

# Mahatma gandhi as a journalist



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Long ago, Mahatma Gandhi had set down the prescription for a newspaper, ' One of the objects of a newspaper is to understand the popular feelings and give expression to it; another is to arouse among the people certain desirable elements; and the third is fearlessly to expose popular defects. ' The above statement clearly highlights Gandhi's deep understanding of journalism. He knew that the pillars of democracy are built upon a strong and independent press and stressed upon the fact of having a free press.

Gandhi was a journalist much before he became a freedom fighter. Mahatma Gandhi, in a journalistic career spanning nearly four decades, edited six journals. None, including Harijan and Navajivan, could boast a circulation of more than a few thousand copies. For decades he edited several newspapers including Harijan in Gujarati, Hindi and in the English language; Indian Opinion while in South Africa and, Young India, in English, and Navajivan, a Gujarati monthly, on his return to India.

Later, Navajivan was also published in Hindi. In addition, he wrote letters almost every day to individuals and newspapers. But such was Gandhi's grasp of the basics of mass communication that he ensured that his daily " outpourings of heart and soul" reached all. He was the most effective mass medium of the movement and was a prolific writer. He felt the pulse of the nation in those times and gave expression to it through his writings. Gandhi had a vision of an Indian tradition revived, cleansed and free.

His newspapers, dedicated to the cause of Indian freedom and deeply suspicious of Western materialism, were free from advertisements. Through his newspapers Gandhi promoted Hindustani, the simple speech of North India, which readily borrowed and blended words from various languages

and regions. Mahatma Gandhi's ideals of journalism are still relevant today. He wanted the press to be free, ethical and totally unbiased. He declared that " the sole aim of journalism should be service. "