

PRIME SENSE

Spreading Positive Vibrations
Issue No 186 – Aug 2022
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Cover Story



Media in Freedom struggle

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**Spreading Positive Vibrations
Issue No 186– Aug 2022**

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The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors. They do not purport to reflect the opinions or views of Prime Point Foundation or PreSense.

From the Desk of Managing Editor

Dear Readers



While the whole Nation celebrates Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (Nectar of Independence), PreSense wishes all readers a happy 75th Anniversary of



Independence Day

I am happy to share the 186th edition of your eMagazine PreSense with its usually rich content as usual.

The recent Monsoon Session 2022 of Parliament ended up as a near washout without transacting much legislative business. It has caused a lot of disappointment among the public. Our Editorial reflects the sentiments of our people

During freedom struggle, many Indian media have participated and spread the message to the public. Our Cover Story looks back at the history and brings out the contributions made by some of the Indian media.

Every month, we bring out the story of one of our freedom fighters. This edition carries two interesting stories on Veerapandiya Kattabomman and Sidhu Murmu brothers.

During August 2022, we released a book on Freedom Fighters of India both in the print and digital format. Besides, DiJAI, an associate of PreSense organised an online seminar on Media entrepreneurship. This edition carries a detailed report on our activities.

As usual Prince Cartoon humours our readers.

I am confident that readers will enjoy reading this edition too. Kindly send your feedback to editor@corpezine.com, so that our Editorial Board can examine your suggestions. Please share this edition with your friends. I will catch up with you next month with more varied content.

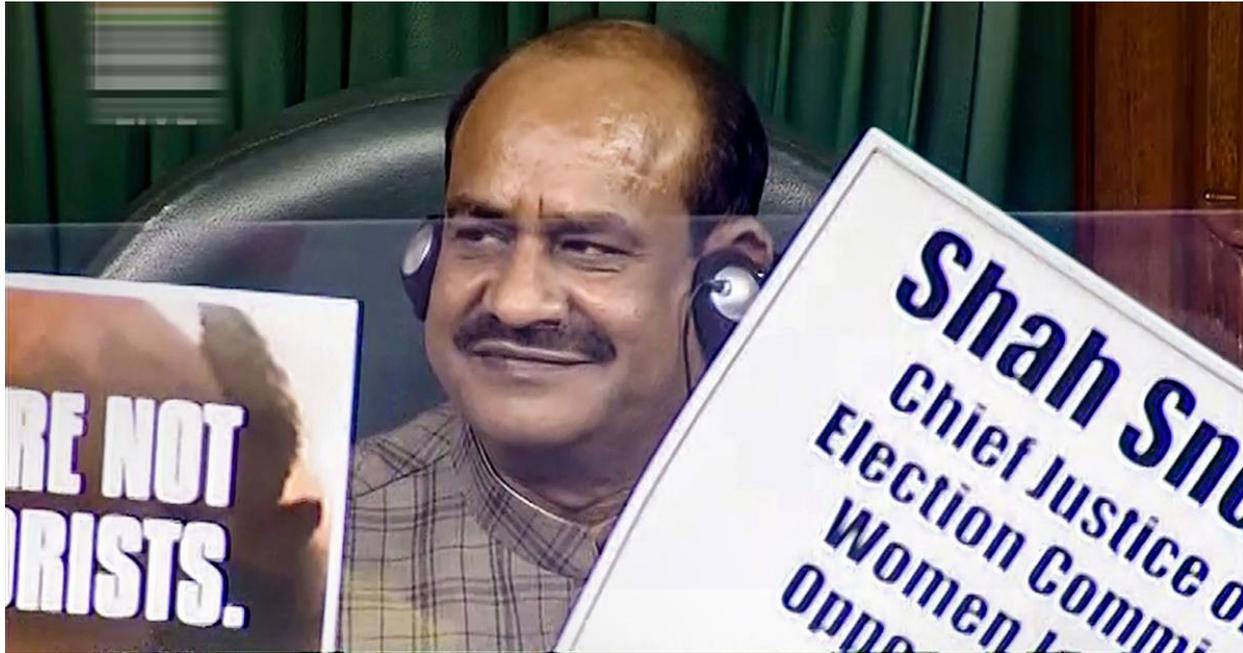
Jai Hind

K. Srinivasan

Editorial

Political parties Should Respect the Institution of Parliamentary Democracy

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Mg. Editor



While the Nation was preparing to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of our Indian Independence, some of the political parties caused disappointment to the Nation by disrupting the Monsoon Session of the Parliament in August this year. While the nation is proud of being the largest democracy in the world, a section of Parliamentarians shamed India with their unparliamentary behaviour for their selfish interest.

Low Productivity due to disruption is against the interest of the Nation

The Monsoon Session ended as a complete washout without taking up many of the burning issues facing the nation. The productivity of the Lok Sabha was 47% and that of Rajya Sabha was 42%. Sadly, the productivity of the Question Hour was the lowest, at 12.1% in the Lok Sabha and 18.2% in the Rajya Sabha. That means both the Houses did not give much importance to the Question Hour, where the real issues of the people are brought out.

The entire country elects the Members of Parliament to discuss and to take up the issues facing the Constituency and the Nation. Generally, in our view more than 90% of the Members want to take up their job seriously and sincerely. They want to participate in the discussions and to raise important issues. Unfortunately, a handful of members belonging to some political parties for their own selfish reasons and to gain political mileage, disrupt the proceedings. They rush to the well of the House and shout slogans, display banners on the face of the Speaker and indulge in various activities against the rules of the House. They don't realise the negative impact, it may create on the students and youngsters watching the proceedings live.

The sittings are forcefully adjourned without doing any business. When all the political parties have enough opportunities to discuss all the issues, even sitting late, in both the Houses of the Parliament, it is highly unfortunate that the floor leaders of some of the parties encourage disruption, instead of getting time allotted through Business Advisory Committee.

The unruly behaviour of some of the Members of Parliament in disrupting the House has led to frustration among many of the citizens. PreSense has pointed out several times in the past that disruption of the House is against the interest of the Nation and the citizens.



Punish the disrupters

Before writing this Editorial, we spoke to many concerned citizens. Everybody uniformly agrees that the Speaker should punish the Members who disrupt the House. If few Members disrupt the House, many serious Members are unable to utilise the Parliament time for the benefit of the people. If some Members continuously indulge in disrupting the House, shout slogans in the well and display banners hiding the face of the Speaker, they should be suspended for the Session, besides withdrawing all the allowances and travel charges. Their privileges also should be withdrawn for specific period.

These Members cannot justify that they are doing disruption in the interest of the nation, since other avenues are available for discussion. We have seen many important Private Members Bills do not get introduced or debated on Fridays, due to disruption. The party leaders and floor leaders should not encourage such anti-people disruption for their short-term gains.

Allow the Inter-Session Notices

Due to disruptions, many issues are not taken up in the Parliament. To get more participation from the Members and to address many problems of the country, the Speaker and the

Government should consider accepting notices under Rule 377 and Questions online during inter-session period also. This will improve the efficiency of the Government too.

Working of Parliament and Committees

Presently, Parliament functions only for 60 to 70 days in a year. Out of this 25 to 30 percent is wasted due to disruption. The productive working hours are getting reduced. Parliament should function for a minimum of 100 to 120 days with least disruption. Then only the Parliamentarians will be fulfilling the dreams of our freedom fighters.

If some Members continuously indulge in disrupting the House, shout slogans in the well and display banners hiding the face of the Speaker, they should be suspended for the Session, besides withdrawing all the allowances and travel charges. Their privileges also should be withdrawn for specific period.

Over the last five years, it has been observed that the attendance in the Parliamentary Committee Meetings is very poor. Members show scant respect of interest in attending the Committee meetings. Parliamentary Committees are like 'Mini Parliament' with representation from all parties. In the past, they have contributed a lot by scrutinizing the bills and the budget presented to them. Government should motivate the Members to participate in the Committees. The Government should refer as many bills to the Committees as possible for scrutiny. This will strengthen the Committees and the quality of the bills for passage. Also,

many important issues relating to individual States could not be taken up for discussion during the Parliament Sessions. The respective Committees can take up suo moto all the important matters that are not discussed in the Parliament and discuss within the Committee. The Committees have the advantage of inviting the stakeholders as witness to get the expert views.

Members do not use the Parliament library

The library in the Indian Parliament is one of the best libraries in the world. It is generally observed that only 5 to 10% of the Members utilise this facility properly to enrich knowledge and to share it during the debates. Besides, the Parliament itself is conducting training programmes to all the Members for their effective participation. Unfortunately, such facilities are not used by the Members. Even PRS India conducts seminars on various bills to educate the Members for the discussion. Only a handful of Members participate in such educative programmes.

Deputy Speaker not elected even after 3 years

Even after three years, the Government has not decided to elect the Deputy Speaker for the Lok Sabha. It is a Constitutional position and the Deputy Speaker plays a significant role in the Parliamentary functioning. For the first time, since adopting the Constitution, the position of Deputy Speaker is lying vacant for three years. It is not a healthy one in the democracy.

Unless the ruling and opposition parties respect the Institution of Parliament, the purpose of our celebrating "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav" will be lost entirely.



Cover Story

Role of Media in Indian Freedom Struggle

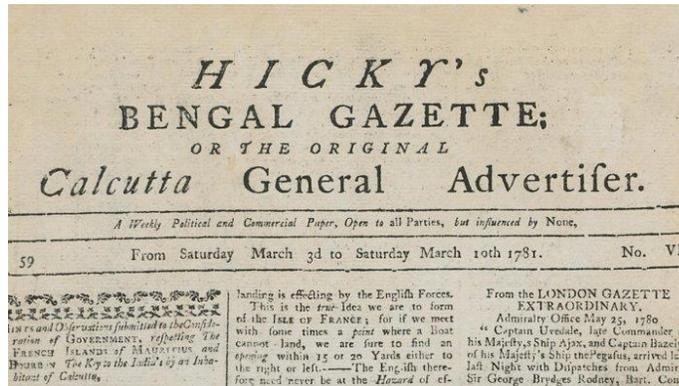


By Ramesh Sundaram, Consulting Editor

In the present days, within few seconds, information is passed on globally with technology and media tools. During the freedom struggle, such facilities were not available. Even the Radio was owned by the Government. In spite of all the constraints, the messages were distributed across the country with the support of various print media and films, braving the rules by the British regime.

It carried the fervor of patriotism and freedom to all the four corners of the country. A person in southernmost tip of India was able to know the thoughts of great leaders of the freedom movement in north India through the newspapers only. Ironically the English language was a uniting factor behind the people joining the freedom movement.

Regional and English Newspapers



An Irishman James Augustus Hickey started in Calcutta what is perceived as first Asian and Indian Newspaper in January 1780. He boldly exposed the misdeeds of East India Officials and was even jailed for it. Thus Hicky's Gazette in tabloid form became the first English newspaper published in India to write against British tyranny.

There were also three contemporary newspapers of that period namely

Doorbeen, Samachar Sudhavarashan and Sultan-ul-Akbar that were suppressed for their anti-British stance. The English newspapers like Hindustan Times, The Times of India, The Statesman, The Hindu and The Indian Express carried the views of the leaders of Freedom movement to all parts of the country. The regional language newspapers like Anand Bazar Patrika, Mathrubhoomi, Dinamani, Swadesamitran also spread the freedom movement in their respective regions.

Gandhiji effectively used the newspapers like Navjivan and Young India to spread his messages on Indian freedom. Nethaji Subhas Chandra Bose launched a radio in March 1942 named Azad Hind Radio (Freedom for India) from Germany to enthuse Indian people to fight for their country's independence. In 1821 itself Raj Ram Mohan Roy used his newspaper Sambad Kaumudi to propagate socialist reforms and independence fervor. He is for all purposes founder of Indian nationalist press.



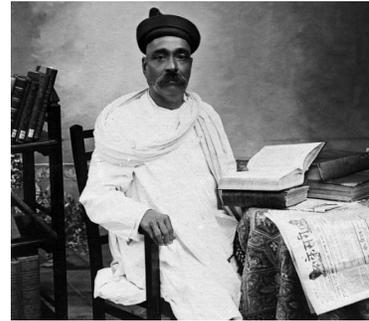


Swadesa Mitran Masthead

G. Subramania Iyer founded the nationalist English newspaper The Hindu in 1878 to enthuse Indian populace to participate intensely in independence movement. He also founded *Swadesamitran* (meaning friend of self-rule) in Tamil language in 1891 to trigger national spirit among the Tamilians. The great nationalists like Mahakavi Bharathiar and VVS Iyer were Editors and wrote many inspiring articles in the newspaper to kindle the freedom spirit among masses. Similarly Malayalam newspaper Mathrubhoomi started in March 1923 spread the message of nationalism in Kerala and south India. Ramnath Goenka started The Indian Express in 1936. He relentlessly and openly challenged the British rule through his paper. Jawaharlal Nehru

founded the English newspaper National Herald and used it to propagate the Independence spirit.

Lokmanya Tilak founded two newspapers Kesari and Maharatta in English (both in January 1881) to spread dissent against British regime. Tilak always believed that journalism, when properly channeled, has the capacity to shape public resolve. He strongly criticized the negligence of Britain in tackling famine, drought, starvation deaths and epidemics like Plague which claimed many lives. He even conducted the Ganesh Chaturthi festival and Shivaji Maharaj festival and used them to arouse nationalism among people.



Lok Manya Tilak and his newspaper Kesari



The Svadesabhimani

A bold journalist Sishir Kumar Ghosh shook the foundation of British Empire in India through his newspaper Amrita Bazar Patrika. He actively campaigned against exploitation of the Indian peasants by forcing them to do Indigo cultivation. Malayalam publication The Svadesabhimani was very critical of British rule in India. Its editor Ramakrishna Pillai wrote a number of articles in the newspaper supporting freedom struggle. The newspaper was confiscated and Ramakrishna Pillai was deported by British in 1910. Another prominent pro-independence leader Madan Mohan

Malaviya started English daily The Leader along with Motilal Nehru. He published many of Mahatma Gandhiji's works and he also set a benchmark for article writing in newspapers.

Role of radio in covering Indian freedom struggle:



Underground Radio Station set up by Usha Mehta and others

Indian newspapers were gagged by stringent laws like Sedition Laws, Rowlatt Act and Vernacular Press Act enforced by the British Government. To negate this in 1942, an underground radio station known as Congress Radio was started by Usha Mehta, Ram Manohar Lohia, Sucheta Kriplani and others to propagate independence movement with the tacit blessings from Congress Party which was leading the freedom struggle. It broadcast news reports and talks by prominent leaders on need for India's independence. Many



protests for the sake of Indian Independence were also broadcast to remote corners of the country. Usha Mehta thundered: "When newspapers and news were banned, our transmitter helps in great deal in spreading and sustaining the freedom spirit by conveying the public with facts of happenings." People gathered in large numbers around the radio to hear the broadcast even in rural areas that boldly broadcast against British rule and the plunder of Indian assets by the British Raj.

Role of Entertainment Media (films) in freedom struggle

In 1921, Bhakt Vidur, a silent movie was banned by British for displaying Indian topi (cap) and Chakra. Many films produced and released during the freedom struggle explicitly carried nationalist sentiments. Hindi films like Apna Ghar, Naya Tarana, Amar Joti, had lyrics that supported independence movement but escaped censor as British did not know Hindi.

Thyaga Bhoomi, a Tamil film is a pointer in this direction. It was directed by K Subramanyam and lead actors were M.S.Subbulakshmi and Papanasam Sivan. The film was released in theatres in May 1939. It was running to packed houses for weeks on. The film depicted people participating in protests against British rule. It also had a song praising Gandhiji. This made the Britishers uncomfortable. The film was banned after successfully running for more than 20 weeks. This was the first time in film's history that a film was banned after its release. The fans did not like the ban.



A scene from Thyaga Bhoomi

Free shows were conducted in a theatre by Director Subramanyam for 24 hours before the ban order was issued. People thronged the theatre en masse and kept the police from entering the theatre.

Role of Media published from foreign soil



Sep 1908 edition
published from

The Indians in Britain were not lagging behind in support for Indian freedom struggle. Shyamji Krishna Varma's started The Indian Sociologist newspaper in 1905 and published from London in the initial days and later from Paris. This newspaper propagated anti-colonial opinions and views.

The woman freedom fighter Bikaji Cama was deported to Paris. She did not remain silent there. She in association with Munchersah Burjorji Godrej, Rewa Bhai Rana published many literatures encouraging rebellion in India that included a song Bande Mataram and an article Madan's Talwar in response to the execution of freedom fighter Madan Lal Dhingra. She also sent weekly magazines extoling freedom struggle to many freedom fighters in India. She also widely travelled in United States of America, bringing to their knowledge the freedom struggle in India through her talks and literature.

Conclusion

The Print Media, Radio and Movies imbibed political awareness among Indians that led to strengthening of Indian independence movement. They were not run for the sake of profit but to propagate freedom spirit among Indians. The impact of the newspapers extended well beyond cities and towns and percolated down even to villages, where it was common sight for one literate person reading the news to ten and more of the villagers. This led to viral

spread of nationalism throughout India. No wonder, the media is considered as backbone of freedom movement. The media thus played a major role in spreading the independence movement far and wide and sustaining it in this vast country called India.

This quote by the former President of India, Pranab Mukherjee clearly surmises the role of media in freedom struggle: "The history of journalism in India is closely linked to the history of our freedom struggle".

Announcement

Editorial Team is pleased to inform the readers that from the August 2022 edition onwards Shri C Badri and Shri Ramesh Sundaram will be functioning as Consulting Editors.



Shri C Badri is a former General Manager of Canara Bank and a former General Manager & Chief Vigilance Officer of Indian Overseas Bank. He carries nearly 40 years of Banking and Finance experience. He is an expert in Banking and Finance.



Shri Ramesh Sundaram also carries forty years of journalism experience. He retired from The Hindu and he is one of the experts in Editing.

NGPL and PreSense launch 'MY NATION; MY PRIDE' Campaign



Priyadharshni Rahul (second from left) launching the campaign. Dr Sanjay Yadav, (first from left), Principal looking on.

On 15th August 2022, PreSense and Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL), one of the initiatives of PreSense launched a new campaign "MY NATION; MY PRIDE" at Ahlcon International School, Delhi in the presence of School Management, Teachers and Students. Priyadharshni Rahul (Editor of PreSense and National President of NGPL) explained the concept of 'My Nation; My Pride' campaign concept and launched this initiative.

Through this initiative NGPL and PreSense will be reaching out to various educational Institutions to create awareness about our Nation and the freedom struggle. We have plans to conduct competitions among the school and college students on various aspects to motivate them to involve themselves in the Nation building activities.

Many Members of Parliament, who are the recipients of Sansad Ratna Awards have assured to involve themselves in this campaign.

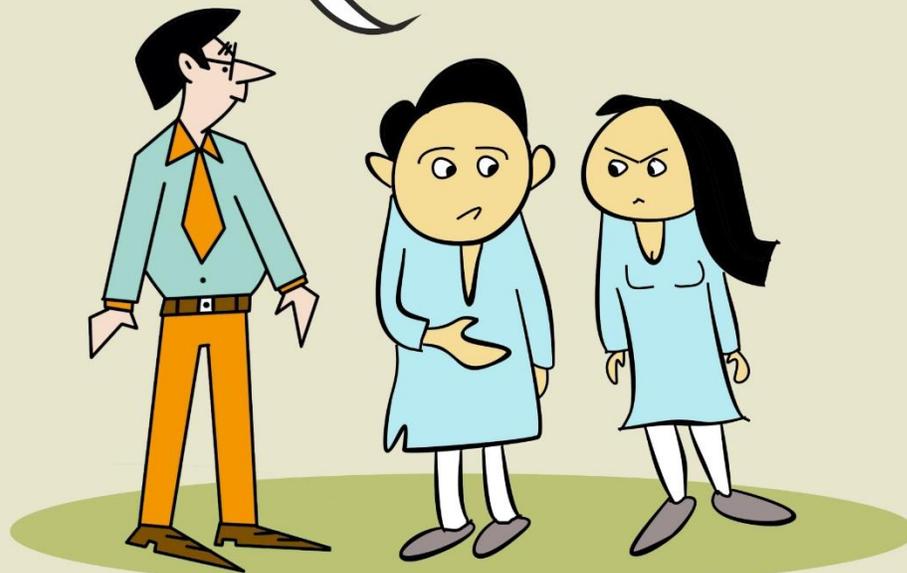
PRINCE

By Triambak Sharma



What a
contradiction..
She wants to give me
Divorce..
but she can't
digest my
FREEDOM..

NEWS
75 Years of
Independence



Triambak Sharma



PreSense launches a book on "Freedom fighters of India"



PRIME POINT

SPEAKS

**Valiant Freedom
Fighters of India**

Compiled by
Prime Point Srinivasan
C. Badri

Prime Point Foundation
Chennai

The eMagazine PreSense has been publishing articles on the contributions of the great freedom fighters of India. Prime Point Foundation has compiled all the articles and published a book titled "*PreSense Speaks - Valiant Freedom Fighters of India*". The eBook and the printed book were released by Dr Latha Rajendran, Correspondent and Dr R Manimekalai, Principal, Dr MGR Janaki College of Arts and Science for Women, Chennai in the presence of students to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of Independence on 15th August 2022. The first copies were received by the descendants of the freedom fighters Sri Arya Bhashyam and Dr Champakaraman Pillai.

The eBook can be downloaded from this link.

<http://www.prpoint.com/publication/freedomfighters.pdf>

Media and Technology

The Unlock Series Opens Discussions on Media Entrepreneurship in the Digital Era

By Dipti Kumar, Prem Shanker, Vinoth Poovalingam, Honorary Secretaries



On 7th August 2022, Digital Journalists Association of India (DIJAI) launched the Unlock Series, exploring topics of interest in the digital media era. The first of the series was a conversation on Entrepreneurship in the Digital Era with K.N. Arun, a professor of Media Studies at The Asian College of Journalism, Pratiba Raman, an independent digital journalist, Ramanathan Subramaniam, Head of Revenue and Product for The News Minute, and Vinoth Poovalingam, Founder of Hocalwire. The programme was moderated by Prem Shankar and Dipti Kumar, Honorary Secretaries of DIJAI.

The audience for this discussion was a mix of mid-level career professionals looking to enter the entrepreneurial space in digital news media and seasoned journalists looking to start up. Over 60,000 startups are operational in India and while they are in different stages of development, the onus on digital news media startups is to identify audiences, create compelling content, and crack the delivery mechanisms to build a sustainable revenue stream.

Several digital news media outlets like The News Minute, YourStory, The Better India, NewsLaundry, The Quint have emerged as a result of breaking away from the media conglomerates and forging a new, albeit tougher road to success. Tougher because audience selection is critical to content creation and dissemination. Breaking away from mainstream media outlets provides freedom to create, but also opens up doubts on resources to get good content that would drive engagement. Keeping a small team is not a bad idea.

“Staying lean is extremely important,” said Ram, adding that it’s prudent to start “slow and small.”

K.N. Arun helped ACJ construct the entrepreneurial journalism course to equip students in making it in the “business” of news. He reiterated that students are taught how to identify the “existing ecology and the gaps...then identify the audience gaps and know what content works.”

But the question remains- how do you know what content works?

Vinoth shared examples for tools from Google Analytics to trademarked data processing platforms to understand audience demographics, consumption patterns, underscoring the importance of investing wisely in the early days of an entrepreneurial venture. Technology is an equal player in the success of a business and with over 70 percent of web traffic to a website originating on either Google or Facebook, the relationship of technological investment to marketing success is a close one indeed. Using the right technology can serve as a marker to identifying audience personas.

While independent news startups are cash strapped and will often dip into personal savings and/or goodwill of supporters, the commercial of running a business is pegged on positive revenue. Despite donations or paywalls and exclusive offers, Pratiba highlighted that a subscription to an entertainment website or an e-commerce page happens more easily than news websites. She noted that the collective opinion among Gen Z is that news is unattractive. The realization marked an important step for her own entrepreneurial journey toward building Newsence, news posts published on Instagram.

Ram emphasized that engagement is the true metric to assess success of a startup. While page clicks, reach, and traffic are lucrative, the impact of those do not necessarily transform into actual money in the bank.

Revenue is a top priority and Pratiba highlighted the importance of partnerships to help grow revenue. Pratiba's venture into independent consulting work has been a learning curve on understanding the dynamics of different partnerships and tapping into the specific areas of the client's CTA to yield profits.

Ram emphasized that engagement is the true metric to assess success of a startup.

While page clicks, reach, and traffic are lucrative, the impact of those do not necessarily transform into actual money in the bank.

The four key takeaways for anyone looking to explore news media entrepreneurship would be:

- Stay lean in your venture
- Metrics matter - invest in technology
- Know your USP/audience- nail down the specific audience your venture will impact
- You matter

The DIJAI team looks forward to bringing more such open discussions and expert opinions for the benefit of the Digital Journalism Community.

The full proceedings of this discussion can be watched at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIYVmzu2SQE>





Freedom Fighters of India

Veerapandiya Kattabomman



By C. Badri, Consulting Editor



India has the incredible record of producing great freedom fighters and revolutionaries ever since the foreign invaders set their foot in India. One such freedom fighter is Veerapandya Kattabomman. Veerapandya Kattabomman is a freedom fighter from the south of India who lived in 1760 AD. He was one of the earliest freedom fighters who fought against the British and became a source of inspiration to the other freedom fighters. He fought valiantly against the British and became a national hero. Veerapandiya Kattabomman's patriotism, courage, and sacrifice is of a remarkably high order.

Kattabomman's ancestors had migrated from Andhra Pradesh during Vijayanagar empire to settle in a village called "Salikulam" in order to safeguard the Hindus and the Hindu culture from the Muslim kings. They belonged to the "Thogalavar" community and were warriors who would fight until their last breath. The first of the Kattabomman's clan settled at Salikulam was appointed as a Chief Guard to the then King Sri Jagaveerapandian of Veerapandiapuram (presently known as "Ottapidaram") in recognition of his bravery and fighting capability. By his sheer loyalty and commitment, he gained the confidence of Sri Jaga Veera Pandian the King and became the trusted lieutenant.

Veerapandiya Kattabomman belonged to the 47th generation of the Kattabomman dynasty. He was born to Jagaveerapandya Kattabomman and Arumugathammal. He had brothers named Oomathurai and Thuraisingam, two sisters named Easuvaravadivu and Thuraikannu. Veerapandiya Kattabomman was crowned on 2nd February 1790 when he was thirteen years only and effectively ruled the area which consisted of ninety-six villages divided into six divisions. He ruled the state with great ability of good administration, justice and welfare. He maintained good relations with his neighbouring rulers. Two able Generals namely Vellaiathevan and Sundaralingam assisted him.

It so happened that one day whilst Veerapandiya Kattabomman was on a hunting mission, he happened to witness a strange incident where a hare chased a dog at a particular spot. He considered that land as a land of valour and constructed a fort on that soil. The fort was named as "Panchalamkurichi" in memory of the King Panchapandiyan who was the grandfather of King Jagaveerapandian. The Panchalamkurichi fort was a robust fort. It was five hundred feet in length and three hundred feet in breadth with the wall of twelve feet height. The construction material consisted of black clay mixed with a straw of paddy, maize and corn, etc.



The fort was completely surrounded by thorny bale bushes. The fort could withstand any type of attack other than the attack by cannons and tanks.

Veerapandya Kattabomman was a great devotee of Lord Murugan of Tiruchendur and Goddess Jakkamma. He had constructed forty-five bell towers between Panchalamkurichi and Tiruchendur which were about forty miles to convey the pooja time of Tiruchendur temple in a relay system. Kattabomman was also a great lover of music and art. He quite often organized dances and music for entertainment.



Panchalankurichi fort

The British East India Company initially landed in India for commercial purposes and later constructed a fort in Madras beach. Slowly they changed their purpose of coming to India and wanted to rule the county. They adopted the policy of divide and rule. In the process they brought many Indian kingdoms under their rule. They lured them to great business and made them debtors. Nawab of Arcot was dominating the southern states at the same time. In the year 1781 he had no way to settle his debts to the British East India Company. The Nawab of Arcot also became helpless as he could not manage to pay the salary for his forces at Tirunelveli. Thus, the Nawab of

Arcot yielded and gave the right to collect the taxes to the British.

The British slowly started to bring the kingdoms of the south under command in 1795. Later they announced that the Nawab of Arcot had no authority over the rulers and brought them under their control. Severe restrictions were placed on the construction of Forts etc., by the Indian rulers.

Kattabomman was determined to take on the British at any cost and defend the country. He enticed the support of all his neighbouring rulers viz. Sivagiri, Nagalapuram, Elayiram Pannai, Kolarpatti, Kadalgudi, Kulathor, Maruthu Brothers and from Ramnad King's family. The British conspired and created a rift between the rulers. They created enmity between Kattabomman and the Zamin of Ettappa Naicker of Ettayapuram who turned a traitor to give information about Kattabomman's activities by spying on him. The King of Ramanathapuram was arrested by the British in 1797 and Kattabomman gathered his forces under the command of his brother Oomathurai and took a position at Sivagiri to plan and conduct an attack against the British. The British tried to get Kattabomman and his men in their trap by conspiracy.

Mr. Jackson took over the charge as Collector of Tirunelveli. One by one the local rulers slowly became friendly with him except Kattabomman. He wrote two letters to Kattabomman in February 1798 and in April 1798 and warned Kattabomman's of dire consequences if he did not and pay the taxes but it had no impact. Jackson requested the British to send the troops to arrest Kattabomman but the British suggested to Jackson to call Kattabomman for settlement through mutual discussions.

Jackson asked Kattabomman to meet him at Ramanathapuram and Kattabomman accepted the invitation. But Kattabomman went with his forces to Ramanathapuram. This irked Jackson as he was expecting Kattabomman to come alone. If the discussions failed, he conspired to arrest Kattabomman. Kattabomman sensing the trick Jackson left his guards and aides outside Ramanathapuram fort and proceeded to meet Jackson. Kattabomman was not given due respect by Jackson and the discussion was not cordial. Sharp words were exchanged between Kattabomman and Jackson which led to clashes between Kattabomman and the forces of Jackson who were kept hidden during the talk. During the clashes and Thanapathi Pillai minister of Kattabomman was captured by Jackson's aides and Clarke a British officer was killed during the fight.

Kattabomman on returning to Panchalamkurichi wrote a letter to the British regarding the Ramanathapuram incident and asked them to release his minister Thanapathi Pillai. An inquiry was held by the British administration against Jackson. Jackson was dismissed from service and Kattabomman's minister Thanapathi Pillai was released. The British army led by Major Bannerman invaded Panchalamkurichi on 5th September 1799 by surprise. The people of Panchalamkurichi were at Tiruchendur celebrating a festival. Kattabomman got to know the plans for the surprise attack well in advance from his well-managed informers. His forces were kept ready to take on the British. To a message of Bannerman to surrender unconditionally Kattabomman said, "We are the sons of this soil. We live with prestige, honour, and dignity. We do not bow down to the British. We will fight until death."

Kattabomman's army gave a tough resistance and the British had to withdraw their forces. Major Bannerman used cannons to break the clay fort and they were successful in breaking



Picture courtesy: Bharathgyan

the walls of the fort. On the last day of the war, Kattabomman was injured and he was taken away by his aides from Panchalamkurichi. Kattabomman and his men after the dramatic escape took umbrage in the Thirukalampur forest which was under the King of Pudukkottai. Not to get into controversy with the British, Kattabomman was handed over to the British by the King of Pudukkottai on 24 September 1799.

Kattabomman was lodged in Kayathar jail and a trial was held on 16 October 1799. The British invited all the local Zamindars to witness the trial proceedings. He boldly argued for the right of the country and questioned the British invasion.

Kattabomman was suggested to request for pardon but did not yield. He boldly proclaimed, "Do what you want to do, you cowards". Kattabomman was awarded the punishment "Hang until death" and his end came on 16th October 1799, when he was hung on a tamarind tree at Kayathar. Veerapandiya Kattabomman will be remembered as one of the greatest freedom fighters of the world and more importantly his Patriotism, Courage, and Sacrifice will be remembered by the future generations in India.



Freedom Fighters of India

Sidhu Murmu and Kanhu Murmu



By C. Badri, Consulting Editor



Sidhu Murmu and Kanhu Murmu were freedom fighters who led the Santhal Rebellion during 1855 to 1856. Though the time was short they exhibited extraordinary bravery and determination in fighting against the British despite many odds and though belonging to tribal community. The Santhal rebellion was indeed a native rebellion against the British and also the Zamindars who were corrupt and fleecing the tribals living in the present day of Jharkhand. Sidhu Murmu and Kanhu Murmu were brothers and hailed from the village Bhognadih in Sahibganj district. The Santhals fought with traditional bows and arrows against the British who used weapons and arsenal which exhibits how important and dear freedom was for them.

The British in 1832 demarcated Damin-i-koh region of Jharkhand and Santhals lived there. They were promised land and other assistance and hence many Santhals migrated and settled from Cuttack, Hazaribagh and Midnapore etc. The Santhals were solely depending on the forests for their living. They engaged themselves mainly by clearing the wild forest and

hunting for their living. The British designated the Zamindars and money lenders for collecting tax from the Santhals. The Zamindars and Money Lenders lent money at very exorbitant rates and the Santhals were caught in their trap as they could not repay the money. Consequently, their lands were confiscated and were left with no source of livelihood. They were living as bonded labourers. This was the triggering point of Santhal Rebellion. The Santhal rebellion is also referred to as Santhal Hool.

Somewhere around the end of June 1855 Sidhu Murmu and Kanhu Murmu gathered about fifty thousand people of Santhal tribe and rebelled against the British. The Landlords and the money lenders who fleeced the Santhals became their targets and were killed. This action of the Santhals took the British by surprise and consequently sent a small force to quell them but without success. When the situation became uncontrollable for the British to manage, they sent a large contingent of army. The British also took the support of local Zamindars and the Nawab of Murshidabad. The British announced a reward of Rs.10,000 for anyone who could give a clue about Sidhu Murmu and Kanhu Murmu.

The outdated weapons of Santhals were no match for the weapons and armoury used by the British. A number of battles took place from July 1855 to January 1856, and the Santhals suffered casualties. The 7th Native Infantry Regiment, 40th Native Infantry and others put into action. A number of battles took place from July 1855 to January 1856, in places like Kahalgaon, Suri, Raghunathpur, and Munkatora and the Santhals suffered major casualties from which they could not recover. The uprising was effectively crushed and, in the process, the two leaders Sidhu Murmu and Kanhu were also killed. The Nawab of Murshidabad provided a number of Elephants to the British which demolished the Santhal huts and thus quelled the revolution completely.

Major Jervis paid his tribute by recording as follows in his memoir:

"It was not war; they did not understand yielding. As long as their national drumbeat, the whole party would stand, and allow themselves to be shot down. Their arrows often killed our men, and so we had to fire on them as long as they stood. When their drum ceased, they would move off a quarter of a mile; then their drums beat again, and they calmly stood till we came up and poured a few volleys into them. There was not a sepoy in the war who did not feel ashamed of himself."

Charles Dickens in his weekly magazine *Household Words* made a mention on the Santhals as follows:

"There also seems to be a sentiment of honour among them; for it is said that they use poisoned arrows in hunting, but never against their foes."

The Santhal rebellion was overshadowed by the Indian Revolution of 1857 but the history of the Santhals will be fondly remembered for their commitment, valour, pride and identity in fighting the British. Honouring them after a century and half, a separate state Jharkhand was carved by the Government of India. India Post also during 2002 issued a Postal stamp in commemoration of their rebellion. Sidhu Kanhu Memorial Park was established in Ranchi. Sido Kanhu University was established in memory of Sidhu Murmu and Kanhu Murmu

which was renamed on 10th January 1992 as Sido Kanhu Murmu University by an act of Bihar Legislative Assembly. Boro Baski a Santal researcher, educator and community leader says, ***"From British Raj to independent India, the Santhal Hul drum still echoes***





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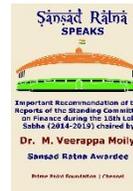
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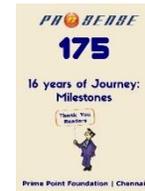
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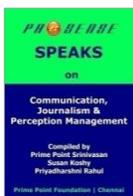
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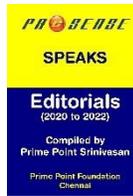
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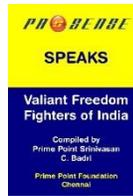
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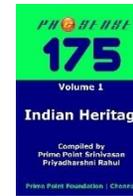
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