The Press is  aptly referred to as the fourth pillar of democracy other three pillars are Legislature, Executive and Judiciary . We consider press as free from bias and prejudice. Press reflects the realities of this world as wished by social and political world. The press tries to motivate, mesmerize or change the opinion of the people in such a way that people of a particular taste will be addicted to a particular newspaper. This is how a newspaper turns or moulds the language of the news as well in such a manner that it can fulfill its desired goal. It can represent murder and bloodshed along with love, mercy and kindness.

**‘Papa Of Indian Press’**

In the year 1780, India got its first ever newspaper and the man single-handedly made it possible was James Augustus Hickey. Irishman James Hickey, known as the ‘Papa of Indian Press’ by the British, built the framework of Journalism in 18th Century. Calcutta which was then under the rule of the East India Company. Hickey started a newspaper called Bengal Gazette, which also known as ‘Hickey’s Bengal Gazette’ or the ‘Calcutta General Advertiser’ which hit the stands for the first time on January 29, 1780. It was the first manifestation of Journalism in India, serving as a public watchdog against the mismanagement and wrong-doings of government and corruption in the society.

**A circulation of 200 copies**

Published on every Saturday, the Bengal Gazette was written, edited and printed by Hickey, who was otherwise a surgeon by occupation.  It had only two sheets with three columns on each page and was printed on both sides of the pages. Its circulation was limited; not exceeding 200 copies.

**Warren Hastings was not impressed**

The newspaper drew strong criticism for its coarse language and its blunt commentary on the government. Hickey ruthlessly carried out tirades against the East India Company. Soon Bengal Gazette provoked the ire of the then Governor General, Warren Hastings. Warren Hastings was furious about the malicious and sarcastic contents Hickey used to publish in his newspaper about him and also the Chief Justice Elijah Impey. Soon he filed a case against him and Hickey was imprisoned.  Hickey was stubborn. He continued to publish his Gazette even when he was in jail and his criticism grew harsher. Finally, Warren Hastings seized his printing machines and typewriters, and March 1782 saw the end of Bengal Gazette. It was a big setback for the freedom of the press.

**An epitome of fearless journalism**

James Augustus Hickey is still revered by many journalists as an epitome of fearless journalism. The famous Decker’s Lane in Kolkata, has now been rechristened as James Hickey Sarani. Journalism is taking a new leap every day as more newspapers, TV channels, websites are coming into the market. Journalism in India has also gone way ahead of the times when one had to wait till the morning for the newspaper to arrive or the primetime news shows at All India Radio. No matter how many steps we take, it all started with James Hickey.