

NEWS REPORTING AND EDITING

Complementary Course of BA English/Malayalam

Semester II

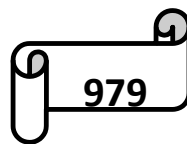
(CUCBCSS - 2014 Admission onwards)



UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

Calicut University P.O. Malappuram, Kerala, India 673 635



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STUDY MATERIAL
NEWS REPORTING AND EDITING
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Semester II
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Module 1

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF A NEWSPAPER

Journalism is one of the most important professions in the world. It informs citizens about various events that take place in our community, state, country and beyond. The reports and analyses of journalists help people know the current affairs and to form opinions. Journalists inform the public through newspapers, magazines, radio, television, internet etc. These means of communication are often referred to as the news media.

Newspapers are daily engaged in the gathering, packaging and distribution of news, opinions and pictures from across the globe. Mass media shape and mould public opinion and represent social reality. They are complex and multi-faceted organisations involving huge business and commercial interests. Efficient and harmonious coordination of various departments of a newspaper are essential if it is to effectively function as a professional and business entity.

The mere collection of news and its distribution alone will not ensure the successful functioning of a newspaper. Advertisements in a newspaper are the basis of its stability and profitability. Similarly, a paper must have good circulation. The greater the circulation the greater will be the volume of advertisements. The mechanical production (print quality) and the distribution of newspapers also play a key role.

The organizational setup varies from newspaper to newspaper depending on the size and turnover of a newspaper. Generally most of the newspapers have three major departments - editorial, business and mechanical. Large newspapers may have more departments such as Human Resource Development, Public Relations, Personnel and Administration. However, editorial, business and mechanical are the core departments of a newspaper. Let us discuss the most important characteristics of these departments.

1. Editorial Department

The editorial department is the key section of a newspaper. The news, features, comments, columns, editorials, cartoons, letters to the editor are handled by this section under the leadership of the editor or editor-in-chief. A host of assistant editors, news editors, sub-editors, special correspondents and reporters work under the editor. The chief reporter along with a team of reporters collects news from various places. These reports are edited by a team of sub editors under the supervision of a news editor. Most newspapers have separate desks for local, regional, national and foreign news. Presently, most of the newspapers have online editions. A team of journalists will edit, design and present the content for the internet editions.

2. Business Department

The business department of a newspaper is of prime importance. To function properly and effectively, a newspaper has to be run as a business enterprise.

Usually, the business department consists of two sections, namely, advertising and circulation.

3. Mechanical Department

The mechanical section of a newspaper is in charge of the actual production of the paper. This section deals with the composing, plate making, printing, packing and dispatching. Once the stories are edited and arranged, the pages are handed over to the mechanical department. Here, these pages are converted into metal plates through a chemical process for offset printing. Once the papers are printed, they are folded, counted, and packed for delivery to various destinations.

Big newspapers may have more specialised departments than the above mentioned. Newspaper business is like any other corporate business venture. All the modern management principles are applied in order to maximize profit and to render the best product to the readers. Internet editions, mobile applications and other technologies are essential in reaching out the newspaper to the generation next.

Structure of Editorial Department

The editorial department is described as the soul of a newspaper. The department has two important sections namely reporting and editing.

Reporters gather news from different parts of the country and also from abroad. Photographers provide photos and cartoonists supply sketches of personalities and events. Editorial writers and special writers contribute editorials, features, articles, middles, columns etc. All the news collected including the photographs, cartoons, special stories, columns, middles etc. are edited and arranged by the editorial department. The organisational structure of the reporting and editing section is given below.

Editor

Reporting Section

1. Bureau Chief
2. Chief Reporter
3. Senior Reporters
4. Special Correspondents
5. Reporters
6. Trainee Reporters

Editing Section

1. News Editor
2. Chief Sub-editor
3. Senior Sub-editors
4. Special/Magazine Editor
5. Sub-editors
6. Trainee Sub- editors

1. Editor

The editor takes all important decisions connected with the publication of news and expression of opinion on vital national and international issues and events. He/she coordinates the editorial department (editing & reporting). Every newspaper in India is required under the law to print the name of the editor on every issue. This pins responsibility on the editor for what goes to print. If a newspaper violates the laws of the land the person responsible can easily be identified, located and booked.

The editor is appointed by the proprietor. The relationship between an editor and a proprietor need not be a smooth one always. We have numerous cases in India where the editor had to step down on account of disagreements with the proprietors. In some cases the proprietors have unceremoniously kicked out the editors. Legendary Malayalam editor Swadeshabhmani Ramakrishna Pilla had left the editorship of many newspapers on account of disagreements with the proprietors.

Some people hold the view that an editor is responsible solely to his/her conscience and to the readers. Interference on the editorial policy or on the discharge of the duties of an editor is considered an assault on the freedom of the press and it should be resisted at any cost. But there are few takers for this view.

Some newspapers such as *The Times of India* have done away with the post of chief editor. Some others such as *The Hindu*, and *Malayala Manorama* choose the editor from the family members of the proprietors so that they can avoid possible differences of opinion in the editorial matters.

2. News Editor

News editor is in charge of the newsroom and his major responsibility is in the selection of news stories. He/she allocates tasks to news team and instructs reporters on the news angles which are to be highlighted in reports. News editor is directly answerable to the chief editor.

The news editor in consultation with the chief reporter will decide what news stories should be covered and in what detail. As the final authority on the news, he has the power to stop the printing of a newspaper in order to accommodate an important fast-breaking news story. He/she must scan all incoming news and issue directions for appropriate editing. Dummy for the first page is finalised by the news editor. He/she should know the pressure, stress, ordeals and joys of working in the late night as well as the strain of competitive journalism and news operations.

3. Chief sub-editor

The senior sub-editor or the chief sub-editor is the captain of the editorial section of the news desk. It is his/her responsibility to see that copies are distributed among the sub-editors and to ensure that copies are edited properly, attractive and meaningful headlines are given and copies are free from libels. The edited copies are handed over to the printing section before the cut-off time.

4. Sub-editor/copy editor

The sub-editor also known as copy editor has been described as the midwife to the story and *the unsung hero of a newspaper*. He/she should have a lawyer's analytical approach and quick-mindedness which enables him/her to understand a story quickly and come to the core of the matter.

A sub-editor has to give appropriate headlines and, where necessary, revise and condense the material to suit the available space. These tasks call for a flair for writing and mastery over the language. He/she has to check and recheck facts, style, grammar etc. while editing a story in a newspaper.

A sub-editor's working hours are more regular than that of a reporter. Unlike a reporter who can be called to duty at any time, a sub-editor's duty is fixed like any other office worker's. The only difference is that a sub-editor has to work in shifts and his/her work begins in the late afternoon and goes up to 2 to 3 in the wee hours of the morning.

5. Chief photographer

Photojournalism is a form of journalism that creates images in order to describe a news story. A photojournalist is a visual reporter who must often make decisions instantly and carry photographic equipment, often while exposed to significant obstacles such as physical danger, weather, crowds etc.

A good photojournalist is both a skilled photographer who uses the camera and other equipment to his best advantage. He must also be a creative person who mixes technique and judgement to capture images as they happen because news events do not wait for the photographer.

A photojournalist must be prepared to act fast and have his camera always at hand. Interesting pictures are most often a result of the alertness of the photojournalist who is at the right place at the right time. The chief photographer coordinates the gathering of photos.

6. Reporter/correspondents

A reporter collects news on behalf of the readers of a newspaper. To a great extent, a newspaper's reputation and credibility depends on the reporters. They can make or destroy a newspaper. A reporter performs the noble task of educating and informing the reader about what is happening around them.

As in every other profession, specialisation is there in reporting too. Big newspapers have specialists to report political, legal, business, education, crime, sports, films and special events. These reporters write authoritative articles in their specialised areas.

An experienced reporter on being given an assignment asks:

1. What has happened? That is, what has really happened ---the complete story.
2. Why (or how) did it happen? That is, what are the explanations.
3. What does it mean? That is, how to interpret it.
4. What next? That is, in the light of the present news what is expected to happen next.
5. What is beneath the surface? That is, to interpret an event.

Principles of reporting

Every news story should contain four essential elements-- accuracy, attribution of source, fairness and objectivity. These factors give credibility to a publication and at the same time demonstrate a reporter's sense of responsibility.

1. Accuracy

The facts in a story should be correct, down to the minutest detail. A reporter must be precise with every bit of the details of a story. Readers tend to judge a

newspaper's credibility by their own experiences with its record of accuracy. News stories with inaccuracies are a sign of a lazy reporter.

2. Attribution

Source identification should be as specific as possible. Use the person's name if possible, not merely a 'spokesperson'. A reporter should not invent news source or attribute information to such vague quarters like 'an informed source', 'a confidential observer' etc. The source from which a story's information is obtained must be clearly identified. Failure to do so makes a reporter's story suspect.

3. Fairness

News stories should be scrupulously fair in their presentation of information. They should never serve the vested interests of groups or individuals. When a person criticises the behavior or opinion of another in a story, basic fairness requires that a person criticised is given an opportunity to respond.

4. Objectivity

Writers should strive to keep their personal opinions out of a news story. In general readers are unable to detect the reporter's political beliefs, religious affiliations or social attitudes. Every reporter will have his/her personal beliefs, interests, and involvements but these should not be allowed to creep into the story. At times a reporter will cover events that run contrary to those personal concerns. In such cases, the reporter should work harder to achieve evenhandedness.

Before a reporter submits a story, read through it one more time and ask: "Is it accurate?, Does it have a proper attribution?, Is it fair? And is it objective?"

Module 1I

CONTENTS OF A NEWSPAPER

The contents of a newspaper can be broadly classified into four types namely news, features, advertisements and opinion pieces. Opinion pieces such as editorials, columns, letters to the editor, and reviews are views expressed by people within the organisation and outside.

1. NEWS

A few definitions of news are given below:

1. News may be defined as an accurate, unbiased account of the significant facts of a timely happening that is of interest to people.
2. News is any event, idea or opinion that is timely, that interests or affects a large number of people in a community and that is capable of being understood by them.
3. News is what the newspaper prints, electronic media broadcasts and new media publishes.
4. News may be defined as any fact or idea that will interest a large number of readers.

News determinants

What are the values and qualities that qualify an event, an issue or anything for that matter to be news? How do reporters/editors judge the news worthiness of an event, issue, statement? Some of the core values that determine news worthiness are given below.

1. **Impact/consequences** : An event that causes or is capable of causing great sequence of events affecting many persons is obviously newsworthy. Though all newsworthy events spell consequences, the extent and the degree of consequences add to the news value. If many people are affected, then the reporter knows that such an event is important enough for a news story.
2. **Conflict** : Most conflicts are newsworthy to some degree. Wars, murders and violent strikes receive space on the front page. Conflicts between political parties, between nations, between man and nature arouse reader interest.
3. **Disaster and tragedy** : The terrorist attacks on the Indian Parliament, Taj hotel in Mumbai, World Trade Centre in Washington; flood in Uttarakhand, Tsunami and the nuclear radiation in Japan, a super-cyclone killing thousands, a volcano eruption that brings in its wake death and destruction etc. are all newsworthy events.
4. **Proximity** : Proximity means nearness. An accident that takes place in Thiruvananthapuram is more newsworthy in Kerala than an accident of the same magnitude taking place in Bhubaneswar.
5. **Human interest** : These are news stories which appeal to one's feelings and emotions. A business millionaire donates a kidney, a twelve-year old girl who

ventures to cross the English Channel, a ragging incident that leads a student to commit suicide etc. are examples of human interest stories.

6. Novelty : Unusual events, actions or statements that make us stop and shake our heads in wonder or puzzlement are certainly newsworthy. A two-headed calf, a cat that walked 200 km to find its owner, a mother gives birth to five babies in delivery etc. are definitely newsworthy items.

7. Sex : This is of perennial interest to readers. Solar scandal involving Saritha Nair and allegation of sexual abuse against former Kerala minister Jose Thettayil etc. have occupied front page space in media.

8. Eminence and prominence : Names make news and bigger names make bigger news. There is an aura of news around prominent personalities. The visits, statements and even the silence of big names can make headlines.

9. Money : The budget (national, state, municipal) is news; so are levying fresh taxes, fall in commodity prices, salary hikes and economic crises.

10. The power elite: Stories concerning powerful individuals, organization or institutions will frequently appear in the media.

11. Celebrity values: Stories concerning people who are already famous. Disproportionate attention given by the media on Sachin Tendulkar, the coverage of Abhishek- Aishwarya marriage, the birth of baby Bachan are examples of celebrity news stories.

12. Miscellaneous values: The other news values include crime, religion, humour, weather, food, inventions etc.

The news values provide criteria for journalists to decide which stories are newsworthy and which are not. These values enable journalists to decide which stories are major ones and which are relatively insignificant.

TYPES OF NEWS

News stories can generally be divided into two types namely straight news and interpretative writing. A straight news story gives factual account of what has happened in a simple, direct, clear and accurate manner. *Interpretative news* stories report events in depth, give all sides of the event, provide background information and put new meaning into the events so that the reader can better understand and appreciate the event.

Straight news can be further classified into predictable and unpredictable news. Some news can be predicted or anticipated. Such news should be marked in advance by the Chief Reporter and assigned to reporters. The murder of a politician or a cabinet minister, collapse of a building, terrorist attacks, resignation of a minister, the theft of an idol from a famous temple etc. are incidents that are unpredictable.

Some scholars classify news into *hard* and *soft* news. Stories that fall in the hard news category report specific, tangible events such as fire, accident and death of a prominent person. News stories that provide explanations, analyses and interpretations are known as soft news.

PRINCIPLES OF REPORTING

Every news story should contain four essential elements— accuracy, attribution of source, fairness and objectivity.

a. Accuracy

The facts in a story should be correct, down to the minutest detail. A reporter must be precise with every bit of the details of a story. Readers tend to judge a newspaper's credibility by its record of accuracy.

b. Attribution

Source identification should be as specific as possible. The source from which a story's information is obtained must be clearly identified. Failure to do so makes a reporter's story suspect.

c. Fairness

News stories should be fair in their presentation of information. When a person criticises the behavior or opinions of another in a story, basic fairness requires that the person criticised must have an opportunity to respond.

d. Objectivity

Writers should strive to keep their personal opinions out of a news story. Every reporter will have his/her personal beliefs, interests, and involvement but these should not be allowed to creep into the story.

2. FEATURES

A feature can be defined as a story that stresses the human interest angle. A news story usually stops after it has presented facts or ideas but a feature story goes further than that. News is an objective and factual account of events where the reporter sticks to facts and tries to answer the six basic questions (who, what, where, when, why and how) which make a news story. The ultimate aim of a reporter is to give facts or information of interest to readers.

In the case of hijacking of a plane, the lead stories will focus on hard facts such as the number of passengers, the destination of the plane, the response of the government, the motives of the hijackers and the details of the crisis management. On the other hand, a feature writer can concentrate on the experiences, feelings, narrow escapes of passengers, the anxiety of the relatives of the passengers and crew. A feature could also be written on the laxity in screening and checking passengers and security lapses.

Writing style of a feature

The style followed in news writing is in the descending order of importance (inverted pyramid style). A feature follows an entirely different style. A feature writer has more freedom and he/she can freely react to situations, events and people with emotions and imagination

Depending upon the content, features can be classified into the following categories.

a. Profiles or Personality Features

Profiles describe interesting people. The people may have overcome a handicap, pursued an unusual career, achieved success or become famous because of their colorful personalities.

b. Historical Features

Historical features commemorate the dates of important events, such as the bombing of Hiroshima, assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, Tsunami tragedy and bombing of World Trade Centre.

c. Adventure Features

Adventure features describe unusual and exciting experiences, perhaps the story of someone who survived an airplane crash, climbed a dangerous mountain, sailed around the world, served in the peace keeping force or fought in a war.

d. Seasonal Features

Feature writers are often assigned topics about seasons and holidays: about Independence Day, teachers' day, Onam, November 1 and the opening day of schools.

e. Explanatory Features

Explanatory features are also called interpretative features. In these features, the writers provide a more detailed description or explanation of topics in the news

f. Unusual Occupation or Hobby Features

Reporters may write about an occupation because it is dangerous, highly specialized (cleaning up oil spills) or exciting (personal fitness trainer or a make-up artist to a movie star). They may also pick a boring or exacting job (sorting letters at a post office) that is fulfilling to a physically challenged worker because it allows him or her to earn money and live independently.

g. Personal Experience Features

News stories are usually written in the third person (he, she, it) with reporter being a neutral observer or outsider. Features stories can be written in the first person (I, we) with the journalist appearing in the story.

h. Human Interest Features

These deal with ordinary persons in extraordinary circumstances such as a construction worker winning five crore Onam bumper lottery or extraordinary persons in ordinary circumstances such the Chief Minister held up in traffic jam for three hours. They appeal to the emotions of readers.

3. EDITORIAL

A good editorial is a carefully constructed analytical essay in which the writer explains, interprets and appraises an event or public issue. An editorial provides an opportunity to a newspaper to present its viewpoints on a particular policy, programme or event.

It is not the chief editor who writes the daily editorials in newspapers. He/she may do it on very important occasions. Most newspapers have editorial writers who perform the task of writing editorials. These writers should know the newspaper's

policies so as to ensure that the viewpoints expressed in the editorials are not contradictory with such policies.

Types of editorials

The style of writing an editorial differs from newspaper to newspaper. Depending on the topics and significance of the events, editorials can be classified into the following types.

a) Interpretative editorial: This type of editorial enhances the reader's knowledge and understanding of an issue. It instructs and educates readers on a given topic, issue or event.

b) Action-oriented editorial: This type of editorial may suggest one or more course of action in a very strong language such as demanding the immediate roll back of the hike in petroleum products or withdrawal of the steep increase in the University examination fee. It may demand immediate action on the part of the public officials or exhort readers to take immediate action because of the gravity of the issue.

c) Critical editorial: The editorial writer will condemn a despicable act that has taken place. It could also be on the involvement of individuals, organisations or political parties in the execution of such nefarious acts.

d) Humorous editorial: This type of editorial is intended to lighten the seriousness of the editorial page and inject an element of amusement.

4. ARTICLE/COLUMN

An article is an elaborate piece of composition written on a topic. It is a well-documented and well-studied essay in which the writer expresses opinion on all aspects of a topic. Unlike features, an article is serious and its primary role is to inform, educate and shape opinions. An article is generally written in a sober style and the subject-matter is treated in a scholarly manner. Articles usually appear on the editorial page of a newspaper.

An article is an elaborate piece of writing based on study and research. There will be facts, figures and lot of statistics. The writer gives his/her views and conclusions after making a comprehensive study of the subject. Interpretative journalism falls under this category. An interpretative journalist may not go to the spot of the event but the analysis is based on his/her vast knowledge.

The terms article and column are used interchangeably in the media. A column can appear regularly in a publication under a common name. A person who writes the column is known as columnist.

5. INTERVIEW

An interview is a planned process of asking questions and seeking answers to gain more information and understanding. A reporter will have to interview several people while preparing news stories and features. Let us analyse the different types of interviews.

a. Interview for getting facts/ News interview

This type of interview is intended to give the reader expert comments and illuminations on a subject from persons directly or indirectly connected with the news item.

b. Interview for getting opinions/Symposium interviews

A reporter gathers opinions from several persons to convey a general idea about a topic. The interviewees need not be experts on the topic but ordinary citizens.

c. Personality interview

Personality interview is conducted to reveal the personality of an individual. The interviewer selects a person who is either a news worthy personality or has become newsworthy because of some awards or achievements.

Most reporters begin with an informal talk to establish a rapport with the interviewee. Then, the interviewer can move to a prepared set of questions. General questions should be asked at the beginning and difficult questions should be posed towards the end. The interviewer should listen carefully and verify the facts. Most interviews are presented in the question and answer format. A brief biographical sketch is given at the beginning and then the entire interview is reproduced or its excerpts. Another structure of the interview is in the form of a speech story giving important facts and quotes.

6. MIDDLE

A write-up that generally appears at the center of the editorial page, below the article and above the letters to the editor in a newspaper is known as middle. It is called so in journalistic jargon because middle is positioned in between two different types of opinion pieces on the same page.

The middle is usually a humorous, entertaining piece of writing. Mostly, it is a satire on unusual experiences or strange political developments. It may either deal with an off-beat or a topical subject or attempt to expose or ridicule certain policy, programme, activity etc. Middles are not mere fun and entertainment; they are also highly thought-provoking.

7. REVIEW

A review is a critical assessment of an art form or entertainment. A review should provide information, describe the work and express an opinion about it. A review is considered useful by many people. A favourable review usually attract people to the work and the vice versa. In the midst of so many art and entertainment, a critical assessment in the form of a review does a vital service to the audience.

Reviewers must write for their readers, not for the authors/directors whose work they are assessing. To do this, they must know who their readers are. Some magazines publish a brief review of a film or book and then give a five star rating (*****excellent, ****good, ***average, **below average, *poor). Some newspapers and magazine provide longer, more carefully argued reviews. A book review in *The Hindu* and *The Frontline*, for example, might run to 1,000 words of description, argument and opinion.

Module III

REPORTING PRACTICES

A newspaper will have scores of reporters assigned with the responsibility of covering various events, issues, organizations, celebrities etc. Thus, senior, mid-level, junior and trainee reporters are entrusted with the task of writing regular reports from various areas on a daily basis. Reporting in general takes three forms.

1. General assignment

General assignment reporters cover breaking news or feature stories as events and issues unfold. The editor or the bureau chief (senior most designation among the reporters) of a particular edition directly assigns these stories. These reports are covered from the spot where the events take place. For example a flash strike by private bus workers, a police lathi-charge on students picketing the roads or a political murder.

2. Beat reporting

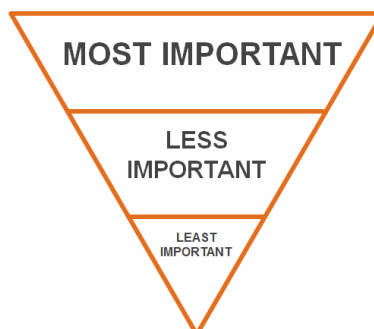
Beat reporters cover news and features in specific geographic or subject areas such as police stations, munsiff and district courts, universities, local bodies, political parties. These reporter come up with their own story ideas based on the inputs they get from a number of resources that they maintain. They usually write at least one story on their beat. Beats are one of the best methods to catch major news stories. This practice has become an accepted method all over the world. A person assigned with a beat is media organization's primary source of news from that area.

3. Speciality reporting

Speciality reporters cover breaking news and features in more specialised areas than the beat reporters such as environment, cultural programmes, information technology, law, foreign affairs, education and medicine. Specialist reporters generally do not cover spot news. But they have to analyse the roots of problems, the reasons behind the news, the possible solutions, and the future prospectus of the news events and developments.

Structure of a News Story

A news story is organized differently from any other type of writing. For example, an essay would begin with an introduction and then move on to the body and then end with a powerful conclusion. But a news story quickly conveys the main facts of a happening – the climax – and then relates the other facts in the order of diminishing importance. A diagram of the story would look something like this:



The main advantage of this type of writing is that it is easy to grasp the important points in the first few seconds of the reading. Let us analyse a typical story in a newspaper.

Abdul Ghani Lone shot dead

Srinagar, May 21 (UNI): Senior Hurriyat Conference leader Abdul Ghani Lone was today shot dead by unidentified gunmen at a rally here, dealing a severe blow to the voice of moderates among separatists.

One of Lone's gunmen was also killed in the attack while another injured, they said.

The shootout took place during a ceremony to mark the death anniversary of the father of senior Hurriyat leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and former Mirwaiz of Kashmir, Maulvi Mohammed Farooq, at Idgah ground in Old Srinagar city, they said. The attack was apparently carried out by two unidentified gunmen who appeared at the Idgah graveyard....

(The New Indian Express, Kozhikode)

Abdul Ghani Lone shot dead which appears in bold type is the headline. It is put at the head of the story and gives the reader an idea about the subject of the story.

Srinagar, May 21 is the 'dateline'. It tells the reader the place and date of the news story.

UNI is the 'creditline'. The newspaper has published this story which has been supplied by the news agency *United News of India*. By putting UNI the paper acknowledges the source of the news story and gives due credit. Sometimes the name of the reporter or correspondent appears below the headline: for example, *From John Mary, By K K Katyal* etc. It is termed byline in newspaper jargon.

The first paragraph of the story is called intro or lead. In the above example *Senior Hurriyat Conference leader Abdul Ghani Lone was today shot dead by unidentified gunmen at a rally here, dealing a severe blow to the voice of moderates among separatists* is the intro/lead.

The rest of the news is called the *body* of the news story. Intro/lead gives the most important information contained in the news story. A well written lead/ intro is a prerequisite of a good story.

Inverted pyramid style

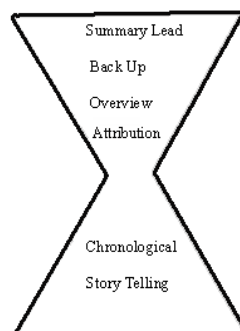
Newspapers also adopted the inverted-pyramid form because it summarises the news quickly. It gives readers the convenience of grasping the news of the day by simply skimming lead paragraphs. The form allows readers to decide whether they want to continue reading a story or leave it after any one of its paragraphs. An inverted pyramid can also be trimmed from the bottom, which makes it easier to fit it into the tight news holes of a newspaper.

The primary **advantage** of the inverted pyramid style is that it allows someone to stop reading a story after only one or two paragraphs. Doing so still allows that person to learn the story's most important details. The inverted pyramid style also ensures that all the facts are immediately understandable. It also helps the headline writer to grasp the essentials of the story more quickly. Moreover, if a story is too long, editors can easily delete one or more paragraphs from the end.

The inverted pyramid style has several **disadvantages**. First, because the lead summarises facts that later paragraphs discuss in greater detail, some of those facts may be repeated in the body. Second, a story that follows the inverted pyramid-style rarely contains any surprises; the lead immediately reveals every major details.

Hourglass style

Most stories are written in the traditional inverted pyramid. But there are alternatives to this style. In hourglass style, the reporter provides the major news in the first few paragraphs of the story. These paragraphs are presented in the inverted pyramid style. The reporter uses a turn, a transitional paragraph is introduced to explain the chronology of the events. The transitional paragraph may begin with: *police gave the following account of the accident, our correspondent gave the following account, the victim told the jury what happened* etc. The details presented are told in the chronological order.



Hourglass style is suitable for covering trials, accidents news, breaking news etc. *The Hindu* newspaper follows this style in some of their lead stories.

LEAD/INTRO

The first paragraph or two in a news story is called the lead. The lead is the most important part of a story and the most difficult part to write. It is the part of the story that attracts the reader and, if it is well-written can arouse readers' interest. It should tell the reader the point of the story, not hide the subject with unnecessary or misleading words and phrases. The important types of leads are listed below.

1. Summary leads

A summary lead, generally in no more than 35 words, tells an audience the most important of the six primary elements of an event, the five W's and H. Reporters look for these six elements whenever they cover a news event. The most important of the six elements go into a summary lead.

2. Narrative lead

A *narrative lead* is the most popular lead on features and non-breaking news stories. It draws people into a story by putting them, suddenly, in the middle of the action. It should entice a person to continue reading.

3. Contrast leads

A *contrast lead* compares or contrasts one person or thing with another, or several people or things with one another. These “old and new”, “short and tall” or “yesterday and today” leads tell an audience the way something was and now is. They can be used on any type of news or feature story.

4. Staccato leads

A *staccato lead* is made up of a short burst of phrases that carry an audience into a story by dangling some of its key elements in front of them. It is meant to tease readers and to set the mood for the story, as in these examples:

Friday. The night the music stopped. The first day of his prison term. 3,649 to go.

5. Question leads

Lead that asks a question. The key to writing a question lead is to answer the question as quickly as possible

Sweating? The mercury is to go up sharply in the days to come.

6. Direct address lead

In a *direct-address lead*, the news or feature writer communicates directly with the audience by using the word *you* in the lead. These leads give writers an opportunity to reach out to their audience, to include them as individuals in a story.

Beware if you are above 40. One out five Indians suffer from serious respiratory ailments, revealed a study conducted by...

7. Quote leads

A *quote lead* allows a central character to begin a news or feature story by talking directly to the audience. The quotation may be the most powerful one in the story, or it may set the tone for what is to follow.

‘I will not resign’, declared the CM.

SOURCES OF NEWS

A newspaper will have hundreds of news stories each day comprising international, national, state and local news. Besides such straight news, there will also be features, opinion pieces such as columns, reviews, middles, articles etc. How does a newspaper gather all these stories from across the world?

We cannot pinpoint someone or something as the source of news. We have seen ordinary mortals becoming great heroes all of a sudden. Similarly, great men and women have become fallen heroes and heroines instantly. Unknown places become a hotbed of news stories. There are numerous sources of news for newspaper organization. These are briefly explained below.

Reporters are the primary sources of news for a newspaper. Vast majority of the news that appear on a newspaper are reports filed by the newspaper’s own

correspondents. They are the foot soldiers of a newspaper. Their reports become news to millions of reading public.

News agencies are professional organizations that collect and distribute news to the newspapers. All the news that is printed in a newspaper is not gathered by its reporters. A major source of news for a newspaper is news agencies or wire agencies.

Electronic and new media namely television channels, radio stations and websites, are also a source of news for a newspaper.

Press release is an important source of news for newspapers. Press conferences and meet the press are important sources of news.

Parliament, legislatures and civic bodies when in session become major sources of news. Important decisions are announced, debated and voted in these assemblies. Courts also are sources of news. Proceedings of sensational cases and important judgments by High Courts and Supreme Court come in the news.

Conferences, meetings, seminars,, symposia etc. are also sources of news. Important decisions can be announced in such meetings. Similarly, research findings and discoveries could be put forward in such meetings.

Internet has become an important online source for all media professionals. Police stations, fire stations, party headquarters, medical colleges, universities etc. are also news sources. For an alert and committed journalist anything and anybody could be a potential source of news.

PRINCIPLES OF TRANSLATION

Translation is the communication of the meaning of a source-language text by means of an equivalent target-language text. Source language/text is the language or text that is translated into another. The language into which a text is translated is target language. The word *translation* derives from the Latin *translatio* which means "to carry across" or "to bring across".

Qualities of a good reporter

- a) Good knowledge of the language, written and spoken, from which they are translating (the source language);
- b) Excellent command of the language into which they are translating (the target language);
- c) Familiarity with the subject matter of the text being translated;
- d) Profound understanding of the etymological and idiomatic correlates between the two languages.

Translating stories for mass media

Media professionals constantly require translating news stories for their target publications. Journalists, unlike professional translators, translate against impossible deadlines. But the inherent hurry should not lead them to Himalayan blunders. In the Indian context, most news stories reach the mass media in English from the leading news agencies. These news reports require translation into regional languages without affecting the sense and accuracy.

Translation for media has some peculiarity that distinguishes it from fiction translation. A newspaper report basically expresses facts, communicates information, therefore relatively easy to translate as far as the construction and style are concerned. It is not so when it comes to translating literary works. News translation requires skill and craft. A news translator should have the qualities of a news editor. While translating news, we should keep the rhythm of news language in the target language. The translated text should be simple, clear, easy to understand, concise and matching with the news writing styles.

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

Writing of any news story calls for investigation, analyses and verification of facts. Investigative journalism is popularly known as a branch that specialises in uncovering big misdeeds and misuse of power. It is nothing but uncovering of scandals for the readers which some people hide as top secrets. It is a rigorous, challenging and strenuous task for the journalist who undertakes such investigation.

Investigative journalism in India really began after the Emergency period. Several people describe Arun Shourie as the first real investigative journalist in India. Aswini Sarin, Arun Sinha, Sucheta Dalal, Chitra Subramaniam and N. Ram were the important investigative journalist of yesteryears.

The Pioneer reporter J. Gopikrishnan, a journalist from Kerala, is credited with exposing the 2G spectrum scandal which is termed as the biggest corruption scandal in India so far. Similarly, it was *The Outlook* and *Open Magazine* which dared to publish the Niira Radio transcripts that established the unholy nexus between corporate business houses and high ranking media personnel. Julian Assange's WikiLeaks provided the online possibility of posting several thousands of secret documents of governments and banks.

STING OPERATION

A sting operation can be defined as an operation designed to catch a person committing a crime by means of deception. In a general sense, sting operation is an information-gathering exercise where facts are not easy to obtain by simple requests and searches.

The concept of sting operation in India is rather new. It really began with the Tehelka expose in 2001 where the hidden cameras unearthed corruption in defense deals.

Positive and negative sting operations

Sting operations can be classified as positive or negative. Positive sting operation results awareness in society. It is carried out in public interest. Due to positive sting operation society is benefited because it makes government and other entities more responsible and accountable.

Sting operations on ultra-sound centres that illegally conduct sex determination tests, Tehelka operation that trapped top politicians and army officers taking bribes from journalists posing as businessmen, cash for questions in Parliament are some of the examples of positive sting operations.

On the other hand negative sting operations do not benefit society, but they do harm the society and individuals. It unnecessarily violates the privacy of the individual without any benefits to society. These types of sting operations will obstruct the freedom of the individuals and restrict their rights.

A sting operation was carried out by *Live India*, a local TV channel in New Delhi, which claimed to have exposed a sex racket run by a government school teacher Uma Khurana by tempting her pupils into prostitution. But this news turned out to be completely fabricated, fake and distorted.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS AGENCIES

News agency, also called press agency/wire service/news service is an organization that gathers, writes, and distributes news from around a nation or the world to newspapers, periodicals, radio and television broadcasters, government agencies, and other users. It does not itself publish news but supplies news to its subscribers. All of the mass media depend upon news agencies for the bulk of the news, including the big newspapers and broadcast media that have extensive news gathering resources of their own.

The basic function of a news agency is to collect and distribute reports, photographs and video clippings of current events to newspapers, magazines, television channels, radio stations and other subscribers. News agencies set up their offices, communication networks and appoint correspondents in important cities around the world. The agencies' coverage should be fast, complete and accurate as well as fair, objective and unbiased.

A brief history and working of the important news agencies are given below.

1. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE (AFP)

AFP, a French cooperative news agency, is the third largest news services in the world after AP, and Reuters. It is based in Paris where it was founded under its current name in 1944. In addition to having bureaus in major French cities, it has bureaus and correspondents in important world capitals. Besides having contracts with AP, Reuters, and TASS for exchange of news reports, it sells domestic French news reports to most of the world's news agencies and also provides its worldwide reports to many of them. AFP also has a photo service and a number of specialized news reports, several concerned with African matters.

2) THE ASSOCIATED PRESS (AP)

The Associated Press (AP) is one of the largest news-gathering services in the world. AP distributes international, regional and local news to media everywhere.

The Associated Press offers daily reports, features, photographs and graphics. Its photographs are sent digitally via satellites. Six New York city newspapers founded the Associated Press in 1848. They began the service to save money on the gathering of news by telegraph. Today, the Associated Press has about 230 news bureaus worldwide. Its headquarters is in New York. AP's service is available in English, German, Swedish, Dutch, French, and Spanish.

3. REUTERS

Reuters' services are available in more than 150 countries and it has bureaus in 100 countries. Reuters was one of the first news services to furnish financial, political and general news to European newspapers.

Reuters was founded in London in 1851 by Paul Julius Reuter. In 1849, Reuter began the operation by using pigeons to carry news between the terminal points of telegraph lines at the borders of Germany, Belgium and France.

The Reuters news agency was an independent company, Reuters Group until 2008. The Thomson Corporation took over Reuters Group in 2008 and it became a part of Thomson Reuters. It transmits news in English, French, Arabic, Spanish, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Japanese and Chinese.

Reuters' association with India began from its inception. The first newspaper to publish Reuters' news in India was *The Bombay Times* (later became *The Times of India*). Reuters' operation in India began on March 21, 1866 with Bombay as its headquarters.

4. UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL (UPI)

UPI is one of largest privately owned news agencies in the world. It distributes news, photographs, television news, radio news and cable television news programmes to about 6000 subscribers. Its clients included newspapers, radio and television stations, news magazines and cable television stations in more than 100 countries. During its heyday UPI had more than 230 bureaus worldwide. UPI functioned internationally till 1980. Now its major business is confined to the US.

5. ITAR-TASS

TASS is the acronym for TELEGRAFNOE AGENTSVO SOVETSKOVO SOYUZA (Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union), the official news agency of the Soviet Union from 1925 to 1991. TASS was one of the world's major international wire services, distributing news throughout the Soviet Union and around the world.

Following the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, TASS was reorganized into two branches: the Information Telegraph Agency of Russia, or ITAR, reporting news of Russia; and the Telegraph Agency of the Countries of the Commonwealth or TASS, reporting news of the other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Other major international news agencies

- 1. DPA (Deutsche Presse Agentur)** is a German news agency, mainly serving the German speaking regions.
- 2. EFE** : This is a Spanish news agency with its headquarters in Madrid. It has close links and influence in Latin America where Spanish is one of the major languages.
- 3. NCNA**: China's Xinhua News Agency is also known as the New China News Agency (NCNA). It was founded in 1931. It has four regional offices in the Pacific region, Latin America, Africa and West Asia. Presently, it has branches in 100 countries.
- 4. Kyodo**: It is the major news agency in Japan.

Other major news agencies include the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) of Iran, Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associatea (ANSA) of Italy, Caribbean News Agency (CANA), Ghana News Agency (GNA), Inter Press Services (IPS) of South America, Middle East News Agency (MENA) and the Panafrican News Agency (PANA) of Senegal.

INDIAN NEWS AGENCIES

1) Press Trust of India (PTI)

Press Trust of India, the leading news agency in the country, is a nonprofit cooperative of newspapers. Established on August 27, 1947, this news agency took over the Associated Press of India (API) and the Indian operations of Reuters and began operations from February 1, 1949.

PTI offers its news service in English and Hindi. Subscribers to this agency include 450 newspapers in India and scores abroad. All major television and radio channels including BBC, London receive PTI service. It has 150 bureaus across the country and has a staff of about 2,000 writers spread across the nation. For international news, it maintains 30 correspondents and stringers around the world.

2) United News of India (UNI)

The United News of India (UNI) was registered as a company on November 10, 1959 and began its news operations from March 21, 1961. At the time of UNI's foundation, it was sponsored by a group of 40 leading newspapers of India including *The Statesman*, *The Times of India*, *The Hindu*.

The administrative headquarters of UNI is in New Delhi. UNI has offices in all the major cities and towns of India, including all the state capitals. In order to keep pace with the latest developments, it has more than 325 staff journalists around the country and more than 250 stringers, covering news events from remote corners.

51% stake in UNI was bought by Zee TV in 2006. Media West, one of the associates of Zee TV, bought the shares of UNI for Rs. 32 crores. UNI has been going through a phase of financial crisis.

Module 1V

EDITING PROCESS

The sub-editor who plays a key role in the editing process has been described as *the midwife to the story, the most useful person in the newspaper and the unsung hero of a newspaper*.

The various steps involved in the editing process are briefly explained below. It is based on Floyd K. Baskette et al in their book *The Art of Editing*. Since editing is carried out by sub-editors at the desk, the following steps are basically their responsibilities.

1. Ensuring accuracy

Good reporting is a key ingredient in ensuring accuracy. But all who edit the story too share this responsibility. Sub-editors ensure accuracy by checking and rechecking the facts and if needed they would seek clarifications from the reporters about the information in a story. Carelessness can lead to blunders and embarrassing mistakes. These can greatly tarnish the reputation of a newspaper.

2. Trimming unnecessary words

Unnecessary words, adjectives and adverbs should be trimmed. If an event is *very interesting*, it is sufficient to say it is *interesting*. Meaningless phrases should also be trimmed. For example the following phrases could be replaced with the words given in brackets: a great number of times (often), a small number of (few), at regular intervals of time (regularly), made an investigation of (investigated), placed its seal of approval (approved) etc.

3. Protecting and polishing the language

Editing involves polishing the language. An editor should have a thorough knowledge of the grammar and the language usages. He/she plays a major role in protecting the language against abuse. People at the desk should know how to spell, to make certain a story is written in proper language, to reorganise and clarify passages and protect the meaning of words. Clear writing, correct spelling and grammar contribute to better communication of ideas.

4. Correcting inconsistencies

Inconsistencies within the story should be detected and corrected. Inconsistencies in story can confuse the reader. For example: *INSAT - IA launched in 1982 ended its life prematurely. But INSAT - IA launched in 1983 was a grand success.* The sub-editor should detect the mistake that INSAT- 1A cannot be launched twice. In the second sentence *INSAT-1A* should be corrected as *INSAT-1B*. If superlatives cannot be checked they can be softened. *The most despicable crime in the world* is to be changed to *One of the most despicable crimes in the world.....*

5. Making the story conform to style

The word 'style' in newspaper jargons refers to the consistency provided by rules of usage in a newspaper. Newspapers adhere to rules of style to avoid inconsistencies that would annoy the reader. Adherence to style rules gives the newspaper a sense of consistency that would be absent if *goodbye* were used in one story and *goodby* in the next.

6. Eliminating libellous statements

Libel is a written defamation. The sub editor must know the libel laws of the country. Libellous/ defamatory statements should be eliminated. It is the duty of the sub-editor to ensure that the stories are free from such statements.

7. Eliminating passages in poor taste

Some newspapers have policies banning profanity of any types. Other permit the use of some words but not others. For example, reputed newspapers by convention will not publish the victim's names and other identities in a story on rape.

8. Make the story readable and complete

A story that is readable and complete has the following characteristics.

- a) It is precise.
- b) It is clear.
- c) It has a pace appropriate to the content
- d) It uses transitional devices that lead the reader from one thought to the next.
- e) It appeals to the reader's senses.

9. Writing attractive headlines

A copy editor's first task is to correct and refine copy. A second task is to write headline that attracts reader's attention, summarises the story, depicts the mood of the story and helps the tone of the newspaper.

10. Editing pictures and designing pages

An important step in the editing process is the packaging of news stories in a page. Designing the page helps the reader to read faster and read more of what is written. The packaging or designing of a newspaper is considered as important as its contents.

Quality of writing primarily depends upon a reporter, but a sub-editor can improve writing. Good editing complements good writing. Occasionally good editing can save mediocre writing. Poor editing can make it worse or destroy it. It is said, 'an excellent staff without a copydesk might produce a fair newspaper. A mediocre staff with a competent copydesk can produce an acceptable newspaper. But an excellent staff, backed by an excellent desk, guarantees an excellent newspaper.'

WRITING HEADLINES

Headlines are words and phrases printed in large types over each story in a newspaper or magazine. The size of the headline varies with the importance attributed to news. The headline can stretch over all column of a newspaper, if the report is on a very important topic. Such headlines are called ribbon or streamer in newspaper jargons. Many readers read only the headlines as these give a basic idea of the contents of a newspaper. Besides, headlines can be read without much strain on a moving train or bus.

Reporters gather news and then sub-editors correct and refine the copy. Writing headline for a news story is an essential task of the editing process. A sub-editor should write headline that:

- 1) Attracts reader's attention.
- 2) Summarises the story.
- 3) Helps the reader index the contents of the page.
- 4) Depicts the mood of the story.
- 5) Helps set the tone of the newspaper.
- 6) Provides a better layout to a newspaper.

A headline that stretches across all columns of a newspaper is called a banner, streamer or ribbon. Reputed newspapers will not display such headlines on every day. They will display such headlines only on deserving occasions. Headline that appears above the nameplate of a newspaper is called a skyline. This type of headline appears on very rare occasions.

Types of headlines

Styles of headlines, like fashion, change constantly, even though their functions remain the same. Early newspapers' first news display lines were short and slender. It was nothing more than a topical label like: *Latest from Europe, Latest from warfront, Palace News, etc.* Then there were multi-deck headlines in most newspapers. The more the deck, the more important is the story.

Multi-deck headlines were common in Malayalam newspapers as well. More decks implied that the stories were important. Presently, multi-deck headlines are out of fashion. It consumes more time to write and reduces the newsprint space. Single deck headlines are the present style in most newspapers. By adding, more lines or by varying the length of the lines, designers have created the hanging indentation, inverted pyramid and the pyramid style of headlines.

The headlines that stretches across all columns of a newspaper is called a banner, streamer or ribbon. Reputed newspapers will not display such headlines on every day. They will display such headlines only on deserving occasions. Headline that appears above the name plate of a newspaper is called a skyline. This type of headline appears on very rare exceptional occasions.

WRITING CAPTIONS

A caption is more of a label, telling readers what the photograph or graphic shows. Photo captions also have a different purpose from headlines. Instead of summarizing content the way a headline does, a caption helps the reader appreciate what's inside the visual frame. The photograph and caption together form a small story that the reader can understand without having to read the text of the story that accompanies it.

NEWSPAPER LAYOUT

Keeping pace with the modern trends in fashion and design, the newspapers have begun to change and adopt contemporary design concepts. It is not enough to

fill the pages with news stories and pictures but it should attract and appeal to the readers. Newspaper layout has come to play an important role.

According to Floyd. K. Baskette et al in their book *The Art of Editing* opine that when a newspaper arranges news, pictures and the other stories on a page, they are packaging their product. There is a great similarity between editors' and manufactures' packages. Both use the package as a convenient means of conveying contents to consumers and both use the package as a means of helping consumers use the product. An editor's goal in packaging (layout) is to help the reader read faster and read more of what has been written on all pages.

The objectives of layout

1. Layout is done primarily to facilitate readership. The foremost in planning a page is the goal of making every page easy to read.
2. Newspapers are in competition with dynamic media such as television and radio. Hence there is a need to make the pages more attractive.
3. Layout in a newspaper should reflect the contemporary design found outside the newspaper.
4. Layout in a newspaper should be more exciting to the readers than ever before.
5. A newspaper should be attractive both as a visual art medium and as a modern package because beauty for its own sake is one of the most important values in a consumer society.

The means of achieving the above objectives are through the application of artistic principles of design and layout. There are four guiding principles in the layout process.

a. Balance

Balance means equilibrium. That is, a page should not be overwhelmingly heavy on one section or extremely light in another. Balance in a newspaper is achieved by visually weighing an element on a page with another on the opposite side of the page using the optical centre as a fulcrum.

b. Contrast

Contrast is the principle of using at least two or more elements on a page, each of which is dramatically different from the other. The page is made to appear lively and interesting, as one element is different from the other. Indiscriminate use of contrast is undesirable. If the page has too much contrast it is likely to cause uneasiness to readers. Contrast may be achieved by four general ways: by shape, size, weight and direction.

c. Proportion

Proportion is the principle of comparative relationships. In a newspaper design the length of one line may be compared with the length of another or the shape of one story with the shapes of others or the width of a photograph with its depth. The goal of the layout is to create pages in which the proportion of the various elements are pleasing to the eyes.

d. Unity

The principle of unity concerns the effect of a page layout that creates a single impression rather than multiple impressions. Stories on a page that has unity appear as if each contributes a significant share to the total page layout

Pagination

Pagination may be described as the process of producing good page layouts for a given material. Newspaper pagination includes two main sub-tasks: (1) distributing the given material to a range of pages and (2) preparing the presentation of the material, i.e. the *page layout*.

In other words it is the process of dividing the content into pages electronically. Before the arrival of information technology (IT), pagination was a manual process, and print output was its sole purpose. Every instance of a pagination decision was made by individuals at the newspaper office. Today, many of such decisions are made by machines.

Over the years software developers continuously refine the software programmes to increase the quality. Some of the commonly used software for the newspaper pagination are PageMaker, QuarkXPress, InDesign etc.

SYLLABUS & SCHEME
NEWS REPORTING AND EDITING

Module I : Organizational structure of a newspaper: business, mechanical and editorial departments - editorial hierarchy - departmental chart - responsibilities and qualities of chief editor, managing editor, assistant editor, news editor, bureau chief, chief sub-editors, chief photographers, reporters and sub-editors.

Module-II : Contents of a newspaper: news - definitions of news - types of news - news determinants; features - definition and types of features - articles - middles - advertorials - editorials - interviews - reviews - profiles and columns.

Module III : Reporting practices: organizational hierarchy of a news bureau - chief reporter, special correspondent, foreign correspondent - news story structure - headlines - lead and body - inverted pyramid style - hour glass style - types of reporting: general assignments, beats and specialties - principles of reporting - cultivating news sources - national and international news agencies - investigative journalism - sting operation - new trends in the field of reporting - principles of translation.

Module IV : Process of editing: general principles of editing - writing headlines subheads and captions - design and pagination - pagination softwares.

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