

Journalism has now become a victim of violence and persecution. PHOTO: STAR FILE

he didn't mention the word "Honourable" while addressing that MP. Vehicles carrying journalists were also set ablaze during the recent strikes.

Even the far rightist groups have a fare share of blame. It seems they have singled out women journalists to materialise their demand on women affairs. In the Dhaka Siege programme of Hefajate Islam, 5 women journalists were physically harassed. The assault on reporter Nadia Sharmin was particularly vicious. But no measure has been taken to investigate the incident. Only a handful of industry leaders offered a single-lined verbal apology in a press conference but with a "wise warning" that the reporters should also be more "responsible" while reporting.



PHOTO: CPJ

Tipu Sultan, an investigative reporter, was tortured almost to death for reporting against a local ruling Awami League leader in 2001.

The prime character of Bangladeshi politics is that our political parties have the tendency of not reaching any consensus on the major issues of the day. But surprisingly all of them seem have agreed to the fact that pesky journalists who reveal their dirty laundry will not 'go scot-free'. No government has taken any step against these criminals. Killing of journalist couple Sagar- Runi is a case in point. No motive has still been found behind this brutal crime. A gang of thugs wielding machete attacked the office of bdnews24.com, one of the largest online media outlet a few months ago in which nine journalists were severely wounded. The entire office was vandalised by the attackers. Sometimes even police come into the field with a flag of rescue for the thugs. On May 29, 2012 police burst into the court building and assaulted three journalists and two lawyers in the presence of two senior officers, Salahuddin Khan, the officer in charge at Kotwali police station, and Rajib Al Masud, an assistant police commissioner.

No visible measure is being taken against the assailants of journalists. In most cases the assailants get political shelter, because of which the police don't dare to investigate the cases.

Media is the only source of truth for the common people. Unfortunately few politicians want us to know them. When it comes to gagging the press, there are countries worse than ours. But, a nation that had fought a bloody and ruthless war to make its voice heard, muzzling the free press is against its very own four founding principles. Presently the country is standing at a crossroads, and so is its journalism. In a country plagued with the likes of Hazari and Taher, freedom of speech is going to remain a far cry. ■