

# Dalits in journalism and writing: From past to present

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## Abstract

French philosopher Michel Foucault popularized the thought that history is written under the shade of power in his theory of power and truth. Writing is an art to properly communicate one's own thought, feeling, ideas or information, problem/issues, solution or key takeaway to the readers or audience which ultimately contribute to history making. Likewise, journalism, the fourth organ of state, has been a very crucial field to make the people aware on the pertinent issues of the contemporary time which is usually said to be a mirror of the society that should present the voices and choices of the people whether one may be rich or poor, ruler or ruled, manufacturer or consumer, lord or serf, bourgeoisie or proletariat, capitalist or labor/employee, haves or have nots, male or female, Dalits or Non-Dalits in case of Nepal. This short research based article entitled "Dalits in Journalism/Writing: From Past to Present" tries to minutely investigate the Dalit history of journalism and/or writing from the commencement or writing history from the general public in state politics. It also tries to answer the questions on how Dalits writing/history has been erased, how

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has it been negated and hidden and how has it been manipulated and twisted in a disgraceful manner. This research further tries to dig out whole Dalits' history of writing, journalism, its contributors from past to present, including the print and online as well as television and radio owned or operated by Dalits as an Editor-in-Chief and/or Managing Director or Publisher of the media outlet as their physical and content representation have been very nominal. It draws conclusion and key takeaways as a recommendation. This research employs an empirical method by desk review, secondary data collection and analysis. Descriptive and analytical tools are applied.

**Keywords:** *Dalits, history, journalism, inclusion, physical and content representation*

## **Introduction**

"History is written under shade of power, which significantly guides shaping the knowledge," says French philosopher Michel Foucault in his theory of power and truth (YouTube/Michel Foucault history of power). His theory of power is very fascinating, he claims the power and knowledge are two sides of the same coin. The writing and journalism are very powerful tools that produce and shape knowledge, orient and aware people, guide and control them and make a certain discourse in society so as to have common understanding on some issues among certain community of audiences, who may be the elite people or the haves or have nots or rulers or ruled, bourgeoisie or proletariat and lord or serf.

Journalism is the fourth organ of the nation and taken as the mirror of the society. It is very pivotal for bringing about expected changes in the way of thinking, way of perceiving, and the way of acting and behaving. Journalism is also very powerful which would further contribute producing knowledge and shaping the minds of the people. The International Conventions including the UN Charter, the Constitution, Laws—rules and regulations as well as

the courts' precedents and verdicts are the powerful tools that will be shaping action and behavior of the people; and such discourse further hegemonize (Gramsci) the people politically and culturally. Hegemony is such social and political ideology that is to support for the false and unjust narratives as the true and just on the ground of tradition, religious belief and/or cultural ground. Media is sometimes compelled to hide the truth and create the false narrative in society which mislead the truth in the community.

Winston Churchill, the statesman and the Prime Minister of UK from 1940-1945 CE, speaks that the history is written by the 'victors'. The oratory is clear that the history is written in favor of winners and the losers don't have their history (Mijar, 6). While talking about history, Dalits' history has been either erased or manipulated, either negated or twisted, either derogated or disapproved, either hidden or humiliated, either discriminated or decentered with bad intent rather lacks right judgement, recognition that one can't expect its glorification and appreciation. There is a good example that how Bange Sarki's history of patriotism and nation building has been underestimated. He had shown great bravery and patriotism that he didn't show the route to British Army where Nepal Army was heading for. For that reason, he was cruelly killed by the British.

Now, it is very crucial that the Dalits' history of journalism and writing to preserve, well discuss and further explore and disseminate as well as to take into the new heights of glorification. Writing is a very tough job to everyone, let alone Dalits. Nepal's writing history has not been so long as Motiram Bhatta has been considered as the first journalist and writer (Aryal). Unlike, the *Katwal* pratha, conveying the information of special function, meeting in village by shouting from a top of the hill, that was the duty assigned to Shudras (Dalits), they were supposed to do this job when radio, television, print media were not invented. As such, Dalit writing history dates back to 1950 CE in Nepal when TR Bishwakarma in limelight, but still lags far behind the mainstream writing. Now it is high time to

make the Dalits' knowledge and skills, their contribution in writing and journalism well managed and taken into glorified history of the country.

### **Objective of the article**

The following five points are the key objectives of this article. It will be able to:

- (i) Dig out the history of journalism by Dalits and uncover their contribution for the society;
- (ii) Minutely survey the inclusion of Dalits in decision making level of state-owned media;
- (iii) General survey of the major program being produced and aired/broadcast from Radio Nepal, Nepal Television and *Gorkhapatra*; and
- (iv) Draw the key opportunity and challenges as well as key take away for making inclusive journalism and Dalits writing.

### **Methodology and research limitation**

The methodology of this mini-research aimed at writing the tentative Dalit history of journalism and writing applies more qualitative and less quantitative approach of data gathering, analyzing and synthesizing as well as drawing the key takeaways—conclusion and recommendations for making the journalism (more) inclusive in terms of physical and content/programmatic representation. It describes, narrates, analyzes and synthesizes the text based on the published articles, books and quarterly magazines. Mainly, it adopts desk review method for the secondary sources of data. It also relies on the articles being published by Press Council Nepal's *Media Year Book 2023/24*, *Samhita* quarterly, Ashar 2082 BS, website of PCN, History of Nepali Media: From print to digital, other research work and field visits to collect the primary data from Nepal Television,

Radio Nepal, Gorkhapatra Corporation, Rastriya Samachar Samiti and Department of Information and Broadcasting.

This article will be the groundbreaking literature as it digs out the closest scenario of Dalits' physical representation. As it is a mini research for the purpose of journal article, it doesn't study minutely and rigorously about content representation. It also describes, analyzes and synthesizes the available resources, primary sources with program head and chair of the organization as well as relevant secondary reference materials of state-owned government organizations. It also examines the major history of Dalit writers and journalists, and draws the key conclusion and recommendation for further improvement in terms of physical and content presentation. Neither it studies the overall Dalits' presence in community Radio, nor assesses the nation-wide online outlets.

## Literature review

There is very little literature written by Dalit writers and/or journalists in Nepali language. English version write ups are rarely found on the part of Dalits. Although the Nepali journalism and writing started formally in the early 1970s (2026 BS), Panchayat regime, very few journalists and writers have emerged in re-establishment of the democracy (1990) and federal democratic republican era after 2007 CE. There are thousands of journalists from among non-Dalits but very few of them belong to Dalit community. There are 5 thousand 1 hundred 31 online media listed at Press Council Nepal as of 21 July 2025, there are 225 (4.38%) Dalits who are chair/proprietor and/or Editor/Editor-in-Chief.

Article 1 of UDHR claims, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." Similarly, the preamble to the Constitution of Nepal guarantees "**full press freedom**". Also considered as the guiding document of the world, UDHR has been disseminated worldwide in more than 500 different

languages which provides equal dignity and freedom. Constitution of Nepal (2015 CE) has made the provision of 31 fundamental rights, two are Dalit focused. Article 24: Rights against Untouchability and Discrimination and Article 40: Rights of Dalits. One focuses to eliminate the caste-based discrimination and untouchability and another for facilities – house, land, free education, skills and occupation, etc.

Similarly, the constitution guarantees **two fundamental** rights relating to **communication** and right to information—article 19 and 27. The preamble to the constitution makes the provision of 'full freedom of the press'. Article 19 has made the provision of Right to Communication that ensures—(1) No publication and broadcasting or dissemination or printing of any news item, editorial, feature article or other reading, audio and audio-visual material through any means whatsoever including electronic publication, broadcasting and printing shall be endorsed. The right to information in Article 27 ensures the public information. "Every citizen shall have the right to demand and receive information on any matter of his or her interest or of public interest." Article 19: Right to Communication guarantees press to fully functioning to the best interest of the people and the nation according to the "full press freedom" enshrined in preamble.

Furthermore, there are dedicated acts, regulations and rules regarding the freedom of press and proper arrangement and smooth functioning of the media outlets—print, electronic and digital medium of information and communication. Press and Publication Act, 1991; National Broadcasting Act, 2092; Communication Corporation Act, 1971; Right to Information Act, 2007; Working Journalist Act, 2002; Radio Act, 1957; Gorkhapatra Corporation Act, 1962; Rastriya Samachar Samiti Act, 1962; and the most important—Press Council Act, 1991 as well as regulations and rules for further easing the functioning of the press. Aswasthama Bhakta Kharel asserts, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the rise of mass media—newspapers

and radio marked a significant shift in how information is received by the public (Media Year Book, 2023/24, pg. 3). Media activities were highly suppressed then and the Dalit issues were not the issue of debate as well as news content for a long period after the reinstatement of democracy in 1990.

Kundan Aryal, the head of Central Department of Journalism and Mass Communication of the Tribhuvan University claims that Motiram Bhatta is the first journalist of Nepali press history. In the book entitled, *Nepali Mediako Itihas: Chhapadekhi Digitalsamma* (History of Nepali Media: Print to Digital), Aryal refers to Devkota, "Motiram Bhatta has been considered as the first journalist of Nepal as he was engaged in the preparation of publishing *Sudhasagar*, first and the oldest among printed newspaper in Nepal (Devkota, 1993, p. 29). In June/July (Ashar), 2082 issue of *Samhita* quarterly, Press Council Nepal published an article of Meghendra Bishwakarma from Dalit community with high priority, placing it first. Almost a decade earlier, author Mijar's two articles were published.

## History of Dalit journalism

The writing and journalism history of Dalits is no longer than that of the works of TR Bishwakarma and the Jawahar Roka as he has been considered as the first writer and journalist from Dalit community. Michel Hutt is of the view that the history of Nepali-language literature dates back to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, but there is almost total absence of Dalits from this literature until the recent past whether in terms of the subject or authors of texts. He further claims, "The earlier published Nepali Dalit TR Bishwkarma and Jawahar Roka" (Nepali Dalit Literature – Michael Hutt – Nepali & Himalayan Studies). Their history has been erased, negated and twisted history of writing by non-Dalits to the large extent. They have been historically repressed and sidelined from the mainstream schooling, education, employment, land, capital, state ruling, administration as well as media discourses.

Being discriminated, dehumanized, stigmatized, negated and humiliated a lot, Dalits, also called Shudra in past, do not have their long history of writing and journalism. TR Bishwakarma was an editor of *Dalit Aawaj* Monthly in 1969 CE, which was published by Nepal Rastriya Dalit Janabikash Parishad. Later, he also published and edited *Sanjiwani* monthly magazine. Few monthly magazines have been established and edited by Dalit journalists and they used to be often raising the issues of Dalits contributing a lot for the Dalit movement and journalism as well as supported strengthening the democracy at large. Some of the available history is as follows:

### ***History of Dalit Magazine/Journalism***

S.No.	Name of Magazine	Started Publishing	Publisher	Editor/Editor-in-Chief	Present Status
1	<i>Dalit Aawaj</i> Monthly	1969 (CE)	Nepal Rastriya Janabikash Parishad	T R Bishwakarma	Closed
2	<i>Mukti</i> Monthly	1974	Nepal Rastriya Dalit Parishad	CK Gadai	Closed
3	<i>Sanjiwani</i> Monthly	1978	TR Bishwakarma	TR Bishwakarma	Closed
4	<i>Utpidit Bidhyarthi Aawaj</i> (Occasional)	1993	Nepal Swotantha Dalit Bidhyarthi Sangathan	Hom Nepali, et al.	Closed
5	<i>Shramjivi</i> Monthly	1993	Nepal Rastriya Janabikash Parishad	--	Closed
6	<i>Mukti Sandesh</i> Monthly	1994	Mukti Andolan Prakashan Samiti	Dan Bahadur Bishwakarma	Closed
7	<i>Samata Sandesh</i> Monthly	1994	Jatiya Samata Samaj	Rajesh Bishwakarma	Closed
8	<i>Samanata</i> Monthly	1994	Nepal Utpidit Dalit Jatiya Mukti Samaj	Padmalal Bishwakarma	Closed
9	<i>Jana Utthan</i> Monthly	1995	Jana Utthan Pratisthan	BK Sebak and DB Sagar	Irregular
10	<i>Margadarshan</i> trimester	1995	Feminist Dalit Organization (FEDO)	Durga Sob, Renu Sijapati	Regular
11	<i>Parishrami</i> quarterly	1996	Nepal Dalit Sahitya tatha Sanskriti Pratisthan	Ranendra Barali, Khadga Sadasankar et al.	Closed



12	<i>Jijibisha Monthly</i>	1996	Dalit Welfare Organization	Motilal Nepali	Closed
13	<i>Naba Janautthan Monthly</i>	1997	Utpidit Jatiya Chetana Sangh	---	Closed
14	<i>Manav Maryada Mothly</i>	1999	Upekshit, Utpidit ra Dalit Barga Utthan Bikas Samiti	Dipakjung Bishwakarma	Closed
15	<i>Rastriya Pratibodh Bi-monthly</i>	1999	Tejman Bishwakarma	Arjun Kumar Bishwakarma	Closed
16	<i>Muktiko Aawaj Monthly</i>	1999	Dalit NGO Federation	Tirtha Barma & DB Sagar	Closed
17	<i>Muktibodh Quarterly</i>	1999	BB Bishwakarma	BB Bishwakarma	Closed
18	<i>Nabasamanata Monthly</i>	2001	Nepal Utpidit Jatiya Mukti Samaj	Chhabilal Bishwakarma	Closed
19	<i>Samananta Abhiyan Bi-monthly</i>	2003	Dalit Human Rights and Caste Concern Center	Bedbahadur Sunar	Closed
20	<i>Nepali Manch Monthly</i>	2003	Binod Pahadi	Binod Pahadi	Irregular
21	<i>Dalit Khabar Monthly</i>	2004	Jana Utthan Pratisthan	DB Sagar	Closed
22	<i>Chluwachhoot Unmulan Abhiyan Bi-monthly</i>	2004	LANCAU	Narayan Nepal	Closed
23	<i>Dalit Mukti (Occasional)</i>	2004	Dalit Liberation Front	-----	Closed
24	<i>Naya Samrachana Quarterly</i>	2005	Dalit Welfare Organization	Suman Bishwakarma	Closed
25	<i>Janabodh Monthly</i>	2006	Purnasing Baraili	Yubalal Bishwakarma	Closed
26	<i>Dalit Samsad Quarterly</i>	2007	Rastriya Dalit Network	Ganesh BK	Irregular
27	<i>Dalit Sandesh Monthly</i>	2008	Parashuram Ramtel	Parashuram Ramtel	Irregular
28	<i>Dalit Darpan Trimester</i>	2008	Dalit Darpan Publication Pvt. Ltd	Bhim BK	Irregular
29	<i>Dalit Nigarani Fortnightly</i>	2009	Hira Bishwakarma	Hira Bishwakarma	Closed
30	<i>Seemanta Aawaj Monthly</i>	2011	Mrigendra Bishwakarma	----	Closed
31	<i>Bahujan Monthly</i>	2011	Bishwendra Paswan	P.B. Diyali	Closed
32	<i>Inclusion Watch Bi-monthly</i>	2017	Samabeshi Foundation	Dr. Yam B. Kisan, Dhana B. Mijar	Closed

33	<i>Yugantar Khabar Monthly</i>	2024	Yugantar Media Pvt. Ltd.	Basanta Pariyar	Irregular
34	<i>Yug Parivartan Weekly</i>	2011	Dalamardan Kami	Saroj Dilu and Rajendra Tamrakar	Closed
35	<i>Parivartan Post Weekly</i>	2013	Dhana Bahadur Mijar	Dhana Bahadur Mijar	Regular
36	<i>Voiceless Voices Quarterly</i>	2023	Global Forum against Caste-based Discrimination, USA	Dr. Man Bahadur BK and Dhana B. Mijar	Irregular
37	<i>Arthawani Daily</i>	2021	Dhana Bahadur Mijar	Devika Mijar	Irregular
38	<i>Ablokit Daily</i>	2019	Bhola Kumar Paswan	Bhola Kumar Paswan	Regular

Source: Adapted from *Nepali Mediama Dalit: Sahabhagita ra Bishayabastu* (2013)/JB Bishwakarma, published by Martin Chautari and few adjustment by an author himself.

Weekly papers published and edited by Dalits have been a rare case that only one publisher and editor PCN once (2070/71) classified colorful newspaper is *Parivartan Post* weekly, which has made its history. This weekly always remained cautious about abiding the code of conduct (COC) of Press Council Nepal and basic rule of A=accuracy, B=balance and C=credibility. The history of Dalit's journalism is 56 years old, more than half a century, which was started from mid-Panchayat regime in 1969. Saroj Dilu, the writer, and Kamal BK, the retired journalist from *Nepal Samacharpatra* daily, say that CK Gadai is the first professional journalist of Dalit community in Nepal.

## Dalit online media at a glance

Since online media has been registered and increased by the day these years, it is crucial to study how the Dalit online journalism is going on and how many have been registered and functional. Keeping these things in mind, author rigorously studied and examined the Dalit data of online journalism. There was found a total of 225 Dalit online news portals out of 5131 nationally as

of Shrawan 5, 2082 BS as Press Council Nepal listed. There is an estimate that 4.38% online news portals belong to Dalits out of total domains listed by PCN. The caste-wise data of online engagement/operation from Dalits is as follows:

Bishwakarma	Madhesi Dalit	Mijar	Pariyar	Other Dalit	Total
123	6	47	34	15	225
54.67%	2.67%	20.89%	15.11%	6.66%	100% (Dalit)
Overall online representation out of 5131					
2.4%	0.12%	0.92%	0.66%	0.29%	4.38%

Source: Author's analysis based on the PCN list of 5131 as of Shravan 5, 2082 (21 Jul 2025)

### Major Contributors of Dalits in Journalism Field

Some of the major journalists from Dalits who have contributed a lot for journalism field are listed below. Altogether, 10 journalists from Dalits who have made history in print, television and online media:

S.No.	History Maker	Media and position	Reason for taken as History maker
1	TR Bishwakarma	<i>Dalit Aawaj</i> Monthly/ Editor	First Dalit journalist, started in 1969 AD.
2	CK Gadai	<i>Mukti</i> Monthly/ Editor	First professional Dalit journalist.
3	Kosmos Bishwakarma	<i>Republica</i> English Daily / Editor-in-Chief	First Editor-in-Chief from Dalit community in mainstream English broadsheet daily, son of TR and Mithaidevi.
4	Dhana Bahadur Mijar	<i>Parivartan Post</i> Weekly	Publisher and Editor of <i>Parivartan Post</i> Weekly, the first ever PCN classified color weekly, published/edited by a Dalit in Nepal.

5	Mitharam Bishwakarma	Chair of Rastriya Samachar Samiti	He is the only one from Dalit community holding this position of state-owned RSS, he is a Writer/Journalist.
6	Pabitra Sunar	<i>Nagarik Daily</i>	First ever woman professional journalist.
7	Ramhari Shahi Samundri	<a href="http://www.emailkhabar.com">www.emailkhabar.com</a> Editor-in-Chief	First Dalit online news portal operator and Editor-in-Chief (Reg. 28/2074/75)
8	Umid Prasad Bagchand	FNJ Cen. Vice Chair, Ex. NTV Journalist	First ever central vice chair of FNJ, worked almost three decades in journalism field including NTV.
9	Bhola Kumar Paswan	<i>Ablokit Daily</i> Publisher/Editor	First Madhesi Dalit Publisher and Editor of Daily newspaper

## Major names of writers and journalists from Dalit community

There are very few writers and journalist from Dalit community; they have been contributing for Nepali Dalit history writing and journalism. Some of the writers who more or less are (re)writing Dalits' history in an appreciative and glorified manner are as follows:

List of major writers and journalists from Dalit community			
Aahuti	Dipak Pariyar	Hira Bishwakarma	Prabhakar Bagchand
Amar Sunar	Dr. Bishnumaya Pariyar	Hiralal Bishwakarma	Prakash Dhaulakoti
Archana Darji	Dr. Drona Prakash Rasaili	JB Bishwakarma	Rajendra Tamrakar
Ashok Darnal	Dr. Govinda Nepali	J K Bishwakarma	Ranendra Barali

Baburam Bishwakarma	Dr. Madan Pariyar	Kamal BK	Rem B. Bishwakarma
Basanta Pariyar	Dr. Man Bahadur BK	Kamala Bishwakarma	Renu Sijapati
Bharat Nepali	Dr. Mitra Pariyar	Kamala Hemchuri	Riban Magarati
Bhim Kshitiz	Dr. Nirmal Bishwakarma	Keshab Bhul	Rita Budhathoki
Bhim Pariyar	Dr. Purna Nepali	Madhu Shahi	Sarita Pariyar
Bhola Kumar Paswan	Dr. Ratna B. Bagchand	Meghraj Rasaili	Sarojdilu Bishwakarma
Binod Pahadi	Dr. Rudra Charmakar	Min Bishwakarma	Sona Khatik
Birendra Jairu	Dr. Yam B. Kisan	Mithaidevi Bishwakarma	Subhash Darnal
Bishwas Khadkathoki	Ganesh Bishwakarma	Mitharam Bishwakarma	Subhash Nepali
Buddhi Bishwakarma	Gajadhar Sunar	Milan Bishwakarma	Sushil BK
Chakraman Bishwakarma	Ghambar Nepali	Motilal Nepali	Sushil Darnal
Devika Mijar	Gopal Baraili	Om Prakash VK	Tej Sunar
Dhana Bahadur Mijar	Gopal Nepali (Badi)	Padam Sundas	Tek Tamrakar
Dhana Kumari Sunar	Govinda Pariyar	Parshuram Ramtel	Tikaram Sunar
Dhanu BK	Hira Bishwakarma	PB Diyali	Umid Baghand

*Source: Based on author's information and analysis relying to many references.*

Physical representation of Dalits in state-owned media

At Gorkhapatra Corporation

Gorkhapatra Corporation celebrated its quarter past centuries and the information was requested since the establishment of the corporation in 1901 CE. But the corporation was only able to provide the information from 1991 CE. The inclusivity status has been given as follows:

Gorkhapatra Daily (1991-2025---34 years record provided)  
Physical Inclusion

Caste, Ethnicity and Gender	Chairman/General Manger	Editor/Editor-in-Chief
Adivasi/Janajati	6 tenure (out of 52) / 11.54%	8 tenure (out of 38)/ 21.05%
Brahmin/Kshetry	38 tenure (Including 3 Brm/Ksh Female/ 73.08%	26 (out of 38)/ 68.42%
Dalit	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Female (Brh/Ksh)	3 tenure (out of 52) / 5.77%	1 tenure (out of 38) / 2.63%;
Madhesi	5 tenure /9.61%	4 tenure (same person) / 10.53%
Total	58 Tenure /100%	38 Tenure /100%
The Rising Nepal Daily (1965-2025) and Yubamunch Monthly (37 years' record provided)		
	Editor-in-Chief (TRN)	Editor-in-Chief, Yubamunch Monthly
Adivasi/Janajati	7 out of 19 (36.84%)	3 out of 22 (13.64%)
Brahmin/Kshetry	12 (63.14%)	18 (81.82%)
Dalit	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Female (Brm/Ksh*)	0 (0%)	1 (4.54%) (included in Brm/Ksh*)
Madhesi	0 (0%)	1 (4.54%)
Total	19 Tenure /100%	22 Tenure /100%

\*Brm/Ksh=Brahmin/Kshatri

Source: This data is analyzed by author based on list received from Gorkhapatra Corp, 2025

There are three publications in regular basis from Gorkhapatra Corporation, but unfortunately there is not any single representation of Dalits in decision making levels and positions like Executive Chair, General Manager (Acting also), Editor-in-Chief from Dalits, thereby staff-inclusion reflects the same scenario.

*At Radio Nepal*

**Physical Inclusion in Decision Making Level (1950 CE – 2025 – 75 years of Radio Nepal)**

Caste, Ethnicity and Gender	Chairperson (From 1984)	Executive Director (From 1950)	Chief of News Division	Chief of Program Division
Adivasi/Janajati	6 out of 34 (17.65%)	3 out of 30 (10 %)	1 out of 12 (8.33%)	3 Out of 21 (14.28%)
Brahmin/Kshetry	27 (79.41%)	25 (83.33%)	11 (91.67%)	18 (85.71%)
<b>Dalit</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>
Female (Brahmin/ Kshatri)	0 (0%)	1 out of 34 (2.94%)	0 (0%)	2 (9.52%)
Madhesi	1 out of 34 (2.94%)	2 out of 30 (6.67%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total	34 Tenure /100%	22 Tenure /100%	12 Tenure (100%)	21 (100%)

*Source: This data is analyzed by author based on data in Radio Nepalko Aroha Abaroha, 2024*

Radio Nepal has its 75 years of history as it started from 1950 CE and there are dozens of Radio Nepal's executive director/chief administrative officer, chief of news division, chief of program division, etc but not even a single Dalit represented in those decision making position till date which is ironical in itself.

*At Nepal Television*

1985-2025---40 years record provided) Physical Inclusion

Caste, Ethnicity and Gender	Executive Chairman/General Manger/ Board of Director
Adivasi/Janajati	7 out of 41 (17.07%)
Brahmin/Kshetry	29 (70.73%)
<b>Dalit</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>
Female (Bramhin/Kshatri)	4 (9.76%)
Giri/Puri	1 (Ministry-Joint Secretary)
Madhesi	4 (9.76%)
Total	Tenure /100%

*Note: This data is analyzed by author based on provided data by NTV, 2025.*

The steering committee of Nepal Television go through same condition that of Radio Nepal and Gorkhapatra Corporation from Dalit inclusion perspective. Nepal Television has has 41 executive chairman and general manager as well as board of directors till date, but there is not even a single Dalit represented.

### *At Rastriya Samachar Samiti*

Unlike other state-owned media and media monitoring mechanism, RSS has had 42 appointments and only Mitharam Bishwakarma from Dalit community was appointed as the chair of the RSS. His tenure was about six months. His appointment was made after CA I in 2008. Following is the exact representation:

1961-2025---64 years record provided) Physical Inclusion

Caste, Ethnicity and Gender	Chairman/(Officiating) General Manger
Adivasi/Janajati	10 Out of 42 (23.81%)
Khas/ Arya	28 (66.67%)
<b>Dalit</b>	1 (2.38%)/ Mr. Mitharam Bishwakarma 'Dukhi'
Female (Khas/ Arya)	1 (2.38%)
Madhesi	3; (7.14%) (including 2 tenures of Mahato)
Total	Tenure /100%

*Note: This data is analyzed by author based on provided in the book "RSS: Then and Now" 2022*

### *At Press Council Nepal*

1970-2025---55 years record provided of Physical Inclusion in management level

Caste, Ethnicity and Gender	Chairman (Total: 22)	Member (Total: 182)
Adivasi/Janajati	35 out of 204 (17.15%)	
Khas/ Arya	143 out of 204 (70.10%)	
<b>Dalit</b>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Female (Brm/Ksh)	7 (3.43%)	
Madhesi	18 (8.82%)	
Muslim	1 (0.49%)	
Total	204 (100%)	

Source: Sapkota, Taramani. 2023. *Mass Communication and Inclusive Journalism Book*.



Overall, there are altogether five government owned media and media monitoring body where there have been appointed thousands of Executive Chair, General Manager, Executive Director, Editor-in-Chief, Board of Directors since their establishment but there is not even a single Dalit found in *Gorkhapatra*, Radio Nepal, Nepal Television and Press Council Nepal except in Rastriya Samachar Samiti (RSS). It is a bitter experience that CPN Maoist Center, which was supposed to be the mouthpiece of the labor, peasant, landless, have nots, proletariat, serfs, farmers, and all marginalized community including Dalits, but they lagged far behind in delivering into the action.

State has hegemonic and exclusionary tendency and practice although there is high level of debate and discourse as well as legal and policy framework. Welfare regimes determine the co-incidence of unemployment, poverty, family life and social relations (Silver 13). With the view to Silver, individual exclusion is deeply rooted, structured and "institutionally patterned." One of the Nobel prize winners Amartya Sen expresses the view that social exclusion is the severe problem of the society as well as the nation. He admits that there is an umbrella concept with a limited theoretical underpinning (p. 63). Sen claims: The impression of an indiscriminate listing of problems under the broad heading of "social exclusion" (Sen, p.2).

Within 125 years old history of Gorkhapatra Corporation it didn't have any Dalit Managing Director, Chair, or Editor-in-Chief since its beginning. Radio Nepal and NTV have same sort of exclusionary practices that reflect the mindset of rulers, basically of the communication ministers on how their mindset is. It clearly shows that there is *state-protected Bramhanistic Hindu ideology* which hinders Dalit inclusion in decision making level. Subhash Darnal in the *Land of Our Own* asserts that Nepali society is going through a phase of rapid disintegration, integration and re-integration. "Nonetheless, the particular condition of Madheshi and Dalit women is far more heart-rending and grave in comparison to the already Hill and

Newar Dalits" (Darnal, p.10). Kosmos was an Editor-in-Chief of *Republica* English daily, who had also served as the spokesperson of United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) in 2007 CE.

### **Content representation of Dalits in media**

While examining the content of the media outlet -- column and the program they air or broadcast, it is not in right track. In course of carrying out the survey, researcher carried out the conversation with program production head and chair of RSS. Nepal Television news division chief Puspahari Khyampa Rai said that the Dalits dedicated content and the program are very few and physical inclusion is rare. "*Dalit Sabaal*" only one program of Dalit, which is not sponsored by NTV has been produced by Advocate Chakraman Bishwakarma, has been broadcasting for two decades. He gave 5/6 names of Dalits who are working as Stringer in district. As Rai's version, "There is not any Dalit dedicated program."

While visiting the Radio Nepal central broadcasting station Singha Durbar, they even couldn't give the list of the Executive Director (Acting CAO) and head of the station and program inclusivity information for four days although I regularly followed up. There was a very serious problem of administrative hassles in providing the necessary information. Finally, I got to purchase the book entitled: "*Radio Nepalko Aaroaha Abaroha – 75 Barshako Yatra*" (Ebbs and Flows of Radio Nepal – A Journey of 75 Years). The researcher met with Tara Prasad Wosti, the program chief for some information. He said that there is a Dalit dedicated program "*Samanata*" which has been produced by Bhim Ghimire." He said, "We normally don't miss the news related to Dalits but Dalit news is rarely written and aired."

Likewise, the researcher met with Dharbendra Jha, the Executive Chair of RSS and made conversation. He sounded very positive for the content inclusion of Dalits in RSS news writing. He took the names of Madhu Shahi, Section Officer and Tikaram Sunar, Non-gazetted first class staff and they have been deployed to write the

investigative news about the diverse issues of Dalits, Dalit women, Madhesi Dalits and the like. "RSS is trying its best to include the content of each marginalized section of society, including Dalits," Chairman Jha said. While reviewing the content representation, JB Bishwakarma, (2013) found out that one daily has been covering 20 news on average, makes 540 news in 27 days (monthly) making 77,760 news in a year of those all 12 dailies. There was total 8.61% news coverage on the part of Dalits.

### **PCN report and Dalits inclusion**

Press Council Nepal's Annual Report 2024 maintains the record of the regularly published print media outlets in registration basis. For its legal requirement, daily newspaper should be printed 300 issues/days to become a regular and to be able to apply for the classification. Semi-weekly should be published 80 issues to become regular, weekly to publish 40 issues, fortnightly 20 issues, monthly 10 issues, bi-monthly 5 issues and quarterly 4 issues. The report shows 195 Dailies have been published regularly, three half-weekly, 469 weekly and 90 Monthly have been published regularly nationwide. Having reviewed all that regular dailies and weeklies and the like, Dalits are rarely found as an editor and publisher. Dalits are not getting the advertisement facility from the Department of Information and Broadcasting (DOIB) as prescribed by law to print 300, 80, 40, 20 and 10 daily, half-weekly, weekly, fortnightly, and monthly respectively.

Ramjee Dahal has written *An Assessment of Government Investment in Media in Media Year Book 2023/24*. He has minutely investigated the government investment in media as an advertisement – promotional information and public welfare advertisements. According to the Advertisement Board, the Government allocates Rs. 200 million rupees annually for print media and 80 million rupees for radio and television advertising. Additionally, 30 percent of all advertisements published or broadcasted in the media for promotional purposes come from the government, with 80 percent of that going to state-

run media. The major parties' media sister wing -- Press Union, Press Chautari, Press Center -- have bagged 8 hundred thousand rupees each. FNJ was given 1.45 million rupees as a grant/donation. Two Dalit journalist organizations i.e. Jagaran Media Center and National Association of Dalit Journalists have received 2 hundred 50 thousand rupees each. Total 9.8 million rupees were distributed in the year.

In the *Review of the Mass Media and Journalism in Nepal*, Jhabindra Bhusal, the Chief Administrative Officer at PCN, admits that policy, legal and instrumental reforms will be made for the promotion of press freedom and expression, and development of quality journalism (p. 61). Bimala Tumkhewa assesses inclusion from gender lens. As Dalits don't have proper inclusion and participation in any media outlet and state-owned media agencies and regulatory body, women have also the same sort of problem. She suggests, "To promote and protect their rights, it is necessary to mainstream the issues of women in poverty by orienting media workers on gender issues" (Media Year Book 2023/24, p. 183-185).

## **Conclusion and recommendation**

### ***Conclusion***

The overall status of Dalits in terms of physical and content representation in state-owned and private media is nominal, rare and mostly not at all. It shows the very miserable and pathetic condition of Dalit inclusion. The representation in the fourth organ of state is lesser than that of other state mechanism i.e. Executive, Judiciary and Legislature. However, there is an adequate constitutional and legal framework for Dalit inclusion in journalism and sensitivity in Dalit issues to include into the program, there is no-representation or very nominal representation of Dalits. Due to none or less representation of Dalits in journalism field and writing, the history of Dalits has been blurred, erased, negated, stigmatized, twisted and presented as a disgraceful manner.

Since UDHR guarantees the freedom of expression and the Constitution of Nepal ensures full press freedom, it is high time to make journalism and writing very inclusive and decision making positions are to fulfill with adequate inclusive action on the part of government and ensure inclusive staffing on the part of state-owned or private media houses. The PCN can apply the significant policy that no-media shall be renewed and tax-cleared if there is no proportional inclusion followed and applied in line with the constitutional and legal provision.

### ***Recommendation***

1. It is strongly recommended that the state-owned media organization i.e. *Gorkhapatra*, Nepal Television and Radio Nepal, RSS, PCN be inclusive in terms of physical representation and content representation of Dalits that allocate space, produce and on-air, broadcast and telecast through. For that purpose, the government of Nepal should amend or formulate the required laws aligning with the spirit of the constitutional and other legal framework.
2. Immediately form a multi-stakeholder research committee of 5-7 members at Ministry of Communication and Information Technology and assign them to carry out the rigorous and dedicated research of physical and content representation of Dalits.
3. Amend the policy, act and regulation that hinder the promotion and flourishing of media run by Dalits, providing the welfare advertisement which shall be amended as Daily 200, Weekly 25, Monthly 7, Bi-monthly 4 to be qualified for the application to PCN for classification purpose;
4. Allocate funding from FY 2083/84 to the Dalits-run print media, electronic - radio and television, and online media for their contribution and hard work in journalism field.

5. Organize training, exposure visits, journalism fellowship, writing symposium, anchoring training to Dalits for capacity enhancement and retaining them in journalism and writing field;
6. Do life and medical insurance of Dalit journalists, ensure their safe working environment, assigning it to do from respective district post office.
7. Provide laptop, computer, printer, camera for the Dalit-run media and follow inclusivity in distributing the prize and honor, include Dalits.

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