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## The Prospects of English Dailies in Chhattisgarh

### Abstract

*Chhattisgarh has always been acknowledged for its outstanding and unbiased Hindi journalism. However, English journalism has also been here, albeit not in the thick of things, thanks to the initiatives taken by some of the very committed and knowledgeable journalists. Some of the journalists from the subsequent generation have been also contributing to English journalism apart from their contribution to Hindi Journalism. These journalists had been working and reporting for almost all the established National English Dailies since the early 70s. After the formation of Chhattisgarh as a separate state, more and more English newspapers like Hindustan Times, The Pioneer, The Times of India and Metro India have started their edition from Raipur. In this changed scenario, a study of the growth prospects of English dailies must be done.*

### ORIGINAL ARTICLE



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### Key Words

*English Dailies, Journalism, Chhattisgarh, MP Chronicle, Hitavada.*

### Introduction

The first daily English newspaper MADHYA PRADESH CHRONICLE was started in Raipur in 1974. This was the venture of the well-known Hindi newspaper group NAVA BHARAT. Actually, the paper was already being published from Bhopal and another edition of the same was planned from Raipur in the 80s, THE HITAVADA also started its bureau in Raipur to cater to the English readership in this region. It had a fairly good circulation as well. But after the formation of Chhattisgarh, more and more English newspapers like Hindustan Times, The Pioneer, The Times of India, and Metro India have started their edition from Raipur. Therefore a study of the growing prospects needs to be done.

After seeing the trend in the last 20 years or so, it is quite evident that English journalism is growing in Chhattisgarh and It has got good prospects. Chhattisgarh has got tremendous scope for English newspapers in the coming years. It is believed that the new generation would prove to be the main target readers of English newspapers. Circulation-wise English newspapers will grow but not in thousand as is seen in Hindi newspapers.

### Research Methodology

Here two newspapers CENTRAL CHRONICLE and THE HITAVADA have been chosen for study. For doing the qualitative research of the overall layout, content, variety of subjects and news presentation the tools taken here are- Interviews, schedules, and observation methods have been primarily used in this study.

Apart from this, a content analysis has also been done on the basis of one-month news items taken in October 2022 from both newspapers.

## Data Collection

Primarily the data for this study has been collected from primary sources. Retired Editors of English dailies were contacted and some professionals, who are known as keen readers of English dailies, were also included in this list, to evaluate the prospects of English journalism in Chhattisgarh.

### CENTRAL CHRONICLE

CENTRAL CHRONICLE is the oldest English newspaper, printed and published in Raipur. Basically, it is owned by the famous Hindi Daily Nava Bharat Group. It was started in 1974. Since then many renowned journalists have worked here and tried to introduce English readership through their report writings and occasional comments. From the Central Chronicle Editorial family, Govind Lal Vora and Ramesh Nayyar are the two veteran journalists, who are still alive and active as well. "Although English readership in the early days of Chronicle was not very big in number. However, as time progressed, Central Chronicle did make its mark and even now it is a respectable English Daily, giving good amount of local and regional news", they both claim.

### THE HITAVADA

Founded by (the late) Shri Gopal Krishna Gokhale in 1911, The Hitavada has been Central India's largest-selling English daily newspaper for decades. It is one of the oldest newspapers in India and was launched with the specific aim of serving the great struggle for Independence from alien rule. The fortunes of The Hitavada fortunes changed for the better when Shri Banwarilal Purohit took over the management in late 1978 from Shri Vidyacharan Shukla who headed the Progressive Writers and Publishers and revived the defunct publication. After that, The Hitavada has seen only an upward curve of growth and progress. It now boasts four editions -- at Nagpur, Jabalpur, Raipur, and the fourth fledgling one at Bhopal. Under the leadership of Shri Banwarilal Purohit as Managing Editor, Shri Rajendra Purohit as Publisher, and Shri Vijay Phanshikar as Editor, The Hitavada has grown from strength to strength in the past three decades.

### Editors speak

**Pradeep Chaturvedi** - (Retired Exe. Editor- CENTRAL CHRONICLE) - The initial days of English Journalism were predominantly that of translation. However, during the last 15 years, the original reporting has increased. After the formation of state, readership has also increased. The young reporters are doing a commendable job in original writing. Hence the prospect of English journalism is bright.

**Joseph John** (Asst Editor, The Times of India) - In the last 20 years or so, the readership has increased. However, the mistakes in language are evident and need to be rectified. Prospects are good. Initially, the news agencies used to provide news items in English, the journalists used to translate the items and hence their presentation had originality.

**Shivanand Shukla** (Chief Editor- VISION WATCH) - There was always a need for good quality English Daily in Chhattisgarh. Since the state's formation, the readership is increasing public Schools and professional colleges, Engineering, Medical Management, and other institutes are our target readers. We are confident with every coming year the circulation will increase further.

**Sujit Kumar** (Editor, THE PIONEER) - Ever since the national English Daily HINDUSTAN TIMES had to shut down its operation and publishing from Raipur, the need to fulfill that gap was always felt. So THE PIONEER might just fill that gap and emerge as a new national daily. The readership survey, that our group conducted, shows a fair indication of growth in this sector.

### Readers say

**Manish Pilliwar** - (Architect)- Previously we used to underline a lot of spelling mistakes in English Dailies from Chhattisgarh. Now this trend is changing for the better. Black and White papers were there. Now the resources and technology have improved many things including the presentation.

**Tejpal Hanspal** (Engineer & Media Professional)- I used to subscribe to THE PIONEER about 15 years back, to improve my English. Gradually I looked at other newspapers also. Now THE PIONEER has come to Raipur. This is a good sign for all of us.

**Neeraj Singh** (Management professional)- Even when the Times of India did not have an editor, it used to get huge advertisements from Chhattisgarh. This already proves the point that there is a good scope for English Daily in Chhattisgarh.

**Dipika Sharma** (Hostel Warden at NIT)- I always had a dream to learn English. I used to go to Coaching Institute also for this purpose. Now I find some quality English Dailies in Chhattisgarh. This is quite encouraging for me and my friends.

**Soumya Raghuvir** (Teacher in Delhi Public School)- I have always felt that more and more English Dailies should come out for Chhattisgarh. This will improve the overall performance of the students in the national arena. With more such schools the circulation will also increase definitely.

**Nilesh Desai** (Professional photographer)- I find English dailies more suitable for photography. They carry big photographs with clarity. THE HINDU is known for its beautiful photographs. I hope the English Dailies in Chhattisgarh will also concentrate on this aspect. This will also help increase the circulation.

## Content Analysis

Apart from the analysis of the status and growth of English dailies in the Raipur district of Chhattisgarh, a small exercise of content analysis has also been done, in an attempt to examine the presentation and selection news and the priorities of the two selected newspapers i.e.- Central Chronicle and The Hitavada. The total number of news and the topics covered in these items have been shown in the tables here-

Particular	Local News	State level News	National News	International News
Central Chronicle	80	72	214	242
The Hitavada	58	51	354	305
Difference	+22	+21	-140	-63

(Source: Primary Data)

Presentation of News in Central Chronicle and The Hitavada in Neer in Bar.

The chart and table indicate important points :

1. Central Chronicle has given more importance to local and state news, while The Hitavada has given significance to the national and international.
2. Central Chronicle has 20 pages, while The Hitavada has 24 pages.
3. Central Chronicle has specially targeted local and state-level readers, while The Hitavada has been established as a national daily, so those who wish to read The Hitavada, will be expecting national and international news in that newspaper, even if it gives fewer numbers of local and state news
4. Central Chronicle editorial think-tank knows that it is not, and it can never be, at par with The Hitavada and other national dailies, like Times of India which has started its publication in Raipur only two years back.
5. Central Chronicle is concentrating more on its presentation and good language. This has been a major lacking previously. The Hitavada is concentrating more on literary writing and columns to engage its readers.
6. Both Central Chronicle and The Hitavada have many factors, which need to improve either if they have to establish as readers' favorite English Daily. Central Chronicle needs to carry field-based stories, while The Hitavada needs to be more local in news selection.
7. The two newspapers will have to compete with Vision Watch and The Pioneer. So the selection of

news, in these two Dailies comparatively should be observed and the number of items can also be increased.

## Conclusion

This research gives the following findings, which came after analyzing the data and talking to the Editors, English newspaper readers, and professionals, who wish to see both these newspapers run successfully:

1. There is a fairly good scope for English newspapers in Chhattisgarh, The editors, readers, and professionals have confirmed this in their opinion.
2. This scope has increased substantially after the formation of a separate state.
3. The English medium and Public Schools, along with the Professional colleges and institutes of Engineering, Medical, Dental, Management, Information Technology, Agriculture, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy, Nursing, Hotel Management, and Tourism are promoting the readership of English newspapers.
4. The population migrated from Southern and Eastern India- i.e. Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and other states (where English readership of newspapers is very much), is also helping the circulation of English Dailies in Chhattisgarh. This will further increase, according to the editors, readers, and professionals themselves.
5. With the launching of many other English Dailies like TIMES OF INDIA, in the recent past, the competition has increased further and this would boost the circulation of all the English Dailies

## Suggestion

1. The language should be perfect and there should be no grammatical mistakes.
2. The paper used for printing should be substantially white, to ensure that the printed text is readable. It also improves the overall look of the newspaper and gives good results in the printing of colour photographs.
3. In the modern age of technology, information from across the globe should be incorporated, depending upon the demand of English readers.
4. Interactive activities should be done to keep the readers intact. Through READERS' CLUB, QUIZ COMPETITION, and SHARING OF LIBRARY.

These are some key suggestions to be followed by English newspapers in order to improve their readership and overall quality.

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