**Election related news analysis 2024**

Introduction

The national election of Bangladesh in January 2024 was a pivotal event that captured widespread public attention and international scrutiny. This election was marked by intense political rivalry, debates over the fairness of the process, and heightened concerns about election-related violence. To understand how the media portrayed this critical event, an analysis of 2,445 news articles from seven prominent Bangladeshi newspapers provides valuable insights into the narratives, focus areas, and actors highlighted during the electoral period.

This report examines the patterns of news coverage, identifying key themes such as the dominance of event-based reporting, the representation of political actors, the emphasis on pressing issues like free and fair elections, and the involvement of international stakeholders. It also explores the journalistic practices employed, shedding light on the media’s role in shaping public discourse during a highly contested election.

**News Media Coverage**

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| **News Media** | **No. of news** |
| Jugantor | 502 |
| Prothom Alo | 435 |
| Samakal | 432 |
| Ittefaq | 343 |
| Kaler Kantho | 278 |
| Daily Star | 266 |
| Business Standard | 189 |
| **Grand Total** | **2445** |

The dataset reveals that **Jugantor** published the highest number of election-related news articles (502), while **The Business Standard** contributed the least (189). Collectively, the **seven news outlets produced 2,445 articles**.

* **Observation**: Traditional Bangla dailies like **Jugantor**, **Prothom Alo**, and **Samakal** led the coverage, suggesting higher readership focus on local language media for election news.
* **English dailies** such as **The Daily Star** and **The Business Standard** contributed fewer articles, aligning with their smaller readership base and niche audience.

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| **Type of news** | **No. of news** |
| Event-based straight report | 2090 |
| Analysis | 242 |
| Opinion | 48 |
| Editorial | 24 |
| Follow-up report | 22 |
| Interview | 19 |
| **Grand Total** | **2445** |

**Types of News**

The distribution shows that **event-based straight reports dominated (85.5%)** of the coverage, whereas opinion pieces, editorials, and interviews were significantly fewer.

* **Observation**: The heavy reliance on event-based reporting indicates a focus on factual reporting rather than in-depth analysis or commentary.
* **Implication**: The limited number of opinion (48) and analysis articles (242) highlights a gap in interpretive journalism, which might affect public understanding of election complexities.

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| **Source of news** | **No. of news** |
| Staff Reporter/Special Correspondent | 1307 |
| Local Correspondent | 468 |
| Byline | 311 |
| Desk Compilation/Report | 183 |
| News Agency | 150 |
| Editorial Writer | 25 |
| Press Release/Briefing/Handout—without any additional input | 1 |
| **Grand Total** | **2445** |

**Sources of News**

Staff reporters and special correspondents contributed the majority (53.5%) of the reports, followed by local correspondents (19.1%). Notably, only **one report was entirely dependent on press releases or handouts**.

* **Observation**: The reliance on staff and local correspondents suggests that news outlets prioritized primary reporting.
* **Implication**: The minimal use of desk compilations or agency reports underlines the effort to produce original content during elections.

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| **National actors** | **No of responses** |
| Bangladesh Awami League | 886 |
| Bangladesh Nationalist Party | 420 |
| Independent candidate | 402 |
| Election Commission | 277 |
| Jatiya Party | 233 |
| Prime Minister | 170 |
| Law enforcement agency | 108 |
| Civil society | 80 |
| Bangladesh Police | 74 |
| Government | 47 |
| **Grand Total** | **2697** |

**Coverage of National and International Actors**

* **National Actors**:
  + **Bangladesh Awami League (BAL)** and **Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)** received the most coverage, together accounting for 48.4% of the responses. Independent candidates (15%) and the Election Commission (10.3%) also had significant mentions.
  + **Observation**: The focus on major political parties reflects their dominance in electoral narratives. However, entities like the **Election Commission** and **civil society** received less coverage, despite their critical roles in ensuring fair elections.

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| **International actors** | **No. of responses** |
| USA | 80 |
| United Nations | 64 |
| India | 46 |
| Others | 44 |
| China | 40 |
| EU | 37 |
| Russia | 37 |
| International rights bodies | 35 |
| UK | 23 |
| Commonwealth | 22 |
| **Grand Total** | **428** |

* **International Actors**:
  + The **USA (80 mentions)** and **United Nations (64)** led the international response, followed by India, China, and the EU.
  + **Observation**: The prominence of the USA and UN reflects their active role in advocating for democratic processes. Coverage of countries like India and China may indicate strategic geopolitical interests in Bangladesh’s elections.

#### ****Most Talked-About Issues****

* **Free & Fair Election (282)** and **Election Violence (232)** were the top issues discussed, followed by **Code of Conduct (204)** and the restoration of a **Caretaker Government (191)**.
* Other notable topics included **voter turnout (168)**, **street agitation (133)**, and **law enforcement roles (110)**.
* **Observation**: The emphasis on fairness and violence suggests widespread public concern about the integrity and safety of the electoral process.
* **Implication**: Discussions on sensitive issues like agitation and internal conflict highlight political tensions, while topics like security and international dialogue reflect efforts to manage these challenges.

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| **Most talked issues** | **No. of response** |
| Free & fair election | 282 |
| Election violence | 232 |
| Code of conduct | 204 |
| Restoration of Caretaker government/ Election time government | 191 |
| Election campaign | 184 |
| Voter turnout | 168 |
| Mudslinging | 162 |
| Street agitation/Showdown/ Rallies | 133 |
| Post election reaction | 124 |
| Participatory election | 116 |
| Role of law enforcement agency | 110 |
| Internal conflict | 105 |
| Dialogue/negotiation [international] | 102 |
| Injuries | 96 |
| Security | 83 |
| **Grand Total** | **2292** |

#### ****General Observations****

1. **Content Balance**: The dominance of event-based reporting and limited analytical content indicates a need for more interpretive journalism to contextualize election-related developments.
2. **Actor Representation**: The disparity in coverage between major parties and smaller actors like civil society or the Election Commission points to potential biases or prioritization of high-profile narratives.
3. **Focus on Violence and Conduct**: The recurring emphasis on violence and election fairness suggests an underlying concern about political stability.

**Conclusion**

The analysis of media coverage during the January 2024 national election in Bangladesh highlights the pivotal role of journalism in shaping public understanding of electoral processes. While the dominance of event-based reporting ensured timely updates, the limited number of analytical and opinion pieces points to a gap in interpretive journalism, which is essential for fostering informed public discourse.

The disproportionate focus on major political parties like the Bangladesh Awami League (BAL) and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) underscores their influence on the national narrative, but it also reveals an underrepresentation of smaller actors such as civil society and the Election Commission, whose roles are critical to ensuring a transparent election. The media’s attention to issues like free and fair elections, violence, and electoral conduct reflects public concerns about the integrity and safety of the electoral process.

Despite these contributions, the findings suggest room for improvement in diversifying perspectives, prioritizing deeper analyses, and balancing representation of actors. As Bangladesh moves forward, a more nuanced and comprehensive media approach will be instrumental in strengthening democratic accountability and fostering trust in electoral systems.