

CHAPTER VII

COMMUNICATIONS

General

Prior to its annexation in 1849, the roads in the Punjab were in an appalling state. There were old type fair weather roads serving for the transport of grain to the market, which served well even over the dry river beds during the winter. By 1870, the roads had remarkably improved. In 1879, the district had 54 miles of metalled and 490 miles of unmetalled roads but no railway or telegraph line touched the district. This position lasted till 1910 when two railway lines, namely, Delhi-Bhatinda and Bhatinda-Rewari connected the district with other parts of the country. With the inclusion of the Sonapat tahsil in 1912 the Delhi-Ambala railway line laid in 1870, passed through Sonapat, and thus the Rohtak district came to have a main railway line passing through it. Still another railway line was opened in 1927; this connected Rohtak to Panipat. The line was closed down in 1942 but it was partially relaid between Rohtak and Gohana in 1959 to provide a shuttle service between these places.

The roads assumed some importance after the World War I with the advent of motor transport. Later on after Independence, the policy to develop communications resulted in great emphasis on road development in the district. The position in 1965-66 was that there were 4 railway lines, besides a network of metalled and unmetalled roads.

ROAD TRANSPORT

The roads have been classified as national highways, state highways, district major and minor roads and village roads. The national and state highways and the district major roads are maintained by the Rohtak Provincial Division of the Haryana Public Works Department. The district minor roads and the village roads fall under the purview of the Zila Parishad, but due to stringency of funds with the Zila Parishad, and in accordance with the recent policy of the Government, many minor roads also have been transferred to the Public Works Department.

The post-Partition period has seen a considerable expansion in road construction. The district has the fourth position in respect of

road length, Hissar, Gurgaon and Karnal being the first, second and third respectively.

National and State Highways and Major District Roads

Before the Partition, 214.3 miles of metalled and 8.80 miles of unmetalled roads were being maintained by the Public Works Department. During the First, Second and Third Five-Year Plans, some new roads including the following metalled roads were constructed:—

First Five-Year Plan, 1951—56

Name of the Road	Length in miles
Sonepat-Purkhas Road	8.86
Jharaut-Narela Road	3.18
Murthal-Memarpur Road	3.60
Salhawas-Kosli-Nahar Road	6.31
Ganaur-Khubru Road	4.46
Sonepat-Ratdhana Road	2.28
Kharkhauda-Bhagpat Road	3.15
Sonepat-Gohana Road	17.72
Sampla-Kharkhauda Road	11.30

Second Five -Year Plan, 1956—61

Sonepat-Gohana Road (extension)	4.28
Dadri-Chhuchhakwas Road	3.45
Jassia-Sanghi Road	2.00
Rohtak-Jind Road	7.63
Northern by-pass at Rohtak	4.50
Fazilpur Approach Road	0.47
Kosli Approach Road	1.29
Pakasma Approach Road	1.67
Gohana-Khanpur Road	3.00

Third Five-Year Plan, 1961—66

Jhajjar-Subana-Kosli Road	4.62
Jhajjar-Badli Road	6.60

<u>Name of the Road</u>	<u>Length in miles</u>
Sonepat-Bhatgaon Road	2.00
Sasroli-Kaliawas Road	6.98
Kosli-Guryani Road	4.60
Approach to Badh Khalsa from G.T. Road	0.95

Thus about 115.50 miles of roads were opened during the last 15 years. The roads maintained by the Public Works Department in the district in January 1966, are given in Table XXIII of Appendix.

A brief description of the more important roads as they were in January 1966 is given below:

Grand Trunk Road.—This is the oldest road in the district. It runs almost parallel to the Delhi-Ambala railway line and enters the district from Delhi side at the 15.30 mile. The road traverses through the district and leaves it at the 38th mile. This stretch of 22.70 miles has been connected with the interior through many feeder roads.

Delhi-Hissar-Sulemanki Road.—This road was previously known as the Delhi-Multan Road and connected Delhi with Sulemanki Head (now in Pakistan). It enters the district at mile 15.98 and leaves it at mile 67.62. Its length of 51.64 miles, which is totally metalled, lies within the district. This is an important road connecting Rohtak with Delhi. Since the Delhi-Bhatinda railway line ran parallel to this road, it was felt in the end of the 19th century that the latter would be unprofitable. The road was therefore cut up in several places so as to divert traffic on to the railway. But with the advent of motor transport, it assumed importance and was revived.

Bahadurgarh-Jhajjar-Dadri-Narnaul-Nizampur Road.—Bahadurgarh-Jhajjar section of the road connects Jhajjar with Delhi-Hissar-Sulemanki Road at Bahadurgarh. The length of this metalled road is 17.49 miles. From Jhajjar, the road goes to Jahazgarh, Chhuchhakwas and then 3.45 miles away from the latter place crosses the district boundary towards Dadri. The road between Jhajjar and Chhuchhakwas is 10.25 miles and between Chhuchhakwas and the district boundary 3.45 miles, and the entire length of it is metalled.

Rohtak-Jhajjar-Rewari-Shahjahanpur Road.—This metalled road starts from Rohtak and passes through Jhajjar and crosses the district

boundary towards Rewari at mile 36.72. As it passes through the towns of Rohtak and Jhajjar the municipalities of these towns maintain 2.91 miles of it.

Meerut-Sonepat-Kharkhauda Road.—This road enters the district at mile 32.33 after crossing the Yamuna. There being no bridge over the river here, the Yamuna is crossed by ferry at Bhagpat where about 8 rowing boats are provided. The road goes on to Sonepat after crossing the Grand Trunk Road. Of the 11.95 miles of this road within the district a stretch of 3.97 miles is metalled. The remaining portion, viz. 2.98 miles is unmetalled. The road further extends from Sonepat to Kharkhauda and on to Rohtak and this length of 31.20 miles is metalled.

Muzaffarnagar (Sanauli)-Panipat-Gohana-Rohtak-Bhiwani-Leharu-Pilsari Road.—This road enters the district at mile 15.10 from Panipat and passing through Gohana and Rohtak crosses the district boundary towards Bhiwani, 19.65 miles away from Rohtak. A stretch of 48.36 miles of this road lies in the district and is metalled. As it passes through the towns of Gohana and Rohtak, the municipalities of these towns maintain 2.72 miles of it.

Ludhiana-Sangrur-Patiala-Jind-Rohtak Road.—This metalled road, 12.77 miles in length within the Rohtak district, enters from Jind side and extends up to Rohtak proper.

District minor roads.—The district minor roads including the village roads are maintained by the Zila Parishad, Rohtak. Such roads can be classified as tarred roads, *kankar* metal roads, and *kachcha* roads. In 1966, the Zila Parishad maintained the following roads:—

Tarred roads	19.17 miles
<i>Kankar</i> metal roads	47.70 miles
<i>Kachcha</i> roads	200.13 miles

The vehicular traffic along the minor and village roads, mostly confined to vehicles with iron-tyre wheels, damages the roads and makes these unfit for fast traffic. The numerous *kachcha* roads under the charge of the Zila Parishad mostly used by carts, are bad. These are usually below the level of the fields and get flooded during the rainy season. Efforts are being made by the Zila Parishad to raise the level of these roads above that of the fields but due to paucity of funds, only approaches to the important roads are taken in hand

each year. Cross drainage is also being currently provided so that the roads can be used during the rains.

The list of roads maintained by the Zila Parishad in 1966 is given in Table XXIV of Appendix.

Effect of Floods on Road Transport

In recent years, floods occurring practically every year, have caused a lot of inconvenience and disruption of traffic resulting from breaches in the roads. The following roads were affected time and again during the last few years:—

- (1) Rohtak-Gohana-Panipat Road.
- (2) Meerut-Sonepat Road
- (3) Sonepat-Gohana Road
- (4) Rohtak-Jhajjar-Rewari Road
- (5) Rohtak-Sonepat Road
- (6) Delhi-Hissar-Sulemanki Road
- (7) Rohtak-Bhiwani Road

Immediate steps are taken to plug the breaches wherever they occur and make the road fit for traffic. In order to avoid the recurrence of road breaches in the affected portions, additional culverts are being provided in the raised portions of the roads. Richer specifications, use of stabilised soil base courses and increased thickness of the crust are being employed wherever possible.

Vehicles and Conveyances

In ancient times, the means of communication being poor in most parts of the country, life was restricted to the villages. The wants of people were limited. Only on rare occasions, like visits to holy places, they used to travel from one place to another, and that too in groups, on foot taking thereby a long time to complete their outward and inward journeys. Country carts were used by common people in the villages for moving from village to village. *Raths* and *majholis* were maintained by well-to-do persons and big landlords. Ponies and horses were also pressed into service by some people. In the sandy tracts of the Jhajjar tahsil, the chief means of conveyance was the camel.

With the passage of time and improvement in communications, the modes of conveyance also improved. *Ekkas* and *tartoo* carts

appeared to supplement country carts. Camel carts and four-wheeled cart drawn by bullocks also came into use for transporting passengers and goods. As villages and towns were linked together by metalled roads, better vehicles also came into use. Rubber-tyre tongas, drawn by one or two horses, became one of the swift means of conveyance. Later, appeared cycles, motor cars, trucks, but these did not supplant the slower means of transport. Every kind of transport continues to be pressed into service. The multiplicity of transport is indeed fabulous; so is the range of speed at which people travel. There are *thelas* and hand-carts, horses and donkeys, camels in sandy tracts, tongas, cycles, rickshaws, motor-cycles and scooters, jeeps and station wagons, buses, cars, tractors and tempos (three-wheeled motor transport). The tempo which appeared in this district only a few years ago is now becoming a popular means of public transport, especially in rural areas. This is on account of its being both cheap and a quick means of conveyance. There are no tramways or municipal owned services in Rohtak town, though there is a local bus run by the Haryana Roadways.

The total number of vehicles registered in the district during 1961 to 1966 is given in Table XXV of Appendix.

Public Transport

Road transport in this district has not been wholly nationalised. The State transport undertaking does not enjoy monopoly on any route. It has, nevertheless, provided an impetus to private transport companies and due to the healthy competition between the two, the standard of service has improved.

The private transport companies and the State transport undertaking are running services on almost all metalled roads under a joint time and fare table. During 1965 the following companies were operating on the routes mentioned against each :—

Name of Transport Undertaking	Route
1. Karnal Kaithal Co-operative Transport Society Ltd., Karnal	Sonapat-Kaithal via Assandh
2. Karnal Co-operative Transport Society, Ltd., Karnal	Panipat-Rohtak Rohtak-Gohana Kaithal-Sonapat Sonapat-Gohana Murthal-Rohtak Murthal-Jhajjar

Name of Transport Uundertaking	Route
3. Rohtak Delhi Transport (P) Ltd., Rohtak	Rohtak-Delhi Rohtak-Chhara Kharkhauda-Delhi
4. Rohtak Gohana Bus Service (P) Ltd., Rohtak	Rohtak-Gohana Rohtak-Panipat Rohtak-Sewana
5. Rohtak Hissar Transport Co., Rohtak	Rohtak-Hissar Rohtak-Jind
6. Rohtak Hissar Transport (P) Ltd., Rohtak	Rohtak-Hissar Rohtak-Jind
7. Rohtak General Transport Co. (P) Ltd., Rohtak	Rohtak-Hissar Rohtak-Gohana Rohtak-Bhiwani Rohtak-Bhiwani via Kahnaur Rohtak-Dadri Rohtak-Narnaund
8. Sataam Transport Co. (P) Ltd., Rohtak	Rohtak-Delhi Rohtak-Sonepat Rohtak-Gohana Gohana-Panipat Gohana-Kheri-Khera Gohana-Maham Rohtak-Hissar Rohtak-Jhajjar
9. Jhajjar Motor Roadways (P) Ltd., Jhajjar	Jhajjar-Kosli Jhajjar-Delhi Jhajjar-Rohtak Jhajjar-Rewari Rohtak-Gurgaon via Jhajjar
10. Kapur Bus Service, Hansi	Rohtak-Hissar
11. Ganjibar Bus Service, Hansi	Rohtak-Hissar

Name of Transport Undertaking	Route
12. Zamindara Bus and Transport Co. (P) Ltd., Rohtak	Rohtak-Dadri Rohtak-Sonepat Beri-Delhi via Dighal-Sampla Rohtak-Sewana Sewana-Jhajjar
13. Rohtak Bhiwani Transport Co., Group 'A', Rohtak	Rohtak-Bhiwani Rohtak-Narnaul Rohtak-Dadri Rohtak-Kahnaur
14. Rohtak-Bhiwani Transport Co., Group 'C', Rohtak	Rohtak-Bhiwani Rohtak-Kahnaur Rohtak-Jind
15. Gohana Co-operative Transport Society Ltd., Gohana	Gohana-Julana
16. Rohtak District Co-operative Transport Society Ltd., Rohtak	Beri-Delhi Delhi-Dujana Delhi-Jhajjar Delhi-Badli via Daboda Delhi-Badli via Dhandasa Jhajjar-Rohtak Rohtak-Jhajjar-Badli Jhajjar-Bahadurgarh Bahadurgarh-Gurgaon Rohtak-Nahar Sonepat-Delhi
17. Ithad Motor Transport (P) Ltd., Delhi	Delhi-Sonepat
18. Rohtak Haryana Transporters (P) Ltd., Rohtak	Rohtak-Sonepat Rohtak-Beri Rohtak-Dadri Rohtak-Bahu Jholri Rohtak-Nahar Rohtak-Salhawas-Kosli Jhajjar-Kosli-Salhawas Beri-Delhi via Jhajjar

Name of Transport Undertaking	Route
19. Lahore Pindi Transport (P) Ltd., Rohtak	Rohtak-Delhi
20. Matinhail Ex-Servicemen Co-operative Transport Society Ltd., Rohtak	Rohtak-Sonepat via Farmana
21. Bahu Jant Co-operative Transport Society Ltd., Rohtak	Rohtak-Sonepat via Farmana
22. Haryana Backward Classes Co-operative Transport Society Ltd., Rohtak	Jhajjar-Farrukhnagar
23. Bhutana Ashoka Co-operative Transport Society Ltd., Gohana	Gohana-Jagsi-Urlana
24. Sonepat National Co-operative Transport Society Ltd., Sonepat	Gohana-Jagsi-Urlana
25. Haryana Roadways	Rohtak-Dabwali Delhi-Gohana Rohtak-Gohana-Khanpur Sonepat-Kaithal Rewari-Jhajjar Rohtak-Loharu Delhi-Rohtak Rohtak-Sonepat Rohtak-Panipat Delhi-Beri Rohtak-Narnaul Delhi-Kharkhauda Rohtak-Nahar Delhi-Sonepat Rohtak-Jind Rohtak-Kosli Rohtak-Kahnaur Rohtak-Gurgaon Rohtak-Kairu (via Bhiwani) Beri-Rohtak Rohtak-Chhara Rohtak-Maham

Name of Transport	Undertaking	Route
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		Rohtak-Badli-Jhajjar
		Rohtak-Jhajjar
		Rohtak-Chandigarh
		Rohtak-Dadri
		Rohtak-Hissar
		Rohtak-Sirsa
		Rohtak-Bhiwani
		Rohtak-Sampla via Chhara
		Maham-Gohana
		Rohtak-Salhawas
		Gohana-Khera
		Rohtak-Asthal Bohar
		Rohtak-Sewana
		Rohtak-Bahu Jholri
		Dadri-Jhajjar via Birohar
		Beri-Bahadurgarh-Chhara

The buses which start from Delhi and go towards Ambala along the Grand Trunk Road and vice versa, as also those which go from Delhi to Hissar and Bhiwani; or Rewari to Hissar, and Chandigarh to Narnaul also pass through the district.

There is no *deluxe* bus service within the district but the *deluxe* buses from Delhi to Chandigarh, Ambala, Patiala and Nangal pass through it. The station wagons and tempos, which have been registered as taxis, wait at the outskirts of towns for small beats to adjoining places.

Goods Transport by Road

The goods traffic is handled mainly by private owners. There were more than 1,255 public carriers registered in the district in 1965 as against 130 in 1950. There are two reasons contributing to this phenomenal increase in goods transport by road. First, the rural sector which has been participating on a growing scale in the economic activity, has to rely much more on road than on rail and second, motor transport is becoming more common for shorter hauls. But the goods traffic is mostly unorganized. Efforts to

rationalise truck ownership and operation have not met with much success, with the result that there is a sizeable wastage of resources. Nevertheless, there are two redeeming features. First, the system of booking agencies has developed which provides the operators with parking, godown and warehouse facilities. Second, the private operators have united themselves in the district to eliminate competition among themselves, to regulate the traffic and to share profits.

RAIL-ROADS

The oldest railway in the Punjab, the Amritsar-Lahore line covering a distance of 32.40 miles with a 5'6" gauge, was opened on April 10, 1862. The section Amritsar to Delhi, passing through Sonapat, was completed and opened for traffic on October 14, 1870. This line runs almost along the Grand Trunk Road. Entering the district near Rathdhana it passes through Sonapat, Sandal Kalan and Ganaur and leaves the district after covering about 16½ miles.

The second important railway line which traverses the district for 35 miles is Delhi-Bhatinda line. It was opened in 1896 and runs right across the district through Bahadurgarh, Asauda, Sampla, Kahrawar, Asthal Bohar, Rohtak, Samar Gopalpur and Kharanti.

The Rohtak-Panipat railway line, opened in 1927, was closed down in 1942 being uneconomic. In view of the recent development of the district and importance of Gohana as a surplus area in foodgrains, a portion of the line from Rohtak to Gohana was re-laid and a shuttle service was revived in 1959. The total track mileage of this line is 20 miles and it passes through Makroli, Jassia, and Bhainswan before reaching Gohana.

The Rewari-Bhatinda line cutting the south-western corner of the Jhajjar tahsil with railway stations at Kosli, Sudhrana and Jharli, covers only a small distance of 9 miles.

The Amritsar-Delhi, Delhi-Bhatinda and Rohtak-Gohana are broad gauge lines whereas the Rewari-Bhatinda line is metre gauge.

The monthly average of inward and outward traffic of passengers and goods during 1965-66 is given in Table XXVI of Appendix.

Rail Road Competition

With the growth of railways, the roads were neglected as unnecessary till the half of the 19th century. In consequence, the Rohtak-Delhi road was cut up in several places so as to divert traffic on to the railway. But in the 20th century came a reaction and the advent of motor transport led to an appreciation of the value of feeder roads and through highways.

In 1933, the Mitchell Krikness Committee appointed by the Government of India attributed much of the annual loss of railway traffic to the competition from the roads. But during World War II, there was practically no rail-road competition as a considerable number of motor vehicles were requisitioned by the Government for military purposes, and the railways had to carry traffic far in excess of their capacity. The reversal of this advantageous position after the war necessitated a rigid regulation of motor transport in the interests of railways.

After Independence, the Government reached an agreement with the private transport operators by which the relative shares of the Government and private operators were fixed at 50 : 50. Government is now framing a policy by which there will be full co-ordination between rail and road traffic.

For the last ten years, there has been a distinct shift in favour of road transport in the district mainly because of the fact that a large part of the district is rural and is served by roads. Road transport is also gaining popularity because of its frequency of service, speed, cheaper fares and freight rates and other conveniences.

WATERWAYS AND FERRIES

The Yamuna forms the eastern boundary of the district and separates it from Uttar Pradesh. Ferry service is maintained on the river at four points in the Sonapat tahsil; Memarpur, Dheisra, Barauli and Bhagpat. The ferries at the first three places are being maintained since 1962 by the Panchayat Samitis concerned; only the Bhagpat ferry is maintained by the Uttar Pradesh Government. The first three ghats are auctioned and the highest bidder is allowed to ply his own boats. The contractor is required to keep the boats in proper condition.

The following details about the ferries will be of interest :—

Place	Type of boat	Number of rowing boats	Annual volume of passengers	Daily load carried (Maunds)	Annual revenue (Rs.)
			(Average)	(Average)	(Average)
Memarpur	Wooden	2	18,000	50	28,000
Dheisra	Wooden	1	2,000	40	9,000
Barauli	Wooden	2	6,000	50	2,000
Bhagpat	Wooden	8

The ferries transport wheat, *bajra*, gram and *jowar* when there is no restriction on the movement of these grains. The imports through the ferries comprise mainly sugar and *gur*. The service also covers the transportation of passengers, animals and cattle and motor vehicles both loaded and unloaded.

TRANSPORT BY AIR

An aerodrome was constructed in 1942 at Rohtak during the World War II but it was closed down after the War in 1945. At present it is used as a godown by the Public Works Department.

FACILITIES FOR TRAVELLERS

The Chapter on 'Places of Interest' in this volume will show that though there are places with a certain amount of tourist interest in the district, yet no efforts have so far been made to attract tourists by developing facilities. For people visiting either on business or otherwise, there are *paras* or *chopals* in the villages and dharmshalas and hotels in the towns besides departmental rest houses. Rest houses are maintained by different departments of the Haryana Government for its touring officers.

The village *paras* or *chopal* is an institution of considerable importance in the villagers' life. Generally, it is a *pukka* building made of bricks or stones, with handsomely carved woodwork, situated in the heart of the village. A dozen sturdy charpoys which appear to be

unbreakable, are placed in the *paras* for the benefit of guests. A fire of dung cakes keeps smouldering all the time and provides fuel for the hookah smokers. Some of the *chopals* are decorated in a rustic fashion with figures of Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, animals like tigers, horses and elephants and objects like railway trains painted on walls.

In the towns, dharmshalas have been provided by the religious minded and generous persons. Recently, some private hotels have sprung up at Rohtak and Sonapat. These cater to the demands of all types of visitors to the district.

A network of rest houses is spread throughout the district. Most of these are located in the countryside. The Irrigation and the Public Works Departments control most of these rest houses; only a few of the rest houses are controlled by the Deputy Commissioner. The Panchayat Samitis also maintain rest houses at a few places. The list of rest houses along with the number of suites and the officers who make reservations is given in Table XXVII of Appendix.

POSTS, TELEGRAPHS AND TELEPHONES

Posts

The post offices were formerly controlled by the Superintendent, Southern Division, Rewari, but in 1927, a Superintendent of Post Offices was appointed at Rohtak who is now in charge of the posts and telegraphs in the district. The figures given below show that there has been a considerable increase in the number of post offices in the district during the last 50 years:

Particulars	1910	1948	1960	1966
Head Post Office	1	1	1	1
Sub-Post Offices	10	15	32	46
Branch Post Offices	44	95	237	308

The names of post offices in the district as in 1966 are given in Table XXVIII of Appendix.

Frequency of mail delivery.—Dak used to be distributed in villages once a week and there were only 44 branch post offices in 1910. But in 1966 about 80 per cent of the villages were receiving mail daily.

To cope with the growth of mail delivery, the mail is carried by buses from Rohtak to Bhiwani, Gohana, Sonapat, Hansi, Jhajjar, Beri and Kahnaur and from Bahadurgarh to Dulehra.

Telegraphs

In 1910, only Rohtak, Rohtak Mandi, Kalanaur, Jhajjar, Beri and Gohana were served by telegraph lines. It was possible to telegraph from all railway stations, but the service was so bad that 'it was quicker to walk than to wire'.¹ The Canal Department also maintained a private telegraph line between Delhi, Rohtak and all main junctions of the *rajbahar* for transmitting departmental information.

Telegraphic facilities have considerably improved since then. In 1966, such facilities were available at the following 27 post offices:—

(1) Bahadurgarh	(10) Jhajjar	(19) Rohtak (Mandi)
(2) Bahadurgarh (Mandi)	(11) Kalanaur	(20) Rohtak (Model Town)
(3) Beri	(12) Kharkhauda	(21) Sampla
(4) Butana	(13) Kosli	(22) Sonapat
(5) Dighal	(14) Maham	(23) Sonapat (Mandi)
(6) Dujana	(15) Murthal	(24) Sonapat (Model Town)
(7) Ganaur	(16) Nahar	(25) Rohtak (Medical College)
(8) Gohana	(17) Rohtak (Head Office)	(26) Salhawas
(9) Gohana (Mandi)	(18) Rohtak (Kanak Mandi)	(27) Kathura

Telephones

In 1966, 7 telephone exchanges were functioning in the district at

1. *Rohtak District Gazetteer*, 1910, p. 138.

the following places:—

Name of Exchange	Year of establishment
1. Sonapat	1950
2. Rohtak	1951
3. Bahadurgarh	1956
4. Gohana	1958
5. Sampla	1958
6. Ganaur	1960
7. Jhajjar	1964

RADIO AND WIRELESS STATIONS

There is a Police Wireless Station at Rohtak for receiving and transmitting messages. It remains open for 24 hours by shifts. It is provided with a mobile wireless set fitted in a pick-up van for anti-dacoity and other emergencies in rural areas.

General

The above account shows the rate at which the means of communication and transport as well as transmission of news have developed during the last fifty years. This improvement is symptomatic of development in the whole country.