

The appearance of Urdu newspapers and periodicals in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century ushered in an age of far-reaching changes in literature as well. The process had started way back in 1780, when an English weekly, the "BENGAL CALCUTTA GAZETTE" introduced a column in Persian and Urdu. Its files of 1786-1787 contain English renderings of some ghazals along with their Urdu text.

The old records and researches of modern days have revealed the fact the origin and growth of journalism in India started in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. James Augustus Hicky published the first English newsweekly the "HICKY GAZETTE" which is also known as "CALCUTTA GENERAL ADVERTISER"; with this gazette Journalism in English started in India. It highlights the fact that following the footsteps of the "HICKY GAZETTE" in English language came the under

"JAM-E-JAHAN NUMA" on 27<sup>th</sup> March, 1822 by a Bengali gentleman Harihar Dutta who was the son of the eminent Bengali journalist Tara Chand Dutta and one of the founders of Bengali weekly "SAMBADH KAUMUDI," the editor of this pioneer Urdu weekly was a Punjabi, Lala Sada Sukh. This heralded the beginning of regular Urdu journalism.

"JAM-E-JAHAN NUMA" was printed at Mission Press, 11, Circular Road, Kolkata - 16, opposite Nonapukur Tram Depot and its office was situated at 2, Colootolla Street, Kolkata - 12. It was a three page weekly of quarter size and published on Wednesdays. After researchers think that "MIRATUL AKHBAR" which was published on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1822 was the first Urdu newspaper. It was not a purely Urdu ~~paper~~ newspaper. It was printed in Persian language, only a column was printed in Urdu. Modern research has proved that the date of publication of the "MIRATUL AKHBAR" was not 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1822 but 10<sup>th</sup> April, 1823. So this proves that "JAM-E-JAHAN NUMA" edited by Lala Sada Sukh and published by Hari Har Dutta was the first Urdu newspaper as its date of publication was 27<sup>th</sup> March, 1822.

Before the origin of Urdu journalism the Congress raised its voice for freedom. For this reason Urdu newspapers from the very beginning joined in this freedom. For Urdu journalism the great Rebellion of 1857 proved to be a blessing in disguise, as it gave a boost to the circulation of the newspapers and many more papers from other centre made their debut. This soon became a matter of great worry for the British Government, which then put a lot of restrictions on the press.

This strict censorship dealt a severe blow to the freedom of the press. Very few papers had a long life, though new ones would come out as easily as old ones ceased to exist. When the tide subsided and the British Government partially relented, the network of Urdu newspapers had spread far and wide! from the "PUNJAB AKHBAR" Lahore, to the "ASIFUL AKHBAR" Hyderabad, "SHAMSUL AKHBAR" Bombay. This was the age of the dailies which began with the "URDU GUIDE," from Calcutta, starting in 1858 under the editorship of Maulvi Kabiruddin.

The scope of my topic is limited, as I wish to stress on Urdu Journalism in Bengal in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. My plan was to give a detailed account of the newspaper which were published at that time in India but this is not feasible here, that's why I am giving a brief account of those newspapers that were published in Bengal in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

The rise of Journalism has helped literature in a variety of ways. In those days of tardy communication, journals and periodicals had become the main media of expression of opinion, thoughts, feelings and ideas of the public.

1. JAM-E-JAHAN-NUMA, was launched on 27<sup>th</sup> March, 1822, which was the first Urdu newspaper, but its duration was very brief. Only six (6) issues were published. This pioneer Urdu weekly was brought out at that time when Urdu was not popular in Bengal. Urdu was prevalent only for conversation and it was not adopted in the field of journalism. But it was the far-sightedness of Hari Har Dutta that he introduced the Urdu language as a new instrument in the field of Print Journalism. Unfortunately his experiment could not succeed at once. Therefore after six (6) issues of "JAM-E-JAHAN NUMA", he converted it into a Persian weekly. The reason for this change was that the majority of readership was illiterate and poor, and Persian was the official language of the period and a language of the elite too. While closing the Urdu edition of "JAM-E-JAHAN NUMA" in May, 1822, the management wrote that the people are not habituated to reading Urdu for this reason that a lot of respected readers of whose interest, this newspaper got glazed do not keep taste with Urdu script. And people of India whose language was Persian wanted Persian script. It was humbly thought that from the next week onwards, Persian Language was to be used instead of Urdu. "JAM-E-JAHAN NUMA" was published by Hari Har Dutta and under the

editorship of Munshi Lala Sada Sukh and the printer of the newspaper was William Hope King. It was published from Colootolla Street and printed at Mission Press, Calcutta. In the beginning it consisted of 8 pages than 12 pages and after that of 16 pages. On 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1823 the number of pages of this newspaper was increased, and four (4) pages were devoted for the Urdu language and it continued till 1845.

2. MIRATUL AKHBAR. Raja Ram Mohan Roy brought out a Persian weekly named "MIRATUL AKHBAR" on 10<sup>th</sup> April, 1823. This was the first weekly launched in the Persian language, in protest against authoritarian attitude towards the Indian Press, Raja Ram Mohan Roy wrote a long editorial in his Persian weekly MIRATUL AKHBAR in the issue of 14<sup>th</sup> April, 1823 and with this issue he closed his publication.

Later some newspapers of the same name came out from Calcutta and other parts of the country in Urdu along with others vernacular newspapers of their Hindu brethren in protest against the British.