

# Print Media Coverage on Children's Issues

The Kathmandu Post | 3  
Friday, December 19, 2003

हिमालय टाइम्स

8 Rajdhani  
Saturday, 15 November

नेपाल समाचारपत्र

१२ गोरखापत्र २०६० साल पुस १४ गते सोमवार  
Monday, December 29, 2003

कान्तिपुर

स्पेसटाइम ९

THE HIMALAYAN TIMES, MOND



**A Report 2003**

**Matemalo Sanchar**

Prepared by:

Saurav Kiran Shrestha

# **Print Media Coverage on Children's Issues**

**A Report 2003**

---

**Hatemalo Sanchar**

**Prepared by:  
Saurav Kiran Shrestha**

# **Print Media Coverage on Children's Issues**

## **A Report**

2003

Prepared by:  
**Saurav Kiran Shrestha**

**Hatemalo Sanchar**

Prepared by: **Saurav Kiran Shrestha**  
Coordinated by: **Kushum Sharma/Pinky Bijayananda**  
Edited by: **Anita Shrestha/Tilak Prasad Pokharel**  
Documentation: **Nina Maharjan**

**700 copies / December 2003**

Published by

Hatemalo Sanchar  
**Kupondole, Lalitpur, Nepal**  
**Tel: 977-1-5547812**  
**Post Box: 682, Kathmandu**  
**Email: [info@hatemalo.org](mailto:info@hatemalo.org)**  
**[hatemalo@mail.com.np](mailto:hatemalo@mail.com.np)**  
**URL: [www.hatemalo.org](http://www.hatemalo.org)**

**Print Media Coverage on Children's Issues: 2003**

## **Acknowledgement**

I am grateful to all my colleagues at Hatemalo Sanchar for their helping hand in publication of the second report on media monitoring. This report would not have come out of the womb without their unceasing support and guidance.

I would like to extend sincere thanks to all — especially Nina Maharjan and BSW trainees from St. Xavier’s College, Maitighar — who voluntarily contributed their valuable time for documentation. I would like to thank Priti Shrestha, for her assistance in the designing of media monitoring tools for the study purpose.

I extend my special thanks to Pinky Bijayananda, Kusum Sharma and Gopi Krishna Shrestha for their sincere and efficient co-ordination. I equally thank Anita Shrestha and Tilak Prasad Pokharel who supported me in the recording and analysis of information during the report preparation.

Saurav Kiran Shrestha  
Program Manager  
Hatemalo Sanchar  
Lalitpur

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS	PAGE NO.
<b>CHAPTER I</b>	<b>1</b>
Background	1
Introduction	3
Objectives	6
Methodology	6
Operational definition	7
<b>CHAPTER II</b>	<b>8</b>
Newspaper wise findings	8
The Kathmandu Post: coverage	8
Kantipur: coverage	10
Rajdhani dainik:coverage	12
Samachar patra coverage	14
Space Time: coverage	16
Himalaya Times: coverage	18
Gorkhapatra:coverage	20
The Himalayan Times: coverage	22
<b>CHAPTER III</b>	<b>24</b>
Major findings and discussion	24
Coverage of children's issues	24
Priority given children issues under UNCRC	29
Overlooked issues	33
<b>CHAPTER IV</b>	<b>34</b>
Suggestions and recommendations	34
Limitations	<b>35</b>
Conclusion	36
Annex	38

---

## CHAPTER I

### **BACKGROUND:**

Hatemalo Sanchar is a social organisation with more than two decades of working experience in the field of child rights promotion through mass media, drawing its history from the Hatemalo Radio Programme, which has been on air since 1982. Expansion in different programmes like child friendly publications, Child Clubs, Child-to-Child Hatemalo Resource Centre, and Media Monitoring Programme are the significant developments of the organisation.

The significant role of media in all spheres of society is well recognised because of its power to influence on attitude and behaviour of the public. It also plays a key role in influencing the planning and policy designing on national and international levels. Like every other sector, it has to be acknowledged that media too has certain drawbacks, which, they often are not aware of due to numerous tasks they have to perform. Hatemalo believes that the drawbacks of the mass media can be overcome through regular critical analyses of contemporary trend of media especially in relation to the child development and child rights.

In this context, the need to study on co-relation between children and media, and its influence on society at large has been realised. Media Monitoring Programme needs to raise general consciousness on various child-related issues among mass media institutions, journalists and children so as to create child friendly mass media, which is an underlying principle of the monitoring.

Hatemalo Sanchar, being an ally of media and children, has been taking initiatives for Media Monitoring Programme from April 2002 in its endeavour to watch the media coverage. "Print Media Coverage on Children's Issues" prepared in 2002 was

completely an innovative initiation on part of Hatemalo. It was presented on January 28, 2003 (Magh 14, 2059) at a programme attended by representatives of social organisations and journalists from renowned mass media<sup>1</sup>. Acknowledging the feedback and suggestions drawn from the journalists and children, the second report of media monitoring is prepared with the improvement in its methodology.

Hence, this report has come with the advance findings based on developing methodology. The study team has prepared and analysed frequencies of print media coverage on children's issues under the four categories of child rights stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) – Right to Survival, Rights to Development, Right to Protection and Right to Participation.

---

<sup>1</sup> See Annex I for summary report of "Print Media Coverage on Children's Issues: A Report 2002

## INTRODUCTION:

Media plays a crucial role in disseminating information on pertinent issues through various means of media, which incorporate both print and electronic. Media is also important for creating awareness and raising public concern on pragmatic situations directly affecting the lives of the people.

The decade of 1990s has been inked as the remarkable period in the history with regard to the media development in Nepal, with the Nepalese media sector witnessing a fast-pace progress. By the end of 2002, altogether 3,378 newspapers had been registered in Nepal, which included 246 dailies, 1,163 weeklies, 240 fortnightlies, 986 monthlies, 360 quarterlies and others<sup>2</sup>. Likewise, more than 43 FM radio stations and over six television channels are in operation in Nepal. It is mainly due to the 1990's re-advent of democracy, which incorporated the right to access to information under the fundamental human rights.

With the development of media in Nepal, civil societies are greatly concerned with regard to the role and performance of media for the promotion and protection of human rights. A report of Institute of Human Rights Communication (IHRICON) – Nepal states that issue on armed conflict due to the Maoist insurgency has foremost coverage in the print media (39.155%). And issue on children (11.7%) and education (7.1%) are second and third most coverage in the print media respectively. IHRICON has analysed that the conflict has come to the top media priority not because of it being a “genuine social issue” but due to its unprecedented escalation.

---

<sup>2</sup> His Majesty's Government Ministry of Information and Communications, Department of Information "List of Newspaper Published form Nepal, Kathmandu-Based Foreign Press Representatives 2003"

Similarly, the media monitoring conducted by the Hatemalo Sanchar has revealed that among the children issues, organisational activities (23%) have been ranked with the highest coverage followed by education (21%), child labour (9%), effect of Maoist conflict (9%) and health (7%).

Since media is playing significant role in bringing children issues in the public as well as disseminating the related information, the civil society is slowly becoming concerned about the harms incurred by the media on children and their rights to information. It is appropriate to quote Hammarberg here:

*“Only one or two generations ago, very few children had ever seen images of someone being shot, knifed, blown up or raped in front of their bare eyes. Today, most children see such violence on the screen everyday, often in gruesome detail. The impact of this mass consumption of violent crime is apparently inspired by particular films. Today in printed or electronic media, we get to know of more violent activities. Though the intention of media could never be to inspire children for such activities, children, are by nature, imitating and curious, which, therefore leads children to commit such activities.”*

Considering the quote and recognising the positive role of media stated on the Article 17 of the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC):

*“State Parties recognise the importance function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health.”*

Especially, journalists, media and the civil society have challenging role to ensure UNCRC implementation, especially child rights to have views and to express them (Article 12), freedom of expression and access to the media (Article 13) and right to privacy (Article 16)

Thus, media needs to consider various aspects while publishing news and articles related to children so that media should not harm and violate child development and child rights. Thus media monitoring should be imperative for child rights promotion in media that could minimise possibility of media encroachment of child rights.

The second report has been prepared in an effort to shed light on the media coverage related to children on the backdrop of UNCRC, especially under the four categories of child rights – Right to Survival, Rights to Development, Right to Protection and Right to Participation.

The report is primarily based on the documentation of eight national daily newspapers in a period of nine months from January to September 2003. They are:

1. *The Kathmandu Post* (English)
2. *Kantipur* (Nepali)
3. *Rajdhani* (Nepali)
4. *Nepal Samacharpatra* (Nepali)
5. *Space Time* (Nepali)
6. *Himalaya Times* (Nepali)
7. *Gorkhapatra* (Nepali)
8. *The Himalayan Times* (English)

## **Objectives:**

The study aims to analyse the print media coverage on children issue on the basis of UNCRC. The specific objectives are to:

1. know the coverage of children issues
2. identify the "prioritised issues of children" as per the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
3. identify overlooked children issues in the newspapers
4. make suggestions for the print media

## **Methodology:**

The descriptive report is based on the collection of 4,553 news clippings, that is, news, news features/analyses, news/articles and the sole opinion of the writers (hereafter news/articles) based on children's issues. Documented news/articles during January to September 2003 from the aforementioned eight newspapers, six Nepali-language and two English-language newspapers, have been taken for primary data. All the news/articles are recorded in the media-monitoring table (see annex II).

Following the principles of UNCRC all the documented news/articles are categorised into four dependent variables – survival, development, protection and participation. The other independent variables are listed in annex III.

All the data and information documented are checked and edited for internal consistency. The statistical tools like diagrams, graphs, and charts are used for drawing inference and assuring the relation between the variables.

**Operational Definitions:**

**News/articles:** News/articles comprise all news, news features/analyse, news/articles and sole opinion of writers.

**Children's issues:** Any news/articles published in the newspapers regarding the children aged between 0-18 as categorisd below:

0-5

5-10

10-16

General-news without any age specification or age above 16 and below 18

**UNCRC:** The four major issues defined to understand the child rights under United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – development, protection, survival and participation.

## CHAPTER II

### FINDINGS

This chapter deals with the facts and findings collected from documentation of eight newspapers during January to September 2003. The findings of the news/articles are presented individually.

#### 1. *The Kathmandu Post* (TKP):

##### Coverage:

The study team collected 503 news/articles during the study period. Of the total, 14 per cent of the news/articles were published with supporting pictures.

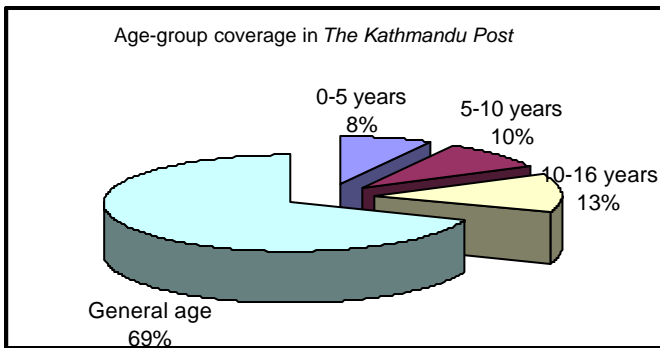


Figure: 1

Of the total, highest number of news/articles (28.6%) was published in the third page and 10.5 per cent of news/articles were published on the first page.

The figure reveals that the general age-group children's issues were reported in the news/articles followed by the age between 10-16.

## Priority given children's issues under CRC

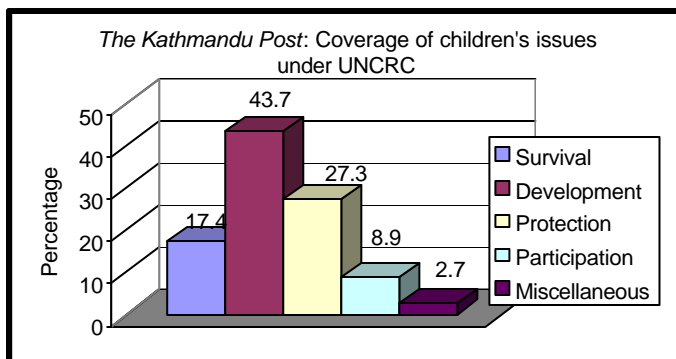


Figure: 2

*The Kathmandu Post* had brought out the children's news/articles on development issues with high priority, which comes around 43.7 per cent of the total. The issues of Protection, Survival, and Participation followed this.

Survival (n=87)		Development (n=218)		Protection (n=139)	
	Frequency		Frequency		Frequency
Health	55	Education	162	Armed Conflict	53
Accident	13	Child care home	15	Child labour	29
Natural calamities	11	Sports	11	Sex abuse	10
Death	4	Backward	11	Street children	6
				Orphan	6

**Table 1: Priority given issues on children**

The table reveals that maximum number of news/articles was published on education, followed by reporting on health and armed conflict (under Survival and Protection). The newspaper has the least coverage on Participation, that is, 45 (8.9 %). Among them, many of the news/articles were about children participating in programmes and activities like various competitions, workshops, rallies and creative works.

## 2. *Kantipur* (Ktp):

### Coverage

During the study period, 838 news/articles related to children were collected. Among them, seven per cent of the articles were published with supporting pictures.

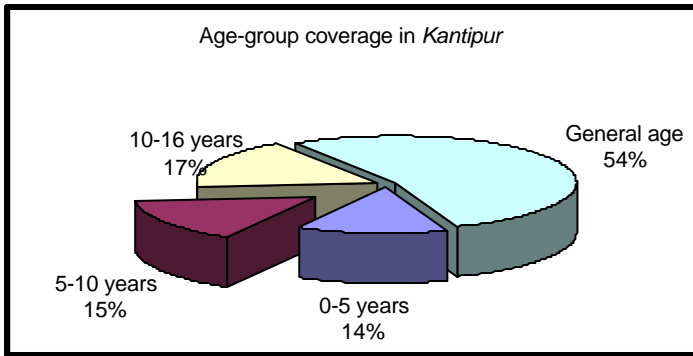


Figure: 3

General age group of children had highest coverage (54%) in the newspaper, followed by the age group of 10-16. Of the total, highest number of news/articles (15.3%) was published in its fifth page. Only eight per cent of news/articles was published in the first page of *Kantipur*.

## Priority given children's issues under UNCRC

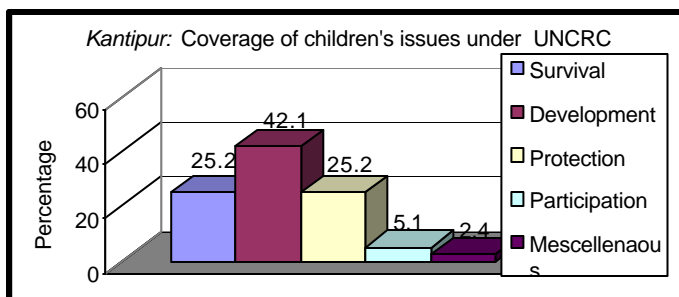


Figure: 4

*Kantipur* had published maximum number of developmental issues of children in its news/articles. The issues like Protection, Survival, and Participation have been trailed on the following table.

Survival (n=211)		Development (n=353)		Protection (n=211)	
	Frequency		Frequency		Frequency
Health	108	Education	255	Armed conflict	87
Accident	71	Child care home	25	Sex abuse	34
Death	13	Sports	29	Child labour	23
Natural calamities	10	Backward	20	Orphan	15

**Table 2: Priority given issues on children**

The table shows that the newspaper had the maximum reporting on health under Survival, education under Development and children in armed conflict under Protection. The study has found only 43 news/articles (5.1%) related to the Participation. Among them, greater part of the news/articles had information of children participating on programmes and activities like various competitions, workshops, rallies and creative works.

### 3. *Rajdhani* (Rjd):

#### Coverage

Altogether 659 news/articles were collected from *Rajdhani* out of which 9 per cent had supporting pictures.

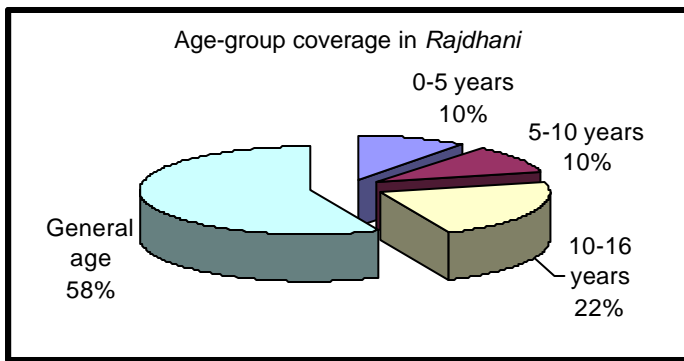


Figure: 5

General age-group of children had highest coverage (58%) in the newspaper, followed by the age-group of 10-16. Of the total, highest number of news/articles (21.3%) was published in the fourth page. Only 4.7 per cent of news/articles was published in its first page

## Priority given children’s issues under UNCRC

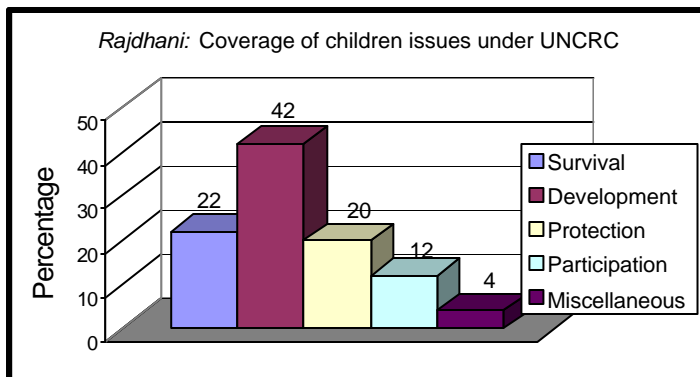


Figure: 6

The figure has revealed the fact that Developmental issues of children were published in greater number (42 per cent of the total), followed by the issues of Survival, Protection and Participation.

Survival (n=211)		Development (n=353)		Protection (n=211)	
	Frequency		Frequency		Frequency
Health	73	Education	198	Armed conflict	41
Accident	43	Backward	19	Child labour	31
Death	23	Disability	16	Sex abuse	26
Infant morality	10	Award	13	Violence against Children	8

**Table 3: Priority given issues on children**

The table shows that education followed by health and news/articles on armed conflict was featured as the major coverage in the newspaper. The reported cases of accident, child labour, sex abuse were also published in greater number. Of the total, 12 per cent of the news/articles are found under the Participation, covering on various competition, training and workshop for the children.

#### 4. *Samacharpatra* (Smp):

##### Coverage

A total of 533 news/articles related to children were found during the study period, out of total 12 per cent of the articles were published with supporting pictures.

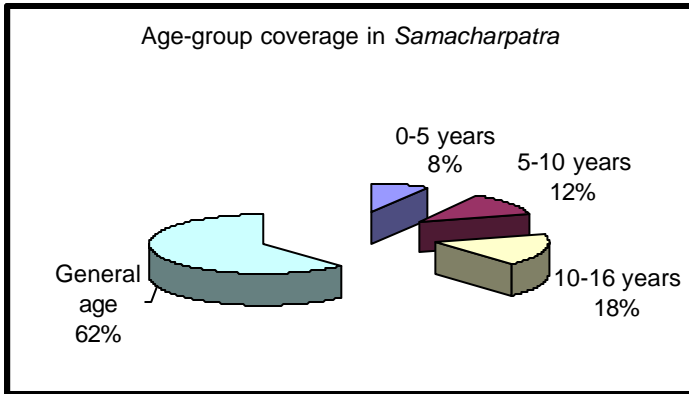


Figure: 7

The sixth page of *Samachapatra* published the news/articles in higher (21%) frequency. Only 5.2 per cent were published in the first page. Figure 7 demonstrates that the news about general age-group children were reported in majority (62%).

### Priority given children’s issues under CRC

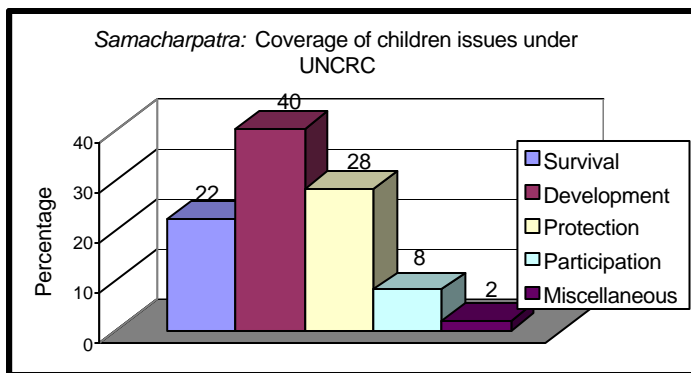


Figure: 8

The figure shows that a Developmental issue of children preceded the news/articles followed by the issues of Protection, Survival, and Participation (see Figure 8).

Survival (n=211)		Development (n=353)		Protection (n=211)	
	Frequency		Frequency		Frequency
Health	78	Education	130	Armed conflict	47
Accident	20	Sports	25	Child labour	24
Death	9	Backward	15	Sex abuse	20
Natural calamities	6	Award	13	Child trafficking	11
		Child care home	13		

**Table 4: Priority given issues on children**

In this newspaper, education has received the highest coverage, followed by health and armed conflict under Development, Survival, and Protection respectively. Of the total, 8 per cent of the news/articles are found under the Participation, in which they are about various competitions, workshops and rallies.

## 5. *Space Time* (SpT):

### Coverage

The study team collected 829 news/articles during the study period. Of the total, five per cent of the news/articles were found with supporting pictures.

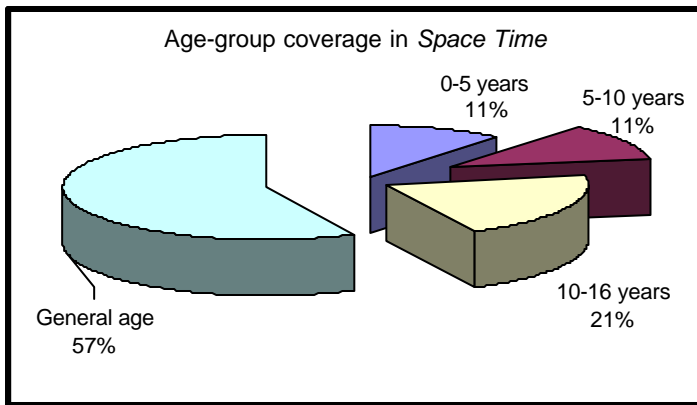


Figure: 9

General age group of children has highest coverage (57%) in the newspaper, followed by the age group of 10-16. Of the total, highest number of news/articles (20.3%) was published in its fourth page. Only six per cent of news/articles was published in its first page.

## Priority given children's issues under UNCRC

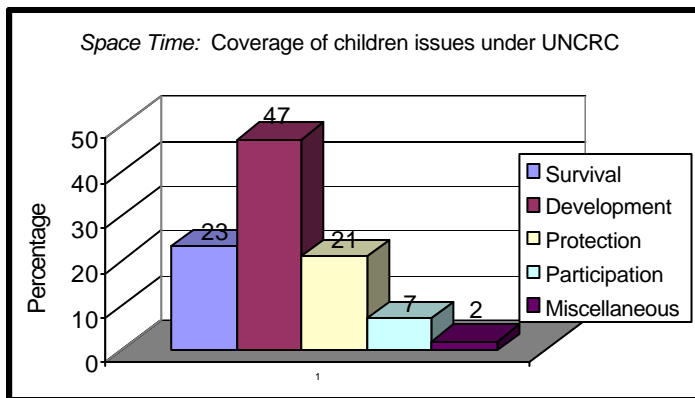


Figure: 10

In this newspaper, Developmental issues of children were in top priority (47% of total news/articles), followed by the issues of Survival, Protection, and Participation.

Survival (n=211)		Development (n=353)		Protection (n=211)	
	<i>Frequency</i>		<i>Frequency</i>		<i>Frequency</i>
Health	132	Education	263	Conflict	42
Accident	33	Backward	29	Child labour	40
Death	10	Sports	17	Sex abuse	25
Natural calamities	8	Child care home	14	Child rights and law	22

**Table 5: Priority given issues on children**

The table shows that education had succeeded other news/articles. The news/articles on health and conflict were also published in higher frequency. Of the total, 7.4 per cent of the news/articles are found under the Participation, which were about various competitions, workshops, rallies and creative works.

## 6. *Himalaya Times* (HT):

### Coverage

Within the study period, 356 news/articles related to children were collected. Out of the total, 8.4 per cent news/articles were published with supporting pictures.

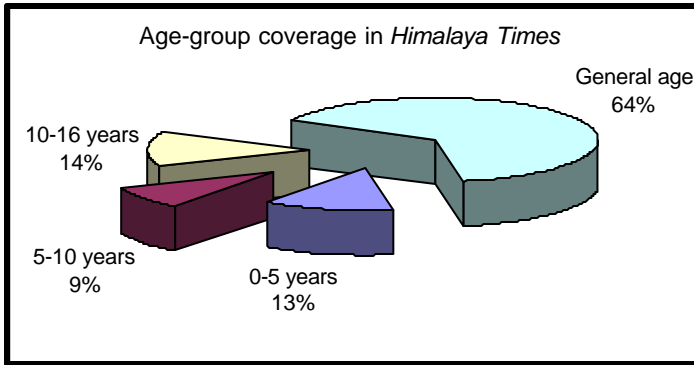


Figure: 11

General age group of children had highest coverage (64%) in the newspaper, followed by the age group of 10-16. Of the total, highest number of news/articles (36.7%) was published in its third page. Of the total, 10 per cent of news/articles was published on its first page.

## Priority given children's issues under UNCRC

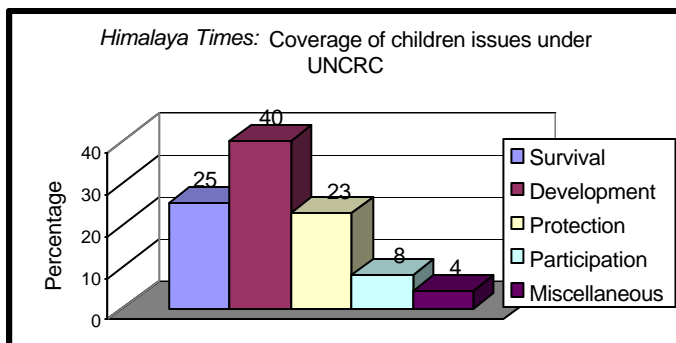


Figure: 12

*Himalaya Times* also had higher coverage (40%) of the news/articles in Developmental issue of children, followed by the issues of Survival, Protection and Participation.

Survival (n=211)		Development (n=353)		Protection (n=211)	
	Frequency		Frequency		Frequency
Health	47	Education	93	Conflict	26
Accident	25	Child care home	13	Child labour	20
Death	7	Backward	11	Sex abuse	11
Natural calamities	5	Disability	8	Child trafficking	5

**Table 6: Priority given issues on children**

In this newspaper, issue of health under Survival, education under Development and issues of armed conflict under Protection were published in maximum number. Of the total, eight per cent of news/articles are found under the Participation, in which they are about various competitions, workshops, rallies and creative works.

## 7. Gorkhapatra (Gkp)

### Coverage

During the study period, a total of 432 news/articles were collected in which 9.7 per cent of them contained supporting pictures.

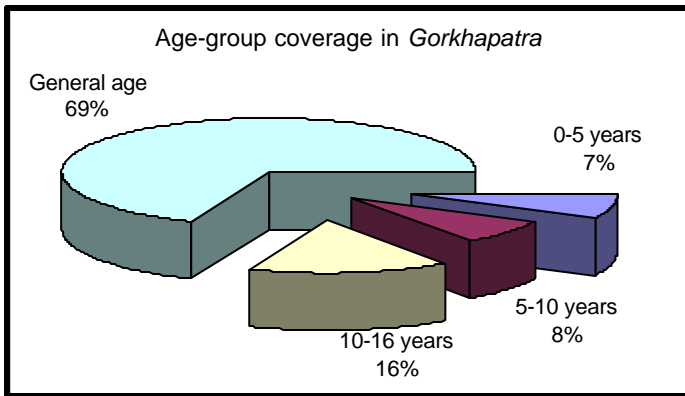


Figure: 13

General age group of children has the highest coverage (69%) in the newspaper, followed by the age group of 10-16. Of the total, highest number of news/articles (17.6%) was published in its fourth page. Only eight per cent of the news/articles was published in its first page.

## Priority given children’s issues under UNCRC

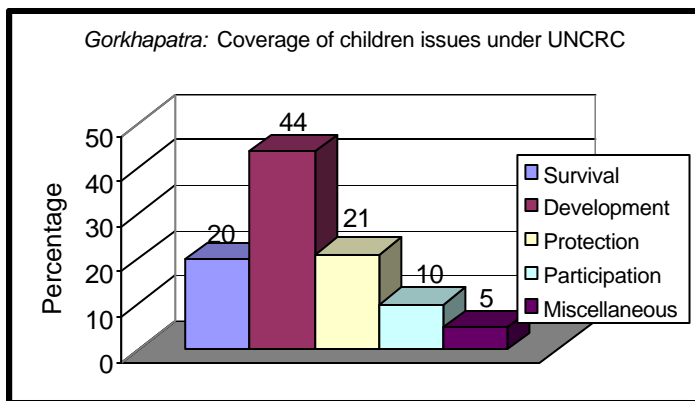


Figure: 14

Developmental issues of children is on the topmost priority (44% of total news/articles), followed by the issues of Protection, Survival and participation.

Survival (n=211)		Development (n=353)		Protection (n=211)	
	Frequency		Frequency		Frequency
Health	54	Education	114	Child labour	24
Accident	19	Child care home	13	Conflict	18
Natural calamities	10	Sports	15	Street children	13
Death	10	Backward	15	Violence against children	10

**Table 7: Priority given issues on children**

In this newspaper, topmost priority was given to health issues under Survival, educational issues under Development and child labour issues under Protection. Of the total, 10.4 per cent of the news/articles are found under the Participation, which were about various competitions, involvement of children in awareness campaigns on environment protection and clubs activities for peace.

## 8. *The Himalayan Times* (THT):

### Coverage

A total of 404 news/articles were collected during the study period. Of the total, 14 per cent of the news/articles were published with supporting pictures.

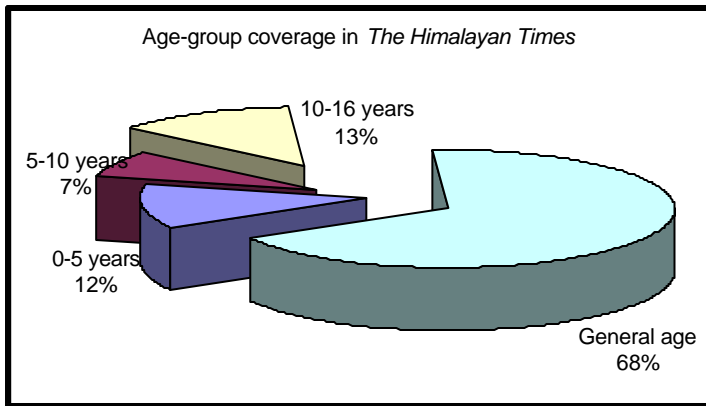


Figure: 15

General age group of children got the highest coverage (68%) in the newspaper, followed by the age group of 10-16. Of the total, highest number of news/articles (30.6%) was published in its fourth page. Only 9.4 per cent of news/articles was published in its first page.

## Priority given children’s issues under UNCRC

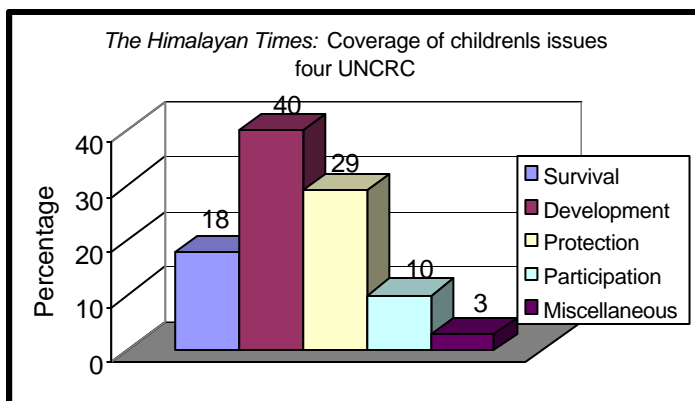


Figure: 16

*The Himalayan Times* had a majority of coverage in Developmental issues of children (40% of total news/articles) followed by the issues of Protection, Survival and participation.

Survival (n=211)		Development (n=353)		Protection (n=211)	
	Frequency		Frequency		Frequency
Health	36	Education	120	Conflict	22
Accident	23	Award	8	Sex abuse	20
Natural calamities	5	Backward	5	Child labour	13
Death	4	Early childhood development	4	Child trafficking	11

**Table 8: Priority given issues on children**

The table shows that health issues under Survival, educational issues under Development and children in armed conflict issues under Protection were at the topmost. Of the total, 10.3 per cent of the news/articles are found under the Participation, which were about various competitions, workshops, creative works, exhibitions and students’ participation in campaigns for peace.

CHAPTER III

**MAJOR FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter briefly reviews and discusses the general findings. Due to the descriptive design of the study, given categories have varied frequencies. Therefore each newspaper was assessed individually not comparatively.

**Coverage of children's issues**

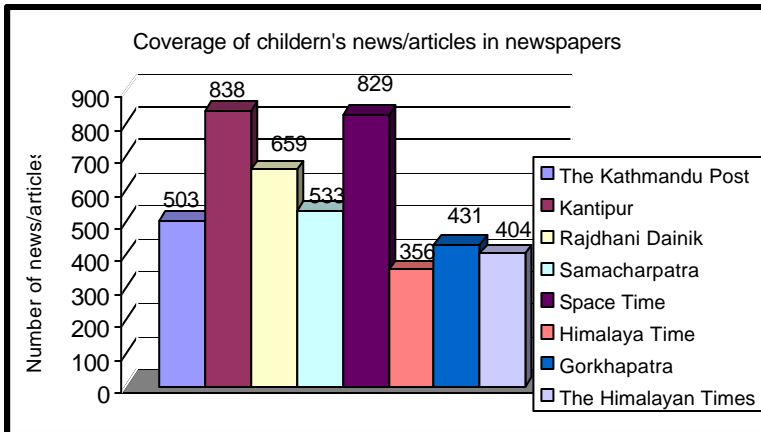


Figure: 17

A total of 4,553 news/articles were documented and analysed for the study purpose, which were collected during a period of nine months starting from January to September 2003.

The figure illustrates that *Kantipur* has been accounted for 18.4 per cent of the total news/articles collected on children's issues, followed by *Space Time* (18.2%) and *Rajdhani* (14.7%). The finding does not lead to the conclusion that *Kantipur* has the highest coverage due to varied number of pages published in each newspaper each day, which ranged from 8-24 pages.

Page-wise news/article coverage

Page	T K P (n=503)	Ktp (n=838)	Rjd (n=659)	Smp (n=533)	Sp T (n=829)	HT (n=356)	Gkp (n=431)	THT (n=404)	Total
1	53	68	31	28	49	37	34	38	338
2	72	100	98	84	133	87	43	6	623
3	<b>144</b>	107	134	102	101	<b>131</b>	53	<b>124</b>	896
4	33	110	<b>141</b>	9	153	6	5	107	564
5	70	<b>129</b>	22	19	36	25	9	42	352
6	35	15	4	<b>112</b>	21	5	64	23	279
7	11	27	15	88	29	12	62	21	265
8	27	105	43	18	24	52	15	5	289
9	18	5	11	3	<b>168</b>		5	9	219
10	7	5	13	11	19	1	45	7	108
11	12	11	13	24	1		16	12	89
12	21	15	131	35	94		<b>76</b>	8	380

Note: The table does not represent total number (4553) of news/articles. Only the pages from 1 to 12 are included for generalisation.

**Table 9 : Page wise news/article coverage**

The table shows that out of the total news/articles on children's issues, the highest number (19.7%) was published in the third page. It reveals that almost all newspapers allot the third page for the publication of the children's issues, which is followed by the second and forth pages respectively. Individually, *The Kathmandu Post*, *Himalaya Times* and *The Himalayan Times* publish most of the children's news/articles on the third page.

Most of the children-related news/articles published on the third page were about the Development issues, followed by Protection and Survival. Participation issue received the least coverage in each newspaper.

The finding shows that the news/articles of children are published in regular manner with the maximum reporting in the inside pages. The fact cannot be ruled out that the issues have received the coverage on the first page too though not regularly. Only 7.4 per cent of the total news/articles is covered on the first page. The first page usually covered the news on education/development, and protection. The Survival and Participation had shared minimum coverage.

Supporting picture of news/articles

No. of Pictures	T K P (n=503)	Ktp (n=838)	Rjd (n=659)	Smp (n=533)	Sp T (n=829)	HT (n=356)	Gkp (n=431)	THT (n=404)	Total
1	68	57	33	61	38	28	40	46	371
2	2	2	16	3	4	1	2	7	37
3		2	6	1					9
4		1	3			1		4	9
5			1						1
Total	70	62	59	65	42	30	42	57	427

**Table 10: Number of supporting picture for articles in newspaper**

The study has found very less number of news/articles with supporting pictures. A total of 427 news/articles were found with pictures, which makes up only 9.8 per cent of the total 4,553 news/articles. And most of them (371) had single picture along with the text.

Out of 503 news/articles published by *The Kathmandu Post* during the study period, 70 were found with pictures, ranking the highest among all the newspapers taken for the study purpose (see Table: 10).

It is already implicit that the frequencies of news/articles published on the third page of most of the newspapers are the highest. In this reference, the supporting pictures used on the page were largely about Protection (armed conflict, drugs, orphan, child labour), followed by Development (SLC award, education, culture), Participation (young talents, competition) and Survival (news of children requesting for financial aid for medical treatment).

Age group coverage in the newspapers

The research team has found that majority of the news/articles (61%) have addressed news and issues of general age group children, which is followed by age group of 10-16.

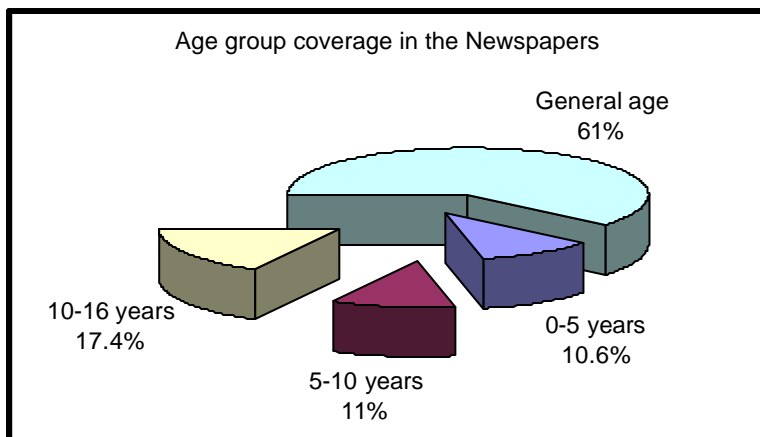


Figure: 18

Figure 18 shows that almost all newspapers have general pattern of publishing news/articles in response to the age group. The table No: 11 (below) shows that the flow of news/articles is in the ascending order from ‘0-5 age’ to ‘general age’ groups.

Age group	TKP	Ktp	Rjd	Smp	SpT	HT	Gkp	THT
0-5 years	41	114	69	45	89	46	32	49
5-10 years	49	129	69	65	94	31	34	29
10-16 years	65	143	148	95	171	49	68	52
General age	348	452	373	328	475	230	297	274
Total	503	838	659	533	829	356	431	404

**Table 11: Newspaper wise media coverage in response of age group**

The study has found that child issues under Survival are highly published in 0-5-age group including immunization, accident, and death followed by early childhood development and missing children.

Location-wise news/articles coverage on children's issues

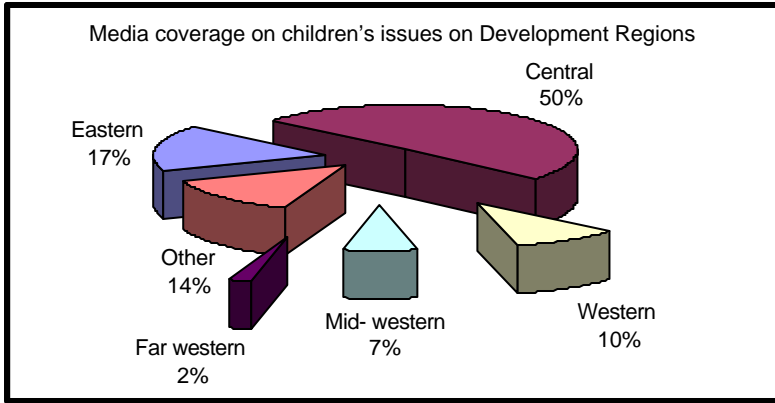


Figure: 19

Significantly high number of children-related issues carried by the sample newspapers were from the Central Development Region of the country (which also has the national capital city Kathmandu) – that is, 2,275 out of the total, which is followed by Eastern and Western Development Regions. Hence, the study has revealed that the newspapers have carried out the least coverage on children's issues from the western parts of the country, accounting only 90 news/articles from the Far-western region. Fourteen per cent of "Other" includes national (without specific location) and international issues (Figure 19).

District-wise coverage on children's issues

Kathmandu has been ranked on the top with the highest number of news/articles (27%). Other districts following Kathmandu have relatively very low coverage with only 3.2 per cent of Sunsari, 2.5 per cent of Morang and 2.1 per cent of Bhaktapur. The newspapers had covered the news/articles of 73 districts leaving Manag and Mustang – the two least developed districts. The news of 42 districts did not even cover up 1 per cent of the total coverage. (See Annex: 4)

## Priority given children’s issues under UNCRC

The study has found that, almost all daily newspapers have similar kind of media coverage on children’s issues under the four categories of the UNCRC. None of the issues were left out by any newspaper.

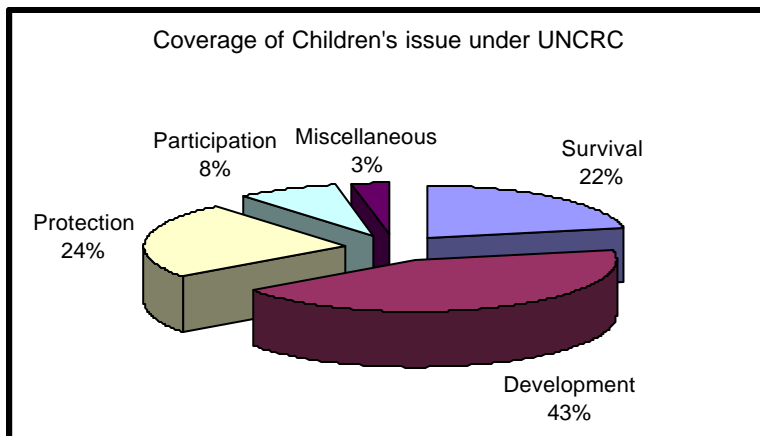


Figure: 20

Figure 20 reveals that the Development issues were given the highest priority while reporting by all the sample newspapers. Out of the total, highest number of news/article (43%) was found under Development issues followed by 24 per cent of reporting under the issue of Protection, 22 per cent in Survival, and the least (8%) in Participation.

Issues	TKP	Ktp	Rjd	Smp	SpT	HT	Gkp	THT
Survival	87	211	148	117	189	89	85	73
Development	220	353	278	214	389	143	189	161
Protection	137	211	132	149	177	80	91	116
Participation	45	43	81	43	62	29	45	42
Miscellaneous	14	20	20	10	12	15	21	12
Total	503	838	659	533	829	356	431	404

**Table 12: Priority given issues**

The study has found that almost all the newspapers have similar coverage priority on children's issues. Under the title of Survival, Development, Protection and Participation, following issues are briefly discussed below:

### **Survival**

Out of the total, 999 (22%) news/articles were about issues of Survival while 583 (12.8%) were about health issues, followed by issues of accident (242), death (80) and natural calamities (55).

The health news/articles usually contained of seasonal diseases, stories of children in need of financial aid for their medical treatment. The news of HIV/AIDS, measles, polio, Vitamin 'A', leprosy, health camps and the children born with abnormalities (conjoined twins and its follow up news) were also reported in the news/articles.

The cases of death or injury due to mishaps like road accident, electrocution, burning, drowning were reported under accident. The news about accident comprised 5.4 per cent of the total. The crime committed against children by oneself or others leading to death including suicide is included under the title "death". Usually, cases of infanticide and child murder by their parents were reported under this subject.

Natural calamities like landslide, earthquake, hailstorm, flood, and its toll on the children were recorded under natural calamity.

### **Development**

Out of the total, 1,947 (43%) news/articles were about issues of Development. Out of 1,947, significant number (1,365) of those

news/articles was on education, followed by issues of marginalised/backward children (125), children and sports (97) and child care home (93).

The news/articles of community schools, SLC, scholarships provided to poor and backward children, schools' infrastructure, donation provided for the schools, education curricula were reported under education. The news of closure of schools due to unidentified diseases gripping students, students' protests mostly called by the All Nepal National Independent Students' Union-Revolutionary (ANNISU-R), and Maoist threat to educational development had received a high score in news/articles reporting.

The news on dalit and Kamaiya children, Bote, Musahar, Doom, Chepang, scholarships and quota, grants provided and the discrimination from education are reported under the backward section.

Inter-school sports programmes have been featured as regular coverage in the newspapers. Young talents and achievers, selection of child athletes is also included. These news/articles are enlisted as children and sports in the report.

The stories of the children in orphanage, inauguration, situational reporting of orphanage are reported under childcare homes.

## **Protection**

Out of the total, 1,093 (24%) news/articles were about issues of Protection in which a meagre majority (336) of those news/articles were of armed conflict. It is followed by issues of child labour (204) and sexual abuse (146).

The news of armed conflict focusing on “children as a zone of peace” were published under armed conflict with appeals and rallies against armed conflict, killings and abduction of children, children in Maoist cadet, closure of schools owing to Maoist threat, news for call on peaceful resolution of conflict.

The stories of domestic child workers tortured by landlords, children working to meet their ends (like child hawkers), those working for education, and situation of child labour are reported under child labour/protection.

The cases of rape and murder, incest of young children, sexual exploitation of the children in schools and working place, the rehabilitation of raped children are published frequently.

### **Participation**

Out of the total, only 390 (8%) news/articles related to the Participation were found during the study period. Though it was categorised under Participation, very few of those news/articles were best qualified to be listed under this category. Among them, many of the news/articles had information on children participating on programmes and activities. The activities like music, debate, painting/drawing, quiz, and poem/story drama were featured under this category. Other activities included child clubs activities especially for peace, against child marriage, for environment protection. Likewise, children’s camp, rallies, creative children and works campaign and children’s day celebrations were made the subject of the Participation in the news/articles.

**Overlooked Issues:**

<b>Survival</b>	<b>Development</b>	<b>Protection</b>	<b>Participation</b>
Child mortality	Adoption	Abduction	Child club activities
Child suicide	Birth registration	Child trafficking	Children's creativity
HIV/AIDS	Child Marriage	Children in prison	Participation in programmes
Infant mortality	Children park	Corporal punishment	
	Communication/ media	Crime by children	
	Culture	Drug abuse	
	Disability	Law and rights related to children	
	Early childhood development	Missing children	
	Entertainment	Orphan	
	Environment	Refugee	
	Gender discrimination	Social discrimination	
		Street Children	
		Violence against children	

**Table 13: Overlooked issues**

It is an irony that the aforementioned issues of children (Table: 13), though are of high importance directly affecting children's life, have received less than 1 per cent coverage.

## CHAPTER IV

### **SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATION:**

The study has revealed substantial increment in the print media coverage on children's issues in comparison to the 2002 report. It is also felt that print media seem to be concerned more about the issue and are giving priority to the children's issues. In this regard, suggestion and recommendation are made on the basis of the study especially for responsible print media in order to bring positive changes in the life of children and/or preventing the frequency of untoward incidents largely affecting the children.

- The findings shows the least reporting of the news/articles about the children and the issues related to age group 0-5. The news of immunisation, infant mortality, and early childhood development are reported but the findings show a need of increment in the publication of such news.
- Newspapers should give high-frequency coverage on children's issues on the front page
- The data shows a need of increase in supporting pictures. Keeping in view the fact that the pictures have a psychological impact on children's learning, the number of picture needs to be increased in the newspapers.
- The newspaper converge is largely urban-centric, which is sidelining many serious issues of the faraway and remote places such as the Mid-western and the Far-western Development Regions. However, the newspaper reporting has equally undermined the issues of rural parts of other development regions as well.
- The general news/article coverage in the newspapers is of similar pattern, with more focus on three issues – health, education and armed conflict. But other serious issues,

which are now adversely affecting the lives of the children, have not been featured in the newspapers.

- Issues of child participation have received the least coverage in the newspapers. Even those issues of child participation which were covered by the newspapers were of meagre importance, such as participation in political activities. But it is high time the print media report about the children's participation in the decision-making processes and other activities helping in their physical and intellectual.
- Many issues, though are of high important vis-à-vis the children's lives (see Table 13), have been overlooked by the media. This has resulted in severe adverse affect on the lives of the children. Hence, the print media needs to give higher importance to these overlooked issues.

### **LIMITATIONS:**

- Photo captions were not taken as data for the study
- Special children sections published by various newspapers on some specific days were not included in documentation
- Limited numbers of newspapers were used as source of data
- Study is strictly based in the coverage of the collected data during nine months which may not be totally conclusive and relevant to compare in the context of current situation
- Constraint of time, human and monetary resources
- Methodological limitations
- Chances of any news/articles being missed or misplaced while documentation
- The page-wise coverage of the children's issues may not be identical in all sample newspapers as there are variations in the page numbers and page categorisations.

## **CONCLUSION:**

Media has emerged as the most important tool of change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and it has become a subject of concern for all. It can make decisive impact in the local, national as well as the international fronts. Hence, the media coverage on the issues of children who are the citizens of today reserves significant importance.

Media's importance lies mainly on its potential to disseminate information and knowledge in the public mass, making large impact. With the increase in the number of media houses, the print media coverage on children's issues has increased in frequency after the re-advent of democracy in 1990; but it has failed to address the sentiments of the children by failing to recognise many pertinent child rights issues (including those mentioned in Table 13).

Media coverage on children's issues have been largely urban-centric in a country where more than three quarters of the children live in villages, away from facilities and other modernities. Hence, such a coverage, even if it is highly outstanding, cannot bring positive impact on the children. Such an unpleasant media trend is shown by the study, where only 2 per cent of the total coverage was from the Far-western Region.

Experts have often warned that Nepal's media bazaar lacks investigative journalism, which has of course negative impact in covering the children's issues as well. Hence, the media as a whole should mull over how to incorporate all major children's issues from all geographic regions so that it really can make some desired impacts.

Many serious issues like (armed) conflict, sex abuse and death have received sound print media coverage. But they have remained “mere coverage”. No assessment has been done about what kind of impact it has made on children. It has not well addressed the issue about how to prevent such social evils. Hence, the media itself should be more child-sensitive while reporting conflict and violence. Likewise, the civil society and the government on the other hand, should be able to create a kind of awareness (media literacy) among the children about the importance and use of media in the everyday life.

However, it should be taken in the positive note about the increment of the media coverage on children’s issues in the recent years and it should go on and on. While reporting, media should always keep in mind about “Putting Children in the Right”.

*Annex I*

**Print Media Coverage on Children's Issues: A Report 2002**

Since the re-advent of democracy in Nepal in 1990, the uses of media have been intense in every aspect of social, political and economical development. Media also play a major role in the promotion of children's development.

From this perspective, the Nepal Press Council, Federation of the Nepalese Journalists, Media Line, with the support of the ILO (International Labour Organisation), formulated a Child News Code of Conduct in 2002. However, Hatemalo Sanchar, a Nepali organization working for child rights promotion, believes that merely formulating the Code is not sufficient for the media development for children. We therefore initiated a program of media monitoring beginning in 2002 to watch media in more scientific and professional ways. This program aims to publish regular reports on information and issues regarding children covered by the media. The first study results was released in December 2002.<sup>1</sup>

**Objectives and Method**

The general objective of the study is to analyse the coverage of children's issues in the print media and to determine the type of information flow concerning children. Another objective is to contribute to the field of children and media. Specific aims are to:

- learn which children's issues are published most frequently in the print media
- determine the "priority issues on children" in each national daily paper
- identify overlooked children's issues that should be advocated
- Make suggestions to the print media.

The study is based on all clippings of children's issues – a total of 999 clippings – from eight national daily newspapers during the first three months of the Nepali calendar (i.e., Baisakh to Ashar 2059, corresponding with a start in April 2002). Six newspapers are Nepali and two are English. The clippings consist of news, news features/analyses, news articles, and the opinions of writers, hereafter comprehensively called news/news articles.

### **A Few Findings and Discussion**

Child issues had the highest coverage in *The Himalayan Times* (English), followed by *Gorkhapatra* (Nepali) and *Rajdhani* (Nepali). In total, the five most covered issues were 'organizational activities' (23% of the clippings), 'education' (21%), 'Maoist activities' (9%), 'child labour' (9%), and 'health' (7%).

- *Organisational activities* were, thus, an issue covered in all the newspapers on a large scale. However, this news was primarily descriptive in nature and concerned topics such as training, workshops and seminars. Reporting also seems to be conducted according to these organisations' wishes. The information appears to be limited to only what is shown rather than including what is hidden. The civic society would have benefited more from investigative journalism. Further, if follow-ups on the impact of the organizational activities on children had been reflected, the coverage of this issue would be genuine in the true sense of the word.
- *Education* was also a widely covered issue in all newspapers, often related to subjects such as construction of schools, book distribution and scholarships. However, there is need to publish more news/news articles on policies and strategies of education, as well as to address the education problems generally, instead of focusing solely on specific cases.

- The issue of *Effects of Maoists on children* dealt with, among other things, deaths of children, unavailability of health services, and attacks on schools and children's institutions due to Maoist insurgency. Similarly, there was critical news on misuse of children in war, etc., by the Maoists. However, the news published was mainly statistical, providing the numbers of children affected. Much less emphasis was put on the adverse impact on children's physical and psychological well being.
- The issue of *Child labour* primarily covered domestic workers, petty shopkeepers, newspaper sellers and child workers in stone quarries. Other aspects of child labour such as child trafficking, child prostitution, child pornography and other of these worst forms of child labour need to be published more frequently.
- Regarding *Health*, the study found that vitamin A capsules, polio and HIV/AIDS were the most frequently published topics. Additionally, news/news articles dealt primarily with personal cases. However, other major health problems in our country were ignored, such as dysentery, diarrhoea, maternal mortality, child mortality, early childhood development, problems of malnutrition and communicable diseases.

Issues published only 1-4 times in a newspaper during the three-month period were regarded as *Overlooked issues* and those published 5-8 times as *Less reported issues*. For example, drug abuse, birth registration, children's creativity and child trafficking were overlooked issues in all eight newspapers. Further, several newspapers overlooked disability, international news and child abuse.

### **Suggestions and Recommendations**

As newspapers have always played a fundamental role in disseminating news and information and in creating public

awareness, the study team came up with the following recommendations (here summarised):

1. Overlooked child issues should be given more priority, and there may be many other child issues and problems that should be identified and acknowledged.
2. Rather than focusing on occasional news, the regular flow of news and analyses on child-related issues should be given prominence.
3. Child-related news/news articles should be more analytical and solution-oriented.
4. The international news covers primarily crime/violent activities committed by and against children. This news should be oriented more toward developmental and creative activities that could serve as good examples to inspire readers.
5. News/news articles on organizational activities ought to provide more relevant, analytical information about the activities' impact on children's lives.
6. Newspapers need to pay special attention to disabled and underprivileged children and their development.
7. Child issues should be given more priority within the newspaper, for example, by placing news related to children on the front page.
8. Newspapers should give much more coverage to child rights issues. News/news articles need to treat issues such as children's rights to participation and decision-making, children as citizens of the civic society, children's right to freedom of expression, children's right to recreation, the Global Movement for Children, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN General Assembly Special Session, peace for children, and gender equality.

*Note: The Summary has excerpted from "News From ICCVOS", The UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media, 2003, Volume 1, Nordicom, Goteborg University, Sweden.*

*Annex II*

**Media Monitoring Table**

Newspaper

Duration

Overall analysis				Content analysis			
SN	Page	Picture	Size	Topic	Age group	Location	Basis

*Annex III*

News/articles related to children issues were categorized under following headings (CRC Principles):

<b>Survival</b>	<b>Development</b>	<b>Protection</b>	<b>Participation</b>
Accident	Adoption	Abduction	Child club activities
Health	Award	Child labour	Children's creativity
HIV	Backward	Child trafficking	Participation in programmes
Death (due to crime)	Birth registration	Armed conflict	
Infant mortality	Child care home	Children in prison	
Natural calamities	Child Marriage	Corporal punishment	
	Children park	Crime by children	
	Communication/ media	Drug abuse	
	Culture	Law and rights related to children	
	Disability	Missing children	
	Early childhood development	Orphan	
	Education	Refugee	
	Entertainment	Sexual abuse	
	Environment	Social discrimination	
	Gender discrimination	Street Children	
	Sport	Violence against children	

Annex IV

District	KTP	Ktp	Rjd	Smp	SpT	HT	Gkp	THT	Total
Achham	1	4			1				6
Arghakhanchi				3					3
Baglung	3	8	16	2	6	3	3	3	44
Baitadi		3			1		3		7
Bajhang			1						1
Bajura			7			1			8
Banke	9	5	11	10	6	4	10	3	58
Bara	7	14	17	2	42	5	2		89
Bardiya	4	12	3	1	4		1	2	27
Bhaktapur	6	15	5	8	27	9	17	10	97
Bhojpur	3	9	3	1	10	4	4	1	35
Chitwan	3	9	7	10	3	1	8	4	45
Dadheldhura	2	6	4	6	7	2			27
Dailekh	4	6	6		1				17
Dang	3	25	26	3	23	1	7	2	90
Darchula			1		1				2
Dhading	3	16	4	12	20	4	1	2	62
Dhankuta		3	3	2	1		2	1	12
Dhanusha	4	5	3	5	14	7	3	1	42
Dolkha	5	9	9	10	19	5	3	1	61
Dolpa	1	4					1		6
Doti		4	2		1		1		8
Gorkha	3	11	1	1	6	1	2	1	26
Gulmi			4	1	1		3		9
Humla	2	4	3		2		1		12
Ilam	1	11	5		21	4	4	3	49
Jajarkot			4	2	5		1		12
Jhapa	7	17	6	22	12	6	4	3	77
Jumla		5					1		6
Kailali	4	10	1	2			2		19
Kalikot		5	1		4				10
Kanchanpur			4		7	1			12
Kapilvastu	4	8	20	7	2	3	5	2	51
Kaski	9	6	7	6	5	7	7	3	50
Kathmandu	180	194	152	161	163	134	123	125	1232
Kavrepalanchowk		4	11	3	12	5	7	2	44
Khotang	5	3		1					9

## A Report 2003

---

Lalitpur	10	14	10	5	13	6	17	14	89
Lamjung		3	6	1	7	1	3		21
Mahottari	4	4	12	3	13	9	3		48
Makwanpur	7	32	13	22	14		5	2	95
Manang									0
Morang	8	15	15	26	22	8	14	4	112
Mugu			1						1
Mustang									0
Myagdi	2	9	5	3	2	1	1	1	24
Nawalparasi	3	11	10	4	5	2	11	2	48
Nuwakot	8	8	8	14	14	2	1	5	60
Okhaldhunga	1	4							5
Palpa	2	19	8	2	15	1	2	3	52
Panchther	1	7	6	2	23	1	3		43
Parbat	4	15	1	3	6	10	10		49
Parsa	3	2	12	7	3	22	7	4	60
Pyuthan		1	4	2	2		1	1	11
Ramechhap	2	13	15	7	25	1	12	2	77
Rasuwa					1	1			2
Rautahat	5	14	4	2	5	6	5	1	42
Rolpa	1	2	1		1				5
Rukum		2	4	6				1	13
Rupandehi	1		1	5				1	8
Salyan	5	11	7		7				30
Sankhuwasava		3		1	5				9
Saptari		10	14	5	16	3	3	7	58
Sarlahi		9	8	3	8	1	7	1	37
Sindhuli	4	15	8	4	6	5	6		48
Sindhupalchowk	4	10	10	8	7	3	3		45
Siraha	6	17	11	8	11	7	5	6	71
Solukhumbu								1	1
Sunsari	3	21	13	31	36	17	19	1	141
Surkhet	4	4	6	2	9	2	3	2	32
Syangja		9	1	1		1	5		17
Tanahu	7	9	7	8	17	2	3	5	58
Taplejung	3	13	5	2	19	2	3	5	52
Tehrathum	3	7	2	1	4	1	3	2	23
Udayapur		19	9	5	14	4	10	1	62

### **Child News-Code of Conduct**

1. Media should not promote the information that hinders and make negative impact on children development.
2. Children should be motivated to speak truth without giving pressure and lure.
3. News of the survivor child should be presented concerning not to further their agony.
4. News supporting the child exploitation should not be published.
5. Advertisement and news should not be published and disseminate that violate the child rights.
6. National and International Laws should be observed while publishing and disseminating children related issues.

Formulated by the Nepal Press Council, Federation of the Nepalese Journalist, Media Line with the support of ILO in 2002

Prepared by: **Saurav Kiran Shrestha**  
Coordinated by: **Kushum Sharma/Pinky Bijayananda**  
Edited by: **Anita Shrestha/Tilak Prasad Pokharel**  
Documentation: **Nina Maharjan**

**700 copies / December 2003**

Published by

Hatemalo Sanchar  
**Kupondole, Lalitpur, Nepal**  
**Tel: 977-1-5547812**  
**Post Box: 682, Kathmandu**  
**Email: [info@hatemalo.org](mailto:info@hatemalo.org)**  
**[hatemalo@mail.com.np](mailto:hatemalo@mail.com.np)**  
**URL: [www.hatemalo.org](http://www.hatemalo.org)**

**Print Media Coverage on Children's Issues: 2003**