

Print Journalism of Manipur: A Historical Perspective

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Abstract: *The early history of print media for Manipur however remained less documented. It is unfortunate that the newspapers which were published before the end of the Second World War became unavailable antics. This paper seeks to offer a fundamental reading of the history of growth and development of Manipuri Journalism in Manipur. It traces the origin of newspapers in the state from the late 1910s till the merger of the state with Indian Union in 1949 on 15th October. It also attempts to exemplify, whenever it deems appropriate, the gravity of the political situation in the context of journalism by scaling historic events related the era of any particular newspapers. It is not, by any means, a complete compendium of the Manipuri journalism.*

Keywords: Manipuri newspapers, Manipur media, journalism history, print media, early journalism.

1. Introduction

The growth and development of journalism had started by using hand written and cyclostyled publication before the proper facilities and infrastructure of printing machines were available. Development of press also articulated the growth of journalism in the state. There has been radical change in terms of contents, designing, reporting, writing and presentation during the last few decades with the advent of new technologies and increased number of knowledgeable and informed citizens. However, in the beginning of Manipuri journalism, the readership potential was quite low and most of the newspapers were unable to survive long. Absence of infrastructures and the government's stance against the publication of anything that invoked patriotism were the main hurdles that made the publication of newspapers virtually impossible in those days. Concerted efforts were made to bring out publications despite hurdles of Imprisonment of journalists and instances of penalty levied upon newspapers. The later part of 1930s was a crucial period in the freedom movement of the country from the British Empire. Newspapers in Manipur had served to mobilize for this noble cause against all odds. Many journalists of the country were put behind the bars during this juncture. The first ever case in the history of Manipur to put a journalist in jail happened in 1939. The turmoil of the Second World War stopped publication of most of the newspapers and journals during 1939 – 45 but efforts were made to bring out newspaper and magazine against all odds.

History of journalism would be incomplete without the part and role of vernacular journalism of other languages of Manipur which is not covered in this study. Diligent attempts will be made in the future to bring out a research paper on the history of other vernacular newspapers.

Manipur is a state situated in the north-eastern region of India with Imphal city as its capital. The total area covered by Manipur is 22,327 square kilometres. Manipur shares its borders with Nagaland, Mizoram, and Assam. The state shares its international borders of about 352 kilometres long stretch of land with Myanmar in the southeast. Manipur is

richly endowed with natural beauty and splendour. It is the birth place of Polo. This is the place where Rajashree Bhagyachandra created the famous Ras Lila, the classical dance of Manipur. It is the home to Sangai, a rare, endemic and endangered subspecies of bow-antlered deer found only in Manipur. Siroy Lily, the only terrestrial lily grown on the hill tops of Siroi hill. Ethel St. Clair Grimwood described it as "A pretty place, more beautiful than many show places of the world." The first Prime Minister of India, Late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru paid a fitting tribute by describing it as "Jewel of India". As per the data released by Census 2011, the total population of Manipur is 27,21,756 .

Manipur was an independent kingdom on the eastern frontier of India bordering Burma, now called Myanmar. It has long unbroken history from 33 to 1891 A.D. Manipur came under the British Rule as Princely State after the defeat in the Anglo-Manipuri war of 1891. On 27th April, the Union Jack was hoisted over Imphal. Manipur lost its independence and sovereignty and became under the British paramountcy. In 1947, after the independence of India, Manipur was merged in the Indian Union on October 15, 1949 and became a full-fledged State of India on the 21st January, 1972 with a Legislative Assembly of 60 seats of which 20 are reserved for Scheduled Tribe and 1 reserved for Scheduled Caste. The State is represented in the Lok Sabha by two members and by one member in the Rajya Sabha.

2. An Overview of Early Printing Press in Manipur

A small printing press was brought to Imphal in 1910 – 1911. The said press is believed to be the one which was established by Shanglakpam Bhubanchandra Jyoti Sharnab of Kwakeithel. It was used only for printing government forms, bills and other government documents. Construction of State Printing Press building was completed in 1917 - 1918. The State Printing Press was established in 1918-1919 and it had started printing government reports as well as private publications. Printing reports was the major task and purpose of the press. The Manipuri script was abolished and replaced by Bengali script in the year 1981. *Jagaran* and

Meitei Chanu were published in Bengali script using litho printing. Haodijamba Chaitanya's *Itihas Macha Ama* is the first ever published book by a meitei which was printed at Sylhet (now in Bangladesh) in 1891. Books were first brought out in Bengali script by Pandit Makar Singh in 1895 and were being taught to Manipuris for a long time. In 1912, William Pettigrew wrote a book on Manipuri grammar in English.

The first ever book printed in Manipur was Sorokhaibam Lalit Singh's *Areppa Marup*. The cover of the book was printed in colour. Loitongbam Kalachand Singh introduced colour printing both on the covers and the contents of his three books based on Children Drama in 1962 [1].

3. The beginning of Manipuri Journalism

The origin of Manipuri journalism can be traced back to late 1910s and from outside the state of Manipur although it was a newspaper prototype. A pioneer hand written journal in Manipuri language '*Meitei Leima*' was started from Cachhar in Assam. It is believed that the same had been practiced in 1917-18. The journal could last only for a short period of time [2].

A multi-faceted leader of the state, Jananeta Hijam Irabat, who had pioneered social and political movements of the state, brought out another hand written journal '*Meitei Chanu*'. The first issue of the cyclostyled monthly appeared in June, 1922. But there are conflicting reports on the starting year of the journal. Some writers opine that the journal was published in between 1925-26. In one of his articles, Seram Mangi, the former Assistant News Editor of the All India Radio, Imphal wrote that without going to the scale of newspaper publication, the first publication of a newspaper in Manipur was Hijam Irabat's hand written journal, *Meitei Chanu* in around 1925-26.

Masik Jagaran, a monthly bilingual journal in Bengali and Manipuri is considered to be the first printed journal in the annals of Manipuri journalism. It was edited by Arjun Singh and printed at the Islamia Press in Sylhet (now in Bangladesh). Nityaichand Singh was the publisher of the journal. It started in 1924 and aimed at giving education to Manipuris outside the state properly and improving their standard of living. No newspaper was printed at press in Manipur before the month of October, 1930. It is unfortunate that newspapers which were published before the end of the Second World War have become unavailable antics.

The first printed Manipuri monthly journal published in Imphal was *Yakairol*. The journal was edited and published by Dr. Ningthoujam Leiren Singh. The first issue of the publication appeared in October, 1930 and a copy of it was priced five pice. The main contents of the journal were literary items, health columns, spiritual comments, historical and social issues. Among the regular contributors of the journal, Hawaibam Nabadwipchandra, Dijamani Sharma, Lalita Sharma, Dr. Lamabam Kamal, Khwairakpam Chaoba etc. are worth mentioning. The publication had some of its contents in Bengali and English too [2].

4. Dailies and Weeklies of Manipur (1933 – 1949)

The first daily newspaper *Dainik Manipur Patrika* was published on 23rd March, 1933 under the editorship of Shri Thongbam Gokulchandra Singh [3]. The historical print media policy started in Manipur with an order issued by Manipur State Darbar vide resolution no.1 on 6th July, 1932 by granting acceptance to publication of *Dainik Manipur Patrika*. The registration number of the paper was 2056 and it was printed at Churachand Printing Works, Sagolband, Imphal. Its editor Thongbam Gokulchandra Singh was born in 1901 at Sagolband Meino Leirak. He did not matriculate but he was multitalented and he excelled in long jump, high jump, hockey and football even when he was a student. During the reign of His Highness Sir Churachand Maharaj, he served as a clerk (*kerani*) in the State Military Police. He left his job before World War II and rendered his service to the society as an editor of the one and only Daily newspaper of that time [4]. The newspaper was read not only in Manipur but also in Manipuri inhabited areas of Assam, Bengal, Tripura and Brindavan in Uttar Pradesh. The daily was a vocal critic of the British rule in Manipur and it invoked a sense of patriotism that would lead to freedom struggle against the alien rule in the state.

The newspaper went on to provoke the colonial authority in Manipur to such an extent that ultimately the government of Manipur proscribed its publication. This was the first instance in the history of Manipur journalism in which a newspaper was banned by the state administration [5]. Some others argue that real credit of pioneering printed media journalism in Manipur goes to Thongbam Gokulchandra Singh [6].

Tarun Manipur, a weekly journal started in August, 1938. Editor of the weekly was RK Shitaljit Singh and it was published by Arambam Dorendrajit. It served as an ideologue newspaper of the Nikhil Manipuri Mahasabha. Shitaljit had also served as a correspondent of the Associated Press of India (API) from 1937-1941. The API was pioneer news agency of the country during the British regime in the country and later it became the premier news agency of the country - Press Trust of India (PTI) [7].

Manipur Darbar passed a resolution on granting the publication of the journal. The details of the resolution as given below:

- 1) Weekly Journal
Manipur State Darbar Resolution No. 2 of 13/7/1938.
- 2) To consider an application from Sjt. A. Dorendrajit Singh, proprietor, Churachand Printing Works, Imphal asking for permission to publish a weekly journal under the editorship of sjt, R.K. Shitaljit Singh, B.A.

Allowed provided a free copy of every publication is sent to the Darbar. Rk. Shitaljit was summoned by Manipur State Darbar. The President of the Manipur State Darbar, McDonald said that Manipuri People were unfit for shouldering administrative responsibilities. The same was recorded in the State Darbar. When the story was published in his *Tarun Manipur* he was summoned for infringement upon the confidentiality of the proceedings of the Darbar but

he was not given any punishment as there was no law to book him under any provision of the rules enacted by the State Darbar [8].

In another instance of publishing official matters is his Manipur *Matam*, R.K Shitaljit was summoned again by Manipur State Darbar on its proceeding of 19th July 1939.

A year later in January, 1939, after the publication of *Tarun Manipur*, Shitaljit had started publishing his own bi-weekly paper *Manipur Matam*. The first issue of the paper was published on 14th January, 1939 two days before he even applied for permission from Manipur State Darbar. He was later granted permission to publish the paper by Manipur State Darbar Resolution no. 1 of 15/2/1939 under two conditions:

- 1) Rs. 100 (one hundred) security is lodged by him in the State office before the end of Feb., 1939.
- 2) No Objectionable matter is to be published in the paper. The security may be forfeited if any objectionable matter appears in the paper [9].

Manipur Matam was published from New Star Press, Keishamthong. Although the newspaper supported Nikhil Manipur Hindu Mahashabah, the paper did not criticise the British Government strongly. The number of circulation was about 300 copies a day. One copy was priced at four pice but, for students, it was offered at half the price. A section for Assamese language was also reserved in this paper. This newspaper was held in high esteem in Assam. '*Manipur Matam*' was included in Dr. Dimbeswar Neog's collection of names of newspapers and books which were published in Assam [10]. It is found mentioned in the book '*Modern Assamese Literature*' published by Dimbeswar Neog that "*Manipur – Matam* is another Manipuri-Assamese paper published from Manipur" [11].

It so happened that Keisham Kunjabihari was sub-editor of both the papers *Tarun Manipur* and *Manipur Matam*. He was born on Monday, 13th March 1916 at Keishamthong Top Leirak, Imphal. His father's name was Tonjao and mother's Thiyam ningol Tombi Devi. He was the youngest of all the three brothers. He lost his father when he was a young boy [12].

In the same year 1939, soon after the publication of RK Shitaljit's *Manipur Matam*, Keisham Kunjabihari Singh was gearing himself up to launch his first paper *Manipur Paojel*. The resolution of Manipur State Darbar granting publication of this paper is as given below:

“ Manipur State Darbar Resolution No. 14 of 27/1/1939.

14. To consider and application from Sjt. Ningthoujam Nabakumar Singh of Elangam Leikai asking that he may be given permission to start and run a weekly journal under the editorship of Keisham Kunjabihari Singh, Keishamthong. Sanction, provided a copy of every publication is sent to the Darbar”.

The paper was printed at Popular Press, Yaiskul Police Lane, Imphal [13].

This period was a crucial juncture of Indian freedom movement from British Empire and many journalists of the country were put behind the bar. In Manipur also Keisham Kunjabihari was summoned by Manipur State Darbar and Sadar Panchayat. Although he could succeed in most of the cases, he was fined and jailed on a defamation case by Sadar Panchayat. It was the first ever case in the history of Manipur to put an editor in jail [14]. In 1939, he was arrested and sentenced for 3 months for publishing an article "*Chaningmalladi Lektuna Tok-ee*" in his newspaper *Manipur Paojel* mocking the administration and speaking against the supremacy of the King's rule. The then speaker of Manipur Legislative Assembly, Y. Yaima Singh conferred him a certificate and recognised him as one of the Pioneers of Freedom Movement in Manipur. In the certificate, it is mentioned that Keisham Kunjabihari Singh of Keishamthong, Top Leirak, Imphal was sentenced to 6 (Six) month Rigorous Imprisonment (R.I) and a fine of Rs. 300/- (Rupees three hundred) only by the Sadar Panchayat Court on 20-4-39 on the charge of sedition and defamation. Yaima had written in the certificate that "I remember, as a prisoner, he was subjected to Oil Crushing Labour, like other categories of criminals. This was first occasion that a political prisoner was subjected to such humiliating condition in the Manipur Jail. He may, therefore, be rightly called one of the Pioneers of Freedom Movement in Manipur" [15].

In 1939, Manipur State Darbar resolved on 19th July, to adopt the Press Act which was already adopted in Assam. Details of the resolution passed are as given below:

Press Act.

Manipur State Darbar Resolution No. 22 of 19/7/1939.

22. To consider adopting the Press Act in force in Assam (D.R. No. 11 of 7.6.39).

The Press Act is adopted. The President will act as District Magistrate for the purpose of the Act.

Soon after the adoption of the Press Act, Akham Thambal Angou Singh of Keishamthong requested to give him permission to start and run a Printing Press as well as a bi-weekly paper in Manipur but it was kept on hold for the King's sanction in connection with the adoption of the Press Act in Manipur (Darbar Resolution No. 2 of 2/8/1939). There was an instance that a resolution which was passed by Manipur State Darbar on 19th July, 1939 to consider forbidding any newspaper in Manipur from referring to "Gaidiliu" as "*Rani*". The freedom of press was not assured by the state government.

The 1930s and 1940s had seen the emergence of a new educated class of intellectuals which was critical about the British rule in Manipur and also of the socio-economic discriminations that were perpetuated in the society under the native kings. Atrocities of the princely rule and suppression of the colonial administration had led to people's apathy towards the ruling circle. Opinion leaders of the state started to explore ways to combat chilling effects of undemocratic governance. These developments were the main reasons behind the profusion of newspaper publications in the late nineteen thirties and forties. Airing

his observations upon the role of the press in Manipur during the dependent Bhodhachandra regime, Naorem Birendrakumar Singh, former editor of the daily newspaper Paojel said that many of these newspapers of the time reflected hatred towards the monarchy and the inhuman religious and customary practices. Newspapers associated with persons who are known for their political leanings had significantly contributed to this. Yet, there were others who were loyal to the king. The conflict came to such a head that few intellectuals who were loyal to the then Maharajah of Manipur had to start newspapers to counter the bid [16].

Freedom of Press during those days was subject to regular censorship. Details of Introduction of Press Censorship in Manipur is as given below:

Press Censorship
Darbar Resolution No. 8 of 4/10/1939

8. To consider introducing "Press Censorship" in the State (P.A.'s 2542-G.A.of 19/09/1939).

The Darbar have no objection to the action approved.

The menace of the Second World War stopped publication of most of the newspapers and journals from 1939-45. Some journals like Meitei Leima, Meitei, Naharol etc. however appeared in 1941 for a short period. Neither earlier existed newspapers nor were new newspapers published during 1941-45. It was only in 1946 that newspapers resurfaced in Manipur.

Only few periodicals were brought out. *Meitei Leima* was started in 1941 and its first editor was Akhyam Thambalngou. Poems written by the last king of Manipur, Maharaj Bodhachandra were published regularly in its publications [17].

The same year witnessed the emergence of another monthly, *Meitei* edited by Phurailatpam Gourachandra Sharma. Laishram Jugeshwar, Chingakham Pishak, Thokchom Modhu and Hawaibam Nabadwipchandra were among the contributors of the monthly. Economic condition of the state, Russia's compulsion to join the Second World War andurna swaraj (full independence from foreign rule) were discussed in the monthly through the enlightening columns of different contributors.

Another periodical which excelled in 1941 was *Naharol*. It was published twice in a year under the editorship of Laishram Gopal Singh. Two issues of the journal- yaoshang issue and pujah issue were brought out. The former was printed at the Shivaji Press, Dr. Suresh Sarkar Road, Calcutta and the latter was printed at the Churachand Printing Press, Imphal. Both were, however, published from 6 Murlidhar Sen Lane, Calcutta. The journal had the prestige of publishing letters to the editor from eminent personalities like Anil Kumar Chandana, Rabindranath Tagore's secretary; Maharajkumar Priyobarta of Manipur, Thakur Kamini Kumar Singh, Revenue and Development Minister of Tripura; Gopinath Bordoloi, premier of Assam etc. [18].

Most of the newspapers and journals could not be produced. It was only after the end of Second World War newspapers and journals started flourishing in Manipur.

In 1946, a daily newspaper called *Bhagyavati Patrika* emerged under the editorship of many well-known personalities. Manipur State Darbar granted permission of its publication on 20th February 1946 by the resolution no. 25. The first publication of the paper was brought out on Monday, 15th April 1946 and Meisnam Biramani Singh was its first editor. Shri Khamnam Madhu Singh took over the charge of editorship from the second half of May, 1941. Again in the same year from July, P.M Singh took charge of editorship. In February 1947, Dr. Leiren Singh and Khanam Madhu Singh jointly edited the paper. In the first week of April, Dr. Leiren Singh and Arambam Lalmani Singh became editors of the paper for a brief period. From the second week of April, Arambam Lalmani Singh alone edited the paper. In the month of May, Dr. Leiren Singh again became the editor. Shri Dhaneshwar Singh, general secretary of the All Assam Manipuri Congress worked as sub-editor of the paper from July. From 1947 to 1950, regular publication of the paper was brought out under the editorship of Shri Arambam Lalmani Singh [19]. The same year witnessed the emergence of another fortnightly *Ngashi* under the editorship of Keisham Kunjabihari Singh from 14th April, 1946. It became weekly in 1947. From 26th January 1948, *Ngashi* became a daily newspaper and continued its publication till 1971. It later became the mouthpiece of Congress. After 1948 Assembly elections, Congress (Manipur State Congress) failed to form government. Praja Shanti party emerged as the ruling party and formed the government with the representatives from the Hills. After the formation of the government, Manipur State Council passed a resolution on 20th July, 1949 to ban publication of *Ngashi*. It is assumed that the reason to ban the publication of *Ngashi* was for publishing a resolution passed by a session of Manipur State Congress party; however, Manipur State Council did not spell out any specific reason in this regard. This paper was banned for a long time [18]. The paper survived for about 23 years and it was printed from Chitrangada Press. It cost 4 pice.

A significant newspaper of the time *Prajatantra* a daily newspaper came into existence in the same year 1946 when Manipur State Congress was formed. The Manipur State Congress party decided to publish party's own newspaper to disseminate it political agenda, activities and current affairs to the public and to make people aware of global news. So, it started as a mouthpiece of Manipur State Party under the editorship of Keisham Kunjabihari and it was earlier published from Chitrangada Press. However, in 1948 it shifted its printing centre at Tarun Press, Moirangkhom when Shri Maipaksana became its editor [20]. "*The voice of the people is the voice of God*" was printed just below the title of the newspaper. As sub-editor, Laishram Joychandra Singh assisted Maipaksana in 1950 and, later in 1951, the former succeeded the later. After three or four years, the paper became an independent newspaper without any political ties with Manipur State Congress [21].

The year 1947 is a significant one in the history of the evolution of Manipuri journalism. The year witnessed the

emergence of ten periodical publications including daily newspapers viz. *Praja*, *Eikhoigee Manipur* and *Sandhyagee Bhagyabati Patrika* (dailies); *Anouba Yug*, *Bhagyabati* and *Praja* (weeklies) ; *Khonjel* (fortnightly) *Palem* and *Imarol* (monthlies); *Meengnaidabee* (quarterly).

Anouba Yug was started in April, 1947 as a cyclostyled weekly by Hijam Irabat. He was a revolutionary social reformer. He stood for the cause of peasants, weaker sections and oppressed people of Manipur. He started the weekly with a vision to bring about a socialist society. Through the columns of his weekly, he encouraged the peasants and oppressed section of the society to fight for their cause, spread democratic values and shoulder a great role in removing the misunderstanding developed between the plain and hill people of the region. His newspaper voiced against untouchability, religious dogma and many social and administrative malpractices. His weekly could not last long because of his socio-political engagements.

Bhagyabati (weekly) was published every Sunday under the editorship of Arambam Lalmani Singh and it was purely a literary journal. *Praja* (weekly) was started in the last week of June, 1947 under the editorship of Hawaibam Ranbir Singh. The weekly had to cease its publication within two months but, within the short span of two months, it published enlightening editorial comments on significant issues like possibilities of center-state relations of independent India and its states and British India's views on the formation of a united India after independence.

Praja (weekly) reincarnated as a daily newspaper in the last week of July, 1947, but with a change of guards. Laishram Achou Singh became editor of the daily. The daily advocated against the formation of an Interim Council in Manipur by the royal authority. The Council had seven members or ministers. The royal authority appointed his brother prince Priyobarta to serve as Chief Minister and head of the Interim Council. Through his editorial columns in *Praja* the editor made a harsh comment against the king's decision to appoint an unelected person to lead a government. He criticised that the autocratic decision was against public interest. His newspaper demanded that the Interim Council should be an elected body and there should be proper representation from the hill areas of Manipur also in the Council.

Khonjel was the first Manipuri journal published from Tripura. The fortnightly was started on 3 August, 1947 from Agartala. It was edited by Ningthem Shri Madhabjit Singh and published by Moulabi Nalu Miya and printed at Sophia Press, Agartala. The editor of the fortnightly had a mission to uplift the status of Manipuris outside the state, but succumbed to death untimely of a dog bite

The Young Writers' Association, Manipur started a literary quarterly *Meengnaidabee* on August 1, 1947 under the editorship of Khwairakpam Chaoba Singh. He also edited a monthly journal *Jyoti* which was started in 1948. Another monthly *Palem* was also started on October 29, 1947. It was a cyclostyled publication. It was edited by Thambalngou Singh and it was known for its promotion of Meitei revivalism. The journal was published by an organization

called Meitei Mayek Thougol Marup, Wangkhei which was working for rejuvenating Meitei script. Another literary monthly *Imarol* had appeared in the month of November, the same year. It was edited by Wahengbam Narayan Singh.

In 1947, social worker Sagolsem Indramani Singh edited *Eikhoigee Manipur*. It was a daily newspaper. He also had edited a health journal *Meitei Maiba*. The daily could survive for five years. Indramani was put behind the bar when he tried to organize meetings against the non – inclusion of Meiteis in the administrative set-up of the state that emerged after Manipur's merger into the Dominion of India in October, 1949 and her subsequent becoming of a Part-C state. Laishram Jugeshwor Singh had edited *Sandhyagee Bhagyabati Patrika*, a daily newspaper. Later, he also edited the English weekly named *the Eastern Express*.

A journal called *Praja* which was later changed its name to *Prajashanti* was also in print under the editorship of Loitam Yaima Singh. It was also proclaimed banned in 1948 on the charges of malicious writing against the king of Manipur. There were some monthly and other periodical journals in between 1930-1948. All these newspapers were circulated only for a short period and stopped publication because of sanctions by the state government or some other reasons. The newspapers at that time could not serve as a potent mass media

After independence from the colonial rule, many printing presses came up in the state. As per a report of the All Manipur Press Association, 1965-66, as many as 62 printing presses were there in Imphal and its nearby areas at that time. There were some unregistered printing presses also. With the advent of more developed printing technology, journalism also got boosted in Manipur. The Manipuri weekly *Ngashi* was converted into a daily newspaper in January, 1948 under the editorship of Keisham Kunjabihari Singh. *Jyoti* a monthly edited by Ashangbam Minaketa Singh also saw light of the day in December the same year. The Calcutta Manipur Students Congress also started its annual publication *Khonjel* in the same year and it was edited by Gourahari Singh.

Loumee edited by Elangbam Yaima Singh started as a weekly in 1949 and later it became daily newspaper. It was printed by socialist party at Popular Press, Wangkhei and its publisher was Chingangbam Gourahari Singh. *Praja Shakti* edited by R.K Maipaksana made its appearance in the same year. It was published twice a week initially and later it was published thrice a week on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 15th August 1949. Just under the banner of this newspaper, it was written as "*Service to Mankind is the greatest virtue*". It was the ideology of the paper. It was printed at Tarun Press, Imphal .

1949 was another landmark year in the history of Manipuri journalism. In the month of October that year, Manipur merged into the Dominion of India. In fact, the period from 1949 to 1980 may be considered as the second phase of the development of the press in Manipur [22].

5. Conclusion

Through our study from the collected primary and secondary data and resources, we may conclude that the early history of Manipuri journalism was driven by the aspects like literature, social reform, identity formation, anti-British rule and freedom movement. Journalism has contributed in the formation of social, political, religious changes right from the beginning of its history and, therefore, has become a part of Manipur's history. Most of the publications were running short life. No proper distributions systems were there. Royal patronage and support from the government were least expected. Most of the daily newspapers were published cyclostyled for lack of printing press, except for a handful of publications. Existence of the publications largely depended on the number of readership for their maintenance and survival.

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