

CUET · SOCIOLOGY · CLASS XII · CODE 326

Mass Media and Communications

CUET unit: Social Change and Development in India — Mass Media and Communications

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Snapshot

- Traces the growth of modern mass media in India from the colonial print press to the post-1990 globalised satellite/FM era.
- Establishes the **dialectical relationship** between media and society: media is shaped by economic, political and socio-cultural contexts, and in turn shapes them.
- Three temporal phases organise the topic — (a) colonial India, (b) first decades after Independence (Nehruvian "watchdog/development" approach), and (c) globalisation.
- Emphasises the central role of the **state and/or the market** in structuring mass media due to its capital, production and management demands.
- High CUET salience: factual recall of dates/names (Gutenberg 1440, **Sambad Kaumudi** 1821, SITE 1975–76, **Hum Log** 1984–85, FM 2002) plus conceptual items on "imagined community", infotainment, and digital divide.

Detailed Notes

2.1 Core concepts

- **Mass media defined:** includes television, newspapers, films, magazines, radio, advertisements, video games and CDs; called "mass" because they reach very large audiences across geography, class and language simultaneously (NCERT §Intro, p. 90).
- **Why "mass" media is a distinct social institution:** it requires a formal structural organisation to meet large-scale capital, production and management demands, so the state and/or the market necessarily have a major role in its structure and functioning — unlike face-to-face communication, mass media cannot exist without sustained institutional backing (NCERT §Intro, p. 91).
- **Dialectical relationship:** mass media and society influence each other — media is shaped by its socio-economic-political context, and exerts far-reaching influence on society in return (NCERT §Intro, p. 91). The "magic-bullet" view that media simply imposes effects on a passive audience is rejected.
- **Digital divide:** sharp differences exist in how easily different sections of people can use mass media — gender, urban/rural, income and education stratify access (referenced from previous chapter) (NCERT §Intro, p. 91).

- **Origins of modern mass media:** the first modern mass-media institution was the printing press, developed by **Johann Gutenberg in 1440**; initial print attempts were restricted to religious books (the Gutenberg Bible) (NCERT §7.1, p. 92).
- **Press and nationalism — Benedict Anderson:** with the Industrial Revolution and rising literacy in the mid-19th century, newspapers reached mass audiences; people across a country reading the same news developed a "we-feeling". **Benedict Anderson** argued this fostered nationalism and described the nation as an "**imagined community**" — its members will never know most of their fellow nationals yet feel deep horizontal comradeship (NCERT §7.1, p. 92).
- **Colonial Indian press:** 19th-century social reformers debated through newspapers; the nationalist press channelised anti-colonial opinion. Censorship was imposed, e.g., during the **Ilbert Bill agitation of 1883**. Nationalist papers like **Kesari** (Marathi, Tilak), **Mathrubhumi** (Malayalam) and **Amrita Bazar Patrika** (English) suffered colonial displeasure and prosecutions (NCERT §7.1, pp. 92–93).
- **Pioneers (Box 7.1):** Raja Rammohun Roy's **Sambad-Kaumudi** in Bengali (**1821**) and **Mirat-ul-Akbar** in Persian (**1822**) were the first Indian publications with a distinct nationalist-democratic approach; **Fardoonji Murzban** started **Bombay Samachar** daily in **1822** (pioneer of Gujarati press); **Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar** started **Shome Prakash** in Bengali in 1858; **Times of India** (1861), **Pioneer Allahabad** (1865), **Madras Mail** (1868), **Statesman Calcutta** (1875), **Civil and Military Gazette Lahore** (1876) (NCERT §7.1, Box 7.1, p. 93).
- **Colonial-era media mix:** newspapers, magazines, films and radio; **radio was wholly owned by the state**, hence nationalist views could not be expressed on it; newspapers/films were autonomous but strictly monitored (NCERT §7.1, p. 93).
- **Nehruvian approach in independent India:** Jawaharlal Nehru called upon the media to be the "**watchdog of democracy**"; media was to spread self-reliance, national development, fight untouchability, child marriage, ostracism of widows, witchcraft, faith healing; promote a rational, scientific ethos consonant with the Nehruvian "temper of science" (NCERT §7.2, p. 94).
- **Films Division:** produced newsreels and documentaries shown before every film in every theatre, documenting state-directed development (dams, steel plants, vaccination drives, literacy campaigns) (NCERT §7.2, p. 94).
- **Radio history:** amateur "ham" broadcasting began in **Kolkata and Chennai in the 1920s**; matured into public broadcasting in the 1940s during World War II as Allied propaganda in South-east Asia; at Independence only **six radio stations** existed, located in major cities; by **1950 there were 5,46,200 radio licences** (NCERT §7.2, p. 94).
- **AIR structure:** All India Radio operates a **three-tiered service — national, regional and local** — for India's geographic, linguistic and cultural diversity; today 480 stations and 681 transmitters cover **99% of population and 92% of area** (NCERT §7.2, p. 95).

- **Vividh Bharati:** entertainment channel primarily broadcasting Hindi film songs on listeners' request; acquired by AIR in **1957**; later carried sponsored programmes and advertisements — among the earliest commercial breaks on Indian state media (NCERT §7.2, p. 95).
- **Transistor revolution of the 1960s:** made radio mobile via battery-operated sets and reduced unit price, popularising it among rural and lower-income listeners; the transistor radio became a fixture of Indian villages (NCERT §7.2, p. 95).
- **AIR and the Green Revolution (Box 7.2):** from **1967** AIR ran a sustained countryside campaign on high-yielding varieties for over 10 years, with subject specialists recording farmers' accounts — an early example of agriculture-extension via mass media (NCERT §7.2 Box 7.2, p. 95).
- **Wars/tragedies spurring AIR (Box 7.3):** 1962 China war → "talks" unit; August 1971 Bangladesh crisis → hourly news 6 AM to midnight; 1991 Rajiv Gandhi assassination → round-the-clock bulletins (NCERT §7.2 Box 7.3, p. 95).
- **Television beginnings:** experimental TV introduced for rural development in **1959**; **SITE (Satellite Instructional Television Experiment)** broadcast directly to community viewers in rural areas of **six states between August 1975 and July 1976**, reaching **2,400 TV sets for four hours daily** — an Indo-US satellite collaboration using NASA's ATS-6 satellite (NCERT §7.2, p. 96).
- **Doordarshan stations by 1975:** Delhi, Mumbai, Srinagar and Amritsar; three more (Kolkata, Chennai, Jalandhar) added within a year (NCERT §7.2, p. 96).
- **1982 Asian Games:** introduction of colour broadcasting; rapid expansion of national network led to commercialisation; sponsored programming entered Doordarshan in a big way (NCERT §7.2, p. 96).
- **Indigenous soap operas: Hum Log (1984–85)** — India's first long-running soap opera, **156 episodes** in Hindi for 17 months, promoted gender equality, small family, national integration; **epilogues by Ashok Kumar; Buniyaad (1986–87); epics Ramayana (1987–88) and Mahabharata (1988–90)** drew unprecedented audiences (NCERT §7.2 Box 7.4, p. 96; main text p. 97).
- **Entertainment-education strategy** of **Hum Log** used parasocial interaction; viewers wrote **400,000+ letters**; studied by Singhal & Rogers as a model for development communication (NCERT §7.2 Box 7.4, p. 96).
- **Emergency 1975:** gravest challenge to media — press censorship under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act; democracy restored in 1977; India proud of a free media (NCERT §7.2, p. 98).
- **Globalisation context:** until the 1970s media companies operated in specific domestic markets; in the past three decades, national markets gave way to a fluid global market, with **fusion of forms** that were once distinct (television + internet + telephony converging on the smartphone) (NCERT §7.3, pp. 98–99).
- **Indian-language newspaper revolution (Box 7.8):** Hindi, Telugu, Kannada showed highest growth; average daily circulation rose from **39.1 million (2006) to 62.8**

- million (2016)** — CAGR 4.87%; **Dainik Jagran** and **Dainik Bhaskar** are top Hindi dailies (NCERT §7.3 Box 7.8, p. 99).
- **Reasons for Indian-language press growth:** rise in literate migrants to cities; localised content; advanced printing tech; supplements, pullouts, niche booklets; aggressive marketing (Dainik Bhaskar's door-to-door surveys before launch). **Eenadu** (founded by **Ramoji Rao, 1974**) used the anti-arrack movement, launched **district dailies** in **1989** with sensational local news and small-town classifieds (NCERT §7.3 Box 7.8 & p. 100).
 - **Infotainment** (Box 7.11): combination of information and entertainment, adopted to retain segmented young readers; newspapers becoming a consumer product rather than a public good (NCERT §7.3 Box 7.11, p. 102).
 - **Newspaper production change (Box 7.10):** from late 1980s/early 1990s, networking of PCs via LANs and software like **Newsmaker** enabled fully automatic newspapers; paper eliminated; reporters now use digital recorders, laptops, mobile/satellite phones — the deadline cycle shrank from hours to minutes (NCERT §7.3 Box 7.10, p. 101).
 - **Private satellite TV in India: 1991** — Gulf War popularised CNN's live coverage; same year, **Star-TV launched by the Whampoa Hutchinson Group of Hong Kong**, signalling arrival of private satellite channels in India; **1992** — Zee TV (Hindi entertainment) began (NCERT §7.3, p. 102).
 - **Channel growth:** one Doordarshan channel in 1991 → ~70 channels by 1998 → ~900 private TV networks by 2020 (NCERT §7.3, p. 102).
 - **Localisation by transnational TV: STAR Plus turned solely Hindi by Feb 1999;** slogan **Aapki Boli. Aapka Plus Point**; cable operators grew from 100 (1984) → 1,200 (1988) → 15,000 (1992) → **60,000 (1999)** (NCERT §7.3, pp. 103–104). This is globalisation in action (cross-ref Ch. 6).
 - **Private FM radio:** launched in **2002; not permitted to broadcast political news bulletins**; specialises in popular music. Brands: **Radio Mirchi (Times of India group), Red FM (Living Media), Radio City (Star Network)**. Independent public broadcasters like NPR/BBC are missing in India (NCERT §7.3, pp. 104–105).
 - **Soap opera (Box 7.13):** serialised continuous stories; no ending until taken off air; presumes a history familiar to regular viewers; the form is borrowed from US daytime radio of the 1930s sponsored by detergent makers — hence "soap" (NCERT §7.3 Box 7.13, p. 104).
 - **Raghav FM Mansoorpur 1 (Box 7.14):** a village-run unlicensed FM station in Bihar by **Raghav Mahato**, transmission kit costing **Rs. 50** — illustrates demand for local content and the case for **community radio** (NCERT §7.3 Box 7.14, pp. 105–106).

2.2 Definitions to memorise

Term	Definition	Page
Mass media	TV, newspapers, films, magazines, radio, ads, video games, CDs reaching very large audiences	90
Imagined community	Benedict Anderson's term — the nation as a community of people who never meet but feel connected through shared print/news	92
Watchdog of democracy	Nehru's prescribed role for post-Independence media — safeguard democracy, spread development	94
SITE	Satellite Instructional Television Experiment, Aug 1975–July 1976, 2,400 community sets, six states	96
Three-tiered AIR service	National + regional + local broadcasting tiers	95
Vividh Bharati	AIR's entertainment channel for Hindi film songs; acquired in 1957	95
Hum Log	India's first long-running soap opera (1984–85), 156 episodes	96
Entertainment-education	Developmental message embedded in entertainment programming	96
Infotainment	Information + entertainment blend used by newspapers/channels to hold reader interest	102
District dailies	Tabloid inserts launched by Eenadu (1989) with district-specific news	99
Soap opera	Serialised continuous stories with no fixed ending; presumes familiar history	104
Cable operator	Local agent distributing satellite TV to households	104
Community radio	Low-power station serving a specific local community	106
Digital divide	Unequal access to mass-media technology across social groups	91
Globalisation of media	Convergence of national markets into a fluid global media market	98
Doordarshan	India's public-service television broadcaster	96
Films Division	State newsreel and documentary producer for cinema halls	94
Press censorship	State suppression of newspapers (Ilbert Bill 1883, Emergency 1975)	93, 98
Magic-bullet theory (implied)	Discredited view that media imposes effects on a passive audience	91
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Term	Definition	Page
Glocalisation (cross-ref)	Mixing of global format with local content (STAR Plus → Hindi 1999)	
Print capitalism (Anderson, implied)	Linking of profit-driven publishing with national-imaginary formation	92
Public-service broadcasting	State-funded media serving citizen-information rather than profit	105
Ham radio	Amateur shortwave broadcasting	94
Parasocial interaction	One-sided audience attachment to media characters; key to Hum Log's effect	96
Convergence (implied)	Merger of TV, internet, telephony on a single platform	99

2.3 Diagrams / processes to remember

- Visual of a printing press alongside a 21st-century Indian TV newsroom — illustrates the technological journey from Gutenberg's press to the satellite-TV era (p. 92).
- Photograph "A television showroom" — accompanies satellite-TV growth (p. 102).
- **Box 7.10** image of an automated newspaper newsroom — for the technology-driven shift in print production (p. 101).
- **Timeline to mentally sketch:** Gutenberg (1440) → **Sambad Kaumudi** (1821) → **Bombay Samachar** (1822) → **Times of India** (1861) → ham radio (1920s) → AIR rebranded (1936) → AIR acquires Vividh Bharati (1957) → experimental TV (1959) → SITE (1975–76) → Doordarshan colour (1982) → **Hum Log** (1984–85) → **Buniyaad** (1986–87) → **Ramayana** (1987–88) → **Mahabharata** (1988–90) → Gulf War + Star-TV (1991) → Zee TV (1992) → STAR Plus Hindi (1999) → private FM (2002).
- **AIR growth chart** — 6 stations / 5.46 lakh licences (1947–50) → 480 stations / 681 transmitters / 99% population coverage (current).
- **Cable-operator growth** — 100 (1984) → 1,200 (1988) → 15,000 (1992) → 60,000 (1999).
- **Indian-language press circulation** — 39.1 m (2006) → 62.8 m (2016), CAGR 4.87%.

2.4 Common confusions / NTA trap points

- **Gutenberg printed religious books first**, not novels or newspapers — NTA may swap "religious books" with "scientific texts" or "novels".
- **Sambad Kaumudi (1821) is Bengali**, **Mirat-UI-Akbar (1822) is Persian** — both by Raja Rammohun Roy; questions often flip the languages.
- **SITE ran 1975–76 for one year, in six states, four hours daily, 2,400 sets** — distractors substitute "12 states" or "eight hours daily" or "1959".

- **Vividh Bharati was acquired by AIR in 1957** (not started in 1957); it primarily broadcast Hindi film songs.
- **Private FM was permitted in 2002**, but **cannot broadcast political news bulletins** — a frequent statement-based trap.
- **Hum Log (1984–85) preceded Buniyaad (1986–87) which preceded Ramayana (1987–88) and Mahabharata (1988–90)** — chronology questions are common.
- **Benedict Anderson** is the scholar for "imagined community"; do not confuse with Desai (Indian nationalism background) or Singhal & Rogers (**Hum Log** study).
- **Ilbert Bill agitation (1883)** triggered censorship of the nationalist press — sometimes confused with Vernacular Press Act 1878 or 1857 events.
- **Star-TV is launched by Whampoa Hutchinson of Hong Kong, 1991** — not by Rupert Murdoch (he acquired later) and not in India.
- **Eenadu's district dailies = 1989**, not 1974 (1974 is the founding of Eenadu by Ramoji Rao).
- **Colour TV came with the 1982 Asian Games**, not with SITE or Hum Log.
- **6 radio stations at Independence**, not 60 or 600 — order-of-magnitude trap.

2.5 Thinkers / Theories

Thinker / Concept	Key Contribution	Page
Johann Gutenberg (1440)	Invented modern printing press — first modern mass-media institution	§7.1, p. 92
Benedict Anderson	Nation as "imagined community"; print-capitalism foundational to nationalism	§7.1, p. 92
Raja Rammohun Roy	Pioneer of Indian press — Sambad Kaumudi (1821), Mirat-UI-Akbar (1822)	Box 7.1, p. 93
Fardoonji Murzban	Bombay Samachar (1822) — pioneer of Gujarati press	Box 7.1, p. 93
Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar	Shome Prakash (1858)	Box 7.1, p. 93
Jawaharlal Nehru	"Watchdog of democracy"; rational-scientific developmental role for media	§7.2, p. 94
Singhal & Rogers (implied)	Studied Hum Log as entertainment-education model	§7.2 Box 7.4, p. 96
Ramoji Rao (1974)	Founded Eenadu and launched the district-daily revolution (1989)	§7.3, pp. 99–100
SITE (1975–76, NASA + ISRO + Doordarshan)	Satellite developmental TV to 6 states	§7.2, p. 96
	India's public-service television	§7.2, p. 96

Thinker / Concept	Key Contribution	Page
Doordarshan (1959 → colour 1982)		
Whampoa Hutchinson Group (1991)	Launched Star-TV — gateway of private satellite TV in India	§7.3, p. 102
Zee TV (1992)	First Hindi private satellite entertainment channel	§7.3, p. 102
Anti-Emergency press tradition	Censorship 1975 → free-press consciousness after 1977	§7.2, p. 98
Marshall McLuhan (implied)	"The medium is the message" — convergence and form-shaping	§7.3, p. 99
Stuart Hall (implied)	Encoding/decoding — audience as active interpreter	§Intro, p. 91
Community radio movement	Local broadcasting illustrated by Raghav FM Mansoorpur 1 (Box 7.14)	§7.3, pp. 105–106

Practice MCQs

PYQ Alignment

This chapter is a high-frequency CUET pick: 2023–25 papers have consistently drawn 1–2 direct-recall items on dates/pioneers (Gutenberg, Raja Rammohun Roy's papers, SITE, Hum Log, private FM 2002) and 1 conceptual item on either Anderson's "imagined community", infotainment, or Nehru's "watchdog of democracy" framing. Statement-based and match-the-following formats dominate, especially around the chronology of indigenous soap operas and the phases of AIR/Doordarshan expansion.

CUET 2025 — Actual PYQs from this chapter

Q.29 (CUET 2025) Match the following (Media – Example): (A) Eenadu (B) Zee TV (C) AIR (D) Buniyaad / (I) Telugu Newspaper (II) Satellite Channel (III) Radio Channel (IV) Soap Opera.

- A) A-III, B-IV, C-I, D-II B) A-II, B-III, C-I, D-IV C) A-III, B-IV, C-II, D-I D) A-IV, B-III, C-I, D-II

Tests: Indian media examples — Eenadu (Telugu daily), Zee (satellite), AIR (radio), Buniyaad (DD soap). **Answer:** Not in extracted key

CUET 2024 — Actual PYQs from this chapter

Q.25 (CUET 2024) Who invented the printing press?

- A) Leonardo da Vinci B) Johann Gutenberg C) Galileo Galilei D) Isaac Newton **Tests:** Gutenberg's printing press. **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.26 (CUET 2024) Match individuals with contributions to Indian media: (A) Raja Rammohun Roy (B) Fardoonji Murzban (C) Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (D) Jawaharlal Nehru / (I) Started Bombay Samachar (II) Media as watchdog of democracy (III) Started Shome Prakash (IV) Started Sambad-Kaumudi.

- A) A-I, B-II, C-III, D-IV B) A-I, B-III, C-II, D-IV C) A-IV, B-II, C-I, D-III D) A-IV, B-I, C-III, D-II **Tests:** Pioneers of Indian newspaper press and Nehru's media philosophy. **Answer:** Not in extracted key

CUET 2023 — Actual PYQs from this chapter

Q.37 (CUET 2023) Which of the following is not an example of new social media?

- A) Facebook B) Instagram C) Blogs D) Radio **Tests:** Old vs new media distinction. **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.38 (CUET 2023) Television programming was introduced experimentally in India to promote:

- A) Women development B) Health programme C) Urban development D) Rural development **Tests:** SITE / early TV in India for rural development. **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.39 (CUET 2023) Who described nation as an "imagined community"?

- A) Raja Ram Mohan Roy B) Benedict Anderson C) Johann Gutenberg D) Farooqi Murzban **Tests:** Benedict Anderson's "imagined community" thesis. **Answer:** Not in extracted key