**Lecture # 1**

**News Gathering (Finals)**

**BEAT REPORTING**

1. **Social Ministries Reporting**

**Introduction**

There are number of ministries which come under the title social ministries they are: Health ministries, Law & Justice and Parliamentary Affairs ministries, Human rights, Agriculture ministry, Education ministry, Environment ministry, Youth & Woman Affairs ministry, Tourism & Culture ministry.

**Reporter’s Responsibility**

Social ministries are one of the major beat of reporting. **Their policy decisions have direct impact on common man’s life.**

* A Reporter covering the social ministries must know the importance of the ministries.
* He should know the hierarchal structure of these ministries.
* He must establish personal contact with all officials from the top to bottom working in various capacities.
* He must have a special relationship with the focal person for media in every ministry.
* He should try to establish personal relation with the minister so that he can get first hand information to file an exclusive story or breaking news.

1. **Diplomatic reporting**

**Introduction**

Diplomatic Reporting concerns with the foreign policy and the relationship of a country with other countries and the activities of various foreign missions and the contours (outlines) of the foreign policy. In diplomatic relations, neither the enemy is eternal nor the friendship is eternal. The only thing which is eternal is the interest of the nation. Information highway has changed the traditional role of diplomatic reporting, media technology, internet, live feeds and instant reporting has a direct influence on the relationship of countries. Media build or distort the perceptions.

**Reporter’s Responsibly**

* A diplomatic reporter should be aware of **the world power games and the interest of various countries in various regions.**
* In today’s world along with the diplomats, the political scientists and journalists are the main players of diplomacy. NGOs also provide useful information to Diplomatic Reporters. The diplomatic reporter must establish contacts with them.
* **Foreign Missions** are also a great source of diplomatic reporting.
* Reporters should be aware **of international agreements** among various countries.
* He should also know the international organizations (UNO, OIC, NAM, SAARC, ASEAN, EU, AFU, NATTO)

1. **Business and Financial Reporting**

**Introduction**

Business and Financial Reporting is a very important beat. Only a person who is well versed with the financial and business climate of the country can do this assignment.

**Reporters Responsibilities**

* He should be aware of current **economic climate**. The causes and the potential solutions for the problems confronting the business community.
* He must know the **banking system.**
* He must be aware of **situation of world economy and the future trends.**
* He must **know the role of World Bank and IMF**.
* Stock Markets Impact on National Economy and the Broker system etc.
* Business and financial beat reporter must be aware **of Political and Social Fallout on the economy of the country** and the effects of strikes and meetings on the economy.
* Financial Reporter must study business pages of daily newspapers/yellow pages and weekly business magazines to enhance the knowledge. He should frequently visit the business pages of web and internet.

1. **Sports reporting**

**Introduction**

Sports reporting is claimed be one of the most interesting and thrilling beat. Most talented and respected journalists have been sports writers. . Investigative reporting in sports started in 1990. In Cricket, it was the investigative reporting which brought many amendments in the laws and rules of Cricket. Issue of “Ball Scratch” and “Dope Test” was came out due to investigative.

From 1950s to 1960s people saw a rapid growth in sports coverage, both in print and broadcast media. During this period, independent sports agencies and photo agencies were established to cover the sports events. International Sports Press Association (AIPS) was also established. Sports shops for various dedicated games were opened. Now number of the sports channels and sports magazines are in the market. Sports also brought a good amount of advertisements.

**Reporters Responsibilities**

* If any one intends to be a sports reporter he must read books on a range of sports topic, including biographies, histories of Cricket, Hockey, Football, Golf, Athletics, World Olympics, Local sports – Kabaddi and Wrestling etc
* He must have full information about the players, cricket boards, matches schedules and the climate of the relevant countries
* He must know the rules and terminologies of different games

1. **Court Beat:**

Courts are one of the very important sources of news. The decisions of court are often breaking news or they have a larger implication on policy metters of the state. The major courts are:

Supreme Court

High Courts

District Courts

The Reporter covering the court must know the basics of the law of the land. The functioning of court, its procedure proceedings. The importance of Bar Council. The problems faced by lawyer community and the clients.

He should also read and understand the constitution.

1. **Election commission beat:**

Election commission is also one of the important sources of news. Election commission is a constitutional body and is responsible for holding the general elections in the country. Chief Election Commissioner is the head of Election Commission. His tenure is fixed in the constitution. A person having a Supreme Court Judge stature can hold this position.

Reporter must know about the structure and functioning of election commission.

1. **Show Biz Beat:**

Show biz is also one of the popular forms of beat reporting. A show biz reporter has to cover the activities of Film Industry, TV, Stage, Theatre, Models, Cat Walks and Fashion Shows.

A Reporter who is supposed to be the show biz reporter must know all the aspects of these fields. Show biz is the major source of deriving the entertainment news.

1. **Conflict Reporting**

Working within range of guns, bomb blasts, mines, violence comes under Conflict Reporting parameters. Conflict reporting is considered to be the most dangerous form of journalism. Army or Law Enforcing Agencies seizes control over land or situation while media helps consolidating it.

There are number of situations comes under Conflict Reporting they are;

War, Civil war, Terrorists attack, Disaster, Bomb blast, Suicide attack, riots, abductions, target killing, floods, earth quakes.

While working in conflict zones/disaster areas one should be mentally and physically fit and alert. From the war zone, reporting is very dangerous and one has to take special care while reporting the events, or analyzing the facts.

Whenever a reporter covers rallies and mob demonstrates he should be aware of that some time mob takes

out their frustration on the media. In war zone or in mob rallies attack or violence comes from unexpected directions and reporter should be vigilant to take safety measures.

HISTORY OF CONFLICT REPORTING

The history of conflict reporting is not only interesting but thrilling as well. Before modern media, history of the war was returned after the end of conflict. **The first known war reporter was “Herodotus” who wrote accounts of Persian war.** He did not participated in the event but he recorded the accounts of various Military General and produced them in book form. Among recent war, **the Kosovo war received a great deal of coverage as did the Gulf war**. With the development of Modern Media and hi-tech equipment now it is comparatively easy to cover war/conflict areas and disasters**. Instant and live reporting is possible due to satellite uplink and speedy communication**

WAR ZONES

In various continents of the world there are number of Conflict Zones. The major conflict zones are Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Somalia, Sudan, Algeria, Colombia, Philippine, Bangladesh, Nepal, Russia, Ukraine, Sri Lanka, Chechnya and Pakistan etc.

HOW TO GET FACT

While reporting in Conflict Zones, a reporter found three types of facts:

Sweet facts (People helping each other/human interest angles).

Better facts (Casualty/Looting/Robbery/Killing/Bloodshed/Crying)

Official facts (spokesmen briefing)

From these facts a reporter has to file a story. He has to judge what type of facts he has to take to balance the story.

SECURITY MEASURES

While working in conflict zone a reporter has to take security measures on priority. The purpose of reporting in Conflict zone is to fetch news but not at the Cost of one’s life. A successful war reporter is one who is “Ghazi”. If a reporter ought to be a “Shaheed” than how would he be able to report news.

WHEN TO ENTER

It is advisable for war reporter to enter in war region/blast **area after first strike**. He will get exclusive news stories and would be able to get many other humanitarian aspects to report.

HIGH PRESSURE ENVIRONMENT

Only such reporter is able to be a good war reporter who has the experience of working in high pressure environment. The working in war zone is a challenging job. A person who has no experience to work in pressure, he would not be able to perform good in war/disaster zones.

SOLO REPORTING

**In conflict zone always move as a team. Solo** reporting venture in conflict zone is not advisable. If any accident happens to you than there should be someone who can be helpful in providing first aid or to inform the situation and call help/rescue.

FIXER

In war zone the reporter is a stranger who has to seek guidance about the routes, geography, and about the behaviour of the people. **For this purpose a war reporter has to hire a fixer.**

TYPES OF JOURNALISTS IN WAR REPORTING

In war zone or in disaster area three types of journalists reports the event.

 Channel journalists

 Freelance reporting journalists

 Embedded journalists

Channel Representation

Channel representation means a journalist who is the nominee of a TV Channel, Radio or a Newspaper. He should be on the regular pay roll of those organizations.

Freelance

Freelance reporting is done by a person who works at his own. He is not representing any channel or newspaper but various channels or newspaper get his/her services on payment for a particular assignment.

EMBEDDED REPORTING

Reporters traveling with the security forces/Law Enforcing Agencies or with army are called EMBEDDED REPORTERS. **The term “embedding” or placing journalists with troops in wartime, was coined by U.S. Defense Department officials in 2002.**

SAFETY OF JOURNALIST

No set of principles, no training course and no handbook can guarantee safety of a journalist in conflict zone. In war zone, apart from security measure, a reporter can be targeted if he is in the wrong place at the wrong time it will be his bad luck. Or You are perceived wrongly by the military that you are not a journalist. For safety measures the journalists should be careful while filming because camera some time appears as a weapon. Journalist should know safe and unsafe areas and the behaviour patron of local population.

TIPS FOR JOURNALIST

In war and disaster zone journalists must carry **First-Aid-Kits** with them.

**Always wear helmets** when you are recovering in the conflict zone area.

**Body Armor**, also protect the body injury.

Always **staying in Touch with your News room**.

You must **carry required clothing/Dry Food and drinking water** with you.

For safety reasons **Label prominently all your clothing including helmets that clearly identify you are press.**

You should **never carry weapons** with you.

Take special measures to protect your valuable things from theft.

STRESS

Stress is a normal reaction to repeated exposure to trauma, especially violence results sleep disturbances,

emotional numbing, or feelings of insecurity, keep in mind that traumatic stress often affects spouses

relationships when you come back must consult the Psychologist and seek guidance.

1. **Parliamentary Reporting**

Parliamentary reporting is a specialized job. Only experienced and a person who has the nose for parliament courage can do this job. Parliament reporting is a sensitive assignment. You should be well versed on the following if you are interested to become a parliamentary reporter:

Read the constitution?

Read the parliamentary procedure act?

Know what is adjournment Motion, Privilege motion, Question hour, Point of order.

How these motions can be moved and how they are disposed off?

The procedure of law making?

1st reading, 2nd reading and 3rd reading?

How a bill can shape the law?

How the voting takes place?

What is the role of Speaker, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly and Chairman, Deputy Chairman of the Senate? Composition of provincial assemblies?

How the leader of the house and Opposition leader are elected?

What is the role of Press Gallery?

Also read the history of parliaments.

**Parliamentary reporting is a technical and sensitive assignment. A Reporter has to take care of certain points if he would like to be a successful reporter.**

POINTS TO BE REMEMBER

You are a stranger; you are bound by the rules.

Observe very basic conduct and parliamentary tradition.

Must comply with all standing orders.

Read National Assembly (Powers & Privileges) Act.

Never carry any recording device such as tape recorder, video camera, cell phone, or film equipment into

Parliament unless specifically authorized.

Familiarize yourself with proceedings.

Simply sit, listen and take notes.

Never rely on the notes made by any other reporter.

Seek the assistance of the parliamentary secretariat staff on information you need.

Present all issues and leave judgment to the readers.

If you have any doubt about an important News point, have a follow up meeting with MP to clarify the point.

Parliamentary Reporter must familiarize himself with the working of House Committees. The Committees of Parliament are important source of News.

The Reporter must **visit the library of the parliament**. He will find exclusive material to report.

The Reporter should know that the members can say anything during debate without fear of any legal action due to parliamentary immunity – but that doesn’t necessarily mean that whatever they say is correct.

Being a responsible newsman, it is the job of a reporter to pick and choose what to be reported.