

Trails of Media Trial: Impacts on Judiciary and Society in Bangladesh

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Abstract

The media is supposed to be a light bearer of truth and justice as people tend to trust the circulations of media. However, using this as an advantage, the media often brings delicate judicial issues on a trial which results in the suffering of the victim. The key objective of this research was to explore the impacts of the trials of media on the justice system and society of Bangladesh. Primary data were collected using qualitative tools like In-Depth Interviews to understand the rigor of the research problem. At the same time, secondary data such as several case studies were collected to depict the history of media trials in Bangladesh. The research found the capability of media trials to impact the judicial system and society of Bangladesh adversely through indirect influence on the juror, evasion of privacy of the personnel associated with the cases, and misuse of social media. The research opted for effective policies to be formed by the government to regulate media influence on judicial cases so that media trials cannot impact the system.

Keywords: Media trial, Press, Judiciary, Justice System, Impact, Society.

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1. Introduction

“Media Trial” or “Trials by Media” is a simpler way of addressing the broader scenario, where print or electronic media impacts people’s minds by presenting their understanding or idea about the cases and where they hold someone guilty before any trial regardless of the judgment in the court of law. Seeking justice is the basic right of everyone. While going through the judicial process it is quite obvious to go through several legal trials. However, in recent times, media trials or social trials are very common scenarios in most cases. The world of media has faced a new horizon in the 21st century showing an elemental change in reciprocating from earlier forms of media like newspapers, television, and also in social media, the new face of the present media era. Serious arguments have already taken place among the parties about basic human rights to justice and privacy and people who demand enough space for journalists to work. (Lim, 2015). In recent decades, most hyped topics like rape, kidnapping, sexual abuse, murder are seeing high rates of press interactions in the process of gaining justice. In the name of exclusive bites, inhuman and non-stop interrogation of the witness, and publishing interviews of the victim’s parents, relatives, and friends all these have become common affairs. This may create an indirect (sometimes direct) effect on the trial proceeding as well as the legal mind.

Media is considered one of the four pillars of democracy along with the Legislature, Executive, and Judiciary (Ranjan and Kashyap, 2014). Media plays a significant role in representing mass people’s demands and creating awareness in society. Despite having such power to present the truth to people, sometimes the media houses regulate people’s thought processes and manipulate them by producing news that is favorable for them with a desire to stay at the peak. This often includes showcasing one side of the story which often ends up fueling public outrage and vengeance on the so-called suspect, disparaging his/her reputation, and maligning their characters declaring them guilty all by themselves even before the judiciary. Nevertheless, the media is considered by some to be the reason for the initiation of rabble violence by mass people and again few oppose this by the counter reality (Berryessa, 2014).

The inception of the media was as the light bearer of truth who digs out the real picture of an incident and also plays the role of a presenter of the people having a difference of opinion regarding a topic, what they want. Although the noise of media trials was there in earlier decades, in recent times it has become more visible and shown enough capacity to turn the tables by creating a big buzz over an issue. Despite the significance of an

independently functioning press in a democratic nation, continuous involvement of the media, during a legal procedure can lead to unwanted involvement in the preceding. Interviewing the victims, their families, and witnesses, examining the probable evidence, visiting the crime scene, and going live from there can affect the case negatively and positively. Impressions created in the public mind about the accused or victim may reflect on the court trials also. Some academic findings have shown that scientific results have failed to impact human minds in competition with the media (Golding, Krimsky, & Plough, 1992; Ricketts, 2007; Shanahan, Jones, & Mcbeth, 2011).

Although the discussion on media trials has been going on for quite a time now, there is very little research about the after marks of this pretrial has had on the justice system. The existing literature presents a visible gap depicting the connection between policies and media (Nelson, Oxley, & Clawson, 1997; Shanahan, Jones & Mcbeth, 2011). More constructive research is needed to find out the influence created and its repercussions. In line with that, this study intends to portray a clear image of the media trial system in Bangladesh and how it impacts the justice system.

2. The History of Media Trials and its Emergence in Bangladesh

2.1 The History of Media Trial

Court proceedings and the whole process of legal battles are commonly termed trials. So, it is a legal and official procedure, only to be carried out by the people responsible for this. Although the media is not authorized for this task, often a high-profile incident occurs or a particular topic with high mass interest draws the attention of the media. The press then gets involved in the issue by investigating as well as intervening by publishing assumptions related to the issue. Since the mass people are supposedly more influenced by press reports rather than other authorized committees, it becomes easy for the media to manipulate and instigate the public perception which results in creating negative impressions or developing a soft corner for the accused or victims.

The very first case that is considered as the emergence of media trial is the case of famous actor and comedian of the USA Roscoe Arbuckle, also known as “Fatty” Arbuckle Vs Virginia Rappe, which occurred in the 20th century (Fischer, 2004). Though he was only suspected of raping and murdering Rappe, in this whole process the media especially newspapers and magazines were completely against him and presented him as a criminal before the public eye way before the court’s decision. This created massive pressure on the legal body as well as on his acting career, which relied more on the social image because no matter the actual result, people had already generated a negative image of him. Also, the judiciary was under immense pressure for the public outrage that he could not even get bail during the procedure but finally, after 3rd trial, he was proved to be innocent. Trials started on 12 November 1921, it continued for 3 weeks. Despite the verdict in favor of him, his reputation and career were fully destroyed by the press beforehand which could not be salvaged later. (Raihan & Hossain, 2021). People started getting clearer ideas following this incident around the late 20th and early 21st centuries, about the term ‘trial by media’; and how it interrupts the legal battles of the judiciary and maligns the reputation of the suspect much before the media reached a decision. It became famous in the subcontinent during the early 1990s (Hasan, 2022). Gradually media houses changed their platforms into ‘peoples’ courts’, which have their own style of trials and verdicts.

2.2 The Line Between Suspect vs Guilty

The media has a major contribution in keeping democracy active, and transparent and creating contemporary thoughts in people as well. However, the recent development of media based on Target Rating Point (TRP) has raised its exclusivity for commercial benefit. That often includes crossing the line with sensitivity and secrecy of any individual cases leading to impacting the justice system. The justice system, at its core, follows the bible idea of rightness which is the ‘Presumption of innocence until proven guilty’. Correspondingly, the judiciary has its own values as everyone is equal in the eye of the law and focuses on treating any suspect equally until the allegation is proven. Nevertheless, the world of journalism ignores this fact as per their need to modify the news related to any case (Singh & Asif, 2021). Despite having a proper judiciary system to ensure justice, it has been completely blown off by the press who, on their own, has taken the responsibility to declare a suspect guilty or not. Since the media creates a public impression about any case, the suspect goes through immense pressure and humiliation, and he rarely gets back to his old life (Rahman, 2022). The debate of free trial vs free press always arises with media trials because independent press is important for a democracy but at the same time fair court proceedings are also needed. The press sometimes works as a part of the evidence that is used on the bench (Newburn & Peay, 2012). As the structure of trial by media is quite unplanned and verbose it bluntly presents them before the mass people, where they are always judged in a sheer one-track path. (Greer & McLaughlin,

2011b). Press or anyone cannot project the accused or the other stakeholders as guilty, it is not even their precinct.

2.3 Media Trials as the Contempt of Court and Constitution

Media in no circumstances, has been given the authority to try a case and give a verdict. The negative portrayal of a person's characteristics, lifestyle, and work creates a false image in the public's mind and they begin to pre-decide about the case even long before the Judge and jury conclude and announce the verdict. This pre-decided conception and the wrath of mass interrupt the legal battles and weaken the case from both sides and that is how, often, the media gets in the way of justice. The famous Jessica Lall murder case of Delhi is a prime example of this, where due to several political and other pressures the court had given a wrong verdict even though it was an open and shut case. It was the media campaign and sting operations of an online platform, that brought out middle-class Delhiites to the candlelight march and forced the legal system to reopen the case (Nandy, 2018). Moreover, the freedom of the press to express themselves should be handled with a sense of balance without indulging the court's regulations. When the role of media was under question regarding a sensational case, advocate Ankit Lohia explained while citing the 1947 report of a European institute that media can work on their own without any intrusion of the authorities (Prakash, 2020). The competition of turning everything into breaking news is reaching an alarming state, which can turn petty cases into big issues as well. Nonetheless, the current scenarios have changed the whole definition of the media's responsibility, it seems like their job is to confront the witnesses, explore the cases, and declare guilty. Due to this over-interference, the victims and other stakeholders also consider them as a weakness in the case (Rae, 2019). It is the right of every resident to protect their dignity and freedom which get denied as a result of this folly affairs, under Article- 31 of the Bangladesh Constitution.

2.4 The concept of 'Kangaroo Court'

According to the latest definition given by the Oxford Dictionary (2022), a kangaroo court is "An illegal court that punishes people unfairly." Experts have explained the reason behind this name because of the fast and unimaginable growth it has shown everywhere which was compared with the jumping style of the kangaroos (Stamper, 2022). It is widely used to refer to the self-claimed court proceedings taking place in the name of journalism and investigation by prominent media houses. This culture is growing by nips and bounds everywhere, mostly on social media sites.

In a traditional court, things happen in a more organized way: two different parties, or the defendant and prosecution put their claims in front of the judge, and they argue their points based on the facts, evidence, witnesses, etc. The arguments grow mostly around the judicious laws and acts. After assessing all the evidence, the judge gives the verdict mentioning proper consequences under the constitutional guideline. However, in a kangaroo court, unlike the conventional proceedings, everyone tries to be the judge and gives their verdict without considering any evidence or legal procedure. It observes a hegemonic situation where they bring out innovative ways to challenge the judiciary and its laws (Bell, 2022). Unfortunately, the suspect or the accused becomes the ultimate sufferer since irrelevant issues are also brought upon in such trials and it destroys the defendant's reputation in the public eye.

2.5 The Emergence of Media in Bangladesh

With the technological revolution in recent times, the world of journalism is changing and new dimensions are molding shapes. Despite the media bringing out the real pictures of society as well as many hidden issues that may unfold such as corruption, anti-social elements, etc., a country cannot be a democratic one without the freedom of the press. Media played a very significant role in Bangladesh right from its birth. Even during the liberation war of 1971, radio channels like "Shadhin Bangla Betar" did a very fine yet risky job of providing information about the war to people around the world. In the independent Bengal, Banglar Bani (1971), Ganakantha Samaj (1972), Janapada (1973), and Bangabarta (1973) all these were the prime dailies that served as the mirror of the nation.

However, during the autocratic rule of HM Ershad from 1975 to 1990, the media was under government supervision and not functioning independently (Gonzalez-Foerster, 1994). After that, some amendments were made to the Printing Presses and Publications Act, which paved the path for private media houses to perform freely (Ahmed, 2006). In a few years, the numbers of print and electronic media increased at a good speed. Currently, there are almost 1,244 print media houses available in Bangladesh (dailies 826 & 273 weeklies) but only 477 of them are registered. The number of TV channels is 44 of which only 3 are state-owned and the rest 41 are privately owned. Among the 82 radio stations in the country, the state owns 22, 32 are community radios, and the rest are privately owned FM radios (Rahman, 2016). Freedom of media and the rapid outgrowth of social

media have significant impressions on the judges which may trigger mistrials or media-oriented verdicts. This immense growth in the press and social media can sometimes come in the way of the justice system while creating a pre-decided impression on the judges.

2.6 State of Media Trial in Bangladesh

The media is responsible for presenting impartial, neutral, and true information to the mass people. The mass media and communication sector of Bangladesh has reached new heights in recent times and it needs to maintain the standard in contributing to the democracy of the nation as well as compliment the judiciary to conduct their job properly. However, the confusing statements made by the authorities, lengthy procedures, and unclear reasons for arresting and keeping in custody have destroyed the public's trust in the judiciary in recent times (Ahsan, 2016). As a result, mass people started putting their faith in the media, and the media grabbed this chance to exploit the faith of the people for their commercial agenda. While being in the race of getting the most exclusive bites often the journalists are seen to be crossing the line of decency and privacy. Apart from the regular news bulletins, most of them have a separate team for investigative journalism where they directly accuse someone of a crime with the basis of their sort of clues and publicly announce their punishment. There are even a few designated units of the media that play this role and the most popular of them are – Talash Team of Independent TV, Ekusher Chokh of Ekushey TV, Investigation 360 Degree of Jamuna TV, Onusondhan of Maasranga TV, Searchlight of Channel 24, and others as well (Islam, 2021). These units regularly practice acting as the public court where they call out the convict before the completion of court trials.

2.7 Historical Cases of Bangladesh That Faced Media Trial

In recent times, few criminal cases in Bangladesh have faced media trials from the mass people due to the rapid involvement of the media in the investigation. The significant ones among those are the case of the murder of BUET student Abrar Fahad, the 21st August Grenade Attack case in 2004, the case of rape and murdering Nusrat Jahan Rafi in Feni, and the case of objectifying women like the Porimoni sexual assault case.

2.7.1 The Murder Case of BUET student Abrar Fahad

This case is one of the most path-breaking cases of Bangladesh lately. Abrar Fahad, a student at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) was cruelly murdered on 9th October 2019 in the Sher-e-Bangla residential dormitory by some other students. The murderers were claimed to be part of a political student forum representing the ruling party. Right after the incident, the general students demanded justice and began to protest. The media broadcasted detailed information from time to time fueling the mass people to join the protest from every nook and corner. The media intervention brought out the tiniest details of the case and as a result, the government could not hide any evidence which was common in earlier politically affiliated cases (Tipu, 2019). The justice system worked well to find out the potential suspects through law enforcement agencies. However, due to the media's constant pressure and investigation, the agencies filed a charge sheet against six other students whose names were not even in the First Information Report (FIR) and the case was transferred to a Speedy Trial Tribunal. (The Daily Star, 2020). This case showed the power of media in pushing the system to act faster regarding such sensitive criminal cases.

2.7.2 The Grenade Attack on 21st August, 2004

One of the heinous attacks on a political party was the Grenade Attack at the rally of Awami League on 21st August 2004. Including prominent leaders and workers, 24 people died and more than 100 were injured along with the then-opposition leader Sheikh Hasina. The ruling party tried to hide the truth with the help of law enforcement agencies and were in a rush to feed the public made-up stories (Liton et al., 2018). However, the media played a significant role in bringing justice to the case by unmasking the truth.

2.7.3 The murder and rape case of Nusrat Jahan Rafi, Feni

The case of Nusrat Jahan Rafi's sexual assault and murder shook the whole country for the brutality and ignorant behavior of law enforcement agencies. Nusrat, a school girl of Feni, was sexually assaulted by Principal Siraj-ud-Dola, of her school Sonagazi Islamia Senior Fazil Madrasa. In these kinds of cases often girls are seen to keep it quiet and hide from society with a fear of defamation and character assassination. But she bravely confronted the criminal, filed a case against him, and got the teacher arrested. When things seemed to fall into place, a major setback happened, as she went to take her final exam after 11 days at her institution. She was pressured to withdraw the case but she refused and some deviants set her on fire. She died after 4 days of tough and painful fighting. Nevertheless, her whole story was continuously followed by the media, and due to its massive reach even Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina met her family and assured them none of the offenders would be spared. (Sabbir, 2019). Daily updates and reports of the case turned into a speedy geared-up case and within 7

months the verdict came out. Nusrat died asking for justice and the countrymen got it for her. This verdict sent a message to everyone that committing such a heinous crime would be punished with utter sincerity (Mahmud, 2019).

2.7.4 The Case of Women Objectification; The experience of Pori Moni

Pori Moni, the famous actress from Bangladesh was arrested by Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) over possession of liquor and alleged drugs in August 2021 (Sarkar, 2021). While the reason for the arrest was quite questionable, rather than focusing on that, the national media were busy judging her character, describing her as “Nosto Pori Moni” (Sullied Pori Moni). That was not all some even went a step further by almost treating her as a prostitute and edited pictures of her with sex toys were circulated (Banarjee, 2021). This is a prime example of how out of nowhere journalists showcase one side of the story and defame somebody completely by assumptions and speculations. But these thoughts created in the public mind already considered them as guilty much before the judiciary gave a verdict. Nonetheless, cases of similar sort are mostly presented in the media in such a way that rather than focusing on the crime and the criminal they start justifying them by judging the victim’s character. These are very threatening for the justice system of our country and this will give birth to more cases like this.

3. Methodology

3.1 Method

The study followed a qualitative research methodology for an in-depth understanding of the current scenario of media trials and their impact on the judiciary and society in Bangladesh. The underlying aim was to provide a clear understanding of the research problem and answer the research questions through a method that would bring out the key findings related to the research problem. An extensive literature review was conducted to prepare the baseline of the study problem. The study area for the research was the Chattogram district.

3.2 Sampling and Data Collection

The study focused primarily on collecting primary data from a total of 50 respondents. The respondents were sampled based on two sampling methods in two stages of the research. In the first stage, a purposive sampling method was used to identify 20 respondents with whom In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) were conducted. The respondents included Lawyers, Law students, Journalists, Professors, and experts in Journalism and Mass Communication who deal with such media-related situations regularly. IDI was used as a qualitative tool to dig deeper into the responses to understand the thoughts and experiences of the respondents. In the second stage, interviews were conducted with a total of 30 respondents who were chosen based on a random sampling method. These 30 respondents included the general people residing in the study area. Interviews were chosen as a qualitative tool as the insights of the mass people are significant in understanding the impact of media trials on society. Moreover, these two categories of respondents provided a detailed perception that helped the study to have a variation of the data and a holistic understanding for the researcher through periodical interviews.

3.3 Data Analysis

Since the primary data were collected through interviews, the sessions were recorded in the native language, Bangla, with informed consent from all the respondents. The audio recordings were then transcribed into texts and then translated into English. Simultaneously, the data were sorted and analyzed following a thematic analysis approach. In order to conduct a thematic analysis, the sorted data were manually coded to a maximum of 10-12 codes in a structured way. Once the codes were generated, the codes were categorized into three themes answering the research questions associated with the study.

3.4 Limitations of the Research

Since the key guiding question of this research tended to find the impact of media trials, collecting data from the victims of media trials was very crucial. Although such victims were identified for the research, it was not possible to obtain consent from them for collecting data on their experience. Thus, an important part of the study remains unidentified on which further research can be conducted which will bring new dimensions in understanding the impact of media trials on the judiciary and society.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Findings

Based on a thorough collection and analysis of the primary data, the findings of the study have been categorized

into three broad themes- indirect influence on the juror, invasion of privacy, and obstreperous social media.

4.1.1 Indirect Influence on the Juror

Since the judiciary is supposed to provide a verdict on any case through an unbiased approach confining evidence, witnesses, and legal boundaries, it is often ignored that the verdict of mass people might influence the juror even prior to starting a trial. The indirect impact media trial has on the juror brings out a biased result despite the unbiased approach being practiced in the court. Although it is quite expected from the judiciary to not be influenced by any sort during any trial, social pressure can cause an unwanted change in that practice since the jury is also part of the society. The experts in this study have mentioned a psychological theory where it has been shown that a juror builds up an impression about the accused and victims based on the discussion, theories, and stories they get acquainted with from the world outside of court. Certainly, this first impression creates an indirect yet significant influence on the mind of any juror.

According to experts, media trials were not prevailing in a world where media did not have such access to the mass people. Due to commercialism, media houses seek promotion and popularity. That has brought such options to create mass trials of any case on the media platforms in recent times. Moreover, the mass people judge the accused of any case without enough information regarding the case and their only source of information is the media. As a result, the media can feed mass people whatever they want, and that results in mass judgment on that case without considering the case to be handled in the court. Undoubtedly, being a part of the common media platforms, the juror gets an impression of the case even before studying it which ultimately can play a major role in affecting justice.

4.1.2 Invasion of Privacy

Technological innovations have made the lives of people much easier than before but no one can deny the negative role technology often plays in people's lives. One such downturn is the invasion of privacy of people. Bangladesh, being on the fuel of technological access, has reached new heights and expanded in promoting presence in the internet of mass people rapidly. The digital platforms contain news that maintains no personal, social, or legal boundaries. Interestingly, the media always remains one step ahead as they decide a day before what the public will be going to discuss the next day. However, with such accessibility of the media platforms, public participation in any delicate issue such as the case of Porimoni is uncontrolled and unfollowed by any boundaries. As a result, public opinions thrash or sympathize with the individuals related to any case despite the facts associated with that case and they are termed as media trials.

As the experts identified how the invasion of privacy of the individuals associated with any case is the result of such media trials, there is little doubt about the governance system in managing the media platforms. The experts called for a balance in such use and misuse of the media platforms through regulatory bodies and national laws. Nevertheless, the public opinion on this issue is quite similar to the experts. According to their view, the problem that has arisen from media trials goes both ways- the public feeds on the news broadcasted by the media houses and the media houses feed on the public opinions on their news and plan further. Undoubtedly, there is a huge role of basic education in shaping people's mentality on respecting anyone's privacy. Through media trials, media houses become unethical whereas the public places themselves in the position of the juror.

4.1.3 Obstreperous Social Media

In today's world, people's lives are bounded by social media being a blessing as well as a curse. As much as it is a platform for learning, connecting, and going beyond worldly boundaries, it is a platform where all sorts of negativities are practiced. Interestingly, the uneducated people of Bangladesh are mostly attracted by the negative channels. People can easily spread rumors, false claims, and fake news at the speed of light through social media and most people tend to believe those. In today's world of journalism, there is a very famous saying, "Bad news is Good news" which means every negative news becomes a hit and viral over time and becomes profitable for the media agencies.

The experts in the study have pointed toward the limitless misuse of social media as the main cause of media trials and their negative impact on individuals and society. People sharing their thoughts on any issue is always positively impactful as long as it maintains certain regulations and repercussions. Since the current media usage of society as a whole is mostly unchecked, the experts believe that people utilize these platforms to establish their criminal agenda on the mass people, and often, the media is connected with such attempts. Similarly, the general public thinks of social media as a completely negative channel to create any positive outcome in society. Although they acknowledged the role of social media in promoting the outreach of positive work, they believe the rate of happening of criminal and heinous activities is much higher than the positive outreach. One such

heinous activity mentioned by them was sexual abuse and defamation of women on social media and they believe this practice of harassing women on social media correlates with media trials of cases related to women. In regular societies of Bangladesh, women refuse to seek justice due to a fear of public shaming. Even those who come forward with such issues are humiliated by the public on social media platforms and that impacts them so traumatizingly that they cannot get back to their regular life.

4.2 Discussion

Trials by the media impact a lot in our justice system as well as our society. We often think that these petty issues will go away soon. But slowly it affects our society and its people. Judges are also part of this society, so obviously this information and investigations indirectly impacts their minds too. Though there is a complete constitution and its law to help the judiciary, it is pretty understandable that people get influenced by the community they belong to. When the media openly treat someone as guilty or convicted, they do not consider the fact that this is not valid data or proof and they are not authorized to do that. Even their activity hampers the legal battle and creates questions about the justice system too. Also, the after-effects of these trials become very tough for the victim, as their whole life, character, and all other things become part of people's everyday discussion topics and they face enormous humiliation from everyone which makes it tough to lead life the way they used to live in earlier days.

In a democratic country, no one has the right to judge someone's lifestyle and personal life as he/she has the absolute right to do as they feel. If they do anything wrong according to the law then the law enforcement parties must see the matter. Still, others cannot punish them or declare any verdict for them. In the age of social media, it has become very easy for everyone to pass a comment and judge someone even without having any concrete evidence in their hands. At the same time, although the rate of accusations is also increasing, most of them are false reports. People quite easily get instigated by the news provided by the media and attack the person and their family without any proof and attacking someone is lawfully wrong. Many cases have been seen where the mob was intrigued by some completely false news and killed many people and their families. This happens mostly in cases of religious hatred and attacks as well as gender issues. Currently, no law enforcement agency has been working as a regulatory body in acknowledging and undertaking rapid action against the misuse of social media by media agencies and the public. Thus, media trials are happening at an increasing rate and affecting the lives of individuals, the society as well as the judiciary system of Bangladesh. In order to create a healthy justice system and social environment, media literacy is a prerequisite. At the same time, regulations are to be created and maintained through effective policies that will control the delicacy of any judicial issue in the media platforms.

5. Conclusion

Among all the developed fields of the 21st century, the media sector has witnessed huge amounts of changes and reach in the mass people. Over the period, it has gained the trust of the public and is in a position where people easily believe their given information compared to any other sources. The press has the power to influence people over any trending issues and this influence can be both positive and negative. While sometimes it creates excitement and enthusiasm in the public's mind, in some cases, it can build fear and anxiety. Media trials contribute mostly to the latter where people play the role of judging the convict of a case and it can create massive influence in the law enforcement process of the state. Over time, several cases have come to light where the media has successfully manipulated the general people's minds and taken advantage of people's opinions and aggression to sell their news and be at the top of their industry. In this cynical competition of being at the top and delivering the most exclusive report, media agencies are more prone to declare the verdict on their own against the supposedly suspect of the incident much before the court reaches any decision which creates a great scar on the prejudicial procedure and its result. It also hampers the right of an individual to have a fair and apt legal trial.

It is high time the government establishes effective policies to control the media trials by specifying regulations on both the media agencies and the public use of social media on such delicate issues. An independent and healthy judicial system is a prerequisite for establishing and practicing democracy and ensuring people's welfare through fairness in judgment.

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