is a social issue. "Women should be able to enjoy equal rights as others do."

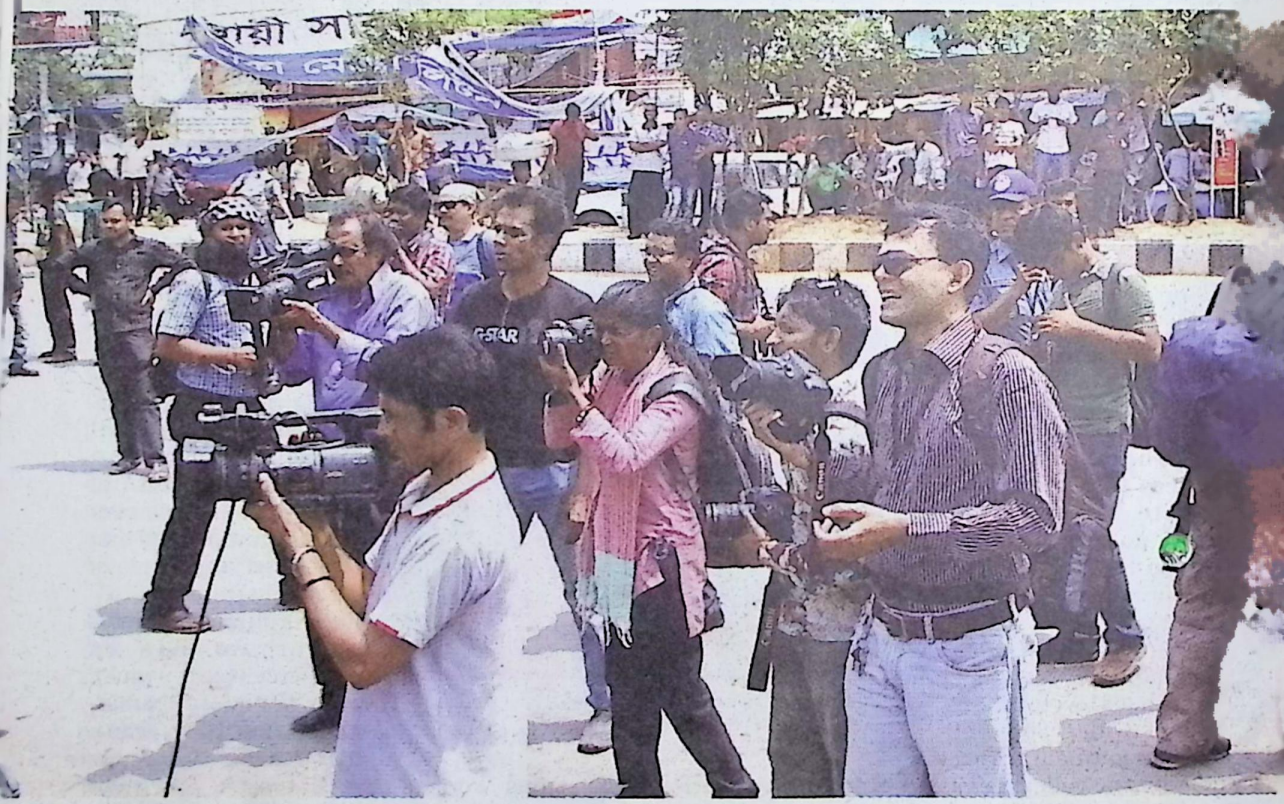
It goes without saying that media houses are obligated to come up with codes of conduct and professional evaluation systems that will be gender neutral and focus solely on the merits of the individual. Although most media houses are not particularly interested in gender-sensitivity training, it is something that should be incorporated. Journalism courses taught at universities need to be updated and upgraded to address these issues. "We have been advocating the introduction of gender sensitivity courses in the curriculum for some time now," says Kaberi Gayen.

Research is also necessary to improve the knowledge base of journalism on these issues.

"When I covered the BDR massacre, a team of Australian journalists came to Bangladesh. They



Tahmina Rahman



We need laws and codes of conduct to ensure gender equality in journalism.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

were shocked to find out that I had not received any training on how to cope with security related issues in dangerous situations. I did everything using my common sense. Developed countries offer this kind of training to journalists", says Munni Saha.

A H M Moazzem Hossain is of the opinion that training on gender sensitivity will not be effective unless social conditions and our attitude towards women change.

Some journalists attend foreign training to acquire new knowledge and skills. In-country training facilities may be developed in order to upgrade their skills and knowledge.

Asked about the implications of attacks on women journalists, Munni Saha sounds optimistic. "In the year 1994-95, I went to cover an event attended by the then Prime Minister. I was almost thrown out by the security personnel because it did not occur to them that I was there as a journal-