

# Newspapers Published in Garhwal Region After Independence : A Historical View

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**Abstract :** Currently, the entire world is developing into a global village. We can access information on any subject within seconds through the internet. In this era of modernity, while many communication technologies have developed among people, the significance of media and mass communication is also growing uniquely. The world's first newspapers were published in Britain in 1620 and in America in 1690. Since then, numerous revolutionary changes have occurred in the world of journalism. These revolutions can be seen across all areas, including newspaper technology, layout, distribution, and content.

There is also no doubt that electronic media like radio and television has left newspapers behind in many ways. However, despite all of this, the credibility of newspapers remains intact. There has been no change in the number of newspaper readers in our country. Newspapers remain everyone's preference even today because they present news in a detailed manner. This study examines the historical development of newspapers published and circulated in Garhwal region after India's Independence in 1947. It explores the emergence of regional newspapers, their contributions to social and political movements, particularly the Uttarakhand statehood movement and the challenges faced by regional journalism. The study is based on historical and descriptive research methods using both primary and secondary sources. The findings reveal that newspapers such as Yugvani, Himachal Times, Devbhumi, Satyapath, Naya Jamana, Lalkar, Himalaya Ki Lalkar, Doon Darpan, Seemant Prahari, Uttarakhand Observer, Parvatraj Times, Pauri Times, Dhadhakta Pahar, Parvatwani, Himvant, Aniket, Garhwal Post, Dainik Jagran, Amar Ujala etc. significantly contributed to regional development, public awareness and cultural preservation.

## The Origin and Development of Journalism in Garhwal:

As long as the kings ruled over Kumaon and Garhwal, there was a complete lack of social, economic, and political awareness. However, with the establishment of British rule in both of these regions, the feeling of nationalism developed rapidly. Angered by the oppressive behaviour of the local administration in Kumaon-Garhwal, people started forming organizations. These organizations were not political but were created to deal with regional issues. The purpose of these organizations was to gather educated, aware, and socially-connected people to eradicate the prevailing anarchy and superstition in society, and to spread the spirit of nationalism among the public. Its objective was to connect the local people with the mainstream of development. To fulfil this purpose, the 'Debating Club' and 'Happy Club' were established in Kumaon, and the 'Garhwal Union' was formed in Garhwal.

The beginning of journalism in Garhwal is traced back to the city of Mussoorie. The foundation of Mussoorie city was laid in the year 1826 by Captain Young, who built his residence 'Mallingar' on the flat peak of a hill. In 1829, the Landour Cantonment and Everest House were established here, and after that, the city of Mussoorie kept expanding. Being a favourite town of the British Government, a municipal board was established here as early as 1842.

## INTRODUCTION

The status of newspapers improved significantly after independence as print media continued to grow. However, many newspapers buckled under financial burdens and shut down. In 1947, the weekly newspaper '*Yugvani*' was published under the editorship of Shri Bhagwati Prasad Panthri and Acharya Gopeshwar Kothiyal. During this same period, Shri Satya Prasad Raturi edited '*Himachal*' from Tehri. In 1952, Shri Ram Prasad Bahuguna published '*Devbhoomi*' from Nandaprayag, and in 1955, Shri Hiralal Badola published '*Saptahik Uttarakhand*' from Rishikesh. From Kotdwar, Lalita Prasad Naithani published '*Satyapath*' in 1956, and during the same session, '*Naya Zamana*' was edited from Dehradun under the leadership of Radha Krishna Kukreti, which remained a newspaper with a leftist ideology.

During this period, efforts continued outside of Garhwal to reflect the status and direction of education within the Garhwali community. Prominent among these were Bhagwati Prasad Chandola's '*Parvatiya Sanskriti*', published mainly from Delhi in 1957, and Shri Dwarika Prasad Uniyal's '*Himalaya Times*' in 1958. Subsequently, this paper was published from Shimla, and during the same period, S.P. Panthi started its weekly English edition from Mussoorie. In the same decade, '*Frontier Mail*' began publication from Dehradun. In 1959, the former MLA of Badrikedar, Shri Narendra Singh Bhandari, started publishing a newspaper named '*Yugdharm*'.

In 1964, Sardar Harbhajan Singh started publishing '*Simant Prahari*' from Mussoorie, and Dhananjay Bhatt started publishing '*Uttarakhand Observer*' from Gopeshwar. In 1964, Kunwar Singh Rawat started the publication of '*Parvatiya Jan*' from Kotdwar, and in 1967, Chandramohan Lakhera started publishing the weekly '*Janlahar*' from Dehradun. In 1968, Satishwar Prasad Azad started publishing '*Maithi*' from Pauri, and in 1969, Satya Sakha Bhandari started publishing '*Pauri Times*' from the same place.

In 1970, Somwari Lal Uniyal published '*Uttaranchal*' from Chakrata; Bhallabh Dobhal published '*Maliyanil*' in 1971; and Pitamber Joshi published '*Parvatvani*' from Uttarkashi in 1972. In 1973, Surendra Bhatt's '*Garh Raibar*' was published from Kotdwar. From Kotdwar itself, Sultan Singh Bhandari published '*Hamari Aarthik Wa Rajneetik Samasyaen*' in 1974. Yogesh Panthri's '*Alaknanda*' was published from Lansdowne in 1975, and in the same year, Yogeshwar Prasad Dhuliya's '*Tarun Hind*' was published from Rishikesh. In 1977, Narendra Uniyal published '*Dhadakta Pahar*' from Kotdwar, followed later by '*Jayant*'. Kunwar

Singh Negi's *Karmath* and *Garh Gaurav* were published in 1976. In 1978, Govind Prasad Gairola published *Himalaya Aur Hum* from Tehri, and in 1977, Ramesh Pahadi's *Aniket* began publication from Gauchar (Rudraprayag).

As per the latest records from the Press Registrar General of India (PRGI) (formerly RNI), Uttarakhand has approximately 1,871 active registered publications that regularly file annual statements.<sup>1</sup> However, the broader registry database spans thousands of approved historic and active print media titles across the state.

Undoubtedly, several of these newspapers have been working for many years to bring the social, economic, and political consciousness of Garhwal to society. Starting from the weekly 'The Hills' published from Garhwal (Mussoorie) in 1842 to the present day, journalism here has covered a journey of many years, which can truly be called a historic milestone.

## 2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- (i) To identify major newspaper published in the Garhwal region after independence.
- (ii) To examine historical development of newspapers in Garhwal region.
- (iii) To analyze their contribution to social, cultural and political development.
- (iv) To assess challenges faced by newspapers in the region.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

**Research Design:** The study adopts a descriptive and historical design.

### Sources of Data:

#### Primary Sources:

- (i) Archived newspaper editions of Garhwal region.
- (ii) Personal communication with media professionals.

#### Secondary Sources:

- (i) Books on Journalism and Mass Communication history.
- (ii) Registrar of Newspaper for India (RNI) records.
- (iii) Newspapers archives of Garhwal region.

#### Method of Analysis:

Historical and qualitative content analysis methods have been employed to interpret the collected data.

## 4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Several researchers have studied the development of regional journalism in India. Studies on Garhwal regional journalism emphasize the role of newspaper in social mobilization and identify formation.

Joshi (2004) discussed the evolution of the Uttarakhand Press and its role in public awareness.<sup>2</sup> Pant (2010) examine the contribution of regional newspapers to democratic participation in hill states.<sup>3</sup> Kumar (2015) highlighted the significance of local journalism in addressing developmental issues.<sup>4</sup> Existing literature indicates that newspapers in Garhwal region have been central to discussions on migration, environment and statehood.

However, there is limited research focusing exclusively on newspapers published in the Garhwal region of Uttarakhand after independence. This study seeks to fill that gap. So the study is very important.

## 5. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF NEWSPAPERS IN GARHWAL REGION :

### Major Newspapers Published from Garhwal Region After Independence:

#### 5.1 Yugwani (1947):

Started on August 15, 1947, by Prof. Bhagvati Prasad Panthari and Acharya Gopeshwar Kothiyal from Dehradun, this publication was crucial in raising a voice for mass revolution against the monarchy in Tehri Garhwal. It focused on social reform, education and political awareness.

#### 5.2 Himachal Times, Dehradun (1947)

This English-language newspaper was published from Mussoorie in 1947, and was edited by Satyapal Gandhi. Under Gandhiji's editorship, its Hindi edition was also launched in 1949 as a weekly paper. Since 1960, it has been published as a daily newspaper. Initially, it was published from Mussoorie, and after some time, it began publishing from Dehradun.

At present, the office of the Himachal Times daily newspaper is located in Dehradun, and it is also published from Shimla. 6 to 8 pages are published in the Hindi edition of this newspaper, while 8 to 10 pages are published in its English edition. Its circulation area mainly covers the Dehradun, Tehri, Uttarkashi, and Haridwar districts of the Garhwal division. It played an active role in the Uttarakhand statehood movement.

#### 5.3 Himachal, Mussoorie (1948)

Its publication started on 25 July 1948 from Mussoorie, and its editor was Satyaprasad Raturi. After independence, this was a famous newspaper of Garhwal. Its initial issues consisted of 4 to 6 pages, and special editions were also published on various occasions. Its editorials used to attract readers, and its Tehri District, Tehri Town, and Diwali special editions became the most popular. Because of this, the circulation of this paper reached up to one thousand by the 1950s.

This paper established new milestones in the journalism of Garhwal and highlighted the importance of news among the common people. Due to its simple language style, it was accessible to readers, leading to a continuous increase in its circulation. This newspaper continued to be published fearlessly and impartially from 1948 to 1981. Eventually, due to financial constraints, its publication was stopped.

#### 5.4 Devbhumi, Nandprayag (1952):

After independence, numerous newspapers and magazines began publication from the mountainous regions of Garhwal. In the year 1952, five handwritten copies of the weekly newspaper *Devbhumi* were distributed from Nandprayag in the Chamoli district.<sup>5</sup> One copy each was kept at Karnaprayag, Rudraprayag, Chamoli, Joshimath, and Gauchar. Written on the outside of these copies was: "Please read, pass it forward, and help in its promotion and circulation." Editing this type of newspaper was an incredibly difficult task. However, driven by the missionary zeal for journalism among young men like Shri Ramprasad Bahuguna

and Shri Jangeel Shah, this paper became highly popular in the mountainous region. Shri Ramprasad Bahuguna served as the editor of this newspaper.<sup>6</sup>

The circulation of this paper was primarily concentrated within the Chamoli district, and it chiefly highlighted issues related to Chamoli. Through this medium, the rising trend of alcohol consumption in society was fiercely opposed. Shri Ramprasad Bahuguna channelled his entire energy into developing *Devbhumi* and the Chamoli district. The *Devbhumi* weekly newspaper was also famous for its layout, design, and beautiful printing. The holy shrines of Badri-Kedar were always inscribed alongside the name *Devbhumi* on its masthead. Generally, local news was given prominence in it. It was usually printed as a four-page paper, though occasionally the number of copies was increased. Advertisements and official notifications were also published in it.

### 5.5 Satyapath, Kotdwar (1956):

The publication of 'Satyapath' started in 1956 from Kotdwar, which was a famous newspaper of Garhwal. The price of a single copy was 13 paise, and the annual subscription fee was 6 rupees. Its editors included Lalita Prasad Naithani 'Vakeel' (who was also on the editorial board of 'Karmabhumi'), with Jagmohan Singh Negi serving as the patron, and Kunwar Singh Negi as the manager.

Lalita Prasad Naithani left *Karmabhumi* in 1948 and started publishing *Satyapath*. He had completed his B.A., B.Sc., and LL.B. education in the 1940s. However, he was not inclined toward government service and chose journalism and social service as his mission instead. The layout and beautiful word composition of this newspaper attracted the readers. The policy of this paper was inspired by Gandhiji's ideals, Nehruji's progressive ideology, and Gurudev's (Rabindranath Tagore) philosophy.<sup>7</sup> A unique feature of this newspaper was giving prominence to minor incidents, which made it a people-centric paper. This newspaper also presented highly important suggestions on socio-economic issues. It exposed the weaknesses of the government to the public and gave space to village-level problems in its columns.

This newspaper also worked to make several public movements successful. It played a major role, especially in making the *Gadi-Sadak* (Vehicle-Road) movement successful. The paper also used its writings for forest conservation. It prominently highlighted the problems of farmers in the hills.<sup>8</sup> Along with this, *Satyapath* played a commendable role in intensifying the movement against alcohol—a severe, growing problem in the hills. The paper ran a dedicated campaign against alcohol.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, to improve the condition of women, it published special editions focused on women. This was done to bring awareness among women so they could demand their rights and develop a spirit of self-reliance.

On 1988, its editor Lalita Prasad Naithani passed away, which dealt the heaviest blow to this newspaper. After him, his son Sudhir Naithani became the editor, and Radhakrishna Vaishnav became the chief editor. Sometime later, Pitamber Dutt Devrani became its editor, who made every possible effort for this paper. However, due to difficult challenges and circumstances, this paper could not survive for long, and in 1996, this famous newspaper closed down forever.

### 5.6 "Naya Jamana", Dehradun (1956)

On the occasion of Independence Day, this famous newspaper of Garhwal commenced its publication from Rishikesh. Its inaugural issue was released on August 15, 1956. Right on its main page, along with the banner, it was specially mentioned that it was the leading weekly newspaper of Dehradun, Tehri Garhwal, Almora, and Nainital. Initially, this paper was published by advocate Vanshilaal Pundir, Lokayan, and Radhakrishna Kukreti, who were part of its editorial board. Its chief editor was Radhakrishna Kukreti.

This paper practiced fearless journalism against the government and corrupt officials of government departments. It supported public movements and attempted to bring the problems of the common man before the government. It also leaned towards communist ideology. In the decades of 1960 and 1970, this newspaper played an important role behind the rise of communist power in Dehradun, Uttarkashi, and Tehri districts.<sup>10</sup> Even at present, the editing of this paper from Dehradun is being done under the editorship of Radhakrishna Kukreti.

### 5.7 "Lalkar," Kotdwar, (1956):

The publication of this weekly newspaper started from Kotdwar in the year 1956. Its editor was Hariram Mishra "Chanchal," and Krishnachandra Agrawal was the co-editor. This was a progressive newspaper published in the mountainous region.<sup>11</sup> This paper gave prominence to regional news. Along with this, it raised and interpreted the question of culture.<sup>12</sup> This paper also launched a campaign against the rising trend of alcohol consumption in Garhwal. This paper drew the government's attention toward the problems of the people of the hills, such as transport, roads, etc., and also suggested starting regular bus services for the hilly areas. This newspaper was a carrier of public awareness and fiercely opposed social evils.

### 5.8 Himalaya Ki Lalkar, Kotdwar (1958)

This newspaper was published from Kotdwar under the editorship of Shri Hariram Mishra 'Chanchal'. Beginning its journey in the year 1958, this paper continued to be published until 1980 despite facing numerous ups and downs. Although it was originally established as a weekly newspaper, it often ended up being published irregularly.<sup>13</sup> The paper usually consisted of 4 to 6 pages, but sometimes 8, 10, or 12-page editions were also printed. Meanwhile, its special editions often contained 16, 24, or more pages.

The primary objective of this newspaper was to secure justice for the suffering, exploited, and backward people of the hilly region. Its front page always carried the motto: "The official voice of the suffering masses."<sup>14</sup> "The paper prominently led the 'Bhoomihin Andolan' (Landless Movement) for landless individuals and brought their grievances to light. Most farmers in the region owned no land for cultivation and had to depend entirely on rainwater for irrigation. Due to these harsh conditions, large numbers of youth migrated to other states in search of employment.

Because its editor, Hariram Mishra 'Chanchal', was actively involved in various social movements, the publication of this paper became irregular and even stopped completely at several points. According to a personal note by Chanchal: "With great difficulty and constant struggle, we are pausing 'Himalaya Ki Lalkar' in its 12th year after releasing 43 editions up to March 31, 1971. We will step into our 13th year only if proper arrangements can be made for future publication. Otherwise, due to unavoidable circumstances, we will regretfully have to stop its publication." The paper managed to continue its publication until October 5, 1980. However, it abruptly shut down forever following the mysterious disappearance of its editor, Hariram Mishra.

### 5.9 Doon Darpan, Dehradun (1960)

In 1960, *Doon Darpan* began publication from Dehradun as a fortnightly newspaper, but after some time, it was converted into a weekly. It was a prominent newspaper published from Dehradun, with page counts ranging from 24 to 60. In 1962, this newspaper started publishing daily. Even at present, it is circulated in the Dehradun, Tehri, Uttarkashi, and Haridwar districts.

This newspaper played a significant role in public movements, chief among which were the Chipko Movement (to save trees), the University Banao (Establish University) Movement, and the Uttarakhand Statehood Movement. Along with these, it also played an important role by periodically writing articles on the problems of people displaced by the Tehri Dam project.

### 5.10 Seemant Prahari, Mussoorie (1964)

Its publication started on May 18, 1964, from Mussoorie. Currently, despite many ups and downs, it is still being edited and published from Mussoorie under the editorship of Sardar Harbhajan Singh. This weekly newspaper is published every Monday.

While this paper highlighted the problems of the public on one hand, it acted as a bridge between the government and the public on the other. Among its major achievements, this paper published a prominent 300-page special issue on the Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, and a 150-page special issue on the popular Hindi poet, Amritlal Nagar.

Its *Forest Special Issue* (Van Visheshank) was released in February 1974 from Kotdwar, which was highly significant from an environmental perspective. Articles and news reports were given special importance in this newspaper. In the 1960s and 1970s, several articles by environmentalist Sunderlal Bahuguna and social worker Swami Manmathan were published in this newspaper. This publication has been a leading newspaper of Garhwal, which made it highly popular, and it remains popular to this day.

### 5.11 Uttarakhand Observer (1967):

Its publication started from Gopeshwar in the year 1967. Its editor was Dhananjay Bhatt. This newspaper was among the prominent newspapers of Garhwal. Its editorials and articles awakened a new consciousness in society. This newspaper made a significant contribution to the development of the Chamoli region.

### 5.12 Parvatraj Times (1968):

This weekly newspaper was published from Ramnagar in 1968. Following this, it started getting published from Kotdwar in January 1969. Its editor was Shri Sushil Kumar 'Niranjan'. The layout and illustrations of this newspaper highly impressed the readers. Along with this, it became very popular in Garhwal and Kumaon due to its pro - people journalism. The editorials of this newspaper contained sharp commentary. Along with regional news, special articles and commentaries were written on political and social subjects. It published interviews of newly established and prominent personalities, while simultaneously highlighting the basic needs of the mountain residents. This newspaper also shut down in the year 1972 due to its inability to bear the financial burden.

### 5.13 Pauri Times, Pauri (1969):

Pauri Times has been published regularly from Pauri since 1 May 1969. This weekly newspaper is published every Monday. This newspaper was published for the first time under the editorship of Satendra Singh Bhandari 'Sakha Satyam'. Keeping public sentiments in mind, this paper continuously served society. It took effective initiatives to highlight regional problems and did important work for the development of the region.

Pauri Times continuously wrote through its news reports to curb the rising trend of alcohol consumption in the mountains. Through this, popular movements were given a new direction from time to time, and it also made significant contributions to reservations in the hills, the Uttarakhand Statehood Movement, and hill politics. It exposed the growing custom of alcohol consumption in village after village before society and wrote many articles against it. Pauri Times published detailed news on subjects like cheating in examinations, open corruption in appointments, and the lack of development work.<sup>15</sup> Shri Satendra Singh Bhandari edited Pauri Times until the year 1982, after which Sumanlata Rawat took over its editing and management.

### 5.14 Tehri Times, Tehri (1973)

The weekly newspaper *Tehri Times* began publication on January 25, 1973, from Purana Darbar, Tehri. Initially, its circulation was around five hundred copies, and Mr. Bafar Singh Rawat was its editor and publisher.<sup>16</sup> The annual subscription fee for this newspaper was twenty rupees, and it was primarily circulated in Tehri and Uttarkashi. However, this paper was also sent via post to other parts of the country. Through this newspaper, while society was given a new direction on one hand, the paper also raised its voice against issues like education, health, and rising inflation on the other. This newspaper mainly published news from Tehri and Uttarkashi districts and highlighted local regional problems. This paper always opposed injustice and supported the truth, due to which it had to face many difficulties. Ultimately, it shut down in 1990 due to an economic crisis.

### 5.15 Dhadhakta Pahar, Kotdwar (1973)

The publication of this weekly newspaper started in 1973 from Kotdwar. Its editor was Narendra Uniyal and the assistant editor was Khushalmanni Ghildiyal. Narendra Uniyal, the editor of this newspaper, had to face many crises for opposing government policies, but he always tried to bring the truth before the public.

The editor of this newspaper was arrested after the Emergency was imposed on June 25, 1975, due to which it had to be shut down. It was published again in 1977. In 1979, the name of this newspaper was changed from *Dhadhakta Pahar* to *Jayant*. The editor of *Jayant* was also Narendra Uniyal. After the demise of Narendra Uniyal on July 23, 1981, this newspaper was edited by his younger brother Nagendra Uniyal, and on April 18, 1986, this newspaper was made a daily newspaper. This is the first daily newspaper of Pauri district. The daily newspaper *Jayant* is still being published today.

### 5.16 Parvatwani, Uttarkashi (1974)

On 2 October 1974, Pitambar Joshi started the publication of this newspaper. He also holds the credit for setting up "Chetna Printing Press", the very first printing press in the border district of Uttarkashi in Uttarakhand. Keeping the public interest in mind, this newspaper attempted to highlight local issues. It brilliantly published and covered the struggle that took place in the Tiloth and Bayala forests.

### 5.17 Garhwal Mandal, Pauri (1975)

The inaugural issue of "Garhwal Mandal" was published from Pauri on 15 August 1975. Edited by Vachaspati Gairola, this weekly newspaper is printed at the Himwant Press, Pauri. Along with articles and editorials, it publishes regional news, local news, and advertisements. While this newspaper raised social issues, it also highlighted family planning programmes.<sup>17</sup> Through this paper, the Garhwali language received a boost, and the paper actively advocated for the Garhwali language.<sup>18</sup>

This paper is known even today for its unbiased journalism. During the Emergency, threats were made to shut down this paper and send the editor to jail. However, facing the circumstances bravely, they maintained their independent identity. Even at present, Shri Vachaspati Gairola continues to publish this paper. Initially, for some time, Shri Kunj Bihari Negi served as the news editor of this paper and edited a few special editions. Many established writers associated with this newspaper are earning fame in their respective fields.

### 5.18 Himwant, Pauri (1976)

Under the editorship of Shri Charu Chandra Chandola, the publication of "Himwant" started from the divisional headquarters, Pauri, in the year 1980. Among its special editions, "Snow View" and "Civil Lines" are prominent. This newspaper emphasized thought-driven and ideological journalism in Garhwal. It did not merely deliver information to the people through news, but also tried to discover vital points for the development of the region.

"Himwant" was a reliable paper for the people of the hills. It was a vibrant newspaper of Garhwal. In addition to editorials and articles, this newspaper published poems and travelogues of Garhwal. Its column titled "Your Questions, Our Answers" was very popular, establishing an unbreakable bond between the readers and the newspaper. Ultimately, this weekly newspaper shut down in the year 1983.

### 5.19 Aniket, Gopeshwar, Chamoli (Weekly, 1977):

The publication of Aniket started from Gopeshwar, Chamoli under the editorship of Ramesh Gairola 'Pahari'. Pahari Ji favored harmonized thoughts and balanced writing. Therefore, the style of this newspaper remained analytical. Its editor, Pahari Ji, has been associated with the field of journalism for a long time. Even at present, he continues to publish it.

### 5.20 Garhwal Post (1996):

Launched on September 27, 1996, as a weekly before becoming a daily on July 2, 2006, this prominent English-language regional newspaper is dedicated to combating the Himalayan region's backwardness and promoting development. It provides in-depth coverage of politics, tourism, education, environment and governance in Uttarakhand.

### 5.21 Dainik Jagran (Dehradun Edition 1997)

Under the editorship of Puran Chandra Gupta, the publication of this newspaper began in the year 1947 from Kanpur. With the launch of the Meerut edition, its reach began to grow in Garhwal as well. The Dehradun edition of Dainik Jagran was launched in 1997. This regional daily was the most trusted newspaper in Uttarakhand. It highlighted the local issues of every village. Following the launch of its Dehradun edition, it has been covering the Garhwal division.

This newspaper played an important role in the public movements of Garhwal. It has continuously opposed the rising trend of alcohol consumption and social evils in villages. The role of this newspaper was also significant in the Uttarakhand statehood movement and the rehabilitation movement for those affected by the Tehri Dam. This newspaper continues to be published at present.

### 5.22 Amar Ujala (Dehradun Edition 1997)

Late Shri Dori Lal Agarwal and Late Shri Murari Lal Maheshwari started the publication of this newspaper from Agra in 1948. After the launch of the Meerut edition of Amar Ujala in 1986, its reach expanded significantly across both the plains and the hilly regions of Uttar Pradesh. The Dehradun edition of Amar Ujala was launched in 1997. At present, with the publication of its Dehradun and Nainital editions, it has become the most popular and famous newspaper in the state of Uttarakhand.

It has established a strong presence throughout the mountainous regions of Uttarakhand. Amar Ujala has readers in every village. This newspaper excellently raised the public movements and issues of the hilly areas. People here began to revere its words as "absolute truth" (Vedvakya). From time to time, it drew the attention of the government and administration toward the rising social evils and problems in Garhwal, such as alcohol, lottery, gambling, unemployment, migration, and joblessness. This newspaper played a major role in the Uttarakhand statehood movement, the university movement, and the anti-alcohol movements. Even today, this newspaper remains highly popular and reaches every household.

## 6. Role of Newspapers in the Uttarakhand Movement :

The newspaper played a crucial role in documenting public grievances and mobilizing support for the movement. The regional newspapers highlighted various issues as – Unemployment, Migration from hill areas of Uttarakhand, Administrative neglect, Environmental degradation, Lack of educational healthcare, transportation facilities. The newspapers helped create awareness and facilitated communication among activists, intellectuals and general public.

## 7. Contribution to Social and Cultural Development :

The newspaper of Garhwal regions have contributed significantly to educational awareness, environmental conservation, cultural preservation and democratic participation.

## 8. Challenges Faced by Newspapers in Garhwal Region:

Despite their contributions, newspapers in Garhwal region face several challenges :

- (i) Difficult geographical terrain in Garhwal region.
- (ii) High distributions costs of newspapers.
- (iii) Limited advertising revenue from newspapers.
- (iv) Declining readership among younger generations.
- (v) Financial sustainability concerns for small regional publications.

## 9. Findings:

- (i) Regional journalism has strengthened public awareness and democratic participation.
- (ii) Newspapers have been important agents of social change in Garhwal region.
- (iii) Newspapers have contributed to cultural preservation and environmental awareness of Garhwal region.

(iv) The Newspapers played a vital role in the Uttarakhand statehood movement and other movement of Garhwal region.

## 10. Conclusion:

The history of newspapers in the Garhwal region after independence reflects the broader social, political and cultural transformation of the region. Publication such as Yugvani, Himachal Times, Devbhumi, Satyapath, Naya Jamana, Lalkar, Himalaya Ki Lalkar, Doon Darpan, Seemant Prahari, Uttarakhand Observer, Parvatraj Times, Pauri Times, Dhadhakta Pahar, Parvatwani, Himvant, Aniket, Garhwal Post, Dainik Jagran, Amar Ujala etc. have played an essential role in informing citizens, promoting regional identity and strengthening democracy.

Despite facing economic and technological challenges, regional newspapers continue to remain important institutions in Garhwal society. The contribution of regional newspapers to public discourse, social development and cultural preservation underscores their enduring significance in the history of Uttarakhand journalism.

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