

Different Aspects of Newspaper

A CASE STUDY ON

NEW AGE



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Introduction

One of the biggest challenges a newspaper faces in a developing country like Bangladesh is the low literacy rate. Statistics claim 45% of the population is literate. However, this is a misleading figure because literacy is defined in terms of the ability to write one's own name. Even then, the literate population does not necessarily have a grasp over English, much less read an English newspaper.

For those of you who have little or no knowledge of the state of media, here are a few facts and figures that can interest even a layman. In Bangladesh, while the government retains ownership and licensing control over electronic media, all newspaper are in the private domain. Approximately 1,566 newspaper and periodicals are published from Bangladesh in Bengali and English. While TV dominates media usage, English newspapers are diverse, outspoken and privately owned. As the percentage of educated people increased, the rise of newspapers in English has been recognized. But as a whole, English language titles appeal mainly to an educated urban readership. The print media are privately owned and there is a strong tradition of owner-editorship. The constitution guarantees press freedom, but journalists are subject to regular harassment from the police and political activists. Even then the newspapers are constantly busy trying to bring news to the citizens of this country. The government exercises a degree of control through the placement of official advertising. Media rights organization reporters without borders say journalists are targeted by Islamist and Maoist groups, as well as officials and politicians. Among the two news agencies are *Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha* (BSS) which is official and provides English language pages and the other is *bdnews24* which is private.

News is any information about whose revelation, it is anticipated to have an intellectual or actionable impact on the recipient. This information could add insight to an existing topic, or could pertain to current events. News can be disseminated using any available communications vehicle, such as word of mouth, public address system, postal letter, print, broadcast or the Internet. Some forms of news dissemination are intended for a single person or group, while others are directed towards a mass audience. Printed news had to be phoned in to a newsroom or

brought in by a reporter, where it is typed and either transmitted over wire services or edited and manually set in type along with other news stories for a specific edition.

From the very beginning of my studentship, I was always attracted to print media- this is one of the main reasons behind my decision of majoring in print and media. The steps involved behind an event transforming into printed news always intrigued me. So when the question of my internship came, without any doubt I decided to do it with a newspaper in order to have a first hand working experience and testify my theoretical learning in practice. I was lucky enough to be placed in the second leading English news dailies of Bangladesh, *NEW AGE*.

During the three and half months of my internship, I mainly worked for two supplements and the cultural page of *NEW AGE*. My assignments were divided between for *Xtra*- weekend magazine of *NEW AGE* coming out every Friday, *TRENDS*- life style magazine coming out every Tuesday, and Timeout- cultural page coming out everyday. In all these sections, my work was basically limited to feature writing and cultural reporting. Besides, I traveled around the office, talked to various reporters and editors from various departments to have a notion of how the newspaper operates. This report is based on my experience at *NEW AGE* and understanding of the publication while I was doing my internship. The report will specifically analyze the feature section of *NEW AGE*, newsroom workflow, working environment, and some market strength and weakness of the daily.

NEW AGE at a Glance

NEW AGE may not be a prominent feature in Tejgaon landscape, being one of those places you can only find if you have already been there, nor does it boast a sizeable staff. However, it certainly makes up for all that the ambition, the vitality of its team and the potential it has to be the top English daily in the country, making a greater influence than it already has.

One day, a bunch of young people got together and thought there was a vacuum of neutral English daily in the industry, and decided to bring out a dynamic daily that is evenhanded. The initiative resulted in the publication of *NEW AGE*, presently the second leading English daily in the country, on June 7, 2003 with a striking slogan, 'biased towards the people.' The founder editor of the daily was late Enayetullah Khan. After the death of the founder editor, Nurul Kabir became the editor after having experienced the position of deputy editor and executive editor in *NEW AGE*. According to them, *NEW AGE* presently has 30% share in the market and 10% share in the industry while it has around 20,000 readerships with a daily circulation of 12,000-15,000.

NEW AGE, the name of the daily, itself resonates a promise of being new, different and the starting of a new era in English news readership. The name also represents the spirit of the young people behind its driving force. Eminent personality and editor of the daily, Nurul Kabir is presently the youngest editor among the editors of other dailies in Bangladesh. The editorial panel and the journalists of *NEW AGE* are also comparatively young compared to the other dailies, whereas feature sections are all about the young generation, even the features editor himself characterizes the youth. However, that does not mean that there are no senior staff in *NEW AGE*, those who are senior are very young mentally.

Daily copies of *NEW AGE* consist of 20 pages in three sections: 12-page front segment (Section A), four-page *NEW AGE* business (Section B), and *NEW AGE* sports (Section C). Section A delivers chronologically, National (page 2 and 3), International (page 4 and 5), Editorial (page 6), OP-ED (page 7), Home (page 8), *Timeout* (page 9) and *NEW AGE* metro (page 10 and 11). All these pages deal with different news. For example, you will find the news concerning culture in the *Timeout* and city news in metro. Presently *NEW AGE* has two regular supplements, 16-page lifestyle periodical *TRENDS*, published every Tuesday and 40-page weekend *Xtra* published every Friday. *NEW AGE* was pioneer in starting the trend of providing more

supplements in the market. Previously, it had *SLATE* and *Glitz* in their line of supplements, but because of insufficient logistics support, they stopped publishing them. Among the 20 pages, eight pages are printed in four colors and rest of the pages are black and white. A copy of *NEW AGE* is priced Tk. 10 on Fridays and Tuesdays, when the supplements comes along with the paper and Tk. 7 on other days.

In an industry where it is hard to come across information that is unadulterated, *NEW AGE*'s fundamental belief that "information is free" sets it aside from the rest. Having influential personalities such as Nurul Kabir as the editor means this daily won't be falling short of revolutionary ideas any time soon. With its trendy, neutral and pro democracy sentiments (which are all elements very close to the modern Bengali youth's heart), *NEW AGE* doesn't seem to be too far from reaching its apex and fulfilling what it had set out to do- provide quality information without any bias.

What is Feature?

A feature story is a prominent news story written like a piece of short fiction. The story is usually not related to a current event, but it could be. If one asks the question "how and why" things happen, then s/he probably likes reading feature stories in newspapers and magazines.

A feature takes an in-depth look at what is going on behind the news.

- It gets into the lives of people.
- It tries to explain why and how a trend developed.
- Unlike news, a feature does not have to be tied to a current event or a breaking story. But it can grow out of something that is reported in the news.

A feature may be a profile of a person or a group -- an athlete, a performer, a politician, a community worker or a team, a choir or a political organization. Alternatively, perhaps it is an in-depth look at a social issue. It could also be a story that gives the reader a background on a topic that is in the news.

A feature story is usually longer than a news story- but length is not a requirement. What is more important is the form the story takes.

Types of Features

According to Wynford Hicks¹, feature can be divided into four main categories:

1. Profiles
 - Of individual people, usually based on interviews, which can be written: in the first person. If the subject is dead these becomes obituaries
 - Of two or more people, or groups; again these can be from interviews, or clippings-assisted. Subjects can be companies, pop groups, sports teams, orchestras, university departments, clubs, councils etc.
2. Product stories: about one product\round up of many, described compared and tested.
3. Background features, which put news in context.

News features are hybrids, somewhat between straightforward news and a feature.

“News features tend to contain more comment, analysis, color, background and a great diversity of sources than news stories and explore a larger number issues in greater depth. It is an extra length which accounts for many of intro, sections, where the overall tone of the piece is set, tend to be more colorful and varied in style than those of hard news. A feature may argue a case; the personal views of the writer may be prominent. But the emphasis is still on the news².”

4. Opinion Pieces:
 - Leaders\editorials
 - Think pieces
 - Columns
 - Diaries

Xtra and *TRENDS*, two supplements of *NEW AGE* deals with different types of features and the style of language used in these publications are also distinctive. *Xtra* always tries to use very direct language whereas features in *TRENDS* contains more flowery and stylistic language.

¹ In the book Writing for Journalists, 2nd Edition. New York: Routledge, 1999.

² Keeble, Richard. The Newspapers Handbook. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Product profiles are mainly emerged in *TRENDS* cover stories and it never deals with any serious issue. On the other hand, *Xtra* mainly deals with hard news and current national and international issues.

Regular sections in the magazine *TRENDS* include Up Close & Personal, a question-answer style profile of a popular figure of Bangladesh, En Vogue, an analysis of new stores or products and where they are available, a Cover Story, generally dealing with fashion, culture, lifestyle in Dhaka featuring models from a pool of readers' acquaintances, Global Vogue, which presents snapshots and descriptions from international fashion shows, Events, covering various events in the city and of course Horoscope, a weekly astrological forecast.

Features in *Xtra* include, the Cover Story, which is based on current happenings and major headlines of the preceding week, a profile of a cultural figure, On The Line, a profile of an influential or political figure, Art Calendar, which outlines ongoing exhibitions, News Of The Week, which depicts the historical occurrences of the week, Literati, the literature page comprising book reviews and pieces on television, art and music, Five minute briefing, comprising a current international issue, Off the reel, review of a drama or movie, and Digest, which is a compilation of amusing news items. Sometimes, it also contains a Travelogue, Score, the sports section and faces of the week, featuring quotes by eminent individuals.

Some sample features covered by these two magazines are included in the last page.

Some Guidelines for Feature Writing

Like news writing, strong feature writing is simple, clear and orderly. But, unlike news stories, feature stories do not have to be written about events that just happened. Instead, they focus on human interest, mood, atmosphere, emotion, irony and humor. Here are some guidelines for writing features, but these are not absolute rules to rely on for security.

1. Get the reader's attention quickly: Start with a well thought-out first paragraph touching on some aspect of the person's life that you are writing about or the event if it is not a person. Good feature stories have a beginning that draws in readers, a transition that might repeat itself in the middle, and an ending that refers to the beginning.
2. Organize the story carefully: Feature stories can be told in narrative fashion or by sliding from event to event even though not in chronological order. Writers should use careful transitions to maintain the flow of the story if they are not going to follow chronological order.
3. Use short paragraphs and vary the lengths of sentences for effect: Reading sentences and paragraphs that are always the same length gets boring.
4. One should write with strong verbs and nouns, but go easy on adjectives: S\he should try to draw a picture of the subject or event through his\her writing.
5. Don't be afraid to use offbeat quotes: Not profanity, but rather witty things the person may say in response to a question about their success, life or family.
6. Write tightly: One does not need to tell the reader everything s\he knows on a subject or event. Tell only the most important things. It is better to write shorter than longer. A good feature can be done in 500-750 words

Way Feature Section Works in *NEW AGE*

New Age's feature section includes *Xtra* and *TRENDS*. These two publications have different working style.

Meetings for *Xtra* are held every Saturday where all writers, editors, and photographers are usually present and provide their story ideas for upcoming issues in the presence of the feature editor. He writes down the good ideas and cancels out the odds immediately based on the timeliness, feasibility and importance. Then the editor and staff discuss stories they can cover in the next issue, and accordingly the feature editor assigns writers and photographers those stories. Finally, the meeting ends with discussion about the last issue. Besides, before the meeting, writers of *Xtra* have to submit their previously assigned stories. After getting the stories from the writers on Saturday, editors and graphic designers have three more days to edit and fix the lay out of the next issue. If any story needs further clarification or some additional information then the editor generally contacts the writer and clears out the confusion or asks for additional information. On the other hand, if writers have confusion or problems following a story, the feature editor solves the problem. Another responsibility of the feature editor involves following up development of the stories in the course of time. Normally cover stories are written by more than one writer depending on the subject, and other stories are done by a single writer. Finally, the layout is sent off to the press on Tuesday or sometimes on Wednesday.

Unlike *Xtra*, *TRENDS* has no specific time for meeting. Generally, the editor of *Trends* calls for meeting at noon twice a month, according to a time convenient for every writer. Lots of press releases and event invitations always keep coming to the *TRENDS* editor. Therefore, it is comparatively easy for her to decide which one will be covered in *TRENDS*. Writers also provide new story ideas at the meeting. After jolting down the ideas and deciding on the event invitations, *TRENDS* editor assigns a cover story or a review of an event or new shops to every writer of *TRENDS*. The writers have 15 more days to complete these stories along with *En Vogue*, which introduces new products in the market and an Up Close, fixed question answer based interview of a well-known figure. After that, editors edit the story and store it in the specified folder. Looking at this folder, the editor decides what will go to the next issue based on the popularity of the event or public demand.

Newsroom Workflow at New Age

Anyone can imagine what a newsroom looks like. Popular movies like *Spiderman* have made it easier. In addition, it is always busy and bustling with work. However, the organization involves allotting different people for different sections of the paper. The *NEW AGE* office is located in the Holiday Building in Tejgoan Commercial Area. The office is composed of three floors. The ground floor is the heart of the newsroom; the second floor accommodates the sports and editorial section. Finally, the third floor is the feature section.

A general description of how the group of several editors work is as summarized. The editor who is also the publisher of the newspaper pilots the news, reporting, and editorial units. He is aided by an associate editor and assistant editors. An editorial board comprising of the associate editor and assistant editors are responsible for writing editorials under the administration of the editor. The associate editor is responsible for assisting the editor in leading all the units and work as acting editor in absence of the editor. The assistant editors are responsible for writing editorials in line with the instruction of the editor. The news editor heads the news section that comprises of news editors and sub-editors. Besides the two news editors and a joint news editor, there are several sub-editors. The news editors are responsible for page make-up. They also inscribe headlines of the reports. The sub-editors edit the reports and submit to the news editors. Although this is one of the most unwanted and low priority jobs in the country, in foreign countries it takes a person several years of media experience to get this job. Here they are meager paid trifles that the newspaper can afford to lose occasionally. Abroad, they are the major assets of the print media. The news editors later send the reports for revision to Revision Editor.

The ground floor leads to the first section upon entrance. Here the chief reporters, usually two to three in number, are sent reports from Dhaka and outside through fax and mail. The work produced here finds itself in the hands of the news section, where what should be changed and kept it decided. The following news is allocated for different reports to different pages that are the sole responsibility of the News Editors and Joint Editors. One of the sections here involves people who receive news from various news agencies, e.g. AFP, Reuters etc. Since *NEW AGE* faces the disadvantage of not having correspondents in all the major countries, they have to depend on foreign news agencies. If any discrepancies arise in the collection, a consultation with

the chief reporter usually solves the problem. Genres from different reporters are defined as 'beats' as their area of involvement ranges from crime, politics, health, business, economy, education, metropolitan issues etc. Sometimes the beats overlap when reporters have to get involved in other genres than their own. The business section is where reporters and editors sit in one section or the reporters edit their own reports.

The production team places everything in place and is coordinated by the news editor. Here there is a choice of changing and editing headlines, especially if they are ambiguous and too lengthy. In the case of exceptions such as the failure to publish a report, the reporters are informed as per practice. The editor looks for relevance in the stories he prints, which means that the content must have direct bearing on the public while the news values govern the kind of stories the editors print. Ultimately, in general, choices are made on what will sell newspaper, both to readers and advertisers.

A tour to the *NEW AGE* office will seem like a long room with not-at-the-moment-countable rows and rows of cubicles and a spiral staircase in the centre leading to the sports and editorial space on the floor above (second floor). City reporters and the reporters from outside Dhaka city report through either mail or fax in order to have them printed.

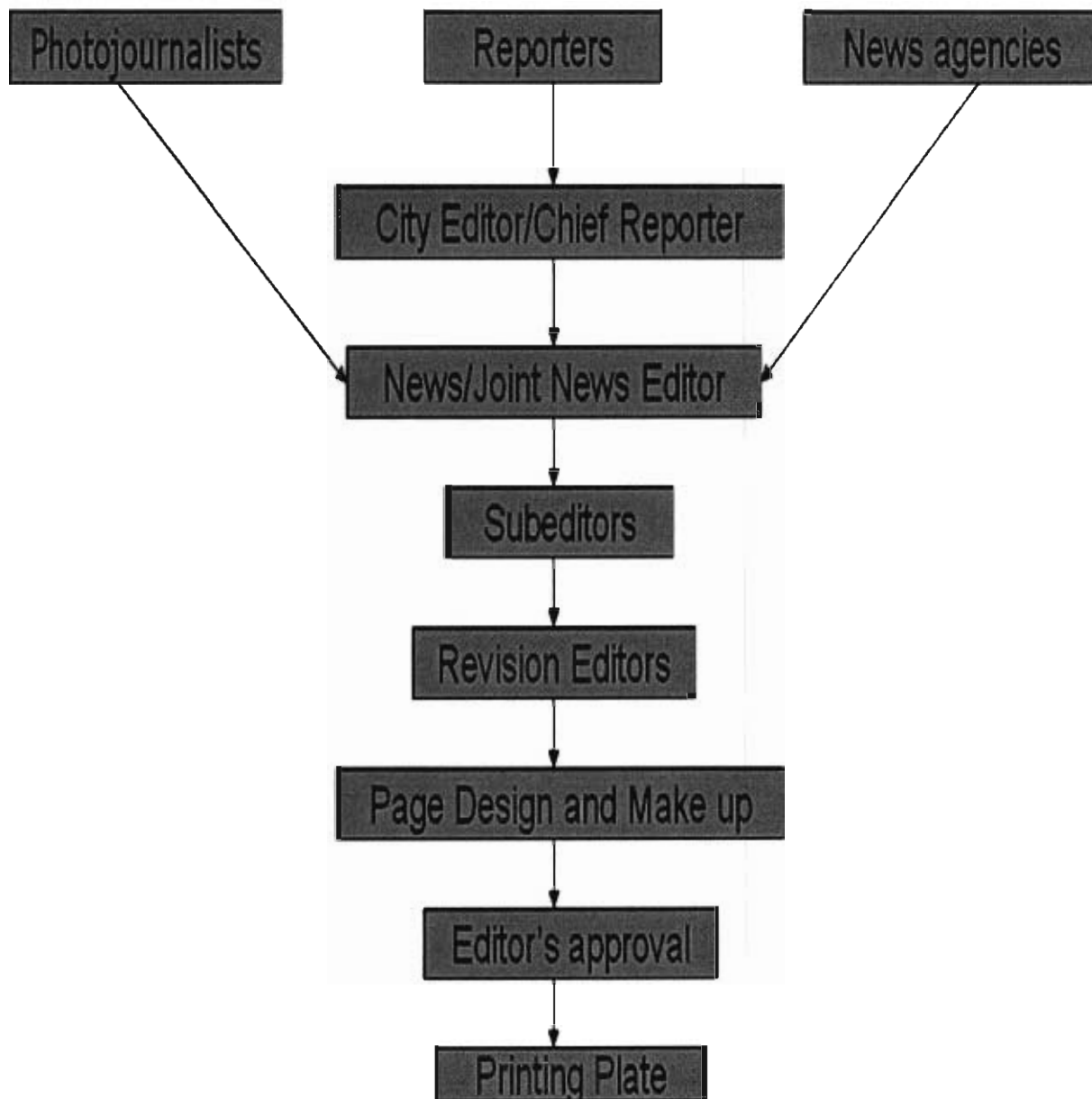
Towards the end of the room is the Photo Section. The concept of photography has just revolutionized to digital cameras. The photojournalists now use digi-cams and upload every photo, which is then given a caption to distinguish it from the rest of the pictures. The chief reporter usually assigns these photojournalists a location or an event to take care of which in turn is handed over to a reporter.

The long awaited section is the centre for layout checks and graphological attention. This is where the layout is fixed. The raw material coming from the sweat and effort of all these staff makes its way on to the tracing paper and is sent to the press for printing.

Reports come in through the whole day. Not all sections have the same deadline. This means that means that several staff have different deadlines to meet. The home page has a strict 1700 hours while sports page has 2000 hours. The common deadline is 2100-2130 hours and at 2300-2330 hours the layout is done and sent to publishers for printing. There are several exceptions, for

example, when suddenly a new and significant news comes in to the newsroom and hell breaks loose. These reports are printed and sent out of Dhaka and a new one is made by 0200 for Dhaka.

Here is a flow chart showing the workflow of the *NEW AGE* newsroom:



Driving-force Behind the Success of *NEW AGE*

At this age of competition, collecting news stories, editing them and preparing the newspaper for the next day are not the only challenges. The ultimate challenge is now to create a position among many other newspapers. *NEW AGE* is presently successful in carrying out that challenge through its supplements, editorial stance, and objectivity.

A newspaper can diversify its readership and cater to the needs of a variety of age groups using the supplements. This helps to segment the readers, detect their interests and meet their needs more specifically. Though *NEW AGE* does not match the Daily Star's prolific supplements in quantitative terms, it does compare positively in terms of quality. *NEW AGE* can easily be called the pioneer of supplements, as it took the initiative to broaden readership through diverse supplements. *Slate* and *Glitz* stand witness to that fact, although they had to be discontinued due to logistical and budget –related reasons. At present, the paper has two regular supplements, *TRENDS* and *Xtra*.

TRENDS is a lifestyle magazine that comes out every Tuesday under the close supervision of Ms Konka Karim. It takes a lot of effort to cover most of the fashion shows in Dhaka city, the new stores that may be of attraction to the young audience who are perhaps the largest audience of *NEW AGE*, new food courts and new products. It is evident from the theme of the magazine and the low cost (of about Tk 3) that the targeted audience is a younger generation of school, college, or university-going readers who live the contemporary Dhaka life. *TRENDS* is also a cheap alternative to other national or international magazines, like *Ice Today* priced at Tk 50, *Cosmopolitan*, priced at Tk 300. It is a common scene in the Economics department of BRAC University- which subscribes to *NEW AGE*- that students leaf through a copy of *TRENDS* and have lively discussions about the choice of models and whether someone knows them personally or not, cover stories, latest *TRENDS* and horoscopes. This reinforces the fact that it appeals to a younger group of readers, who may not even be in the habit of reading newspapers over breakfast each morning.

Xtra is the other weekly magazine that *NEW AGE* brings out every Friday. The features editor is Mr Mubin S Khan. *Xtra* is a compilation of the week's most significant news stories and a lot more. It has a unique mode of sometimes looking at stories from different angles and thus being

a desirable item of the *NEW AGE* menu. *Xtra* used to be a broadsheet supplement, but has recently undergone a makeover and is now an attractive magazine. It appeals mostly to intellectuals or the more educated, academic readers, dealing with serious issues like the significant news items of the previous week. This magazine appeals to students as well, or to anyone with a thirst for knowledge, intending to widen their understanding of the world around them. As it comes out over the weekend, it gives people plenty of time to read the magazine during their leisure. It tries to place all the items in the same standard level as that of the international magazines. According to the editor of the magazine, it is like a window to various types of things that are going around us locally as well as internationally. Once again, *Xtra* is a cost-effective alternative to other international magazines with similar themes, like Readers Digest, priced at Tk. 90, or The Times, priced at Tk. 110.

Besides supplements, editorial stance is another factor that makes *NEW AGE* different from other English dailies. Though research showed that only 8% of the readers actually read the editorial, from its beginning *NEW AGE* is emphasizing on the editorials, as they believe 'people need to know what the newspaper thinks.' The editorial section is the intellectual centre of the paper. Through the editorials, they make their position very clear on an issue among the readers. The policies of the paper are mainly driven from the people in charge of this editorial section. The editorial of *NEW AGE* easily stands out among other editorials published in various dailies by its clarity and partialness towards the general people and national issue orientation. Finally, what makes the paper different from other papers is its sense of freedom in writing the pre-defined notion of how to go about it.

A newspaper cannot sustain in the competitive market without maintaining objectivity in the reports, it publishes. Moreover, it is our tendency to believe whatever we see on the newspaper and therefore it is a great responsibility and burden of the members of a newspaper agency to maintain the objectivity of the reports. Every single report of *NEW AGE* is well researched and fact oriented rather than writer oriented. In addition, the newspaper does not go by popularity but by neutrality, democracy and secularism. *NEW AGE* always takes a strong position and is not even frightened of taking a stand against the government. The editor himself wants to be more effective in the stories he publishes so that it can have an impact on readers who have every right to know the truth.

The final tool to be discussed is the advertisement campaign used by *NEW AGE* to attract readers. With the ongoing discourse about journalism ethics and neutral reporting, a slogan like “biased towards the people” seems controversial at first. Somehow it seems very bold to be open about a prejudice, although the slogan very cleverly connotes dedication, sincerity and honesty when it comes to news coverage. It is far more intriguing and gripping than the “people’s right to know” used by a rival paper. “Dynamic. Daring. Daily” is the dramatic slogan that is also used by the paper. The slogan is catchy and very efficient when seen from a marketing perspective.

The *NEW AGE* is a very young paper, and in the few years of existence, it has shaken up the industry and made its presence felt. It has built a solid reader base and a strong reputation for itself. Innovation, objectiveness, professionalism, courage, and success are terms commonly associated with *NEW AGE*. It has already made its stance on various issues quite clear- the opinions expressed in the editorials are eloquent and straightforward. The paper truly is “biased towards the people,” and is an advocate of reporting without fear. Backed by a vibrant team of young minds and professionals, *NEW AGE* is well on its way to reaching the top, with a story of success behind it, and a prosperous journey lying ahead of it.

Working Environment

Working environment of a newspaper is no way even close to the working environment of other places. Where other offices strictly start at 9 o'clock in the morning the *NEW AGE* office becomes fully operational at around 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

If you by any chance ever visit the *NEW AGE* office located in Tejgoan industrial area, surely there will be many striking sights, which will make you feel stupid being a member of the corporate world. Yes, surely you will not find anyone wearing a tie in the middle of the hot summer afternoon here.

NEW AGE poses a warm and calm environment. The present editor with a broad smile on his face, represents the youth group that has worked so hard to bring *NEW AGE* to a position of successful standing in the newspaper industry in Bangladesh. His disposition is of one who is fond of chatting and he dotes on reading everything but a newspaper. The hustle and bustle of the *NEW AGE* office is filled with the passion of these youngsters who celebrate the joy of writing and team effort.

In addition, you will also be overwhelmed by observing people putting their legs on the computer table, bending on their chairs, keyboard on their lap and composing stories.

Interestingly, addressing someone as 'sir' is strictly banned in the *NEW AGE* office. All of them regardless of their age and rank, address each other by calling 'bhai.' Smoking in front of your Chief Executive Officer may be unimaginable for you, but in the *NEW AGE* office the environment is so friendly you do not have to bother who is in front of you before smoking, even if it is the editor himself.

A number of female employees are also working in the office hinting a good friendly environment in the office. However, the ratio of male and female workers in the place is not balanced. Deputy Editor, Mir Ashfaquzzaman says, "It's unfortunate that we do not have that much women journalists compared to males, but I think it is a general problem under Bangladeshi context and we would love to make the ratio more balanced at our office." At present, the number of employees in *NEW AGE* is 180.

The environment in *NEW AGE* office is more casual than formal, and more friendly instead of official, but at the same time no less professional than it is supposed to be. All the higher rankers always maintain good relationship with the employees working under them, and they are the master in motivating someone. Even the editor, Nurul Kabir himself, does not impose a bossy impression on people around him. In one word, literally an employee has nothing to bother about the place as long as s/he is serious with his/her job.

Compare and Contrast of *The Daily Star* with *NEW AGE*

A meager 10% of the total newspaper readership in Bangladesh subscribes to English dailies, of which the Daily Star claims 50%. With an impressive 30% of the market share to accredit to its name, it is quite obvious that the Daily Star is *NEW AGE*'s only real competitor. The figures may be disheartening to some, but put in the context of time, they are actually rather remarkable- the Daily Star has been in print for about 17 years, while the *NEW AGE* has only been around for five years. In those terms, the figures are promising for *NEW AGE*. So, let us look and compare and contrast some key features of these two dailies.

If you put these two dailies in your two hands, the very first difference you will notice is the number of advertisements. Usually, The Daily Star is full of advertisements whereas *NEW AGE* hardly has any advertisement in the front page.

The second most important difference is their policy of support. The Daily Star sometimes seems pro-elite where *NEW AGE* generally takes its stance for the general people. For example, while *NEW AGE* disagrees to pull out illegal rickshaws from the VIP roads before rehabilitation of the pullers, The Daily Star supports the movement. In my opinion, The Daily Star is most likely driven by popular sentiment, whereas *NEW AGE* is focused on national issues.

The number of supplements *The Daily Star* provides are more than six, and four of them are in magazine form, whereas the *NEW AGE* only has two. Sometimes the editorials in the Daily Star seem unclear, but *NEW AGE*'s editorial stance is clear, firm and for the general people.

Another important difference is The Daily Star's coverage of cultural news is in the pages called Arts and Entertainment, which has regular two-page emergence in the daily. On the other hand, *NEW AGE* only has half a page black and white coverage on culture.

Collaborated cohesive language used by *NEW AGE* sometimes turns out to be reader unfriendly. However, The Daily Star's language is more reader friendly. Again, *NEW AGE* seems much more aggressive in bringing out new issues in the limelight compared to the Daily Stars e.g. the allegations against BD foods were first raised by *NEW AGE* in 2006.

Finally, the website version of the Daily Star is much flawless than *NEW AGE*. Even, in the website of The Daily Star someone can read everything, which is in the printed version. However, many sections of *NEW AGE* cannot be found in their web editions.

Readers and non-readers responded differently regarding the two dailies, as I roamed around and inquired their opinions.

Fayyaz Mushtaque, a final year student of the CSE department of BRAC University said, “As far I know, none of the English dailies in Bangladesh presently have a particular section for information technology. However, I need to know about upcoming technologies and their prices regularly to keep me up to date. Therefore, presently I have no option but to subscribe to a Bengali newspaper.”

Mahmudul Haque, an English teacher of Government Laboratory High School said, “Before *NEW AGE* came into publication, I subscribed The Daily Star and I never noticed they took any firm stance against the ruling power. To me The Daily Star is a very much defensive daily, unwilling to take their position with the truth rather with benefit.” He added, “Therefore, from the very beginning of its publication I switched to *NEW AGE*, for their objectivity towards the truth. I hope if *NEW AGE* takes sufficient promotional activity, it will not be very tough for them to become the market leader. “

S. M. Shahedur Rahman, a Junior Officer, of the Trust Bank noted, “To keep practicing English and know the news related to economy and business, I subscribe to The Daily Star. I have gone through *NEW AGE*’s business section as well but I guess The Daily Star published more national business news compared to *NEW AGE*.”

Kishowar Shabnam, an A-level student of European Standard School also voiced her opinion, “I find that The Daily Star uses more flowery language in their features. Since I have literature as a subject, I think The Daily Star is handier for me to enrich my language mastery. Other than that, they also have two full color pages of daily coverage on arts and entertainment, which is my favorite whereas *NEW AGE* only has half a page black and white coverage of arts and entertainment.”

Last but not least, Maria Tasnur, a third year student of fashion designing at Shanta Mariam University of Creative Technology said, “The One and only publication I read regularly is *TRENDS*, a Tuesday supplement of *NEW AGE*. I subscribe to *NEW AGE* only because of *TRENDS*. Their choices of topics are very timely and the language is so soothing that I can travel to the featured places through their words.”

Conclusion

Completing my internship at *NEW AGE* was certainly a whole new experience for me. Though the time was really short for getting used to the pace, only three and half months, but in the process I managed to gain a first hand experience about jobs in the media world. Moreover, in my time I came across different individuals of different backgrounds, from inside and outside of *NEW AGE*, through personal interactions or via interviews, and got to know many things about them and their life style and learned many lessons which will be helpful in my future. Not only that, but also I came to know about the overall procedure that goes through from writing articles to publishing newspapers- the ins and outs of publication. The processes a newspaper has to go through before publication would have never been felt, unless I worked for them. It was a tremendous gain. As the world of news always intrigues me, I got some first hand experience working here. The tasks at hand weren't always easy as the busy environment of a newspaper office makes it really difficult for an intern to collect all his necessary information properly in due time. The knowledge I got from feature writing is the most important gain in the internship. Last but not least, the internship taught me how to work under pressure and what characteristics make a newspaper successful.

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Appendix

Some of various types of features I covered in *NEW AGE* are attached here for further clarification:

UP CLOSE & PERSONAL, TRENDS AUGUST 5, 2008

Rubel Rana

SAF gold medalist, Nation's fastest swimmer and one of the six Bangladeshis at the Beijing Olympics talks his liking for talent hunt programmes, coming in last in an international swimming tournament and his fascination for Zafar Iqbal's books

Interviewed by **Abu Layes Khan**



What is your hobby?

Traveling and listening to music

What are your favourite foods?

Alu vorta, daal, bhaat, sobji

What kind of books do you enjoy reading?

I have fascination for novels and fiction written by Muhammad Zafar Iqbal

What do you mostly watch on TV?

Talent hunt programmes like Close-Up 1

What are your favorite sports?

After swimming, I love football a lot

Which electronic appliances have made your life easier?

DVD player

What is your favourite vacation spot?

Dhaka city

What do you do to make yourself feel better on a bad day?

I call Nargis Ara, a woman living in Chapainawabgonj, whom I admire like my mother

What are your favorite colours?

Black

Your most memorable moment...

When I clinched gold medal in 100m backstroke in Islamabad SAF games, 2004

Who is your inspiration?

My family

What traits in a person do you dislike?

Since I am a simple person, I hate people who speak ill of others in their absence

What is your idea of romance?

Listening music by sitting on the rooftop in a moonlight night with my beloved one

What is the funniest incident of your life?

I participated in 5000-meter freestyle in the world swimming competition in Spain and finished way behind the second last among 32 participators but welcomed by huge run of applause.

What is your favourite cologne?

HAVOC

Who are your favorite singers?

S D Rubel and Andrew Kishor

Is there anything you regret?

Nothing in particular

Who are your favorite actors and actresses?

Aupi Karim, Bobita, Sabnoor and Salman Shah

Your birthday...

April 4, 1983