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Sources of News

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If any journalist aimlessly wanders in the city hoping that some news or the other might come her/his way, s/he may have to return empty handed at the end of the day even after diligently sifting through the entire city. To gather news a journalist must have 'a nose for news'. The intuitive capability to smell news increases with experience. Sources of news can be divided into following three categories:

1. Expected
2. Unexpected
3. Predicted

1. Expected Sources of News: People are apprehended on the basis of suspicion whenever a crime occurs. This information is available to the police. Therefore, police becomes expected source of such news stories. Besides police, municipalities, hospitals, various government and non-government organizations, mortuaries or cemeteries, meetings of different committees, parliament and state legislatures, public meetings and speeches, meetings of various enquiry commissions, etc. also important expected sources of news.

2. Unexpected Sources of News: Experience of correspondents is of utmost importance in extracting news from the unexpected sources.



Competent and skilled reporters with efficient information networks do not find it difficult to dig out news from such sources. The signs of unexpected news stories may appear suddenly out of the blue. Experienced reporters keep their eyes and ears open to receive these signs. Once they get anything concrete to act upon, they go all out to unearth the truth and strive to develop a good news story.

Journalists should always be conscious of their surroundings if they want to gather news from the unexpected sources. For instance, while passing through a road with light traffic you saw a dead animal lying in the middle of the road and did not consider it newsworthy. But when you again traversed through the same road after three hours and still found the same dead animal lying in the middle of the road, you suddenly realize that you have found a good news story related to the functioning of the civic authorities of that area. You then try to find out answers to questions such as, "What is the arrangement for taking care of dead animals in the city?" and "Why are the concerned authorities working in a lackadaisical manner?" Important point to keep in mind here is that after receiving news from unexpected sources the journalists should try to discover even the minutest possible detail related to the incident, get versions from all the concerned parties and verify the story properly before writing the final copy. This is necessary to ensure authenticity of the news.

3. Predicted Sources of News: Metropolitan cities have to face problems related to squalid slums and unauthorized colonies while smaller towns and cities invariably face problems of filthy drains and broken roads. How are these problems affecting day to day lives of the denizens? Why is length of queues perpetually increasing? Is there a shortage of doctors? Are there enough nurses and clinical assistants? Why ailing persons are made to sleep on the floors of the hospitals? What is the economic condition of the Delhi University? Are there educational issues as well? What is the status of internal politics in the University? How many related industries have originated in Rourkela since the setting up of the Steel Industry there?

All the above questions are important source of news. These can be easily predicted and copious good news stories can be extracted from them. Therefore, they fall under the category of unexpected sources of news.

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