

# CIVICS

## Chapter 6: UNDERSTANDING MEDIA



## UNDERSTANDING MEDIA

Media is the plural form of the word 'medium'. It refers to all the means of communication, everything ranging from a pamphlet to satellites. Television, radio and newspapers are called the mass media as they reach millions of people, cutting across the boundaries of countries.

### Technological Advancements in Media

- Means of communications have changed in the recent past due to the advancement of technology.
- Due to a constant change in technology, the medium of communications has also changed and become innovative.
- Mass media such as television, radio and newspapers are able to reach out to millions of people due to the technologies which are used by them.
- Newspapers and magazines are called **print media** as they are portable and lightweight publications printed on papers.
- Television and radio are called electronic media as they are electronic items and the related technology is required to access these mediums. Television has been one of the products of technological advancement.
- Technology plays a big role in making the means of communication more accessible to the people. Electronic media have seen a considerable improvement in the quality of sound and images as a result of technological innovations.
- Technological innovations have changed the lives of millions of people.



Print Media



Electronic Media

Following are the advantages of television



### Inflow of Money in the Media

- The technology used in media is extremely expensive. For example, while broadcasting news, a television studio has a news reader, makeup artists, cameramen, sound recorders, transmission satellites etc. This means that many employees need to be paid.
- As technology keeps on changing, a large amount of money is spent on acquiring the latest technologies. As a result, mass media requires huge sums of money. Thus, many television channels and newspapers are a part of big business houses.
- One of the major sources from where mass media make money is through the advertisements of various products. Products are advertised in order to influence people into buying them.



Advertisements are a major source of earning for the media

### Media and Democracy

Media play a very important role in a democracy.

- It provides people with information about the working of the government.
- Through media, citizens learn about various laws and Acts which are passed by the government.
- Based on the news reported by the media, people may organise protests, start a signature campaign and hold rallies to oppose any oppressive laws passed by the government.



Media play an important role in shaping the public opinion

- Media sees to it that the government does not abuse its power.
- It acts as a link between the government and the people.
- Through all the above measures, media can force the government to reconsider its decisions.
- Media decides the stories which have to be focused upon. It sets the agenda as it focuses on an issue, widely publicises it and brings it to the attention of the people. It influences the thinking process of the people.
- It plays an important role in framing public opinion.
- In the past, media has drawn the attention of the people to many issues. One such issue was the increase in the levels of pesticides in aerated drinks.
- However, media also fails to highlight some essential issues. For example, many areas in our country do not get clean drinking water. Media over the years has not highlighted this issue as it should have been.

### Balanced Reporting

It is very important for the media to provide balanced reporting to the people. A balanced report is one in which all aspects of a news story are discussed and the readers are left to arrive to their own conclusions. A balanced report is never judgmental.

The media is able to present balanced reporting only when it is independent and not under the control of any authority. However, media is not always independent. This is because of the following reasons:

- The government has a sizable control over the media.
- The government may censor some news. When the government prevents a news item, scenes of a movie or the lyrics of a song from being published or shared with the public, it is known as  **censorship**.
- The emergency was promulgated in 1975-77 by the government, during which it censored many news items.
- However, today we find that government generally does not censor any news items though it does censor films. Despite this, we find the absence of balanced reporting.
- According to various researches, balanced reporting is absent in media because many news channels are controlled by business houses. Thus, they try to use these channels in

the interests of their business.

- Media gets money through advertisements. Hence it usually does not report against those people who give them the advertisements.
- People need to think from various angles before forming an opinion about any issue. It is important to focus on the areas as to who has written an article? Who gets benefited from this news? Who is being neglected in the news item and why? It is only after pondering over these points that we should form our opinion over any news item.

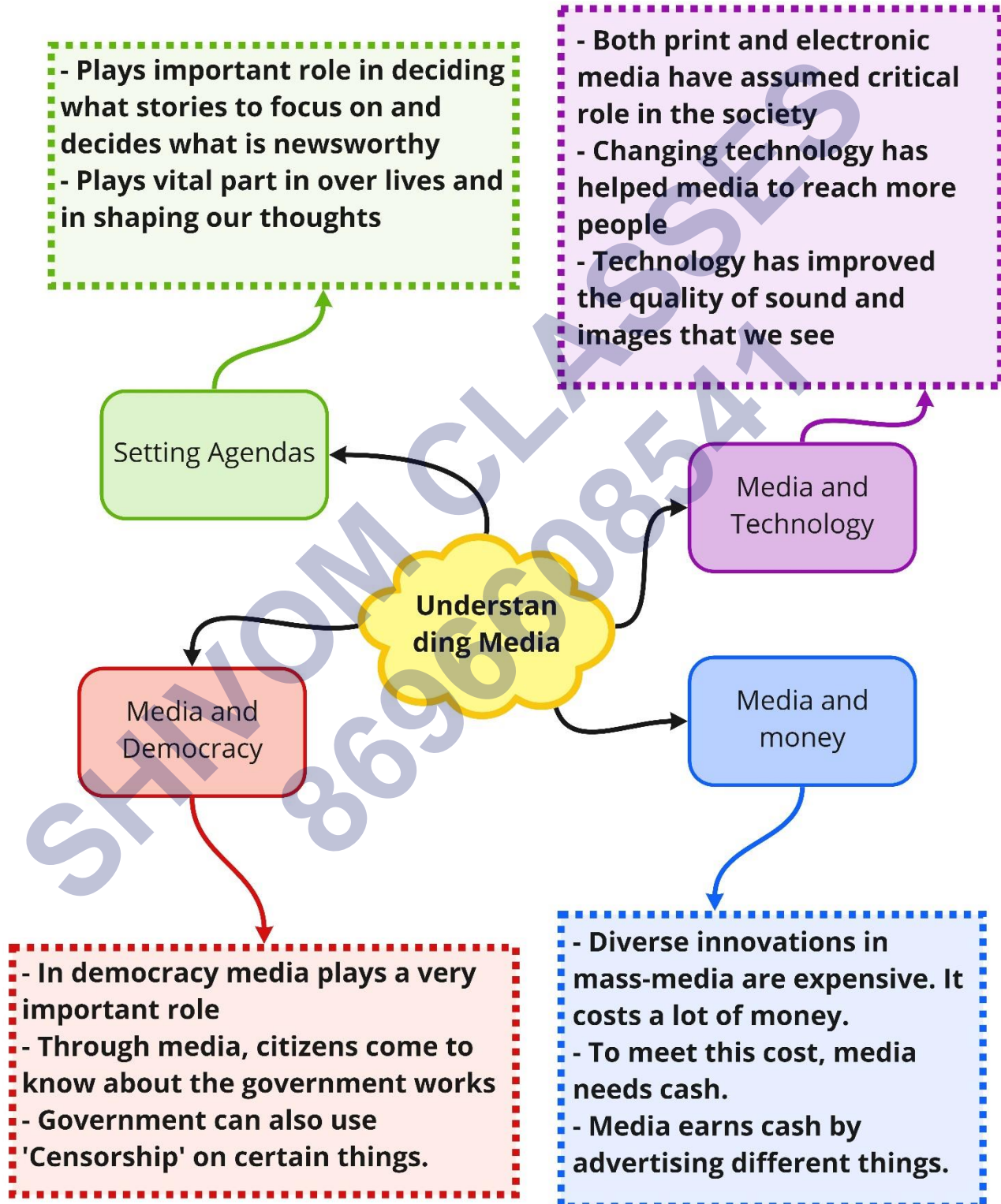
### Local Media

- Many people have realised that the media are not interested in covering the lives of ordinary people. Hence, several local groups have started their own media.
- They have made use of the radio, started several local newspapers and published many newsletters which focus on the local problems.
- Many organisations use the community radio and advise farmers about the quality of seeds and fertilisers. They also make documentary films on the hardships suffered by the poor communities.
- Khabar lahariya is a newspaper which is run by eight Dalit women in the Chitrakoot District of Uttar Pradesh. The news paper is written in the bundeli language and focuses on cases of corruption and violence against women.



Khabar lahariya has played an important role in highlighting the local issues in the Chitrakoot District of Uttar Pradesh

Class : 7th Social Studies (Political Science)  
Chapter - 6 : Understanding Media



## Important Questions

### ➤ Multiple Choice Questions:

Question 1. Television was invented by:

- (a) J.L. Baird
- (b) Dr. Alexander Graham Bell
- (c) Isaac newton

Question 2. Khabar Leahriya is a:

- (a) Magazine
- (b) Newspaper
- (c) Novel

Question 3. Media is often controlled by:

- (a) Government
- (b) Prime minister
- (c) Business houses

Question 4. Which of the following comes under print media?

- (a) Phone
- (b) TV
- (c) Newspaper

Question 5. Television, radio and newspaper are called:

- (a) Mass media
- (b) Print media
- (c) Local media

Question 6. what is one positive aspect of television?

- (a) Enabled people to waste their money
- (b) Enabled ourselves as member of larger global world
- (c) Enabled people to spend their time
- (d) None of these

Question 7. what do you mean by mass media?

- (a) Television

- (b) Radio
- (c) Both a and b
- (d) None of these

Question 8. what is Khabar Lahriya?

- (a) Local magazine
- (b) Story book
- (c) Local newspaper
- (d) None of these

Question 9. Between which period's media was censored in India?

- (a) 1990-1992
- (b) 1975-1977
- (c) 1952-1954
- (d) 1978-1979

Question 10. Which of these is a part of print media?

- (a) T.V.
- (b) Radio
- (c) Newspaper
- (d) None of these

Question 11. Which is the local newspaper written in bundeli?

- (a) Times of India
- (b) Dainik paper
- (c) Khabar Lahriya
- (d) None of these

Question 12. Who was the inventor of mechanical television?

- (a) John Michael
- (b) John L. Baird
- (c) Gutenberg
- (d) None of these

Question 13. what is the consequences of the media setting the agenda by reporting on the fashion week rather than the slum demolitions?



- (a) To earned a huge amount of money
- (b) To earn the confidence
- (c) To earn the sympathy of people
- (d) None of these

Question 14. Why is it necessary for media to be independent?

- (a) To earn salary
- (b) To encourage company
- (c) To write balanced report
- (d) None of these

Question 15. what do you mean by factual information?

- (a) Information about completed issue
- (b) Information about issue that is often not complete
- (c) Information about future topics
- (d) None of these

➤ **Fill in the blanks:**

1. One way in which the mass media earns money is by \_\_\_\_\_ different things.
2. Changing technology or machines help ..... to reach more people.
3. Media is the plural of the word \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Electronic typewriter in journalism was invented in \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Media uses advertising as a tool to raise \_\_\_\_\_.

➤ **Write true (T) or false (F):**

1. The technology that mass media uses keeps changing.
2. An independent media means that government should control and influence its coverage of news.
3. Since TV time costs so much money, only those programmes that can attract the maximum number of viewers are shown.
4. The print media offers a large variety of information to suit the tastes of different readers.

➤ **Very Short Questions:**

1. Name various forms of communication.

2. What does the word 'media' mean?
3. Mention any one positive aspect of television.
4. Mention one way in which the mass media earns money.
5. Why are some advertisements shown repeatedly on the television screen?
6. What are the various ways through which people express their dissatisfaction to any of the government's decision which does not go in their favour?
7. What do you mean by a balanced report?
8. Why is it necessary for media to be independent?
9. Why does media sometimes focus on a particular aspect of a story?
10. What does media's close relationship with business often mean?

### ➤ Short Questions:

1. How television is like a 'window on the world'?
2. What do you found most useful about internet?
3. What do you mean by 'public protest'?
4. What is an independent media?
5. What is mass media?

### ➤ Long Questions:

1. In what ways does the media play an important role in a democracy?
2. How does technology affect the media industry?
3. Can you give this diagram a title? What do you understand about the link between media and big business from this diagram?
4. You have read about the ways in which the media 'sets the agenda'. What kind of effect does this have in a democracy? Provide two examples to support your point of view.
5. How can we say that media is far from freedom?

### ANSWER KEY –

### ➤ Multiple Choice Answer:

1. (a) J.L. Baird
2. (b) Newspaper
3. (c) Business houses

4. (c) Newspaper
5. (a) Mass media
6. (b) Enabled ourselves as member of larger global world
7. (c) Both a and b
8. (c) Local newspaper
9. (b) 1975-1977
10. (c) Newspaper
11. (c) Khabar Lahriya
12. (b) John L. Baird
13. (a) To earned a huge amount of money
14. (c) To write balanced report
15. (b) Information about issue that is often not complete

➤ **Fill in the blanks:**

1. advertising
2. media
3. medium
4. 1940
5. revenue

➤ **Write true (T) or false (F):**

1. True
2. False
3. True
4. True

➤ **Very Short Answer:**

1. Radio, television, newspapers, Internet.
2. Radio, television, newspapers, Internet and several other forms of communication are collectively known as media.
3. Television has enabled us to think of ourselves as members of a larger global world.
4. The mass media earns money by advertising different things like cars, clothes, tea, etc.

5. Same advertisements are shown repeatedly on the television screen just to make people's mind to go out and buy what is advertised.
6. They do so by writing letters to the concerned minister, organising a public protest, starting a signature campaigns and asking the government to rethink its programme, etc.
7. A balanced report is one that discusses all points of view of a particular story and then leaves it to the readers to make up their minds.
8. Only then media can write a balanced report.
9. It is because media believes that this will make the story interesting.
10. It means that media will fail to give a balanced report.

### ➤ Short Answer:

1. Television is like a 'window on the world' because a lot of our impressions about the world around us are formed by what we see on TV.
2. We always get the latest information on internet as we can read latest news and gain knowledge about the latest products within minutes of their release.
3. When a large number of people come together and openly state their opposition to some issue is termed as public protest. Organising a rally, starting a signature campaign, blocking roads etc. are some of the ways in which this is done.
4. An independent media means that no one should control and influence its coverage of news. No one should tell the media what can be included and what should not be included in a news story.
5. TV, radio and newspapers are a form of media that reaches millions of people, or the masses, across the country and the world and, thus, they are called mass media.

### ➤ Long Answer:

1. **Role of media in a democracy:**
  - i. In a democracy, the media plays a very important role in providing news and discussing events taking place in the country and the world. It is on the basis of this information that citizens can, for example, learn how government works.
  - ii. It also criticizes the unpopular policies and programme of the government.
  - iii. It forms the public opinion.
  - iv. It raises issues and problem related to common people.
  - v. It also acts as reminder for the government about their promises.
2. Changing technology, or machines, and making technology more modern, help media to

reach more people. It also improves the quality of sound and the images that we see. But technology does more than this. It also changes the ways in which we think about our lives. For example, today it is quite difficult for us to think of our lives without television. Television has enabled us to think of ourselves as members of a larger global world. Television images travel huge distances through satellites and cables. This allows us to view news and entertainment channels from other parts of the world.

**3. The title can be 'Media and Big business houses'.**

From this diagram it is clear that some big business houses have their own television channels and newspapers. They show news of interest to the people on television and newspaper and advertise their own product in between. Independent media houses also advertise product of big business houses to make money. As a result, most television channels and newspapers are part of big business houses. People buy these advertised products of the big business houses and money flow back to them.

**4. The media also plays an important role in deciding what stories to focus on, and therefore, decides on what is newsworthy. By focusing on particular issues, the media influences our thoughts, feelings and actions, and brings those issues to our attention.**

**Example:**

- i. The media drew our attention to alarming levels of pesticides in cola drinks. They published reports that indicated the high level of pesticides and, thus, made us aware of the need to regularly monitor these colas according to international quality and safety standards.
- ii. The media drew our attention to suicide committed by farmers which leads to large scale movement and forced the government to look further on this issue.

**5. However, the reality is that media is far from independent. This is mainly because of two reasons:**

- i. The first is the control that the government has on the media. When the government prevents either a news item, or scenes from a movie, or the lyrics of a song from being shared with the larger public, this is referred to as censorship. There have been periods in Indian history when the government censored the media.
- ii. Second, at times, it is in the interest of these businesses to focus on only one side of the story. Media's continual need for money and its links to advertising means that it becomes difficult for media to be reporting against people who give them advertisements.