. The same chapter also highlights the special stories on the seven capitals of Delhi carried by the *Hindustan Times*.

The second dimension of media coverage of heritage issues centres around issue of tourism. Globalisation and World Heritage tag of various sites of Delhi have opened up the issue of tourism potential of the site. Archaeological park, heritage walk, signboard and integrated tourist circuit have been developed by government and other stakeholders to attract tourists to the built heritage sites. Media highlights the adequacies and inadequacies of these new strategies. Sustainable tourism that makes a balance between tourism, neighbourhood concern and preservation of monuments has also come out as major highlights of the media coverage of the built heritage of Delhi.

Media effect on reader's perception about the heritage of Delhi constituted an important concern of the present dissertation. This assumes critical concern, especially after the emergence of social media and mushrooming of information. One of the major findings of the present dissertation is that readers' continuous faith in the view that media plays an important role in shaping the meaning of the heritage in the minds of the readers. At the same time, the representation of heritage in newspaper and its reception of the reader vary across readers. Some readers view that media act as a pressure on public policies; others believe that media does not have a comprehensive understanding of the management of heritage. More often media attention is largely focused on heritage monument without taking into account the

intangible heritage with which the people of the neighborhood has been intimately attached. The valence of reporting on reading public is equally contingent on the reader who decodes the meaning in his own way. Predisposition to heritage issues, interest of the reading public about the monument and its conservation and his/her phenomenological encounter with the living heritage and monuments also play a major role in molding the mind of the public. The present study will certainly propel the enthusiastic future generation to probe further on the subject for the betterment of heritage and its experience.

