

## **1. Media is plagued by sensationalism:**

Sensationalism, typically seen as the editorial bias in mass media, is generally the events or the topics in news stories deliberately over-hyped to increase viewership, readership or the TRP figures. It involves reporting or scripting about insignificant or trivial matters and events , which do not have any constructive influence over the public and prejudiced, and glamorous presentations of not so newsworthy topics in a sensationalist, trivial or tabloid manner.

Celebrity gossips, breakups and scandals are the best examples of sensationalism.

## **2. Tweaking of facts:**

One of the flaws in the working style of the media today is that it often twists facts to make the report look more controversial and interesting. The media holds a great responsibility to ensure that the news they present is accurate and serve the interests of the people. However, unfortunately, more attention is given to the presentation of the news, packaging it in an interesting and jazzy manner.

- If ever media conveys false or twisted news, it may harm the reputation of a person or a section of society.
- It may also do great damage to the mental health of a person, since reputation is a valuable asset for everybody.
- Irresponsible news reporting results in aggravating the grief of the already anguished.
- By twisting facts and publishing wrong news, media clearly breaches the right to privacy of those who are being wrongly portrayed.
- The media must not cross its boundaries to the extent of victimizing and being judgmental.

### 3. Paid News:

- Paid news or paid contents are those articles or reports published by the media in favour of various organizations or institutions in exchange of some payment.
- This is more like an advertisement but without a clear ad tag. Such kind of news is considered to be serious malpractice as it deceives the citizen, not letting them know that the news is in fact a method of paid marketing.
- Paid news is usually considered to have been funded by **politicians, businessmen, celebrities, eminent personalities or such social figures** in order to accomplish ulterior political goals or to improve their image in public.

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#### **4. Non-issues as real issues:**

Media, these days, frequently presents not-so important issues as genuine, while sidelining the genuine ones. These factual and grave issues in India might relate to various social or economic conditions, in which a majority of people are living, like poverty, unemployment, lack of housing or medical care, and so on. Instead of addressing or publishing stories about these real issues, the media often tries to divert the attention of public to not-so important issues by giving more prominence to these.

*like the wife of a film actor becoming pregnant, whether she will deliver single baby or twins, the controversies during Lakme India Fashion Week etc.*

Although media addresses genuinely important issues, like farmers' committing suicides, rise in the prices of essential commodities, etc., but such coverage constitutes only 5 to 10 per cent of the total coverage. The bulk of the coverage goes to portraying subjects like lives of the film stars, pop music, fashion parades, cricket, astrology, advertisements and several others which are non-trivial.

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## **5. Tendency to brand:**

A media issue or debate is always concerned with some social, political, technological or economic issues. However, even before the factual conclusions about the issues are identified, the media has the tendency to brand, relate or speculate the same.

Within a few minutes of a bomb blast or murder of a high-profile person, various TV news channels start showing news stories around it and speculate the acts to be connected to terrorism or blame certain groups like naxalites, communists, anti-social elements for the same.

Thus, media is responsible for branding certain groups of society as bad, wittingly or unwittingly, and, hence, become responsible for communalism within the country.

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## **6. Journalistic Blackmail or Blatant Journalism:**

Blackmail by journalists (Blatant Journalism) is something which has been prevalent in journalism industry since long time and is practiced by errant journalists who indulge in such activities.

Errant journalists or freelance journalists try and capture stories, clips or pictures of eminent personalities, executives etc. by either breaching the conduct of privacy or by trespassing.

The journalists thereafter threaten/blackmail to release the evidences to the media. Risking the possibility of negative or damaging stories appearing in media, eminent personalities usually yield to blackmail threats.

These captured evidences are, then, used by the journalists to extort huge amount of money.

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## 7. Media Bias:

Media bias is the prejudiced or perceived bias of the news producers or the journalists in the selection of events and stories in the way they are reported or covered.

The term "media bias" refers to an enveloping or widespread bias contravening the standards of journalism.

**Ethnic or racial bias** includes racism or nationalism.

**Corporate bias** includes reporting of issues in favour of the interests of the owners of the news media and the corporate.

**Class bias** includes favouring one social class and ignoring the other.

**Political bias** includes bias in favour of or against a particular political party, candidate, or policy.

**Religious bias** includes bias in which one religious or non-religious viewpoint is given preference over others.

**Ideological bias** includes bias based on personal philosophy which may include liberalism, conservatism, progressivism and communism.

## 8. Social Media negative impacts:

- Social media is integral part of everyone's lives. Not always fun and useful, it can get harmful in ways nobody would anticipate.
- Social media allows spreading of misinformation which may be perceived as facts even with nimble or no evidence.
- It creates a notion in which a single mistake, such as a lewd image or poorly thought-out remarks, result in irretrievable harm to a person's reputation.
- It also provides information that increases the risk of identity theft and creates a platform for cyber bullying.



**To conclude,**

In developing countries like India, the media has a great responsibility to fight the orthodox ideas, such as casteism and communalism, and to help the people in their struggles against poverty and other social evils.

The media is termed as the “fourth pillar” of Indian democracy. If it has been given such a status, it must also abide by the responsibilities that come with it.

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