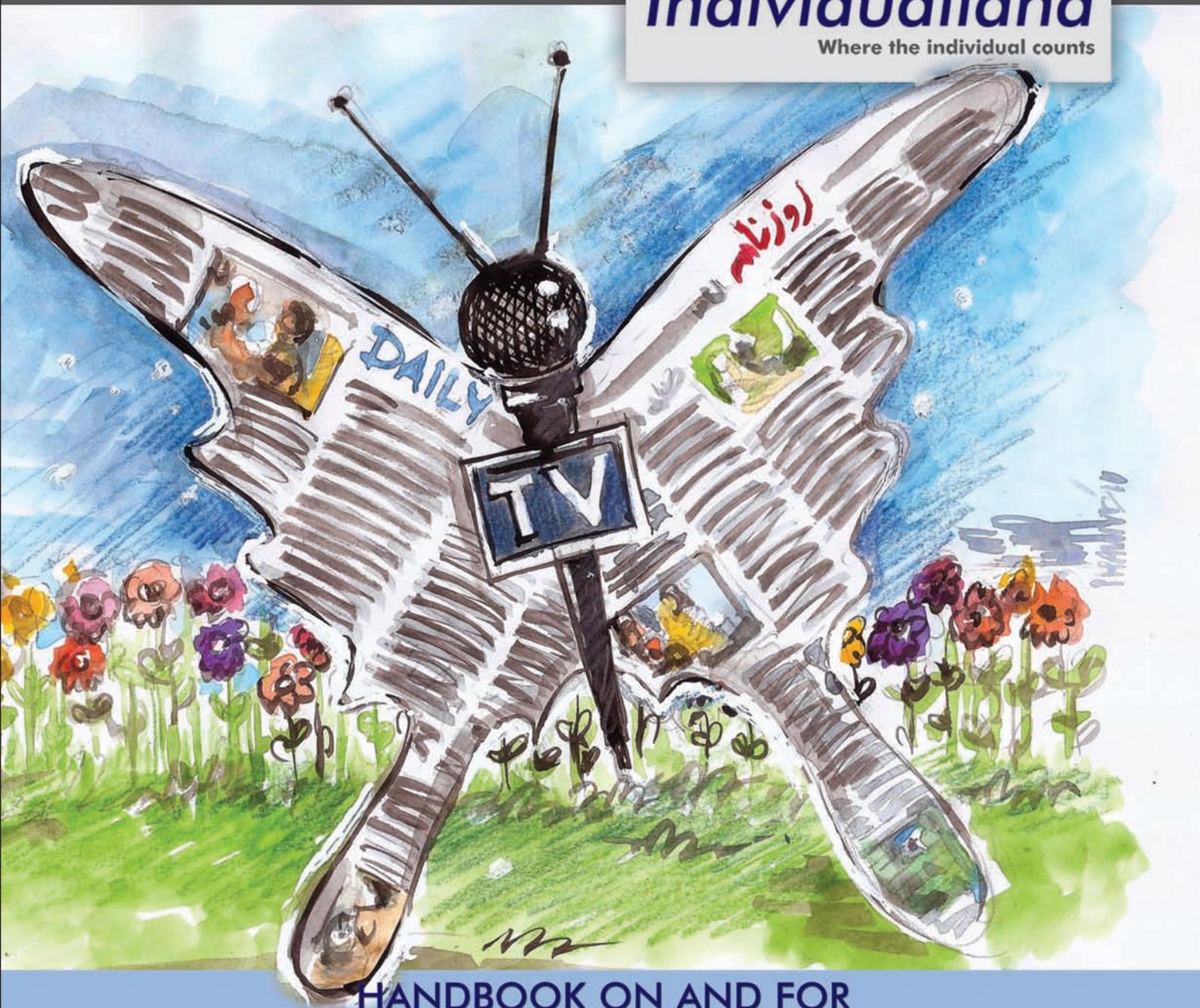


Individualland

Where the individual counts



HANDBOOK ON AND FOR

Free **I**ndependent **R**esponsible **M**edia

Supported by

Friedrich Naumann
STIFTUNG

FÜR DIE FREIHEIT

Individualland
Where the individual counts

HANDBOOK ON AND FOR

Free **I**ndependent **R**esponsible **M**edia

Supported by

Friedrich Naumann
STIFTUNG **FÜR DIE FREIHEIT**

Lead Author: Gulmina Bilal Ahmad

Researchers: Mian Ehsam Waheed, Zulfiqar Haider , Muhammad Zeeshan Khan,
Ammar Zafarullah, Fazal Sher

Illustrations: Akhtar Shah (Shatoon)

The author acknowledges the support of Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit for providing financial assistance to conduct this research. The information presented here would not have been possible without inputs from various sections of civil society. Despite all the assistance received, the lead author personally assumes the responsibility of any omissions.

Individualland

Where the individual counts

House 12-B, Street 26,
F-8/1, Islamabad - Pakistan
Tel: +92-51 2 25 34 37, 2 25 34 38
E-mail: info@individualland.com
Url: www.individualland.com

supported by

Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit

P.O Box 1733,
Islamabad - Pakistan
Tel: +92-51-2 27 88 96, 2 82 08 96
Fax: +92-51-2 27 99 15
E-mail: pakistan@fnst.org
Url: www.southasia.fnst.org

ISBN: 978-969-9515-14-9
No of printed copies: 2,000

Islamabad, November 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Chapter 1: What is FIRM?	6
Chapter 2: Sensational or Yellow Journalism	16
Chapter 3: Professional and ethical standards of journalism	25
Chapter 4: Responsibilities of Journalists	32
Chapter 5: Conflict, disaster reporting and its importance in Pakistan	35
Chapter 6: Steps to improve standards of journalism in Pakistan	42
Chapter 7: Linkages of General Public with Media	53
Chapter 8: Regulation of Media	57
Annexure A - List of activities conducted by IL	71
Annexure B - Profiles of key resource persons for this handbook	72

Before we begin discussing the concept and the implications of **Free, Independent and Responsible Media (FIRM)**, let us make an attempt to understand questions like:

A need for FIRM?

- In a country which has suffered successive dictatorships characterized by ridiculous controls on expression, no one can really contend against the argument for a free media.
- Neither can anyone condone excessive regulation or control of media. But this is precisely where we skate on thin ice. Free media has to be synonymous with responsible media.
- Media plays a huge role in our lives. It helps us in understanding the world around us by providing information about so many different aspects of it like politics, economics, sports, entertainment etc.
- At the same time media faces a lot of issues which may include government influence including overt and covert censorship, biases in the media, market forces that tend to dominate media monopolies.
- The idea of **FIRM** is an attempt to focus on the internal as well as the external issues journalists face in the line of duty.

DISCLAIMER: Discussion on media will be done from a liberal perspective.

What is the liberal perspective?

- Liberalism is the belief in the importance of liberty and equal access to opportunities.
- Liberals believe in a media that is free from prejudice and bigotry. They believe in a media that is independent of any influence and bias
- They believe in a media that is responsible in all sense of the word i.e. socially, economically, politically and culturally.
- In a liberal society, it doesn't mean one can get away with 'hate speech' as it is checked by laws and regulations. The same applies to the media.

Why a Handbook on FIRM?

- As contemporary societies grow, the need to coordinate, channelise and strengthen information sharing medium also grows. This has a key role in evolution of any society.
- **BUT** before media can contribute to the constant evolution of a society, it must often undergo it's own self-improvement processes. This handbook is a small step in that direction.

I. What is FIRM?

*The free press is the mother of all our liberties
and of our progress under liberty.*

- Adlai E. Stevenson¹

What FIRM means?

- **FIRM** means **F**ree, **I**ndependent and **R**esponsible **M**edia.
- It is an initiative to achieve, improve and address the weaknesses present in the already dynamic, vigilant and stimulating media in Pakistan.
- **FIRM** is not about reforming media in Pakistan. It is about exploring, inspiring and being inspired along with media to evolve.
- This initiative is not about creating new channels or newspapers but it's about assisting the existing ones to examine their freedom with responsibility and be accountable to their consumers.
- **FIRM** is more like a free flowing river of ideas, opinions and information.

Why FIRM matters?

- **FIRM** is essential for a proper democratic setup. Both complement each other.
- For democracy to flourish, it is necessary that people have unbiased information about parties, candidates and manifestoes to make informed choices about who they want in the corridors of power. Media is the tool which can help people in choosing the best candidate by unbiased and responsible reporting.
- For **FIRM**, democracy provides the necessary room for improvement and evolution. The right to express freely is guaranteed which may not be the case in a monarchy or dictatorship.

¹ Adlai Ewing Stevenson was an American politician, noted for his intellectual insight and promotion of liberal causes in the Democratic Party. Adlai Stevenson worked as a journalist and as a lawyer in Chicago before being elected as the 31st Governor of Illinois. He received the Democratic Party's nomination for President in 1952 and 1956.

- Just like shopping, in a democracy the best candidate can only be elected if the people have been informed about all the choices they have. A **Free, Independent and Responsible Media** does that.
- When societies grow and evolve, they need to share and coordinate. Information also increases. That is where a free, independent and responsible media serves as the focal point for all communication.
- Media in any country is the best tool to fight prevalent issues. The simple reason behind this is the wide area of influence media has. In Pakistan, media along with the people has been instrumental in fighting dictatorships, terrorism and corruption by raising the awareness level of people.
- Pakistan is facing troubled times where people are dying of terrorism around the country.²
- Pakistani media by effectively translating Pakistan's efforts in fighting terrorism is an important stakeholder in the peace process.
- By highlighting the atrocities of Taliban it has served to highlight the plight of the people.³
- The role of journalists in going behind enemy lines and the Swat flogging video have been major turning points in this 'war on terror'. According to Pakistan Federation of Union of Journalists (PFUJ) six journalists were killed in 2009⁴ and six journalists have been killed until September 2010 in Pakistan⁵.

How FIRM transforms a society?

- Exchange of ideas and opinions feeds the intellect of a society. **FIRM** enhances this by providing factual, exclusive ideas and unbiased, balanced opinions.
- **FIRM** is actually more about a free society. If the graph for **FIRM** increases, probability is that the society will be more liberal.

² In 2010, 6,135 people have died in terrorist related events. Since 2003 a total of 31,323 people have died in terrorist activities.

³ The media has been vital in highlighting issues such as flogging of a girl in Swat and the stoning of a woman in Orakzai agency

⁴ <http://pfuj.pk/journalists-killed>

⁵ <http://cpj.org/killed/asia/pakistan>

- This could be understood by comparing the social scenario in 1980s and now.
- There was a time when the newspapers could not get their stories published prior to an approval by an authority. Today in a democratic setup, that rule does not exist.
- That not only means that media is free but it also highlights that the acceptance level of people have risen indicating a freer society.
- **FIRM** challenges, dismays, disrupts, disturbs and outrages elements opposing a peaceful society.

How to be FIRM?

- **FIRM** cannot be achieved by exercising in the gym! It can be achieved by battling taboos and dogmas which exist around media in Pakistan.
- It is difficult to achieve **FIRM** but even more difficult to live with **FIRM**.

How FIRM we all are at present?

Food for thought:

1. An award winning editor-in-chief of a Lahore-based weekly political magazine has faced harassment, torture and political imprisonment at the hands of many democratic governments. In 1999, he was imprisoned by the then government on charges of treason. The reason was relentless exposure of corruption of a prominent figure in his magazine. The Supreme Court of Pakistan later rejected the charges and freed him after one month. While in detention, he was tortured and suffered a heart attack, which necessitated heart surgery in 2000. The government continued to harass him later by slapping dozens of income tax cases, accused him of being a “non-Muslim” and tried to deprive him of his voting rights. But all the cases were dismissed by the courts and his rights were restored.
2. In 1992, Pakistan's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Dr Maleeha Lodhi, was charged with treason for running as a news item, a poem calling for the military overthrow of the first Nawaz Sharif government. The entire journalist community, all major political parties and even some individual

members of the then ruling party coming to the support of the then editor of a major English language newspaper.⁶

3. In Slovakia when Vladimir Meciar was Prime Minister, the government could assign where a paper was printed. If the paper opposed PM Meciar, the government would take the paper off a modern offset press and put it on a 1909 press. All of a sudden they'd lose advertising from the auto companies and all the companies that required good production facilities for their ads. The government could deny any responsibility for the declining revenue of this opposition newspaper.

Question: In the above three examples, the situation, actions and events are threatening for FIRM.

True OR False ?

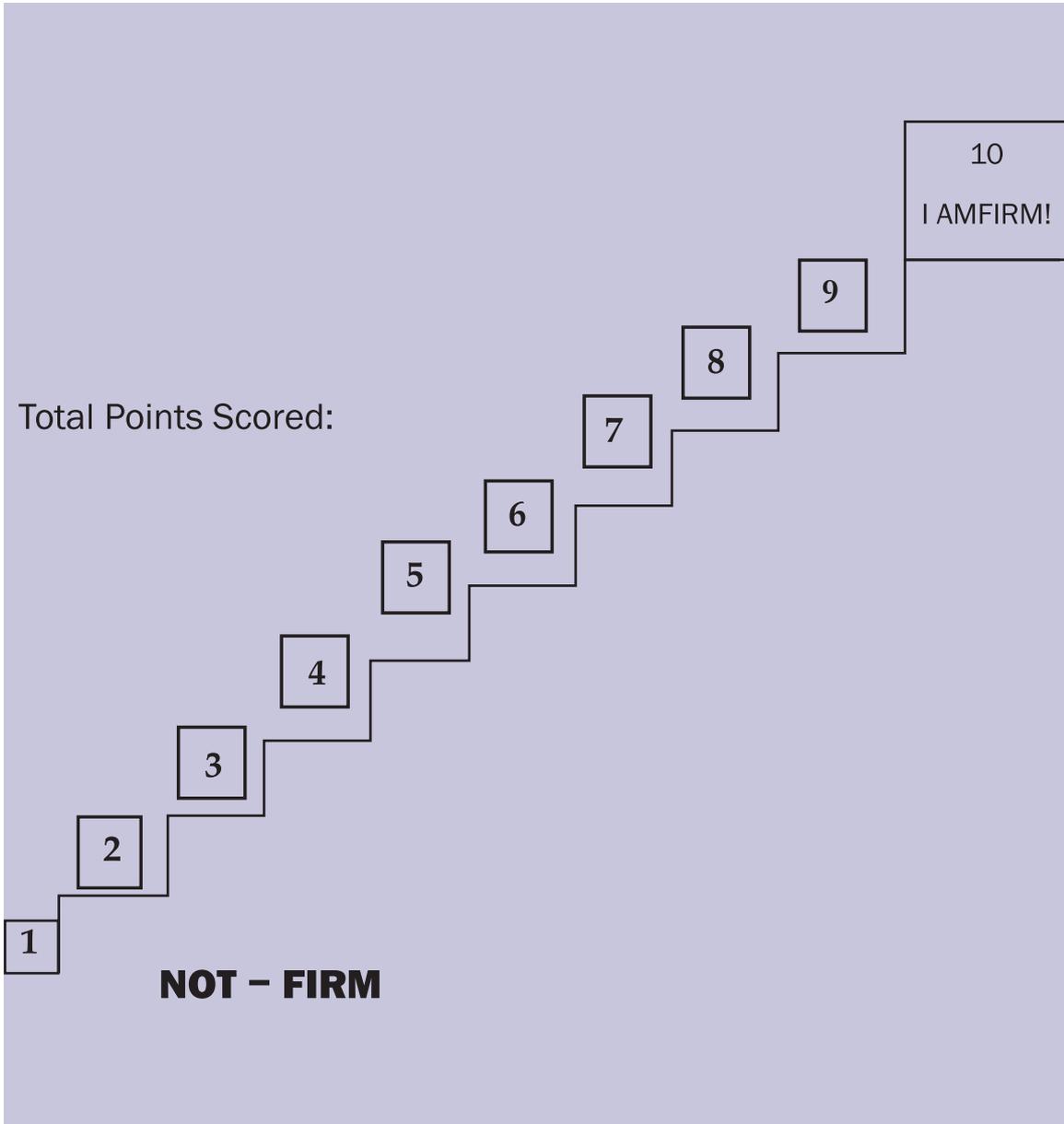
How FIRM are YOU?

Below is a set of ten questions. For every "Yes", give yourself 1 mark. At the end calculate the total and see where you stand.

1. I **always** remained committed to my personal freedom to write the truth. (Y/N)
2. I have **never** written a biased or a prejudiced story. (Y/N)
3. I have **never** used my pen to draw personal gain or profit. (Y/N)
4. I have **never** used my power to take revenge from anyone. (Y/N)
5. I **always** support being accountable to people and anyone for the work I do. (Y/N)
6. I have **never** been involved in plagiarism or fabrication. (Y/N)
7. I have **never** reported out of context. (Y/N)
8. I have **never** worked for a hidden agenda whether personal or organizational. (Y/N)

⁶http://www.antisystemic.org/satribune/www.satribune.com/archives/may16_22_04/P1_hh.htm

- 9. I have **always** respected privacy of others when reporting. (Y/N)
- 10. I have **always** paid attention to ethical and professional considerations in my work. (Y/N)



FIRM as the fourth pillar of state ?

What are the four pillars of state? They are:

- Executive – Cabinet of ministers that take decision.
- Judiciary – upholds the rule of law and ensures and checks the laws made by the government are within the ambit of the constitution and don't violate the fundamental laws of the citizen.
- Legislative – Elected Representatives

AND

- Media – does not have any constitutional or statutory powers but holds up the mirror for society including government making it the fourth pillar.



- The term Fourth Estate (Fourth Pillar) refers to the press, both in its explicit capacity of advocacy and in its implicit ability to support frame of political issues. The term goes back at least to Thomas Carlyle⁷ in the first half of the 19th century.

Novelist Jeffrey Archer⁸ in his work *The Fourth Estate* made the observation: "In May 1789, Louis XVI summoned to Versailles a full meeting of the 'Estates General'. The First Estate consisted of three hundred clergy. The Second Estate, three hundred nobles. The Third Estate, six hundred commoners. Some years later, after the French Revolution, Edmund Burke⁹, looking up at the Press Gallery of the House of Commons, said, "Yonder sits the Fourth Estate, and they are more important than them all."

- Media which includes newspapers, television, radio and internet is a powerful force in developing people's opinions. Opinions are of course the crux of political thinking.
- Media is called the fourth pillar due to the important role of media in shaping public opinion.
- As a fourth pillar media is the watch dog of political democracy.
- Media has an important role as a bridge between governing bodies and general public. In the absence of media, general public cannot know about what kind of legislation is done in the parliament and what their positive and negative effects on the society are.

⁷ Thomas Carlyle (4 December 1795 – 5 February 1881) was a Scottish satirical writer, essayist, historian and teacher.

⁸ Jeffrey Howard Archer, Baron Archer of Weston-super-Mare (born 15 April 1940) is an English author and former politician.

⁹ Edmund Burke PC (12 January [NS] 1729 – 9 July 1797) was an Irish statesman, author, orator, political theorist and philosopher.

Dissection of the Fourth pillar

Below are some examples from the local newspapers which highlight some of the areas where room for improvement is available.

Afia's sentence is a challenge to Muslim Umma's honor ¹⁰

The news story by a correspondent quotes the spokesperson of Taliban, Azam Tariq who termed the sentence of Afia Siddiqui as an insult to Muslim Umma's honor and lamented the government for being a puppet of United States. He urged the government to join hands with Taliban and defeat the US forces and further said that the drone attacks can not deter their commitment.



Comments:

- i. Apparently the correspondent asked little questions as this news story looks more like a Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) press release.
- ii. The story offers no insight and repeats the Taliban rhetoric with more vigor.
- iii. A perfect illustration of militant propaganda.

¹⁰ 27th September 2010, Daily Nawa-e-Waqt, p. 8, 2 columns.

Presidential Immunity, majority of parliamentarians might not support Prime Minister¹¹

In this news report by a senior journalist, there is speculation that the weak government may face another setback as majority of the parliamentarians might not support Premier Gillani's stance on presidential immunity. Allies such as Jamiat-e-Ulema-el-Islam Pakistan (Fazal-ur-Rehman Group) and Awami National Party (ANP) will wait for the Supreme Court verdict before choosing a stance.

Comments:

- i. The news story is a political prophecy/prediction which is based on assumptions and speculations e.g. the term "weak government", how does this hold true?
- ii. How does the reporter know the majority of parliamentarians might not side with the premier? Again this is an assumption.
- iii. This can be filed as an opinion piece but not as a news story on the front page.

Tribals protest against drone strikes in Waziristan¹²

In this news report by monitoring desk quotes a private TV station on the protest of tribes in Waziristan where they closed down the markets and waved black flags

Comments:

- i. While the accuracy of this news report may not be disputed it offers vague information.



¹¹ 27th September 2010, Daily Jang, p. 2 columns.

¹² 1st October 2010, Daily Khabrian, p. 3 , 2 columns.

- ii. Which private station covered the story? Why can it not be named?
- iii. Where in Waziristan? i.e. North or South?
- iv. How many protesters were there?

Pervez bowed down to single call from Washington ¹³

A news story compares the actions of Pervez Musharraf, as it says in the aftermath of 9/11 he gave up fighting and pushed Pakistan in a cesspool. Whereas US apology on NATO incursions shows the vision of present command. The report further talks about how RAW Indian agency thwarted an assassination plot on Pervez Musharraf.

Comment:

- i. Was Pervez Musharraf's move a blunder? Should we have not joined the war against terror? These are the points only historians can determine. The journalist's assessment is not objective news. It is his opinion.
- ii. "The present leadership compelled the US to apologize". Again this is an opinion not a fact.
- iii. General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani is not mentioned in this news story but his picture is attached.
- iv. The assassination plot of Musharraf: How is that relevant to the story?

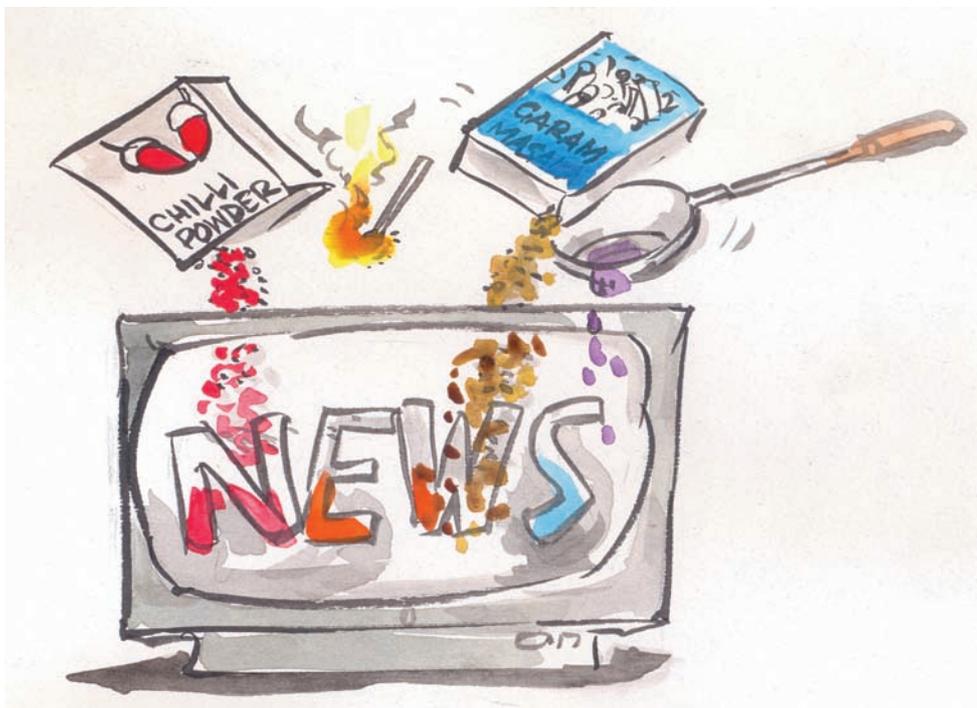
¹³ 7 October 2010, Daily Jang, p. 8, 2 columns.

II. Sensational or Yellow Journalism

*I'm in the reporting part of journalism.
I'm not in the judgment part of journalism.*

- Jim Lehrer ¹⁴

- Sensational or Yellow Journalism is journalism that exploits, distorts and exaggerates the news to create sensation and attract readers.
- Flamboyant and irresponsible approach to news reporting is known as “yellow journalism.”
- Yellow journalism, sometimes called ‘sensationalist journalism’ is a term that was often used about New York newspapers around 1900.
- This term was coined by Ervin Wardman¹⁵, publisher of the sedate New York Herald. The phrase “the Yellow Journalism” appeared in a small headline on the Press editorial page on January 31, 1897.



¹⁴ James Charles "Jim" Lehrer (born May 19, 1934) is an American journalist.

¹⁵ Ervin Wardman was the Editor of New York Press.

Defining Yellow Journalism

American historian and journalist, Frank Luther Mott¹⁶, uses five criterias for defining “yellow journalism”:

1. Screaming headlines designed to scare individuals into purchasing the newspaper or magazine when often the news is in fact, minor.
2. Overuse of images or drawings.
3. The utilization of fake interviews, headlines designed to mislead readers, pseudo science or input from several ‘experts’ which may or may not be valid.
4. Emphasis on full-color Sunday supplements, including comic strips.
5. Sympathetic angle depicting an ‘underdog’ fighting against the system.



Food for thought:

Do you know that the Spanish–American War in 1898 was a result of “yellow journalism”? Many historians believe that. Spare a thought!

Joseph Pulitzer¹⁷ and William Randolph Hearst¹⁸ are often blamed for drawing USA into the Spanish-American War with sensationalist stories or outright lying. The most famous example of the exaggeration is the apocryphal story that artist Frederic Remington¹⁹

¹⁶ Frank Luther Mott (April 4, 1886 – October 23, 1964) was an American historian and journalist. He coined the term photojournalism in 1924.

¹⁷ Joseph Pulitzer (April 10, 1847 – October 29, 1911) was a American newspaper publisher of the St. Louis Post Dispatch and the New York World.

¹⁸ William Randolph Hearst (April 29, 1863 – August 14, 1951) was an American newspaper magnate and leading newspaper publisher.

telegraphed Hearst to tell him all was quiet in Cuba and “There will be no war.”“ Hearst responded “Please remain. You furnish the pictures and I'll furnish the war”. The story first appeared in the memoirs of reporter James Creelman²⁰ in 1901 and there is no other source for it.

Factors that promote the practice of yellow journalism

- A fight for dominance by a certain newspaper or channel.
- To attract or generate more revenue either on personal or organizational level.
- To settle personal grudges.

What are the adverse effects of yellow journalism?

- It distorts and tarnishes facts which in turn will create panic.
- It puts a question mark on the credibility of all journalists even those who are not involved.
- Sensationalism corrupts objectivity of any news.

What are some short term benefits of yellow journalism?

- It will give a temporary boost to a journalist's career.
- It may increase readership/viewership of newspaper or the channel following it.

¹⁹ Frederic Sackrider Remington (October 4, 1861 – December 26, 1909) was an American painter, illustrator, sculptor and writer who specialized in depictions of the Old American West.

²⁰ James Creelman (November 12, 1859 – February 12, 1915), was a reporter during the height of yellow journalism. By 1876 he joined the New York Herald as a reporter.

Questions for you:

- Are these “short term benefits” actually “long term losses”?
- Is it worth doing something immoral for personal benefits?



Prominent English daily reported that Interior Minister Rehman Malik has lodged a case with the Press Club in Islamabad against a misreporting incident by a private channel. Questions which a FIRM Journalist would explore are:

1. Is it the ideal way to pursue a misreporting complaint by anyone?
2. Does a Press Club have any power to conduct such an investigation?
3. Can a Press club or any union of journalists have the authority to be a Judge?
4. Does such a body have an authority to suggest any compensation, punishment or even a verdict against any channel or newspaper?

Another English Daily* published a story on its opinion page titled as “Generals angry with Zardari over deteriorating economy”.

Some extracts from the story are as follows:

The Pakistani military, angered by the inept handling of the country's devastating floods and alarmed by a collapse of the economy, is pushing for a shake-up of the elected government.

* The News, 29 September 2010.

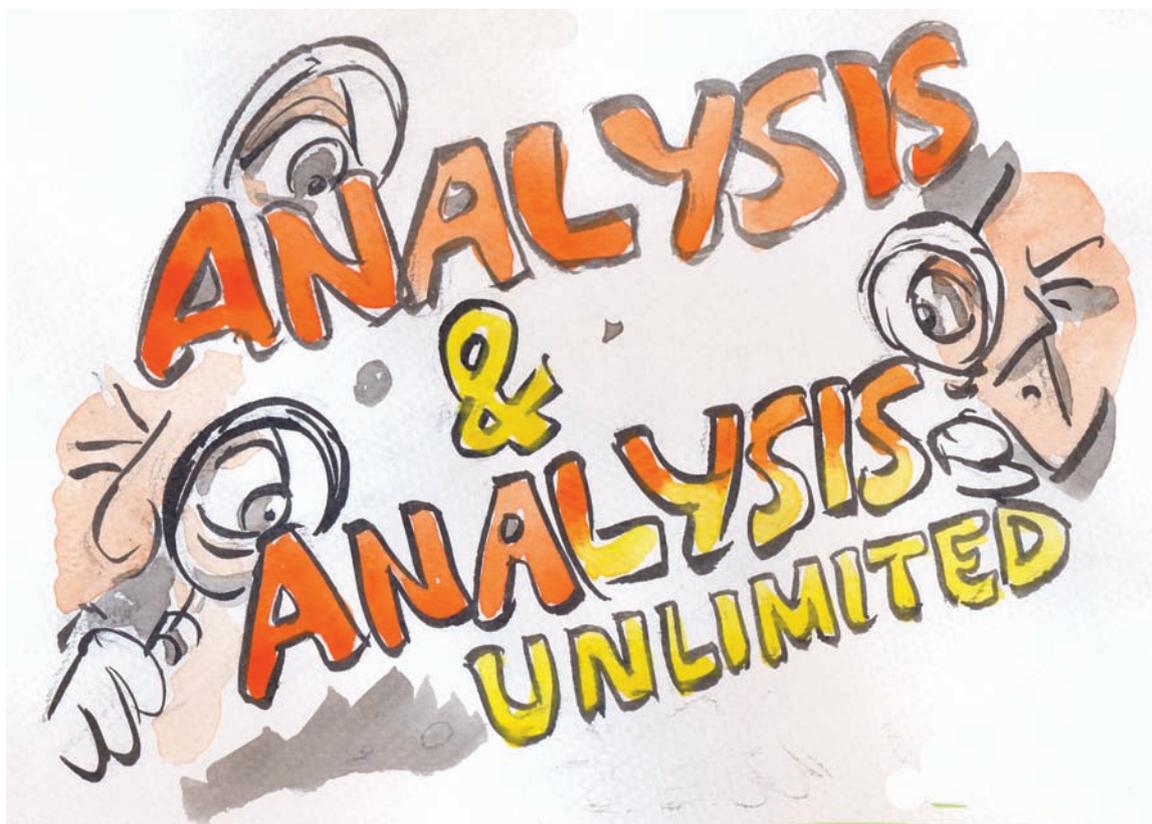
In a series of meetings with the civilian leaders, the Army Chief, Gen Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, told the President and his Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani for incompetence and corruption in the government, according to officials familiar with the conversations.

Zardari told the general that, come what may, he will not be maneuvered aside, according to a Pakistani official close to the President who was familiar with the conversations but did not want to be identified.

Still, it is clear that General Kayani, head of the country's most powerful and respected institution has ratcheted up the pressure on the government in the past several weeks.

Military officers in the main cities have been talking openly and expansively about their contempt for the Zardari government and what they term the economic calamity, an unusual candor, reporters and politicians said.

As the military maneuvers for change, it is not immune from criticism. Defense spending is budgeted at 13.6 percent of total expenditures in 2011, in line with past yearly expenditures even as the civilian population suffers.



Points to ponder

- Agreed that this is an opinionated article but should any newspaper allow such terminology to be used for describing the nature of meeting with the head of state and his premiere.
- Do such opinions serve to create a rift between the government and the army?
- What are the sources of all this information?
- Is the information provided above more opinionated or more factual in your opinion?

How to avoid yellow journalism?

I can avoid falling prey to “yellow journalism” by:

- Properly researching the facts before reporting.
- Making sure my informant is credible.
- Keeping a keen eye on social trends to avoid sparking violence by reporting on sensitive issues.

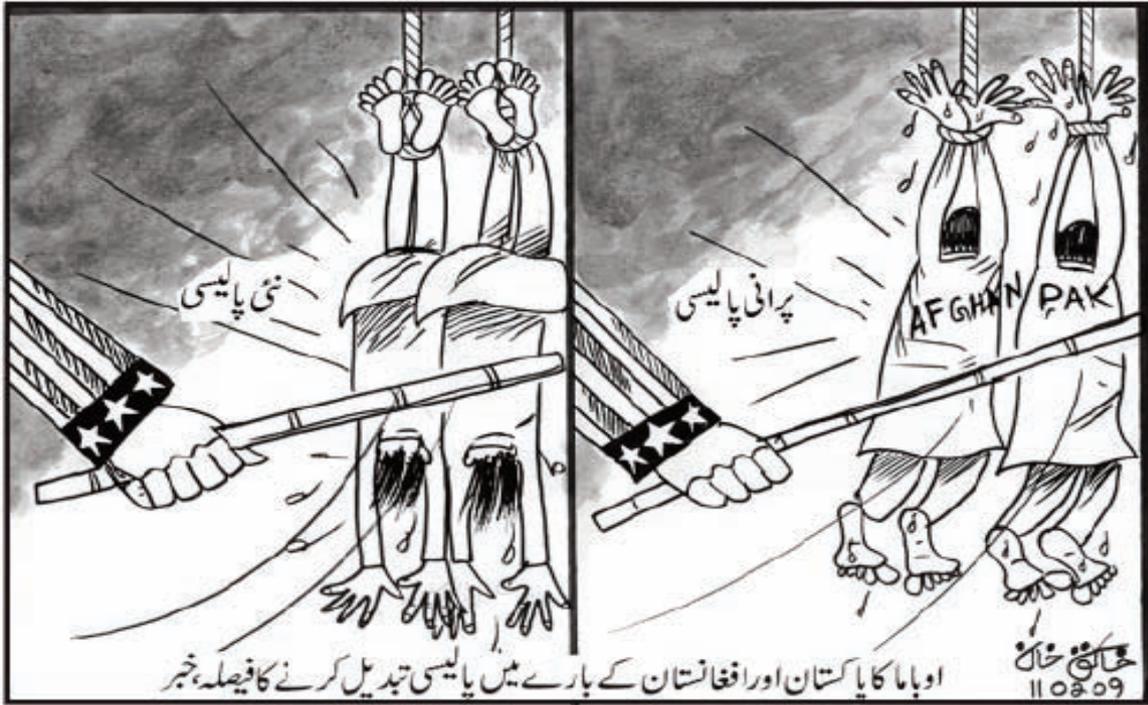
How to draw a line between responsibility and sensationalism?

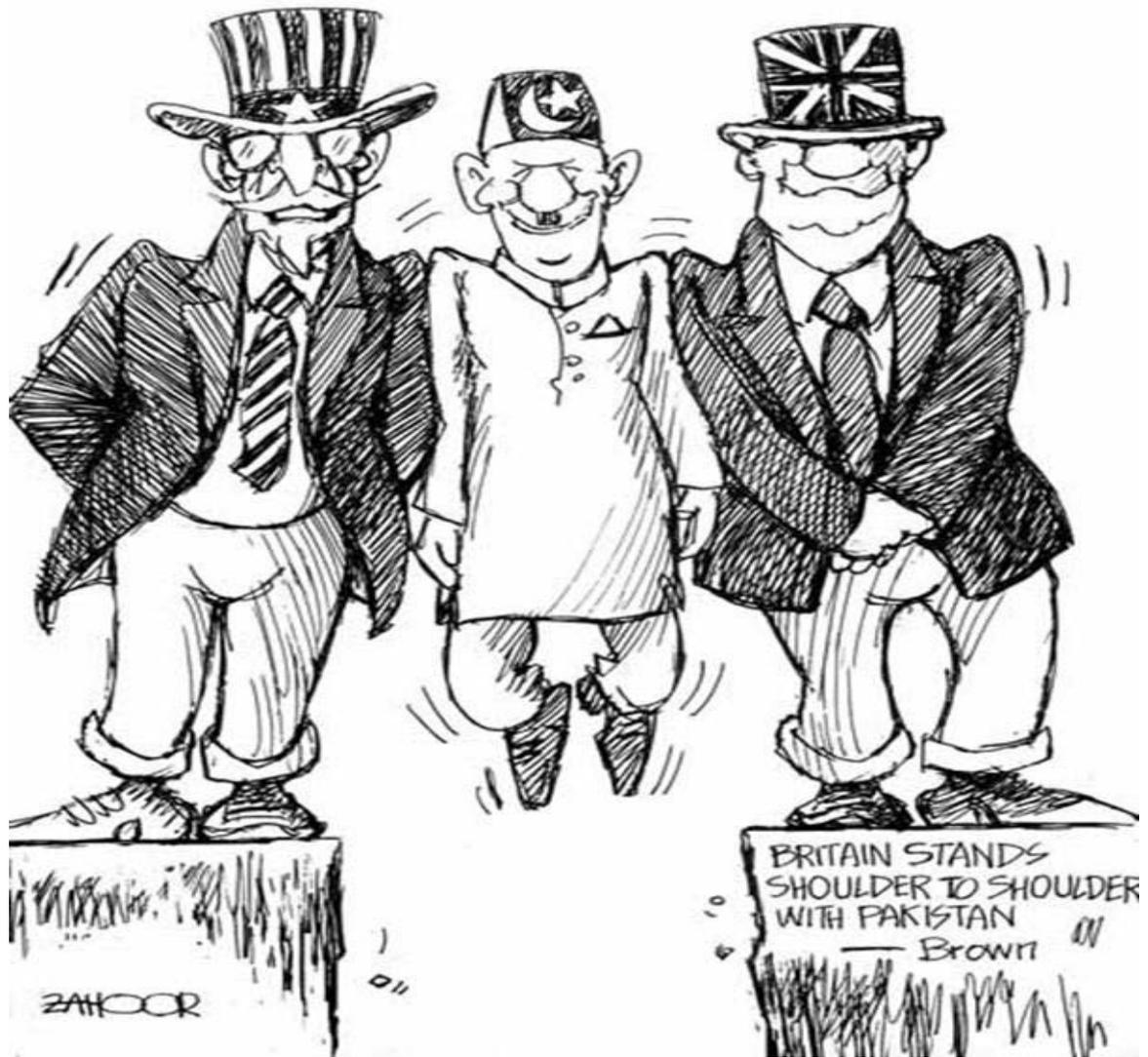
- If I am **FIRM** then I will not need to pump any story up in order to get people to read or watch.
- I will walk that fine line between informing the public yet not revealing information that may be harmful for government or public.
- Being a journalist in a terror struck country like Pakistan puts additional responsibilities on me to be **FIRM**.

Activity

Take a look at the following examples below:

Pay attention to how the policy is being illustrated as an aggressive one. What is the message being given?





So Pakistan's alliance with global community is on false grounds or 'No Grounds' at all based on what is being shown.



اسلام آباد: وزیر اعظم یوسف رضا گیلانی سے منگل کے روز پرائم منسٹر باؤس میں ملاقات کے موقع پر امریکی نمائندے رچرڈ ہالبروک اور مائیک مولن اپنی نشستوں پر بیٹھنے کی تیاری کر رہے ہیں (آن لائن)

Although the Urdu caption below the picture says that the foreign dignitaries are about to sit but is that the real message? You be the judge



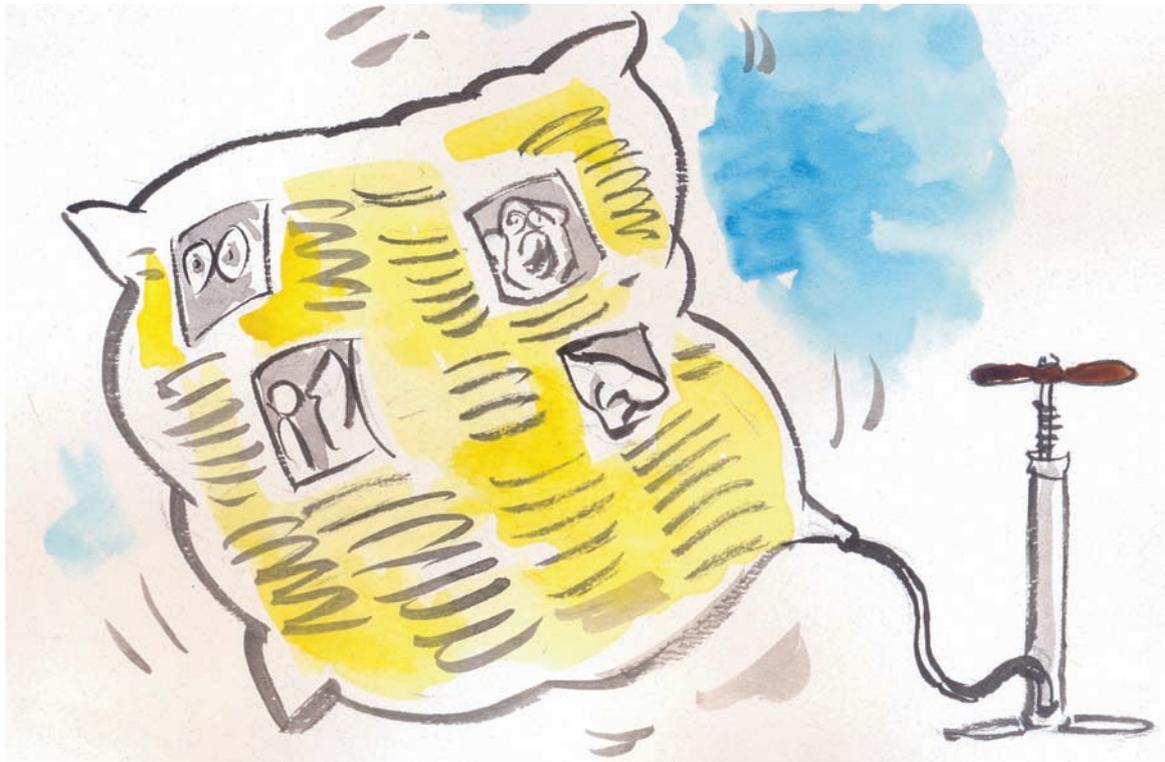
III. Professional and ethical standards of journalism

News Corporations, today, reach people at home and at work; when they're thinking; when they're laughing and when they are making choices that have enormous impact. The unique potential and duty of a media company is to help its audiences connect to the issues that define our time.

- Rupert Murdoch²¹

How to balance a news story?

- Objectivity is a significant principle when writing any news story.
- A news story must not take sides and should be free from bias.
- A **FIRM** journalist always balances a story than just putting words in someone's mouth.
- Balance in a story is achieved by making sure that the story is not biased against any specific individual or organization. It does not ridicule any organization or person.



²¹ Keith Rupert Murdoch (11 March 1931) is an Australian-born American media magnate and the founder, chairman and chief executive officer of News Corporation.

What is “News manipulation”? Simple...In other words ‘Spice it up’!

- Media manipulation or news manipulation is the practice of creating an image or argument that favors certain people and organizations.
- Tactics may include the use of logical fallacies and propaganda techniques. It often involves the suppression of information or points of view by crowding them out.
- The purpose of manipulating news is to create distractions.

Reporting out of context/half truths

- Propaganda, reporting out of context or half-truths is a form of communication that is aimed at influencing the attitude of a community toward some cause or position.
- Propaganda can be as blatant as the sun itself or as subtle as a joke.
- With the growth of communication tools like the Internet, the flow of persuasive messages has been dramatically accelerated.

Difference between a News Story and an Opinion Page article:

- A “news story” is data or information gathered from different sources and then researched upon to give a final version.
- A news story is based on facts.
- It is more inclined towards what has been said by an authority on a prevailing issue.
- It does not offer the reader an analysis of the situation from a personal view of the reporter.
- While an Opinion Page article is a part of a newspaper where different journalists/columnists can and have the right to express their opinions on the topics they cover.

KARACHI: The Anti terrorist court in Karachi concluded the hearing of Allama Hassan Turabi's murder case on Thursday. Three of the six accused were sentenced to death and the other three were sentenced to life imprisonment.

Example of a News Story

Allama Hasan Turabi, and his young nephew were killed when a suicide bomber blew himself up outside the religious leader's Gulshan-i-Iqbal residence on July 16, 2006.

The six accused had been charged with masterminding the suicide attack on the Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal leader and also with planting a remote-control bomb to kill him.

The anti terrorist court judge, Anand Ram based on the evidence provided to the court ordered death sentences to Amanullah, Muhammad Rehman and Sultan Mahmood.

Life imprisonment was ordered to the remaining three, Ashfaq, Muhammad Akber and Rahim.

- In the example below, the writer is expressing a personal opinion/thought about the issues between Pakistan and India.
- The opinion is based on history, socio-political dynamics and personal experience.

SECOND EDITORIAL: The words of Rao

Indian Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao's lecture at Harvard University on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly carried some encouraging news. By saying that India is prepared to "discuss all outstanding issues, including Kashmir" with Pakistan, the foreign secretary has extended the hand of dialogue once again. However, she has also reiterated that Kashmir is an "internal matter" as it is "an integral part of India"; this, unfortunately, is a statement that is far removed from the ground realities in Indian Held Kashmir (IHK).

The civil unrest in Kashmir is bringing out the youth, bare-chested and stone pelting, like never before. In response to the deadly violence and bullets meted out to them by the Indian security forces, the new generation of Kashmiris has shown its determination not to be cowed down. It is becoming increasingly difficult for India to continue to veil the unending cycles of violence in Kashmir. Continuation of such attempts at obfuscation is only going to witness further mayhem in IHK. The current visit of Indian lawmakers to IHK has been jeered, protested against, and told to go back home. It is time India gets real on the Kashmir issue.

Post-Mumbai, India has realised that engaging in talks with a neighbour they accuse of masterminding terror on its soil is the only way forward to bring a halt to the militant menace. The terrorists want nothing more than to halt any friendly overtures; India finally realising this is a welcome sign. Ms Rao has also said that Pakistan must do all it can to "eradicate" the terrorism perpetrated on Indian soil, if all issues are to be tabled. It must be said that since the resumption of dialogue, no matter how awkward, infiltration of non-state actors in IHK has fallen off, as well as attacks occurring in India. With terrorism in India that can be traced back to Pakistan becoming the exception rather than the rule, more positive talks and diplomatic engagement promises to bear badly needed fruit.

With foreign ministers Shah Mehmood Qureshi and S M Krishna expected to meet next week in New York, it is hoped that the prickly subject of Kashmir is handled effectively and realistically. There is no substitute for talks, and no substitute for peace. *



Truth & Honesty

- Truth and honesty are two important traits of a **FIRM** journalist.
- Searching for truth and writing with honesty are the goals of a **FIRM** journalist.

Example: The use of Freedom of Information Act adds credibility and truth to a news story.

Ensure Privacy

- A **FIRM** journalist when reporting always ensures that his/her story does not become an intrusion into someone's privacy.
- "Bedroom" and "boardroom" affairs are different for a **FIRM** journalist.
- Paparazzi is a concept that does not bode with the concept of a **FIRM** journalist.

Example: Consider the dilemma of a rape victim, whose identity needs to be protected.

Benefit from your curiosity

- A **FIRM** journalist follows the principle "know something about everything".
- But he always keeps in mind "Curiosity killed the cat". Too much of everything is bad.

Example: Investigative journalism is core element of FIRM, by thoroughly investigating and accurately reporting the facts.

Celebrate your courage

- A **FIRM** journalist will never shy away from his duties in tough times.
- When the going gets tough, a **FIRM** journalist gets going.

Example: Conflict reporting needs courage, but always remember in the golden rule of "Safety First".

Determination & patience

- Determination and patience are a **FIRM** journalist's most precious assets.
- S/he pursues news with determination and researches the truth with patience.

Control your "Flight of imagination"

- A **FIRM** journalist does not let imagination rule certainty.
- His/her work is a triumph of reality over imagination.

How to avoid fabrication & plagiarism?

- Cutting and pasting is the plagiarist's friend and the ethical journalist's enemy.
- If you quote someone, use proper referencing to avoid plagiarism.
- Keep track of source material and always check your story against your notes to make sure you provide accurate attribution.

Questions to ask when writing and reporting

- How do I know that what I have presented really happened the way I say it did?
- Is it true? According to whom?
- Do I not only have the facts right but also the right facts?
- How complete is my reconstruction? Is it based on one source, two or several? Have I tested it against the memory of other participants?
- Have I sought independent verification from documentary sources, such as historical accounts or public records?
- Do I have a high level of confidence in my sources? Could I have been fooled by an unreliable source or a source with a faulty memory or an axe to grind?

- Is my purpose legitimate? Am I trying to convey the reality of an event for my readers or simply trying to entertain or impress people with my writing ability?
- Does lack of attribution, a hallmark of reconstruction diminish credibility?
- Does a reconstruction need an editor's note to help readers understand how the story was reported and sourced?
- Am I willing and able to fully disclose and explain my method to my editor and my readers?

Can you be free from Bias?

- Just like a judge has to be free of personal affiliations and bias while giving a verdict, a journalist has to be free from these while reporting.
- Being a **FIRM** journalist who is free from bias and affiliations is not a one day job. It's a continuous struggle.



IV. Responsibilities of Journalists

*The smarter the journalists are,
the better off society is.*

- Warren Buffett²²

Social & Ethical Responsibility

- The mass media has a powerful influence on how people see and understand the world. But with great power comes great responsibility.
- In Pakistani society, which is a society in conflict, this responsibility is doubled. Here journalists have two roles i.e. a reporting role and a non-reporting role.
 - ❑ The reporting role of a journalist revolves around bringing true facts and opinions to the public.
 - ❑ A non-reporting role for a journalist revolves around using his/her stories to impart a message of tolerance.
- A journalist must strive to alleviate social issues by working with other forces like government and civil society organizations.
- The media is a tool for change in attitude, behavior and beliefs in a post-conflict society.
- The writing of a journalist should be inspiring not only in keeping 'social harmony' but also in achieving social development at the same time.

Legal Responsibility

- As a **FIRM** journalist, I face important legal responsibilities. I should know my rights and the rights of each individual and I should be sure I am compliant with legal issues.

²² Warren Edward Buffett is an American investor, industrialist and philanthropist.

- This will ensure there is no intrusion on matters of confidentiality and privacy. Libelous and slanderous remarks can result in legal action against journalists.

Professional Responsibility

- My foremost responsibility as a **FIRM** journalist is relating current events to the rest of society and to make sure the information presented is fair, balanced and truthful.
- It is my duty not to sensationalize any media event for my own benefit.
- The objective of a **FIRM** journalist is to disseminate the correct and fair report in undistorted manner to the audience rather than crowding them allegedly to meet the present challenging situation of the news world.
- A **FIRM** journalist must follow the newspaper editor's deadlines.

Public interest

- The public interest refers to the “common well-being” or “general welfare.”
- A **FIRM** journalist does not harm public interest with his/her work.
- Revelation of military tactics in fighting terrorists and other sensitive information in this regard may be contrary to the public interest.
- Leaking of such information may give terrorists some advantage.

Owner's interest

- A world driven by economy poses some issues for a **FIRM** journalist which s/he has to cope with throughout her/his career as a journalist. From an organizational viewpoint, these may hinder her/his pursuit of being **FIRM**:
 - Advertising bias:** When stories are selected or slanted to please advertisers.
 - Corporate bias:** When stories are selected or slanted to please corporate owners of media.

- ❑ **Mainstream bias:** A tendency to report what everyone else is reporting, and to avoid stories that will offend anyone.

- ❑ **Sensationalism bias:** Favor of the exceptional over the ordinary, giving the impression that rare events, such as airplane crashes, are more common than common events, such as automobile crashes.

V. Conflict, Disaster Reporting and its importance in Pakistan

Problem 1 “Hate speech”: Different ethnic or cultural groups openly demonize each other. One group blames the other for difficulties or problems it is suffering. Violence is encouraged to eliminate the blamed group.

Problem 2 “Xenophobia”: A people’s or a country’s hatred or fear of another country creates misperceptions and encourages policies which promote conflict with that country.

Problem 3 “Myths and legends of war heroes”: A society whose popular songs and history books glorify one side’s ancient victories can build hatred for the other side.

Problem 4 “Religious justifications for war”: Extreme intolerance of others’ beliefs promotes conflict.

Problem 5 “Gender violence”: To allow practices and laws against women that are not accepted against men is a form of violence.

Points to ponder upon

Q 1: Have you ever heard or read a news item which provokes sentiments against Jews, Christians, Ahmedis or Shias?

Q 2: Do you feel that we have been told since our childhood that a particular country is our enemy?

Q 3: Do you feel our history glorifies violence?

Q 4: Have you encountered phrases such as “This is a war between Islam and Infidels”?

Q 5: Was the public flogging of a girl in Swat just as she violated the prescribed code, but what if it was a man?

Exercise 1: Link these questions with conflict problems identified above

Exercise 2: How many of these conflicts problems are present in Pakistan? Identify!

Role of 'FIRM' in conflict situations A checklist for FIRM "Conflict sensitive journalism"

Avoid reporting a conflict as consisting of two opposing sides.

Find other effected interests and include their stories, opinions and goals. Interview merchants effected by the general strike, workers who are unable to work, refugees from the countryside who want an end to violence etc.

Example: Rather than labeling someone as Sunni extremist or Shia radical use a neutral term.

Avoid only reporting what divides the sides in conflict.

Ask the opposing sides questions which may reveal common ground. Report on interests or goals which they may share.

Example: Ask the government officials that aside from operations can there be a program to rehabilitate militants? Ask the militants on what terms can they lay down the weapons.

Avoid always focusing on the suffering and fear of only one side.

Treat all sides' suffering as equally newsworthy.

Example: Military strike killed three militants, two passerby die in collateral damage (mention what damage the troops suffered also).

Avoid words like devastated, tragedy and terrorized to describe what has been done to one group.

These kinds of words put the reporter on one side.

Avoid emotional and imprecise words. Assassination is the murder of a head of state and no-one else.

Massacre is the deliberate killing of innocent, unarmed civilians. Soldiers and policemen are not massacred. Whereas genocide means killing an entire people. Do not minimize suffering, but practice caution while using strong words.

Avoid words like terrorist, extremist or fanatic.

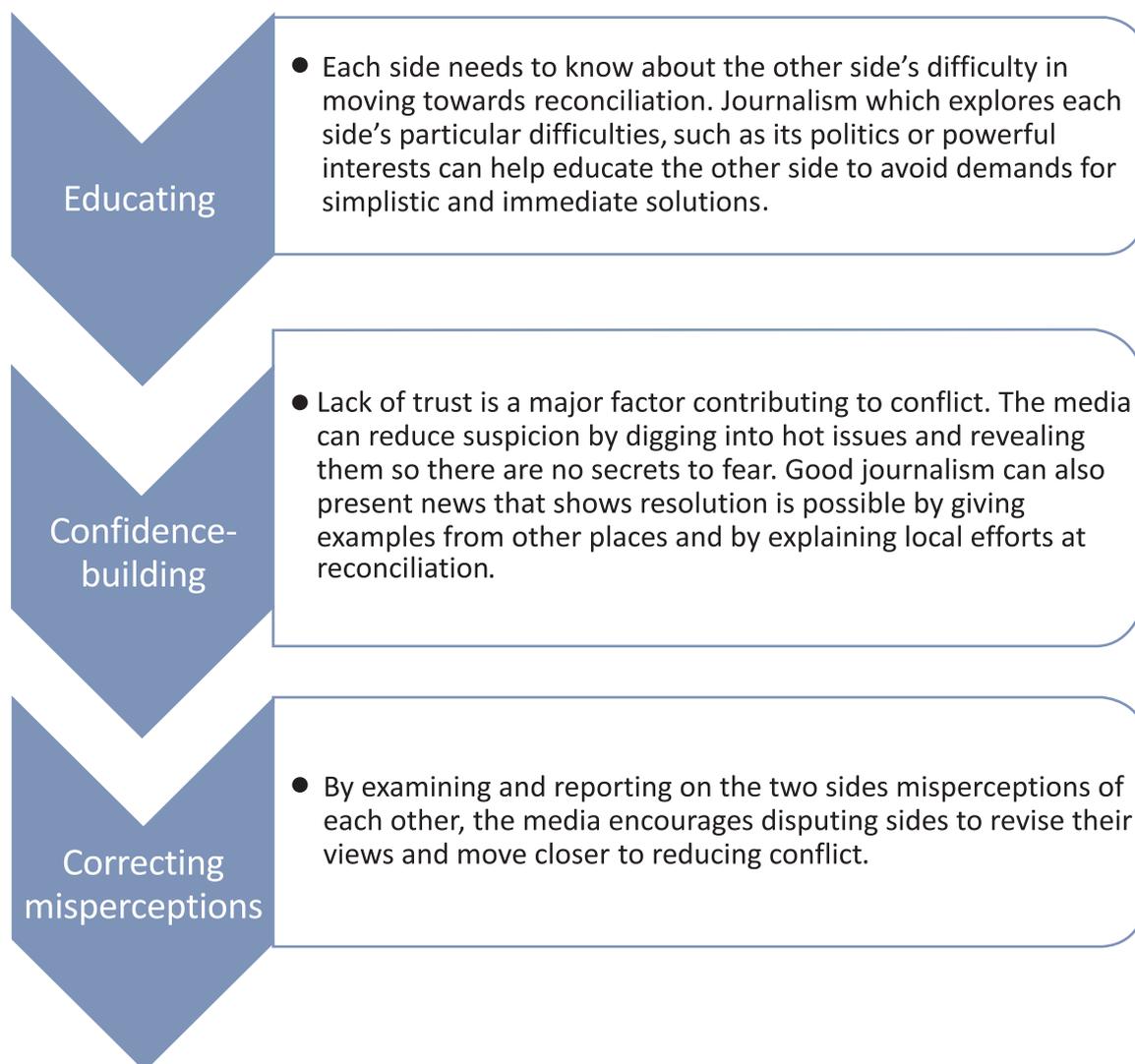
These words have a perceived picture making the other side seem impossible to negotiate with

Example: The barbaric militants have attacked mosques, markets and other public places. (The word barbaric adds emotional trauma which is not needed)

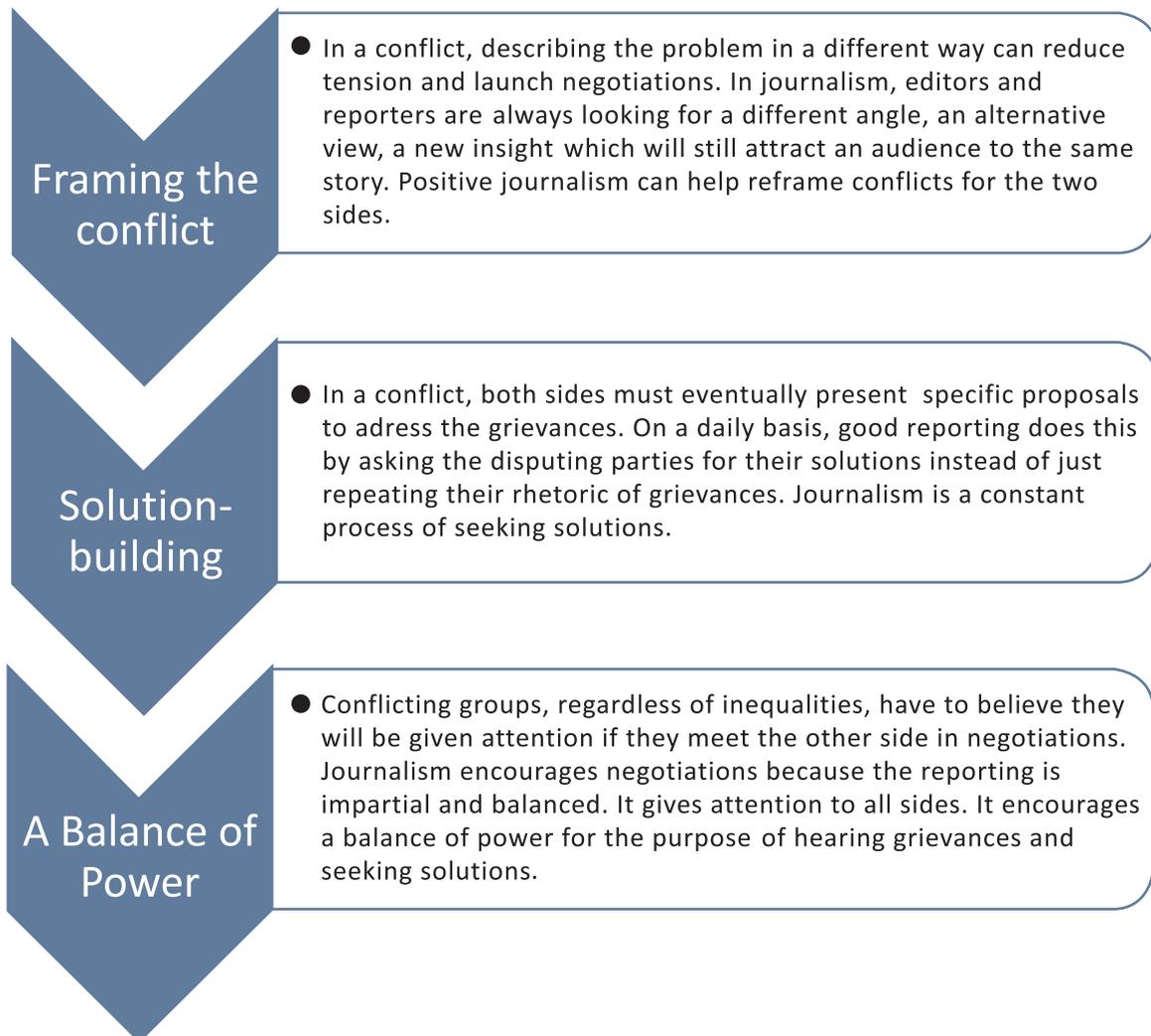
Avoid making an opinion into a fact.

If someone claims something, state their name, so it is their opinion and not your fact. "Islamic system is essential for Pakistan" this can be the opinion of radical militants but a journalist must not add his/her opinions.

How is “FIRM” useful in pre and post conflict scenarios? Role of FIRM “Pre-conflict”



Role of FIRM Post-conflict



Food for thought

- A magazine²³ while commenting on Pakistan cricket team's performance suggested in a satirical manner that team should be sent to Sialkot to face an angry mob! Now is this not crude humor? Such statements reflect how much violence is embedded in our society.

²³ Refer to Newline September 2010 editorial.

Pakistan and role of 'FIRM'

Accurate journalism. What it should not do:

- **Defamatory:** Accurate journalism does not tell lies and twist the truth about people. Sensationalism might sell but compromises objective reporting and adds fuel to fire.
- **Derivative:** Accurate journalism does not simply repeat what has been reported somewhere else. Copying others' news may repeat false information and it is a breach of journalistic ethics.
- **Malicious:** Journalism is powerful. News reports can ruin reputations, put people in danger, or cause public panic. Good journalism is not used to intentionally harm other persons.
- **Corrupt:** Accurate journalism does not accept bribes. It does no special favors to anyone. Journalism is not for sale!

Accurate journalism. What it should include:

- **Accuracy:** Getting the correct information is most important of all. Everything which is reported must be described accurately. Before reporting good journalists seek evidence and accurate facts.
- **Impartiality:** Almost every code of journalism puts importance on impartiality. To do this, a journalist will seek to produce a report which is balanced. To be balanced is to include both sides. There are always two sides in any story involving conflict. Citizens need to know what the other side says, and how it will effect them.
- **Responsibility:** Journalists have moral and ethical obligations to the people they report about, and to the society to whom they report the news. An honest journalist also uses only honest methods to obtain the news, which means they work within the parameters of law.

Self Analysis:

- Does my work meet the test of reliable journalism?
- Does my report have accuracy, impartiality and responsibility in it?

VI. Steps to improve standards of Journalism in Pakistan

What is Freedom Of Information?

The primary objectives of the Freedom of Information Ordinance (2002 & 2004) is to provide transparency and freedom of information and ensuring that the citizens of Pakistan have improved access to public records, thereby making the Government more accountable to its citizens. The Ordinance provides citizens of Pakistan with the right to access public records, as defined under Section 7 of the Ordinance, held by a public body for official use and in any form, including printed, written, maps, films and photographs. However, it applies only to the Federal Government organizations including Ministries, Divisions, attached departments, Secretariat of Majlis-eShoora (Parliament), any office of any Board, Commission, Council, or other body established by, or under, a Federal law; it also extends to courts and tribunals.

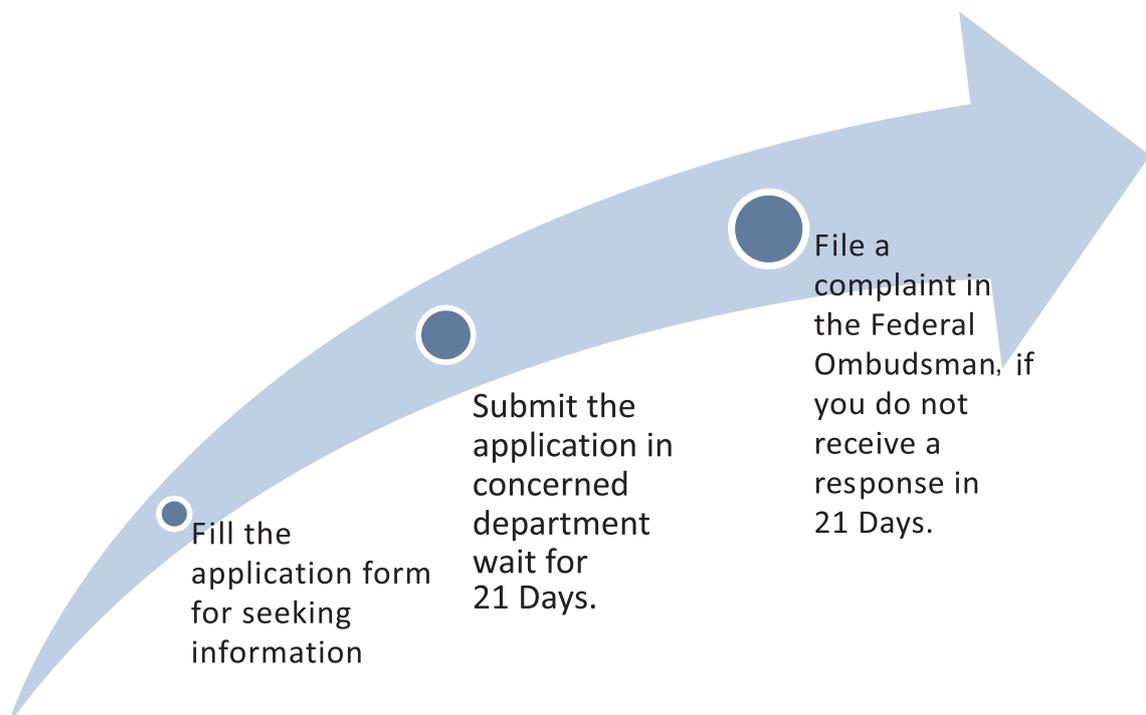
Freedom of Information is an internationally recognized human right.

- Right to information legislation is fundamental for the development of society and ensuring free flow of information to the general public. Under the Freedom Of Information Act, information pertaining to government departments which was inaccessible before can now be accessed under this act.

Over 90 countries around the world have so far enacted Freedom Of Information laws.

- Pakistan is the first country in South Asia to promulgate Freedom Of Information Ordinance 2002. Right to information is a not a favor but rather a prerogative of general public and the media which ensures greater level of transparency.

How to use FOI for accurate reporting?



A 3-Step Process

- The FOI information form can be purchased from local banks at a cost of 50 PKR.
- Submit the information and wait for 21 days.
- If there is no response then submit an application to the concerned Secretary and wait for 30 days.
- If the ministry still does not respond then you can submit a complaint to the Federal Ombudsman.
- **File a Complaint:** complaints@mohtasib.gov.pk

Making Use of FOI:

- By effectively using FOI, the journalists can add facts to a news story.
- The credibility of news story is increased, so rather than citing unnamed sources the story will cite the information given by the government's department.
- The effective use of FOI acts a pressure vent on public servants.
- A story based on FOI information is undeniable as you are merely reporting from the information obtained through a proper channel hence your safety net is well-intact.
- Individualland Pakistan has conducted a series of radio talk shows featuring experts on the issue. These programs can be accessed at our²⁴ website.

²⁴ <http://www.individualland.com>

**APPLICATION FORM
FOR OBTAINING RECORD
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ORDINANCE, 2002 (XCVI OF 2002)**

Name of Applicant:	
CNIC No.: (Attach a photocopy)	
Father's Name:	
Address:	
Phone No.:	
Name of Public Body from which information is to be obtained:	
Subject matter of record requested:	
Nature of record requested:	
Purpose of acquisition of the information or record:	

DECLARATION

- (a) Application Fee of Rs.50/-(non-refundable) has been deposited with the cash branch of the department or in State Bank of Pakistan or National Bank of Pakistan or Treasury _____ vide challan or receipt No. _____ dated _____, an original copy of which is attached
- (b) The information obtained would not be used for any purpose other than specified above.

Signature of Applicant

Case Study

Hannah Postels, a third year journalism student at Sheffield, took her findings to the Yorkshire Evening Post and ended up writing the next day's exclusive splash story.

The story revealed the list of items confiscated from inmates at the top security Wakefield prison - including hard-core pornographic DVDs, mobile phones, and even collections of newspaper cuttings about prison staff. Unknowingly her story was a big scoop as the community had no clue that such activities were taking place in prison facilities.

This article was written on basis on information Hannah obtained under the Freedom of Information Act

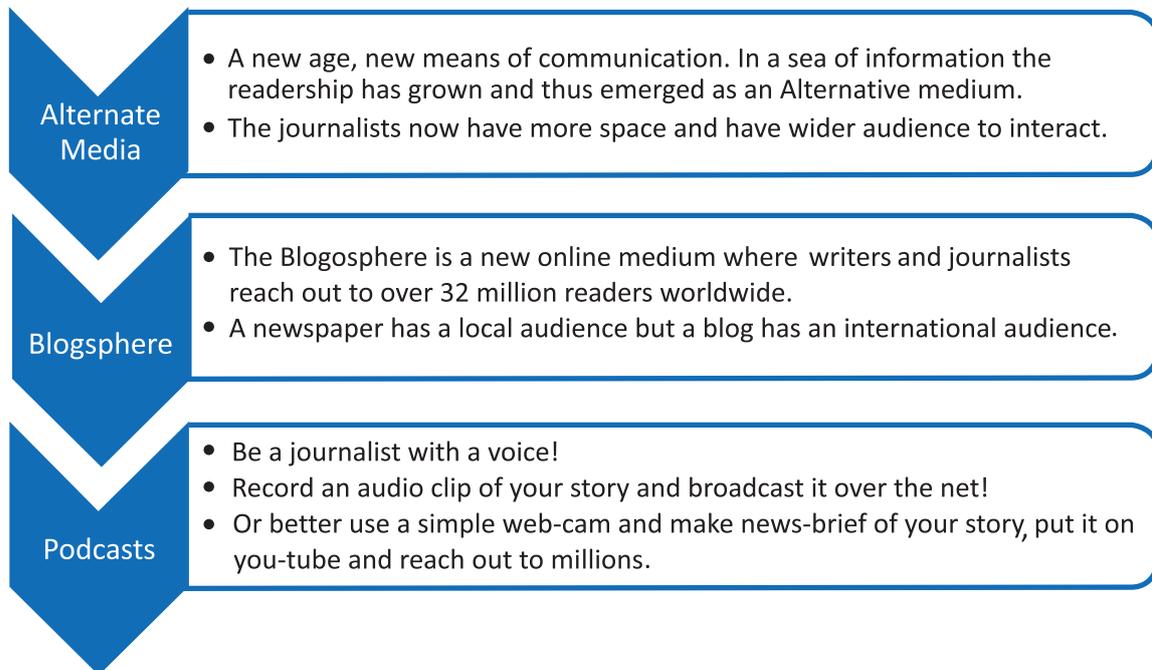
Hannah, 21, said afterwards: **“When I took the information to the news desk I didn't think in a million years it would make the front page splash. It was really exciting to see the information from my request develop into a real news story and even more exciting to see the finished story and my byline on the front page the next day”.**

Points to Ponder upon:

- Hannah, who is a third year journalism student, got her story published as the lead cover story.
- It was not due to her experience or excellent write-up but simply due to the fact that her story presents very revealing facts.
- These facts were obtained under the FOI law, so can you as an established journalist make use of this law?

What is “New Media”? How can it help you?

The New media is a new emerging domain where readers have now access to other sources of information such as blogs and Podcasts. Many newspapers have also launched Blogs to reach to this segment of audience.



- The new media offers a wide array of opportunities of journalists. Shaheen Sehbai when confronted with censorship launched an online paper “South Asian Tribune”. That soon became an alternative source of information.
- As the technology progresses, the number of readers is going to increase and many predict that in the coming years the alternative media may become the main-stream media.
- Unlike a newspaper, a blog offers the chance to interact with the reader and gain insight on how the story is viewed by the readers.
- A news-story which the editor may think is not fit to be published has the liberty of being a blog-post.
- You can express your opinion in a more open and casual manner.

- <http://www.tehelka.com>, an online news website broke major corruption scandals which forced the Indian Defense Minister to resign.

Case in Point:

The Swat flogging video of a 17 year old girl made headlines nationwide and abroad. The story is one of the factors that prompted the government to break the peace accord with the militants and initiate an operation in Swat.

This story was broken through a video recorded by a mobile phone camera!

What is “Social Media”? How you can use “Social Media”?

- ✓ **<https://twitter.com>**
Twitter is a real-time information network. It connects an individual to the latest information about what s/he finds interesting by finding relevant public streams and following the conversations on regular basis.
- ✓ **<http://www.orkut.com>**
This social network envisages pictures and messages. Orkut can help an individual maintain existing relationships and establish new ones by reaching out to people never met before.
- ✓ **<http://www.myspace.com>**
Myspace is an online private community where photos, journals and interests can be shared.
- ✓ **<http://www.facebook.com>**
This social network gives the freedom to create a personal profile, add other users as friends and exchange messages any time of the day.
- ✓ **<http://www.linkedin.com>**
At present LinkedIn operates the world’s largest professional network on the Internet with more than 90 million members in over 200 countries and territories.

- The social media offers the chance of networking (a very key element in journalism).
- Sites such as **LinkedIn** are social-networking sites designed for professionals who seek to develop a network with professionals in the same field.
- Twitter has emerged as source of information for journalists where they closely monitor the activities of politicians and celebrities and often make news story through it.
- By social networking sites the journalists can share their work with a wider set of audience.

Interesting facts! A survey conducted in 2010 by George Washington University reveals:

- 89% of the journalists said they turned to the blogosphere for story research.
- 65% to social media sites as Facebook and LinkedIn.

Twitter Wars: Sara Taseer VS Fatima Bhutto



Sara Taseer takes on Fatima Bhutto for ruining Pakistan's public image.

Nadya V

2 months ago

Like **141**

Tweet **33**

For those who missed it, Sara Taseer Shoib (daughter of Governor Punjab, Salman Taseer) let loose a string of Twitter

By following Twitter, you can come up a good story. Refer to picture a story describe the twitter-rift between two socialites.

How to equip yourself to use new mediums of information and knowledge?

- Engage in blogosphere. A good writer is a keen reader.
- Use social networking sites as tool to benefit your work.
- Think out of the box. Use technology for your benefit to post a story on a blog.
- Make your own blog. Reach out to millions.
- Did you know? Urdu blogs have a wider readership so this is not an English medium tool!
- Make a podcast. Experiment with new form of communication. The best part about online communications is that most of it is free of cost!

List of some Blogs:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/urdu>
2. <http://www.pakistaniat.com>
3. <http://www.pakspectator.com>
4. <http://www.blog.dawn.com>
5. <http://www.thenews.com.pk/blog>
6. <http://www.chowk.com>
7. <http://blogs.reuters.com/pakistan>
8. <http://www.individualland.com/blog>
9. <http://blogs.tribune.com.pk>
10. <http://www.chowrangi.com>
11. <http://www.cafepyala.blogspot.com>

VII. Linkages of General Public with Media

Building liaison with media personnel

Media is often termed as a mirror image of society, its values, norms, traditions and practices. Therefore it is imperative that the voices of citizens are well-represented in the media. The media needs to reflect the society and not to construct narratives.

Citizen Media Forums

- The citizen's media forums provide an opportunity where the journalists and general public sit together and ponder upon pertinent issues of public interest.
- Citizen media forums provide platform for dialogue between citizens and media persons/media organizations on contents/behavior and role of media.
- These forums are vital for gauging the opinion of public upon issues which are of national importance such as national security matters, issue of Kalabagh Dam or the rehabilitation of flood victims.
- Such dialogues enable the citizens to ensure that their voice is heard and their opinion matters.

Role of Journalists:

- Think from a citizen's perspective! What would be your opinion as a citizen?
- Think from a consumer perspective! What would you want in a newspaper?
- Give preference to the voice of a citizen no matter how irrational, biased or radical it maybe!
- Monitor the letters to editors as they reflect the line of thinking of citizens!

Involving the citizens: Social Reporting

Social reporting is an emerging role, a set of skills, as how to mix journalism facilitation and social media to help people develop conversations and stories for collaboration.

While mainstream reporting is usually about capturing surprise, conflict, crisis, and entertainment, and in projecting or broadcasting stories to audiences, social reporters aim to work collaboratively with other people, producing words, pictures and movies together. They may challenge and even provoke.

The difference between social reporting and journalism lies in helping other people find meaning, create stories and to share them, rather than just being "the reporter" of stories. It is about using skills in story-telling to help the conversation along in ways that may help people work better together.

Concept of Citizen reporting

Put very simply, citizen journalism is when private individuals do essentially what professional reporters do i.e. report information.

- The idea behind citizen journalism is that people without professional journalism training can use the tools of modern technology and the global distribution of the Internet to create, augment or fact-check media on their own or in collaboration with others.
- Citizen journalists are not bound by the conventional term of a journalist. Citizen journalists take up an initiative to express ideas irrespective of their educational or professional background. In a way this emerging form of journalism is promising a scenario of breaking free from media bias as well as taking local news on a global platform.

Role of Citizens and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) for FIRM

- Mass media are channels, such as newspapers, magazines, radio or televisions. They are vital to communicate information to large groups of people.

- By regularly conveying information to important audiences, from the general public to government and international decision makers, media plays a large role in shaping public debate.



Media and CSOs are two ends of the coin. Both complement each other. The civil society is a representative of society. Thus by collaborating with CSOs the journalists can learn more about social issues.

The Journalist can cover many stories which are unreported through the CSOs such as drug abuse in society, plight of rape victims, transparency in public funds, child mortality are few examples of areas in which CSOs function.



As a journalist you can assist civil society organizations by writing articles that:

- Create an environment of political pressure!
- Convey general information, serving as a public education tool!
- Counter popular misconceptions!
- Comment on an issue by providing an alternative viewpoint on social issues!

VIII.Regulation of Media

Article 19 of the Constitution of The Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which guarantees the freedom of the press, also places some obligations on it. The Article reads:

Every citizen shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, and there shall be Freedom of the Press, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of the glory of Islam, of the integrity, security or defence of Pakistan or any part thereof, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence.

Journalists are the eyes and ears of the public. In a democratic society they must be free to investigate and report matters of public concern and the public should be able to trust them to provide accurate information. There is statutory regulation of the press but is not being followed. There was a Press Council Ordinance promulgated during Musharraf's regime but journalists and media owners raised their objections and it is not being implemented presently. On the other hand, journalists developed their own code of ethics but they fail to follow. Besides, there is also a Publications Ordinance under which declaration for a newspaper is granted.

Example: The BBC is governed by the Royal Charter and also has its own internal regulatory system.

Media ethics for Media Regulation. Yes/No?

Media ethics is the subdivision of applied ethics dealing with the specific ethical principles and standards of media, including broadcast media and print media.

Yes	Or	No?
Media ethics is necessary to ensure truth.		Media ethics would enable influential people to use media for their personal objectives.
To save country interest		Media ethics will help to curb the media under the garb of country's interest
To control disinformation		
To disseminate/equate information		
To guide people		

Why does journalism need a code of ethics?

There are three essential players in the arena of mass communications:

- Owners of media and their editors;
- journalists and other media professionals;
- the public on the receiving end.

For each 'stakeholder' the code of ethics, including public, has a different but linked value:

- For **"media owners and editors"** a code of ethics is a protection against criticism and legal action and provides a basic guarantee about the credibility of their output. At its most basic, it is a form of quality control underpinning the commercial value of their products. By reminding (or instructing) staff that the law of the land applies to their conduct and that they must abide by the common decencies of human interaction.
- For **"journalists"** a code of ethics provides a touchstone against which their output and activities can be judged by others, as well guidance for them about acceptable methods of gathering and presenting information.
- For **"the public"** a code provides a guarantee that the material they receive is a reasonable approximation of the truth, based on information gathered fairly and thoroughly checked by those who operate in their name.

Making self-regulation work

- To be effective there has to be some means by which a Code is 'supervised' whether by journalistic organizations or by a non-state body which has the confidence of both media and the public.
- Admitting to mistakes is always difficult, especially in an industry whose function includes furnishing the public with reliable information about events and issues that affect their lives. But publicly acknowledging failure, setting the record straight and seeking to ensure that such errors

will not recur is one of the most effective ways of strengthening trust between the public and the media.

- Devising codes and promoting them is always problematic but agreeing systems of 'enforcement' is even more difficult. However it is pointless having and publicizing a "Code of Ethics" if mechanisms do not exist to allow all-comers to draw attention to breaches.
- Press Code of Conduct (adopted by the General Assembly of the Committee of the Press, 1972):

- 1 The profession of journalism, which is a public institution, should not be used as an instrument to serve anti-social ends, or interests which are not compatible with this profession, nor should it be used to the detriment of national and public interest.
- 2 The following are to be avoided in any form of publication, such as articles, news items, photographs and advertisements:
 - a Immorality or obscenity.
 - b Vulgar and derogatory expressions against individuals, institutions or groups.
 - c Libelous or false allegations against individuals, institutions, newspapers or publications.
 - d Religious sectarianism; arousing one sect against another.
 - e Glamorization of crime.
- 3 The right of the individual to the protection of his reputation and integrity must be respected, and exposure of and comment on the private lives of individuals must be avoided unless this is imperatively in the public interest.
- 4 Presentation of news items and comments on events should be fair and objective and there should be no willful departure from facts.
- 5 Headlines should not materially distort the contents of the news.
- 6 Off-the-record briefings should not be published.
- 7 The journalist should be entitled to protect his sources of information and respect confidence placed in him.

- 8 Embargoes on release dates of news, articles and pictures, should be rigorously observed.
- 9 All paid commercial announcements or advertisements should be published in such a way as to leave no doubt that they actually are paid commercial announcements or advertisements.
- 10 Justified corrections or denials sent as a result of any incorrect information published by newspapers, periodicals or news agencies should be published within the shortest possible period of time so as to effectively eliminate the impression created by the original publication which necessitated the issuance of a correction or denial.
- 11 The press shall not publish news or comment, photographs or advertisements which may undermine the security of the state or the solidarity of the nation.
- 12 The press shall refrain from publishing anything likely to undermine the loyalty and allegiance of the Armed Forces of Pakistan.
- 13 The press shall not publish anything apt to create ill-will between different sections of the people, but it shall not be construed to preclude legitimate airing of grievances.
- 14 In reporting proceedings of the National and Provincial Assemblies, such portions of the proceedings as the Speaker may have ordered to be expunged from the records of the Assembly shall not be published and every effort shall be made to give the readers a fair report of what has been said by all sections of the House.
- 15 In dealing with any situation, the press shall restrict itself to factual reporting of events without in any way encouraging or providing any form of disturbance.
- 16 No newspaper shall accept in any form or shape any financial and pecuniary advantage or obligations from or on behalf of any foreign country or concern.

Declaration of Objectives

A code of ethics was adopted in 1993 by the Council of Pakistan Newspapers' Editors (CPNE). The CPNE laid its foundation in 1957. Its aims and objects include safeguarding the freedom of the press and working ceaselessly for the healthy growth of journalism in the country.

- 1 The following are to be avoided in any form of publication such as news items, editorials, articles, photographs and advertisements:
 - a Immorality or obscenity.
 - b Vulgar and derogatory expressions against individuals, institutions or groups.
 - c Allegations known to be false and malicious against individuals, institutions, groups, newspapers and other publications;
 - d Arousing of sectarian, parochial or provincial passions and prejudices and class hatred.
 - e Glamorization of crimes and vice.
 - f Incitement to violence.
- 2 Editors/journalists must be free of obligation to any interest other than the public's right to know the truth.
- 3 They will make constant efforts to assure that the public's business is conducted in public and that public records are open to public inspection.
- 4 The right of the individual to protection of his reputation and integrity must be respected and exposure of, and comment on, the private lives of individuals must be avoided except where it affects the public interest.
- 5 Presentation of news items and comments on events and airing of legitimate grievances should be fair and objective and there should be no willful departure from facts. Headlines should be fully warranted by the contents of the items they accompany and photographs should give an accurate picture of an event and not highlight a minor incident out of context; off the record briefings should not be published and embargoes on release dates of news, articles and pictures should be rigorously observed.
- 6 The journalist should be entitled to protect his source of information revealed in confidence.

- 7 All paid commercial announcements, articles or advertisements should be specified as such.
- 8 No newspaper shall accept in any form or shape any financial and pecuniary advantage or obligation from or on behalf of any foreign country, concern, or agency. This does not apply to paid advertisements appearing as such.
- 9 Gifts, favors, free travel, special treatment or privileges can compromise the integrity of editors and influence their sense of justice and impartiality. Nothing of value should be accepted.
- 10 Secondary employment, political involvement, holding public office, and service in community organizations should be avoided if it compromises the integrity of editors. The editors should conduct their personal lives in a manner which protects them from conflict of interest, real or apparent.
- 11 Justified corrections or denials sent as a result of any incorrect information published by newspapers, periodicals or news agencies should be published within the shortest possible period of time so as to effectively eliminate the impression created by the original publication, which necessitated the issuance of a correction or denial.
- 12 The Press shall refrain from publishing anything derogatory to religion or which may hurt religious feeling of any sect/minority.
- 13 The Press shall refrain from publishing anything likely to bring into hatred or contempt the head of any friendly state.
- 14 The Press shall not publish news or comments, photographs or advertisements which may undermine the security of the state or solidarity of the nation and its ideology.
- 15 The Press shall refrain from publishing anything likely to undermine the loyalty and allegiance of the defense forces and the civil armed forces.
- 16 The Press shall refrain from involving the defense forces in politics and offer only fair comment on its performance and conduct.

- 17 In reporting proceedings of Parliament and Provincial Assemblies, such portions of the proceedings as the Chairman/Speaker may have ordered to be expunged from the records of the House shall not be published and every effort shall be made to give the readers a fair report of what has been said by all sections of Parliament and Provincial Assemblies.
- 18 In reporting the proceedings of courts of law, care will be taken not to suppress the version or arguments of the contending parties.

Ethical Code of Practice

In October 2002, the military government issued a new code as part of the “Press Council of Pakistan Ordinance”, creating a supposedly independent body (headed by a government appointee), to resolve complaints of and about the press.

- 1 The press shall strive to uphold standards of morality, and must avoid plagiarism and publication of slanderous and libelous material.
- 2 The press shall strive to publish and disclose all essential and relevant facts and ensure that the information it disseminates is fair and accurate.
- 3 The press shall avoid biased reporting or publication of unverified material, and avoid the expression of comments and conjecture as established fact, generalization based on the behavior of an individual or a small number of individuals will be termed unethical.
- 4 The press shall respect the privacy of individuals and shall do nothing which tantamount to an intrusion into private, family life and home.
- 5 Rumors and unconfirmed reports shall be avoided and if at all published shall be identified as such.
- 6 The information, including pictures, disseminated shall be true and accurate.
- 7 The press shall avoid originating, printing, publishing and disseminating any material, which encourages or incites discrimination or hatred on grounds of race, religion, caste, sect, nationality, ethnicity, gender, disability, illness, or age, of an individual or group.
- 8 The press shall not lend itself to the projection of crime as heroic and the criminals as heroes.
- 9 The press shall avoid printing, publishing or disseminating any material, which may bring into contempt Pakistan or its people or tends to undermine its sovereignty or integrity as an independent country.
- 10 The press shall not publish or disseminate any material or expression, which is violation of Article 19 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

- 11 The press shall rectify promptly any harmful inaccuracies, ensure that corrections and apologies receive due prominence and afford the right of reply to persons criticized or commented upon when the issue is of sufficient importance.
- 12 While reporting on medical issues, care must be taken to avoid sensationalism, which could arouse baseless fears or false hopes in the readers. Early research finding should not be presented as though they were conclusive or almost conclusive.
- 13 Sensationalism of violence and brutalities shall be avoided. All reporting shall be accurate, particularly when court proceedings are covered and an accused person must not be presented as guilty before judgment has been pronounced.
- 14 In the cases of sexual offences and heinous crime against children, juveniles and women, names and identifying photographs shall not be published.
- 15 Confidentiality agreed upon at briefings and background interviews must be observed.
- 16 The press while publishing findings of opinion polls and surveys shall indicate the matter of people, geographical area on which the polls and surveys were conducted, and the identity of the poll-sponsor.
- 17 Any kind of privilege or inducement, financial or otherwise, which is likely to create conflict of interest and any inducement, offered to influence the performance of professional duties and is not compatible with the concept of a reputable, independent and responsible press must be avoided.

Individualland Pakistan's (IL-Pakistan) Activities for FIRM

Individualland Pakistan (IL-Pakistan) after launching its 'FIRM' initiative carried out a number of activities in order to involve all the stakeholders to get feedback on the topic. Much of the content seen in this handbook is the result of feedback from the journalists and the consumers. A detail of activities can be viewed in the Annex A. Targeted cities included Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Quetta, Peshawar, Karachi, Lahore, Multan and Hyderabad.

Based on the feedback from the participants from different activities and one on one interviews²⁵ conducted, IL-Pakistan has developed a voluntary code of ethics for a **FIRM** journalist.

Voluntary Code of Ethics

Based on the values of transparency, accountability, participation, unity in diversity, equity and effectiveness, a **FIRM** journalist will work according to the following 'Code of Ethics':

- Be transparent in their performance!
- Be accountable to the partners, consumers and other stakeholders!
- Acknowledge any intellectual, technical, material or other contribution or assistance made by any individual or group!
- Adopt high standard of professionalism and quality!
- Adhere to applicable laws and government regulations!

²⁵ Refer to Annex B and C.

Social & Ethical Responsibility

- The mass media has a powerful influence on how people see and understand the world. But with great power comes great responsibility.
- In Pakistani society, which is a society in conflict, this responsibility is doubled. Here journalists have two roles i.e. a reporting role and a non-reporting role.
 - ❑ The reporting role of a journalist revolves around bringing true facts and opinions to the public.
 - ❑ A non-reporting role for a journalist revolves around using his/her stories to impart a message of tolerance.
- A journalist must strive to alleviate social issues by working with other forces like government and CSO's.
- The media is a tool for change in attitude, behavior and beliefs in a post-conflict society.
- The writing of journalist should be inspiring not only in keeping 'social harmony' but also in achieving social development at the same time.

Legal Responsibility

- As a **FIRM** journalist, I face important legal responsibilities. I should know my rights and the rights of each individual and I should be sure I am compliant with legal issues.
- This will ensure there is no intrusion on matters of confidentiality and privacy. Libelous and slanderous remarks can result in legal action against journalists.

Professional Responsibility

- My foremost responsibility as a **FIRM** journalist is relating current events to the rest of society and to make sure the information presented is fair, balanced and truthful.
- It is my duty not to sensationalize any media event for my own benefit.
- The objective of a **FIRM** journalist is to disseminate the correct and fair report in undistorted manner to the audience rather than crowding them allegedly to meet the present challenging situation of the news world.
- A **FIRM** journalist must follow the newspaper editor's deadlines.

What is PEMRA?

The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) is a regulatory body established by Pakistan on 1 March 2002. It is responsible for facilitating and regulating the establishment and operation of all private broadcast media. Sometimes PEMRA acts as a tool to tighten the control over the electronic media for personal gains. In past several times it stopped the transmission of private TV channels including Geo TV, Aaj TV and ARY etc.

PEMRA has recently over the past year imported latest technology to block the transmission of few FM channels.²⁶

PEMRA mandate

- It improves the standards of information, education and entertainment.
- Enlarges the choice available to the people of Pakistan in the media for news.
- Facilitates the devolution power to the grass roots by improving the access of the people to mass media at the local and community level.
- Ensures accountability, transparency and good governance by optimizing the free flow of information.

²⁶ <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/PEMRA+chief+asks+electronic+media+to+give+balanced+coverage+to+events.-a0203250944>

What is the role of the Ministry of Information?

- It communicates with media regarding various controversies that emerge after debates.
- It takes action against those media groups which publish any material contrary to the national interest, ethics or which create anarchy in the country.
- It acts as a communication bridge between the public through media.
- It approves declaration to print media.
- It provides license to electronic media through PEMRA.
- The Ministry of Information enables the government to oversee, monitor TV channels or issue license or declaration to the newspaper under proper mechanism otherwise it would create problems for the government.

The idea of Self-Regulation (Why is it best suited?)

- The idea of self-regulation in media is not new and it emerged with emergence of newspapers.
- Media owners mostly appointed professional editors who conduct self regulation. For example they impartially decide about the fate of the news. E.g. The Express Tribune has implemented the concept of self-regulation and has appointed Fakharuddin G. Ibrahim for the objective.

History of Censorship and suppression of journalists in Pakistan

- One of the major attacks was the closure of the Civil & Military Gazette (C&MG) in 1949 after it carried a story by its Delhi correspondent that Pakistan and India are devising a formula to partition Kashmir.

²⁷ <http://thoughtlines.wordpress.com/2009/03/14/press-in-chains-history-of-media-gagging-in-pakistan>

- Censorship in Pakistan has a long history and its first victim being the founder of the nation Muhammad Ali Jinnah. On 11 August 1947 when he delivered his first speech “You are free, you are free to go to your temples...” before the Constituent Assembly; within hours some shadowy figures became active and “tried to have some secularist passages of the speech blacked out in the press”.²⁷
- Ayub Khan within the first week of his coup detained Syed Sibte Hassan, Ahmed Nadim Qasimi and Faiz Ahmed Faiz, who worked for Progressive Papers Limited (PPL).
- In Zulfikar Ali Bhutto era the muzzling of media continued and the most shameful event was the arrest of Altaf Gauhar, editor of Dawn, on the ridiculous charges of “forging a passport, possessing obscene literature and contraband liquor.”
- The Zia ul Haq era was the darkest period for the journalists and in 1978 four journalists were sentenced but three were flogged as one of them was handicapped and the jail doctor did not allow flogging him. This happened within 90 minutes after a phony court ordered it.
- The democratic governments of Benazir and Nawaz were no better than their military comrade-in-arms. Daily Khabrain, Daily Jang, Friday Times and many others papers and journalists faced their wrath.
- Though, the media space had grown considerably under Pervez Musharraf, but media also has to suffer the worst under his government. Following the sacking of Chief Justice of Pakistan on March 09, 2007, media coverage of the issue forced government to ban the live coverage and its desperate moves led the government to impose emergency on November 03, 2007, and private TV channels were taken off the air in one go. This ban continued for months. However, the complete blackout also failed to tackle the difficulties faced by the general and he had to pack up in August 2008.

Internet censorship in Pakistan

The Government of Pakistan some six years back established the Pakistan Internet Exchange (PIE), as a means to monitor all incoming and outgoing Internet traffic from Pakistan. The primary purpose of PIE is to filter content on internet.

List of Activities		
Dates of FIRM Activities		
Date	Time	Location
Training workshop in Islamabad		
2 Aug-10		Islamabad
3 Aug-10		Islamabad
FGD in Karachi		
17 Sep-10		Karachi
Training workshop in Karachi		
15 Sep-10		Karachi
16 Sep-10		Karachi
Training workshop in Lahore		
25 Sep-10		Lahore
26 Sep-10		Lahore
FGD in Islamabad		
20 Aug-10		Islamabad
FGD in Lahore		
26 Aug-10		Lahore
Skills Training in Quetta		
29 Oct-10		Quetta
Skills Training in Multan		
19 Oct-10		Multan
Skills Training in Hyderabad		
9 Oct-10		Hyderabad

Adnan Rehmat

Adnan Rehmat has been associated with the Pakistani media sector since 1990, principally as a journalist and media development specialist. For the last few years he has been associated with efforts on development strategies for the Pakistani media including radio, TV and print, as the country's media transitions from a heavily state-controlled sector to one of pluralisms.

He has been involved in advocacy and lobbying on media development issues including improving access to information, media legal reforms, raising the profile of women in media, building news and information capacities of the broadcast sector, and research and analysis, among others. For the last six years he headed the Pakistan operations of the US-based media support INGO, Internews Network, implementing a string of media development projects funded by USAID, US State Department, DFID, FCO-UK and Swiss SDC.

Rehmat has worked for a string of publications and broadcast networks nationally and internationally and continues to write on media, security and politics regularly. Through some organizations that he helped found, and others that he either heads or guides by being on their board, his efforts are focused on developing and advocating for a stronger legal and professional environment for journalists and media in Pakistan, particularly in the private broadcast sector, with a special focus on North West Frontier Province (NWFP), Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Baluchistan.

Mazhar Arif

Mazhar Arif is a known journalist, researcher, writer and an activist. He also heads the Society for Alternative Media and Research (SAMAR) as its Executive Director. He has contributed a number of papers and investigative reports on social, political, cultural and environmental issues. He is also a regular contributor to a number of English, Urdu and Siraiki language newspapers.

He has been delivering lectures on 'Media and Critical Consciousness' and 'Alternative Media' at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, and four universities in Pakistan. Apart from this, he has also attended a number of international workshops, conferences and participated in study tours and courses in different countries in Asia, Europe and Africa.

Individualland (IL) is an active non-partisan and a not for profit liberal civil society group. It has worked on governance, rule of law, strengthening civil society and democratic development. Individualland has a demonstrated track of working with legislators and civil society organizations engaged in advocacy work. Hence, it has a strong national footprint and has the experience of implementing initiatives aimed at strengthening and institutionalizing interaction between the civil society and parliamentary committees. IL's world view is based on liberal values. It believes firstly in the individual, secondly in individual freedom and then consequently social responsibility but from the reference point of the individuals. Individualland is a space for liberal, secular individuals who believe that the state is for the individual and not vice versa, minimum government is more than enough, private entrepreneurship is the vehicle and root of creativity and progress and market need to be open and globalization to be embraced.