



THE INDIAN NEWSPAPER SOCIETY

Lies try to  
disguise themselves  
as the sensational truth.  
But we all seek the truth.  
That's why every word  
in the newspaper  
is corroborated, verified,  
and only then printed.  
Between these lines,  
there is no space for  
falsehood. A newspaper  
is the only place where  
what's written and what's  
true are always the same  
thing because

**Nothing but the truth.**

**Ink Doesn't Lie**

THE INDIAN NEWSPAPER SOCIETY

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS BY MR. VIVEK GUPTA**

**87<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
THE INDIAN NEWSPAPER SOCIETY**

**07<sup>th</sup> September 2026**

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Good Morning, Ladies & Gentlemen!!

I have immense pleasure in welcoming you all to the 87<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of The Indian Newspaper Society.

At the outset, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to every member publication for the confidence reposed in the Society by extending their unwavering support.

The Indian Newspaper Society has, for over more than eight decades, remained the collective voice of India's Print media industry, and it is this collective spirit that continues to define our relevance and effectiveness.

Print, for over more than two centuries, has chronicled the triumphs and tragedies of this nation, recorded the evolution of civilizations, shaped public opinion, held those in authority accountable, and continues to do so.

- **THE BEGINNING OF PRINT**

Interestingly, the story of communication, especially Print, is much older than we think.

It has been here for ages.

When the technology was different.

When the world was different.

But the human need was the same.

The need to know.

The need to communicate.

The need to connect.

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The story of Indian journalism goes back to 1780, when Hicky's Bengal Gazette was published. That first newspaper marked the beginning of journalism in India. Thereafter, Indian journalism grew steadily and many renowned Publications of Indian languages started their journey with the freedom struggle movement.

**I can proudly say that many of them are still thriving and are associated with us as an esteemed member of this Society.**

Friends, we have survived generations, wars, economic crisis and technological revolutions and that itself tells us something about the strength of Print.

The Press has played an extraordinary role in creating political consciousness.

The role of Press in India's freedom movement is something we remember with pride, as the printed word became an instrument of awakening.

- **HISTORICAL TIMELINE**

Despite this extraordinary history, Print has repeatedly been told that it is a sunset industry. However, we survived and emerged stronger with each of the below happenings:

**Radio Era:** When radio emerged, predictions were made that print would become irrelevant. Yet, print adapted by offering depth, permanence, and analysis that fleeting audio could not provide.

**Television Revolution:** Television brought visuals into storytelling, and once again, the obituary of print was prematurely written. We again responded by strengthening

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investigative journalism, editorial depth, and regional coverages.

**Internet Boom:** The digital wave redefined speed and accessibility. As screens multiplied, so did claims that print would disappear. Yet print evolved with credibility and context.

**Mobile Phone Era:** The proliferation of mobile phones placed information directly into the hands of billions, making news instant, portable, and constant. Predictions grew louder that print would be replaced by handheld screens. Yet, amid the rush of notifications and fragmented updates, print retained its strength by offering curated, verified, and distraction-free journalism that readers could trust and absorb with clarity.

**Social Media & AI Surge:** They are rapidly transforming the way content is created and consumed. In an age of information overload and misinformation, the prediction of print's extinction still persists. However, Social media is a major contributor of fake and unverified news. Whereas, Newspapers, now more than ever before is known for trust, integrity and credible journalism.

Every technological revolution has predicted about the death of print.

And each time, print has adapted.

Print has not only survived; it has remained steadfast while preserving its core values of trust and credibility.

**Ink does not merely record history - It resists erasure, demands accountability and endures beyond the noise of every passing age.**

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Where other mediums chase speed, print commands reflection.

Social media posts can be taken off or deleted, while a Newspaper, magazine etc., once printed, remains for posterity.

In an era defined by information overload and trust deficit, print does not compete - it anchors.

- **THE FOURTH ESTATE**

The press is often described as the Fourth Estate which is not merely ceremonial but also carries responsibility.

We question, investigate, expose wrongdoing and explain complex issues.

Today, the responsibility is greater than ever.

We are living in an age of information abundance, which does not necessarily mean knowledge or the truth.

A photograph can be manipulated. A video can be fabricated. A voice can be cloned. A person can be made to appear to say something, never said.

This is where print has a fundamental advantage.

We have reporters, editors, verification processes and follow professional guidelines and standards.

We know that what we publish carries the name of the publication.

Accountability is built into our process and that is why trust has become the most valuable asset of journalism.

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- **THE NUMBERS**

According to the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting's Statistical Handbook on Media & Entertainment Sector, the number of registered print publications in India rose to **1.54 lacs in 2024-25** from **5,932 in 1957**. The combined circulation of registered publications today is approximately **37 crore copies per publishing day**.

According to data from the Audit Bureau of Circulations reported for July-December 2025, total print circulation of their members stood at approximately 2.91 crore copies representing a growth of about 2%.

As per government's data, India is home to **approximately 6.44 lakh villages**, each with its own socio-economic strata, linguistic diversity, and varying levels of access to technology. While significant progress has been made in connectivity, internet and mobile access remains uneven especially in many remote regions, making newspapers a lifeline of information for many.

The real strength of this industry, however, cannot be measured only by the number of registered publications or their circulation. It lies in its extraordinary geographical and linguistic reach. Print reaches districts, towns, semi-urban, urban and rural India, simultaneously.

At the smallest level, a local newspaper carries the story about a village road, a panchayat decision, a school activity, an agricultural issue, a government scheme or the achievement of an ordinary citizen in its region.

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This is the extraordinary strength of print – even a local voice is heard at the national level.

- **THE PEOPLE**

Behind our success there is a vast human ecosystem consisting of reporters, editors, photographers, designers, printing professionals, advertising teams, circulation departments, distributors, transporters and hawkers.

The strength of the Indian print media industry has always been its “Unsung Ground Soldiers” whom we call “Our Journalists”. This human presence i.e. journalism is something that technology can never replicate.

Across the country, thousands of journalists leave their homes every day to report from the remotest corners of the country.

**This boots on ground approach enables print to report not merely what is happening, but what matters.**

We must also recognise the contribution of our distribution partners especially the Hawkers because the relationship between a newspaper and its reader may begin in the newsrooms but it ends with the hawker and the delivery boy at the doorstep.

**However, today the availability of hawkers is becoming a serious concern for the industry.**

Thus, there is a need for skill development and a stronger ecosystem for our distribution partners.

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- **PRINT'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION**

Having said that, the print media industry also provides direct and indirect jobs and businesses - from journalism to ink, machinery, logistics, technology, distribution, advertising, and printing to paper.

**This industry provides employment and livelihood to crores of people while supporting 20 million or more families.**

While the outlook is positive, we cannot ignore the economic realities.

As we all know, the print industry continues to function under extreme cost pressure and at the same time discharges its responsibilities, complying with prevalent laws and regulations.

**The cost of publishing has increased.**

**Wages have increased.**

**Transportation has become more expensive.**

**Distribution is becoming more and more difficult.**

The policymakers must recognize the public value of a viable print ecosystem when framing policies, affecting its costs and sustainability.

- **IMPORTANCE OF PRINT**

Sometimes I am asked: **Does print have a future?**

My response to this is a counter question: **Can a Society afford a future without journalism?**

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I firmly believe the answer is **NO**.

Technology companies can aggregate and distribute information. Social media platforms can amplify information. They do not do journalism.

**But journalism is created by the publications.**

Big Tech companies like Google and Meta have zero journalists.

This is why readers should support the original source and must be encouraged to access news directly from the Print Publishers own websites and digital platforms.

**Therefore, there is a need for greater public understanding of a simple principle: Support the source that creates the news content.**

Similarly, print is not simply a source of news or information. It is a source of knowledge and wisdom as well.

**For students, newspapers and magazines are an important educational resource.**

They help students to prepare for competitive examinations, improve their language and comprehension skills. They connect classroom learning with the real world by introducing students to economics, science, politics, international affairs, public policy, sports, culture and society.

Many State Governments have encouraged the availability of newspapers in their libraries and educational institutions. I believe more State governments should follow this principle to keep the citizens informed to enable them to understand, question and evaluate information.

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There is another major contribution of Newspapers that is sometimes overlooked.

**Print is an archive.**

Tomorrow's historians will look at today's Newspapers.

They will examine and study how India responded to crisis like Wars, Economic changes, Natural calamities, Social movements and Scientific achievements.

We, therefore, do not merely report the present. We preserve the present for the future.

Here I would also like to acknowledge the **important role played by Magazines, Journals and Periodicals as they provide depth and analysis** to its readers. They serve communities by documenting specialized knowledge.

- **ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT**

There is another important dimension that we must address - the environmental perception surrounding print.

**Paper is recycled and the end product becomes raw material again.**

The industry is increasingly using better technology, standards and more efficient production processes. We should therefore continue to innovate and improve resource efficiency.

Print does not need any algorithm, electricity, water guzzling data centres, battery chargers, or an internet connection.

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- **THE PRESS FREEDOM**

The United Nations' 2026 message on World Press Freedom Day reminded us that economic pressures, new technologies and active manipulation are placing press freedom under unprecedented strain. The UN Secretary-General Mr. António Guterres stated:

**“When journalism is undermined, crises become far more difficult to prevent and resolve.”**

**“All freedom depends on press freedom.”**

**“Without it, there can be no human rights, no sustainable development – and no peace.”**

He also mentioned that when access to reliable information erodes, mistrust takes root. This message is particularly relevant today because if credible journalism becomes economically unsustainable, the consequences extend far beyond the publishing industry. The Society and Nation at large will suffer.

- **EMBRACE THE CHANGE**

However, change is constant. We all are aware of it.

Every day brings a new technology, a new platform and a new challenge. Yet, almost every day, somewhere in India, a new newspaper is launched or is in the process of it.

A new edition is created. A new journalist begins his/her reporting.

A new reader picks up a newspaper. That is resilience.

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That is the strength of print.

**Artificial intelligence is already helping to improve efficiency in publishing.**

It can assist with translation, transcription, data analysis, streamlining workflow and many other routine newsroom functions.

There is another area where India needs greater attention, that is Research and Development in print.

**India has a vibrant and large publishing industry, but compared with its scale there is insufficient R&D focused facilities.**

Government should encourage innovation in printing machinery, energy efficiency, paper technology, color reproduction, recycling, distribution, automation, AI-assisted production and environmentally sustainable printing.

- **RECOGNISING PRINT'S VALUE**

After experimenting with multiple media platforms, many advertisers have come to recognise the value of print. **Why?**

The reason is because advertising is ultimately about attention and conversion to business.

Here Print offers a much more controlled environment.

It offers permanence and detailed information. In many categories, it remains particularly effective for consumers who are making considered decisions.

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This should give us confidence but also encourage us to communicate these values of Print more effectively to the advertisers.

It was in this spirit that your Society undertook the **“Ink Doesn't Lie”** campaign. The campaign captured something very fundamental about our industry.

In an age of misinformation and synthetic content, the printed word stands for accountability.

The campaign therefore was not simply about promoting print, it was about reminding the readers, advertisers and policy makers about the value of print.

**Ink doesn't lie because behind the printed word stands responsibility and accountability.**

- **YOUR SOCIETY AT WORK**

During the year under consideration, your Society has taken up various concerns and remained engaged with Government, various departments and policy makers. Some of them are:

**A. 9<sup>TH</sup> RATE STRUCTURE COMMITTEE**

After nearly four years of persistent efforts of your Society, the Government announced the recommendations of the 9<sup>th</sup> Rate Structure Committee. In November 2025, the Government announced a 26% increase in print advertisement rates.

This was an important recognition of the economic realities confronting Publishers.

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While we appreciate this step, we have also made further request to the Government.

**Higher rates must be accompanied by adequate advertising allocation.**

The Government advertising budget for Print should adequately reflect the revised rates and the continuing importance of Print's reach.

## **B. NEWSPRINT**

For Print media industry, Newsprint is not simply just another industrial raw material. It is indeed one of the most essential inputs.

**Imposing customs duty on such an essential input ultimately increases the cost of production for Publishers.**

In our representations to the Government, we have consistently emphasized that there is no justification for continuing this duty.

The Domestic newsprint production is about half of the total requirement of the industry hence, the Print industry faces challenges in terms of insufficient capacity, adequate quality and non-availability of specialized grades.

Your Society has issued Press Releases to convey these concerns to the Government and policymakers.

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**On behalf of the Members of the Society, I once again urge the Government to withdraw the 5% Customs Duty on Newsprint.**

### **C. MONOPOLISTIC PRACTICES OF BIG TECH COMPANIES**

Around the world, Publishers have invested enormous resources to run their publications. They maintain editorial teams, printing infrastructure and distribution systems that serve the public interest every single day.

Yet, a large share of digital revenue generated by their original news content is increasingly captured by a handful of global technology platforms that neither produce content nor bear any editorial responsibilities.

Recognising the seriousness of this issue, your Society has filed a complaint with the Competition Commission of India (CCI).

The CCI after examining the contentions of the Society found that these allegations of abuse of dominant position are under the purview of the Competition Act, 2002. Your Society is keeping a close vigil on the progress of the matter.

### **D. GENERATIVE AI AND COPYRIGHT**

While technological change presents significant opportunities, it also raises legal and policy concerns that demand careful consideration. Artificial Intelligence is transforming the creation, dissemination and consumption of information at an unprecedented pace.

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Recognising the far-reaching implications, your Society has participated in the Government's consultation process on the working paper relating to Generative AI and Copyright and submitted its detailed recommendations emphasizing the need to establish a balanced legal framework that encourages innovation while simultaneously protecting the intellectual property rights of publishers and original content creators.

Similarly, your Society has submitted a comprehensive representation to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting regarding copyright infringement and strengthening anti-piracy mechanisms.

#### **E. MINIMUM ADVERTISEMENT SIZE**

A very small advertisement may technically carry the message, but it may compromise readability, visual quality and communication effectiveness. Likewise, a colour advertisement requires sufficient space for the creative to be reproduced properly.

In this connection, your Society has approached the Government to prescribe a uniform minimum size for their advertisements in print media.

This is not simply a revenue issue. It is also about ensuring that the communication reaches the public in the quality intended.

#### **F. INTERACTIVE SESSIONS**

During the year under consideration, your Society had conducted interactive sessions with publications and

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advertising agencies in various parts of the country which were fruitful.

We can assure you that the industry's concerns are heard and pursued with the concerned authorities.

- **MESSAGE TO MEMBERS**

Now before I conclude, I want to say something to every Member of the Society.

**Do not underestimate what you have built.**

**Do not underestimate the strength of your Publication.**

**And do not underestimate the resilience of Print.**

We have watched every technological revolution and have seen every prediction of the decline of Print.

We have faced economic pressures and cut throat competition.

**And yet, we are still here.**

**More importantly, we are relevant.**

It is about ensuring that, in an age where information is everywhere, there remains journalism that people can believe.

That is why I remain confident and optimistic.

And that is why I believe that the future of Indian Print media is not behind us.

It is still ahead of us.

**So, let us move towards that future together and stay united.**

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Now I wish to place on record my sincere gratitude for the cooperation and support received from my colleagues: Mr. Karan Rajendra Darda - Deputy President, Mr. Tanmay Maheshwari - Vice President and Mr. Anant Nath - Honorary Treasurer.

I would also like to specially thank the industry's veteran Mr. H. N. Cama for his valuable guidance and support during my tenure.

I also owe my thanks to all the Chairpersons/Chairmen of Regional Committee & Sub-Committees, all Members of the Executive Committee and Past Presidents for their support throughout the year.

I also want to once again thank all the Members of this esteemed Society for their consistent support which is indeed vital to our collective efforts and success. On behalf of the entire Executive Committee of the Society, we are grateful for your continuing support.

Finally, I convey my thanks to the Secretary General - Ms. Mary Paul and other staff members of the Secretariat for their assistance and cooperation during my tenure.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to lead this prestigious Society.

**Vivek Gupta**  
President



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हर दिन लाखों झूठी बातें  
सच बनने का दावा करती हैं।  
इसलिए, इस झूठ की दुनिया में,  
सच जानना जरूरी है।  
मगर हम हर अक्षर को  
सिर्फ पढ़ते नहीं,  
बल्कि जाँचते हैं  
और तभी छापते हैं।  
इन शब्दों के बीच  
झूठ की कोई जगह नहीं होती।  
हम जो लिखते हैं, सच लिखते हैं।  
तो झूठ को हटाओ,  
सच को अपनाओ।

सच के सिवा कुछ नहीं

स्याही झूठ नहीं बोलती