

Polis – Well Read Indians

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Is India a news paradise? This is one of the few countries where newspapers sales are soaring. 250 million people read papers and there's another 350 million who can read but don't yet buy a daily. Lot's of profit potential there.

It's a country where there used to be one TV station and now there are 350. No wonder so many British media groups have bought a stake in the Indian news market.

And no-one here worries about the online threat. There are between 20-30 million people with internet access but there's still plenty of room in the mainstream media for growth before the internet kicks in.

I'm in Delhi for a POLIS roundtable meeting with India's leading media figures. If it wasn't a breakfast session I am sure we would be opening champagne to celebrate the growth in the media market here. Along with the rest of the Indian economy, it's been growing like topsy thanks to liberalisation and global trading.

But what I want to find out is whether the growth in outlets has meant a corresponding increase in news journalism. And if it has, is what is being produced for all these new channels any good? India still has a vast amount of poverty and corruption. Is the sparkling western-style media holding government and the authorities to account? Or has it lost its soul and its bite?

We shall find out tomorrow.

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