

Reporting of local incidents by a national daily: A study on Hyderabad

Somak Sen

Assistant Professor, Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, St. Francis College for Women, Hyderabad, AP, India

Abstract

Newspapers play a pivotal role in finding out the problems of governance. It, thus, compels the concerned authority to take stock of the same and find out remedies. The Hindu is one of the noted national dailies. Its Hyderabad edition has been focusing on various incidents sharply and bringing the same to the notice of the mass through its esteemed columns since its beginning. Newspaper is considered as the voice of the mass and its words are definitely given value by its readers. This research paper focuses on the reporting of a particular daily on various incidents happened in and around the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad.

KEYWORDS: Development, communication, print media, The Hindu, governance

Introduction

Mass media are always essential for creating a climate for development intended to prepare populaces for the radical changes that modernization would bring upon them. The media were to become the technological tool in the hands of the Third World governments for educating their people about the imperatives of modernization as well for diminishing the potential for resistance to change (Schramm, 1964). Hence, the newspaper also plays an important role in bringing development and to create awareness among people about the development. The Hindu is not an exception. Since beginning, this national daily has been focusing on various local, national and international issues and trying to develop the readers' awareness on various topics besides delivering information.

About The Hindu:

Six young men in their twenties established this newspaper namely The Hindu on September 20, 1878. G. Subramania Aiyer and M. Veeraraghavachariyer, later became joint proprietors of this media company which was started as a weekly and became a daily in 1889. They all belonged to a society called the Triplicane Literary Society, which was a forum for discussion of political and social topics and attracted the attention of the elite classes in Madras. The paper was started in order to criticize the appointment of T. Muthuswami Aiyer as the judge of the Madras High Court. The beginning days were not too easy for the young men as they borrowed one rupee and three quarters, printed and published only 80 copies.

The Hindu, since then, has been acting as a representative of Indian voices, their feelings and grievances. Bipin Chandra Paul, the famous Bengali revolutionary and freedom fighter used to be the correspondent of The Hindu from Calcutta. His writings espoused nationalist feelings among the readers. The Hindu, though closely associated with the

Indian National Congress in those days during Subramania Aiyer's editorship, changed its tracks after S. Kasturiranga Iyengar, a lawyer in profession bought this paper and became the editor in 1905. From then onwards, it started to criticize the moderates and their activities towards the Indian Freedom Movement. It was S. Rangaswami's writings, whose articles mostly reflected this criticism. He was also the nephew of K.Iyengar. The Hindu invited the wrath of the British Raj because of its strong writings on 1919 Jallianwalabagh massacre. In 1923, the Nizam of Hyderabad banned this newspaper in Hyderabad as he did not like some articles on Hyderabad published in this paper. Many other national heroes were the correspondents of this daily. Subhash Chandra Bose was the correspondent from Vienna while V.K. Krishna Menon was the correspondent from Europe. In 1928, A.Rangaswamy Iyengar became the editor. He acted as a Secretary of the INC for many years. He was also a leading member in the Central Legislative Assembly. Then in 1934, Kasturi Srinivasan, son of Kasturiranga Iyengar became the Managing Editor and held the same post upto 1959. The newspaper achieved its worldwide fame during this period. The page one of The Hindu became a news page in 1958, breaking its 80-year-old policy of carrying advertisement on that page. (Parthasarathy, 2005)

Objectives of the research:

- To find out how the newspaper focused on various incidents, happened in the city.
- To find out how the newspaper focused on individual aspects in terms of development in various sectors.
- To discover whether the follow up of the stories was taken place regularly or not.
- To find out what kind of importance was given to the reports in terms of pagination.
- To find out what kind of report was given much emphasis.

Research methodology:

A random sample survey was made on the reports of The Hindu and a quantitative content analysis was done. A total of 152 reports from The Hindu newspaper of the Hyderabad edition dated from 17 March 2016 to 25 March 2016 were taken for conducting the research. The data is completely secondary in type.

Limitation:

If time and number of reports would be increased, the research would be more interesting.

Data details:

Data type: Secondary.

Duration: March 17, 2016 to March 25, 2016

Review of literature:

Balaswamy, B (2006) in his book entitled ‘**Communication for sustainable development**’ stated that during 1950-51, while covering the Middle eastern countries like Iran, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, Daniel Lerner in his studies discovered that mass communication served as the great multiplier of development. The devices attached to mass communication can spread requisite knowledge and attitudes immeasurably, more quickly and widely than ever before. A great correlation was found by Lerner between media growth and national growth. Lerner argued that a person who changes himself or herself in a developing society is a mobile personality. He or she possesses high capacity to identify with the new aspects of his or her environment. Lerner stated that the first element in social dynamics of development is the infusion of modern or mobile personality and the second element is the mobile multiplier which is mass media.

Mark Wilson, Panos and Orlando Bama (2007) in their article ‘**Media and Power: How can the media hold governments in developing countries, international financial institutions and donors to account?**’ stated that if the news media has a responsibility towards building greater levels of accountability and reducing corruption, then a focus must be there on its relationship with contemporary governments. The relationship between a national government and the contemporary is mostly and inevitably antagonistic. There are many governments throughout the world, who are committed in principle to provide the political will and set up a complete norms and regulations and also provide an environment which provides enough scope to media houses to practice freedom of speech and expression. But sometimes, there is an absence of such political will of the government and the protected space for media. According to them, governments must be committed to media for public good and should support it through public service legislation which includes open and independent regulation that promotes high journalistic and media standards.

Data details:

Date	Page no.	Topic	Number	Category
25.3.16	2	UoH and Kanhaiya	8	Univ
	4	Film criticism	3	Film
	5	Man who swapped ATM cards nabbed	1	Law/order
		Fake reporters a headache for cops	1	Law/order
		Man sets ablaze mother and sister, ends life	1	Individual death
		Coming soon, a reality show for start-ups	1	Development
24.3.16	2	UoH and Kanhaiya	7	Univ
	3	Violence erupts in Osmania varsity campus	1	Univ

		SCR to run specials to Ajmer for Urs	1	Development
		Drug-resistant TB, a major concern	1	Health
		Woman immolates self	1	Individual death
		Holiday to HC today	1	Misc
		Arrest UoH V-C: KNPS	1	Univ
		Pace of Army modernisation.....	1	Development
	4	Creating awareness on conservation of birds	1	Environ
		Mahindra unveils Blazo truck series	1	Development
		TRS seniors lobby for	1	State level politics
		Conferred IAS officers complete induction	1	Personal dev
		City industrialist is new chairman of CII-SR	1	Personal dev
		INCOIS buoys at Seychelles to.....	1	Misc
23.3.16	2	UoH	5	Univ
	3	UoH	2	Univ
		Cool tips to beat the heat in summer	1	Health
		RGI Airport bags award	1	Personal dev
		Man dies in freak accident	1	Individual death
		1500 people attend health camp	1	Health
		Police put metro rail annual security bill at Rs. 54 crore	1	Development
		Thai woman 'attacks' African in jail	1	Law/order
	4	Qurrah held...	1	Development
		Integrated plan for Mecca Masjid	1	Development
		HYSEA annual summit	1	Personal dev
		4 special trains....	1	Development
		Governor's pat for Pallela	1	Personal dev

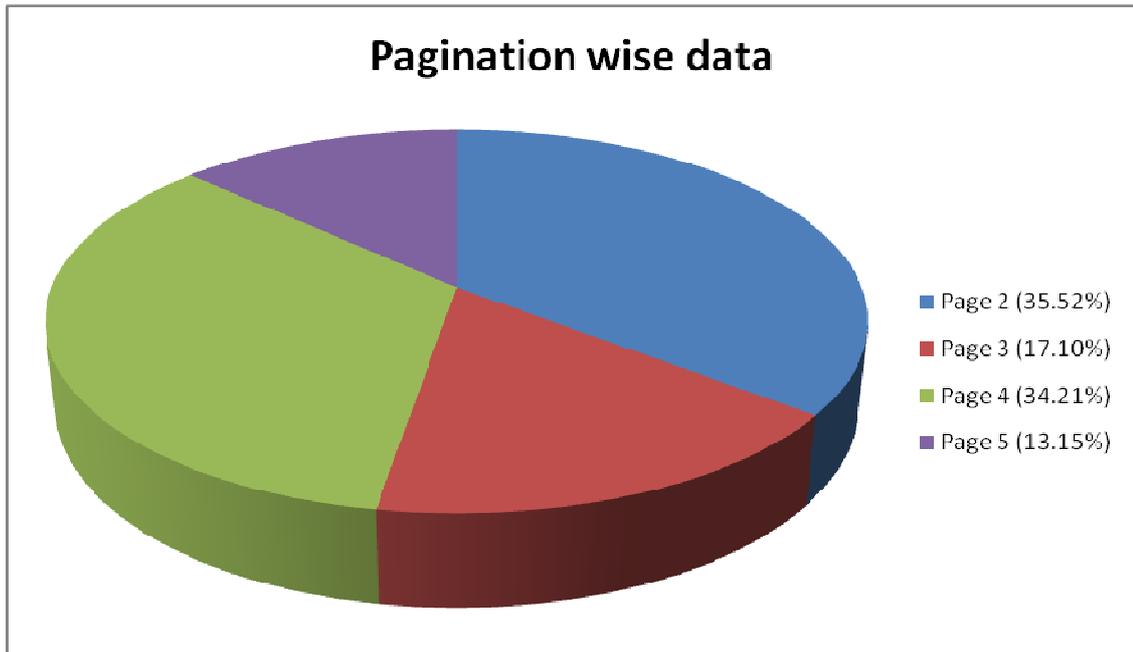
		Gov KCR extend Holi greetings	1	Personal dev
		Warehouse rooftops for solar power generation	1	Development
		Kachiguda station 15th in cleanliness survey	1	Environ
	5	Class X question paper on WhatsApp: 3 suspended	1	Law/order
		Chain snatcher nabbed	1	Law/order
		5 held on charge of robbing businessman	1	Law/order
22.3.16	2	Plan to rein in unauthorised borewells	1	Municipal gov
		Rain dance amidst water shortage	1	Environ
		Private tankers in search of water	1	Environ
		UoH ranking	1	Univ
		Biological E bags Rs. 895 crore order	1	Health
		Techies make a beeline for 'Open Hack'	1	Development
	3	Quiet start to SSC exams	1	Education
		Two 'killers of abhay had attempted suicide	1	Law/order
		Rohith's fellowship arrears released posthumously and JNU alumni.....	2	Univ
		Bike lifters nabbed	1	Law/order
		Advocate held for stealing books from High Court	1	Law/order
		GHMC sweeper crushed under RTC bus	1	Individual death
		L&TMRH Coffee Table book gets award	1	Personal dev
	4	OMC to extend Rs. 7 lakh ex gratia	1	Individual death
		Driver held on charge	1	Law/order
		IJU protests questioning of reporters by AP police	1	Misc
		Jewellers call off strike	1	Development

		Train collision avoidance.....	1	Development
		Panel recommends nod for film shoots.....	1	Film
		IIT Hyderabad team wins.....	1	Personal dev
	5	Forest offences to attract harsh punishments	1	Environ
		Darbar to be shifted in 3 phases	1	Development
		SCR announces 144 summer specials	1	Development
21.3.16	2	Now, in-flight entertainment on your mobile	1	Aeroplane
		India Aviation show concludes	1	Aeroplane
		Applications invited for.....	1	Education
		FIITJEE to conduct admission.....	1	Education
		Global Telangana convention.....	1	Development
		Lamakaan is a	1	Film
		Boating stopped at Mir Alam Tank	1	Environ
	5	Multi speciality hospital at helipad park draws flak	1	Environ
20.3.16	2	Film related	4	Film
	4	OMC panel to probe accident	1	Individual death
		Stamp paper case accused still on the run	1	Law/order
		Training academy	1	Education
		Residents look the other way during Earth Hour	1	Misc
		Man held for sexually assaulting minor	1	Law/order
		KCR inaugurates NALSAR auditorium	1	Personal dev
		Rural banks inaugurated	1	Development

	5	Efforts to gag Abhay caused his death	1	Law/order
		5.56 lakh students to appear for SSC.....	1	Education
19.3.16	2	Aeroplane related	3	Aeroplane
		Film related	2	Film
	4	Stones pelted at police in OU	1	Univ
		GHMC serves notice on Uppal stadium	1	Municipal gov
		Four injured at Army recruitment camp	1	Individual death
		3 held in Rajahmundry for Abhay's murder	1	Law/order
		Narayana students win NASA contest	1	Personal dev
		TVMSF to organise get together	1	Personal dev
	5	6885 gudumba-brewing families identified for rehabilitation	1	State level politics
		Old woman robbed, murdered	1	Law/order
		Chain snatchings down after State formation	1	Law/order
		IIS officer promoted	1	Personal dev
18.3.16	2	Aeroplane related	6	Aeroplane
	4	Murder could be motive.....	2	Law/order
		Ready to install CCTV cameras in all exam halls	1	Development
		Charminar pedestrianisation will be completed soon: KTR	1	Development
		CM Relief Fund misuse:.....	1	State level politics
		Denmark firm to set up manufacturing unit	1	Development
		IoT conference today	1	Personal dev
		Workshop at Women's College	1	Personal dev
	5	Demolition leads to tension at Chandrayangutta	1	Municipal gov

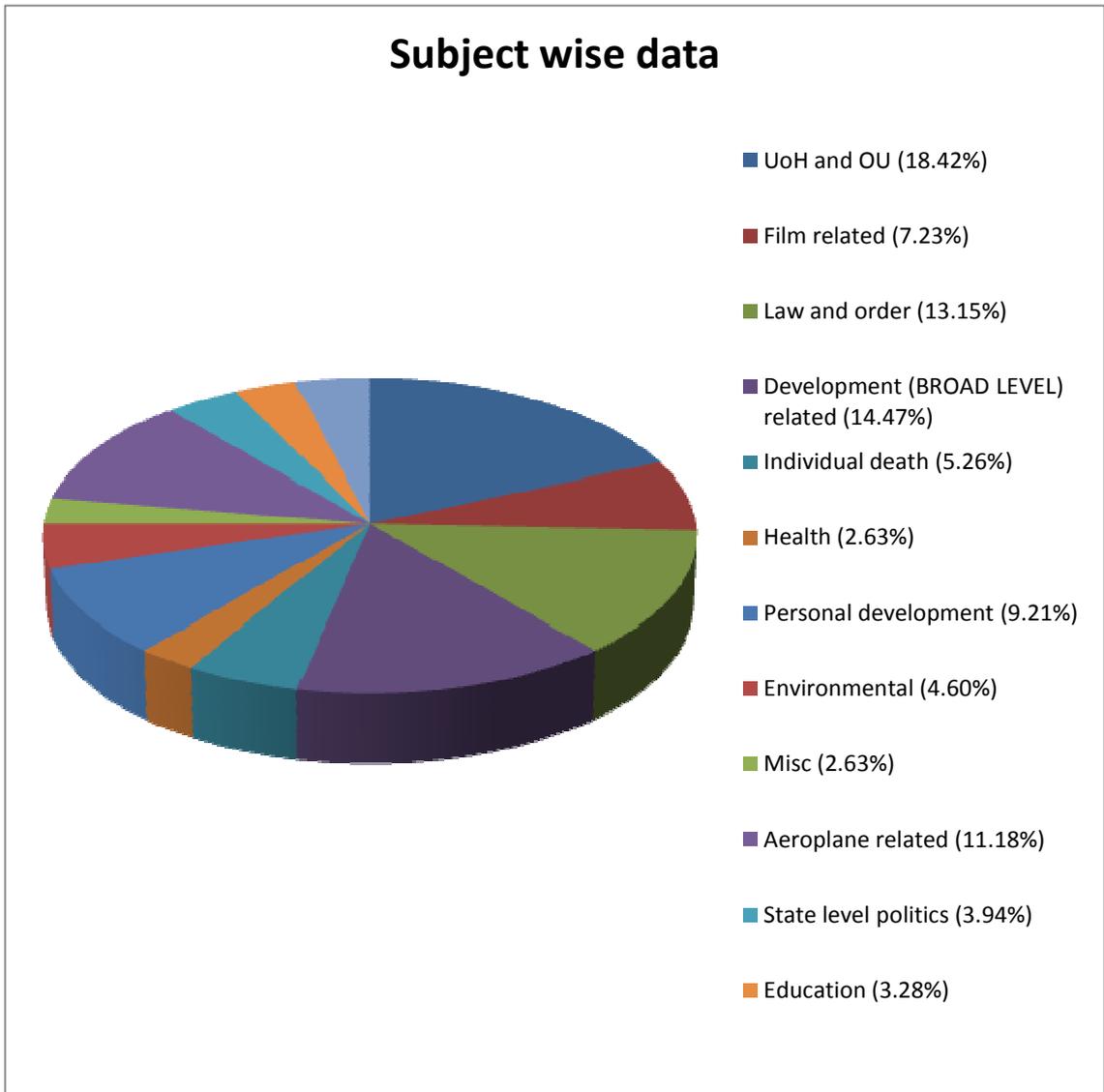
17.3.16	2	Aeroplane related	6	Aeroplane
	3	Tomato, onion prices hit rock bottom	1	Municipal gov
		Telugu TV anchor committs suicide	1	Individual death
		2 arrested for duping Flipkart, amazon	1	Law/order
	4	Encroachments of tanks go unchecked	1	Municipal gov
		Widened roads ease traffic at Bowenpally	1	Development
		SCR to run specials to clear rush	1	Development
		E-ticket booking facility for journalists launched	1	Development
		Youth seek sanction of 1 lakh govt. jobs	1	State level politics
		Cordon and search operations held	1	Law/order
		Curbs on 'gudumba' boost IML sales	1	State level politics
	5	Lacunae in issuing of fire NOCs	1	Municipal gov
		Amaravati work likely from June	1	State level politics
			152	

Analysis of data:



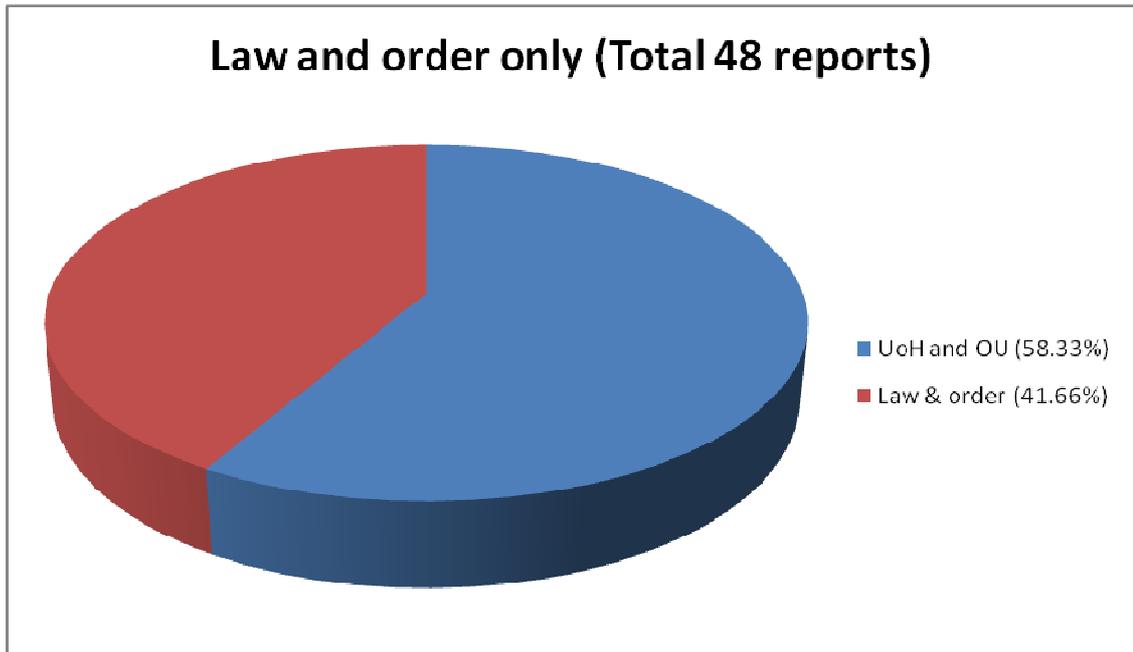
Pie chart 1: Representation of reports as per pagination.

In this chart, it has been denoted that how many reports have been published in which page. Out of the total number of reports (152) taken for research, different pages contain different percentages of report. The page number 2 contains 35.52% report while page number 3 contains 17.10% reports. The page number 4 contains 34.21% reports while page number 5 has 13.15% reports. The page no 2 reports are found mainly on issues related to the University of Hyderabad, Aeroplane fair and aviation related issues.



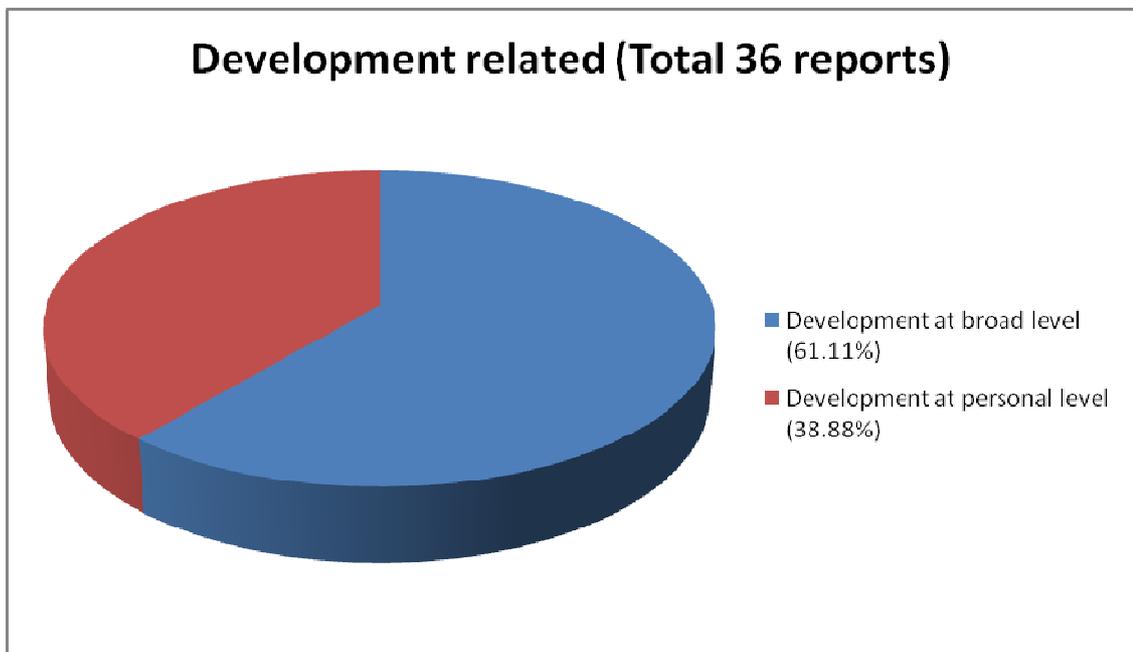
Pie chart 2: Representation of subject wise data

In this pie chart, subject wise data has been provided. The University of Hyderabad and Osmania University related reports constitute 18.42% of total reports, film (7.23%), general law and order (13.15%), broad level development (14.47%), individual death caused by accident (5.26%), health issues (2.63%), personal development (9.21%), environmental issues (4.60%), miscellaneous incidents (2.63%), airplane related incidents (11.18%), state level politics (3.94%) and education related incidents (3.28%).



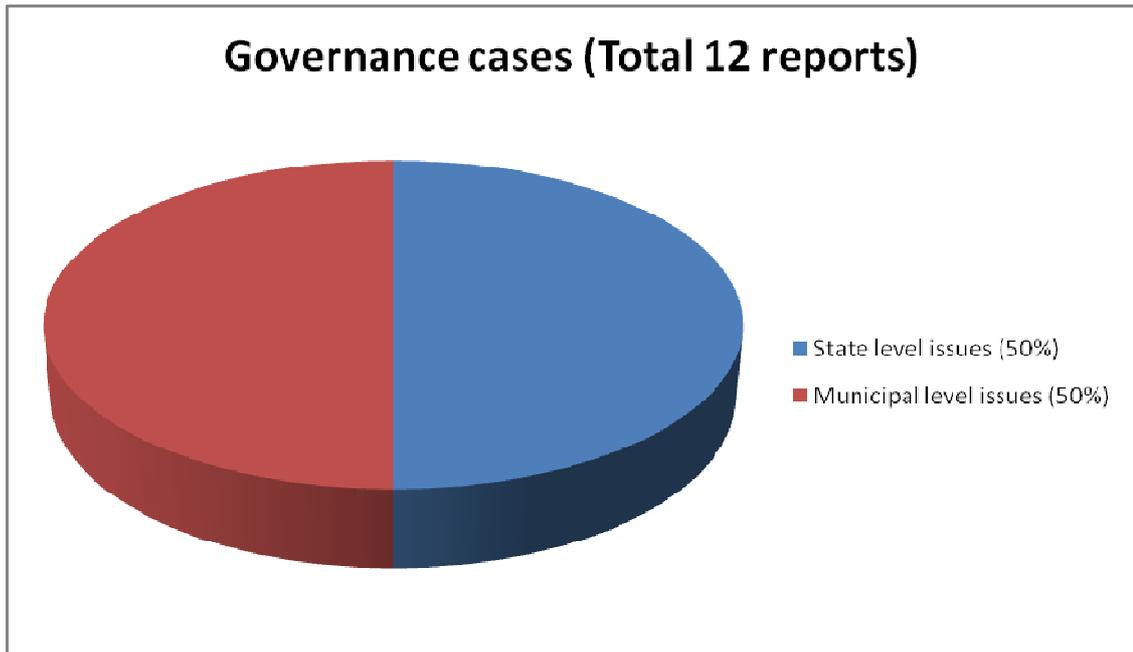
Pie chart 3: Representation of law and order related data

The pie chart 3 represents the data of law and order issues happened in the city of Hyderabad. In this chart, it has been mentioned that only University of Hyderabad and Osmania University related incidents stand at 58.33% while the other law and order issues stand at 41.66%.



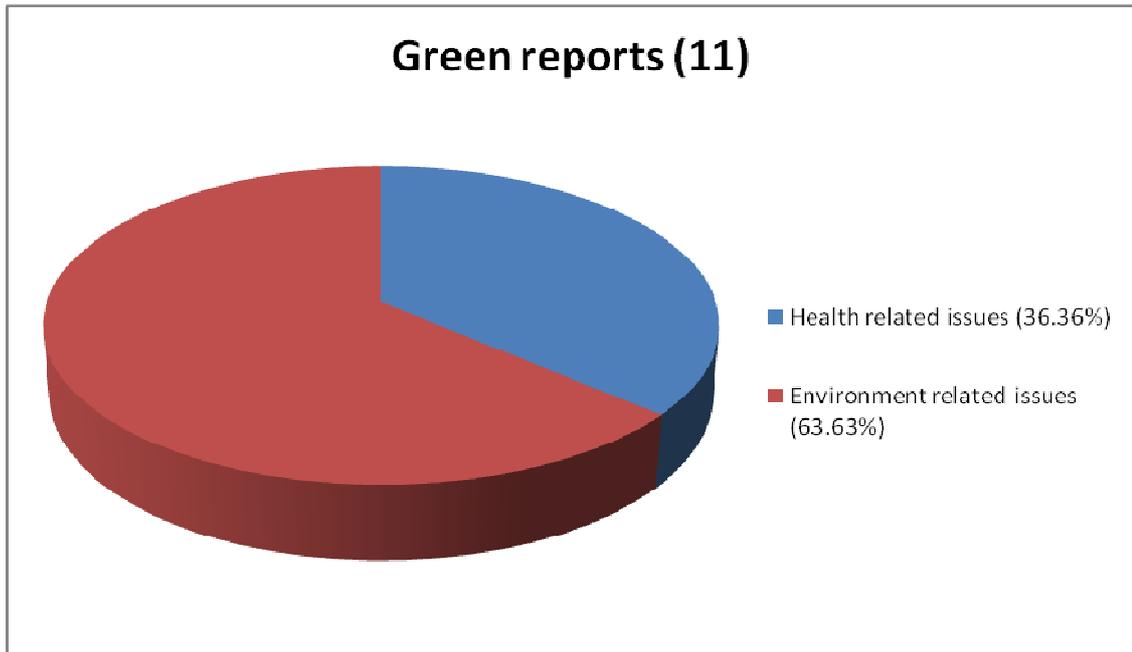
Pie chart 4: Representation of development related data

The pie chart 4 specifies the development related data. Here the development related data is divided into two groups – broad level and personal level. Broad level development indicates the developmental works carried out by the local government in particular and state government as a whole. Personal level development is the developmental incidents achieved by individuals at personal level. The development related data indicates that the broad level data stands at 61.11% while the development at personal level stands at 38.88%.



Pie chart 5: Representation of governance cases

The pie chart 5 reflects the governance reports as a whole. It indicates that state level issues related to governance stand at 50% and municipal level issues related to governance stand at 50%.



Pie chart 6: Representation of health related and environment related issues.

This particular chart describes that 36.36% reports belong to health related issues while 63.63% cases belong to environmental related issues.

Findings and conclusions:

1. The page of a daily carries maximum importance to readers as they have specific interest towards page. In print terminology, the page wise detail is known as folio. Folio stands for the entire reporting of a particular page. Pages numbered 2, 3 and 4 of The Hindu belong to folio namely City. Reports in page 5 belong to both City and State. Reports in all these pages are only reserved for Hyderabad and Secunderabad related incidents. The highest percentage of city reports belongs to Page 2. Only the incidents related to Hyderabad and Secunderabad regions of Page 5 were taken for research. The highest percentage of city based reports after Page 2 was found in Page 4, followed by Page 3 and Page 5. The advertisements occupied the rest of the part of the respective pages.

2. In the Page 2, a specific incident as per time has been focused. The topics thus are varied. They range from the incidents of clash between the students and university authorities at the University of Hyderabad, the unusual events happened in the Osmania University to the aeroplane shows and fairs at the Parade Ground, Secunderabad. Both the incidents of the Osmania University and the University of Hyderabad left a nationwide effect in those days. The death of Rohit Vemula inside the University of Hyderabad campus stirred the entire nation. The recent incidents like resuming work by the UoH Vice Chancellor which led to subsequent violence at the VC guest house inside the campus by some section of the students and professors left an indelible mark to the status and reputation of the university. The presentation and analysis of the report, done

by The Hindu on the respective incidents clearly represented a strong condemnation towards the police brutality over the protesting students and the professors. Besides the newspaper also made stark criticism of violence carried out in guest house by the students. The aviation related reports represented the local people's interest for the aviation show that was conducted at the Parade Ground. Specific incidents related to city, thus, were focused with care.

3. The Hindu has been focusing on development and health related issues more than any other issues if taken collectively. It thus, helps to make the people aware about the development issues around the city. Environment related incidents also carry a considerable percentage of reports as it is considered one of the prime topics of discussion among the people. The global warming and subsequent environmental hazards have been crippling the civilisation. Hence, it is quite necessary to make an emphasis on the subject which the newspaper has been doing with care.

4. The research observed that maximum incidents challenging the law and order took place inside the Osmania University and University of Hyderabad compared to other places in the city. The failure of administration to maintain peace and comfort inside the universities was noteworthy. The petty crimes that happened in the city were comparatively found less in number. The newspaper has been trying its best to make its readers aware about this situation. If university campus would continue to encourage violence in future, then it would ultimately destabilise the city's status. At the same time, it also questions the stability of the centres of learning.

5. In case of development reports, emphasis has been laid on individual as well as broad level cases. Broad level issues related to Mecca Masjid integration plans, gudumba brewing case, Charminar area development were emphasised with due care. The personal achievements were also not ignored.

6. Only 12 reports related to state level and municipal level governance were made, while many sections were left unattended. The city's stark problem of water crisis was not focused with due care. Only one report was made on government's attempt to inspect and curb unauthorized bore well in the city, but no follow up was done. While it was found that OU and UoH related incidents had considerable follow up stories, report on government's indifference to solve the water crisis was not done.

7. Though the law and order related cases are in rise throughout the city, the newspaper has been found much concerned about the OU and UoH related issues. Cases related to petty and major crimes in and around the city have not been focused with due importance.

8. The twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad have a number of hospitals, both private and government. No reports have been done on this sector, though a considerable number of incidents are taking place every day. Hike of patient-visits, lack of government doctors at government hospitals, rapid growth of private clinics and hospitals, corporatisation of doctor-patient relationship, growing cost of treatment - all such cases have been ignored.

9. Rising pollution which is a major concern of this city due to its growing vehicular movements needs more focus. The newspaper has been found highly selective in drafting reports on health and environment, while a more emphasis is needed on this sector also.

10. There is a need of reporting of incidents that occur at night. The twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad never sleep because of its vibrant software industry. Many incidents happen in front of individuals which need to be reported. The Hindu through its esteemed columns must publish the individual voice for the betterment of the Deccan queen in terms of its governance.

References:

Balaswamy, B. (2006). *Communication for sustainable development*. Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi. p.20

Mark Wilson, Panos and Orlando Bama. (2007). *Media and Power: How can the media hold governments in developing countries, international financial institutions and donors to account?* From Development, Governance and the Media: The role of the media in building African society, A Polis report edited by Charlie Beckett and Laura Kyrke-Smith (POLIS journalism and society). London School of Economics and Political Science, London accessed from the link

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/Polis/documents/DevelopmentGovernanceMedia.pdf>

on 26.4.16

Parthasarathy, Rangaswamy. (2005). *Chapter 13. The Centenarians*. Journalism in India, From The Earliest Times To the Present Day. 4th revised edition. Sterling Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi. p. 225-228.

Schramm, Wilbur. (1964). *Mass media and national development*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, cited by Ascrot and Masilila (1994). *op. cit.* pp. 271-271 and Melkote (1991) *op. cit.* p.92.

The Hindu, Hyderabad edition, March 17, 2016 to March 25, 2016