

'Journalists must follow ethics for credibility'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Discussants at a dialogue yesterday said journalists must follow the professional ethics to attain credibility.

A newspaper could be credible to its readers only by ensuring objectivity, they noted.

The dialogue titled 'Responsible Journalism' was organised by the Centre for National and Regional Studies (CNRS) at IDB auditorium in the city.

While presenting a keynote paper, eminent journalist Ataus Samad said nowadays newspapers are being accused of not maintaining objectivity in their reports.

"Journalists should check and cross check the information available to them so that no distorted news is published," he added.

Samad also laid emphasis on research to identify the vital issues facing the nation so that the readers can become aware of them.

In another keynote paper, Dr Golam Rahman, professor of mass communication and journalism department of Dhaka University, said newspapers should not publish any such story that may create confusion among the readers.

"Sometimes newspapers try to create sensation over some issues which create unnecessary panic among the readers," he alleged.

Taking part in the discussion, Editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam said responsibility in journalism should come spontaneously from the journalists.

"The more journalism would be free, the more responsibility would be created and the more responsi-

bility would be created among the journalists, the more freedom of journalism would be ensured," he added.

"A journalist has to consider the multiple angle of a news so that image of any person or institution is not affected through false news," noted Mahfuz Anam.

He said newspapers have to publish rejoinder with proper treatment and should admit errors if they commit.

Prothom Alo Editor Motiur Rahman said with the change of government not only the role of newspaper but also the role of High Court is changed.

"Until and unless official secrets act is scrapped, the objectivity of news can not be ensured," he noted.

Motiur Rahman said a newspaper must be commercially viable to ensure its objectivity.

"Although newspapers in our

country have been playing a vital role in ensuring democracy over the years but they will have to be more responsible," said former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University Prof Muniruzzaman Mia.

Sonali Bank Chairman Prof Mahbubullah said people have every right to know the financial source of a newspaper.

Moderated by Motiur Rahman Chowdhury, editor of the Manabzamin, the dialogue was also addressed by former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University Prof Emajuddin Ahmed, columnist Harun-ur-Rashid, Major General Mohammad Ibrahim, Zillul Hye Razi of European Commission, and Editor of the Sangram Abul Asad.

Earlier, CNRS Chairman Abul Hasib Khan delivered the welcome address while Secretary General Irtiza Nasim Ali explained the objective of the dialogue.

Agreement on Dhaka-Agartala package tour

BSS, Dhaka

Officials of the civil aviation and tourism ministry of Bangladesh and the Tripura Road Transport Corporation (TRTC) of India yesterday reached an agreement on bilateral package tour to ensure the best use of Dhaka-Agartala direct bus service.

As part of the initiative, the officials at a meeting decided to exchange delegations for sightseeing at places of tourist attractions in Bangladesh and the Indian state of Tripura.

The meeting also decided to encourage the Bangladesh Parjata Corporation, the tourism department of Tripura and private tour operators to offer package tour programmes along with accommodation and transport facilities.

Joint Secretary of civil aviation and tourism ministry Humayun Kabir represented Bangladesh at the talks, while TRTC managing director led the delegation of his country.

