### WHAT IS NEWS?

The term NEWS is so vast in application, so dynamic in use and so complicated in understanding that to define it as a term precisely is rather a difficult task. However, the efforts have constantly been offered by renowned practical journalists, media scholars and dictionaries to reach at a crisp yet comprehensive definition of the term. The universality of the term does not allow a single definition to convey the meaning covering all the aspects coming under the umbrella of the “NEWS”. Defining the word some of the experts went as under:

* + An account of an event.
  + A fact that interests people.
  + A presentation of a report on current event.
  + Anything that people want to know about.
  + An Accurate and timely intelligence of Happenings, Discoveries, Opinions, Inventions and matters of any sort that affect or interest the listener.
  + Comprising of all current activities of general human interest and the best news is that in which the most listeners or readers take interest.
  + Anything that enough people want to know about is news, provided it does not violate the canons (principals) of good taste and the laws of libel. (Laws of libel will be touched upon in detail in coming lectures).
  + Anything that is timely that interest a number of listeners, and the best news is that which has the greatest interest for the greatest number of people.
  + A presentation of a report on current events in a newspaper or on radio or on television.

Some of the famous dictionaries define the term NEWS as under:

### CONCISE OXFORD DICTIONARY

“Tidings, new or interesting information, fresh events reported."

### OXFORD ADVANCED LEARNER’S DICTIONARY

“New information about something that has happened recently”

Renowned journalists and media experts go on the term as under:

### BEN BRADLEE

“News is the first rough draft of history”

### FREDA MORRIS

“News is the immediate, the important thing that has impact on our lives.”

### CHARLES DANA

“When a dog bites a man, that is not news, but when a man bites a dog, that is news.”

### ARTHUR MCEWEN

“News is anything that makes the reader or listener say---’ Gee Whiz!”

### SUMMARY

There are certain things common which can easily be drawn out of all of the above given definitions and they are:

* + There should be an event or opinion
  + That event or opinion must posses the potential to affect or influence a great number of people.
  + A large number of people must have interest in that event or statement.

Now it is pretty necessary to figure out that what people wish to know about, or, they may feel a ray of interest in. Quite obvious is to conclude that the things, activities, events, or happenings which are around people, and somehow or the other are attached with them, stir up and attract their interest.

What follows from all the above-given definitions is that “the newsworthy event is one that affects or changes social, economic, political, physical, or other relationships.

Or, NEWS is an account of man’s changing relationships with his environment.

Or, to be even more specific, the newsworthy development is one that changes or shows promise to change the status quo, i.e., the prevailing status or situation.

### LESSON 04

**NEWS VALUES I**

As we have come to know in the previous lesson that any event or opinion that people want to know, and is reported in newspaper or is broadcast on radio as a part of a news bulletin, is a news. It is a matter of common sense that every event can not mount to be reported and hence can not be called news. Likewise, every statement or every opinion can not be declared or treated as news.

Let us have a look at some situations and see if they can be given some space in any newspaper or in a radio or television news bulletin.

I give a statement about my friend that he is an **irate** kind of person, or I **have a row** (to exchange hot and harsh sort of words with somebody) with my cousin on a point, or my brother goes for shopping and get into a kind of argumentation while making a bargain with the salesman over the price of a pullover he intends to buy, or one of my old buddies give me a ring on my mobile that very next day he may drop in on my place.

All above-mentioned situations can never be called news unless I enjoy a considerable amount of prominence in my country. Getting more simplified, let alone my being known to my countrymen, if I am not known even to my city fellows I can just dream of being a focal point of any news item. Had I been an important figure, in any way, on national or international level, I would have had a considerable space in news.

In this lecture we will see what those factors are which make ordinary event news and add newsworthiness to any happening, event, and any opinion or to any statement.

The following are those factors that can aptly be called **news values:**

### CONFLICT

Conflict means a kind of clash, quarrel, disagreement, discard or battle between persons, groups, societies or countries. It may be political, religious, ethnic or personal.

Most conflicts are newsworthy to some extent or degree. Important types of conflict are given below:

### Physical Conflict:

Physical conflict is normally newsworthy because it usually leads to injury and damage. Since it involves violence, where there such an incidence of conflict arises, people rush to it to know what has happened actually. Physical conflict may be between two brothers over the division of inherited property, between a shopkeeper and a buyer on bargain, between two landlords on water dispute, or between two business partners over the question of profit.

### Social Conflicts:

Social conflicts may not involve physical clash but there is a possibility of disagreement on certain issue amongst different fractions of society. A violent mob getting wild and unruly may loot the shops, set the buildings on fire, break the window-glass of showcases, ablaze the tires on important crossroads and may jam the smooth flow of traffic. All these happenings provide a good stuff for a news bulletin.

### Economic Conflicts:

Economic conflicts are between two business tycoons, between government and public and between two countries; as well. For instance, there are certain economic sanctions imposed on any country resulting from a clash on any issue between super power and a weaker country.

### Religious Conflicts:

Religious conflict is an important conflict of immense news value. What history reveals is the fact that most

of the wars fought on earth were because of religion. It needs a great deal of magnanimity and big heartedness to bear and tolerate other religion’s existence. Failing to which leads humanity to a deadly riots, clashes and sometimes wars.

Different factions and sects within a religion also provide grounds to horrible clashes between the people constituting the same religion.

Ethnic riots in India are apt examples of religious conflicts. Riots between Hindus and Muslims, Hindus and Christians, and Hindus and Sikhs are the incidents carrying strong and convincing news value and are not only reported prominently in Indian media but also worldwide.

### Conflict between Politicians:

In today’s world of news, conflict between politicians is a major source of stuff for a news bulletin. Politician is part and parcel of a democratic system and they are always seen at daggers drawn at one another. One political party’s political leader does not let any chance go unveiled to criticize the rival political party or political leader. Their statements against each other are of great news value.

### Conflict between States:

Conflict between states may be of different kinds. It may be just verbal or may be physical. Verbal conflicts are because of certain unresolved vendetta and disputes between the countries. And if the bilateral relations fail to achieve a position of normalization and the state-of-affairs gets more and more tensed and worse, a moment arrives when war gets ignited between the countries. Getting into war does not demand countries to share the border-line with each other or one another. Last century gifted world with an unending list of reasons to wage a war against any nation, a wide range and choice of sophisticated weapons and intriguingly subtle war ways and techniques that now any nation can declare war against any other nation on earth provided it is more powerful than the other one.

War news are always read and listened to with great deal of keenness and curiosity.

### Conflict between Man and Nature:

Floods, earthquakes, tsunami, famine, torrential series of rains, twisters, tornados, etc. are enough examples of conflicts between man and nature. Radio for the coverage of such natural calamities can prove its worth more than any other form of media.

### PROGRESS

Progress means any improvement in any field. If the progress is really significant it will be a part of the news bulletin.

Some leading walks of a society are as under in which if there is any remarkable progress; it will be noted by the reporter.

### Progress of a student

Outstanding performance in education or sports or in any co-curricular activity such as debates, speech competition, poetry, essay competition, etc.

### Progress of a political party

Any political party wins the polls or clean sweeps the elections.

### Any Department

Progress in any project initiated by any government department may be good news.

### Scientific device

Any change or innovation in any already existing invention or device also makes news, for instance, progress in IT devices or equipments. The first computer could hardly fit into a big room but following

years’ hard work done by the IT engineers not only brought about revolutionary and mind blowing improvements in the machine but also shrank the size of the same machine to the extent that now it can easily fit into one’s pocket as well.

### Medicine

Human and animal diseases are getting more and more complicated day by day and the growing state-of- affair is offering difficult challenges to the medical scientists. Whenever there is any break through in the on-going search for the antidotes of fatal diseases like AIDS and HEPATITUS, it becomes news.

### Ongoing fight

If war has been erupted between the countries and there is a change in the situation, it is media’s responsibility to keep the people informed.

### Progress in relations between countries

If a kind of tension and cold war is going on between two countries owing to certain grounds and backgrounds and the attempts are being made to restore a state of normalization between them through diplomacy or some other channel and resultantly there is a noteworthy progress in the process, it deserves to be given a place in the news bulletin.

### ICTORY AND DEFEAT

Conflict naturally paves way for the victory of one party and defeat of the other one. Whether the conflict is between two hockey or cricket teams striving for a cup or trophy, or two armies combating in a battlefield or two political parties contesting an election, one side’s fate is victory and the other’s is defeat. These two ingredients of human society are teemed with healthy newsworthiness.

### EMINENCE & PROMINENCE

It is agreed upon that names make news and the bigger the name, the larger the news. There is an aura of news around prominent persons.

The inauguration of a beauty saloon by a renowned actress is news.

A statement issued by a social reformer about the pathetic condition of patients in government hospitals is news.

A prominent actor’s visit to a market is news.

An eminent squash player’s appearance in a TV ad in future is news. Any political leader’s visit to a *Kachchi Basti* is news.

Rightly is said that even flu to an actress is news for media.

### LESSON 05

**NEWS VALUES II**

In the previous lesson we have discussed some of the news values. Some more news values are as under:

### TIMELINESS (IMMEDIACY)

“NOW” is more newsworthy than “THEN”

Timeliness, in the field of journalism, no matter print or electronic, means freshness. News is about what is happening now. A saying goes, “old is gold”. It is not true when it comes to a news story. What is old is not news in any way. It is important to mention here that the word *old* used here must never be mistaken for history. These two terms are entirely different and especially in journalism both have different connotations. History itself is a news value importance of which would be discussed later on.

For instance, Pakistan has won the match. You have come to know about it and one of your friends rush forward to you filled with thrill and excitement and wishes you to get surprised. But, since you have already come across the victory of Pakistan in the match, how much ever you try, will not be able to come up to the situation with natural excitement and spontaneity in reflexive actions.

It is, however, important to note, besides something that has happened just now, news is also about the first linking of something that had happened earlier but was not known to people.

That is why,

*“Radio news is what happened five minutes ago and its impact on what is going to happen in the next five minutes.”-------------*

*(Richard Bestic)*

And,

*“The strength of radio is its immediacy. Exploit that by constantly up-dating stories and keeping them fresh. We are telling people what is happening now.”*

*(Malcolm Shaw-news editor independent radio)*

### PROXIMITY (NEARNESS)

“Local” is more newsworthy than “Foreign”

Proximity is nearness which means that an incident which is to be reported as news has taken place near the people; the news bulletin has been put on air for. We, naturally, tend to take more interest in the news story that is about us, or our city, or our province, or our country. The closer the accident, the more the interest will be.

For instance, though *tsunami* was, more or less, equally devastating for humanity but earth quake took place in Pakistan’s northern areas and Azad Kashmir had more impact on the lives and minds of Pakistani people. Likewise the news of a train meeting an accident in Pakistan will be heard with far more attention and concern than news covering an accident of train anywhere in any other part of the world. The obvious rule hence is, “*big problems for them are less important than small problems for us.”*

### NOVELTY

Novelty means something different, something against the general routine of people, something amazing, something incredible, something astonishing, something unusual. Anything, any action, any hobby, any incident, people would hardly prepare to believe in is something *novel* and hence carries the characteristic of *novelty.*

The birth of twins is, though not very common yet is normal and can be believed in easily. But the news of the birth of triplets (three children born at the same time to the same mother) or quadruplets (four children born at the same time to the same mother) is capable enough to surprise people.

Similarly, a child getting birth with two heads or four legs will provide a reporter with good news.

If you come to know that a person devours up glass or iron or blades, how will you not help yourself getting astonished? ---. You will certainly.

A man pulling a truck with his moustache, or allowing a tractor overrun himself makes news carrying a strong flavor of novelty.

So, anything capable enough to surprise your faculty of accepting things comes under the head of NOVELTY.

Rightly said Charles Dana, a renowned journalist:

*“When a dog bites a man, that is not news, but when a man bites a dog, that is news.*”

### HUMAN INTEREST

Simply we turn to those news item, we find interest in. Listening to news pertaining to politics to some people is interesting but at the same time it may bore to a lot of other people.

Some take interest in stories about showbiz but to some people sports news segment serves to make them turn their radio set on.

Women are normally considered to go after fashion news. News stories regarding commerce and economy if bore a lot of people, it gathers the attention of more than many as well.

What follows from all above lines under the head of human interest is; a balanced news bulletin – one that carries news items from all possible walks of life and caters for the tastes of maximum number of people.

People with different mindsets normally wish to know about celebrities, dignitaries, showbiz activities, entertainment, politics and politicians; and those, the mercy of whose decisions and actions, our social, cultural, political and economic decisions and actions rest on.

### DISASTER

Disaster is destruction, ruin, adversity, calamity, devastation, and catastrophe. Where there is any disaster on a considerable scale, there is an availability of news. Earthquakes, tsunami, floods, famine, starvation, torrential rains, tornados, twisters, all these are natural kinds of disasters and devastations. People wish and deserve to know about such stories. The coverage of such disasters is not only a professional duty of any media but also it is a noble service to humanity and a moral and religious obligation. It is media’s responsibility to inform people about the magnitude of the disaster, number and names, if possible, of the casualties and injured ones, aid activities, rehabilitation efforts, etc.

Destruction as a result of wars is man-created form of disaster. World war-1 and world war-2 left world with horrible ruins of humans and humanity, death and fear of death are still dancing upon those ruins and ashes of which are still smouldering. The repercussions of world war-2 are still pregnant with a lot of news stories. Every year the victims and the next generations of the victims of atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, lit candles and observe silence to commemorate one of the most destructive examples of catastrophe history ever witnessed and the heinous act of cruelty earth ever endured.

This gathering of people and their act is news.

### HISTORY

It is mentioned before that there is no connection between an old event and a historical event. History is an important source of news. Researchers are all the time working on history and historical events. The digging of thousands and thousands years old ruins, in fact, is an effort to peep into man’s past and to explore the basic facts regarding man’s creation, evolution, and old civilizations. Above all the quest to history is an effort to quench the thirst of man’ faculty of curiosity.

New truths about established truths are also attempted to discover.

Did Hitler commit suicide? Or was killed? Or did he manage to escape and kept himself hidden till his natural death?

Was Anarkali buried in wall? Or was she let go secretly?

The motivational force behind the erecting of Taj Mehal was Mumtaz Mehal or the story was somewhat different?

Any new discovery at Mohinjodaro, Harrappa, or Taxila is news.

### RELEVANCE

Relevance is another significant news value. Stories which have direct influence on our lives or have direct relation with us are more important for us. Even a news story that is about my own city will fail to catch my attention if I am waiting for my own interview on radio.

Any news bout the University of my City will not attract me if there is news about the school where I got my early education at.

Any news about my own profession is more newsworthy than news about any other profession.

News about the imposition of new tax on cars will not affect a layman who will more be affected by the news about the rise in the local transport fare.

So relevance of a man with a particular incident or place enhances the weight of the news.

### LESSON 06

**NEWS VALUES AND ELEMENTS OF NEWS**

1. **CONSEQUENCE**

Any event or statement of any important person in a society, capable enough to affect a larger number of people in future, carries newsworthiness and must be given space in news bulletin. The incident, as a matter of fact, at the time of its taking place, may not be that important but in future may acquire a great deal of significance in terms of affecting people in one way or another.

Likewise, under the head of CONSEQUENCE, there may be a statement of any personality who enjoys the authority and power of policy making in a state or society and he makes a policy statement that concerns with the coming days of people.

For instance, if metrological office declares a dry weather for the whole year with nominal amount of rains, it means that drought in region may be expected in future.

Every government, during its tenure, every year, announces budget for coming monetary and fiscal year in which new taxes are imposed and some already existing taxes are rescheduled where as some commodities and goods are declared tax free; some imports are declared free from customs duty where as on certain imports custom duty is levied.

It is to be noted, all announcements regarding rise or fall in prices of different commodities and services does not have any immediate affect on the lives of the people but it does after the date the decisions are put into effect. It follows from this, the budget speech is important in terms of consequence.

The announcements of rise or fall in the prices of certain utilities, such as, petroleum products and electricity, also come in such news stories.

### MISCELLANEOUS NEWS VALUES

There are certain news stories which though do not posses any of the news values mentioned above but still, find place in newspaper, radio, and TV bulletin. Such news stories, in any way, are news stories.

Migratory birds, flying from extreme cold regions to warm ones covering thousands and thousands of miles, make news.

A dog saving his master from being robbed makes news.

Anniversaries of different people are covered as news. Birth and death anniversaries of Quaid-e- Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Muhammad Iqbal are celebrated in reverence and respect therefore they will be included in news bulletins.

* + Special days are covered as news
  + Observance of 14th August as Independence Day
  + 23rd March as Pakistan Day
  + 6th September as Pakistan Air Force Day
  + 7th September as Pakistan Defense Day
  + 1st May as Labor Day
  + 5th January as Kashmir Solidarity Day

Besides above stated special days, 14th February as Valentine’s Day, aid’s day, father’s day, mother’s day, etc. have also been started being observed in Pakistan and news stories covering these special days now become a part of the news bulletins.

**Conclusion – “**News values are subjective**.”**

### ELEMENTS OF NEWS

While dealing with news, two stages we have covered so far. First, to see what we call news, what actually is news? Second, to understand those features that convert an ordinary event or statement or opinion, into news.

Now we go into details of news elements. News must carry following elements to come up to the ideal standards of news.

1. Accuracy
2. Meaningful
3. Interesting
4. Factual
5. Objectivity
6. Conciseness
7. Clarity
8. Comprehensiveness
9. Cohesiveness

Let us go into the details of each and every news element.

### Accuracy

When we say ***‘a news item must be accurate’*** we actually mean that whatever we are required to produce as news, or whatever we are being given in the name of news to believe in, it must be correct in every crumb of its details.

* + The ***names of people*** given in the news must be correct.
  + The ***names of the places*** given in the news must be accurate.
  + The ***ages*** of the people, if required to be given in the news, must be given with precision.
  + The ***days, dates and time*** of the incident or speech, or accident, being treated and reported as news, must be accurate.
  + ***Language*** must be correct in terms of ***pronunciation, vocabulary, structure, and grammar.***
  + ***Statements*** of people must be accurate.

### Meaningful

The news should be meaningful and must make any sense. It also implies that it must carry any one, or some of them, or all of the news values we have gone through.

### Interesting

The news story, especially to be broadcast on radio, must be written and presented in such a way that the listener may not get bored. It is quite a difficult task to be managed when it comes to writing and presenting news bulletin since news is something that can never drift away from the principals of accuracy and objectivity. What we actually mean by making news bulletin interesting is the reading effect in the tone and style must be avoided by the news caster and spoken language is to be employed while writing the lines of any news item.

### Factual

The news story must base on the incident or statement which has actually taken place. In this era of media, where the choice available to the listener is wide and universal, news on one channel can easily and instantly be verified on the other channels. The taking risk of putting on air something fabricated or concocted will definitely bring bad repute to the channel doing it. Hence the most important element to be cared for and taken into serious consideration while presenting news is its being factual and truthful.

### Objectivity

Besides being accurate and factual, a news story needs to be to-the-point as well. Unnecessary details,

though may be a part of the incident, should be brushed aside.

Another thing that is important to be considered while making the element of objectivity certain in a news story is that it must not be given personal touch or flavour. Even a slight impression of personal emotions or any kind of exaggeration may endanger the objectivity of the bulletin.

### Conciseness

When it is said, *a news story must be concise*, it means, *it should not be unnecessarily lengthy*. Where unnecessary details are to be avoided, unnecessary wording must also be pruned out. Verbosity always kills the purpose and this is brevity that is unanimously agreed upon to be the soul of wit.

Wordy expressions and unnecessary repetition must be avoided. Your duty is to inform people about an event; you are not supposed to make them understand a thick and problematic matter of psychology or the reasons why crimes are getting rampant in our society. These may well be the topics of an article or feature but can not be touched upon in a news bulletin.

One-word substitution saves the space and time, both.

### Clarity

The main objective of news is to keep the listeners in picture of what is happening around them and in the world. And the purpose is achieved only if clarity is there clarity.

Simplified vocabulary, easy-on-tongue order of the words, and correct and clear pronunciation are the key factors employing which the goal of making news clear and understandable may well be achieved.

### Comprehensiveness

If something is comprehensive it means that it is complete by all regards and aspects. A news item is considered comprehensive only when it answers the every possible question that may arise in the minds of listeners. As a general principal to make a news story comprehensive and complete – five Ws and one H are to be satisfied. They actually stand for: ***what, when, where, why, who*** and ***how***.

* + ***What*** happened?
  + ***When*** happened?
  + ***Where*** happened?
  + ***Why*** happened?
  + ***Who*** did it? and
  + ***How*** did it happen?

Sometimes in certain stories it also becomes necessary to answer another ***W***, and that is ***who for***.

For instance, in vicarious crimes (crimes which are performed by an agent on behalf of some other person or persons), it becomes necessary to give the person’s name as well ***who*** the agent did a certain crime ***for***.

First, to make a news item comprehensive, and then, the whole news bulletin, is a must. A news bulletin must also consist of all the possible news items of all those happenings which have taken place just prior to the moment the news bulletin goes on air.

Sometimes, however, it happens that an important news lands in newsroom immediate after the time the bulletin has started. In such case, an attempt must be made to pen down the story at the moment and be handed to the newscaster so that in this era of neck-to-neck competition the channel may not lag behind its competitors.

### Cohesiveness

The last but not the least one is the element of cohesiveness. When we talk of an order, a kind of symmetry; a well-knit, well-planned, well-organized and even end-product, we actually talk of cohesiveness.

It means that the order of the details to be put in a news item must be in proper order. Symmetry suggests beauty and it must be self-evident in the construction of the news story. Asymmetry mars the beauty and the listener does not go on with the bulletin smoothly and comfortably. It must not be jumpy and uneven. To be more precise, a news item, and then the bulletin, must be well-knit, well arranged and well-ordered.

### Difference between New Values & Elements of News:

**News Value**

We have come across different definitions of news and have been successful in drawing some

common factors which every definition, by and large, shares with the other one. The common features we have drawn out of different news definitions are the news values. These are the values which lend newsworthiness to a common incident, event, statement, or opinion. This is the first stage to evaluate an incident against the yardstick of the news values.

**News Elements**

Once it is decided that this particular event deserves to be treated as a news item, the next stage is

to pen it down for a news bulletin or a newspaper. Now comes forth the expertise and the skill needed to write, arrange and style the event, which has already been declared as a news item. The expertise which a news writer employs while penning down the news story are called News Elements.

### LESSON 07

**MEASURING THE IMPORTANCE OF NEWS**

A constant and specialized kind of training enables reporters to draw a line of demarcation between an ordinary event and a newsworthy event. They come to know what incident, statement, portion of speech, or an activity of a renowned actor is to be treated as news and given space in the news bulletin.

After having enough material that is supposed to be a part of the coming news bulletin, a difficult yet the most important and sensitive task lays ahead is giving a specific order to the news items the typist has to follow while typing the news items and the news caster has to follow while reading out the bulletin.

Is it “first come, first serve” rule that applies here or “hit-and-trial method?” No, not at all. If not, then how to measure the importance of news story so that its turn in the sequence of a news bulletin can be determined? The order to be followed while placing the news stories in a bulletin is based upon a pretty scientific and systematic manner.

“Generally, the most important, significant, and interesting, is offered to the listener or reader.”

The following are the ingredients which make a story important and significant and according to its importance and significance its order in a news bulletin can be evaluated and determined.

### Intensity of an Event

Something intense means something extreme, something powerful, something deep, and something very significant. Intensity involves power, force, and strength. When we evaluate a news story in terms of intensity, we as a matter of fact, make an attempt to gauge its importance in terms of its strength and consequently its affect on the society it is meant for. Intensity may be local, regional or global.

For instance, Pakistan wins world cup in cricket first time in the history of her participation in the competition. It involves extreme level of interest of Pakistani nation in the victory and the victory possesses great amount of intensity for Pakistanis. The news in Pakistani channels’ bulletins will be given first place.

### Extensity of an Event

Something extensive means happening of any event or accident on a larger level involving a great number of people.

For instance, on 8th April 2005, a horrible earthquake left thousands and thousands of people in Azad Kashmir and northern areas of Pakistan, with unforgettable destruction and devastation. It was a titanic tragedy which affected people on extensive level. To cover this natural calamity and its affects on people, reporters from media throughout the world rushed to the affected areas. This was a kind of event that involved people on extensive scale coupled with mammoth intensity. That is why its news and coverage was given the highest importance and the news story stayed at first place in the bulletins for weeks.

“The importance of a story is determined by its intensity (the amount of disruption) and by its extensity (the number of people affected).”

### Recentness of an Event

As it is said, time and again, that recentness or timeliness is the very feature of a news story. Any event or a statement that is stale and old can be anything but can not be news. Out dated stories may be taken as reference but these stories cannot be termed as news items. News is something that is new, as to some journalists, ***news*** is the plural of ***new***. Only the event or happening that carries all or some of the news values we have gone through, and possesses the feature of newness as well, deserves to be called news. That is why the most recent happening is treated as ***breaking news.***

### Proximity

Proximity, as discussed above, is the nearness of an event. Local events are more important than foreign. An accident or crime or ceremony is more important in the city where it occurs. The same kind of happening occurred in any other city or country may be reported as news but in the bulletin it will be placed in the tail end.

### Consequence of an Event

In his budget speech, the finance minister announces a drastic cut in the tariff of electricity, or a fifty percent raise is announced in the salaries of government servants. These changes will not come into effect immediate after the minister concludes his speech, rather, from the 1st of the 1st month of the coming monetary year that may start after a fortnight or twenty days. But since the consequences of the announcement are supposed to affect people in future, the news will be given a prominent placing in the news bulletin.

### Variety of news values

It is a matter of simple understanding that more the news values in an event, the greater the importance of that news will be.

For instance, the murder of a person is news, but the murder of any important figure in a society is even bigger news. Earthquake anywhere in world is news, but earthquake in Pakistan is bigger news. If it is so intensive that it kills thousands and thousands of people forcing other thousands of people to shift and confine to tents, it becomes even the biggest news for almost all the news channels in the world.

### Factors of Magnitude Simplified

Following is the list of the factors of magnitude of a news item:

* + The extent of the disruption of the status quo (prevailing situation) i.e., INTENSITY.
  + The number of the people affected by the event; i.e., EXTENSITY.
  + The nearness of an event; i.e., PROXIMITY.
  + The recentness of an event; i.e., TIMELINESS.
  + The extent of the results flow from the event, i.e., CONSEQUENCE.
  + The variety of the news values in an event; i.e., VARIETY.

### NEWS STORY TYPES

Broadly speaking all news items can be categorized under four heads. They are:

### General types

1. **Simple types**
2. **Complex types**
3. **Special types**

We will look into all these types in detail while studying reporting but it is important enough to have an introduction to these types.

**GENERAL TYPES**

The following are the news stories which are treated as general types.

### Personals

* **Briefs**
* **Meetings**
* **Events**
* **Speeches**
* **Publications**
* **Interviews**

**Personals**

These are the news stories about important persons of a society about whom people want to know. These figures could be from politics, showbiz, sports, or from any walk of life.

The near and dear ones of these celebrities also make news. For instance,

* Any minister is admitted to hospital.
* Nazim visits any market.
* Prime minister’s mother gets ill.
* Minister’s son gets married.
* Any important figure’s near one passes away.
* Names of visitors, guests, committee members, conventions.

### Briefs

These are short news stories not pertaining to persons but they are related to different organization, non- government organization, associations, trusts, clubs, etc.

* Policy or progress announcements/ statements of different government or non government organizations or departments, i.e., NADRA, etc.
* The closing of certain departments on special holidays.

### Meetings

News regarding different meetings held or to be hold at different levels are to be covered. The criterion of evaluating the importance of these meetings is the same we have already gone through.

### Events

These events may be fairs, or festivals, or may be any exhibition of pictures of a renowned photographer or of portraits made by an eminent painter or handcrafts. These events are the social and cultural activities in any society and deserve to be covered or to be made a part of a news bulletin

### Speeches

Speeches of leading politicians, religious leaders, any department’s chairman, ministers, prime minister, president are to be covered and given space and place according to their respective importance.

### Publications

News pertaining to different publications is also covered if again, they deserve to be a part of a news bulletin in terms of the eminence of their author and the importance of the subject matter.

The publications may be a*rticles, books, or research papers.*

### Interviews

Important interviews, if revealing anything important that may affect or interest a handsome number of people, are also included in news bulletin, especially if the interview is on any current issue.

Interview, in general, is an important genre of reporting and journalism whether print or electronic and hence will be touched upon in detail in the coming lectures. Some important kinds of interview, however, are given here:

* Personality interviews
* Informative interviews
* Opinion forming interviews
* Illustrative interviews
* Thematic interviews

### LESSON 08

**TYPES OF NEWS STORIES II**

**SIMPLE TYPES**

These are the news items which require a reporter to be bit interpretative while writing the story.

It implies that these stories need a little more interpretation and explanation about the personality or accident or incident the story pertains to.

The following are the simple types of news stories.

### ILLNESS

As is obvious, this news is about the illness of a personality who is enjoying prominence in a society. Since the rapid and extensive emergence and growth of media has shrunk the whole world into a village, some personalities are blessed with worldwide prominence and importance.

To quote the examples of such celebrities the apt names are of mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela, Jahangir Khan, Imran Khan, Michael Jackson, André Agassi, and many more. So if any of such universally acknowledged personalities or any of their close ones get ill, the news of their illness would be a part of news bulletin.

While covering the stories of illness, following points must be given importance.

### Name & identification of the person who is ill Cause of illness

**Nature of illness**

**Condition (fair, serious, critical)**

**Name of hospital (“local hospital” if private)**

**DEATH**

Following are the essentials of death stories to be covered carefully:

### Name and identification of the person died Age of the person at the time of his death Place of death

**The Time and Date the person died Cause of death**

**FUNERAL**

Stories about the funeral of any person may be the Follow-up of illness story of the same person but not always.

The following are the essentials of a death story to be covered by the reporters.

### Time and date when the funeral ceremony is to be performed Place of burial

**Pallbearers**

**FIRES & ACCIDENTS**

The essentials of the stories of fires and accidents are as under:

### Place where the fire or accident took place, Causalities

**Injured persons Damages to property**

**Escapes (experiences of escapes)**

**CRIME STORIES**

No such society exists on earth that is free from crimes. So to keep people informed, the coverage of crime stories is very important.

The crimes normally found in a society are as under:

### Homicide (Killing a Person)

Homicide is an act of killing any other person that is in contrast with suicide, that is, to kill oneself intentionally.

Killing someone else may be of the following types:

Manslaughter Murder Assassination

### Manslaughter

It is the crime of killing a person by someone who did not intend to do it. In Urdu it is called ***katl-e- khataa.***

For instance, you must have come across news such as an old man is run over by a car. Now the driver of the car did not intend to kill the old man, so this is manslaughter. In court of law the driver will not be sentenced to a punishment that is specific for planned killing of a person.

Or, someone was cleaning his gun and it worked itself killing a person present nearby. This killing, also, cannot be termed as planned killing.

### Murder

Murder is the crime of killing a person by someone who did it deliberately and knowingly. This killing is with the intention of the person who did it and the responsible, if proven in the court of law, will be sentenced to the punishment that is specific for a person who does so. In Urdu, this is called ***katl-e-amd.***

Since killing a person is an established crime and this is something that creates disruption in the society, the news of this incident will be covered in the news bulletin.

### Assassination

Assassination is the crime of killing a famous or important person in a society for any of the reasons; may be out of jealousy, or for money, or to accomplish some other interests.

It is normally a paid murder and the person who commits this crime is called ***assassin.***

As it is a kind of murder in which an important person in society is killed, the news becomes of reasonable magnitude and importance and it must appear in media, whether print or electronic.

### Assault

Assault is a crime in which a sudden violent attack is made on someone. It may be for any reason.

### Kidnap

Kidnap is the crime in which the criminal takes someone away by force, usually in order to demand money in exchange for releasing him or her.

The one who commits this crime is called ***kidnapper*** and the money he or she demands for the kidnapped one or ones is called ***ransom.***

### Larceny

Larceny is the crime of taking something that does not belong to the person who commits it; and it is done without getting illegally into the place where the property, movable or immovable, is taken from.

Larceny is normally performed by altering the instrument of ownership. It is altered to change the ownership of the property. It is to be noted that the instrument of ownership is the legal document showing the legal ownership of a person or persons over any movable or immovable property.

### Burglary

It is a crime the committer of which enters a building illegally, especially after making a hole in the wall or roof of the building, to steal things. The person who does it is ***burglar.***

### Robbery

Robbery is the crime of depriving someone of his belongings by the use of force or threat, physical harm may also be given to the victim especially when resistance is offered to stop the robbers from the act of robbery.

The person who performs the robbery is ***robber.***

### Embezzlement

It is a crime committed by people who or in business or in influential jobs. The person who commits it secretly takes some of the money illegally that is officially in his control and care and that belongs to the organization or business he works for.

### Forgery

Forgery is the act of making an illegal copy of any document in order to deceive someone or law.

### Arson

The act of putting someone’s property deliberately on fire with an intention to damage or destroy the property is called arson.

The person who does it is an ***arsonist.***

### Mugging

The depriving someone of his belonging forcibly in a public place is mugging and a person who does so is called ***mugger.***

### Perjury

The act of giving false statement in court of law after promising formally to tell the truth is ***perjury. Perjurer*** is the one who gives false statement.