

Promoting the role of Vietnamese revolutionary press in the new era of national development

ASSOC.PROF., DR. HOANG PHUC LAM

Vice President, Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics

● **Abstract:** The press is a basic and essential means of information in social life. Since its inception, the Vietnamese revolutionary press has been the voice of the Party, state agencies, organizations, and a forum for the people, playing an important role in each historical revolutionary process of the country and the nation. This article analyzes the role of the Vietnamese revolutionary press over the past 100 years, the challenges, and solutions to promote the role of the Vietnamese revolutionary press in the era of national development.

● **Keywords:** Vietnamese revolutionary press; new era of development; role of the press.

1. Introduction

Our nation is entering an era of development with the aspiration to build a prosperous and powerful country. Speaking at the ceremony to announce and award the National Press Award on Party Building - the 9th Golden Hammer and Sickle Award in 2024, General Secretary To Lam affirmed: “The new era is opening up a bright future for the nation. The new era also sets new and higher requirements and tasks for the revolutionary press, requiring the press to develop accordingly, grow together with the nation, and be worthy of a professional, humane, and modern press”⁽¹⁾. Faced with the requirements of the new development era, the Vietnamese revolutionary press needs to continue to be a pioneer on the propaganda front to meet the requirements of the task.

2. Content

2.1. *The role of journalism in the new era of development*

Firstly, the press has the pioneering mission of guiding public opinion, and guiding ideology in the new era of development

One of the core roles of the Vietnamese revolutionary press is to clarify and widely disseminate the Party’s guidelines and policies, especially the Party’s new breakthrough thinking, vision, and strategic decisions, as well as the State’s policies and laws. In the context of the country carrying out institutional revolutions,

streamlining the apparatus, promoting renovation, and national digital transformation, the press has the mission of conveying, analyzing, and making these policies more accessible, easier to understand, and deeply penetrating the awareness and actions of all classes of people.

The press has been playing an important role in providing timely information, answering concerns and creating consensus and unity across the entire political system and among the people about the correctness of the Party's major policies and orientations such as: Resolution No. 18-NQ/TW dated October 25, 2017, of the Central Executive Committee on continuing to renovate and reorganize the apparatus of the political system to be streamlined and operate effectively and efficiently, with the meaning that this is a "revolution" of the nation; Resolution No. 57-NQ/TW dated December 22, 2024, of the Politburo on breakthroughs in science and technology development, renovation and national digital transformation, which is also a clear demonstration of the role of the press, helping to orient and promote action throughout society, thereby arousing pride, self-reliance and the aspiration to develop the country.

Alongside the task of clarifying policies, the press also plays a role in orienting public opinion through in-depth, multi-dimensional analysis of major, complex issues of the country's socio-economic life, security, defense, foreign affairs, and the global situation. Faced with the constant fluctuations of the world, diverse but also confusing information, the public needs in-depth analysis, sharp comments, and well-founded forecasts from press agencies to understand the true nature and understand events that occur every day. "The press must not only report news but also provide knowledge; not only reflect but also guide; not only present the truth but also help people understand the nature of the truth"⁽²⁾. This requires journalists and press agencies to duly invest in research, improve their theoretical level, analytical and synthesis capacity to produce quality and influential articles and programs, helping to strengthen the people's trust in the Party's leadership and the national development path.

The pioneering role of the press is also reflected in its proactive creation of a positive and healthy information environment, strongly encouraging the spirit of innovation, creativity, self-reliance, self-improvement, the desire to contribute, and national pride. The press needs to be a place to spread good values, inspirational stories, examples of good people, good deeds, new models, and good practices in all fields. After 9 times of organization, the National Press Award on Party building "Golden Hammer and Sickle" has shown that the press is increasingly taking on responsibility, vividly reflecting all aspects of Party building work, while "actively spreading positive values, new models, good practices, exemplary role models among cadres, party members and the people"⁽³⁾. Quality press works not only provide information but also have the power to arouse love for the Fatherland, faith in the future and creating motivation for each citizen to strive and contribute to the common cause. Especially in the new era of development, encouraging the desire for development, the spirit of daring to think, daring to do, daring to renovate is extremely important for the country to break through and rise up.

In the fight to protect the Party's ideological foundation, to refute erroneous, hostile viewpoints, and to refute bad, toxic, and untrue information, especially in cyberspace, the press needs to clearly affirm its pioneering role. In the context of hostile and reactionary forces constantly sabotaging our Party, State, and regime with distorted arguments and sophisticated tricks, the press must be a solid shield and a sharp weapon on the ideological front. This requires press agencies to proactively and promptly identify and directly combat false information with solid arguments, convincing evidence, and appropriate and accessible forms of expression. The establishment of specialized sections and in-depth series on protecting the ideological foundation, and increasing sharp, highly combative political articles, is a regular and continuous task of the Vietnamese revolutionary press.

Secondly, the press plays a role in propaganda, strengthening consensus, spreading positive energy, and encouraging the entire nation to build and develop the country

Along with its pioneering role in orienting ideology, the Vietnamese revolutionary press in the new era plays the role of glue connecting the Party's will and the people's hearts, a spiritual resource to encourage and motivate the entire nation to unite, overcome difficulties and challenges, and realize the aspiration to build a prosperous, happy, and powerful country. This role is not limited to disseminating information but must also proactively create social consensus, spread positive values, and arouse confidence and a strong will to rise strongly in all classes of people.

One of the key objectives of propaganda work is to build social consensus on the Party's and the State's policies, guidelines, and important decisions. When the country carries out strategic, complex tasks with far-reaching impacts, such as preparing and organizing party congresses at all levels leading towards the 14th National Party Congress, implementing Resolution 18-NQ/TW on restructuring and streamlining the apparatus, or building and passing important draft laws, the role of the press in providing full information, detailed explanation, and thorough analysis to create unity in perception and action is extremely necessary. The press needs to proactively open forums and articles to analyze the objective necessity and long-term benefits of policies, while also reflecting people's thoughts and aspirations, promptly addressing concerns and difficulties of cadres, party members, and the people, thereby strengthening trust and creating broad support. Effective propaganda on the preparation for the 14th National Party Congress, clarifying new points, theoretical and practical issues, is contributing to mobilizing the intelligence and enthusiasm of all people for this important political event.

In addition, the press has the task of vividly, comprehensively, and promptly reflecting the country's great achievements and outstanding milestones in all fields of socio-economic development, culture, foreign affairs, defense, and security. The results are not only a recognition of the efforts of the entire Party, people, and army, but also a source of encouragement, motivation, and consolidation of national confidence and pride. The press must continue to portray the dynamic development

picture of the country, from symbolic projects, national key projects to changes in each village; from successes in the economic front to transformations in cultural and spiritual life; from the increasingly enhanced position on the international stage to the solidity of national defense. Positive information and success stories, once disseminated, will contribute to creating an exciting, confident atmosphere in society.

Propaganda work also plays an important role in discovering, praising, and replicating new models, good practices, and exemplary role models in all areas of social life. The press must be a keen eye, a sensitive information channel to search for and honor positive factors, examples of “dare to think, dare to do, dare to innovate”, groups and individuals with outstanding contributions to the community and the country. Propaganda about exemplary figures not only has the effect of setting examples and encouraging but also contributes to summarizing practices, drawing lessons, replicating effective practices, creating a positive ripple effect throughout society, and promoting patriotic emulation movements more deeply.

Culture is defined as the spiritual foundation and driving force for development. In the new era of development, the press also has a special mission in arousing and promoting the good cultural values and the endogenous strength of the Vietnamese people. The press needs to deeply explore and propagate the precious traditional values of the nation such as patriotism, solidarity, self-reliance, diligence, creativity, and at the same time selectively absorb the quintessence of human culture, contributing to building a system of national values, a system of cultural values, a system of family values and standards for the Vietnamese people in the new era. Propagating cultural heritages, unique cultural and artistic activities, and examples of preserving and promoting national cultural identity... is the way to cultivate people's mindset and personalities, creating soft power for the nation.

The propaganda role of the press also extends to the international scope, which is to promote the image of a modern, dynamic, deeply integrated Vietnam, a reliable friend, a partner, and a responsible member of the international community. Through diverse, multilingual external press products, the press contributes to introducing the potential, strengths, development achievements, and cultural beauty of Vietnam and its people to international friends, attracting investment and tourism, strengthening international cooperation, while countering false and distorted arguments about Vietnam. The requirement to “develop publications and information channels in many languages to effectively reach international friends; at the same time strengthen cooperation with international media agencies to spread official information”⁽⁴⁾ are specific requirements set for external press.

To effectively carry out its propaganda role in the new era of development, the press needs to constantly innovate both in content and presentation methods. The content must ensure authenticity and accuracy, but must be presented in an attractive, vivid, accessible manner, suitable for the psychology and level of each audience, especially the youth. The use of diverse types of press (print, radio, television, electronic

newspapers) and new media platforms (social networks, mobile applications), combining political information with creative forms of expression, such as infographics, longform and short videos, podcasts, etc., is an essential requirement. In particular, the press needs to focus on using the human element, telling humane, emotional stories. It is the true stories about life, about efforts to overcome difficulties, about kind hearts... that have the most powerful influence and impact, contributing to fostering faith, love for the Fatherland and country, and encouraging the spirit of dedication in each citizen, creating a combined strength to bring the nation firmly into the new era of development.

Thirdly, the pioneering role in digital transformation and developing modern press

In the strong current of Industrial Revolution 4.0 and the context of the country entering a new era of development, the pioneering role of Vietnamese revolutionary press is not only reflected on the ideological and propaganda fronts but must also be strongly affirmed in the field of digital transformation and the creation of modern journalism. Digital transformation is no longer an option but has become an inevitable trend, a vital requirement for the press to survive, compete, develop, and fulfill its mission in today's diverse and complex information environment. As assessed by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, the rise of new devices, specialized digital platforms, and the audio and video information consumption habits of young readers are creating the "second phase" of the digital revolution, requiring a fundamental change from text culture to multimedia production⁽⁵⁾.

Proactively grasping, applying technology, and innovating is the only way for the press to maintain its leading role, orienting information, and meeting the increasingly high demands of the public. This spirit is also clearly shown in the direction of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, affirming the need to imbue and supplement the spirit of Resolution 57-NQ/TW on breakthroughs in science and technology development, innovation, and national digital transformation into the process of perfecting the Press Law (amended)⁽⁶⁾.

For electronic journalism, the type with the most advantages and is most directly affected by digital transformation, the pioneering role must be clearly and comprehensively demonstrated. First of all, it is necessary to boldly research and apply advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and big data, to the entire operation process. AI can effectively support the automation of some stages of news production, analyze reader data to personalize content, optimize information distribution on different platforms, and even create smart interactive tools. Big Data helps newsrooms gain a deeper understanding of public behavior and preferences, thereby making appropriate decisions about content, development strategies, and business models.

Along with technology, innovation in content, also known as "Creative Journalism", is the key factor for electronic journalism to retain readers and affirm its own value. Instead of just stopping at traditional storytelling with text and images, modern journalism needs to promote the development of multimedia journalism products,

skillfully combining text, images, audio, video, and interactive graphics. Forms of expression such as infographics, longform, megastory, e-magazines with elaborate design, rich information, and impressive visual experience are increasingly popular. Typical examples include: the Dien Bien Phu panorama work of Nhan Dan Newspaper on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of Dien Bien Phu Victory, the interactive 3D product about the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Capital by VietnamPlus, or multimedia reports such as “Small alley stories in the time of Covid-19” by VOV, “The path of water”, “Rescue flight” by VnExpress... which created great resonance, won many domestic and international awards, showing the outstanding creativity of Vietnamese journalism⁽⁷⁾.

The development of new formats such as short videos and podcasts is a strong trend to more effectively reach the public, especially the younger generation (Gen Z) - who “hold the key to opening a sustainable future for newsrooms”⁽⁸⁾. Exploring the potential of virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technology, as the South China Morning Post (Hong Kong) or Rappler (Philippines) have done, also opens up promising new directions for future journalism. The establishment of the “Creative Journalism” award category at the 2025 Vietnam National Press Awards is a necessary recognition and encouragement for this trend.

The pioneering role also requires e-newspapers to develop strongly on multiple platforms, not just limited to traditional websites. Optimizing content and interfaces for mobile devices, while effectively utilizing popular social networking platforms (Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, Zalo, etc.) to spread information and reach readers anytime, anywhere is a mandatory requirement. The press needs to “develop strongly on digital platforms, utilize social networks as an effective communication channel to quickly and promptly reach all audience, especially young people” and “ensure cyberspace does not remain uncontested”⁽⁹⁾. In addition, enhancing two-way interaction with the public is also a vital factor. The press needs to proactively build loyal reader communities, listen to feedback, encourage participation in comments, sharing, and even co-creating content, turning readers from passive recipients into active companions.

Digital transformation is not only the task of electronic journalism. Traditional forms of journalism, such as print, radio, and television, must also promote the application of digital technology in their operations, from editorial management, digitizing archives, to content production and distribution. Print newspapers can integrate QR codes leading to expanded digital content, videos, and exclusive interviews. Radio and television can develop online listening/viewing applications, on-demand, providing podcasts, interactive content, etc.. Integrating many digital elements will help traditional forms increase their appeal and expand their reach in a converged media environment.

The ultimate goal of pioneering digital transformation is to build a Vietnamese revolutionary press that is truly “professional, humane, modern”, as oriented by the Party, the State, and the people. A press with advanced technological infrastructure, high-quality human resources being politically and professionally competent.

knowledgeable in technology, with outstanding innovation capacity, capable of fair competition with other media platforms, and most importantly, increasingly fulfilling the function of information, communication, public opinion orientation, and effectively serving the cause of building and defending the Fatherland in the new era. This is the path for the Vietnamese press to develop commensurately, to rise up with the nation.

2.2. Challenges for Vietnamese revolutionary press

In the new era of development, besides opportunities, the Vietnamese revolutionary press also faces many challenges that require steadfastness, outstanding efforts and synchronous solutions to overcome, continuing to affirm the extremely important propaganda mission of the press.

In today's era, the press is facing increasingly fierce competition for information from social networks and cross-border media platforms. With their rapid spread, instant interaction capabilities and diverse and rich content, these platforms are attracting a large audience, especially young people, and at the same time making up a significant portion of advertising revenue, which is the "lifeblood" of many press agencies. That forces newsrooms to constantly innovate and create to attract readers. In today's diverse and complex information environment, maintaining the role of the press in guiding and providing accurate and reliable information is becoming more difficult than ever.

Alongside this is the phenomenon of the "newspaperization" of magazines, the "newspaperization" of general electronic information sites, and prevailing ambiguity regarding the operation of social networking platforms whose functions resemble those of newspapers. The situation where scientific and specialized journals operate contrary to their principles and purposes, indulging in reflecting social issues, or general information websites functioning like press agencies, is distorting the information environment, making state management difficult and affecting the credibility of revolutionary journalism. Clearly defining the functions, tasks, and effectively managing these types of forms is a complex issue, requiring determination but also avoiding the extreme mindset of "if you can't manage it, ban it".

The economic difficulties of the press are becoming increasingly serious, especially in the context of traditional sources of revenue, especially advertising in print and even online newspapers, are declining. Data at the National Press Conference summarizing the year 2024 showed that the revenue of the print and electronic press sector in 2024 is estimated at VND 8,080 billion, decreasing by 6.1% compared to 2023's, of which revenue from advertising decreased by 5.6%⁽¹⁰⁾. Limited financial resources make it difficult to invest in new technology, improve content quality, enhance livelihoods, and retain talented journalists, thereby directly affecting the competitiveness and ability of press agencies to fulfill their political tasks.

Meanwhile, the requirements for the quality of press human resources are increasingly higher and more stringent. The new era of development requires the contingent of journalists to not only have strong political will and clear professional ethics, but also to be proficient in professional skills, sensitive to reality, have analytical

and critical thinking, and especially must be proficient in technology and multimedia skills to meet the requirements of digital transformation. Training, fostering, and maintaining such a contingent in the context of increasing competition for human resources and work pressure is a big challenge.

The process of streamlining the apparatus of press agencies according to the Plan and Resolution No. 18-NQ/TW also creates certain impacts and challenges in the immediate period. The reduction of a series of focal points (a total reduction of 51 press agencies as projected under Resolution 18) raises many complicated issues such as merging branded publications, the “newspaper within a newspaper” model, the risk of losing the forum of the scientific community when specialized journals are merged, or determining which agencies need to be streamlined in social organizations. This process inevitably causes organizational disruptions, causing concerns and worries for a portion of journalists, requiring close guidance, thoughtful solutions, and appropriate support policies to ensure stability and development after the reorganization of press agencies.

Operating in a strongly digitalized environment poses a major challenge in ensuring information security and safety in cyberspace for press agencies. Press agencies face the risk of cyber attacks, data theft, and information falsification, which affects their operations and reputation. Protecting technology infrastructure, securing editorial data and personal information of journalists, and ensuring the integrity and accuracy of information when it is disseminated on the internet is an extremely important and complex task, requiring investment in resources and raising awareness and skills in cybersecurity for the entire contingent.

2.3. Solutions to promote the role of the Vietnamese revolutionary press in the new era of national development

For the Vietnamese revolutionary press to overcome challenges, promote its role and mission in the new era of development, it is necessary to implement a series of synchronized solutions with the determined participation of directive and management agencies, governing bodies, and each press agency and team of journalists themselves. Specifically, attention should be focused on the following solutions:

Firstly, building institutions and policies with proper orientation and creating an environment for the development of the press

It is necessary to continue to improve the legal framework, focusing on amending and perfecting the 2016 Press Law and implementing documents. The amendment process needs to thoroughly grasp the spirit of “not to prohibit but to create for development”⁽¹¹⁾, while updating and institutionalizing the Party’s new viewpoints and policies, especially the spirit of Resolution No. 57-NQ/TW on breakthroughs in science and technology development, renovation, and digital transformation. The Law needs to create a favourable legal framework for innovation, application of new technologies, and development of a healthy press economy, while more clearly defining the responsibilities and powers of entities in press and digital media activities.

It is necessary to build and improve mechanisms of commissioning and task assignment for press agencies in implementing essential information and propaganda tasks, serving political missions. This mechanism must ensure publicity, transparency, reasonable economic and technical norms, and create stable resources for the press to perform its assigned functions and tasks well, especially for core press agencies. In addition, it is necessary to supplement a specific financial mechanism to support the press in the process of digital transformation, investment in technology, infrastructure and human resource training.

In particular, for press agencies that have been reorganized and streamlined under the planning and Resolution No. 18-NQ/TW, it is necessary to promptly issue specific regulations on organizational models, functions, tasks, and have appropriate support policies so that units can quickly stabilize, operate effectively, and ensure the rights of affected journalists. The process of improving the institution also needs to review and adjust Party regulations if they are not suitable for the development reality.

Secondly, promoting investment and applying technology is a breakthrough solution for the press to improve its competitiveness and operational efficiency.

The State needs to increase investment and upgrade the national information technology and communications infrastructure, creating a solid foundation for the digital transformation of journalism. At the same time, there needs to be a policy to strongly encourage press agencies to research and apply new technologies: AI, big data, cloud computing, blockchain... in the process of producing, distributing content, and interacting with the public. The State can support them through science and technology development programs and projects, tax incentives, and credits for technology investment projects in the journalism field. In addition, it is necessary to study the possibility of building shared data platforms for the journalism industry so that press agencies, especially small newspapers, can exploit and optimize operations without large investments. Mastering technology will help press agencies proactively create innovative products, personalize user experiences, and reach the public more effectively on multiple platforms.

Thirdly, focusing on accurately and appropriately identifying published content - the core factor that determines the vitality and credibility of the press

In the new era of development, the press must first and foremost be steadfast in its principles and purposes, maintaining the core values of revolutionary journalism: party spirit, people's spirit, authenticity, fighting spirit, and humanity. All innovation and creativity must be based on this foundation. However, steadfastness does not mean conservatism. The press needs to constantly innovate and create both content and forms of expression to meet the increasingly diverse tastes of the public, especially young readers. It must boldly experiment with forms of data journalism, multimedia journalism, and interactive journalism. More importantly, the press needs to improve its depth, forecasting, criticality, and especially the solution-oriented nature of each work. The press must not only reflect but also lead, not only raise issues but also

provide knowledge, helping the public understand the true nature of things. Articles need to be carefully researched, multi-dimensionally analyzed, providing profound insights and practical suggestions, contributing to solving difficulties and promoting development. Only then will the press truly be a reliable bridge between the Party, the State, and the people, and a useful social forum.

Fourthly, focusing on building a comprehensively developed journalism workforce

People are the decisive factor for the success of every innovation. Special attention should be paid to training and fostering a contingent of journalists in a comprehensive direction: both steadfast in political will, pure in professional ethics, good in professional expertise, and sensitive to technology. Training programs at journalism training institutions need to be updated regularly, closely following the development trends of modern journalism, enhancing practice, and equipping digital skills and multimedia journalism skills. Press agencies need to develop regular training plans on political theory, professionalism, and technology for reporters and editors. Strengthening training in political theory and professional skills for journalists, especially young reporters, must be considered a key task.

Along with training, there should be a policy of appropriate remuneration, a proper mechanism to attract, retain, and promote talents in the field of journalism. At the same time, press agencies need to improve the working environment, create conditions for creativity and personal development, while tightening discipline and order, resolutely eliminating weak and irresponsible officials from the apparatus, avoiding the situation where state agencies become safe havens.

Fifthly, improving the economic efficiency of journalism with autonomy and investment for development

The fundamental solution is to diversify revenue sources, not just rely on traditional advertising sources that are in decline. It is necessary to boldly research and develop new business models suitable for the digital environment such as charging for online newspaper reading with high-quality, exclusive content packages; developing e-commerce on press platforms; organizing events; providing value-added services based on data and content (analytical reports, media consulting); producing and trading digital content on other platforms, etc.. The State needs to create a favourable legal corridor and can provide initial support for testing these models. In addition, it is necessary to continue to maintain and improve the ordering mechanism, support from the state budget for content and publications serving political and foreign affairs tasks, remote areas, ethnic minorities... , to ensure that the press fulfills its social responsibilities well.

Sixthly, strengthening the state management of the press

It is necessary to resolutely and strictly handle violations in press activities, especially the situation of activities that are contrary to the principles and purposes; “newspaperization” of magazines, “newspaperization” of general electronic news sites; false information, causing harm to national interests, and the legitimate rights and interests of organizations and individuals. Considering the revocation of licenses for

press agencies that have committed serious violations is a necessary measure to clean up the press environment. At the same time, it is necessary to clearly define the functions, tasks, and scope of activities between the press and other types of media, especially general electronic information sites and social networks, in order to have an appropriate management mechanism, avoiding overlap or vacancy. Management work needs to be carried out in the spirit of the rule of law, transparency, fairness, combining inspection and supervision with orientation, support, and creating conditions for the revolutionary press to develop in the right direction and sustainably.

3. Conclusion

Entering a new era of development, the pioneering role of the Vietnamese revolutionary press on the ideological and cultural front has not only been affirmed but also become urgent with increasingly higher requirements and demands. The revolutionary press is not simply a tool to reflect reality but must truly be a vanguard moving one step ahead, proactively orienting, leading and creating the mainstream ideological flow in society, contributing to consolidating trust, creating consensus, mobilizing the strength of the entire nation to successfully implement the strategic goals set by the Party and the State. This position requires the press to always maintain political courage, grasp reality sensitively, and constantly innovate to meet the requirements of tasks in the new situation ■

Received: May 22, 2025; Revised: May 27, 2025; Approved for publication: June 05, 2025

Author's email: hplam2003@gmail.com

● Endnotes:

(1) General Secretary To Lam: “The new era requires the press to develop appropriately, growing together with the nation”, <https://baochinhphu.vn>, January 20, 2025.

(2) Truong Thanh: “The new era requires the press to develop and grow with the nation”, <https://ictvietnam.vn>, February 4, 2025.

(3) General Secretary: “Vietnamese revolutionary press has integrated into real life”, <https://vov.vn>; January 20, 2025.

(4), (9) Nam Trung: “The press must develop appropriately, grow with the nation”, <https://tuoitrethudo.vn>, February 4, 2025.

(5), (7), (8) Hoang Nhat: “Creative journalism in the era of progress”, <https://www.qdnd.vn>, January 29, 2025.

(6), (11) “Promoting the development and further enhancing the role of journalism in the new era”, <https://baochinhphu.vn>, March 7, 2025.

(10) Hong Tham: “Promoting the role of journalism in the era of national progress”, <https://kinhhtedothi.vn>, December 16, 2024.