

JUNE 2020



MEDIA INFLUENCE MATRIX: INDIA

Funding Journalism

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The report was done with partial support from the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS) at Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (IITB).

Acknowledgments:

The authors would like to thank Aman Raj, Jaskirat Singh Bawa, Jai Karan Singh Bhaduria, Jayant Mathew, Paranjay Guha Thakurta, Pratik Sinha, Rajesh Mahapatra, Sneha Bannerjee, Subhash Rai, Rohan Venkataramakrishnan, and Vanita Kohli Khandekar for their insights.

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The Media Influence Matrix Project is run collaboratively by the Media & Power Research Consortium, which consists of local as well as regional and international organizations. The consortium members are academic institutions (universities and research centers), NGOs, journalism networks and private foundations.

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SHIFTS IN JOURNALISM FUNDING

The Indian news media outlets exist in various forms as privately and publicly listed, as vertically and crossly owned, and as closely and widely held companies. The market is regionally and linguistically fragmented but ownership is concentrated within a handful of large players, more so in regional geographies. It is significant that the news business is largely run and owned by individuals (and families) with primarily non-media business interests and assets.

The largest players in terms of funding spent in the media are commercial advertisers. In 2018 advertising contributed €7.8bn to the media funding in India, an annual growth rate of 11.5%. [1]

Advertising makes the largest cut in the operating revenues of the news media. Subscription revenue does not bring in enough. The biggest advertising sectors across all news mediums include fast moving consumer groups (FMCG), services, automobiles, and banking and finance. Top advertisers include both domestic and international players such as Hindustan Unilever, Reckitt Benckiser, Amazon Online, Paytm, and Maruti Suzuki.[2] In 2016-17, the advertising sector experienced a slump due to the implementation of the currency demonetization policy. However, multiple sports events, national elections in May 2019, and a significant contribution from political advertisements, from both regional and national political parties, boosted the sector's revenue in 2017-18.

Two large investors in the Indian news media include Mukesh Ambani and Subhash Chandra. Media is not their primary business. They run Reliance Group and Essel Group of industries, respectively, which are spread across a myriad of industries including petroleum, refineries, telecom, chemicals, textiles, packaging, oil and gas, precious metals, retail, infrastructure, digital services, to name just a few.

Ambani ventured into broadcasting in 2011 when he took complete control over the Eenadu TV (ETV) network, broadcasting in numerous regional languages. In 2014, the Reliance group gained control of one of India's largest news and entertainment television networks, Network 18. This included taking over of Network 18 Media and Investments Ltd and its subsidiaries TV 18 and Viacom 18 (a joint venture between TV 18 and ViacomCBS in India) in a €513mn deal.[3] In 2016, he also started what has become one of India's three largest mobile operators, Reliance Jio. Such vertical expansion was furthered in 2019 when he entered the television distribution segment by acquiring a majority stake in two of the three largest cable companies in India, DEN Networks and Hathway for €661m.[4]

Chandra, an MP, owns the Essel Group which runs one of India's oldest and largest television networks with 14 news channels across eight language markets, operated by the Zee Media Corporation Limited, besides 35 entertainment channels across 19 languages, operated by Zee Entertainment Enterprises Limited. This conglomerate is also vertically integrated through

[1] KPMG, "Media ecosystems: The walls fall down: KPMG in India's Media Entertainment report 2018," September 2018, available online at <https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/in/pdf/2018/09/Media-ecosystems-The-walls-fall-down.pdf> (accessed on 11 February 2020).

[2] See 2018 newsletter for TAM Media Research.

[3] Megha Bahree, "Reliance Takes Over Network18: Is This The Death Of Media Independence?," Forbes, 30 May 2014, available online at <https://www.forbes.com/sites/meghabahree/2014/05/30/reliance-takes-over-network18-is-this-the-death-of-media-independence/#65146a8c65c1> (accessed on 2 April 2020).

[4] Mudit Kapoor, "Reliance acquires 58.92% stake in Den Networks, 51.34% share in Hathway," Business Today, 23 October 2018, available online at <https://www.businesstoday.in/top-story/reliance-acquires-58.92-stake-in-den-networks-51.34-share-in-hathway/story/286130.html> (accessed on 2 April 2020).

its subsidiaries in Direct-to-Home (DTH) and Cable distribution, Dish TV India Limited and Siti Networks Limited respectively, and horizontally integrated through its subsidiaries in print and film production, Diligent Media Corporation Ltd and Zee Studios, respectively.

Politicians and their affiliates are major players in the regional news media. The Sun Group in the state of Tamil Nadu is owned by Kalanithi Maran, nephew of former chief minister of Tamil Nadu, M. Karunanidhi, and brother of current MP Dayanidhi Maran. The Sun conglomerate owns 33 television channels across six languages, 67 FM radio stations, three daily newspapers and numerous other publications. Also, vertically integrated, it owns Sun Direct, one of the largest DTH operators, and Sumangali Cable Vision, a prominent regional cable network. Similarly, in the state of Orissa, the Panda Family runs the Odisha Television Limited, cable networks through Ortel, and digital news assets. Baijayant Panda is a former MP, currently a member of the ruling party, Bharatiya Janata Party.

Large international players in the news media include Facebook and Google who have been active in the small but rapidly expanding online news market in India. They maintain a duopoly in digital advertising, collectively owning 68% of the market in India and are the biggest competitors to news outlets in monetizing content online.[5] Facebook's messaging platform, WhatsApp, has become crucial in the circulation of digital news in India. The Google News Initiative has funded

training of video journalists in three television news outlet and seven digital news and factchecking startups in India. Facebook and Google have also struck distribution deals with many news organizations. (*See more details in Technology, Public Sphere and Journalism in Media Influence Matrix: India*)

The rise of digital news along with various developments in content creation and discovery has motivated companies to engage with various models of funding such as paywalls, subscriptions, freemium model, crowdfunding, and philanthropy. However, such revenue streams contribute very little to whole media funding pie, still dominated by advertising.

The Indian state is also a significant funder of the news media in the country. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting funds India's public service broadcaster, Prasar Bharati Corporation of India (PBC), and its television and radio arms, Doordarshan (DD) and All India Radio (AIR), through grants and subsidies. India is the only large democratic country in the world where the state still holds monopoly over news on the radio, and has only recently allowed re-airing of All India Radio news bulletins on private FM stations. The state also funds commercial news media through public advertising money shelled out by the Directorate of Audiovisual Publicity (DAVP) and Information Public Relations Department at central and state level, respectively. In 2018, the central government contributed €168.5m to the €7.8bn (or 2.16%) in advertising spending in all media in the form of public advertisements.

[5] "In India, Google races to parry the rise of Facebook," CNBC, 3 September 2018, available online at <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/09/04/in-india-google-races-to-parry-the-rise-of-facebook.html> (accessed on 2 April 2020).

Who's who in Indian media

Direct & indirect influence	Operator	Prominent news media assets				Income in 2017-18 (in € million)
		Television	Print	Radio*	Online	
The Sun Group Main promoter: Kalanithi Maran Dayanidhi Maran (brother of Promoter) current MP of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam	Sun TV Network Ltd.	Sun News (Tamil) Surya TV (Tamil) Gemini TV (Tamil) Sun Marathi (Marathi)	Dinakaran (Tamil) Kungumam (Tamil) Tamil Murasu (Tamil)	Red FM 93.5	-	4548
Reliance Group Main promoter: Mukesh Ambani Vijay Darda, former MP of the Indian National Congress	Network18 Media and Investment Limited	CNN-News 18 (English) News 18 India (Hindi) CNBC TV 18 (English) CNBC Awaaz (Hindi) CNBC Bajar (Gujarati) News18 Lokmat (Marathi)	Forbes India (English)	-	FirstPost.com News18.com Hindi.news18.com Lokmat.news18.com	2330
Times Group Main promoter: Jain Family	Bennett Coleman and Company Limited	Times Now ET Now Mirror Now (all English)	Times of India (English) Mumbai Mirror (English) The Economic Times (English) Navbharat Times (Hindi) Nav Gujarat Samay (Gujarati) Maharashtra Times (Marathi) Vijay Karnataka (Kannada)	Radio Mirchi 98.3 FM	Timesnownews.com Indiatimes.com Timesofindia.indiatimes.com Timesnownews.com/business-economy	820
Government of India	Prasar Bharati Corporation	Doordarshan DD News (multi-lingual)	-	All India Radio (AIR)	http://ddnews.gov.in/	560***
Hindustan Times Group Main promoter: Shobhana Bartia, former MP of Indian National Congress	HT Media Ltd	-	Hindustan Times (English) Hindustan (Hindi) Mint (English)	Fever 104 FM Radio Nasha 107.2 FM	Hindustantimes.com Livehindustan.com Livemint.com	395
Bhaskar Group Main promoter: Agarwal Family	D.B Corporation Limited	-	Dainik Bhaskar (Hindi) Divya Bhaskar (Gujarati) Divya Marathi (Marathi) DB Star (English) DB Post (English)	94.3 MY FM	Dainikbhaskar.com Divyabhaskar.com Divyamarathi.com Dbpost.com Moneybhaskar.com	298
Jagran Prakashan Group Main promoter: Gupta Family Narendra Mohan Gupta (promoter's son) former MP of BJP	Jagran Prakashan Limited	-	Dainik Jagran (Hindi) Mid-day (English) Nai Dunia (Hindi) The Inquilab (Urdu)	Radio City 91.1 FM	Jagran.com Jagranjosh.com Mid-day.com Naidunia.jagran.com	297

India Today Group Main promoter: Purie Family Kumar Mangalam Birla and Essel Mining and Industries Ltd.)	Living Media India Ltd.	TV Today (English) Aaj Tak (Hindi) Tez (Hindi)	India Today (multiple languages) Business Today (English) TIME Magazine (English)	ISHQ 104.8FM	Indiatoday.in Aajtak.intoday.in Bharat Tak Life Tak News Tak	90.4
Essel Group Main promoter: Subhash Chandra, MP of Bhartiya Janta Party	Zee Media Corporation Limited	Zee News Zee Business Zee 24 Ghanta Zee Hindustan Zee Rajasthan (all Hindi)	DNA – Daily News and Analysis (English)	-	Zeeneews.india.com Zeeneews.india.com/hindi India.com Zeebiz.com	66.3
The Express Group Main promoter: Goenka-Sonthalia Family	The Indian Express Private Limited	-	The Indian Express (English) Financial Express (English) Loksatta (Hindi) Jansatta (Hindi) Lokprabha (Marathi)	-	Financialexpress.com Indianexpress.com Jansatta.com Loksatta.com	57.6
Anand Bazar Patrika Group Main promoter: Sarkar Family	AnandBazar Patrika Private Limited	ABP News (Hindi) ABP Majha (Marathi) ABP Ananda (Bengali) ABP Asmita (Gujarati) ABP Sanjha (Punjabi) ABP Ganga	Anandabazar Patrika (Bengali) The Telegraph (English) Desh, Sananda, Anandamela, Anandalok	-	Abpnews.abplive.in Anandabazar.com Telegraphindia.com Fortuneindia.com	n/d
NDTV Group Main promoter: Radhika and Prannoy Roy Naveen Jindal former MP of Indian National Congress, Brinda Karat, (sister of the promoter) former MP of Communist Party of India (Marxist)	New Delhi Television Limited (NDTV)	NDTV 24 x 7 (English) NDTV India (Hindi) NDTV Prime (English)	-	-	Ndtv.com Youtube.com/user/ndtv	n/d
The Malayala Manorama Group Main promoter: Mappillai Family	The Malayala Manorama Company Limited	Manorama News (Malayalam)	Malayala Manorama (Malayalam)	Radio Mango, 91.9 FM	Manoramaonline.com English.manoramaonline.com	n/d
Odisha Television Ltd** Main promoter: Panda Family Baijayant Panda, former MP of Biju Janata Dal	Odisha Television Limited	Odisha TV (Oriya)	-	Tarang 98.3 FM	https://odishatv.in/ https://odishareporter.in/ https://deshtv.in/	n/d

n/d: not disclosed

*All radio assets are non-news as the PSB has monopoly over news on radio via the AIR
 ** The Odisha Television Ltd is not a part of a group. The main promoter owns a number of businesses under different names, not as a conglomerate

*** The PSB total income for 2017-18 is €560 m and a Net Revenue of €20.5 m

Source: CMDS

CONSUMPTION TRENDS

The Indian media market, including news, is fragmented at the national and regional level reflecting the linguistic diversity of the country. India has a young reader demographic[6], with two-thirds of the population under the age of 40 indicating a digitally inclined news market. The internet has proliferated in the last five years with almost 500 million Indians online, albeit, owing to its vast reach, television remains by far the dominant source for news.

As of 2018, India had 197 million television viewing households with a total of 835 million viewers, an increase of 7.5% from the previous year, according to the television rating agency Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC). The Free-to-Air (FTA) channels lead the increase in the viewership, especially in rural India, accompanied by the Indian public broadcaster's free direct to home (DTH) service, DD Free Dish. The average time spent daily watching television in India was four hours and six minutes in urban areas and three hours and 27 minutes in rural areas in 2018.[7]

India has over 380 news channels and this genre commands 7% of the total television viewership in the country, across all languages.[8] Women contribute 46% to overall television news viewership and this number goes higher for viewership of news in regional languages. Indians spend over 30 minutes per day watching news across all languages. The most watched news channels (both urban and rural viewership) include Aaj Tak (Hindi), ABP News (Hindi), Republic TV (English), Times Now (English), and Zee News (Hindi). According to the Broadcast Audience Research Council, Republic TV has been the most watched English news channel ever since its inception in 2017, with an average of 877.6 million weekly impressions[9] in 2018. This is followed by Times Now (run by the Times Group) with 739.9 million weekly impressions in the same year.[10] The combined viewership of the top five Hindi news channels (Aaj Tak, ABP News, Zee News, India TV and News 18) in 2018 was a weekly average of 492.5 million weekly impressions.[11]

Print comes in second with a reach of 425 million readers, according to the Indian Readership Survey undertaken in Q1 2019 by the Media Research Users Council (MRUC). The survey found that Hindi dailies had 186 million readers, regional readership stood at 211 million, and English newspaper readership was 31 million. Regional language newspapers have aided the surge in rural readership, with increasing literacy and therefore enhanced demand for content in a language of reader's choice.

[6] "Newspapers add 110m new readers in 3 years: IRS 2017," The Economic Times, 22 January 2018, available online at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/media/entertainment/media/newspapers-add-110-mn-new-readers-in-3-years-irs-2017/articleshow/62610373.cms?from=mdr> (accessed on 22 January 2020).

[7] The survey covered 300,000 Indian households, in approximately 4,300 towns and villages, with an Urban to Rural household ration of 68:32. See more at BARC, "India Universe Update (July 2018)," available online at <https://www.barcindia.co.in/resources/pdf/BARC%20India%20Universe%20Update%20-%202018.pdf> (accessed on 22 January 2020).

[8] BARC, "What India Watched 2018," available online at <https://www.thedmti.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/WHAT-INDIA-WATCHED-2018-BARC-India-Yearbook.pdf> (accessed on 22 January 2020).

[9] Each "impression" is an individual instance of viewing, even if a fleeting one; for more, see Tarachand Wanvari, "Most watched English news channels in 2018," IndianTelevision, 18 February 2019, available online at <https://www.indiantelevision.com/television/tv-channels/viewership/most-watched-english-news-channels-in-2018-190218> (accessed on 22 January 2020).

[10] Tarachand Wanvari, "Most watched," cit.

[11] Tarachand Wanvari, "Most watched," cit.

The most widely read newspaper dailies include Dainik Jagran (Hindi), Hindustan (Hindi), Dainik Bhaskar (Hindi), Amar Ujala (Hindi), and Daily Thanthi (Tamil). In early 2019, Dainik Jagran had a total monthly readership of 73.6 million and Hindustan of 54.6 million.[12] According to experts interviewed for this study, print is considered the most credible source of news at a time of rising misinformation.

The increasing demand for news in regional languages, especially in rural India,[13] has led to an increase in circulations and a market expansion despite high newsprint costs and competition from digital players (although the latter is limited to 282 million users.)[14] In the last five years, there has been a growth in the circulations of the Hindi (10%) and regional language newspapers (7.6%).[15] Dainik Bhaskar, the most circulated newspaper in 2018, had an average sale of 8.6 million copies.[16]

Magazines have seen a flattened growth compared to newspaper dailies due to rising costs, declining advertising revenue, and competition from niche newspaper supplements and television. The circulation numbers continue to decline but readership of a few niche magazines has been found to increase, even as they account for a very small share of the population. The top five most circulated magazines saw a 7% decrease in circulation in 2018. The most circulated magazine, Vanitha (in Malayalam), sold 780,000, down from 960,000 copies in 2017.[17] The most read magazine in the first quarter of 2019, India Today (English) had a total readership of 9.15 million, up from 8 million in the last quarter of 2017.[18]

As of 2019, India had over 340 million smartphone users[19] and a total of 250 million PCs. Internet penetration in India is overwhelming on mobiles. It has grown tremendously from 22.86 million users in 2011 to 493 million users at the start of 2018.[20] For the country's smartphone users, most preferred activities are social media, watching videos, searching, looking for product information, and playing games.[21]

Internet news is on the rise in India, with traditional media outlets expanding to the internet to complement their print and television operations. Many leading newspapers have established their digital editions either to replicate their coverage in print or to create a platform for new forms of news. India has an online news audience of 282 million, 90% of whom consume news on

[12] "Indian Readership Survey (IRS) Q1 2019," MRUC, 26 April 2019, available online at <https://mruc.net/uploads/posts/8e428e54a95edcd6e8be593a7021a185.pdf> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[13] IRS Q1 2019, cit.

[14] ComScore, "Trends in Online News Consumption in India," 2019.

[15] FICCI-EY, "Re-imagining India's M&E sector," March 2018, available online at <http://ficci.in/spdocument/22949/FICCI-study1-frames-2018.pdf> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[16] Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) India, 2018.

[17] ABC India 2018, cit.

[18] Nevin John, "Indian Readership Survey 2019: India Today is the largest and fastest growing magazine," Business Today, 26 April 2019, available online at <https://www.businesstoday.in/top-story/indian-readership-survey-2019-india-today-is-the-largest-and-fastest-growing-magazine/story/340884.html> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[19] Gwyn D'Mello, "Smartphone Penetration In India Is On The Rise, Set To Reach 37.3 Crore Users In 2019," India Times, 15 January 2019, available online at https://www.indiatimes.com/technology/news/smartphone-users-in-india-smartphone-penetration-is-set-to-reach-373-million-users-in-2019_-360475.html (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[20] TRAI, "Annual Report 2017-2018," available online at

https://main.trai.gov.in/sites/default/files/Annual_Report_21022019.pdf (accessed on 10 February 2020); TRAI, "Annual Report 2011-2012," available online at <https://main.trai.gov.in/sites/default/files/201301150318386780062Annual%20Report%20English%202012.pdf> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[21] FICCI-EY Report 2018, cit.

mobile phones, with the average time spent by users on a news site being around 191 minutes a month.[22] The demand for online news in languages other than English is on the rise with an industry study issued in 2017 pegging this number at 32 million.[23]

Majority of the digital population in India is within the age group of 15-44 years and consumption of digital news in textual format in the age group 25-34 stood at 92% in 2019.[24] Online news is widely consumed in textual format for two reasons: Indian digital news providers are still building resources to properly venture into short-video formats, and news in audiovisual form is still not a popular genre.

Digital news is consumed across platforms, including news portals, social media, and mobile applications, and devices, including desktop and mobile. A 2019 survey conducted by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ), about the online preferences of India's English news audience found that search (31%) and social media (24%) were the most preferred platforms used for online news consumption.[25] Other preferred platforms include news websites, mobile alerts, and news aggregators. The most dominant device used for news consumption in India is the smartphone (68%). News and magazine applications available in multiple languages are downloaded widely by smartphone users. Of the 17 billion apps downloaded in 2018 in India, 243 million were news and magazine apps.

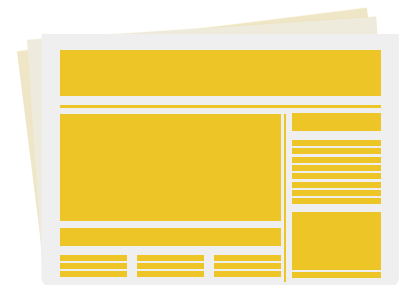
Radio has the widest reach in India, the broadcast radio network being accessible to 99% of the population and the FM radio network reaching 52% of Indians. Despite the staggering reach, news is aired only on the state controlled All India Radio; private FM stations can only retransmit AIR news bulletins, if they pay AIR a high fee. This raises questions about the independence and diversity of news on radio. The medium lacks a proper audience measurement tool, making it difficult to identify listener habits and patterns.

KEY PLAYERS

Print (Newspapers and Weeklies)

India has a very large newspaper and magazine industry with over 17,573 newspapers and 100,666 periodicals registered with the Registrar of Newspapers for India. In 2018, the total circulation of news dailies stood at 430 million copies.

In this linguistically fragmented market, the biggest news publisher in terms of reach is DB Corporation Pvt Ltd. (DB Corp), which publishes the most circulated news daily in India, Dainik Bhaskar. Owned by the Agarwal family, the company



[22] ComScore, 2019. cit.

[23] KPMG India, Google, "Indian Languages-Defining India's Internet," available online at <https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/in/pdf/2017/04/Indian-languages-Defining-Indias-Internet.pdf> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[24] IRS Q1 2019, cit.

[25] Zeenab Aneez, Taberez Ahmed Neyazi, Antonis Kalogeropoulos, Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, "Reuters Institute India Digital News Report," Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (RISJ), available online at https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2019-03/India_DNR_FINAL.pdf (accessed on 10 February 2020).

publishes five other newspapers and 10 periodicals, and owns 30 radio stations in seven states, nine digital portals and four mobile applications.[26] Among these, Dainik Bhaskar, a Hindi language newspaper launched in 1958 is the most widely circulated in 11 Hindi speaking states of India. Despite the rise in the cost of newsprint, an average of 8.64 million copies of Dainik Bhaskar were circulated in 2018.[27] As of the latest readership survey in 2019, the newspaper is also the third most read newspaper in the country with an average readership of over 51 million. Its other popular news dailies include Divya Bhaskar (Hindi), Divya Marathi (Marathi), DB Post (English), and Saurashtra Samachar (Gujarati).

Dainik Bhaskar constantly competes for the first position, in circulation and readership, with another popular Hindi language daily, Dainik Jagran. Both newspapers cover the vast Hindi speaking heartland of India. Dainik Jagran was launched in 1942 by the Jagran Prakashan Ltd. in the state of Uttar Pradesh. It has been the most read newspaper daily in the country since 2003 with over 73 million readers accounting for 11.43% of the total audience. In 2018, an average of 7.5 million copies of the newspaper were circulated across India's states. The company is owned by the Gupta family. The newspaper's editorial director, Mahendra Mohan Gupta, is a prominent minister of the regional party in Uttar Pradesh and a former Indian MP. Apart from Dainik Jagran, the company publishes 12 other print titles in over five different languages across 15 states with over 100 editions. Mid-day (English) is another popular tabloid daily. It was bought by the group in 2010 from the Ansari family. Mid-day is most popular for its entertainment column and Sunday editions.

Both DB Corporation and Jagran Prakashan are also rapidly expanding their digital operations to capture the regional news market through parallel news websites and popular Hindi news mobile applications like Dainik Bhaskar Plus and Dainik Jagran.

Another key player in the newspaper business is Bennett Coleman & Company Limited (BCCL) of the Times Group, one of the oldest publishers of English dailies in India. The Times of India (English) is the country's oldest and the most widely read English language newspaper, and the tenth most read across languages, in the country with over 15 million readers. In 2018, BCCL sold an average 5.86 million of the Times of India. It is one of the largest privately-owned media conglomerates in the country with the highest number of dailies and periodicals (45 in total) and 108 editions. The company's business daily, The Economic Times, and the hyper-local editions covering entertainment and leisure content are also widely read and often circulated in a bundle along with the main newspaper.

Other widely circulated and read English language newspapers in the country are The Hindustan Times (owned by Hindustan group) and The Hindu (owned by Kasturi and Sons).

The regional language publishers other than in Hindi reach some 211 million readers in concentrated markets. Among these, Daily Thanthi Private Ltd is one of the biggest regional publishers controlling the Tamil language market. It publishes the popular Tamil language newspaper, Dina Thanthi, which is circulated in 16 cities of the country and commands approximately 24 million readers. In 2018, an average of 3 million copies of the Dina Thanthi were sold. The paper was founded by a Tamil lawyer and politician associated with Dravida

[26] "The Agarwal Family," Reporters Without Borders (RSF), available online at <http://india.mom-rsf.org/en/owners/individual-owners/detail/owner/owner/show/the-agarwal-family/> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[27] ABC India 2018, cit.

Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), a regional political party. It is now owned by his grandson, Balasubramanian Adithyan Sivanthi, and Beemsingh Thalikuveli Rajalingam. Not much is known about the privately-owned company and its current owners apart from their interests in other news entities such as Thanthi TV. The company also publishes an international edition in Dubai for the Tamil speaking population in West Asia. Another important player within the Tamil broadsheet market is the Sun conglomerate's Dinakaran, which is owned by the ruling political party in the state, All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK).

Malayala Mannorma Company publishes the second oldest Malayalam language news daily, Malayala Manorma, which started out as a weekly in 1890 in the state of Kerala. In the first half of 2019, the newspaper was the most widely read Malayalam newspaper, and the eight most read across languages, with an average sale of 4.7 million copies in 2018. The company, run by the Mappillai family, also publishes the most widely read magazine in the country, Vanitha (Malayalam women's magazine) and an English weekly called The Week, and runs a Malayalam news channel called Manorama News. The newspaper is currently run by the sons of the founder, K.M. Mathew, while 210 members of the extended family hold shares of varying percentages in the company.[28]

Other key players in the regional newspaper market include the Marathi language daily Lokmat published by the Lokmat Media owned by the Darda family of Maharashtra. Lokmat is the second most widely read regional newspaper in the country circulated by prominent politicians and former MPs associated with the Indian National Congress in the state of Maharashtra.

In the print business

Most popular newspaper dailies in India, by circulation (2012-2018)

Publication	Language	Circulation (average sales)						
		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
The Times of India	English	7,174,064	6,319,377	6,251,466	6,107,598	5,916,061	5,914,740	5,856,066
Dainik Jagran	Hindi	5,256,363	5,881,769	6,126,897	6,489,677	7,553,650	8,331,605	7,554,732
Malayala Manorama	Malayalam	4,220,707	4,381,597	4,481,474	4,602,144	4,813,673	4,800,288	4,738,705
Hindustan	Hindi	3,799,636	4,191,200	4,706,537	4,881,774	5,010,347	5,498,875	4,614,460
Eenadu	Telugu	3,443,137	3,568,356	3,655,667	3,621,818	3,707,937	3,704,642	3,540,786
Dainik Bhaskar	Hindi	3,230,640	6,414,352	7,202,200	7,488,093	7,626,870	7,905,686	8,639,158
Amar Ujala	Hindi	3,065,625	3,716,425	4,228,454	5,425,750	5,900,006	5,374,359	4,678,037
Daily Thanthi	Tamil	3,177,240	3,412,441	3,419,987	3,347,259	3,425,364	3,229,100	3,023,889
Rajasthan Patrika	Hindi	3,165,416	3,360,448	3,587,966	3,581,449	3,654,673	3,535,989	1,711,806
Lokmat	Marathi	2,923,885	2,925,363	2,788,114	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mathrubhumi	Malayalam	2,706,173	2,859,581	2,934,380	2,951,675	2,934,934	2,883,988	2,818,351
The Hindu	English	2,969,471	2,808,042	2,666,723	2,785,740	2,922,695	2,764,778	2,948,368

n/a: not available

Source: Audit Bureau of Circulation Reports

[28] "The Mappillai Family," RSF, available online at <http://india.mom-rsf.org/en/owners/individual-owners/detail/owner/owner/show/the-mappillai-family/> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

Most widely read newspaper dailies in India, 2017-2019

Publication*	Language	2017	2019 Q1
Dainik Jagran	Hindi	70,377,000	73,673,000
Hindustan	Hindi	52,397,000	54,695,000
Dainik Bhaskar	Hindi	45,105,000	51,405,000
Amar Ujala	Hindi	46,094,000	47,645,000
Daily Thanthi	Tamil	23,149,000	24,054,000
Lokmat	Marathi	18,066,000	19,691,000
Rajasthan Patrika	Hindi	16,326,000	18,036,000
Malayala Manorama	Malayalam	15,999,000	17,477,000
Eenadu	Telugu	15,848,000	15,673,000
The Times of India	English	13,045,000	15,236,000

*Data covering urban and rural areas
Source: Indian Readership Survey, MURC

India has a total of 16,972 weeklies and monthly magazines, but these markets are dominated by weekend editions and entertainment publications often published by the top newspaper publishers in the country. For instance, the Ravivasriya Hindustan (Sunday Hindustan) owned by the Hindustan group, and Sunday Times of India (English) owned by the Times Group are the most circulated weeklies in the country.[29] The leading magazines in the country include the India Today (English), a current affairs magazine published by the India Today Group (who runs leading news broadcast channels) and Vanitha, a women centric magazine published by Malayala Manorama group.

Television News

The television news market has 383 broadcast channels across languages in the country, but the market, like the print one, is dominated by a few media conglomerates. One of the biggest players in terms of reach is the state broadcaster, Doordarshan News (DD News in short). The channel has terrestrial and satellite reach across country. DD News, the multilingual news channel of the Prasar Bharati Corporation (India's public service media corporation) was launched in 2003 and is today one of the top five English news channels in the country in terms of viewership. It claims a terrestrial reach of 49% by population and 25% by area of the country, commanding a market share of 15%.[30] The broadcaster also has 30 regional news units, spread across states to telecast news in the regional languages.



[29] See more data on Office of Registrar of Newspapers for India, "Circulation of weeklies and other periodicals," available online at http://rni.nic.in/pdf_file/PIN2017-18/CHAPTER-07.pdf (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[30] "Urban areas dominate DD viewership: Zapr," Indian Television, 25 February 2018, available online at <https://www.indiantelevision.com/television/tv-channels/viewership/urban-areas-dominate-dd-viewership-zapr-180225> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

The biggest private players in the television news segment include BCCL, India Today Group, Zee Media Corporation Ltd and Network 18. The Times Group operates the prominent English news channels Times Now, Mirror Now and the business news channel ET Now through the television division of BCCL. Times Now was launched in 2006 in partnership with Reuters and is currently broadcast across 100 countries.[31] The channel was India's most watched English news channel until 2016 when its popular anchor quit to start Republic TV. However, Times Now still falls in the top three English news channels in the country with a market share of 33% during primetime.

Republic TV is owned by ARG Outlier Media Private Limited, a subsidiary of SARG Media Holding Private Limited. The channel and company were founded in 2016 by a prominent journalist, Arnab Goswami, after quitting from Times Now. Its co-founder was Rajeev Chandrashekar, a businessman and politician associated with the Bharatiya Janata Party, who had invested in the channel through his company Asianet News Media. In 2019 Goswami became the majority shareholder after buying back the shares from Asianet News Media.[32] It has managed to gain a large English news audience share and is the top ranked English news channel despite being a young broadcaster. It commands 44% of the audience share during primetime.[33] The company also launched a Hindi news channel, Republic Bharat, in 2019, which has frequently surfaced in the most watched Hindi news channels list.

The other key English language news broadcaster is TV 18 Broadcast Ltd of the Network 18 Group, which broadcasts the news channels CNN News 18 (in English) and News18 India (in Hindi). The Network 18 Group is part of the Reliance Group of Industries owned by the richest man in Asia, Mukesh Ambani. CNN News 18 was launched in 2005 by the group and News18 India was acquired from the Jagran Prakashan (who owns the news daily Dainik Jagran) in 2006.

India Today Group is another big player in the broadcast business running the most watched Hindi news channel Aaj Tak, which was launched in 1995 as a daily show on the public broadcaster news channel and became an independent news channel in 2000. The channel is run by the TV Today Network, which is a subsidiary of the Living Media India Limited owned by the Purie Family. Kumarmanglam Birla and family, one of the largest diversified industrial conglomerates in India, owns stakes in the Living Media. Aaj Tak commands a large Hindi speaking audience in the country with a market share of 17.3% among Hindi news channels.[34] The company also operates the popular English news channel, India Today, and the hyper-local news channels Tez and Delhi Aaj Tak.

Zee Media Corporation Ltd, which operates the Hindi news channel Zee News, is a key player in the non-English TV news market. The company is part of the Essel Group owned by Subhash Chandra who is an MP associated with the Bharatiya Janata Party. The Corporation runs 14 news channels in eight different languages and the English newspaper Daily News Analysis (DNA). Zee

[31] "TIMES NOW marks its presence in 100 countries," The Economic Times, 30 March 2017, available online at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/media/entertainment/media/times-now-marks-its-presence-in-100-countries/articleshow/57036496.cms?from=mdr> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[32] Lata Jha, "Arnab Goswami buys back Republic Media shares from Asianet," LiveMint, 6 May 2019, available online at <https://www.livemint.com/industry/media/arnab-goswami-buys-back-republic-media-shares-from-asianet-1557146618503.html> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[33] "Republic TV completes 100 weeks as No.1 and expands the genre size by a massive 79%," Best Media Info, 12 April 2019, available online at <https://bestmediainfo.com/2019/04/republic-tv-completes-100-weeks-as-no-1-and-expands-the-genre-size-by-a-massive-79/> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[34] "TV Today Network, Director Report," Business Standards, available online at <https://www.business-standard.com/company/t-v-today-netw-24061/annual-report/director-report> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

News is one of the oldest private news channels in the country launched in 1999. It falls in the top three most watched Hindi news channel in the country with a market share of 12.4%, competing with Aaj Tak and ABP News.

ABP News is a Hindi news channel run by the ABP News Network of the Anand Bazar Patrika Group (ABP Group) owned by the Sarkar family. The broadcast operations of the group began in affiliation with Rupert Murdoch's Star Network in 2003 before becoming an independent broadcast group in 2012. The network owns other top ranked regional language news channels like ABP Majha (in Marathi) and ABP Ananda (in Bengali), besides the print publications Anandbazar Patrika (in Bengali) and The Telegraph (in English).

New Delhi Television Ltd is a smaller company but a significant player as it is India's first independent news network with news broadcasting as its primary business interest. The private company is owned by journalists Radhika and Prannoy Roy or RRPR Holding Pvt. Ltd. It runs two prominent news channels, NDTV 24x7 (in English) and NDTV India (in Hindi), both launched in 2003, and two online portals associated with these channels. It also runs another news channel focused on infotainment and lifestyle called NDTV Prime.

Regional language news channels are very important players and command a very large viewership in their respective language markets. Prominent players in regional markets are Associated Broadcasting Company Pvt Ltd, Sun Group (in Tamil), and Odisha Television Limited (in Odia). The Associated Broadcasting Company Pvt Ltd runs news channels in five languages under the brand TV9. TV9 Marathi, TV9 Telugu and TV9 Kannada are the most watched news channels in their respective language markets. The company is also involved in cable infrastructure and broadcasting in the United States and Africa. Sun Group and Odisha Television Ltd are politically owned media conglomerates that run the most watched news channels in their respective states.

Online/Digital News

The digital news market in India has grown exponentially since the first newspaper started offering its online edition or e-paper. Today, the online news environment in India includes legacy media players that run either parallel or independent digital news operations, native digital news sites, and integrated news site/news aggregators and social media that play an important role in content distribution. India is a mobile-first nation therefore most news publishers, broadcasters and distributors have also created mobile applications accessible in multiple languages.



The dominant players within this market are the digital portals of the legacy news media, both print and television. The most visited news website in the country is the Times group-owned [Indiatimes.com](http://indiatimes.com), the online version of the Times of India, with around 33 million unique visitors in 2019.^[35] The website also links to live news through the company's websites of news

[35] ComScore, 2019. cit.

channels, Times Now and Mirror Now. It is run by the group's digital subsidiary Times Internet Ltd. In a recent ComScore study, Times Internet Ltd commanded 13% (desktop) and 17% (mobile) share of unique visitors on the day of general election results in India in May 2019.[36]

Another key player in this market is the digital counterpart of the English television news channel NDTV 24 x 7 operated by the New Delhi Television Ltd. Ndtv.com is the second most visited news site in India. Both companies also stream live television news on their respective channels on YouTube. Other popular English language publishers online are from the Network18 Group (News18.com) and the Indian Express Group (Indianexpress.com).

Hindi language publishers notable in digital news include the India Today Group (Aajtak.intoday.in) and Jagran Prakashan Ltd. (Jagran.com). The online arms of the news channel and broadsheet were accessed by a combined 106 million unique visitors in 2019.[37] Jagran.com was launched in 2013 by the company's subsidiary MMI Online in partnership with Yahoo.com to expand digital traffic. In 2016, Jagran claimed that 50% of the traffic to the company's properties came from mobile, therefore, it created 18 mobile applications in the areas of news, education, and entertainment within the span of two years.[38] The regional news media is growing in the online space as well thanks to regional publishers like Manorama Malayalam (Manoramaonline.com) and Daily Thanthi Ltd (Dailythanthi.com) garnering significant news audience online through their digital arms.

Other important players in the digital news market are the native digital news publishers that have mushroomed over the last few years and gathered significant audience in the country. They include "digital-only" companies like Scroll Media Inc, which has been operating the news website Scroll.in since 2014. It is a notable player because it has gathered a large audience (over 10 million unique visitors a month in 2018) despite not being backed by an already existing media conglomerate. The website was started by prominent journalists Naresh Fernandes and Samir Patil, the latter being president of Scroll Media, a U.S.-based enterprise.

Another significant player in this market is the technology company Greynium Information Technologies Pvt Ltd, with no background in news production and distribution. It runs the website Oneindia.com launched in 2000, which offers news in seven languages and garnered around 72 million unique visitors in 2019.[39] On the other hand, Firstpost.com owned by the Network 18 Group was launched in 2011 as the company's first web-only brand. It is the most visited native digital news website and garnered over 32.8 million unique visitors on mobile platforms alone in 2018.[40] Owing to its online success, this native-digital brand briefly

[36] Ramanujam Pobbisetty, "Top 5 News/Information sites on India general election results day," ComScore, 13 August 2019, available online at <https://www.comscore.com/Insights/Blog/Top-5-News-Information-sites-on-India-general-election-results-day> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[37] "India is the second-largest online news consuming nation with 282 mn UVs: comScore," Television Post, 29 November 2019, available online at <https://www.televisionpost.com/india-is-the-second-largest-online-news-consuming-nation-with-282-mn-uvs-comscore/> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[38] Jeremy C. Fox, "Dainik Jagran creates 18 mobile apps in 2 years to serve audience of 16.6 million," INMA, 6 January 2016, available online at <https://www.inma.org/blogs/ideas/post.cfm/dainik-jagran-creates-18-mobile-apps-in-2-years-to-serve-audience-of-16-6-million> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[39] "Comscore ranking for digital news publishers: Times tops list, Network18 and India Today follows," Best Media Info, 6 November 2019, available online at <https://bestmediainfo.com/2019/11/comscore-ranking-for-digital-news-publishers-times-tops-list-network18-and-india-today-follows/> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

[40] "FIRSTPOST.COM becomes India's 4th most-read News Site," Adgully, 6 July 2018, available online at <https://www.adgully.com/firstpost-com-becomes-india-s-4th-most-read-news-site-79101.html> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

ventured into the print industry in 2019 with a weekly newspaper by the same name but then shut down the operation in six months.[41]

Online winners

Most popular news websites in India, 2012-2019

News website	Platform	Language	Traffic metrics ('000)							
			2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Indiatimes.com	Newspaper	English	92,400	143,000	191,000	195,000	175,000	160,000	132,000	147,000
Ndtv.com	TV	English	31,600	65,000	115,000	128,000	101,000	129,000	164,000	139,000
la.rediff.com	Native digital	English	109,000	125,000	117,000	102,000	74,000	62,000	48,000	39,100
Manoramaonline.com	Newspaper	Malayalam	14,400	20,200	n/a	25,200	22,700	24,700	24,500	25,800
News18.com	TV	English	n/a	n/a	1,180	1,000	2,920	28,600	50,800	82,200
Mathrubhumi.com	Newspaper	Malayalam	6,620	11,200	13,400	12,100	8,600	12,100	14,200	15,000
Indianexpress.com	Newspaper	English	5,670	16,500	24,900	33,300	46,200	52,800	40,200	48,100
Jagran.com	Newspaper	Hindi	4,400	19,100	32,300	34,100	23,700	17,500	16,000	18,700
Firstpost.com	Native digital	English	4,800	10,100	21,600	21,600	22,600	24,200	30,700	15,400
Zeenews.india.com	TV	Hindi	17,100	31,600	45,600	48,100	48,000	38,500	30,200	21,100
Hindustantimes.com	Newspaper	English	13,400	18,300	25,800	23,200	24,800	38,200	36,100	39,100
Oneindia.com	Native digital	English	n/a	n/a	n/a	5,460	4,860	5,810	32,000	33,800
Scroll.in	Native digital	English	n/a	n/a	712	3,230	4,580	5,480	5,690	6,790
Dailythanthi.com	Newspaper	Tamil	1,760	2,290	7,890	7,160	3,780	3,430	3,770	3,730
Dinamalar.com	Newspaper	Tamil	17,100	21,900	24,600	16,000	9,990	11,300	10,300	9,230

Note: Traffic data expressed as number of sessions per month (both mobile and desktop); data as of 1st May every year
Source: Alexa

Other important players in this market are news aggregator mobile applications and the social media websites where most online news consumption takes place. According to a ComScore study, news aggregators attract 56% of the online news audience with DailyHunt leading the market with a 43% reach. DailyHunt is a mobile news application launched as NewsHunt in 2009 and bought by Verse Innovation Pvt Ltd in 2011 once the application gained around 18 million page views in two years. It is a multi-lingual news platform offering news in 14 Indian languages, which struck content deals with major news outlets in the country. The company also bought minority stakes in the web-only portal Oneindia.com in 2016, expanding its portfolio. Flipboard (a U.S.-based aggregator) and InShorts (launched by former engineering students) are other important news aggregators in India.

International search and social media giants are also key players in the Indian digital news market. Google, Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp Messenger are important platforms not only for news consumption, but also news production. These technology companies offer customizable news products to news outlets to enhance their off-site reach such as Facebook Instant Articles, Twitter Moments, and news on WhatsApp.

[41] Lata Jha, "Network18 suspends publication of Firstpost newspaper," LiveMint, 16 June 2019, available online at <https://www.livemint.com/industry/media/network18-suspends-the-publication-of-firstpost-newspaper-1559813616620.html> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

FUNDING TRENDS

Print Funding

In 2017-2018, the newspaper and magazine industry in India grew by 3.4% compared to 2016-2017 (the lowest annual growth rate in a decade). The growth was largely led by the Hindi and regional language newspapers that fared comparatively better (with growth rates of 4.6% and 4.2 %, respectively) than English newspapers (registering a growth of 1.5%). Magazines suffered a 6% decline in advertising and circulation revenue during the 2017-2018 financial year. The muted growth of the newspaper industry is due to a number of reasons including the implementation of the Currency Demonetization Policy in late 2016 and the Goods and Services Tax regime in 2017, the rising price of newsprint (an increase of approximately 40%), and stronger competition from digital.

The most important sources of funding in the print news industry are advertising and circulation. In 2018, revenue generated by the print industry from advertising stood at €2.6bn while revenue from circulation was worth €1.37bn.[42] The industry relies heavily on the advertising revenue to recover the costs of publishing despite their cyclical nature. This is primarily because news is underpriced and publishers charge cover prices anywhere between €0.01 to €0.26 depending upon the language and edition of the paper. This brings roughly €2.5 in circulation revenue per month per household.[43] On the other hand, the level of advertising rates offered to buyers depends on multiple factors such as the reach of the newspaper, edition, page number, location on the page, as well as size and type of advertisement.

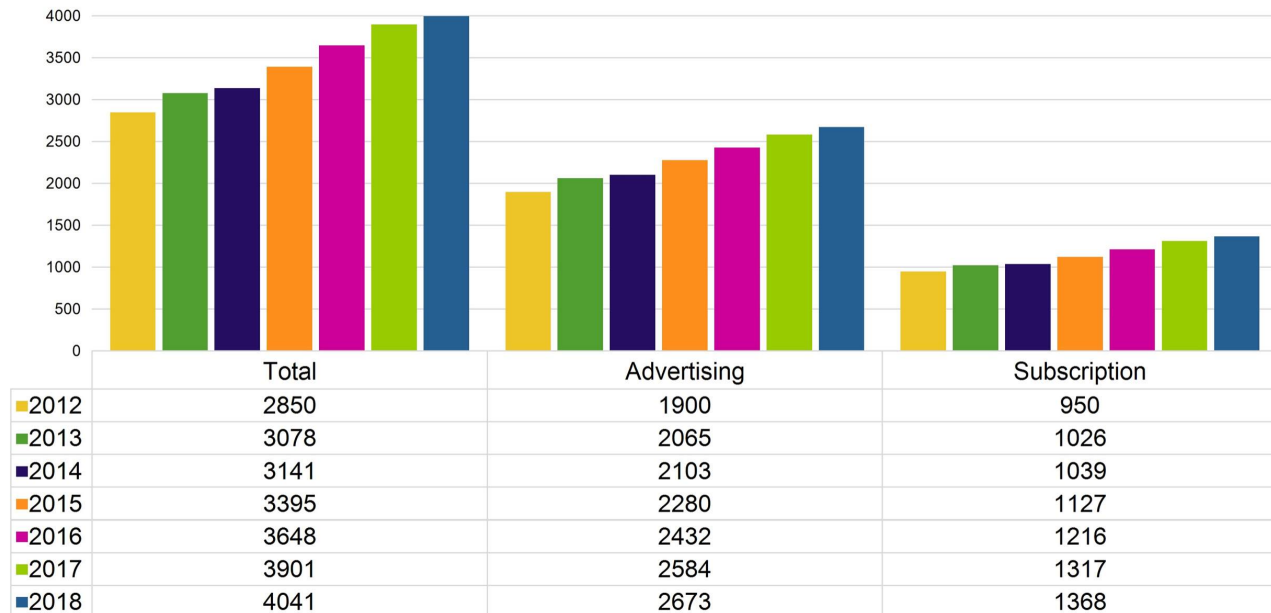
Typically, the revenue from circulation to advertising ratio is 1:2 in the English newspaper market. Language newspapers charge a comparatively higher cover price from their more stable regional audience. Historically, regional language newspapers have traditionally received a quarter of the ad rate charged by English newspapers; however, this is changing as news in regional languages is increasingly demanded by the consuming classes and the advertisers have increased their focus on semi-urban and rural areas. In 2018, Hindi and regional language newspapers saw a 3.6% and 4.2% increase in advertising revenue whereas English newspapers saw a mere 1.7% increase. Revenue from circulation also increased in Hindi and regional language newspapers at 6.5% and 4.2%, respectively, as they increased their cover price to mitigate pressures from the rising cost of newsprint in India. Other important funding sources for Indian print media include brand extensions through sponsored events that usually fall under the “other income” section of their financial filings.

[42] KPMG, “Media ecosystems...,” cit.

[43] FICCI-EY Report 2018, cit.

At print value

Revenue generated by the print industry, in € million, 2012-2018



Source: FICCI-KPMG Reports, 2012-2018

The biggest publishers in the country, DB Corp and Jagran Prakashan Ltd, are publicly listed. Nearly 70% of DB Corp's shares are held by the Agarwal family, and the remainder by the public. Over 60% of Jagran Prakashan Ltd's shares are held by the Gupta family and the remainder by the public. For the financial year 2017-18, the company accounted €51.17m in returns from shareholders.

In 2017-18, DB Corp registered a 3.14% rise in revenue from operations to €295m, of which advertising accounted for €201.5m (a 3% increase compared to the previous year), circulation contributed €61.6m (7% increase against the previous year), and other operations including services and events contributed €23.5m.[44] The company expanded its circulation revenue by increasing volumes and the cover price in their markets in the states of Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh and a new market in the state of Bihar. Jagran Prakashan Ltd publishes the Dainik Jagran, which generates some 65% of the company's operating revenue. The company registered a slight increase (of 0.9%) in revenue from operations in 2017-2018. It stood at €291.8m, with advertising contributing €215m and circulation contributing €54.8m.[45]

BCCL, publisher of the Times of India, has often claimed to be primarily an advertising business as it generates 90% of its operating revenue from advertising sales. In the financial year 2017-18, the BCCL saw a 3.34% rise in its operating revenue to €1.15bn from €1.1bn in the previous fiscal year.[46] Advertising contributed €603m, circulation €89.3m, and sponsored events €25.8m to

[44] DB Corp Annual Report 2017-18.

[45] Jagran Prakashan Ltd Annual Report 2017-18, available online at https://jplcorp.in/new/pdf/ANNUAL_REPORT_2017-18.pdf (accessed on 11 February 2020).

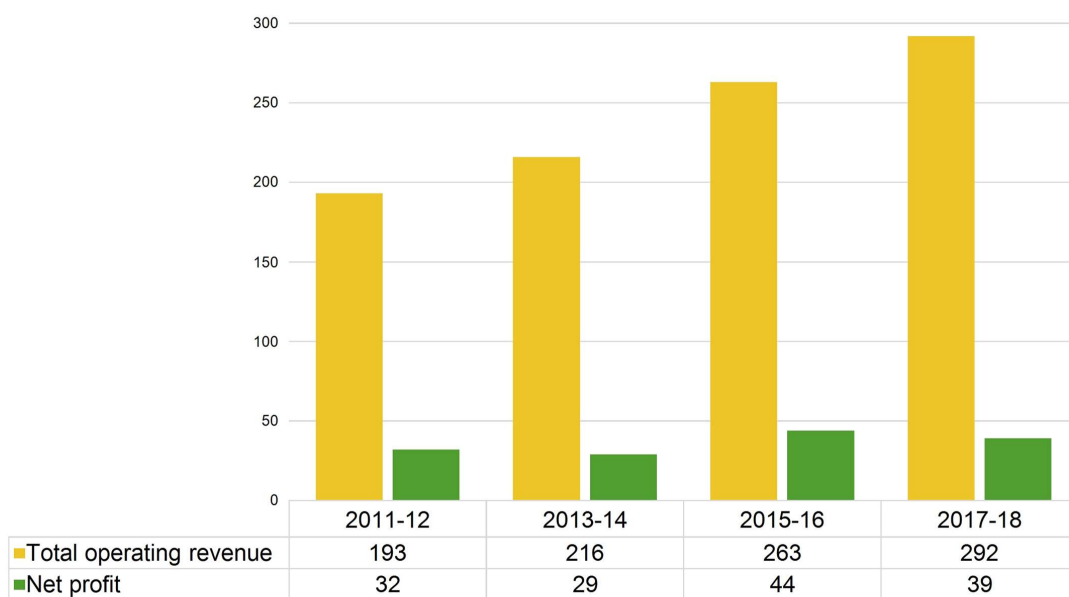
[46] Arnab Dutta, "Times Group's net profit slides again in FY18, registers 6.84% dip," Business Standard, 3 January 2019, available online at https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/times-group-s-net-profit-slides-again-in-fy18-registers-6-84-dip-119010300049_1.html (accessed on 11 February 2020); figures include the revenue from all new and non-news publication and broadcast operations of the company.

the revenue from operations in the 2017-2018 financial year.[47] This was after the company increased the advertising rates for its publications by 8% to 10% in 2017. However, the net profit of the company stood in 2017-2018 at €86.2m, down by 6.5% from €92.5m in 2016-17.

One of the largest regional language markets, Malayalam newspapers, saw a slight increase in operating revenues driven by high cover prices and expansion in digital operations but also suffered losses in circulation and advertising revenues due to major floods in the state of Kerala in 2018. Malayala Manorama Company Ltd, publisher of the Malayalam news daily Malayala Manorama, recorded €153.2m in revenue from operations in the financial year 2017-18. Similarly, The Mathrubhumi Printing and Publishing Company Ltd, which runs the second most read Malayalam news daily, Mathrubhumi, pulled in €91.4m in operating revenues in the same financial year.[48]

The publishing industry

Key financial indicators for Jagran Prakashan Ltd, in € million, 2011-2018



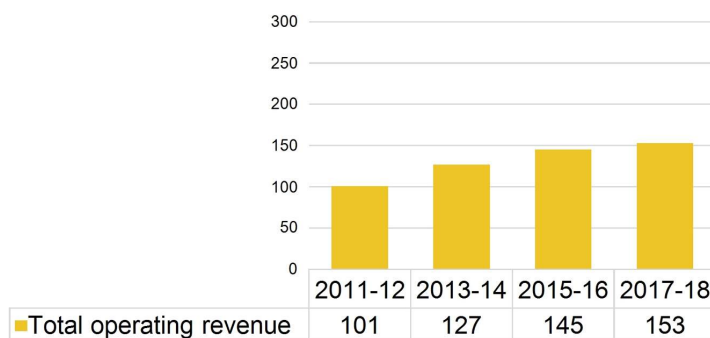
Source: Company Annual Reports, 2011-2018

[47] Sonam Saini, "BCCL's advertising revenue grows 1.7% in FY19," Exchange4Media, 21 November 2019, available online at <https://www.exchange4media.com/media-others-news/bccls-advertising-revenue-grows-17-in-fy19-100974.html> (accessed on 11 February 2020).

[48] Annual Reports submitted to the Registrar of Companies.

Dainik Bhaskar Corporation Ltd, in € million, 2011-2018

Source: Company Annual Reports, 2011-18

Total operating revenue of Malayala Manorama Pvt Ltd, in € million, 2011-2018Note: Net profit not disclosed
Source: Registrar of Companies

Television Funding

Television is the most lucrative news business in India, but also the costliest to run. At the start of the decade the television industry suffered a slump due to the mandatory switchover to digital technology in cable distribution. At the end of the fiscal year 2010, the industry registered half of the revenue generated by the print media.[49] However, in 2017-2018, the industry registered an overall 9.5% growth against the year before, having an estimated size of €8.25bn, which reflected a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 10.7% between the fiscal years 2014 and 2018.

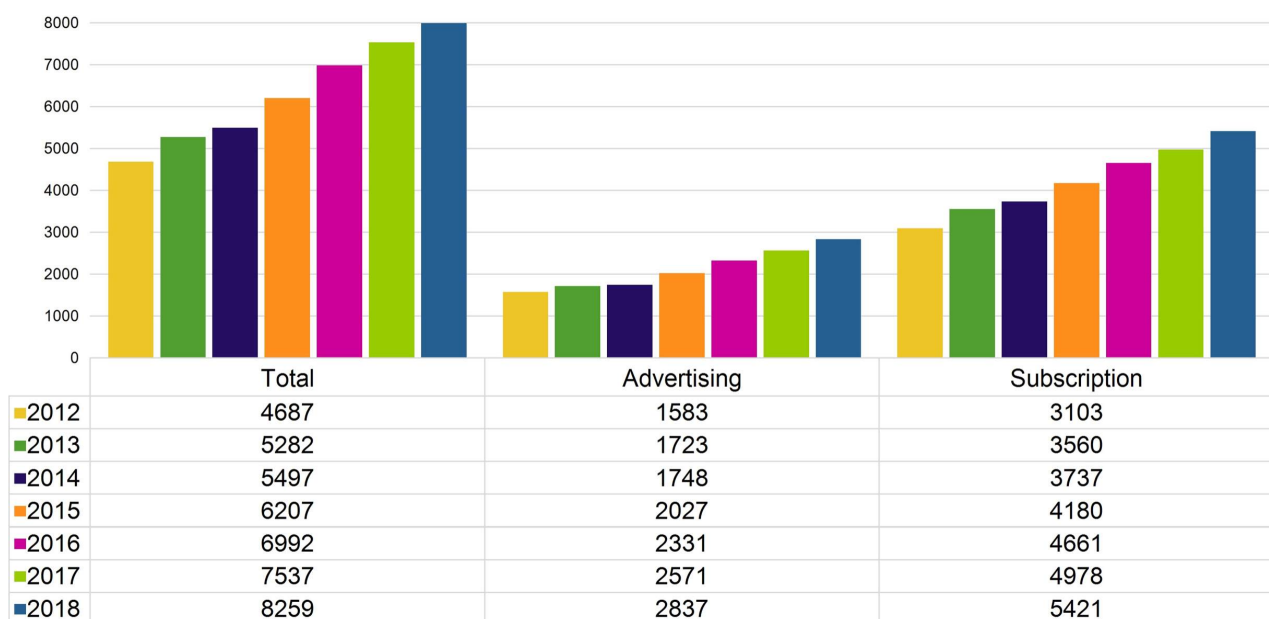
Advertising revenue brought in €2.83bn (a 10.1% increase year-on-year) and subscription revenue contributed about €5.42bn (a 9.1% increase) in the 2017-2018 financial year.

[49] Vanita Kohli Khandekar, *The Indian Media Business*, Edition 4, SAGE Publications, 2013.

In the news, advertising brings higher revenues than subscriptions. This is because most news channels in India are free-to-air; therefore, they too, like print, rely on advertising, sponsorship, and revenue from the company's other (i.e. non-news) broadcast operations to recover costs. The advertising revenue generated by free-to-air channels grew by 10% year on year in 2017-2018 owing to the expanding viewership in rural areas. Broadcasters also experienced a slow growth in subscription revenues in 2017 due to many channels migrating to free-to-air mode and the implementation of the new Broadcasting and Cable Tariff Order that led to a decrease in the average revenue per user.

Screen time

Revenue generated by the television industry in India, in € million, 2012-2018



Note: The figures include data for all news and non-news players in the industry including broadcasters, distributors, and programmers.
Source: FICCI-KPMG Industry Reports, 2012-2018

TV Today Network of the Living Media India Ltd that broadcasts the leading channels Aaj Tak (Hindi) and India Today (English) was one of the best performers in 2017-2018. The company witnessed that year a 64% annual rise in its net revenue to €186m with broadcast operations contributing a total of €76.7m. The operating revenue stood at €87.5m, rising by 12.03 % over the previous year with advertising (from all of the company's operations) and subscription bringing €76m and €2.7m, respectively. The company also hosted a number of large sponsorship events such as India Today Conclave, Agenda Aaj Tak and Sahitya Aaj Tak that generated approximately €800,000.[50]

Zee Media Corporation that runs one of the oldest Hindi news channels, Zee News, also prospered during 2017-2018 with a net profit of €5m. The company experienced a 28% growth in operating revenue from €57m in 2016-2017 to €74m in the following fiscal year. Advertising

[50] TV Today Annual Report 2017-2018, available online at http://specials.indiatoday.com/ajtaknew/download/TV_TODAY_AR_2017-18.pdf (accessed on 11 February 2020).

revenue from broadcast operations accounted for €65m and subscription accounted for €6m. Zee managed to maintain its revenues from subscriptions despite the conversion of its flagship channel, Zee News, to a free-to-air channel in 2016. The company also pulled in over €760,000 in revenue from other activities that included income from sponsorship of events undertaken during the last same financial year.

One of the prominent regional players, Sun Group, which runs the news channel Sun TV (Tamil) was also one of the most profitable channels of 2017. The company gained 116% in net worth with net revenue growing from €2bn in 2016 to €4.5bn in 2017.[51] The company's revenue solely from broadcast operations stood at €375m, with €189m brought in by advertising and €165m by subscriptions.[52]

On the other hand, New Delhi Television Ltd, which broadcasts the news channels NDTV India (Hindi) and NDTV 24x7 (English), has been registering losses for the last three financial years. In the fiscal year 2017-2018, the company noted a net loss worth €7.7m and a decline in revenue from operations, which stood at €54m with advertising, subscriptions and events contributing €25m, €5m and €3.4m, respectively.[53] In 2017, the company also revamped its English business news channel NDTV Profit to a more advertising lucrative genre (lifestyle and infotainment) owing to pressures to generate revenue.[54] In a move to cut costs, NDTV also laid off over 70 staffers, mainly camera persons as part of a shift to mobile journalism where reporters shoot and file their stories on smartphones.[55]

Digital/Online News

The digital industry in India has grown exponentially in the last few years. The cost-revenue dynamics of digital news is very different from that of broadcast and newspaper industries. The minimal barriers to entry and costs to launch and sustain websites have allowed diverse players to enter the business of news production and distribution online. Legacy print and television news media have made large investments in expanding their digital arms but they depend on advertising and other digital operations for revenue. In contrast, native digital news media finance themselves through Venture Capital (VC) investments and philanthropic donations.

Subscriptions and paywalls for online news are still to gain ground in India as the few existing instances are limited to English language outlets. However, some news websites have made headway with new revenue streams such as freemiums (a tiered paywall format that allows readers to access content both free-of-charge and for a range of fees), crowdfunding or reader revenue.

[51] Ruhail Amin, "Sun Group & India Today Group's net revenue up by 116% & 68 % respectively," Exchange4Media, 7 February 2018, available online at <https://www.exchange4media.com/media-print-news/sun-group-india-today-groups-net-revenue-up-by-11668-respectively-88301.html> (accessed on 11 February 2020).

[52] Sun TV Network Annual report 2018, available online at <http://www.suntv.in/pdf/Finance/Annual-Report-2018.pdf> (accessed on 11 February 2020).

[53] NDTV Annual Report, available online at <https://www.ndtv.com/convergence/ndtv/corporatepage/images/AnnualReport2017-18R.pdf> (accessed on 11 February 2020).

[54] Bindu D Menon, "NDTV Profit goes off air from June 5," 2 June 2017, available online at <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/ndtv-profit-goes-off-air-from-june-5/article9718642.ece> (accessed on 11 February 2020).

[55] "NDTV shifts to mobile journalism, downsizes staff," Best Media Info, 25 July 2017, available online at <https://bestmediainfo.com/2017/07/ndtv-shifts-to-mobile-journalism-downsizes-staff/> (accessed on 11 February 2020).

The Times Group has established a very strong presence online through its digital subsidiary Times Internet, which is one of the biggest gainers in the online news market and runs the country's most visited news websites, Timesofindia.com and Indiatimes.com along with 33 other digital properties. The subsidiary pulled in total revenue of €177m in 2017-18, of which the €119m were operating revenues. Currently, 47% of the online vehicle's revenue comes from ads, 17% from classifieds and up to 24% from transactions. Times Internet aims to grow into a billion-dollar company crossing €126m in net revenue by the end of the fiscal year 2020.[56]

In 2017-2018, Jagran Prakashan Ltd.'s digital subsidiary MMI Online brought in €4.2m (up by 15.7% from €3.6m in the previous year) from digital ads on nine digital properties including Jagran.com (Hindi) and Mid-Day.com (English), and mobile applications.[57] DB Corp recorded total revenues from digital operations worth €6.7m in the same financial year. It runs nine websites including Bhaskar.com (Hindi), Divyabhaskar.com (Gujarati) and Divyamarathi.com (Marathi), and has four mobile apps through its subsidiary DB Infomedia Pvt. Ltd. (DBIPL).

The Network 18 Group that runs popular news sites like the Firstpost.in, News18.com, and Moneycontrol.com (a business news site) reaches 25% of total news consumption audience on the internet. The company had average revenues of €5.7m from digital operations in each quarter of the fiscal year 2017-2018.[58] Among these, News18.com brought in the highest revenue from display ads owing to its popularity among regional news audiences. New Delhi Television Ltd.'s digital subsidiary NDTV Convergence, which runs the online arms of the television news channels, has fared slightly better compared to the company's broadcast operations. It recorded total revenues of €18.2m from digital operations.[59] The company in 2018 launched a premium subscription-based news service (priced at €0.7 per month) on its mobile application. The service is ads-free and shows live news from NDTV channels.[60]

Reader revenues have emerged as a new revenue stream, especially among digital natives, that aim to be ad-independent and monetize niche and investigative journalism. Some niche news websites have been successfully running a paywall as was the case of business news websites of Business Standard (owned by the ABP Group), VCCircle (owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Network), and The Ken (a native-digital technology news site).

From 2017-2018, Newslandry Media Pvt Ltd, which runs the for-profit news site Newslandry.com, put sections on Comics and Podcasts behind a paywall. The website also relies on crowdfunding individual stories taken up by the website. For their coverage of the Indian General Elections in 2019, it set a target of €20,270 of which €7,347 was eventually raised.[61] It recorded total revenues of €98,815 in the fiscal year 2018. Similarly, the Foundation for Independent Journalism (FIJ) that runs the non-profit news website Wire.in recorded revenues of

[56] "Times Internet looks to join \$1 billion club in next 5 years," The Economic Times, 8 January 2017, available online at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/tech/internet/times-internet-looks-to-join-1-billion-club-in-next-5-years/articleshow/56408773.cms> (accessed on 14 February 2020).

[57] Rashi Varshney, "Jagran Prakashan's digital ad revenue grew 1.3% YoY to Rs 9.3 Cr in Q4FY18," Medianama, 28 May 2018, available online at <https://www.medianama.com/2018/05/223-jagran-prakashan-q4fy18/> (accessed on 14 February 2020).

[58] "Network18 narrows losses in Q2, TV18 profit up 15%," Best Media Info, 16 October 2019, available online at <https://bestmediainfo.com/2019/10/network18-narrows-losses-in-q2-tv18-profit-up-15/> (accessed on 14 February 2020).

[59] Trisha Jalan, "NDTV digital revenues at Rs 37 Cr, overall profits up in Q1FY19," Medianama, 21 August 2018, available online at <https://www.medianama.com/2018/08/223-ndtv-earnings-q1fy19/> (accessed on 14 February 2020).

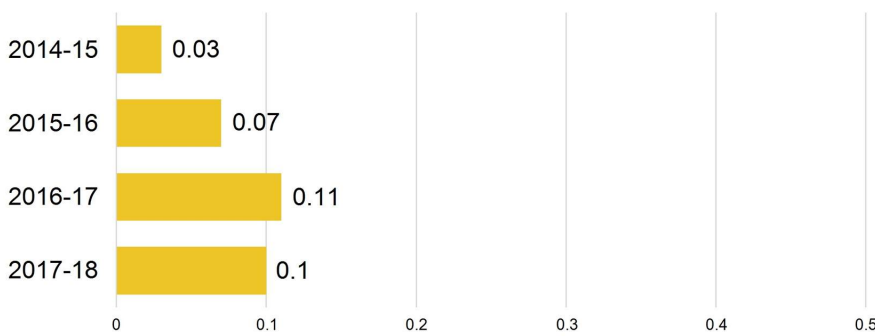
[60] "NDTV launches ad-free subscription service on mobile app," TelevisionPost.com, 22 November 2018, available online at <https://www.televisionpost.com/ndtv-launches-ad-free-subscription-service-on-mobile-app/> (accessed on 14 February 2020).

[61] See more on the portal's website at <https://www.newslandry.com/sena>

€700,000 in 2017-2018 via donations from philanthropic organizations and individual readers. In the previous year, it recorded revenues of €600,000, of which 20% was generated from reader revenues in the form of donations.[62]

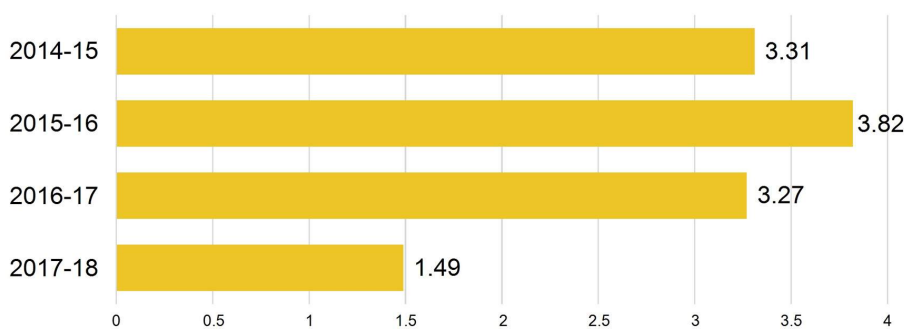
News aggregators have been running a lucrative business in the digital news landscape primarily through advertising and seed funding. DailyHunt owned by technology company Verse Innovations Pvt Ltd., reached 207 million monthly active users in 2019. The company monetizes content (especially regional language news) through ads, and recorded operating revenues of €1.3m in 2017-2018. InShorts, owned by Inshorts Medialabs Private Ltd, is a news aggregator launched in 2013 that functions solely through its mobile application available in English and Hindi. It had €2.4m in operating revenue in 2017-2018. The platform has over 250 companies advertising on it including big brands such as Netflix, Vodafone, and Mercedes.[63] In 2019, the company launched a location-based social network video application called Public, which garnered over 10 million users in India within six months.[64]

Operating Revenue of Newslaundry Media Pvt Ltd, in € million, 2014-2018



Source: Registrar of Companies

Operating Revenue of Verse Innovations Pvt Ltd, in € million, 2014-2018



Source: Registrar of Companies

[62] Bibi van der Zee, "How reader funding is helping save independent media across the world," *The Guardian*, 25 December 2017, available online at https://amp.theguardian.com/technology/2017/dec/25/how-reader-funding-is-helping-save-independent-media-across-the-world?__twitter_impression=true (accessed on 14 February 2020).

[63] "Inshorts reports Rs 60 crore revenue run rate for FY19, but targets Rs 80 crore," *MoneyControl.com*, 4 December 2018, available online at <https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/startup/inshorts-reports-rs-60-crore-revenue-run-rate-for-fy19-but-targets-rs-80-crore-3251081.html> (accessed on 14 February 2020).

[64] Neha Alawadhi, "Inshorts' social video app Public gets 10 million users in 6 months," *Business Standards*, 9 January 2020, available online at https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/inshorts-social-video-app-public-gets-10-million-users-in-6-months-120010801292_1.html (accessed on 14 February 2020).

INFLUENTIAL NEWS MEDIA

The decision-makers in India are influenced by news media that command vast geographic and linguistic reach. These include the large national and regional media houses, news agencies, and the state broadcaster. According to experts interviewed for this study, large and well-endowed national television news channels such as Times Now, CNN News 18, AajTak, ABP News, and newspapers such as Hindustan Times, Times of India, Dainik Jagran, and Dainik Bhaskar are influential among politicians.

Times Now and CNN News 18 are part of the Times Group and Network 18 broadcasting conglomerates, respectively. Times Now, owned by BCCL (which also runs the Times of India), has been in the top two most watched English news channels since its launch in 2006. Both news channels are known to regularly host high-level politicians and bureaucrats on their primetime shows.

Aaj Tak (owned by India Today Group which also has leading print news periodicals in various languages) is the most popular news channel in Hindi among both the urban and rural audience. Aaj Tak, and its English news counterpart India Today, were the only news channels that were offered exclusive interviews with the incumbent Prime Minister of India and the leading opposition candidate before the 2019 elections. Similarly, the national newspapers mentioned above are the most widely circulated and read English and Hindi language newspapers, including their regional and niche editions. Editorials and interviews published in these widely read newspapers are influential amongst the decision makers.

Along with regularly hosting views of politicians and corporates in their newspapers, news channels, and websites, these large media houses also invite them to brand extensions programs, such as sponsored events. These events bring sponsorship for both, the media houses and the invitees, but are also an important source of revenue for the news media. Examples of such events include ET Global Summit (Times Group), NDTV Leadership Awards, Hindustan Times Leadership Summit (Hindustan Group), Jagran Conclave (Jagran Prakashan Group), among many others. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the chief guest for the India Today Group's brand extension event, India Today Conclave, in March 2019, before the national elections.[65] Experts interviewed for this report suggest that attendance to these events is also influenced by the nature of journalism conducted by the news outlet. In many cases politicians and corporates have refused to attend events hosted by media houses critical of them.[66]

Regional television channels and print media have always been influential among politicians and businesses due to their significant audience, which form a large part of the electorate. The influence of regional news media in setting the agenda has been a significant reason for the widespread political ownership of media at regional levels. Newspapers such as Lokmat (Maharashtra), Malayalam Manorama (Kerala) and news channels such as ETV (Gujarat) and SunTV (Tamil Nadu) are some examples of popular regional news outlets owned by politically connected people that are influential among decision-makers.

[65] "PM Modi asks seven 'aaj tak' questions at India Today Conclave," India Today, 2 March 2019, available online at <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/prime-minister-narendra-modi-aajtak-sawaal-india-today-group-conclave-1469094-2019-03-02> (accessed on 14 February 2020).

[66] "Why Did PM Modi Pull Out Of ET's Global Business Summit?," NewsLaundry, 27 March 2017, available online at <https://www.newslaundry.com/2017/03/27/why-did-pm-modi-pull-out-of-ets-global-business-summit> (accessed on 14 February 2020).

Another influential media is Asian News International (ANI), the largest news agency and provider for television news in India, which also share its content with international news organizations, including Reuters and BBC. It has been known to record and circulate favorable content of political leaders and bureaucrats who otherwise refrain from interviews and news conferences with news channels.[67]

The All India Radio (AIR) is considered influential among politicians, especially the Prime Minister Modi who uses the medium, with the largest reach in the country, for a regular broadcast called Mann Ki Baat (which in Hindi means “Heart’s Voice”). Modi, unlike former leaders, rarely indulges with the news media through interviews and news conferences but speaks on the AIR every few weeks directly to the citizens. The program was started in 2014 and has developed a very wide following, becoming a major source of revenue for the AIR; its 10-second ad slots went for ₹2,497, compared to the normal rate of for ₹6-₹19.[68]

The business news genre on television commands a niche, yet wealthy audience and is very influential amongst corporates and politicians.

Social media, blogs, and news websites play an important role in furthering civil society causes but these spaces have also been mobilized by politicians and businesses. The lack of entry barriers and minimal costs of running news websites has made the internet a convenient and influential news platform for politicians.

Additionally, independent and non-tabloid media are also influential among politicians and bureaucrats despite their limited reach because of their investigative and critical reporting. These include print periodicals such as Economic Political Weekly and Caravan. Similarly, native digital news sites such as The News Minute, The Wire.in and Scroll.in, started around 2014, quickly gained a strong presence although their traffic is far lower than that of the websites of the national and regional leading newspapers and television channels. AltNews, Boomlive, and WebQoof have been regularly debunking false news and misinformation in the country. Websites of international media like Al Jazeera, The Guardian, and BBC are also considered influential media in India for their serious journalism and, on domestic developments, unbiased coverage.

The independent media critical of the decision-makers and having limited reach have gained the attention of powerful politicians and business tycoons who often resort to legal attacks in the form of strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP). These expensive defamation lawsuits aim to silence criticism by financially draining small, independent news outlets. For instance, The Wire.in was faced with 13 defamation lawsuits by politicians and big business amounting to ₹1.45bn filed against the outlet in the first four years after its inception. Even television channels are sued. In 2018, NDTV was sued for defamation by Anil Ambani, owner of the Reliance ADA Group and brother of Mukesh Ambani, who asked for compensations worth ₹1.2m[69] for an investigative story concerning the company’s business involvements. Such lawsuits have also instilled a degree of self-censorship among some independent news outlets in the country.

[67] Praveen Donthi, “The Image Makers,” The Caravan, 1 March 2019, available online at <https://caravanmagazine.in/reportage/ani-reports-government-version-truth> (accessed on 14 February 2020).

[68] Usha Rani Da, “5 times Modi proved he is one the world’s best orators,” Business Insider, 18 September 2015, available online at <https://www.businessinsider.in/5-times-modi-proved-he-is-one-the-worlds-best-orators/articleshow/49013080.cms> (accessed on 14 February 2020).

[69] “Anil Ambani’s Reliance Sues NDTV For 10,000 Crores For Rafale Coverage,” NDTV, 18 October 2018, available online at <https://www.ndtv.com/communication/anil-ambanis-reliance-sues-ndtv-for-10-000-crores-for-rafale-coverage-1934189> (accessed on 14 February 2020).

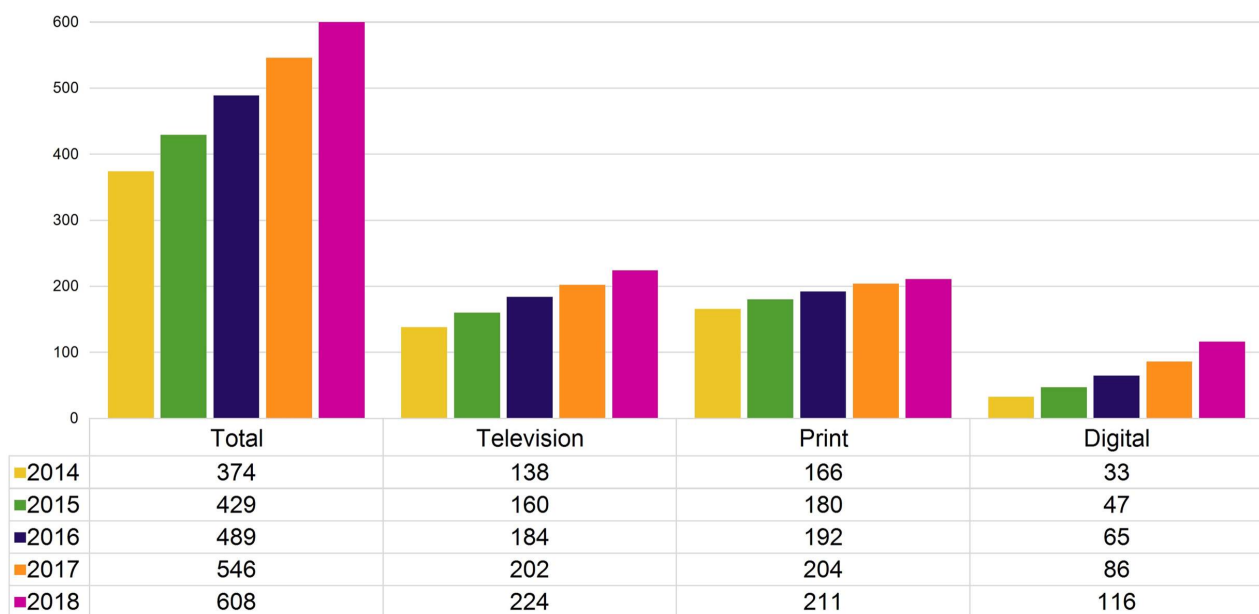
NON-GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Advertising

The advertising revenue from the entire media industry has been on a continuous rise in India, with the digital/online sector seeing exponential year-on-year growth. In the financial year 2018, advertising revenue from television, print, outdoor, radio, and digital grew by 11.5% against 2017. The revenue from digital alone grew by 35% the same year. The national and state elections in 2018 and 2019 gave advertising a boost: news channels made the most of political advertising in the run-up to the election period.

Commercial time

Advertising market in India, in € billion, 2014-2018



Note: The total figures reflect ad revenues from non-news activities as well.

Source: FICCI-KPMG Industry Reports, 2014-2018

Advertising is the primary source of revenue for newsmakers across all media as subscription revenue is insufficient in a country where news has always been underpriced. According to the experts interviewed for this study, the dominance of advertising does not directly influence editorial decisions as most news outlets have a distinct marketing department. However, there have been cases where sponsored content has been disguised as news in newspapers, on television and online portal, quite often, without adequate disclosures.

While television continues to be the dominant advertising medium due to its unmatched reach, advertisers have also kept the newspaper business afloat, helping delay the decline of newspapers as experienced in the West. In 2018, the print media ad spend grew by 3.1% and subscription

revenue increased by 4% due to expansion in circulation, readership and regional delivery.[70] Experts interviewed for this study have asserted the importance of the non-English language markets in providing impetus to this growth, with Hindi and regional print media grabbing 3.6 % and 4.2% of the ad revenues, respectively. Digital advertising has been leading the ad revenue growth owing to the vast digital adoption, especially among high income audiences, and cheap data tariffs offered by mobile operators. In 2018, digital ad spending grew by 35% year-on-year, commanding 21% of the total advertising expenditure.

The top advertising sectors across mediums include fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), automobiles, e-commerce, services, and banking and financial services. The advertising market is saturated with international media buying agencies and their subsidiaries including WPP Group, Mullen Lowe Lintas, J Walter Thompson, and Maccann World Group. In 2015, WPP Group commanded 45% of the Indian ad market and has since expanded.[71] The digital advertising market is dominated by Google and Facebook, which together command 68% of the digital ad market in India through hosting, search, display, and video ads, and providing ad technology services to advertisers.[72]

Ad winners

Top advertisers across all platforms in 2018

Advertiser	Spend (in € million)
Hindustan Lever	385-422
Reckitt Benckiser	87-106
Procter & Gamble	25-106
Amazon	87-106
Maruti Suzuki	80-87
Samsung India	80-87
Reliance Industries	80-87

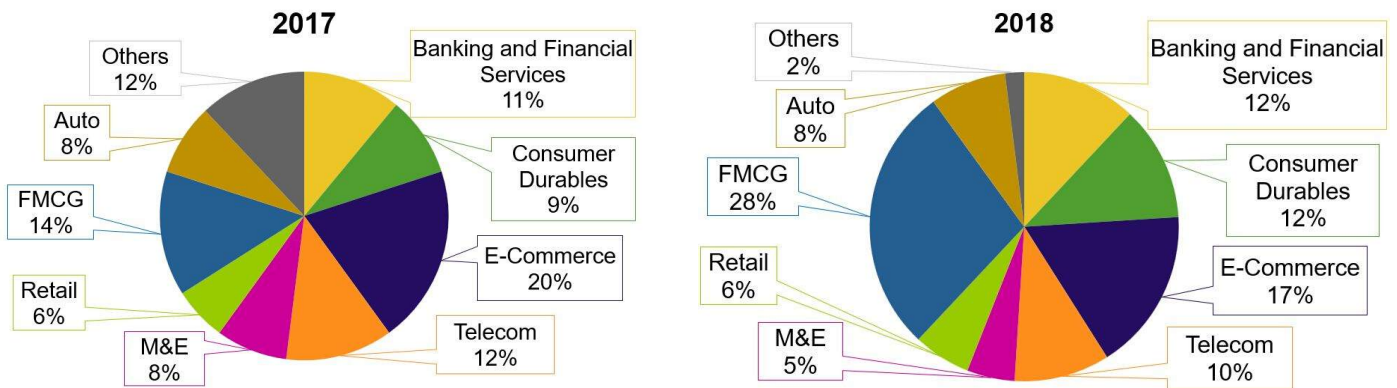
Source: KPMG Industry Report, 2018

[70] Gaurav Laghate, "Print media ad growth to accelerate in 2019," The Economic Times, 7 December 2018, available online at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/media/entertainment/media/print-media-ad-growth-to-accelerate-in-2019/articleshow/66977717.cms> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

[71] "WPP eyes 10% revenue rise in India, bets on organic growth," The Economic Times, 11 October 2015, available online at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/advertising/wpp-eyes-10-revenue-rise-in-india-bets-on-organic-growth/articleshow/49308965.cms?from=mdr> (accessed on 28 March 2020).

[72] Venkat Ananth, Shelley Singh, "Google and Facebook prey on digital advertising for content by news producers. Fair play?," The Economic Times, 24 July 2019, available online at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/advertising/google-and-facebook-prey-on-digital-advertising-for-content-by-news-producers-fairplay/articleshow/70355258.cms?from=mdr> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

Largest digital ad spend by sector (in percentile), 2017-2018



Source: KPMG Industry Report 2018

Political advertising

Political advertising during elections is an important source of revenue for national and regional news outlets. These advertisements differ from the government advertisements covering public schemes and announcements by the state. Political advertising during election periods has significantly changed, both qualitatively and quantitatively, since the 2014 national elections and its unparalleled media blitzkrieg to shape public opinion. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) spent €38m on media advertisements during the 2014 campaign, which was around 10% of total ad spend in the media during that financial year.[73] In the months leading up to the state and general elections in 2019, Bharatiya Janata Party spent €2.3m on television advertising alone, which accounted for around 1% of the total television ad spend in 2018. With over 22,000 television ads, it became the number one advertiser on television, ahead of all commercial advertisers.[74] Similarly, during the financial year 2018-2019, BJP had 53% of the overall ad insertions across print, television and radio while the share of the biggest opposition party, Indian National Congress, stood at 14%.[75] At end of the national elections in May 2019, Bharatiya Janata Party and Indian National Congress disclosed a total media publicity expenditure of €38.7m and €40m, respectively.

Political parties have always preferred to place advertisements on cable televisions and radio due to their local reach. But the digital expansion has promoted political parties to spend large amounts of money on digital advertising. Social Media platforms received the highest sums from political parties during the months before general elections in 2019. Google India earned €3.3m from political advertisements ahead of the 2019 Indian Lok Sabha elections, of which Bharatiya Janata Party contributed 60%, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (regional party in the state of Tamil Nadu) 14%, and the Indian National Congress 10%.[76]

[73] Devjyot Ghoshal, Manu Balachandran, "It cost Narendra Modi \$100 million to win the Indian election—here's how he spent it," Quartz India, 16 January 2015, available online at <https://qz.com/india/327771/it-cost-narendra-modi-100-million-to-win-the-indian-election-heres-how-he-spent-it/> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

[74] Shambhavi Anand, "Ahead of polls, BJP becomes the number one advertiser on television," The Economic Times, 23 November 2018, available online at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/advertising/ahead-of-polls-bjp-becomes-the-number-one-advertiser-on-television/articleshow/66759018.cms> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

[75] Saumya Tewari, "BJP accounts for 53% of overall political ad blitz," LiveMint, 29 March 2019, available online at <https://www.livemint.com/politics/news/bjp-accounts-for-53-of-overall-political-ad-blitz-1553846798935.html> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

[76] Anumecha Chaturvedi, "BJP top spender on political ads on digital platforms," The Economic Times, 16 May 2019, available online at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/elections/lok-sabha/india/bjp-top-spender-on-political-ads-on-digital-platforms/articleshow/69351792.cms?from=mdr> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

Political Advertising on Media

During National Election, in € million, May 2019

	Total	Print	Audio-Visual*	Digital**
Bharatiya Janata Party	38.7	4.6	32.6	1.5
Indian National Congress	40.0	11.7	24.0	4.1

Source: Election Commission of India

*includes TV and radio

**includes websites, social media, bulk SMS and outbound dialer

On social media, in € million, February 2019-August 2019

Party	Facebook	Google
Bharatiya Janata Party	0.54	1.5
Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam	n/a	0.50
Indian National Congress	0.22	0.37

n/a: not available

Source: Facebook, Google

During Madhya Pradesh Assembly elections, in € million, November 2018

	Total	Print	Audio-Visual*	Digital**
Bharatiya Janata Party	6.2	0.08	5.2	2.1
Indian National Congress	2.7	not disclosed	2.7	0.008

Source: Election Commission of India

*includes TV and radio

**includes websites, social media, bulk SMS and outbound dialer

Investors

Investments in the news media, especially online news and technology startups, have largely been made through entities within the news media industry, or venture capital firms looking for fresh investments in startups. The year 2018 saw investments worth US\$ 400m in content startups online which include many news production and distributions outlets.[77]

Journalists and companies within the media industry have also invested in independent news startups. The Quint, a news portal, was founded in 2015 by Raghav Bahl and Ritu Kapur after they sold their equity in their television networks to the Reliance Group in 2014. In 2016, Quint's parent company Quintillion Media signed a 74:26 joint venture with the Bloomberg Media in

[77] Mihir Dalal, Anirban Sen, "Investor frenzy in content start-ups sparks bubble fears," LiveMint, 16 August 2018, available online at <https://www.livemint.com/Companies/0EcWkGnJLiyWkClw8zeWeO/Investor-frenzy-in-content-startups-sparks-bubble-fears.html> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

India for production and distribution of business news as a digital news site and a television channel. Quintillion Media also has stakes in The News Minute (a leading digital platform specializing in news from South India), Youth Ki Awaaz (a popular digital platform for the youth) and Sheroes (a growing digital platform targeted at women).[78] Similarly, DailyHunt, a news aggregator launched in 2009, holds an 89% stake in the vernacular content provider OneIndia.

In a separate development, The Times Group signed a production and distribution partnership with The Huffington Post to launch its Indian edition in 2014. In the same year, through its internet subsidiary Times Internet, Times also invested an undisclosed amount in the first round of funding for the news aggregation platform InShorts. In 2018, Ratan Tata of the Tata Group of industries invested €430,000 in the multimedia digital news startup The Print, launched by veteran journalist Shekhar Gupta.[79]

International venture capital firms have also invested in the Indian news media industry in the last few years. The Omidyar Network India, a fund styling itself as a “philanthropic investment firm,” has invested undisclosed amounts in the native digital news outlet Scroll.in (in 2014), Newslaundry.com (in 2016), the subscription-based business news portal The Ken (in 2018), and the news aggregator DailyHunt under a plan to invest US\$ 290m in India.[80] The Omidyar fund is controlled by Pierre Morad Omidyar, the founder of eBay.

Other international investors include Sequoia Capital, Tiger Global Investor, Matrix Partners and Google Inc. Since 2018, international venture firms have drawn deals worth between €360,000 and €920,000 with vernacular news startups such as Circle.news (funded by SAIF Partners), Awaaz (funded by Matrix Partners), and Lokal (funded by India Quotient).[81]

Google has funded 10 Indian news and technology startups to provide training in video journalism as part of a US\$ 25m investment project known as the Google News Initiative (GNI). The Indian beneficiaries include Factly, a Hyderabad-based factchecking startup, television news channels like NDTV, India Today, Asianet News Media and Entertainment, online sites like Bharatiya Digital Party, Nyooz, ShepHertz, Live Data Visualisation Pvt Ltd., and the NGOs Video Volunteers, Gaon Connection.[82]

In August 2019, the government placed a 26% cap on foreign direct investment (FDI) in digital media. There were no barriers to FDI in digital media in India before this. The measure led to growing concerns among many digital news outlets that have foreign shareholding or that received substantial international funding.

[78] “Bloomberg forms new partnership with Quintillion Media in India,” Bloomberg, 12 April 2016, available online at <https://www.bloomberg.com/company/press/bloomberg-forms-new-partnership-with-quintillion-media-in-india/> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

[79] Shamshad Ali, “Multimedia news platform The Print bags fresh fund from Ratan Tata,” Entrackr.com, 27 March 2018, available online at <https://entrackr.com/2018/03/theprint-funding-ratan-tata/> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

[80] Bhumika Khatri, “Omidyar Network To Enter New Sectors In India, Make Investments Worth \$250 Mn,” Inc42, 5 October 2018, available online at <https://inc42.com/buzz/omidyar-network-looks-to-experiment-new-sectors-in-india-with-250-mn-new-investment/> (accessed on 16 February 2020); Sanya Dhingra, “The Omidyar Network: ‘Committed to a free media’, via two Indian companies too,” The Print, 7 November 2017, available online at <https://theprint.in/report/omidyar-network-two-indian-companies/14889/> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

[81] Aditi Shrivastava, “Investors are queuing up to back Indian language content startups,” The Economic Times, 30 November 2018, available online at <https://tech.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/internet/investors-are-queuing-up-to-back-indian-language-content-startups/66875013> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

[82] See more on the project’s website at <https://newsinitiative.withgoogle.com/youtube/funding/> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

Media-focused investors

News aggregators investment funding

Company	Investor	Remarks
Inshorts	T Lab Investors (Times of India) Flipkart Tiger Global Investors Rebright Partners	First round of funding: T Lab Investors, Flipkart Second round of funding: Tiger Global Investor, Rebright partners, Flipkart Third round of funding: US\$5m from Tiger Global Investor
DailyHunt	Matrix Partners Sequoia Capitals Omidyar Network Byte Dance Falcon Capital	First round: US\$ 18m by Sequoia Capital, Matrix Partners, Omidyar Network Second round: US\$ 40m by Falcon Capital Third round: US\$ 25m by Bytedance

Source: CMDS

Philanthropy

Philanthropy spending in news media exists in the form of non-profit donations made by trusts and foundations. The most significant is the Independent and Public-Spirited Media Foundation (IPSMF), formed in 2015 and anchored by the domestic information and technology bigwigs Azim Premji, chairman of Wipro (a diversified conglomerate know mostly for its IT and business consulting arm), and Rohini Nilekani, wife of the co-founder of Infosys (another leading IT firm), and supported by other companies and high net worth individuals. The trust started out with €12.5m, saying that any return on investments would be pooled back into the trust to fund other media firms. Since its inception it has funded many vernacular and local independent media like Khabar Laheriya (women-led rural news portal), CG Net Swara (local news portal voicing tribal population), Gaon Connection (rural media platform), Azhimukham (Malayalam news portal), Imphal Free Press (digital news platform from the Indian state of Manipur), and many others.[83] The IPSMF has also supported English-language digital news platforms such as The Wire.in, The Print, The Ken, AltNews, Satyagrah and NewsMinute as well as the monthly magazine The Caravan, among many others. Surprisingly, the amounts granted to each news outlet are not disclosed. The Wire.in on its own disclosed receiving €460,000 in two separate grants in March 2017.[84]

High net worth individuals have also extended support to news media in a personal capacity. Rohini Nilekani funded IndiaSpend (data journalism website) and The Ken (digital news platform) through grants in 2014 and 2017, respectively.

International philanthropic funders like the Ford Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Oak Foundation, and the American Jewish World Service have also granted funds to media and

[83] Saritha Rai, "With starting corpus of Rs 100 cr, Bengaluru billionaires register media trust," The Indian Express, 20 September 2015, available online at <https://indianexpress.com/article/business/commodities/bengaluru-billionaires-register-media-trust/> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

[84] See more on the outlet's website at <https://thewire.in/media/how-the-wire-is-funded> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

journalism organizations in India. One of main beneficiaries of this funding is Media Foundation (which operates the TheHoot.org) that has received US\$ 200,000 and US\$ 78,400 from the Ford Foundation in 2011 and 2009, respectively.

The Maecenases

Key international philanthropies financing Civic Media and News Initiatives in India, 2009-2020

Funder	Key Recipients
Ford Foundation	Media Foundation, Abhivyakti Media for Development, Vikas Samvad Samiti
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability
Oak Foundation	Video Volunteers
American Jewish World Service	Point of View, Awaaz-e-Niswaan
Mama Cash	Rahi Foundation

Source: Media Impact Funders

STATE FUNDING

State Advertising

The Indian government is an important funder in the news market. The state funds public and private news media through sanctioned public advertisements from various ministries, administration departments, and public sector industrial enterprises. The Directorate of Audiovisual Publicity (DAVP) is the nodal agency responsible for disbursing government advertisements to all media.

In 2018, the central government contributed €168.5m to the €8.7bn (or 2.16%) advertising spending in the news media, distributed to its 9,213 empaneled publications and agencies. Although it is a small proportion of the news market's total ad spend, government advertising is important for numerous small and medium newspapers in regional languages with no brand recognition and organizational abilities to attract large commercial advertisers. Such support also makes these small news outlets vulnerable to state pressures. In the last few years the government has doubled ad spending in the media. In 2018-19, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) further hiked the publicity budget by €5m owing to the state and central elections in May. [85] According to the experts interviewed for this study, the DAVP is untenable to external pressures and evidence for misuse of the funding widely exist.

The DAVP releases public advertisements through medium-specific rating formulae. It classifies the 8,031 empaneled newspapers into three categories based on their circulation as following: small (with a circulation of up to 25,000 copies per publishing day); medium (between 25,001 and 75,000 copies per publishing day); and big (with a circulation of above 75,000 copies per publishing day).

[85] Question answered by the Minister of Information and Broadcasting in the Council of States of the Indian Parliament.

In 2016, DAVP set a new rating formula based on six criteria with different marks allotted to each criterion. They include volume, ownership of printing press, certification of circulation figures, subscription to Employment Provident Fund for employees, recognized wire agencies, and membership in the Press Council of India. In 2019, DAVP hiked its rates by 25% for newspaper advertisements. While it mandates the distribution of a minimum of 15% and 35% of the annual advertisements to small and medium-size newspapers, respectively, the new rating formula discriminates against them.[86]

For the 323 empaneled cable and satellite channels, the DAVP places the criteria of a minimum telecast period of six months with 17 hours of telecast per day. Rates for news channels are devised for 10-second slots across three-time bands in a day. The differential rating system is based on the television rating points, reach, and language of the news channels.[87] Aaj Tak, Hindi news channel owned by India Today conglomerate, secures the highest rate of approximately €60 per 10-second slots during the time-band of 5 p.m.-11 p.m. Provisions in the 2012 DAVP policy stipulate that 40% of the DAVP television ad spending should be dedicated to regional language channels. It also places a 2% and 8% cap on the allocation of annual advertising budget to groups or companies owning one channel and two to six channels, respectively.

Allocations of government funding to websites was initiated in 2015; a total of 42 websites have since been empaneled. They are divided into three categories based on their reach. Their rates are devised as Cost Per Thousand Impressions (CPTI) based on the location, website age, and minimum average Unique Users (from within India) per month certified by auditors. The location, size and time of the advertisements displayed on the website are also factors in determining the price. Currently the DAVP pays €9,477 for a fixed 24-hour advertisement for news websites with over five million unique users from India.[88] Such an approach is naturally inclined to benefit websites of large newspapers like those of the Indian Express (Indianexpress.com), Times of India group (Timesofindia.com), and the Bhaskar group (Bhaskar.com).

State Advertiser

State Advertising Spent Across Medium 2009-2018 (in € million)

Year	Print	Audiovisual*	Outdoor	Total
2009-10	38	29	26	71
2010-11	45	27	39	78
2011-12	48	19	57	75
2012-13	51	20	n/a	82
2013-14	68	63	n/a	129**
2014-15	54	60	10	125
2015-16	64	67	15	150
2016-17	59	77	24	161
2017-18	80	59	26	169

Note: all figures rounded to closest decimal

*includes online, radio and television;
**increase due to national elections in May 2014

Source: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

[86] See the DAVP policy document online at http://www.davp.nic.in/Newspaper_Advertisement_Policy.htm (accessed on 29 March 2020).

[87] See the DAVP policy document at <http://davp.nic.in/writereaddata/announce/Adv10822952019.pdf> (accessed on 16 G=February 2020).

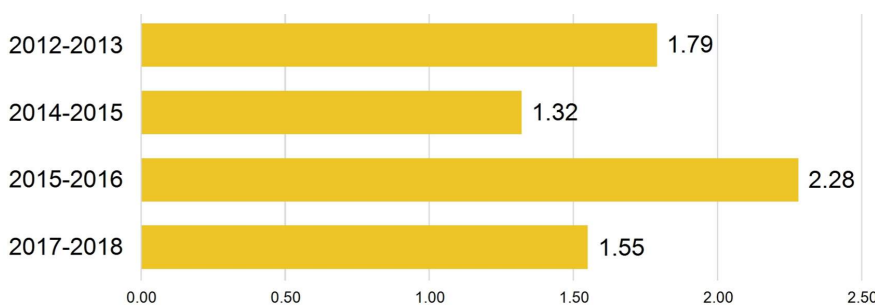
[88] See the rates on DAVP's website at <http://www.davp.nic.in/writereaddata/announce/WebsiteRates.pdf> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

At the state level, the DAVP functions through its 23 Regional Outreach Bureaus and 148 Field Outreach Bureaus. It also decides ad rates to be offered by individual state governments and public sector units through the specific state departments of Information and Public Relations. [89]

The DAVP allocations are prone to being leveraged by ruling regimes to mute or dampen reporting critical of the central and state governments. For example, advertising in a news website critical of the Chief Minister of Bihar was denied despite it having wider reach than the complaisant websites that were given funding.

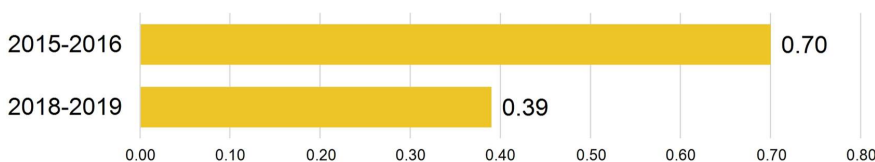
Experts interviewed for this study suggest that closeness to the ruling government (both at central and state level), ideology, and language are other important criteria used in allocating advertising funding. A 2018 study mapping the change in DAVP funding to newspapers found that more than 50% of the Urdu newspapers saw their ad spend share reduced by almost 50% since 2014, suggesting discrimination along parochial lines.[90] An estimation of advertising expenditure in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar show a decline in funding to Urdu language newspapers after the change in government in these states in 2017 and 2015, respectively. In another instance, during 2019, three national newspaper groups with a combined monthly readership of more than 26 million (Times of India Group, Anand Bazaar Patrika, and The Hindu) faced a freeze in government ad spend due to stories critical of the government.[91]

Government ad spend in Urdu newspapers, in € million, 2012-2018



Government ad spend in Urdu newspapers in select states, in € million

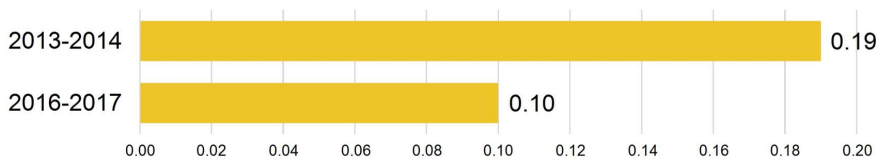
Uttar Pradesh, 2015-2019



[89] See an example for the state of Bihar at <http://urban.bih.nic.in/Acts/AR-01-15-04-2015.pdf> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

[90] Prateek Sibal, "Exclusive for Cobrapost: Government Curtails Ads to Curtail Press Freedom," Cobrapost.com, 15 October 2018, available online at <https://www.cobrapost.com/blog/cobrapos-tgovernment-curtails-press%20freedom/1298> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

[91] Devjyot Ghoshal, "Modi government freezes ads placed in three Indian newspaper groups," Reuters, 28 June 2019, available online at <https://in.reuters.com/article/india-media/modi-government-freezes-ads-placed-in-three-indian-newspaper-groups-idINKCNITT1R6> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

Bihar, 2013-2017

Source: DAVP Print Advertisement Expenditure

Funding of the Public Service Broadcaster

The Prasar Bharati, India's Public Broadcasting Corporation established in 1997, runs television (Doordarshan), a free DTH service (Free Dish) and radio (All India Radio). The Corporation oversees 23 television channels of Doordarshan and 420 radio stations of All India Radio. Doordarshan has one 24-hour news channel, DD News, and telecasts news bulletins on other national and regional language channels. AIR airs a total of 510 news bulletins daily in 82 languages/dialects.

The Corporation is funded by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting through grants in aid and grants under schemes. It generates revenue from advertising on television and radio, from auctioning channel slots on its DTH platforms, and from fees charged for usage of communication towers. Like with private news outlets, DD and AIR also receive advertising from DAVP. In 2017, Doordarshan received €4m and €1.9m from government and private advertisements, respectively.[92]

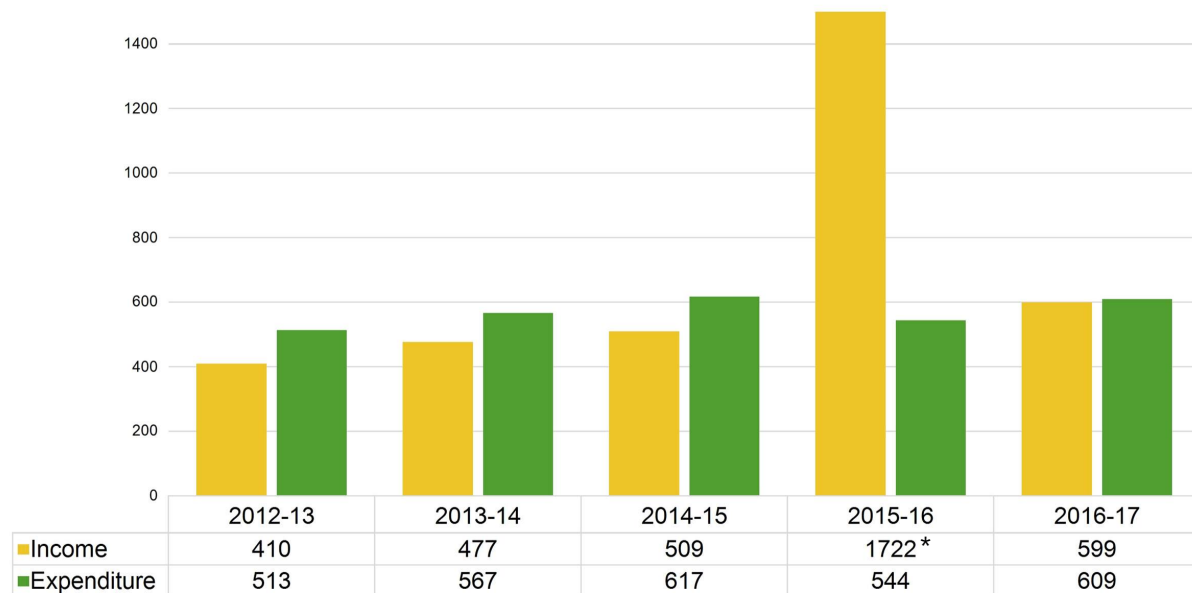
The Corporation's DTH Dish service, DD Free Dish is free and has a larger rural reach than that of other private DTH operators. This growing reach has prompted many private news channels to turn free-to-air (FTA) with the view to expand their audience on DD Direct. The Corporation auctions slots on its DTH platform to private television channels, the receipts from which have tripled between 2012 and 2016. On the other hand, this has led to a loss in audience share of DD's channels to private channels, resulting in a drop in advertising revenue over the years.[93] In 2015-16, Prasar Bharati saw a decline of €39m in its ad revenue from €165m in 2014-15.

[92] Harveen Ahluwalia, "Doordarshan's revenue rises to Rs827.51 crore in FY17, LiveMint, 4 April 2017, available online at <https://www.livemint.com/Companies/3C9fKqRCNh9zNTGXXqoj0L/Doordarshans-revenue-rises-to-Rs82751-crore-in-FY17.html> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

[93] Meghna Sharma, "Doordarshan: A struggle for relevance," Financial Express, 6 March 2018, available online at <https://www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/doordarshan-a-struggle-for-relevance/1088480/> (accessed on 16 February 2020).

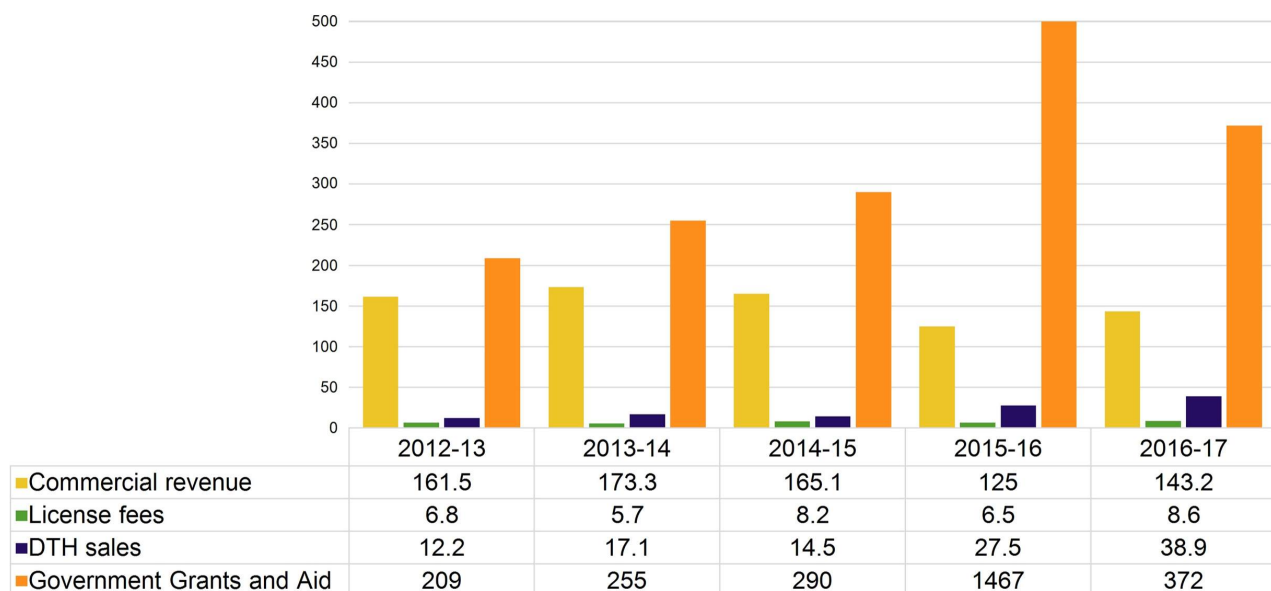
Made for the public, funded by the state

The income-expenditure account of PSB, in € million, 2012-2017



*The amount includes €1171m by the way of conversion of Loan into Grants in Aid and waiver of Interest.

The income sources of PSB in India, in € million, 2012-2017



Source: Source: Annual Reports of Prasar Bharati Corporation

Besides visible competition from private channels, experts interviewed for this report suggest the lack of investment in content as a reason for the loss in the public broadcaster's audience share. Prasar Bharati invests less than 15% of its expenditure every year on content, compared with the 60%-70% for global public service broadcasters, or the 40%-50% for private broadcasters in India.

In addition to outsourcing, the unwarranted increase in costs is due to the high wage bill. As of the last recorded numbers in 2014 by an expert committee, the state broadcaster is overstaffed with over 31,000 full-time employees and 7,200 odd part-time workers, which is the highest labor force in the world for a public broadcaster.[94] Almost 45% of the gargantuan staff is in the engineering department followed by 37% in the administrative support services.[95]

The Corporation lacks editorial freedom promised to it via the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act of 1990. This has led to the Corporation repeatedly being used for self-aggrandizing publicity by successive governments, besides giving preferential airtime to ruling governments and blacking out any criticism towards them.

[94] See more on the MIB website at

https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/Sam_Pitroda_Expert_Committee_on_Prasar_Bharati_January_2014_-Vol_1.pdf (accessed on 16 February 2020).

[95] Vanita Kohli-Khandekar, "How do you solve a problem like Doordarshan?," Business Standard, 10 May 2014, available online at https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/how-do-you-solve-a-problem-like-doordarshan-114051000803_1.html (accessed on 16 February 2020).



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