

English translation:

There are several Bengali TV channels now... I think about eight of them, although, except for the government run BTV (Bangladesh Television), none of them have terrestrial transmission facilities. They can only transmit via satellite. So only the people who have a cable connection at home can view these channels. These channels air various types of programs. Among these programs, they always have a news program, although our neighboring countries do not really show news on channels like these. That is, entertainment channels do not have permission to broadcast news. Their news channels are totally separate, they only show news. But in Bangladesh, if these entertainment channels don't have news programs, then their popularity goes down and as a result people don't watch these channels. They give a lot of importance to the news, and they have trust for the channels that broadcast unbiased news.

Regarding this matter: during the reign of the past government, that is the 1996-2001 government, the first private television channel was established, named Ekushey Television (ETV). They are the ones who remedied... Under the guidance and training of former BBC journalist, Mark Callis, a skilled news group had formed. They have now gone into other channels and improved their news programs. And other than that, very recently, it hasn't even been a year yet, four private institutions have been given permission for FM transmission. Before that, we only had one government run radio channel, *Bangladesh Betaar*, which was amplitude modulated. From the four FM radio channels, two have already begun transmission. One has started well on financial terms, too, with advertising campaigns and different types of programs and news hours, etc., and they also give reports on the traffic situation of Dhaka city from time to time, which helps drivers a lot and thus it has gained considerable popularity. The other one is still doing test transmissions. This is mainly a music radio channel; its name is also like that, Radio Foorti.¹ The other two radio stations have not yet started transmissions; one is in the process with its installation equipment and the other is still in the dark.

So this is what the television and radio scene looks like, and they have established some good transmission services in Bangladesh. Apart from this, there is another media, that is, the print media. In Dhaka alone, there are about at least seven daily newspapers. The small towns of Bangladesh also have several daily newspapers. And a few of the Dhaka centered newspapers have printing presses in these small towns, too, so that printing can simultaneously be done in both Dhaka and other places. This has been started for a few years now and has gained immense popularity. Otherwise, due to bad road communication links, by the time the newspapers reached their destinations it would be late, at least late afternoon. So people could not get the morning news in the morning. So, after this arrangement, the newspapers that follow this have gotten more popular and their sales have gone up. This pretty much sums up the Bangladeshi media. On the cultural

¹ "foorti" means "fun" in Bengali.

side, there are dramas and then the Institute of Fine Arts, that has a theatre [and] where they have two or three plays regularly. And there are some stage groups that perform there as well. That's it.

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