



# Social Media: the New Weapon in Modern Warfare

**Dr. Archana Sukey**

Assistant Professor

Govindrao Wanjari College of Law, Nagpur

Human beings are intelligent and due to this quality, they get some such basic and inalienable rights which are generally called human rights. Human rights are standards that recognize and protect the dignity of all human beings. Human rights govern how individual human beings live in society and with each other, as well as their relationship with the State and the obligations that the State have towards them.<sup>1</sup> Human rights are universal and inalienable. All people everywhere in the world are entitled to them.<sup>2</sup> No one can voluntarily give them up nor can others take them away from him or her. Rights, being immunities, specify that nothing can or should be done against the will of the individual. According to this concept, humans should be protected from unjust and abusive behavior.<sup>3</sup>

In Democracies, the Media is Fundamental to Political Life. It is considered as the fourth pillar of democracy which plays an important role in protection of Human rights. The word media is derived from the Latin word *medium*, which means interaction between two people. The main function of the media is to circulate information about any event which is happened in any part of society to the whole society as soon as possible. It can be said on this basis that the faster protection of human rights is only possible when the media becomes more active. On the other hand, it can also be said that due to the maximum activism of the media, anomalies prevailing in society and violation of human rights can be stopped at a rapid rate.<sup>4</sup> The media's job is to keep an effective check on the Governmental powers, seeking transparency to curb their arbitrariness, communicate their wrong actions to the public. Thus Media is a communicator of the public. Today its role extends not only to giving facts as news, it also analyses and comments on the facts and thus shapes the views of the people. media on society The media has been setting for the nation its social, political economic and

<sup>1</sup> United Nations, World Conference on Human Rights. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. June 1993, para. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Amartya Sen, "Elements of a Theory of Human Rights," *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, vol. 32, No. 4 (2004), p. 320

<sup>3</sup> William Korey, *NGOs and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: A Curious Grapevine*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>4</sup> The role of Media in Protection of Human Rights' at Visakhapatnam on January 11, 2007 organised by Human Rights Council

even cultural agenda. With the advent of satellite channels its impact is even sharper and deeper.<sup>5</sup> With continuous flow of news through various News channels, people cannot remain unbiased to and impervious by news the channels are serving all the day. It is therefore, of paramount importance that the media plays an important and ethical role at all levels and in all parts of the country.

Social Media can also play a productive role in creating legal awareness about the concept of human rights, as basic human rights that would constitute the right of every individual to his fundamental freedom without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.<sup>6</sup> Human society has developed from Stone Age to Space age. While some nations or societies have developed quickly, the others seem to be nowhere in the race. The rights which citizens from various Nations enjoy demonstrate a discrepancy depending upon the economic, social, political and cultural developments of that particular Nation. While there is a revolutionary change and growth in every sphere of life and mainly in the communication and media world, media today, plays a crucial role in the development of society. Thus the role of media in protection of human rights cannot be ignored or minimized.<sup>7</sup>

### **Role of Social Media in today's Warfare time**

Social media plays a key role in today's Warfare time as it has emerged as a powerful tool for communication, association, community and, regrettably, conflict. It also has sometimes created new, highly accessible ways for spreading disinformation, sometimes sowing divisiveness and thus contributing to real-world harm in the form of violence, persecution and exploitation. The Impact of social media extends across international borders which results in posing challenges in traditional humanitarian aid, development and peace building models. This new paradigm requires a new approach. In the present day their role can take two different and disparate forms. Sometimes Media act as a See-Saw Game. Either it gives high weight age to any trifle matter or ignores totally the very sensitive issue also. In short sometimes the media takes an active part in the armed conflict and has accountable for amplified violence, or sometimes stays independent and out of the conflict, thereby contributing to the resolution of conflict and lessening of violence. The Role played by the Media in a given armed conflict, depends on a complex set of factors, like the relationship the media has to act in the conflict and the independence the media has to the power holders in society. But its role should be balanced because it affects at the end to Civilians only.

There are various Antiterrorist and anti insurgency Operations like : Operation Bajrang, 1990, Operation Woodrose, 1984, Operation Blue Star, 1984, Operation Black Tornado, 2008 and Operation Dhang, 2016 occurred in India which proved to be milestone in displaying poor information that was the suppression of

<sup>5</sup>E. Heinz,. and R. Freedman (2010) Public awareness of human rights: distortions in the mass media The journal of human rights [online] 14:4, 491-523

<sup>6</sup> Dr.S.K.Kapoor,(2010) Human Rights ,Central Law Agency ,4<sup>th</sup> Edition .

<sup>7</sup> T. Herdís, (2003) Journalism worthy of the name: A human rights perspective on freedom within the press, Ph.D. Lund: Lund University

media to media mismanagement, lack of effective communication, or disbelieving communication. The tug of war between the media and the military is an ongoing thing which acts as the main hindrance in protecting National Security.

## Impact of Media during Kargil War

The Kargil conflict in the 1999 broken out at a point of time when the Indian media was far better equipped than ever before to project it on an exceptional scale. Kargil War turned out to be India's first war in the television era when the fire and fury of each battle or artillery duel was carried into every office, every home, everywhere.. It was the first war in which journalists went to the battlefield in significant numbers, and the media interfaced with the Army as the war was fought right before their eyes and cameras.<sup>8</sup> Also, just as Kargil was the media's first experience of a real war, though along a limited front, it was also our military's first real experience of dealing with an intrepid corps of young, mobile war correspondents, armed with satellite phones and television cameras, filing from the spot. Such close interface between the media and the military in Kargil has made it contextually imperative to understand what the basic issues are, and the limitations thereby, when the media is at war. Indeed, the role of media is very closely connected to the issues of war. This is because both mass warfare and mass media owe their modern forms to a productive period of 'invention' towards the end of the nineteenth century. In some cases, the technology which has enabled civilians to learn of, or even see, events in a war zone has derived, more or less directly, from military research.<sup>9</sup>

## Media Pulled by Supreme Court in 26 /11 Case

The attacks occurred On 26 November 2008 were a series of terrorists attack in which most attacks last for few hours but few like Trident Oberoi,Taj Hotel were continued for a long time .More than 300 people injured including death of Higher Police officers also .In this incident the media coverage of National Security Guard commandos gave the terrorists a window into their combat strategies. Broadcast media began relaying news of helicopters trying to land on the roofs of Nariman House and Oberio Trident Hotel to rescue hostages held by the terrorists. <sup>10</sup>Without appropriate systems and channels of information in place, journalists went by what they saw, what was visible to the naked eye, and to the ordinary citizen, some of them, breathlessly. It was through news television that terrorists realized fires had been lit and that

<sup>8</sup> Kargil: The forgotten victims of the world's highest war - BBC <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-49101016>

<sup>9</sup> G Seshu Media and Kargil: Information Blitz with Dummy Missiles - jstor <https://www.jstor.org/stable>

<sup>10</sup> Agarwal, Bhavna (2021-09-10). "Mumbai Diaries 26/11 Review: Mohit Raina, Konkana Sen Sharma starrer is a refreshing re-telling of the ghastly terror attack". Bollywood Bubble. Retrieved 2021-09-13.

helicopters were trying to land on the roofs of the Oberoi Hotel and the Jewish Chabad House with an American Rabbi and his family being held inside. Was it poor judgment of the journalists to release this information? With such perception, the answer possibly, is yes. But, for a government under attack for a security failure of epic proportions, deflecting blame was key. News media became the 'fall guy'.<sup>11</sup> Citing phone intercepts between terrorists and their handlers, the political spokes persons placed the lion's share of blame for the mayhem terrorists were able to spread during the 60-hour long siege directly on the mainstream media, particularly live, commercialized, 24-hour news television

## Media Coverage in the Pathankot Case

The 2006 Pathankot attack was a terrorist attack which was happened on January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016. In this incident, a heavily armed group of Islamic militants attacked the Pathankot Air Force Station .It was reported that four terrorists had been killed, and two Air Force personnel martyred on the Indian side at Pathankot Air Force Base. Soon after that, comb-out operations had commenced to sanities that area. However, immediately on January 2<sup>nd</sup> reports emerged about loud explosions emanating from the Base. It was clear that some terrorists were still present within the Air Force Base and that the operation was not over.

Almost twenty four hours later, at 6.50 pm, Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh tweeted, congratulating the Indian security forces on a successful operation in Pathankot and made a public statement in the media. *The Hindu* released a timeline of the events that evening, reporting Rajnath Singh's statement, along with a further update that the operation was completed and five terrorists killed. However, few hours later, more reports emerged of fresh firing in the area. Till now everyone understood that there was a huge failure not operationally but in the communication to the country through news and social media.<sup>12</sup>

To make matters worse, Lieutenant Colonel Niranjana Kumar, a member of the NSG's bomb defusal squad, was injured by an unprepared explosive device which one of the terrorists, in his last dying act, had activated and placed under his body. When the body was moved during the combing operations, it exploded. According to one NSG officer in many other countries this task is done with the help of the robots, or personnel using highly specialized bomb-disposal equipment. That kind of equipment was not available with our Indian Army.

<sup>11</sup> Nikkhil Advani on 'Mumbai Diaries 26/11' success: Overwhelming to see everyone's effort getting recognition". *www.mid-day.com*. 2021-09-14.

<sup>12</sup> Pathankot attack: 'All terrorists dead' - The Hindu  
<https://www.thehindu.com › national › article60521192>

## Social Media and Russia -- Ukraine War

For the past week, most social media have been flooded with posts about the Russia-Ukraine war. While some of these posts are from valid media outlets, many can be considered misinformation inaccurate information. There may be some truth in many of these posts; they should be taken with a grain of salt means not completely believing to be. For example, the “Ghost of Kyiv” may have shot down multiple Russian MIGs; however, the story has not been validated and the viral image is of a pilot modeling a prototype helmet. Additionally, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has not fled Ukraine, despite Russian reports claiming that’s the case. Misinformation is not inherently wrong when it comes to warfare because such news or misinformation is essential to boost morale of the civilians of the country which is defeating in War .Furthermore, given the state of current technology and the sociopolitical climate, misinformation has the potential to play a very significant role in this war<sup>13</sup>.

Misinformation fundamentally, is a military strategy and tactic used in every War. This misinformation can trick an enemy force into making the wrong decisions. This tactic was clearly employed in every war from the Trojan War to World War II .Recently in Russia Ukraine Armed Conflict, the Russian forces claimed to be withdrawing their combat forces from the border on the days leading to the invasion.

Misinformation is also being used by militaristic nations as part of propaganda campaigns. Propaganda allows one country to weaken their opponent’s resolve, which reduces the effectiveness of the fighting force and erodes domestic support. Meanwhile, propaganda can also boost the morale of a country’s own military and civilian population. Early during the conflict, the Russian media made claims that the Ukrainian military had fled the battlefield, a claim that clearly was not true.<sup>14</sup> These claims were aimed at crushing Ukrainian resolve while helping spark patriotism on the Russian home front. Although common in wars, the amount of misinformation in this conflict is significantly more than usual. Moreover, much of the misinformation appears to be coming from third parties that are independent of both militaries and governments.<sup>15</sup> Individuals around the world are using social media to spread large amounts of misinformation.

## Compassionate Role of Media during War Time

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<sup>13</sup> Putin, V. (2014) ‘Russia-EU Summit’, 28 January 2020. Available at: [http:// eng.kremlin.ru/transcripts/6575](http://eng.kremlin.ru/transcripts/6575)

<sup>14</sup> Allison, R (2014) ‘Russian “Deniable” Intervention in Ukraine: How and Why Russia Broke the Rules’, *International Affairs*, 90(6), pp. 1255-1297.

<sup>15</sup> Sakwa, R. (2015) *Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands*. London: I. B. Tauris.

- **Social Connection**

There are number of challenges in front of Soldiers for using social media but there is lot of benefits also. Maintaining personal delicate connections with family, friends, and support groups are bonuses of social media. Soldiers can ease their stress by sharing, talking with his Family members or by communicating with friends and support groups through chat, pictures, and videos,

An access to support groups enables Soldiers to receive help is equally important is. This is very important for instance; a former member of the one previous unit was able to receive mental health support after posting what seemed to be a suicide note on Face book. The Soldier's friend immediately contacted the chain of command who then located and provided assistance to the Soldier.

Thus apart from contact with friends and family, access to and networking with professionals and their organizations is another benefit of social media. As a result, social media prove to be a tool which facilitates career opportunities for Soldiers leaving the Army. There are numerous websites and other online resources allowing Soldiers to post resumes and share information with potential employers. These services provide Soldiers with many hiring opportunities.

## Conclusion

Media being promoter of peace play a major role in protecting and promoting human rights in the world. It can make people aware of the necessitatu to promote certain values in the cause of human rights which are of eternal value to the mankind. Peace, non-violence, disarmament, maintenance and promotion of ecological balances and unpolluted environment and ensuring human rights to all irrespective of caste, colour and creed should be the minimum common agenda for the media. The media can perform this role in different ways. It can make people aware of their rights, expose its violations and focus attention on people and areas in need of the protection of human rights and pursue their case till they achieve them. Media can also give publicity to the individuals and organisations, which are engaged in securing human rights. This will encourage as well as motivate others to do the similar work. Media can inform and educate the people of their rights and suggest ways and means by which they can solve their problems and thus empowering them to protect their rights. Since media plays the role of communication between the state and the public, it can also play an effective role of making the authorities aware of their duties

Media can raise awareness of Human Right issues, expose its violation if any and empower people to take legal actions. It faces a challenge in playing the role in protecting human rights in the world. While playing this new role, there is risk of its misuse. For that self-regulation is the need of the hour. Journalists should set '*Lakshman Rekha*' while reporting human rights violations. The main aim before the journalists should be to give facts but not in a manner and with the purpose to create sensation and to arouse the

sentiments of the people. Projection and language should be decent and civilized. Journalists should not add insult to inquiry. Media should refrain from giving statements and pictures that are flaring. Since media is the mirror of the society, care should be taken that the mirror is not hazy. While reporting such violation media should not get influenced by authorities. It should look deep into the problem and provide solutions. Mere reporting of the facts is not enough. It should give reasons of the problem and the nature of the violations and then give solutions. Press has a sacred duty to focus human rights violations and then measures for protecting them. Freedom of expression is a sacred right well accepted over the globe and journalists should respect this freedom. In Indian constitution, it finds place as a guaranteed fundamental right. The Government of India in tune with constitutional mandate professes its anxiety to protect and safeguard this fundamental right. But no right and for that matter the right to freedom of expression is absolute and unfettered in all circumstances but bound by duty to maintain peace and harmony of the body polity by exercising prudence and restraint in the exercise of right to freedom of speech. If exercise of this right is likely to inflame passion, the right to freedom of expression needs circumspection and consequent restraint for greater good of the society

The Relation between Media and armed Conflict is very complicated. At times Ethics of Media gets watered down and they only focus on TRP. It must be noted by all of us that need the study of war and the media is overstuffed with paradoxes as of Media, at the same time depicting some aspects of conflict into focus while keeping others purposefully out of frame. Media served equally to distance civilians from war as to transform them into its eyewitness spectators. More frequently, never-ending media recycling of wars past have served over the century to encourage contribution in a field of human Endeavour .Mass media do less to mirror the world as it is than to shape a world as it should not be; a world where war too readily appears an inevitable outgrowth of human nature and still, after a long century of conflict, an appropriate form of dispute resolution.

The Foundation of Modern Democratic State lies in its ability to Secure Fundamental Rights which are promised to its people which guarantees Justice, Economic and Social Progress. Hence Media must an role of Embodiment of these rights which define democracy.

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