University teacher of the English Department and social activist is skeptical about the objectivity factor: "We see advertisement of a few persons, gossip, and distorting news in the mass media. We don't find much investigative reporting that analyses manifestos of the parities. Not even in the talk shows, which are quite popular, do we see something constructive such as asking the leaders how they will implement their agendas or what they will do after forming government on controversial issues such as whether they will amend article 70 of the constitution. And what is the substance of the talk shows? In most of the cases they quarrel on the screen for our entertainment. Nothing fruitful comes out of such programmes."

"In news featuring the constituencies, we see that a few members of the public proclaim some common demands and the leaders of two alliances give almost the same commitments. We want more insightful reporting featuring how these leaders intend to solve the problems within the mentioned time frame. The reports also may feature the information of the candidates submitted to the EC so that the public can make proper choice," he adds.

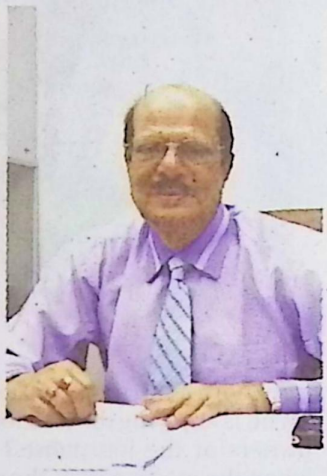
Professor Chowdhury believes that constructive investigative reporting in a medium as powerful as the electronic media could force political parties to be more accountable to the public; at the same time such reporting could force parties to come out with concrete plans, which would help the country to develop.

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Chairman Professor Muzaffer Ahmed is even more critical and demands immediate code of conduct for the press so that if anybody is affected by any reporting or sweeping comments published or broadcasted can get justice. " There is every possibility of yellow journalism when a person has many identities such as owner of mass media, businessperson and politician. In Bangladesh, sometimes we do see yellow journalism. Sometimes they don't follow universal code of conduct for journalism. The presentation is not proper. We have seen character assassination in news reports in the papers and talk shows in the electronic media," he observes.

Like the other media experts, media analyst Muhammad Jahangir believes that in the current scenario there is no alternative to the strength of the Press Council and he also demands a separate wing for electronic media under it. He has some specific suggestions for developing journalism in Bangladesh. He says, "Unless there is no effective press council how can a person get justice being affected by biased reporting or sweeping comments in popular TV talk shows. If I'm told to produce documents of my comment of media biasness, I've to work on it. But, I can prove that many of the reports are not done objectively. Many of the mass media do not even follow the basics of journalism. In fact, institutions such as Press Institute and National Institute for Mass Communication (Nimco) must conduct researches on the treatment of news in Bangladesh. But, unfortunately we don't see such activities in Bangladesh."



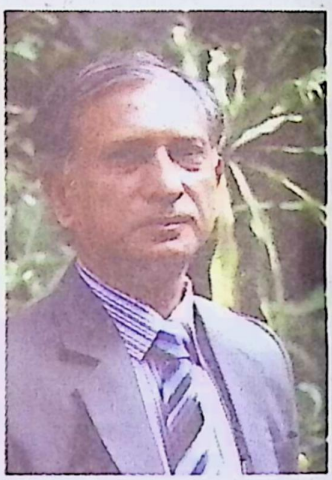
Jamil Osman



Saiful Bari



Shykh Seraj



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"There are many awards for journalism. How come there should not be any punishment for yellow journalism? At present the Press Council can only scold an editor for publishing distorted news but the Press Council should have the right to ask the editor to take punitive action against the reporter for yellow journalism. Even it should also ensure job security for the journalists. Moreover, if any error or misrepresentation has been identified in already published or broadcasted materials, the journalist/media house concerned shall give high priority to carrying out the corrections immediately," he adds.

Muhammad Jahangir also proposes the establishment of a mechanism for private TV channels under the Press Council. For further transparency, he demands