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- CLASSIFIED AGREEMENT BETWEEN [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] THE MEDIA BASIS OF INDIA THE
DOMINION OF INDIA AND DOMINION OF PAKISTAN. [REDACTED] MEDIA

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] SUPPRESSION OF I
... 1949 , SECRETG LA [REDACTED] ONLY.

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**DECLASSIFIED
ANALYSIS**



Engineering Peace Through Censorship

A structural deconstruction of the 1949 Indo-Pak
Inter-Dominion Agreement on media suppression.
CRIMINOLOGICAL INSIGHTS BY DR. MRIDUL SRIVASTAVA

THE 1948 INTER-DOMINION AGREEMENT: GOVERNING MEDIA FOR PEACE

PROHIBITED MEDIA CONTENT



Ban on Hostile Propaganda

Prohibits any material advocating for the amalgamation of dominions or inciting inter-state hostility.

Prevention of Inflammatory News

Media must avoid exaggerated reports likely to cause alarm or inflammation among populations.



No Advocacy for War

Both nations agreed to ban publications suggesting that war between them is inevitable.



INTER-DOMINION CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE



Joint Committee: Ministers & Press Representatives, Meeting Bi-monthly

December 1948

IMPLEMENTATION AND OVERSIGHT

Vigilance on the Press

Authorities must monitor "second and third line" journals where breaches are most frequent.



MEDIA REGULATORY SCOPE & ACTIONS

Press & Journals



Issue appeals to honour terms and report fortnightly breaches.

Films & Newsreels



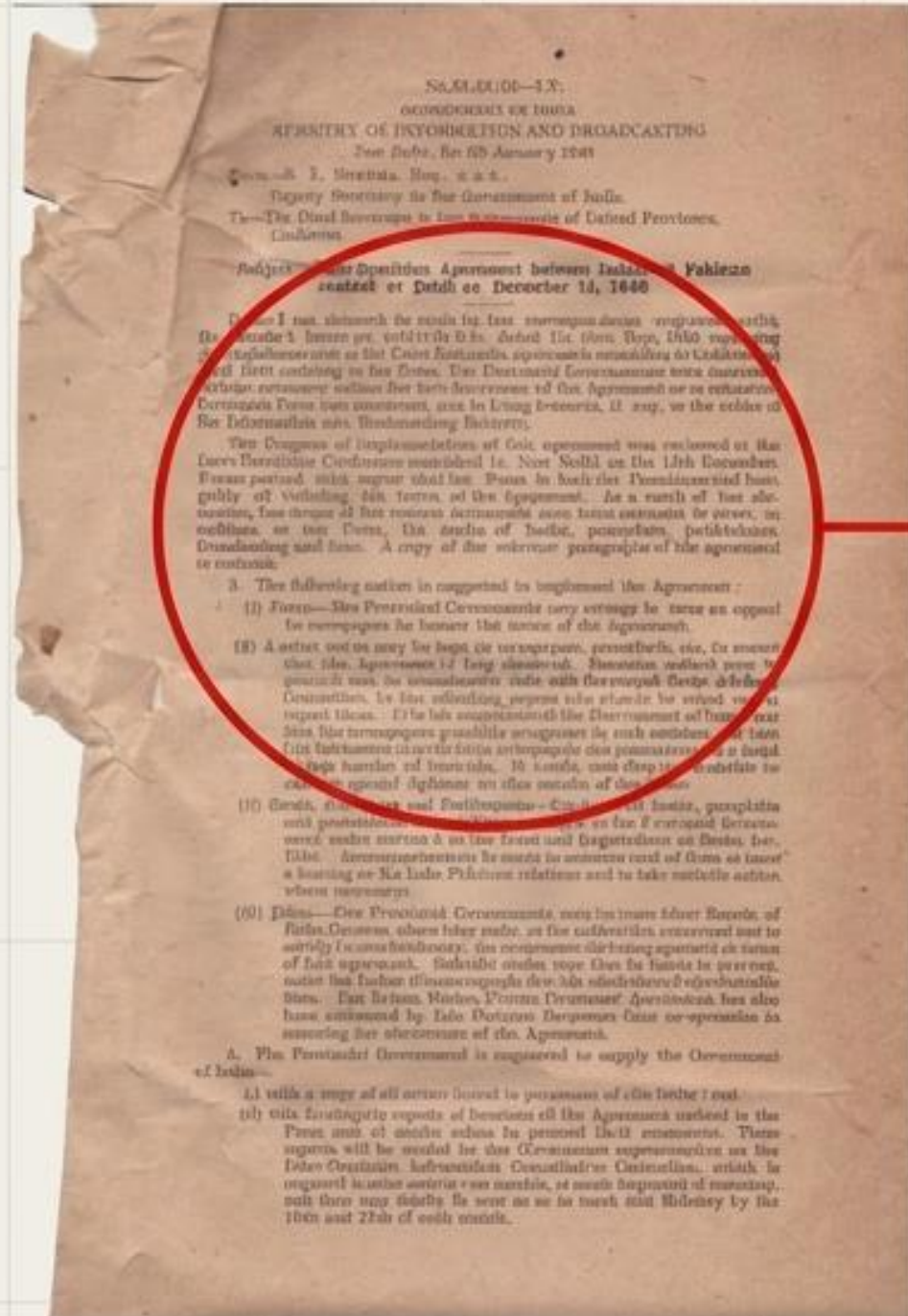
Censor boards to withhold certification for offending content.

Books & Pamphlets



Examination under the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1887.

The failure of the 1948 Calcutta agreement triggered a massive expansion of state censorship.



The Artifact

Letter from B. L. Sharma, Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, to the Chief Secretary of the United Provinces, Lucknow (dated 4th January 1949).

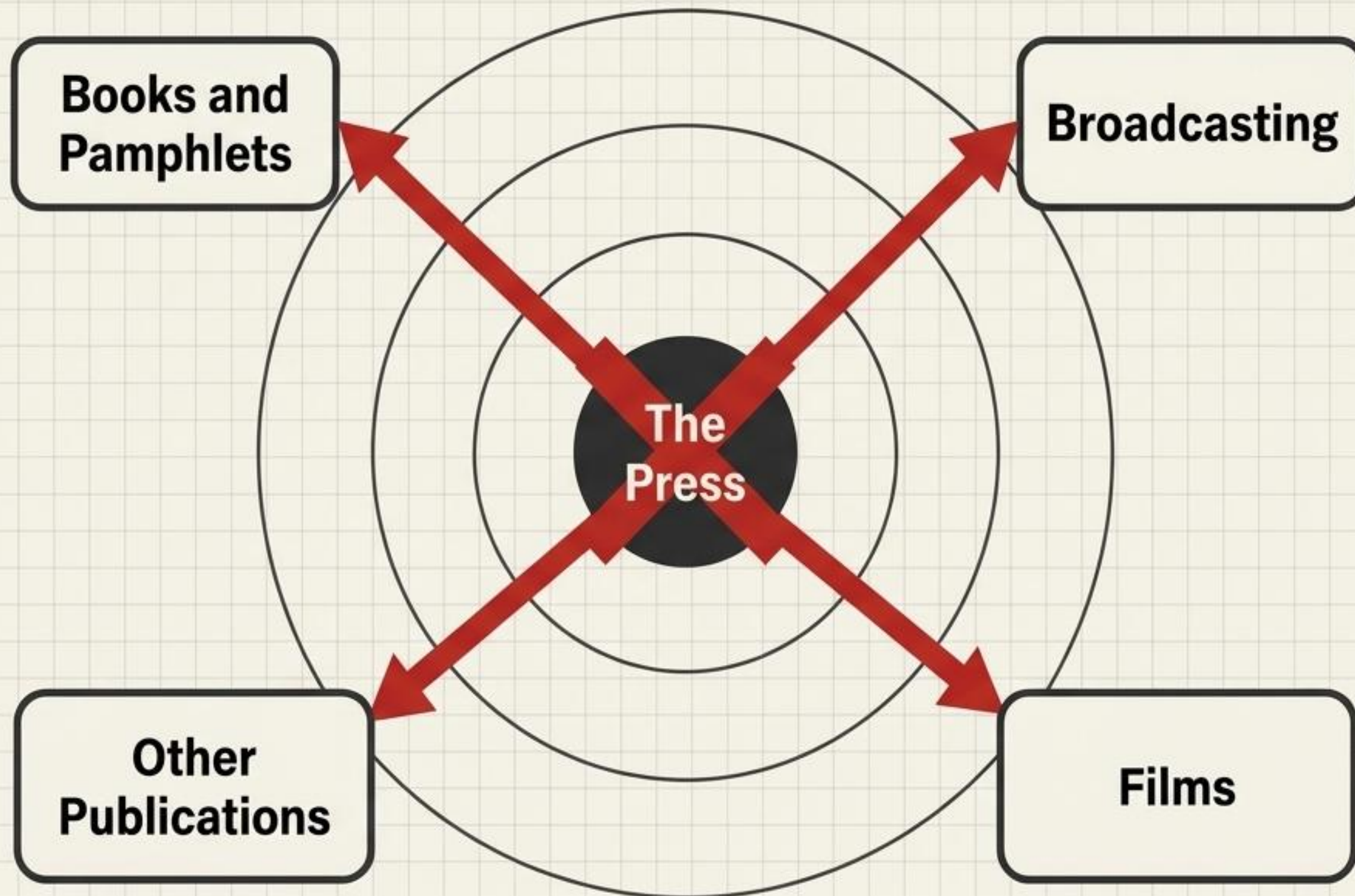
The Crisis

A review at the December 1948 Delhi Conference revealed that the Press in both Dominions had routinely violated the terms of the earlier April agreement.

The Consequence

The state realised that regulating newspapers alone was insufficient to control the post-partition narrative.

The new directives expanded the target zone beyond the daily press to encompass all cultural media.



To guarantee the new terms reached Delhi and Karachi intact, the Inter-Dominion Conference mandated an umbrella approach, capturing everything from local cinematic newsreels to independent pamphlets.

The policy defined a strict escalation scale of prohibited narratives.

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both Governments recognize that the wholehearted co-operation of the Press is essential for creating a better atmosphere...

”



All discourse regarding the amalgamation of divided territories was strictly outlawed.



Clause 3 explicitly banned any propaganda advocating for the amalgamation of Pakistan and India, or specific portions thereof.

Crucially, the directive noted that the word propaganda included the very existence of any organization which might be set up for the purpose.

3. Any propaganda for the amalgamation of Pakistan and India or of portions thereof including East Bengal on the one hand and West Bengal or Assam or Cooch Behar or Tripura on the other, shall be discouraged.

N.B.—The word "propaganda" shall be taken as including any organization which might be set up for the purpose.

Enforcement strategies revealed a distinct state hierarchy of trust within the media landscape.

The Trusted Establishment



First-Line Newspapers

Observation:	generally co-operate in such matters.
State Action:	Issue appeals and rely on voluntary compliance.

The Suspicious Fringe



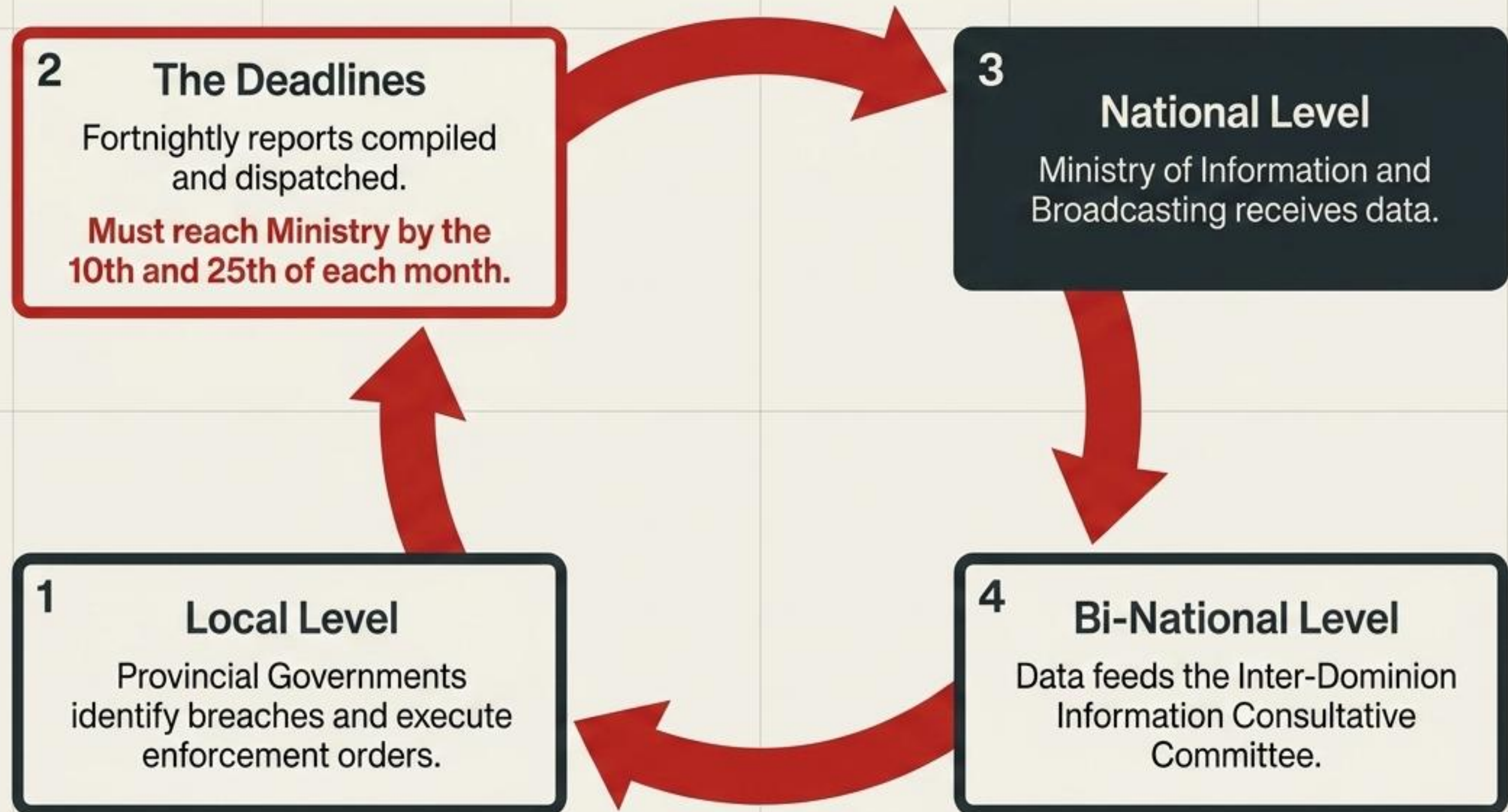
Second and Third-Line Journals

Observation:	commit a large number of breaches.
State Action:	Exercise special vigilance and employ strict surveillance.

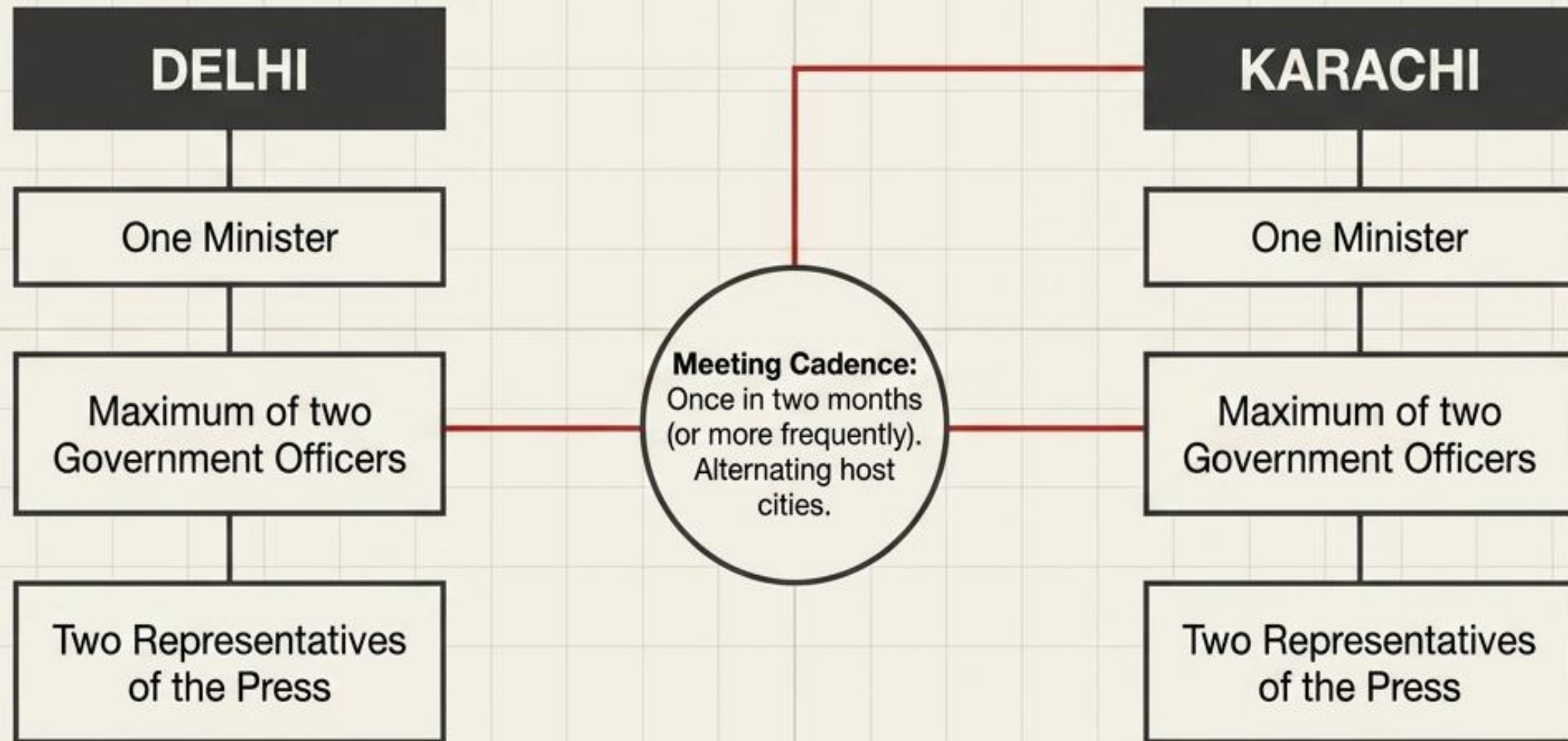
The Media Enforcement Matrix prescribed specific legal weapons for different formats.

Media Format	Primary State Action	Legal & Administrative Mechanism
The Press	Point out breaches; ask offending papers not to repeat them.	Provincial Press Advisory Committee
Books, Pamphlets & Publications	Examine copies for bearing on Indo-Pakistan relations; take suitable action.	Section 9 of the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867
Films & Newsreels	Refuse certification; prevent exhibition; secure producer cooperation.	Boards of Film Censors; Indian Cinematograph Act; Indian Motion Picture Producers' Association

A rigid fortnightly feedback loop ensured provincial governments remained accountable to Delhi.



The Inter-Dominion Consultative Committee operated as a strictly balanced, bi-national tribunal.



The structure mandated mathematical equality, ensuring neither Dominion could out-vote the other when reviewing the media landscape.

The architecture of the committee intentionally marginalised civilian press representatives.

	Government Officials	Press Representatives
Reviewing The Press	✓	✓
Reviewing Books/Pamphlets	✓	✗
Reviewing Broadcasting	✓	✗
Reviewing Films	✓	✗

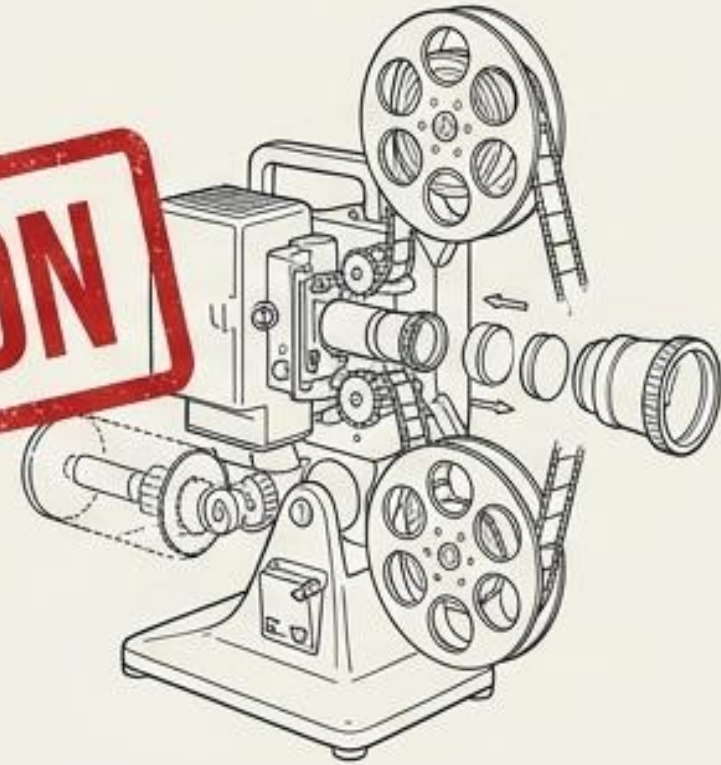
The subject listed under (b), (c) and (d) shall be dealt with only by the official members of the Committee.

The document explicitly isolates civilian influence: The subject listed under (b), (c) and (d) shall be dealt with only by the official members of the Committee.

The agreement required both governments to actively muzzle their own publicity organs.



SELF-REGULATION



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“Both governments must ensure their respective publicity organisations (including radio and film) refrain from:

- (a) Propaganda against the other Dominion.
- (b) Publication of exaggerated news likely to inflame or cause fear/alarm.”

”

The state did not just view independent media as a threat; it recognised that its own bureaucratic broadcasting tools were actively destabilising the fragile post-partition peace.

The Anatomy of 1949 Bi-National Censorship

