

Report On
Internship as an Editorial Intern at Dhaka Tribune

By

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An internship report submitted to the Department of English and Humanities
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Arts in English

Department of English and Humanities

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The internship report submitted is my own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The report does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The report does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Letter of Transmittal

Dr. Tabassum Zaman

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Subject: Report on Internship as an Editorial Intern at Dhaka Tribune

Dear Madam,

It is my pleasure to display my report titled *Report on Internship as an Editorial Intern at Dhaka Tribune*.

I have attempted my best to finish the report with the essential data and recommended proposition in as significant, compact and comprehensive manner as possible.

I trust that the report will meet the necessary requirements.

Sincerely yours,

Pritom Paul

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Department of English and Humanities

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Date: September 27, 2023

Acknowledgement

Firstly, I would like to express my undying love and gratitude to my parents. My father, Mr. Lakshman Chandra Paul, has always supported me in my endeavors. My mother, Mrs. Mira Rani Paul, is my best friend and would always guide and reassure me. As both my parents are teachers, I have received assistance and moral support from them throughout my student life. It is not an exaggeration to say that without them, I would not be able to complete my undergraduate studies.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all my peers and the faculty members whom I have crossed paths with in this journey. I consider myself very fortunate to have been under the guidance of instructors such as Ms. Seema Nusrat Amin, Ms. Roohi Huda, Dr. Mahruba Tasneem Mowtushi, Dr. Tabassum Zaman and others. Their continuous guidance has made my time at Brac University productive and enjoyable. I would also like to thank the handful of good friends I have made during my time at this institution. Their regular encouragement and companionship have kept me composed throughout this long voyage.

Even though my supervisor Dr. Tabassum Zaman, and I only became acquainted late in my time at Brac University, her compassionate attitude will live on in my memory. I want to offer her my heartfelt appreciation for being such a great source of inspiration and guidance.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Mr. Zafar Sobhan, the editor of *Dhaka Tribune* and my on-site supervisor. He gave me the opportunity to work as an intern for one of the biggest English-language newspapers in Bangladesh. Throughout my three-month internship, his unwavering encouragement and counsel have been of great help to me.

Executive Summary

This internship report stresses the work experience I have gathered as an Editorial Intern at *Dhaka Tribune* from March 1, 2023 to May 31, 2023. In this report, I have incorporated my acquaintance with the *Dhaka Tribune* while working there as an intern, especially in sectors such as social media strategies, website traffic etc. I have provided the particulars of my three months' work experience at the *Dhaka Tribune* with a comprehensive description of the various range of tasks that I have completed during this period. Since its first publication in 2013, *Dhaka Tribune* has been a reliable source of news for its millions of readers in Bangladesh and abroad. Nowadays, *Dhaka Tribune* is considered as one of the leading English-language newspapers in the country. This report consists of the many steps that I have gone through to come up with various suggestions and recommendations for increasing the reach of the official *Dhaka Tribune* Facebook page and YouTube channel. I have also described the work that I have done to improve the user traffic of the official *Dhaka Tribune* website. Furthermore, I have included an extensive description of my experience while working on the newspaper's '10 Year Anniversary Special' project. Last but not least, this report contains the final list of recommendations from the 'Social Media Strategies' team, which I was a part of during the entirety of my internship at *Dhaka Tribune*.

Keywords: Social media strategies; Social media reach; Posting frequency; Website user traffic; YouTube algorithm; 10-year anniversary special.

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Glossary

Broadsheet: It is the largest newspaper format and is characterized by long vertical pages, typically of 22.5 inches (57 cm).

Tabloid: It is a newspaper with compact pages that are smaller than broadsheet. Tabloid consists of short articles, lots of photographs, and has no standard size.

User Traffic: It refers to the number of visitors to a website, and the pages they click on.

Reach: It is a media analytics metric used in social media that refers to the number of users who have come across a particular content on social platforms such as Facebook, YouTube etc.

E-Paper: Web/digital edition of a newspaper, usually published on a newspaper's website.

Post Frequency: It refers to how often contents are posted from a social media account.

Boost: 'Boosting' refers to a type of paid advertisement on social platforms such as Facebook that promotes an existing post from a business page so that it gets more reach.

YouTube Algorithm: It refers to a set of computer instructions designed to process videos and associated content such as comments, description, engagements, etc. in order to rank and recommend videos based on relevance and viewer satisfaction.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Since early childhood, I have had a tremendous amount of interest in watching news on the television. I remember my grandfather turning on the news at 8 PM almost every night on BTV, and I used to sit beside him to watch the news presenter go through the top stories of the day. As I grew up, I started reading newspapers to keep up with the everyday events that were occurring around the world. On a different note, as my father was an English teacher, he constantly encouraged me to improve my command of the language. As a result, instead of having any Bangla-language daily, we had a copy of *The Daily Star* at our house every day, and I was always eager to read from the paper.

Fast forward to recent years where various advancements in technology have drastically altered almost every aspect of our lives, newspapers and news media outlets around the world have also been going through a major paradigm shift. According to a report by *WordsRated*, the global revenue for the print newspaper market is expected to “drop 13.05% from 2023’s \$127.20 billion to \$110.60 billion by 2027.” The report also states that the revenue for the digital newspaper market is expected to “grow 11.37% from 2023’s \$38.60 billion to \$42.99 billion by 2027.” Therefore, newspapers are having to look for ways to attract audiences online. The days of waiting in front the television for the 8 PM news or going through the printed copy of a fresh newspaper every morning is dwindling fast. Almost everyone carries a smartphone with internet access nowadays. So, people find it more convenient to just use their phones or laptops and read the digital edition of their preferred daily newspapers. In addition, there has been a rapid rise in

the number of social media users (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, YouTube etc.) in recent years. Therefore, these social networking platforms are arguably the best places where news media outlets these days can reach the highest number of audiences.

As a student of English, with a major in Media and Cultural Studies at Brac University, I was recently given the opportunity to work as an intern at *Dhaka Tribune*, one of the largest English-language newspapers in Bangladesh. In the past few years, I have learned a good deal about media and journalism owing to the media courses that I have completed as part of my undergraduate studies. However, I was eager to work at a newspaper and put my theoretical understanding of this field of study into practice. Hence, I was overjoyed to start working at the *Dhaka Tribune*. At several instances during my work, I received assistance from my supervisor and co-workers. Overall, this journey has provided me with some valuable learning opportunities, given me the chance to do collaborative work, and helped me put my skills into practice.

Chapter 2

A Brief Overview of the *Dhaka Tribune*

Dhaka Tribune is one of the leading English-language daily newspapers in Bangladesh. It was founded on 19 April, 2013 and is owned by 2A Media Limited. Its headquarters is located at 8/C, FR Tower, Panthapath, Dhaka 1207. The publisher and editor of the newspaper are Kazi Anis Ahmed and Zafar Sobhan respectively. At first, the paper was issued in broadsheet, which is the largest newspaper format and is characterized by long vertical pages. However, between March 2015 and April 2019, the newspaper was published in a more compact tabloid format, which is smaller than broadsheet. Since May 2019 however, the paper has reverted to broadsheet editions similar to most other popular newspapers in Bangladesh. In spite of primarily being an English-language newspaper, it has a Bangla online portal named *Dhaka Tribune Bangla*.

There are two main sections inside the *Dhaka Tribune* offices, where the employees perform a broad range of activities. On Level 5 of the building, there is the Business Section, and on Level 6, there is the News Section. Most of the journalists and content writers work in the news section. On the other hand, members of the editorial board and HR personnel have their offices in the business section. The news section has two sub-sections – one for the printed newspaper and the other for the online news portal. The workplace is very tidy and well-organized. In addition, the friendly atmosphere in and around the office makes it quite easy for new interns such as me to adapt quickly. Employees are always encouraged to seek guidance from their peers, seniors and supervisors when working on a story.



Figure 1: Dhaka Tribune's audience on Facebook and Instagram

Since its first publication in 2013, *Dhaka Tribune* has seen a rapid growth in readership and popularity not only in Bangladesh, but also in other parts of the world. As of now, its official Facebook page has around 1.6 million followers, with an additional 35,000 followers on Instagram (Figure 1). The newspaper is particularly popular among the country's youth, as 25.5% of its total followers on Facebook are aged between 18 to 24 years old. A massive 54.2% of the followers fall in between ages 25 to 34 (Figure 1). Moreover, the paper is read mostly from the urban areas of the country, as the data from its official Facebook and Instagram pages shows that over half of the audience are from the three major Bangladeshi cities Dhaka, Chattogram and Sylhet (Figure 2).

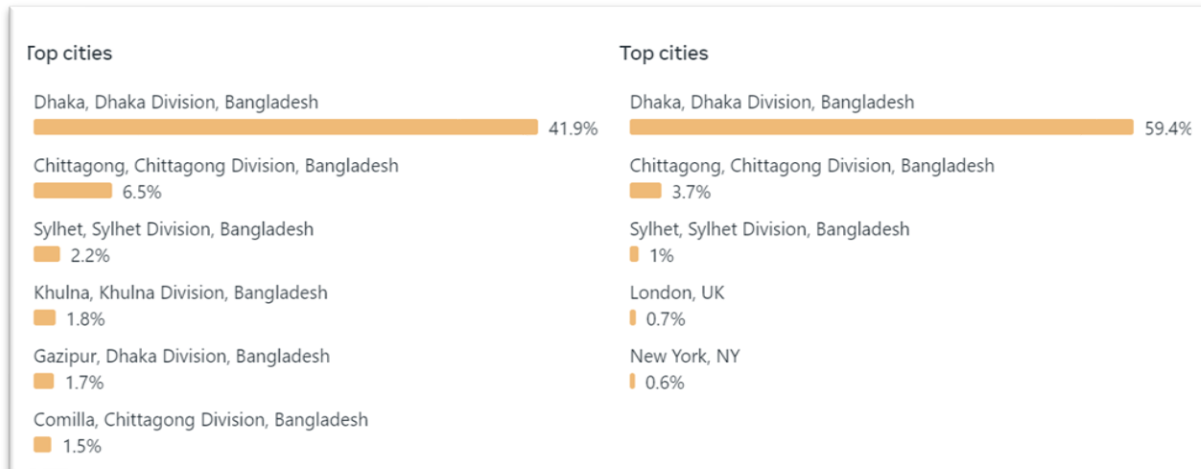


Figure 2: Cities with *Dhaka Tribune*'s top followers on Facebook and Instagram

Furthermore, the newspaper is renowned for having an impartial and liberal editorial stance. Some of its wide range of coverage include Bangladesh-India relations, Bangladesh-US relations, Bangladesh-China relations, human rights, women's rights, LGBTQ rights, press freedom etc. Besides, *Dhaka Tribune*'s editorials and op-ed contents are highly regarded nationwide. Aside from its main paper, *Dhaka Tribune* publishes a supplement named *Dhaka Tribune 2*, which mostly consists of business news and specials. The newspaper has another supplement named *Dhaka Tribune Tube*, which produces regular video reports on various topics to publish on the newspaper's official website, Facebook pages and YouTube channel.

In addition, *Dhaka Tribune* is well known for maintaining a safe and effective work environment. The newspaper employs many dedicated and passionate journalists. Its workforce consists of a good number of young people. Besides, *Dhaka Tribune* is well known for regularly providing internship opportunities to undergraduate students from both Bangladesh and abroad. I had the

pleasure of working with three international students who came to Bangladesh from the USA to work as interns at this newspaper. Moreover, the newspaper has a long reputation of functioning as an organization that is free of prejudice, where nobody is looked down upon because of their gender, religion or cultural differences. Hence, *Dhaka Tribune* is an ideal place for fresh graduates to pursue a career in journalism.

Chapter 3

Daily Activities at the *Dhaka Tribune*

I started working at *Dhaka Tribune* on March 1, 2023. I was assigned as an editorial intern and *Dhaka Tribune*'s editor Zafar Sobhan himself was my supervisor. On my first day, I went to the office and signed my offer letter. Then, I learned that most of my job would have to be done remotely. However, there would also be some instances when I might need to come to the office in-person. On my joining day, I was assigned to the newly formed 'Social Media Strategies' team, which consisted of four members. Tasawar Sattar was assigned as the team leader, and I, alongside two other new interns were introduced to him by my supervisor, Zafar Sobhan. Afterwards, my supervisor briefed the team regarding our goals and responsibilities.

Later that day, I received a joining confirmation email (Figure 3) from the manager of *Dhaka Tribune*'s HR and Administration department. Also, I was part of a WhatsApp group titled 'DT Strats', which was used to maintain regular communication amongst all members of the team. My team leader assigned me various tasks every day via the group chat. Additionally, I was required to join weekly online video call sessions via Google Meet or the Zoom app, where I shared the findings that I had gathered throughout the week on the tasks that were assigned to me. My internship at *Dhaka Tribune* lasted for a total of three months, where I had to work 4 hours every day for 6 days a week.

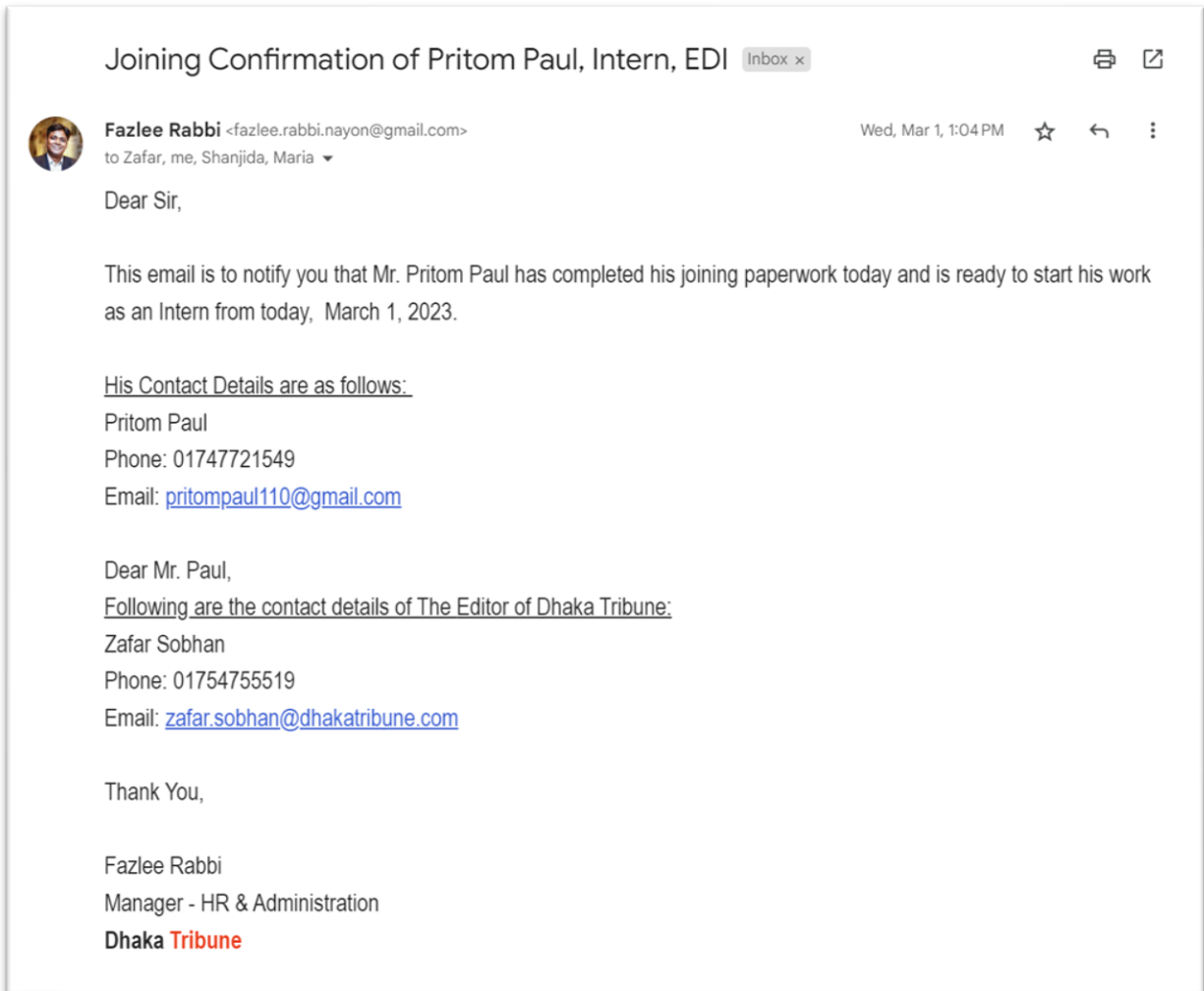


Figure 3: Joining confirmation email from *Dhaka Tribune*

Upon joining the *Dhaka Tribune*, I found out that its editorial board was looking to take the newspaper's online presence to a new direction. My team's primary goal was to come up with ideas that would increase the user traffic (i.e., number of visiting users) of *Dhaka Tribune*'s official website. Besides, finding ways to increase the reach of the newspaper's social media pages (e.g., Facebook and Instagram) was another key objective for our team. While searching to find strategies for increasing the user traffic of the *Dhaka Tribune* website, I had to come up with

ideas to redirect more readers from the posts made on *Dhaka Tribune*'s Facebook pages, to the newspaper's website, and also ensure that they would remain interested to keep browsing the site upon visiting it. I had to go through and analyze hundreds of posts made on the social media pages of *Dhaka Tribune* and its top competitors in the country (e.g., *The Daily Star*, *The Business Standard* etc.) on a daily basis. During my analysis, I looked for posts that were getting the most interactions (i.e., Likes, Comments and Shares) and also the ones that were getting little to no user engagement. Moreover, I browsed through the *Dhaka Tribune* online portal and skimmed multiple news stories every day in order to figure out how the website's overall presentation could be improved.

Apart from this, I was asked to come up with ideas for increasing the reach of the official *Dhaka Tribune* YouTube channel. To accomplish this task, I had to figure out how the channel could be improved as a whole. I watched numerous videos posted on the YouTube channels of *Dhaka Tribune* and its competitors (e.g., *The Daily Star*, *The Business Standard* etc.) and noted down my opinion on various technical aspects of those videos such as the production quality, presentation approaches, content types etc.

Besides, in the last month of my internship, I worked with my team to redesign the layout and appearance of the official *Dhaka Tribune* website. We came up with a few sample designs that would give the website a more modern look and make the site more user-friendly. I also collaborated with my team to develop a sample design for a smartphone application for the newspaper.

Last but not least, I worked on *Dhaka Tribune*'s '10 Year Anniversary Special' project, for which I went through over 1000 editions of e-papers from the newspaper's servers. Then, I had to create a shortlist for the best news stories published by *Dhaka Tribune* from every month of the years 2020, 2021 and 2022.

At the end of my three-month internship, I made a comprehensive list of recommendations and proposals in order to increase the reach (i.e., number of 'views' on the videos) of the *Dhaka Tribune* YouTube channel. The proposals were drafted based on all the research I had done throughout my three months of internship at the newspaper. Additionally, I made a similar type of list with suggestions that I believe would increase the reach of the newspaper's Facebook pages. On the whole, these were the various range of tasks that I had worked on during my time as an intern at the *Dhaka Tribune*.

Chapter 4

Increasing the Reach of the Facebook Page

To find ways of increasing the reach of *Dhaka Tribune*'s official Facebook page, I had to conduct a series of tasks. I browsed through the Facebook pages of *Dhaka Tribune*, *The Daily Star*, *The Business Standard*, *Nutshell Today*, *New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Telegraph* and *Washington Post* in order to acquire a comprehensive understanding of three key aspects – common post types or posting patterns, number of interactions or engagement, and posting frequency.

4.1 Posting Patterns and Number of Interactions

From my observations, I found that the aforementioned newspapers primarily had two ways of posting news on Facebook. The most common approach was to post a direct thumbnailed hyperlink (Figure 4) that would lead to the full story on the newspaper's website, and a few important bits from the story were used as that post's caption. However, I noticed that the posts that were made by following this approach generally got low interactions from the audience. On the other hand, the second approach was to post a single image file that would have a relevant picture alongside the report's headline typed in large font (Figure 5). The website link to that news article would usually be included in the post's caption or as a pinned comment below the post. The unique color pattern used on such images would make these posts stand out from the rest. Therefore, this approach often managed to attract more audience and got more engagement compared to the first approach.

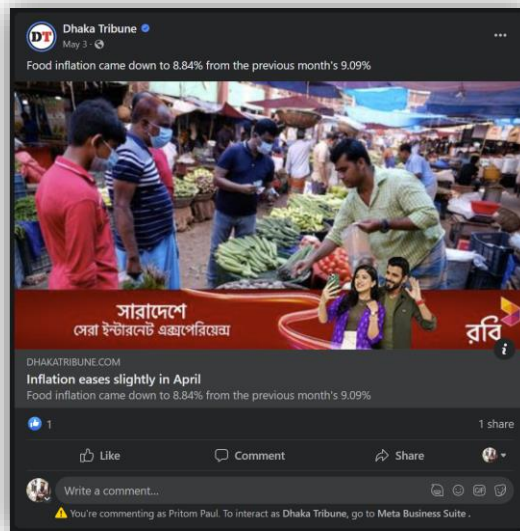


Figure 4: Posting direct links (thumbnailed) with the headline in caption

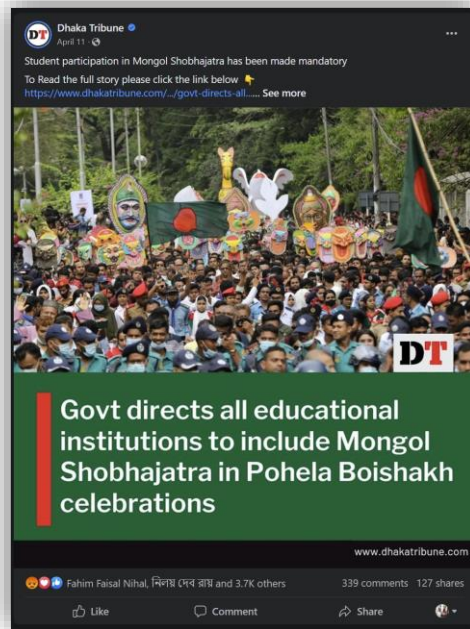


Figure 5: Posting an image with a relevant picture and headline; link in caption

Upon noticing this pattern, I suggested that the *Dhaka Tribune* Facebook page mostly use the second approach to post its news articles. I worked with my team to create some sample images (Figure 6) that could be used as reference when following the second approach of posting.



Figure 6: Sample images for the second approach of posting

4.2 Posting Frequency

Next, I was asked by my supervisor to make a post frequency chart for some of the world's top newspapers (e.g., *New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Telegraph* and *Washington Post*) and compare their numbers with those of *Dhaka Tribune* and two of its biggest local competitors. The data I gathered, as shown in Table 1 below, revealed that *The Telegraph* and *Washington Post* had

an average of 91 and 62 daily posts respectively in three days' time. Whereas, the *Dhaka Tribune* and *The Business Standard* had around 163 and 180 daily posts respectively. Therefore, I came to the conclusion that *Dhaka Tribune*, *The Daily Star* and *The Business Standard* all posted much more frequently on their respective Facebook pages compared to the aforementioned international newspapers.

No. of posts	DT	NYT	Guardian	Telegraph	W. Post	TDS	TBS
Last 24hr	166	81	42	103	81	226	180
+24hr	+168	+68	+21	+86	+36	~	~
+24hr	+155	+76	+31	+84	+69	~	~

Table 1: Facebook post frequency of some popular newspapers (in 72 hours' time)

Later in my internship, I joined a meeting alongside my team with a representative of Echobox, a globally renowned social media management software designed to help publishers track, update and post digital contents on social media platforms. The purpose of this meeting was to watch a demonstration of the Echobox software by the company's representative, and determine whether Echobox's services would help *Dhaka Tribune* maintain optimum post frequency on its Facebook pages. However, upon watching the demonstration and going through the trade-offs, I, alongside my team decided against availing the services of Echobox.

4.3 Separating the Facebook Pages

Apart from this, I worked with my team on separating the main *Dhaka Tribune* Facebook page into different secondary pages. At that time, *Dhaka Tribune* was posting both English and Bangla news stories on its main Facebook page. Upon considering and examining various aspects in relation to this issue, I recommended that the main *Dhaka Tribune* Facebook page publish contents only in English. Some of the factors that I took into account while making this proposal were *Dhaka Tribune*'s primary identity as an English-language daily, the newspaper's target audience, and the language that these audiences would most likely wish to read news articles in. As for the Bangla news stories, my suggestion was to publish those only from a separate 'Dhaka Tribune Bangla' page.

Also, during my research, I discovered that some of the other local English-language newspapers such as *The Daily Star* had a number of secondary pages on Facebook (e.g., The Daily Star Bangla, Star Showbiz, Star Football, Toggle etc.). Upon browsing through these Facebook pages, I noticed that most of them managed to have good reach among the Facebook audience. Therefore, I proposed that more secondary pages could exist for the *Dhaka Tribune* similar to its competitors such as *The Daily Star* and *The Business Standard*. Furthermore, I suggested that some posts could occasionally be 'boosted' from the *Dhaka Tribune* Facebook pages, which would certainly increase the reach of their contents. These were the tasks that I had conducted during my time at *Dhaka Tribune* to improve the newspaper's presence on Facebook.

Chapter 5

Increasing the Reach of the YouTube Channel

Besides working on improving *Dhaka Tribune*'s presence on Facebook, I worked to find ways of increasing the reach of the newspaper's official YouTube channel. This was not an easy task, as the YouTube channel was performing quite poorly at that time (i.e., videos on the channel were getting very little views). I had to do some research and familiarize myself with the 'YouTube algorithm', which is an AI-powered recommendation system designed to present YouTube's viewers with the most engaging contents. Moreover, I watched nearly 80 videos in total from the YouTube channels of *Dhaka Tribune*, *The Daily Star* and *The Business Standard*. As I was watching the videos, I analyzed various technical aspects (e.g., production quality, presentation approaches, content types, organization of videos, posting frequency, uploading schedules etc.), and noted down my thoughts and observations. At the end of my research, I presented a list of recommendations to my team, which I believed would make the YouTube algorithm recommend videos from the *Dhaka Tribune* YouTube channel to more viewers.

5.1 Thumbnails, Titles and Subtitles

Firstly, I noticed that the *Dhaka Tribune* videos often lacked an attractive thumbnail that would catch the eyes of the viewers. Whereas, *Dhaka Tribune*'s competitors such as *The Business Standard* usually had more astounding thumbnails for their videos (Figure 7). Adding a captivating thumbnail on a video greatly increases its chance of getting higher views. Therefore, I suggested that the *Dhaka Tribune* appoint a professional thumbnail artist to improve this aspect. Besides an

attractive thumbnail, the title of a video plays a vital role in ensuring that a video performs well. So, I emphasized on the importance of having a concise, strong and relevant title (Figure 9) for every video that would effectively convey a video's topic to the audience.



Figure 7: Examples of an unattractive thumbnail from *Dhaka Tribune* (left) and an effective thumbnail from *The Business Standard* (right)

Furthermore, I had to consider what language the titles of the videos should be in. In spite of being an English-language newspaper, most of *Dhaka Tribune*'s videos on YouTube were in Bangla. I recommended that the titles for Bangla videos should be in Bangla, and the English videos should have English titles. I also brought up the issue of adding subtitles (closed captions) to the videos. Being an English-language newspaper, *Dhaka Tribune* has a good number of audiences who have limited proficiency in Bangla. Therefore, adding English subtitles in a Bangla video (Figure 8) would certainly make such contents accessible to that particular group of viewers.

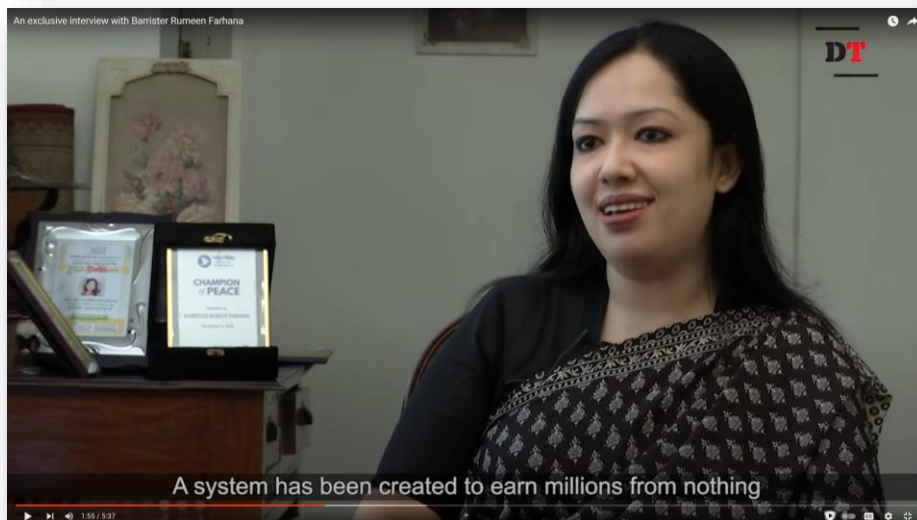


Figure 8: Example of a video (interview) in Bangla with English subtitles

5.2 Descriptions, Keywords and Hashtags

Next, from the research that I had done on the ‘YouTube algorithm’, I came to learn that the first 150 words in the description box of a video were crucial in determining that video’s performance on YouTube. This was due to the fact that whenever someone would search for a video, YouTube’s search engine would take those words from the description box into account. Also, the algorithm would use the information from a video’s description box to recommend personalized videos to millions of YouTube users. Therefore, I made the suggestion that every video should contain a short, well-written description (Figure 9) that would effectively explain what the video is about.

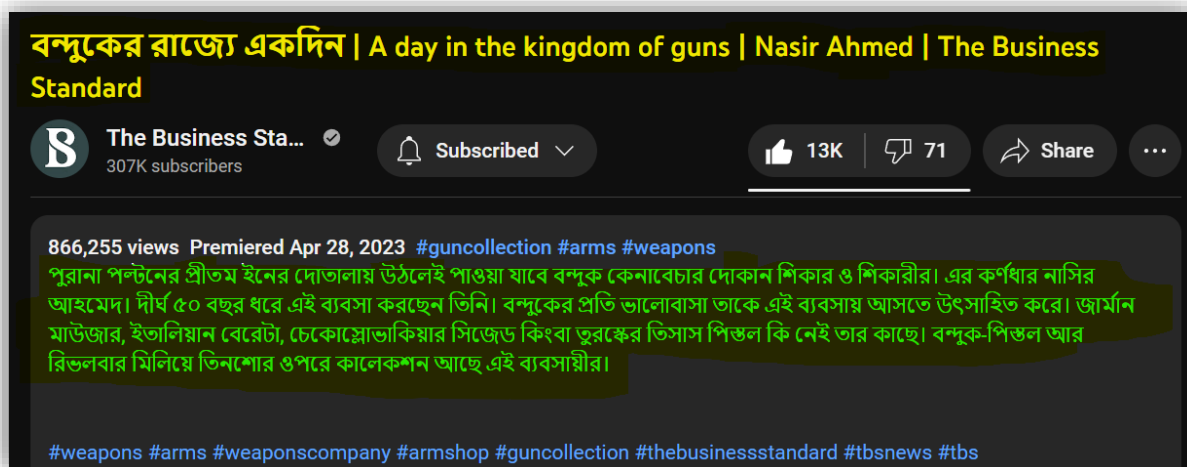


Figure 9: Example of a video with a good title (highlighted in yellow), a well-written description (highlighted in green), and relevant hashtags (highlighted in blue)

I also put emphasis on using relevant keywords and hashtags in a video's description box (Figure 9). Hashtags are a quick and efficient way to let the audience as well as the algorithm know what a video contains. Therefore, videos that are uploaded with relevant hashtags have higher chances of popping up on the YouTube feeds of the viewers.

5.3 Posting Frequency, Production Quality

Moreover, I learned through my research how the YouTube algorithm handled posting frequency on the platform. I found out that quality preceded quantity in this regard. Hence, I let the team know that improving the contents and production quality of the videos should get priority over maintaining a specific uploading schedule.

When it came to the production quality of *Dhaka Tribune*'s videos, I noticed that it lagged behind when compared to the production quality of the videos from *The Daily Star* and *The Business Standard*. For example, the voiceovers in the *Dhaka Tribune* videos would often sound of low quality. The quality of the video editing was likewise subpar when compared to the videos from *Dhaka Tribune*'s rivals. So, I recommended that the newspaper appoint someone with good video editing and video production skills and experience to tackle this issue. I thought that doing so would give the videos a polished appearance that they, in my opinion, lacked.

5.4 Presentation, Organization and Sharing Across Platforms

While I was watching the videos produced by *The Daily Star* and *The Business Standard*, their presentations and voiceovers caught my attention. The presenters in those videos had a strong on-screen presence, and they provided good audio deliveries. Whereas, many of *Dhaka Tribune*'s presenters in the videos did not seem to feel comfortable in front of the camera. In many instances, the videos featured no on-screen presenter and only contained mediocre quality voiceovers. Therefore, I suggested appointing better presenters for the videos, who would be able to speak clearly and effortlessly on camera.

Also, I noticed that the videos on the *Dhaka Tribune* YouTube channel were not properly categorized in playlists. I requested that this matter be looked into. In addition to this, I emphasized on making YouTube 'Shorts'. These are around 30 to 60 seconds long video clips that have the potential of receiving a lot of views. As these videos are very short in length, producing these would not require too much time. I recommended using information from some interesting news stories from the daily editions of the newspaper to occasionally create such short videos, which surely would benefit the channel's growth.

Last but not least, I proposed that the YouTube channel and the links to its videos occasionally be shared on *Dhaka Tribune*'s Facebook and Instagram pages. Sharing across platforms is a common practice among creators in the social media space. As the *Dhaka Tribune* Facebook page has a huge number of followers, sharing the YouTube videos simultaneously on Facebook would ensure that the videos reach a larger audience. For the same reason, I recommended that the YouTube Shorts are also posted on the newspaper's Facebook and Instagram pages, where such short videos are commonly referred to as 'Reels'. Overall, I believed that implementing these changes would result in the growth of the *Dhaka Tribune* YouTube channel.

Chapter 6

Improving the Website's User Traffic

Returning to the topic of the *Dhaka Tribune* website's user traffic, the primary goal of my team was to come up with ideas to improve this particular aspect. Increasing the reach of the newspaper's Facebook pages would help to achieve this objective, as it would result in more audience wanting to visit the website to further read a news story that they stumbled upon on Facebook. But in order to keep a reader on the website for a long time once they would visit the site, certain aspects of the website had to be improved. To find ways of improving the website's user traffic, I had to regularly browse the site's web and mobile versions. I noted down various features and characteristics of the website that I liked and disliked. From my observations, I had to figure out what could be done to improve the overall experience of browsing the site.

6.1 Organization and Space Management

From my observations while browsing the *Dhaka Tribune* website, I noticed that the site's home page in the web version contained too many articles within a short space. This made the home page look congested and disorganized. I felt that there should be more space in between articles so that the home page would not look so crammed. As for the mobile version of the site, I noticed when I scrolled down and opened an article, and then tried to go back to where I was before, I was taken back to either the top of the home page or right at the bottom. Whereas, in such a case, it would be ideal if I was instead taken back to where I was at just before clicking on that article. I found this small issue quite confounding, as I had to keep scrolling up or down repeatedly to return

where I was beforehand. I felt that this small issue would certainly dissuade users from spending more time on the website.

6.2 Sample Re-Designs for the Website

Upon reporting the aforementioned issues, I worked with my team to make some refined samples for the *Dhaka Tribune* website. We came up with six drafts where we tweaked various design aspects and characteristics of the original website. However, there was no complete overhaul in any of the designs as we had to ensure that the changes would not be too drastic and result in the website losing its identity. For example, we used grid-style blocks (Figure 10) of different sizes and colors to present the stories, which would make the site look more modern than the original. Overlapping blocks (Figure 11) were also used in another draft to give the site an elegant look.

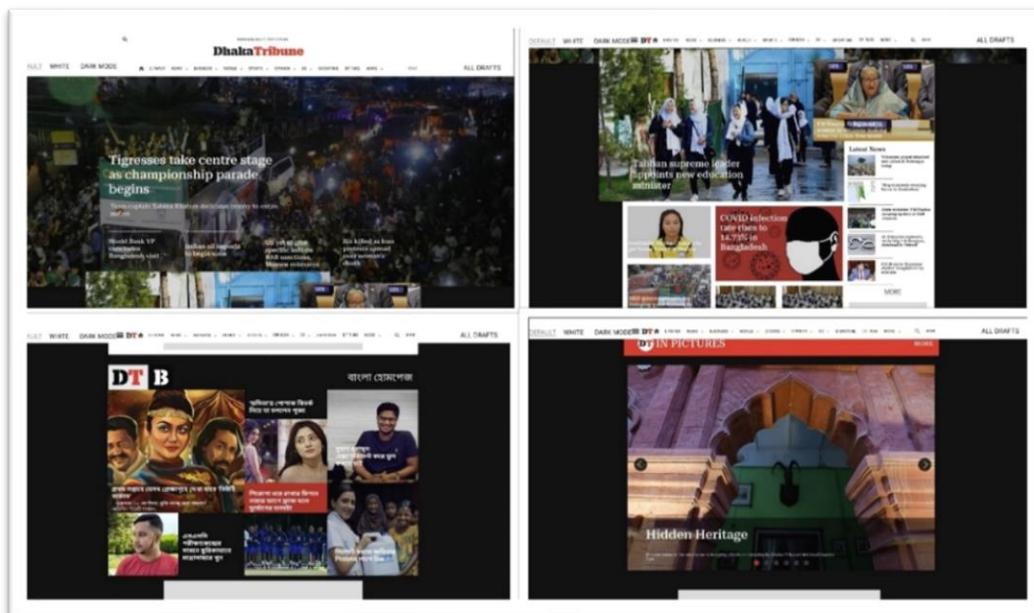


Figure 10: Redesigned website draft incorporating grid-style blocks

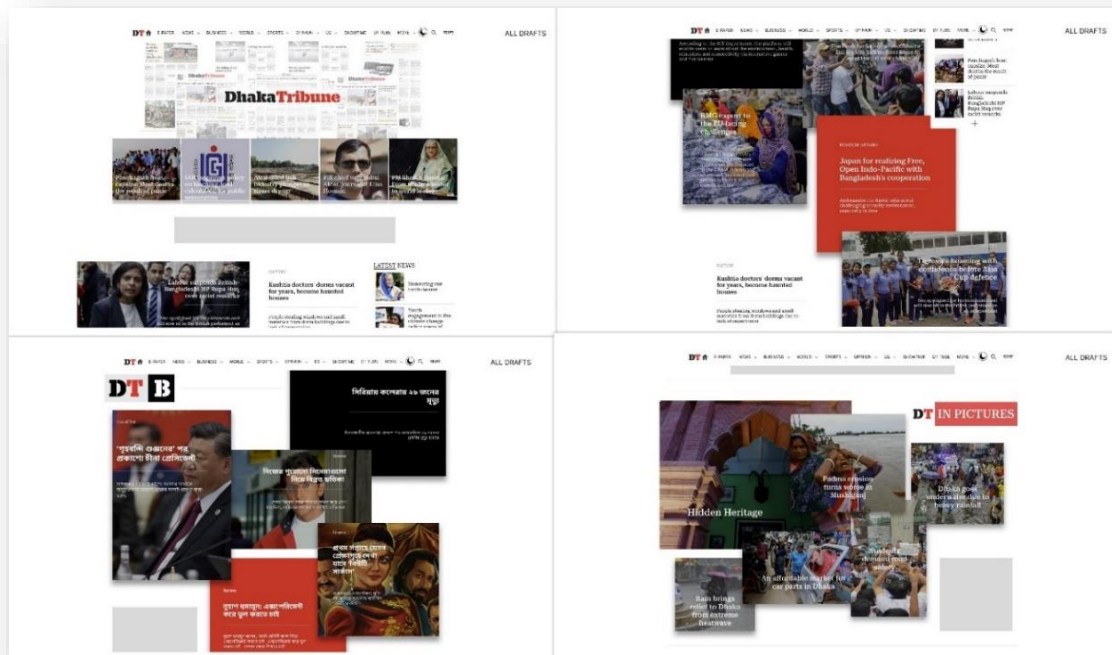


Figure 11: Redesigned website draft incorporating overlapping blocks

6.3 Sample Design for the Mobile App

In addition to the above, I worked alongside my team on designing a smartphone application for the *Dhaka Tribune* online portal. The idea was to give smartphone users a high-quality browsing experience of the newspaper's website in the form of an app. The smartphone application would have three main sections titled Home, Feed and Profile (Figure 12). Users would be able to scroll up and down in the 'Home' section to browse different news stories, and tap on any story to read that further. The 'Feed' section was inspired from a widely popular news app known as 'Flipboard'. This section would contain only a single story per page or slide. From there, users would be able to swipe up and down to go to the next and previous stories respectively. Finally, the

third section titled 'Profile' would contain the user's account information as well as a list of all the stories that they had previously liked and saved.

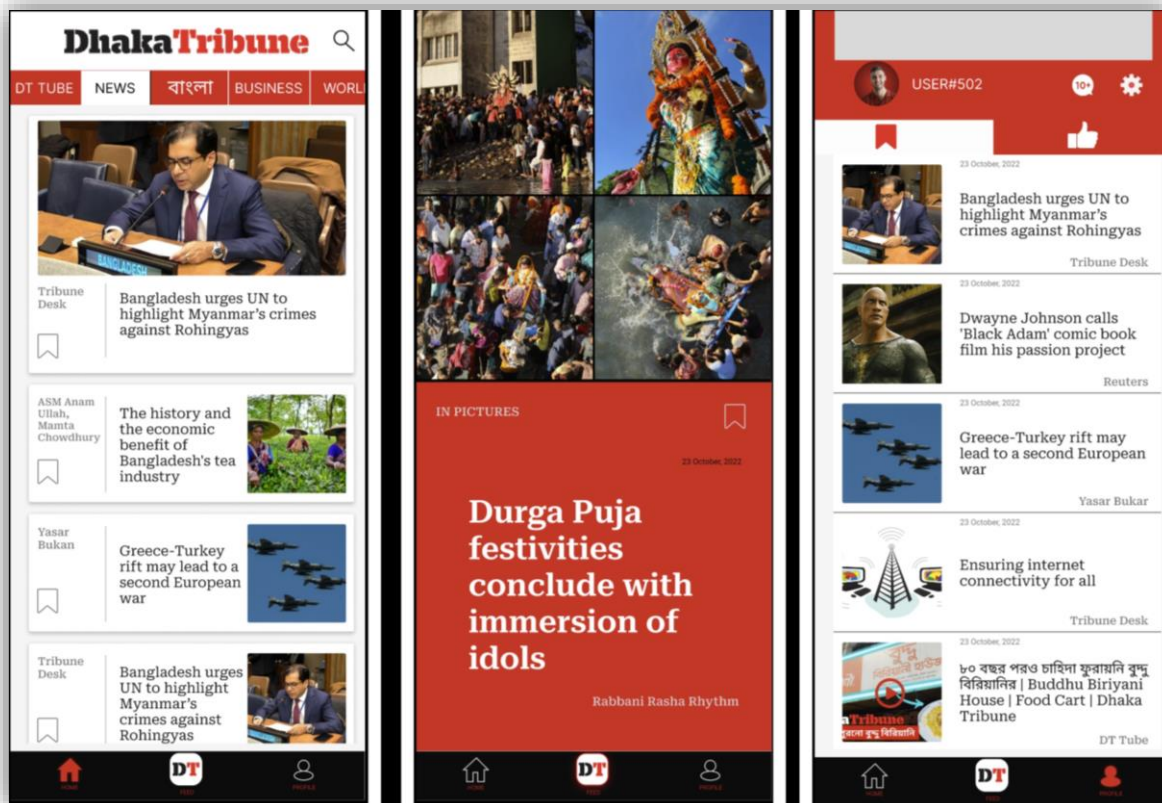


Figure 12: Designs for the Home (left), Feed (middle), and Profile (right) sections of the proposed *Dhaka Tribune* smartphone application

Altogether, these were the tasks that I was part of with a view to improving the user traffic of the *Dhaka Tribune* online portal.

Chapter 7

The '10 Year Anniversary Special' Project

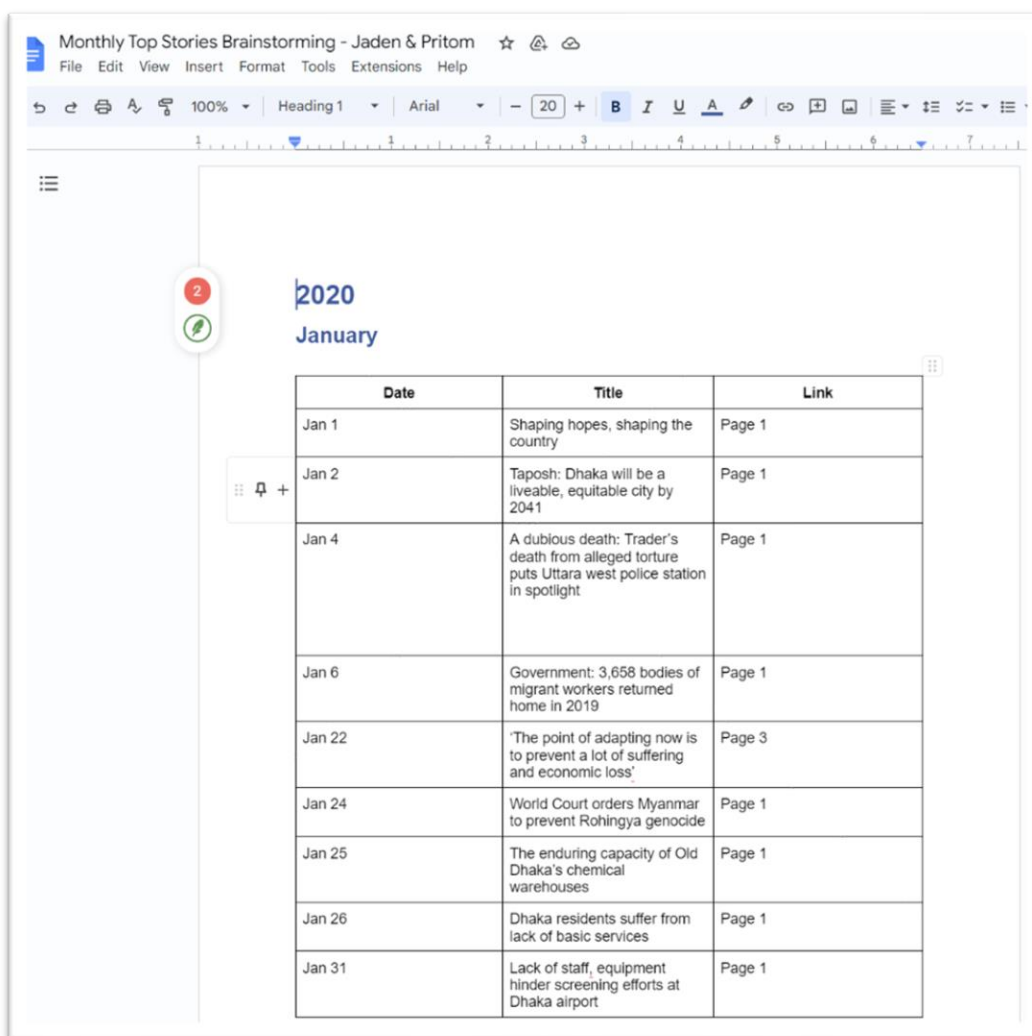
In the last few days of my internship at *Dhaka Tribune*, I was assigned to the newspaper's '10 Year Anniversary Special' project. This special edition would contain the best original stories published by *Dhaka Tribune* from every month of the last 10 years. The purpose of this special edition was not only to celebrate the newspaper reaching the 10 years milestone, but also to exhibit its best journalistic works since it started publishing.

7.1 Brief Description of the Task

As I worked in this project, my job was to go through all *Dhaka Tribune* e-papers from the years 2020, 2021 and 2022 and create a shortlist of the best 5-6 news stories from each of the months in these years. I was asked to go through the front and back pages of all the published editions of the newspaper from 2020 to 2022. I did not have to go through all the pages, as the most important stories in a newspaper are usually printed on the front and back pages. Also, going through all the pages of over 1000 editions of the paper would make it impossible for me to meet the deadline of this assignment. I had to read one story after another, and decide which ones were good enough to be included in the shortlist.

I started from the year 2022, as I could easily find all the e-papers from that year on *Dhaka Tribune's* website. I opened and skimmed through the stories from January 1, 2022, all the way to December 31, 2022. This took a few days to complete. After shortlisting the stories from 2022, I still had 2021 and 2020 left. Unfortunately, the e-papers from these two years were not

available on the newspaper's website. This meant that I had to go to the *Dhaka Tribune* office at Panthapath, where I was able to access the e-papers from the newspaper's local servers and resume my work. In order to make the shortlist, I used a Google Docs file. Once I felt that a story was suitable to make the shortlist, I had to type down the date of publication, story title and the e-paper hyperlink or the page number of that article in the Google Docs file (Figure 13).



Monthly Top Stories Brainstorming - Jaden & Pritom

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2020
January

Date	Title	Link
Jan 1	Shaping hopes, shaping the country	Page 1
Jan 2	Taposh: Dhaka will be a liveable, equitable city by 2041	Page 1
Jan 4	A dubious death: Trader's death from alleged torture puts Uttara west police station in spotlight	Page 1
Jan 6	Government: 3,658 bodies of migrant workers returned home in 2019	Page 1
Jan 22	'The point of adapting now is to prevent a lot of suffering and economic loss'	Page 3
Jan 24	World Court orders Myanmar to prevent Rohingya genocide	Page 1
Jan 25	The enduring capacity of Old Dhaka's chemical warehouses	Page 1
Jan 26	Dhaka residents suffer from lack of basic services	Page 1
Jan 31	Lack of staff, equipment hinder screening efforts at Dhaka airport	Page 1

Figure 13: A portion of the shortlisted stories for the '10 Year Anniversary Project'

7.2 Selection Process and Rationale

In order to decide which stories to keep and which ones to filter out, I had to come up with a few criteria to categorize the news articles. As I read through the stories, I was able to arrange them all in a total of four categories. Whenever I found a suitable story, I typed it down in the Google Docs file and therefore, put it in the shortlist.

7.2.1 In Terms of Significance

Firstly, I focused on finding stories that were original works of the journalists at *Dhaka Tribune*. I prioritized stories that covered more significant issues as opposed to day-to-day hard news stories. For example, I shortlisted a story titled “Lack of staff, equipment hinder screening efforts at Dhaka airport”, which put light on the appalling state of the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. I shortlisted another story titled “UN Report: Bangladesh’s gender wage gap lowest in the world”, which showed Bangladesh’s success in ensuring equal pay for women in workplaces.

7.2.2 Investigative Stories

During the selection process, I gave the most emphasis on good investigative stories.

Investigative journalism is considered by many to be the best form of journalism, where a journalist conducts systematic research to unveil hidden truths and facts on topics such as corruption, serious crimes, corporate wrongdoings, human rights abuses etc. I found a number of investigative pieces that were published by *Dhaka Tribune* from the years 2020 to 2022 and shortlisted such stories. For example, an article titled “Illegal Stone Dredging: Corruption

threatens Panchagarh’s ecology” consisted of in-depth research on cases of illegal stone dredging in Panchagarh district in the year 2020. The journalist conducted various investigations and interviewed a number of people to unravel the ins and outs of the issue and covered all of it in that story. I found another excellent investigative piece titled “Encroachers feasting on river lands”, which brought the issue of illegal river lands grabbing to light. I believed that such reports were the best examples of the excellent journalistic prowess of *Dhaka Tribune* as a newspaper. Therefore, I shortlisted a number of such investigative stories for the anniversary special.

7.2.3 Exclusive Stories

As one of the most renowned newspapers in Bangladesh, *Dhaka Tribune* has a large number of readers in the country and abroad. Therefore, the newspaper often gets the opportunity to conduct exclusive interviews on many prominent local and global figures. One such prominent political figure was Svitlana Zalishchuk, the Foreign Policy Adviser to the Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine on European Integration. She gave an exclusive interview to *Dhaka Tribune* on March 4, 2022, just ten days after Russia had launched the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The exclusive was titled “Ukraine to World: There is no Plan B”, and it was published in the *Dhaka Tribune* on March 8, 2022. I found some other notable exclusives such as this, and made sure to include those in the shortlist for the anniversary special.

7.2.4 Discarded Stories

Not all stories on a newspaper bear the same significance. Many of the stories that I had come across during the selection process contained just day-to-day news. For example, the editions that were issued during the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant number of articles presenting

the daily COVID-19 cases in Bangladesh and abroad. Also, many news stories were published daily that covered general statements and quotes from the regular press briefings conducted by prominent political figures and government officials. Besides, I found many stories that were not *Dhaka Tribune* originals. Such news articles were taken from other renowned international news portals such as *Reuters*, *Associated Press*, *AFP* etc. I discarded all such stories during my selection process. The Table 2 below shows a list with examples of stories falling under each category.

Criteria	Story Example 1	Story Example 2
Significance	“Lack of staff, equipment hinder screening efforts at Dhaka airport.”	“UN Report: Bangladesh’s gender wage gap lowest in the world.”
Investigative Stories	“Illegal Stone Dredging: Corruption threatens Panchagarh’s ecology.”	“Encroachers feasting on river lands.”
Exclusive Stories	“Ukraine to World: There is no Plan-B.”	“Taposh: Dhaka will be a liveable, equitable city by 2041.”
Discarded Stories	“Maleque: Wrongdoers to face legal action.”	“PM Hasina urges US to lift Russia sanctions.”

Table 2: Example of news articles categorized by Significance, Investigative Stories, Exclusive Stories and Discarded Stories

In the end, I managed to shortlist over 200 news stories for the ‘10 Year Anniversary Special’ edition. I shared the shortlist with my supervisor, who later selected only one story from the 5-6 stories that I selected from each month of a year. Thus, he made the final selection from my shortlist. With that, my work in the anniversary special project had concluded.

Chapter 8

Internship Experience

As a media student, I felt honored to have gotten the opportunity of working at such a prestigious newspaper as *Dhaka Tribune*. I was quite overwhelmed at first after getting the offer letter, as the internship would be my first professional job. At the same time however, I felt immense excitement and could not wait to start working. As my interests lied mostly in the area of content writing and editing, I was hoping that my internship at *Dhaka Tribune* would provide me with the opportunity to work in that department. Although I was not required to work in this area, I was still committed to my job and put the best efforts to carry out my responsibilities throughout the internship.

From the day I joined *Dhaka Tribune* to my last day there as an intern, I was moved by the friendly and helpful behavior of my superiors and fellow interns. I must thank Mr. Zafar Sobhan once again for his supervision. In spite of being the editor of one of the top newspapers in the country, he always treated me with respect and took the time to hear me out whenever I approached him. Also, I consider myself fortunate to have gotten such an excellent team leader as Mr. Tasawar Sattar. He guided me and the two other interns in our team with utmost sincerity and compassion. I had no prior experience of doing much of the work that I was assigned to do in my internship. My preexisting knowledge on social media and its certain functions was helpful in this regard, but it was not enough. I had to research on my own and learn more about social media monetization, the Facebook and YouTube algorithms etc. Yet, I still had many questions, and Mr. Sattar assisted me by providing all the necessary explanations and

clarifications. Also, he was considerate when I got stuck in traffic once during the Ramadan month and was forced to be late in our weekly meeting as a result. Moreover, the two other interns in my team, Sophia Lewis Recchia and Lucy K.D., were very friendly and co-operative. Therefore, I had a great time doing collaborative work with the team throughout my internship.

Furthermore, I appreciated the ‘hybrid’ nature of my work at *Dhaka Tribune*. As I was doing three other courses besides my internship last spring, it would have been quite difficult for me to go to the office in-person six days a week. However, working from home also posed some challenges, as I remember the entire country experiencing regular load shedding at that time due to a nationwide power shortage. Therefore, ensuring that I had a stable internet connection at all times during my working hours proved to be a difficult feat to achieve. On the other hand, even though I worked mostly from home, I still wanted to experience working regularly inside an office. Thankfully, I got to do that on the last month of my internship while working in the newspaper’s ‘10 Year Anniversary Special’ project. At the office, I got to meet some of the most amazing people who were working full time at *Dhaka Tribune*. I also met one of my university friends from the English and Humanities Department at the *Dhaka Tribune* office, who started working at the newspaper full-time after graduating in the previous semester. My experience with these people was equally delightful as it was with the members of my ‘Social Media Strategies’ team. I received assistance whenever I needed it, which helped me to settle in the office environment quickly.

On my last day at *Dhaka Tribune*, I presented all of my revised recommendations our team. Upon going through the notes, my supervisor asked me multiple follow-up questions, to which I

responded accordingly. He appreciated the entire team's efforts and ensured us that many of our proposals had great chances of being implemented by the newspaper in the coming days. I felt privileged to have been a small part of the process that would eventually refine the online presence of such a reputed newspaper. This marked the end of my three-month internship at the *Dhaka Tribune*.

Chapter 9

Application of Theories in My Internship

Throughout my journey as a student of Media and Cultural Studies at the Department of English and Humanities in Brac University, I learned a great number of theories from various courses. However, theoretical knowledge by itself is hardly sufficient for the development of a student. I strongly believe that the perceived value of learning any theory can be increased only when that knowledge is put to the test in a practical situation. My internship at *Dhaka Tribune* provided me with the opportunity to apply my theoretical knowledge in real-life circumstances. During my internship, I found myself in multiple situations where I had to connect various theories that I learned from the courses of my major area of study. Some of these courses are ENG 331: Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice, ENG 333: Globalization and The Media, ENG 401: Editing, ENG 440: English for the Print Media and so on.

While doing the ‘Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice’ course, I learned of The Frankfurt School. Two of the intellectuals of this school of thought were Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, who termed the products and process of mass culture as ‘culture industry’. According to these two authors, products of the culture industry are marked by two features – homogeneity and predictability. Homogeneity refers to the state of being similar in kind. In order to explain homogeneity, Adorno and Horkheimer use an example of the familiar experience of a moviegoer, “who perceives the street as a continuation of the film he has just left” (99). On the other hand, predictability refers to something that can be easily predicted. To explain this feature of the products of culture industry, the authors again use an example of movies, where the

outcome of a film “can invariably be predicted at the start” by an audience (Adorno and Horkheimer 98). Now, aside from films, newspapers can also be considered as products of culture industry. Therefore, homogeneity and predictability are two common features that many newspapers share these days. During my internship, I had to regularly browse the Facebook pages of some of the most popular Bangladeshi English-language newspapers (e.g., *Dhaka Tribune*, *The Daily Star*, *The Business Standard* etc.). There, I noticed many similarities in the ways all these newspapers published contents. For example, the second approach of posting that I discussed in Chapter 4 was followed by all these newspapers, as such posts would usually get good reach among the audience. These posts consisted of a single image file that would have a picture relevant to the story alongside the news report’s headline typed in large font. In most cases, many of these posts looked the same regardless of which of these newspapers published them. Even though some of these news outlets often tried to differentiate their approach from that of their competitors, the homogenous nature still remained.

Next, I could relate another theory that I learned from the ‘Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice’ course while working as an intern at *Dhaka Tribune*. It is known as ‘panopticon’, which was conceptualized by English philosopher and social theorist Jeremy Bentham in the mid-18th century. Bentham designed panopticon as an architectural plan for a new type of prison. However, it was later conceptualized into a social control mechanism by French philosopher and theorist Michel Foucault, and it became a comprehensive symbol for modern authority and discipline. Panopticon worked by putting an overseer on top of a tower and placing prisoners in cells around the tower in a way that the overseer had a clear view of every single cell. The idea was to create a sense among the inmates that they were being watched by the overseer at all

times. Here, Foucault incorporates his idea of the ‘gaze’ with Bentham’s panopticon. With the knowledge that all of their actions were being watched, the prisoners would thus refrain from any wrongdoings. While I was working at the *Dhaka Tribune* office, I saw multiple CCTV cameras in a number of places inside the office. Seeing the presence of those cameras, I immediately thought that I must stay focused on my tasks at all times and refrain from using my phone too much while I was at the office. I did not know whether the CCTV cameras were even active or if anyone was watching the live footage from the cameras. Foucault stated that in surveillance systems, there was “no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints. Just a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorizing to the point that he is his own overseer” (155). So, similar to how the presence of an actual overseer was not needed for the gaze to function, I did not need to be certain whether the CCTV footage was being overseen by someone to create a sense of accountability and seriousness in me. I was able to compare this situation with what Foucault called the ‘internalization of the gaze’, which refers to the fact that a person aware of being surveilled would discipline himself internally to conform with the rules or norms. Even outside the office, while I was working from home, I felt the same sense of accountability as I was obligated to answer to my supervisor for my actions during my working hours.

Besides panopticon, I can recall being able to connect a few more theories with the work that I had done at *Dhaka Tribune*. Two such theories are homogenization and hybridization. As I learned from the course titled ‘Globalization and the Media’, homogenization and hybridization are known as two of the three key theories of globalization. The term ‘globalization’ refers to the integration and coordination of people, businesses and governments throughout the world. Hassi and Storti describe globalization as being “multidimensional and having economic cultural,

social and political aspects which impact both individuals and societies” (4). These days, the mass media are playing a major role in enhancing globalization. Then, homogenization refers to the increasing similarity of cultures in a way that unifies them. Cultural homogenization is an act through which different cultures transform and become more similar to each other as globalization progresses. In contrast, hybridization refers to the interaction between local and global cultures. The primary premise of cultural hybridization is the “continuous process of mixing or blending cultures” (Hassi and Storti 13). During my internship at *Dhaka Tribune*, I went through the websites and social media pages of a few reputed newspapers that are based outside of Bangladesh (e.g., *The Telegraph*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post* etc.), and monitored the designs of their websites and how they posted on their social media pages. In my final list of proposals for the ‘Social Media Strategies’ team, I took inspiration from a number of features of the websites and social media pages of these newspapers. On the other hand, I had to work with two other interns who were media students from the United States of America. I witnessed as they discussed many traits that they found in multiple US-based newspapers and proposed that the *Dhaka Tribune* incorporate some of those traits. I could compare these experiences with the theory of hybridization.

Aside from these, I can think of the course titled ‘Editing’, where I learned how to write headlines for newspapers. The primary goal of a headline is to use a few words to create a picture of an entire story and make it appealing to the readers. I also learned the six steps of writing a headline, which put the most emphasis on choosing specific, precise words as well as using action verbs and creativity. Therefore, when I was working to find ideas to increase the reach of *Dhaka Tribune*’s Facebook pages, I realized that the second approach of posting

mentioned previously in Chapter 4 must contain solid headlines in order to attract the most audience. In addition to being captivating, the headlines also needed to be in proper type or font. As I learned from the ‘Editing’ course, typography refers to the shape and size of the type or font, and sometimes the shape and size of the overall headline. This can play a vital role in making the audience interested to read a post on Facebook and other social networking sites, and therefore, increase the post’s reach and engagement. The size and weight of the type help the audience judge the importance of a news. Moreover, type can take on dramatic shapes and appearances that provoke audience to look at a post. I took these points in consideration while making my final list of recommendations for the ‘Social Media Strategies’ team. On the other hand, while working on the newspaper’s official YouTube channel, I focused on the titles of its videos. Although I was not dealing with newspaper stories there, the titles of YouTube videos did share some fundamental commonalities with the headlines of news stories. Therefore, using solid titles in every single video was one of my top proposals for increasing the reach of *Dhaka Tribune*’s YouTube channel.

Last but not least, I studied the five news value factors while doing the ‘English for the Print Media’ course. These are prominence or significance, consequences, proximity, timeliness and oddity. Prominence refers to the significance of a reported event. While searching for the type of news posts on Facebook that got more engagement than usual, I found that news posts that covered important events got more interactions from the audience than posts that contained less significant news. Next, consequences refer to the effects of a news. For example, during my internship, I noticed that the stories that contained some hot takes or unpopular opinions often got many angry reactions and comments from the audience. Apart from this, proximity is another

news value factor that refers to the distance between the audience and the place where the news takes place. I found this factor to be less relevant than others, as globalization has turned the world into a small place these days. Even if a news post had weak proximity, it could get high engagement if it contained other stronger news value factors like prominence or timeliness.

Speaking of timeliness, this is another crucial news value factor that refers to news being reported in time. From my internship experience at *Dhaka Tribune*, I found timeliness to be the most important among the five news value factors. I noticed that any news that was not published in a timely manner on the newspaper's Facebook page would often get low engagement. Finally, oddity refers to the unusualness or the odd nature of a news. Every day, we see numerous strange events taking place around us. I noticed that the news posts and video reports that covered such odd occurrences would often get high engagement from the audience on social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube etc.

All in all, these were the theories that I learned through my studies as a media student and put into use during my internship at *Dhaka Tribune*.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

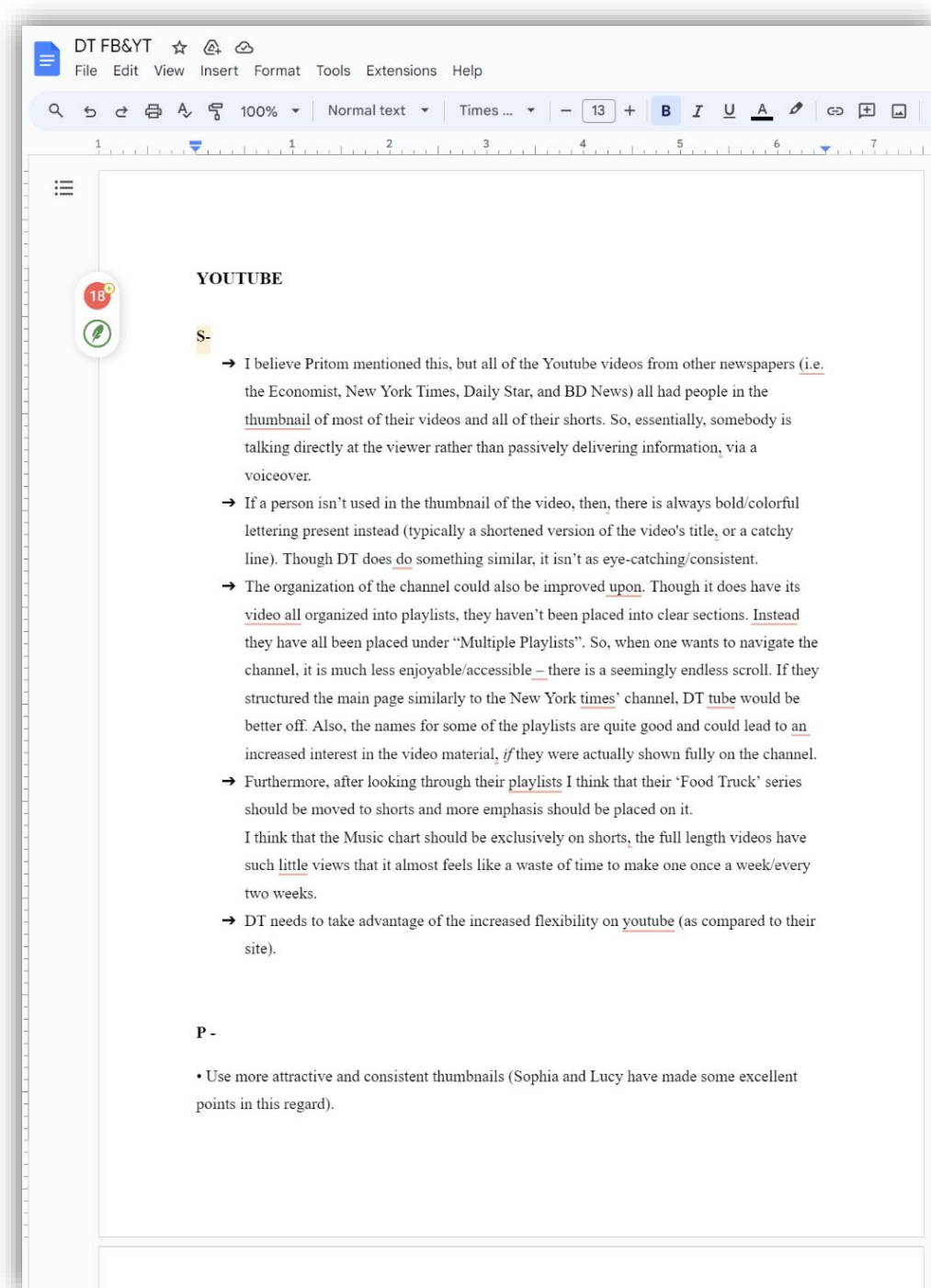
In conclusion, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Department of English and Humanities at Brac University for providing me with the opportunity to study, explore and grow. During my study at Brac University and my internship at the *Dhaka Tribune*, I have learned a great deal about teamwork, time management, self-discipline, kindness and empathy. Moreover, choosing Media and Cultural Studies as my major has made me realize the importance of learning various cultural theories. It also made me aware of the responsibilities of a journalist.

As my work at *Dhaka Tribune* mostly revolved around social media, I had to educate myself on numerous aspects of some of the popular social networking platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube etc. I had some prior idea about few of the technical terms such as monetization, YouTube algorithm etc. However, through the various research that I conducted to accomplish my tasks during this internship, I had gotten a broader understanding of these terms. Nevertheless, the most important takeaway from this internship for me was the experience that I gained by working in an office environment. In a way, this internship was my first real job. I have always been curious about what it would be like to work in an office with other people. Often, I used to feel a bit agitated while having these thoughts. However, after starting to go to the *Dhaka Tribune* office, I discovered that I was actually enjoying myself and enjoying the new experience as well. In this sense, through my internship at *Dhaka Tribune*, I found a part of

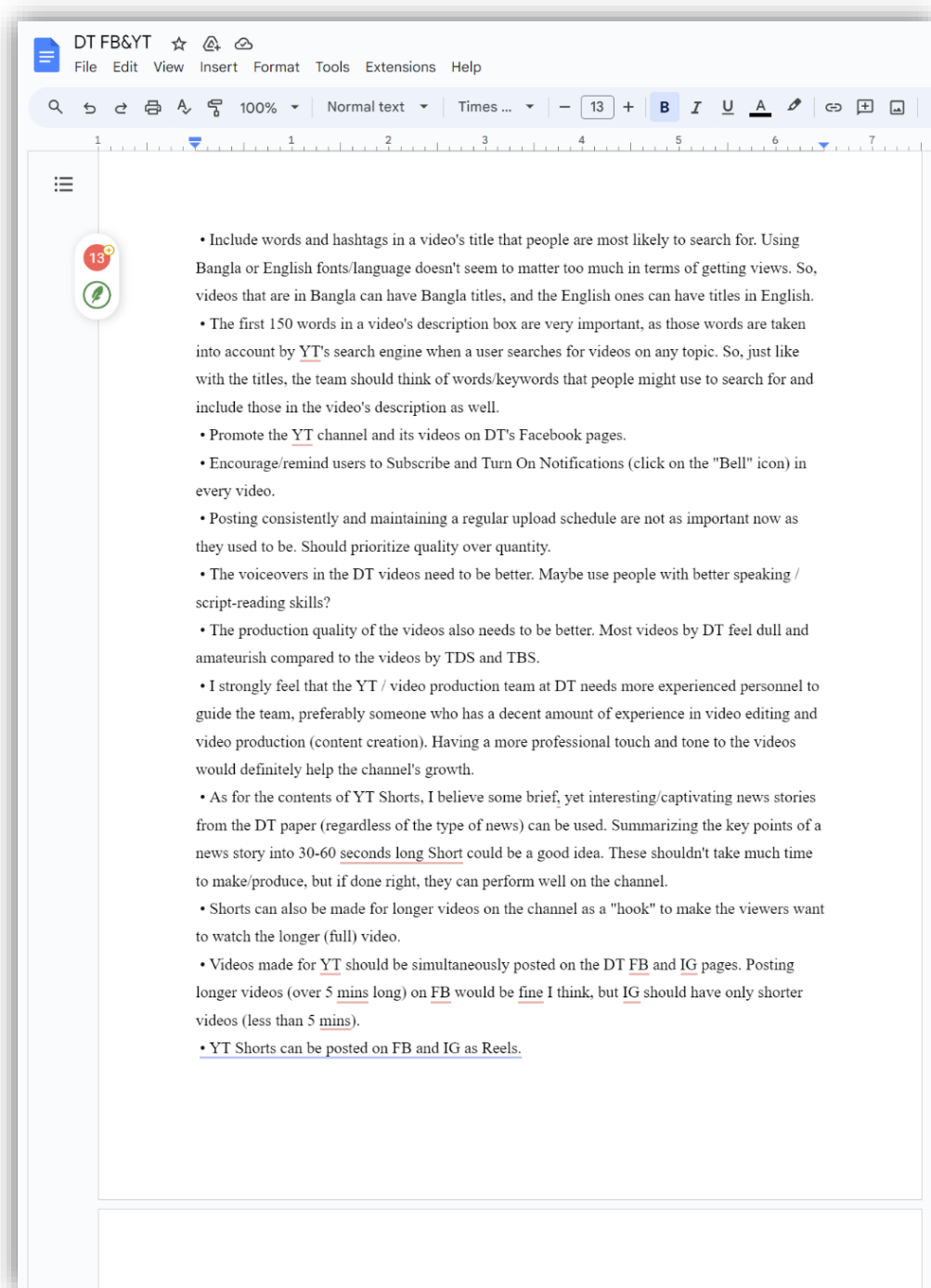
myself which I had previously been unaware of. I strongly believe that this self-discovery is going to be immensely helpful in my work life in the coming days.

Lastly, I would like to state that I have always been conscious about the importance of putting theoretical knowledge into practice. The internship at *Dhaka Tribune* has provided me with the chance to do exactly that. Besides, this internship has gifted me with the invaluable experience of working at a reputed newspaper. I learned something new every day through my work. Also, I got to learn new things about myself. The accumulation of these experiences has enhanced my learnings and helped me grow as a person. In addition to this, I have made some fond memories with my co-workers throughout my internship. I am certain that these memories and experiences will remain with me for the rest of my life.

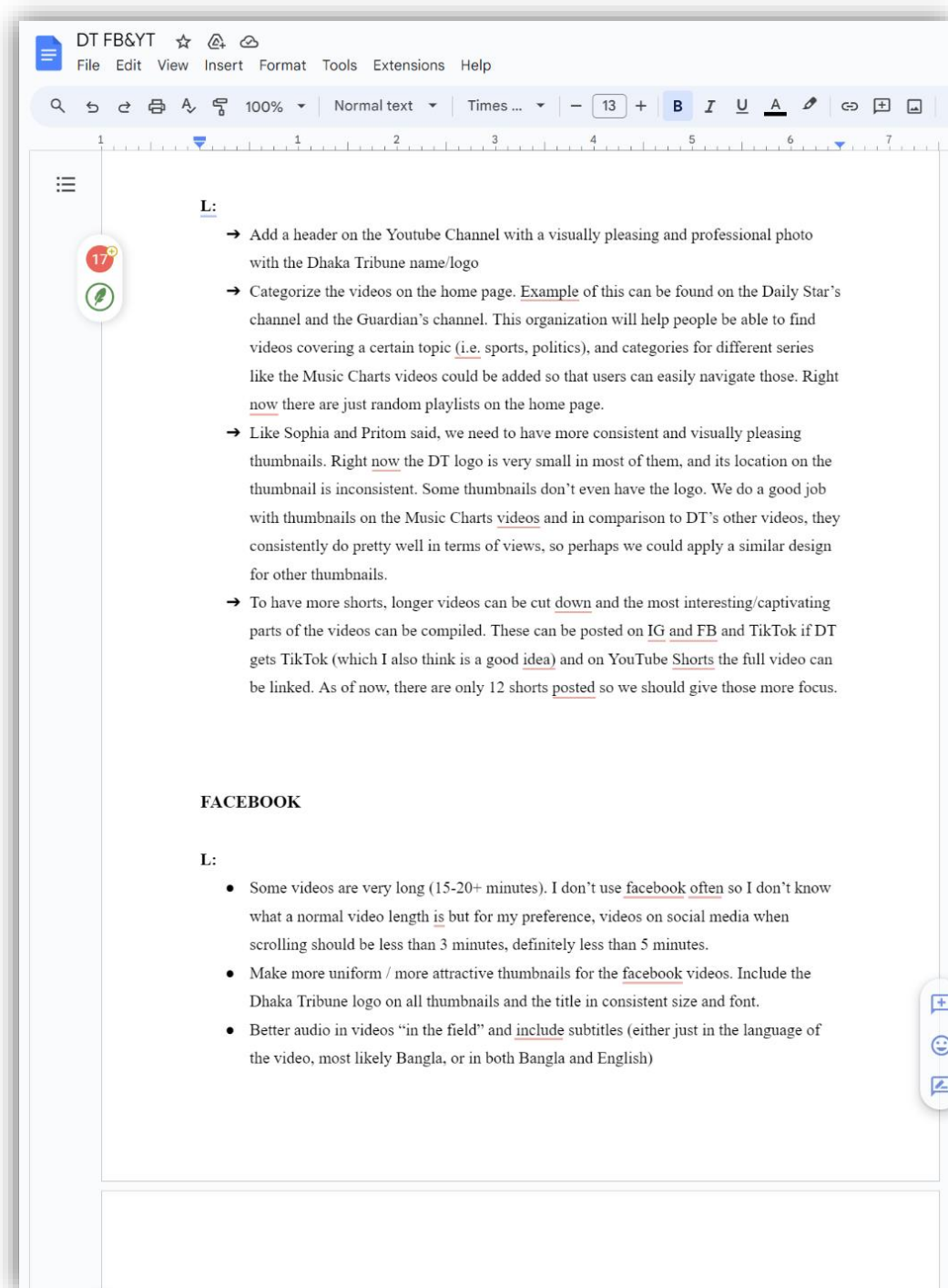
Appendix



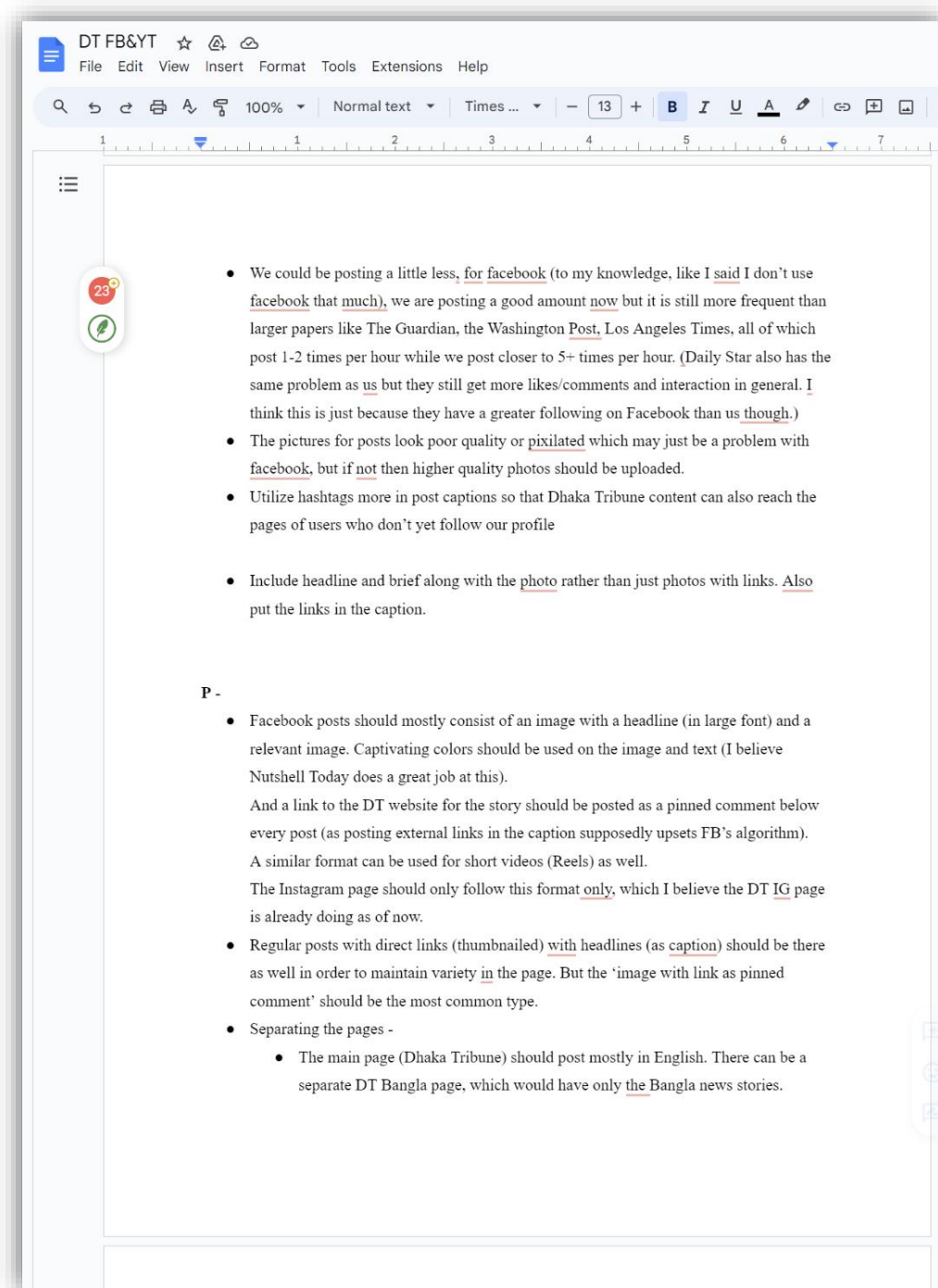
Picture 1: Final List of Recommendations from the 'Social Media Strategies' Team



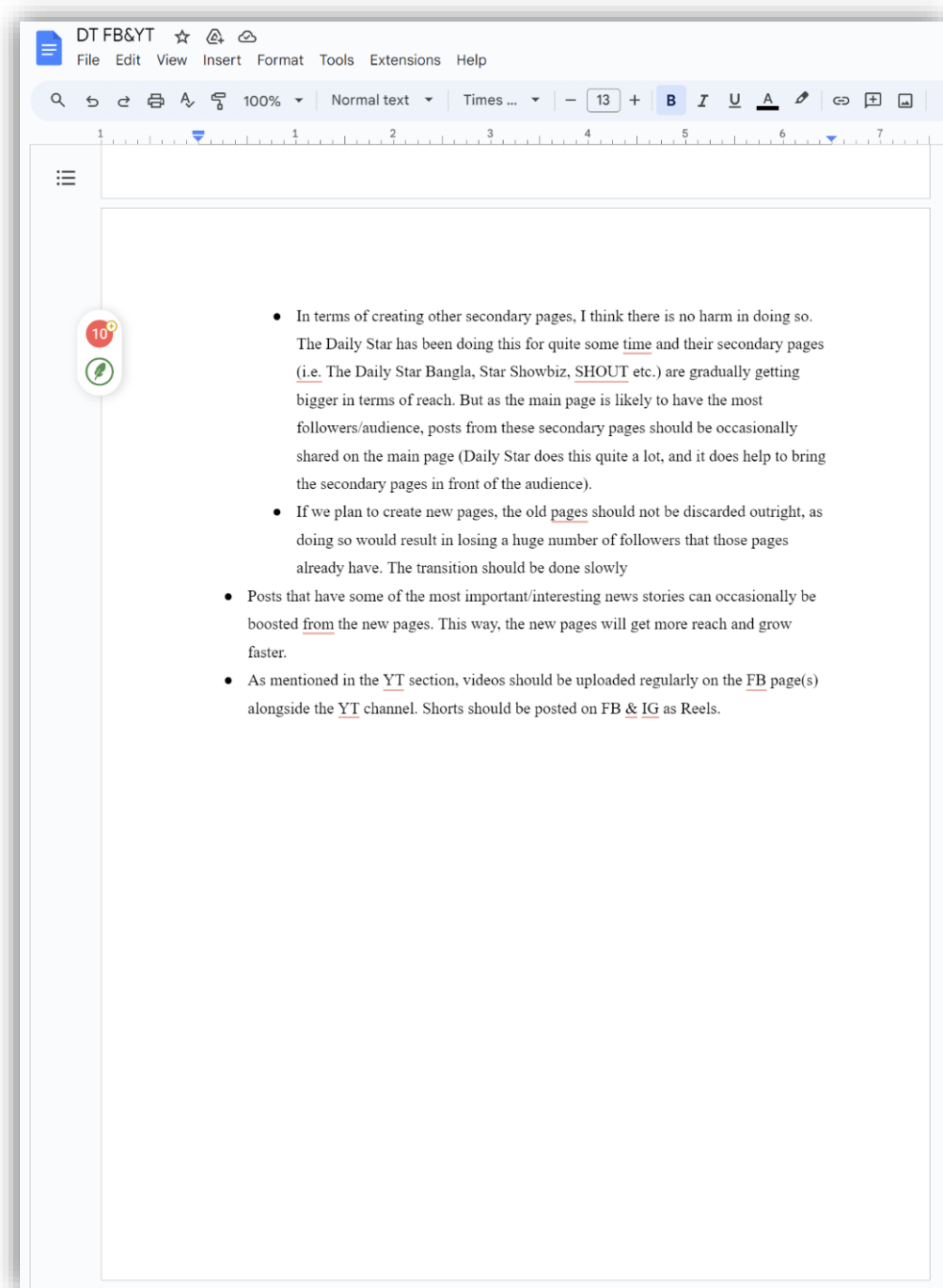
Picture 2: Final List of Recommendations from the ‘Social Media Strategies’ Team (contd.)



Picture 3: Final List of Recommendations from the 'Social Media Strategies' Team (contd.)



Picture 4: Final List of Recommendations from the 'Social Media Strategies' Team (contd.)



Picture 5: Final List of Recommendations from the ‘Social Media Strategies’ Team (contd.)

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