Ever since private channels came into operation and began their news broadcasts, etc., people have been given a platform to voice their views and opinions, agrees Shykh Seraj, Director and Head of News, Channel i.

Concurrently, talk shows also started.

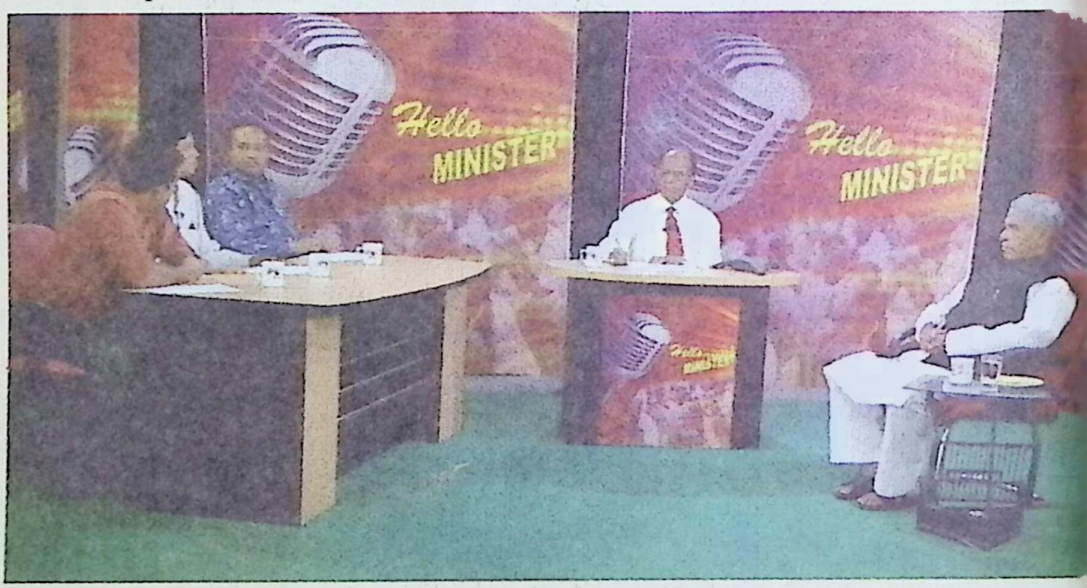
"Talk shows have made people knowledgeable," says Seraj. "They have created awareness among people about issues like democracy."

One of the first and most popular talk shows today is in fact Channel i's "Tritiyo Matra".

"Tritiyo Matra, in the over three years it has been broadcast, has had a big impact," says Shykh Seraj. "There is a lot of bitterness between our politicians," he says, "and they never used to even sit beside each other. On 'Tritiyo Matra', they do. Before, they used to argue a lot, but they've moved away from that and now they actually discuss and debate on important political issues."

Not only politicians, but regular citizens are also much more vocal today through interactive programmes on television like Channel i's "Public Reaction" and ntv's "Muktangon".

"Before," says Seraj, "people used to run if they saw a microphone. Now they actually come forward and speak out."

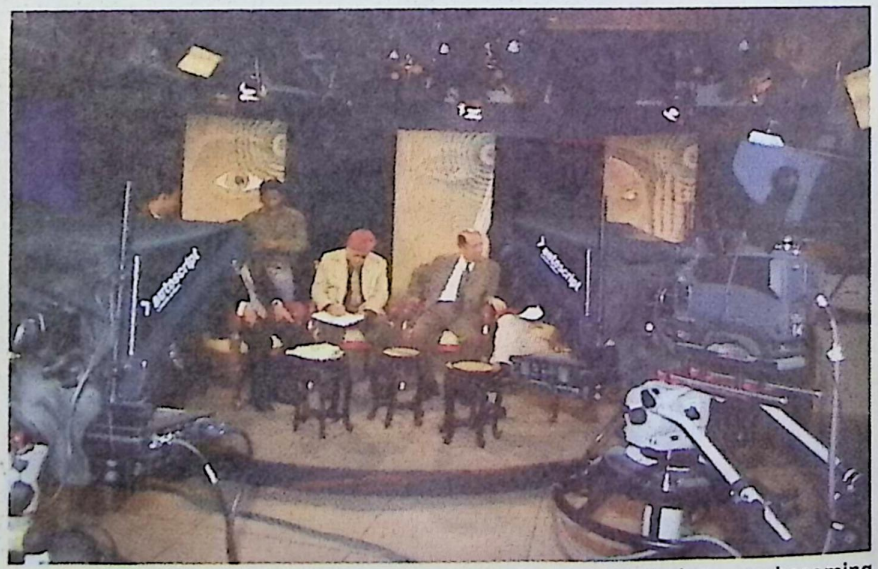


Along with politicians, regular citizens are also more vocal today through interactive television programmes.

When Channel i first started its phone-in programmes, recalls Seraj, they used to get hardly five calls in one hour. "Now, the calls just keep coming," he says. "The media has played a huge role in creating not only awareness among people about their rights but also eagerness to ask questions, voice their opinions, etc."

While shows like "Tritiyo Matra", "Onnyo Drishti" on ATN Bangla, "Article 39" on Banglavision and "Mot Motantor" on Channel 1 usually bring in politicians or prominent citizens to discuss contemporary political issues among themselves, others bring in audience participation as well. "Agamir Kantho" on Banglavision and "Na Bola Kotha" and "Saaf Kotha" on Channel i bring in these personalities to face questions from members of the audience who are present with their own input as well as queries. Other shows like "Tele-Helpline" on Channel i have the audience phone in to put questions to the panel of discussants, on issues ranging from the political crisis to consumer rights.

The good thing about these shows is that they give people scope for open discussion. This was unheard of just a few years ago, when editing as well as self-censorship prevented people from speaking their minds. While this allows politicians to give what may be a less-than-honest version of things, it has helped to bring many issues out into the open which were previously swept under the carpet, whether due to political reasons or social taboo.


With viewers hungry for information and analysis, talk shows are becoming increasingly popular.