



# The impact of the war in Yemen on the professional performance of independent media


survey






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## Introduction

The free media is one of the cornerstones of democracy and human rights, as no democratic system can be without a free and independent media. Its importance lies in the fact that it provides a service to the audience through accurate and documented information.

The power of the media lies in considering it the faithful guardian of people's lives and freedoms by revealing facts and contributing to transparency, accountability and human rights. Its powerful influence depends on the extent of its integrity and its closeness to achieving the interests of peoples and societies.

An independent media has emerged in Yemen, benefiting from the margins of democracy that Yemen experienced in the early nineties of the last century. Despite the great challenges associated with those beginnings, it has been resisting the discouraging political and economic conditions, faltering and rising in an attempt to create a path different from the state media or the partisan media.

The technological revolution and the Internet era was an important turning point in the history of the Yemeni independent media, as many journalists were able to bypass legal restrictions and establish many news website, taking advantage of the absence of legislative texts restricting the new media.

With the increasing role played by the independent media in Yemen, both traditional and modern, the outbreak of the war in 2015 represented a devastating setback for the independent media. The repercussions of the war

were not limited to the independent media only, but negatively affected all media and created an hostile atmosphere curbing freedoms.

The independent media in Yemen has found itself in the midst of major transformations, with raids and closures being one of its most prominent features. Journalists were the most common segments of society that were accused, arrested, and prosecuted.

Today, after eight years of the devastating Yemeni war, we are trying to assess the effects of the war on the independent media, the nature of the new roles created by the war, and the extent to which it is close to the audience and expressing its issues. We are also trying to paint a clear picture of its future role and the challenges it has to face.

### **The study consists of two parts:**

**The first part is** theoretical, which is providing a panoramic picture of the status, nature and challenges of the independent media.

**The second part is** a survey study that covered a sample of journalists in the independent Yemeni media, to learn from them more about the aspects of the independent media experience in Yemen and to make recommendations that enable us to maintain the independent media and support it to rise again for playing important roles in community service during the current stage.

## Research problem:

The independent print, audio and visual media witnessed a great development in Yemen, especially after the achievement of Yemeni unity on May 22, 1990, when Yemen adopted the system of political and partisan pluralism. A law was issued to organize media work at that time. Dozens of press publications and local radio stations appeared in Yemen in a remarkable way in the early nineties.

The independent media is a free forum for citizens to express their different opinions away from partisan or government censorship. However, the independent media still suffer from multiple difficulties in third world countries in general and in Yemen in particular.

But what is the role of independent media in societies in crisis? Or those that suffer from grinding wars such as Yemen? What is the reality of independent media in such countries? How do the authorities suffering from the scourge of war deal with the independent media? All of these motives and questions were behind the preparation of this study on: "The impact of the war in Yemen on the independent media," to diagnose the reality of the independent media in a scientific way, as well as to identify the difficulties and obstacles facing the independent media in its various print, audio and video media in light of the war to reach findings that work to achieve goals of the survey study.

## The importance of studying:

The importance of the study lies in the fact that it diagnoses the reality of the independent media with its various means in Yemen in light of the ongoing war. The study will create a knowledge roots for Yemeni journalists and researchers to continue studying the developments of media landscape and adopting independent media as a free platform for citizens by addressing various issues with an independent vision.

## Objectives of the study:

The study sought to achieve a set of goals related to the reality of the independent media in various print, audio and visual media in Yemen, which are as follows:

1. Identifying the professional pressures faced by the independent media during the war period in Yemen?
2. Getting to know the reality of the practice of independent media work during the war period in Yemen.
3. Monitoring the negatives of working in the independent media during the war period in Yemen.
4. Identifying the sources of funding for the independent media.
5. Identifying the types of independent media owners.
6. Monitoring the reasons for stopping the issuance or broadcasting of independent media, especially during the war period.

7. Identifying the size of the space of freedom granted to the independent media during the war period.
8. Monitoring the challenges and difficulties facing the independent media in Yemen, especially during the war
9. Identifying the extent to which press sources responded to the independent media, especially during the war in Yemen.
10. Identifying the violations that the communicator is exposed to in the independent media during the war period in Yemen.
11. Anticipating the future prospects of the independent media in light of the impact of the war in Yemen, and the requirements to strengthen its role and influence in expressing community issues.

## Study questions

- What are the sources of funding that the independent media rely on to carry out their duties?
- What are the types of independent media owners
- What are the difficulties faced by communicators working in independent media, especially during the war in Yemen?
- What are the negatives of working in the independent media during the war in Yemen?
- What are the reasons for stopping the issuance or broadcasting of independent media in Yemen in general and during the war period in particular?



- What is the size of the space of freedom granted to independent media in times of peace or war in Yemen?
- What is the response of press sources to independent media outlets?
- What are violations that the communicator exposed to in the independent media in Yemen?
- What are the future prospects for independent media in light of the impact of the war in Yemen?

## Methodological procedures

### - **Type of study:**

This study belongs to the descriptive and analytical studies that seek to describe the reality of the independent media in Yemen with its various means in light of the ongoing war.

### - **Study Methodology:**

The study will use the survey methodology that seeks to know the reality of the independent media in Yemen, through the communicators working in the various independent media, in addition to the owners of these media outlets.

### - **Study Society:**

The independent print media (print and electronic) and audio-visual media represent the study society for this research.

### - **Study sample:**

The study chose a representative sample that includes (26) independent media communicators, which are: printed newspapers (Akhbar Al-Youm, Al-Ayyam, Aden Al-Ghad, Al-Share' newspaper), newspapers and websites (Almasdaronline, Yemenmonitor, Letter 28). Al-Hodeidah News, Dhamar Online, Ibb Press, NewsYemen, Al-Mawqe Post, Al-Mushahed Website, Taiz Time, Al-Omana Net, The Eighth Day website, Hadramout Net, Crater Sky Net, Khuyut.com, Dekka, Today.net, Arwa platform, Ta platform), and the stations The radio stations (Radio Alwan FM, Bandar Aden Radio, Nama Radio).

### **The media were chosen deliberately and according to several conditions, including:**

- It is published and broadcasted regularly, and constantly updated.
- It deals with issues of war in Yemen.
- It is issued or broadcasted from different Yemeni governorates. Therefore, the study was keen to ensure that there is geographical diversity in the selected independent media.

### - **Data collection tools**

A questionnaire was designed for the purpose of collecting data on the reality of the independent media in Yemen. It was sent to the communicators working in the independent media, in order to answer the questions set to achieve the objectives of the study, to reach the outcomes that diagnose the reality of the independent media in Yemen and the impact of the war on its professional performance.

- **Validity and reliability test**

After completing the design of the questionnaire, it was presented to a group of academic arbitrators in media colleges and departments, in addition to specialists working in the field of media, to get acquainted with their scientific observations and work with them.

- **Statistical Processing**

After completing the data collection, the data was encoded and entered into the computer and statistical transactions were used via the (SPSS) program to process the study data.

## The intellectual framework of the study:

This study has diagnosed the professional reality of the independent media in light of the war in Yemen, taking into account the realities inherent in the environment of national communication systems, and their relationship to the areas of political, economic, social, cultural and legal systems, because without these variables or paths, we will not be able to diagnose the reality of independent media in Yemen in the shadow of war.

## The reality of independent media institutions in Yemen:

When talking about the reality of media institutions in Yemen, we must look a little at the historical beginnings of independent media in the north and south of Yemen, to learn how the first private newspaper appeared in Yemen.

## History of independent media in Yemen

The emergence of the civil media in Yemen was linked to the magazine “Al-Hikma” which was issued in 1938 in North Yemen. There are some other press publications that appeared even after the revolution of September 26, 1962 in North Yemen, where some limited private press releases appeared during this period.

### **In southern Yemen,**

the civil press did not appear until a century after the British occupation, and “Al-Ikhaa” newspaper or bulletin, published in Tarim in 1938, was the first private newspaper published in the south, but it disappeared after independence in 1967.<sup>1</sup>

In the fifties of the last century, many union and partisan newspapers were published due to the union, partisan and labor activities witnessed by Aden during colonialism. More than (17) newspapers and

1 - Abdullah Al-Zain: Yemen and its Media, 2nd Edition, Beirut: Dar Al-Fikr Al-Maas, 1995, pp. 240-243

magazines were issued, including labor and partisan newspapers concerned with the conditions of workers and professional unions, which were fighting the existence of the colonizer.<sup>2</sup>

In 1960, in the city of Aden, "Girl of the Island" magazine, a specialized women's magazine, was issued by Mahiya Najib. It was concerned with the rights of Yemeni women in that period<sup>3</sup>. However, after the October 14 revolution in Aden, independent media was not allowed to appear due to the nature of the socialist system and the situation continued as well as until the establishment of Yemeni unity in 1990.

### **Factors that helped the emergence of the civil press in the North (1968-1972):<sup>4</sup>**

1. The republican regime was rooted after the defeat of the counter-revolutionary forces in the seventy-day siege.
2. The dictatorship one-person regime retreated after the uprising of November 5, 1967.
3. The conflict intensified between republican forces of different stripes and multi-loyalty tendencies.
4. The limited development in printing through the emergence of Dar Al-Qalam Printers in Taiz and Al-Sabah Printers in Al-Hodeidah.
5. The growth of private commercial firms that started using advertisements to support newspapers.

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2 - Quoted freely from the book: Abdul Rahman Khabara: The Emergence and Development of the Yemeni Press in Aden, 1st Edition, Aden: Al-Amal for Printing and Publishing, 1998

3 - Abdel Rahman Abdel Wahab: "The role of the media in developing women and developing awareness of their rights and societal responsibilities. See the following website: [www.amanjordan.org/aman\\_studies/wmprint](http://www.amanjordan.org/aman_studies/wmprint). Accessed, 20-10-2005, the time, 3:28 pm. P.1

4 - Muhammad Al-Qa'ari: An Introduction to the Press, Sana'a: University of Science and Technology, 2013

## Stage of development

After Yemen had adopted a system of political and partisan pluralism, and achieved Yemeni unity on May 22, 1990, the civil press witnessed a great development, as did the partisan newspapers. Their number reached more than (150) private newspapers and magazines.

The truth is that the nineties witnessed a great democratic movement in Yemen, which was positively reflected on the performance of the media in general and the independent media in particular. Really, it was a period of growth in the number of press publications.

We all know that the Press Law No. (25) of 1990, which is in force in Yemen, provides a margin of press freedom, although this limited freedom is not what the media communicators in Yemen aspires to.

In practice, the stage of political and partisan pluralism during the period (1994-2014) witnessed many harassment and muzzling. The independent media was subjected from time to time to many violations, such as imprisonment of journalists, fines, threats, beatings and abductions.

## The reality of the independent media in light of the war in Yemen:

Despite the independent media in Yemen is unable to meet the desires and needs of the Yemeni audience, whether the paper or electronic press, there are media platforms on social media that have been able to gain the audience's follow-up and attention due to their coverage of events. It tries to be free and independent, although some of those media are biased in one way or another to one side or the other.

Independent media suffer from many shortcomings represented in the lack of exclusivity in transmitting information, the lack of professionalism in their media coverage, and their reliance in their coverage on news search engine, in addition to the impact of political orientations on the professional performance of these media.

Also, some websites and electronic newspapers have unprofessional reporters and workers, who need training and qualification to keep pace with the new press and the information needs of the audience, and to provide it with explanations on ambiguous events. The importance of the media no longer lies in transmitting information only in light of the expanding influence of websites and social media, but we need explanation journalism that is absent from the Yemeni and Arab arenas, which is characterized by press analyzes, opinion articles and various journalistic investigations, in addition to the urgent need to verify information in light of the flow of misinformation through social media.

The financial funding for independent media is one of the difficult challenges, as some independent media receive funding from multiple undeclared sources that directly affect the way those media address events. Some of these media are forced to stop working whenever funding decreases or stops.

The independent media in Yemen was one of the sources of polarization by the various parties to the conflict in Yemen. Many of them were recruited to serve the political and ideological interests of some of the parties involved in the civil conflict in Yemen.

Despite the shortcomings that the independent media suffers from at the institutional, professional, and financial levels, it is important to note that it still plays an apparent role in informing the audience of many important events and developments in the Yemeni arena politically, economically and socially.

The cessation of many partisan and opposition media during the war led to its being replaced by independent media, which were able to form distinguished relations with the audience with their limited capabilities. It is true that they were not able to form a wide audience base, but they remained an important source of information for the audience.

The electronic journalism also suffers from a weakness in the use of modern technology and techniques, as well as a shortcoming in the use of multimedia to present the news service in an attractive way to the audience, due to the fact that it lacks qualified cadres in the use of modern media, not to mention the weak use of the social media such as Facebook, Twitter and other platforms have become important sources of information.



In light of all these challenges, the independent media needs to strengthen its institutional, professional and financial structure. It needs liberation from political and sectarian dependency, and working to achieve financial independence that enables these media to exercise their professional and enlightening role in society.

Given the decline of the paper press significantly, this constituted an opportunity for the growth of the electronic press as an alternative, especially after the closure and collapse of many paper newspapers during the war years.

At a time when the performance of the targeted media was a frustrating factor among the audience, Yemen began to witness the emergence of a quality professional journalism that addresses various segments of society and deals with various issues, away from the ongoing war, and close to its political, economic, security, social and cultural repercussions. As a result, the hope is growing for the emergence of a generation of young journalists with enlightened thoughts, who will professionalize the electronic journalism and move the media work towards independence and freedom.<sup>5</sup>

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5 - Diana Moukalled rowaq.cihrs.org

## The decline of the independent media

When we look at the independent media in recent years, we find it declined, especially the paper press, where many important independent press publications have disappeared from the scene. This is mainly due to the fact that most independent press publications in Yemen are described as individual journalism and not corporate journalism. The media outlet depends mainly on the founder and editor-in-chief, and quickly declines upon the death or preoccupation of the founder with it.

Also, many independent newspapers in Yemen have been receiving financial support from some political parties or state leaders, either directly or indirectly, and when that funding stops, these newspapers are forced to stop being published.

On the internal financial status, journalists and workers in independent media suffer from low salaries and delays in disbursing them, in addition to the instability of the editorial line, which leads to the ignoring or rejection of some press materials.

With regard to distribution, many independent newspapers, for example, are printed about two thousand and five thousand copies, because of many reasons, including little money, poor content or poor marketing, or as a result of dislike disliked by some audience, whose causes were not addressed by the newspaper..

Such independent media will not continue to be published because it is not institutional media. It does not

own the building, the printing machine, the financial and technical capabilities, nor the press, technical, and administrative staff. The advertisements inside these newspapers are few. Therefore, it will be stopped if the financial support declines or ends whatever its source. This is what actually happened at different stages of the life of the modern Yemeni press.

## Challenges facing independent media:

Yemen has been undergoing through a war for eight years, in which blood has been spilled, the infrastructure has been destroyed, the social fabric has been torn apart, and the allegiances have been divided between the different parties to the conflict. The media has had a share of this division, rupture, polarization and destruction.

Over the years of the war, the independent media in Yemen has been subjected to many violations and repressive practices that caused the closure of some outlets or moving to other places. Many journalists were forced to either give up their journalistic work or work under pseudonyms.

The security challenge is one of the most important challenges faced by the independent media in Yemen, not to mention the tyranny of the military, security and political powers in the various Yemeni regions, where the independent media is polarized to play the role of war propaganda for this or that party. The matter reached the point of forcing independent me-

dia to play an inciting role and mobilize public opinion for soldering, especially in periods of wars, conflicts and crises.

Many newspapers and media offices were closed in Sana'a and Aden due to their orientation contrary to the existing powers forcing the media to be one color and one-sided.

Some of the parties controlling the situation in Yemen were able to subjugate the media to spread propaganda and rumors, so a lot of misleading and false news and malicious information appeared.

These official powers take advantage of the absence of legal texts protecting the media freedom. They force independent media to carry out repressive and discriminatory practices. The media landscape is witnessing unfair granting of broadcasting and electronic publishing licenses. They also has controlled the advertising companies, directing them towards advertising in loyal media, not to mention the practices of blocking news websites and refusing to grant licenses to media platforms outside the hegemony of the ruling system here and there.

In view of all this, the independent media finds itself in a dangerous predicament, as it works under great pressure and restrictive measures, in an environment tinged with hostility and hatred.

Despite this complex reality, which increased by the collapse of the Arab Spring, there is an urgent need for an unbiased media working to correct information reaching public opinion and confront organized propaganda and misinformation.

## Difficulties according to the type of media outlets:

There are many common self-challenges faced by the independent media, whether paper newspapers, websites, or independent radios and TV channels. The common challenges are the weak financial capabilities due to the decline in the advertising market, inefficient editorial staff and the absence of a future vision.

In more depth, other challenges appear related to the quality of the media outlet, the nature of its work and the extent of its influence.

About radio stations, we find that they suffer from the challenges of poor financing that covers their programming map, unqualified media team, unprofessional technicians and experienced directors, and transmitters incapable of reaching wider broadcasting spaces. Therefore, the programs of these stations are almost repetitive and do not respond to the audience's priorities.

The situation may be a little better for independent television channels compared to radio stations because the owners of TV channels are either businessmen or private companies. However, they also do not rise to the ranks of private Arab channels because such channels need very large capabilities, especially in the technical aspect. The private Arab TV channels have visual presentation techniques that are used to deliver news content easily to the Arab viewers, such as: (graphics, info graphics, motion graphics, virtu-

al reality, and augmented reality). Yemen private TV channels have only a few of these techniques and equipment compared to private Arabic TV channels.

Moreover, they lack professional correspondents in various Arab and international countries, broadcasters producers, broadcasting equipment, and subscriptions to more than one satellite bringing its broadcasts worldwide.

Independent media also lack the media training centers and a research unit in order to measure public opinion about their content from time to time so as develop its content based on the needs and requirements of the audience, readers, viewers or listeners, depending on the type of media outlets.

## Political systems and independent media

To know the nature of the independent media work, it is important to know its relationship with the various systems, especially the political system granting the license for independent media to issue or broadcast. The political regime is the authority, which enacts laws regulating the work of independent media and determines the space of freedom available to practice independent media.

With regard to the political system, we all know that the communication systems in the Arab countries, including Yemen, are sub-systems of the political regime to which they are directly subject. The media is

one of the policy tools that often creates the agenda of the media in its various orientations, including the independent media.

Yemen, like other Arab countries, allows multiple types of newspaper ownership despite the pressures on these newspapers. The report of the International Committee to Protect Journalists stated that “there are many independent and bold newspapers in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco and Yemen.” Journalists face a number of tricks and official procedures that can hinder their work such as censorship, criminal trials, arrest and threats by the security forces (CPJ.20).<sup>6</sup>

Therefore, we find that Yemen and many Arab countries do not allow political opposition forces and ideological trends opposing them to own radio or television stations (with the exception of Lebanon). It is true that Yemen has allowed some private sector to own satellite television channels, but they are broadcast from outside Yemen. Egypt, Lebanon or DubaiDubai. However, we find that most of the TV channels play a propaganda role for the government.

The power have also recently allowed many individuals and the private sector to own radio stations, but their content does not contradict the directions of the government. Radio stations should also play a propaganda role for the government, and unless they will be closed. This has happened recently in Sana'a for some radio stations that do not adhere to the policy of the new Ministry of Information.

Some television channels and private radio stations may resort to focusing their content on entertain-

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6 - Report of the International Committee to Protect Journalists on the situation of the Arab press, 2002.

ment materials that do not cause inconvenience to the authorities, because if they engage in some political or sensitive issues that cause inconvenience to the authorities, their owners will be held accountable and suspended from work.

The electronic press was not immune to these strict measures that the authorities are using to silence or subjugate media. After the growing media role of the modern media in light of the war and the audience's dependence as a source of information, the authorities under the control of the Houthi group "Ansar Allah in Sana'a" has issued in 2017 a regulation to regulate the electronic and social media and legalize its work in (39) articles, in order to confront what they considered fake and fabricated news.

These measures were opposed by many journalists, who considered them restricting media freedom and lacking legal legitimacy.

In fact, the regimes in Yemen, like a number of Arab countries, do not provide the appropriate environment for the exercise of media freedoms, due to the absence of democratic political systems. They all make laws supporting freedom of opinion and expression in the media, but the reality says otherwise.

The question that must be asked is: What is the form of communication systems reform required in Yemen? The answer may be restructuring the mass media and liberating it from the grip of politicians , so that it can publish or broadcast freely and independently, and leave the audience decide and choose.



## Occupational pressures between rights and responsibilities

The journalist is the main pillar in any media work. He is the focus of communication and the originator of the communication message. Therefore, the journalist faces many pressures as a result of internal and external factors. By external factors, we mean the position of the media outlets in the existing social system, its link to certain interests, such as the presence of competing media. Internal factors include the type of media ownership, methods of control, administrative systems, and production pressure. These factors play an important and tangible role in forming the content presented to the audience. (Ali Al-Ammar: Press Discourse)

As for professional pressures, they are economic, political, psychological and nervous pressures. The journalism is one of the most stressful professions. Moreover, there are pressures and risks facing the journalist or reporter when reporting events during various political crises such as the war in Yemen , which puts the journalist's life at risk.<sup>7</sup>

Just as journalists have rights that they cannot work without, they have responsibilities towards the audience that should not be waived. Legislative laws and codes of conduct are the professional framework that outlines the rights and responsibilities of journalists, so as he adheres to the principles of professional honor, and performs all his responsibilities contained in the media law.

Journalists in Yemen suffer from employment that takes place without a specialized reference, for people

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7 - Ali Al-Ammar: The relationship between the elite's dependence on Yemeni newspapers and their prioritization of environmental issues, an unpublished master's study, Cairo: Helwan University, 2004

who do not have media qualifications. This employment is done away from the authority that confirms the qualifications of the journalist, which allows ordinary and unqualified people to be a journalist, especially in the independent media. Indeed, many newspapers hire journalists who can't be called a journalist as approved by the media law.

Therefore, it is important to have a syndicate that defines the occupational rights of its members, and is committed to claiming and protecting them, and determining who is a journalist able to practice journalism.

The profession of journalism has ethics and principles, which the journalist must respect and abide by. The journalist cannot claim impartiality when it comes to violating individual and collective rights, because by doing so he violates the most important contract that binds him to society. He must avoid spreading rumors, not offend people, respect privacy and personal rights, and defend his colleagues and solidarity with them when they are prosecuted, abused or their lives are at risk.<sup>8</sup>

## Survey findings:

After theoretically reviewing the nature and challenges of the independent media in Yemen, we review here the findings of the survey we conducted to find out the impact of the civil war in Yemen on the independent media, what the needs enabling the independent media to play an important role in the future of Yemen and what the challenges it faces.

The survey study was conducted on a sample of jour-

8 - Ali Al-Ammar: The press discourse on civil and political human rights issues in the Yemeni press, unpublished Ph.D., Cairo University, Faculty of Information, Press Department, 2008.

nalists working in independent media, which are (26) media outlets, to diagnose the media reality. For more than a month, (18) journalists from independent media outlets responded to us, most of them are working in newspapers and websites. The study reached the following findings:

### - Ownership of independent media in Yemen:

**Table No. (1) shows who is the owner of the private media outlet.**

Owner	Repetition	Rate
Owned by an individual	7	% 38.9
Owned by a group of people	6	% 33.3
Owned by an institution or firm	5	% 27.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>% 100</b>

The previous table shows that most of the electronic newspapers are owned by an individuals (38%). This is the case for most independent media in Yemen, followed by outlets owned by a group of people by (33.3%), and at the bottom of the list are outlets owned by an institution or a commercial firm. This is due to the fact that the media are not commercially profitable, as private sector companies are reluctant to invest in the media due to the security and political risks associated with this type of investment, as well as the limited economic feasibility of these projects in Yemen.

### - Independent media buildings:

**Table No. (2) shows the type of building for the media outlet**

Media HQ	Repetition	Rate
Media outlets' building	3	16.70%
Rented apartment	9	50%
Owner's house	6	33.30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

The previous table shows that the independent media is mostly based in rented apartment, by a rate of (50%), which is a large percentage compared to the case of the building owned by the outlet, which came at a rate of (16.7%). This indicates the weak financial position that independent media suffer from in Yemen. The final rank is occupied by media building owned by the outlet's owner by (33%).

### - Financio sources for independent media in Yemen:

**Table No. (3) shows the type of financing source for the media outlet**

Financing source	Repetition	Rate
Self-financing by the owner/or owners	8	38.10%
Donations and grants from others	3	14.30%
Contributions and ads	2	9.50%
Financed by international organizations	8	38.10%
Financed by other countries	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100%</b>

The previous table shows that independent media mostly depend for their funding on the owner or on international organizations, at a rate of (38.1%) for each. This is another evidence that independent media are not institutional,

but rather individuals. Therefore, many of these media are subject to suspension due to the financial deficit. The independent media relying on donations and grants by others came in third place by a rate of (14.3%). At the bottom of the list came contribution and advertisements by (9.5%), which is a very small percentage, although this source is one of the sustainable sources that should be. The media is keen to develop and pay attention to it. The reluctance of regular contributors and advertisers from independent media is due to the weak communication between the media and the private sector, and to the area of influence of the independent media on the audience, which is not a desire for that sector as the percentage shows, in addition to the political and economic conditions left by the war.

**- Independent media cadres in Yemen:**

**Table No. (4) shows the size of the independent media outlet's staff of journalists**

<b>Journalists Number</b>	<b>Repetition</b>	<b>Rate</b>
1_3 journalists	<b>6</b>	33.3%
4_7 journalists	<b>4</b>	22.2%
Over seven journalists	<b>8</b>	44.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

The previous table shows that a large percentage of independent media outlets own a staff of more than seven journalists (44.5%), which is a large and important percentage, but the size of this media staff was not reflected in the content. It is noted that the maximum capacity of the media staff was not utilized in the published press content. In the second place came the outlets owning a number of hired journalists between (1-3), by (33.3%), which is a high percentage. The outlets owning hired journalists between (4-7) came last by (22.2%).

**- The professional roles of independent media in Yemen:**

**Table No. (5) shows the professional role played by the independent media during the war in Yemen**

The professional roles of independent media	Position			Likely rankings		
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total rankings in points	Percentage	Final rankings in points <sup>9</sup>
They convey current events impartially	7	6	4	37	%8.3	6
They call for peace and national reconciliation	11	4	2	43	%9.7	3
They express the problems of the audience and defend their interests	12	3	2	44	%9.9	2
They provide immediate media coverage of national events and issues	6	6	5	35	%7.9	7
They expose the aspects of deviation and corruption in society	10	4	3	41	%9.2	4
They guide and educate the audience through their writing	13	1	4	45	%10.2	1
They make a change for the better in Yemen after the war had destroyed everything	11	5	1	44	%9.9	
They explain the government's actions to the audience and the audience's demands to the government	8	7	2	40	%9.1	2
They care about their own interests	5	6	6	33	%7.4	5
They make a lot of hate speech between all parties	1	5	10	23	%5.2	8
They are fanatic for one party against the other, far from the national interest	4	6	7	31	%6.9	9
They mobilize the audience to fight the enemy	3	5	9	28	%6.3	10
<b>Total</b>				<b>444</b>	<b>%100</b>	

9 - (\*) The weighting is calculated by multiplying the frequencies of Agree x 3, Neutral x 2 and Disagree x 1.

another evidence that independent media are not institutional, but rather individuals. Therefore, many of these media are subject to suspension due to the financial deficit. The independent media relying on donations and grants by others came in third place by a rate of (14.3%). At the bottom of the list came contribution and advertisements by (9.5%), which is a very small percentage, although this source is one of the sustainable sources that should be. The media is keen to develop and pay attention to it. The reluctance of regular contributors and advertisers from independent media is due to the weak communication between the media and the private sector, and to the area of influence of the independent media on the audience, which is not a desire for that sector as the percentage shows, in addition to the political and economic conditions left by the war.

#### **- The impact of independent media on the audience in Yemen.**

**Table No. (6) shows the impact of independent media on the audience from the media point of view**

<b>Independent media influence</b>	<b>Repetition</b>	<b>Rate</b>
Strong influence	10	55.60%
Somewhat strong influence	6	33.30%
No influence	2	11.10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

It is clear from the previous table that a percentage of (55.6%) of the media outlets' communicators believe that there is a strong influence of the independent media on the audience, because the audience no longer pays much attention to the government media due to the many exaggerations and intimidation that accompany its reporting of the events of the war in Yemen. "No influence" came at the bottom of the list with a rate of (11.1%). The phrase "strong

influence” also indicates that the electronic media plays a major role in influencing the audience, given that its space for freedom compared to the audio or visual media, which is not allowed to address issues of war in Yemen, even with a minimum level of professionalism. and impartiality. The rate (33.3%) was for the phrase “a somewhat strong influence”, which indicates that some of the audience have resorted to following foreign media.

## The second axis: the challenges facing the independent media in Yemen because of the war

**Table No. (7) shows the extent to which independent media are allowed to cover the war from the battlefield**

Is independent media allowed to cover the battlefield	Repetition	Rate
Yes	3	16.70%
No	9	50%
Sometimes	6	33.30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

The previous table shows that the independent media is not allowed to cover the war from the battlefield, by a rate of (50%), which is a large rate compared to the fact that it is sometimes allowed to cover the media from the battlefield, by a rate of (38%). The answer “ yes”, the independent media is allowed to cover the war has got a rate of (11.1%). This confirms the government media occupy of the news coverage of the war from the battlefield and not allowing the independent media to cover.



## - Challenges of the independent media in Yemen:

**Table No. (8) shows the ranking of the main challenges facing the independent media in Yemen**

Challenges facing independent media	Repetition	Rate	Rankings of the challenges in order of their importance to media
Security challenges such as prevention and threats	16	23.20%	1
Financial challenges	11	15.90%	3
Institutional challenges related to the institution's policy	8	11.60%	4
Legal challenges related to prohibitions	5	7.30%	6
Occupational challenges associated with developing media content	6	8.70%	5
Challenges related to social pressures	2	2.90%	8
Religious challenges related to religious pressures	6	8.70%	5
Political challenges related to political pressures	12	17.40%	2
Challenges related to competition with other media	3	4.30%	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>100%</b>	

The previous table shows that the most prominent challenges faced by the independent media in Yemen during its coverage of current events were represented primarily in security challenges such as prevention and threats, which came in (23%), followed by political challenges related to political pressures by (17%), and financial chal-

enges came third with a percentage (15%), institutional challenges came fourth with (11%), religious and professional challenges came fifth with 8% each, and legal challenges came in sixth place with 7%), while challenges related to competition with other media came in 4 (%) and finally societal challenges by (2%).

It is clear from the above that the challenges facing the independent media are many and varied, especially the security and political challenges due to the suppression of press freedoms, as well as the impact of the war on its professional performance.

## The reasons behind the absence of independent media from covering the war:

**Table No. (9) explains why the independent media was not allowed to cover the war**

Reason for preventing independent media from covering the war	Repetition	Rate
Because it does not follow the power	14	29.2%
Because the media is free and will disseminate the truth from the battlefield	12	25%
Because the authorities closed newspapers	3	6.2%
Because it doesn't have war correspondents	6	12.5%
Because coverage is exclusive to the authorities	13	27.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100%</b>

The previous table shows that the main reasons for not allowing the independent media to cover the war is not following the authorities, by (29.2%). The news coverage is exclusive to the authorities has got a rate of (27.1%). (25%) is for “the media is free and will disseminate the truth from the battlefield”. Even the authorities have closed most of the independent media outlets, except a few, while their affiliated outlets control the majority of the media landscape.

## Sources of information for independent media:

**Table No. (10) shows the extent to which information sources respond to the independent media**

Media sources response	Repetition	Rate
No response	7	38.90%
Somewhat response	11	61.10%
Strong response	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

It is clear from the previous table that the sources of information responding somewhat to the independent media was (61.1%), compared to (38.9%) for no response at all. Although it is a lower percentage than somewhat response, but it is a high percentage

**- Professional pressures on independent media:**

**Table No. (11) shows the internal professional pressures on the independent media during the war period**

The role of independent media	Position			Favourite rankings		
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total rankings in points	Rate	Final rankings in points <sup>10</sup>
Journalists are obliged to adhere to the biased policy of their institution	14	4	-	50	21.20%	1
Journalists are trying to please their managers for the fear of dismissal	13	3	1	46	19.50%	4
Journalists are under financial pressures because their efforts are not as their pay of	15	2	-	49	20.70%	2
Journalists are exposed to more psychological and nervous pressure than others	14	2	1	47	19.90%	3
Journalists are subjected to time pressures of broadcasting or publication	11	5	1	44	18.70%	5
<b>Total</b>				<b>236</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	

The previous table shows that the strongest internal professional pressures that the independent media are subjected to during the war period in Yemen is adhering to the biased policy of their institution, by a rate of

10 - The ranking is calculated by multiplying the repetition of agree x 3, Neutral x 2, and disagree x 1

(50%). Then, the journalists are under financial pressures because their efforts are not as their pay of, by a rate of (49%). Exposing journalists to psychological and nervous pressure more than others has got a rate of (46%). And the journalists pleasing their managers for fear of dismissal has got (46%).

**- External pressures for independent media:**

**Table No. (12) shows the external professional pressures on the independent media during the war period**

Job pressures	Position			Favourite rankings		
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total rankings in points	Rate	Final rankings in points <sup>11</sup>
Some journalists are subjected to imprisonment, threats or beatings by the security authorities when they discuss the topics of the war in Yemen	18	-	-	54	18.30%	2
Reporters in independent media are prevented from covering war topics in the battlefield	15	2	-	49	16.60%	3
Some independent media are closed down for covering the defeat in the fronts	13	4	-	47	15.90%	4
Competing other media is more increasing pressure on independent media	7	6	3	36	19.20%	1
Political pressure by the authorities or political parties	1	1	-	5	1.70%	8
Social pressures	5	8	2	33	11.20%	7
Economic pressures by advertisers	8	5	3	37	12.30%	5
Religious pressures by clerics and different sects	7	4	5	34	11.50%	6
<b>Total</b>				<b>295</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	

11 - (\*) The weighting is calculated by multiplying the frequencies of Agree x 3, Neutral x 2 and Disagree x 1.

It is clear from the previous table that the most severe external professional pressures faced by journalists during the war in Yemen are imprisonment, threats or beatings by the security authorities when covering the war issues in Yemen, by (54%), and it is one of the most external professional pressures that Independent media are exposed to, especially the media opposing the authority. Preventing the independent media's reporters from covering war topics on the battlefield comes in second place, by (49%), and this because that the war news coverage is exclusive to the authorities as shown in the table (9).

Closing some independent media outlets covering the defeat on the fronts ranked third, by (47%). This is due to the fact that the authorities do not create independent media opposing its point of view during the war, so it closed many independent media outlets. The economic and advertisers' pressures on independent media has got a rate of 37%, because advertisers sometimes require from the media to stay away from covering issues of their companies, unless they will not advertise in the media outlet. Then, The pressure coming from competing other media has got a rate of (36%), because the issue of competition needs capabilities in order to cover larger areas and possess newer technologies, not to mention the pressures of distinguished content, time and so on.

At the bottom of the list, the "religious pressures by clerics and different sects" came and has got a rate of (34%), where isn't not allowed to constructively criticize the wrong practices of some clerics or some issues that "offend" the Islamic religion.

### - The blocking of press materials in the independent media:

**Table No. (13) shows how much some press war materials are blocked in the independent media**

Media materials blocking	Repetition	Rate
Yes	7	38.90%
Sometimes	8	44.40%
No	3	16.70%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

The previous table shows that the independent media (sometimes) blocks some press war materials by a rate of (44%), which is a large rate showing the reality of the independent media and the impact of the war in Yemen on its professional performance. By adding the (38.9%) rate of those who confirmed the blocking, (said Yes & Sometimes), a large rate of independent media outlets are practicing the blocking, compared to a small rate of (16.7%), who don't do blocking. This is a small rate compared to the media blocking press war materials related in Yemen.

### - The type of blocked materials

**Table No. (14) shows the type of press materials blocked by the independent media from the point of view of the journalists**

Types of press materials	Repetition	Rate
Political news	11	22.00%
Religious news	7	14.00%
Economic news	2	4.00%
Social news	2	4.00%
Security and military news	16	32.00%
War news in the fronts	12	24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

The previous table shows that military and security news are the most press materials blocked by the independent media, by 32%. This is due to the fact that these materials are considered harming the national security of the country from the point of view of the authorities, especially during the war. The war news in the fronts rank second with a rate of (24%), and this is another evidence of the pressures on the independent media by the authorities.

Political news ranked third in terms of being blocked by independent media with a rate of (22%), because the war news dominating the scene. Also, it is clear from the mentioned rate that political movement is limited and the pressures on independent media are huge when publishing political news, especially during the war in Yemen.

Religious news ranked fourth by a rate of 14%, because religious discourse is largely present in the arena in order to mobilize and support the authorities, and the independent media cannot contradict or criticize this discourse that the authorities call for.



**- Reasons for blocking press materials:**

**Table No. (15) explains the reasons for blocking the press materials during the war from the journalists' point of view,**

Reasons of blocking press materials	Repetition	Rate
Because it is disclosing some military and security secrets	11	12.60%
Because it talks about the other party objectively	8	9.20%
Because it criticizes the continuation of the war and calls for peace	10	11.50%
Because it is against the existing power policy	13	14.90%
Because it links to the deviations or corruption of a government official	12	13.80%
Because its publications may cause problems or security disorder from the power's viewpoint	10	11.50%
Because it contradicts the editorial policy of the newspaper	2	2.30%
Because it conflicts with the society's values and traditions	4	4.60%
Because it conflicts with the interests of an armed faction	10	11.50%
Because it criticizes the practice of religion in a wrong way	7	8.10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>100%</b>

The results in the previous table shows that the most important reasons for blocking press materials during the war period from the point of view of the journalists is that it is against the policy of the existing authorities at a rate of (14.9%). The reason of being linked to the deviations or

corruption of a government official ranked in the second place, by a rate of (13.8%), because that during the war period, the media was not allowed to address the deviations and corruption of officials under the pretext of existing aggression against Houthi.

Because of disclosing some military and security secrets ranked third by a rate of (12.6%), knowing that this is prohibited according to the press law, which emphasizes the non-disclosure of security and military secrets. Because of criticizing war continuation and calling for war, and because of conflicting with interest of an armed fraction, each of them has got a rate of (11.5%), because it will be accused of being with the aggression, as it happens in the Houthi-controlled areas , as well as in the areas of control of other parties in various regions of Yemen. Therefore the independent media is blocking such press materials for the fear of collaboration charge.

At the bottom of the list, talking about the other party objectively ranked by a rate of (9.2%), also criticizing the practices of religion in a wrong way by a rate of (8.1%). From the above-mentioned, it is clear the extent of the professional and political pressures that the independent media are exposed to because of the war in Yemen.

### - How do the authorities treat the independent media:

**Table No. (16) shows journalists being attacked or held accountable by the security authorities**

Options	Repetition	Rate
Yes	10	55.60%
No	8	44.40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The previous table shows that journalists in the independent media are attacked or held accountable by the security authorities by a rate of (55.6%) compared to a rate of (44.4%) for not being exposed to that, which is a large rate that indicates the level of activation of self-censorship among journalists for the fear of suppression in this war period.

### - Penalties faced by independent media:

**Table No. (17) shows the type of penalty that was taken against the independent media?**

Penalty type	Repetition	Rate
Warning	7	63.60%
Suspension	2	18.20%
Closure	2	18.20%
Permanent closure	-	-
Storming the media building & confiscating its properties	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The previous table shows that the warning is the most severe penalty for the independent media by the authorities, during the war period with a rate of (63.6%), because the independent media has already been committed to the

instructions of the authorities during the war period, and whoever violates this may expose himself or his media to more severe penalties.

The penalties of closure and suspension of the media outlet were equal in the rate, by (18.2%) for each. The permanent closure or the storming the building and the confiscating all the property inside it were not answered, because the closure, confiscation and intrusion of the independent media took place at the beginning of the war in Yemen.

**- The stop of independent media:**

**Table No. (18) shows the reasons for stopping some independent media outlets in Yemen**

Reasons for stopping some independent media	Repetition	Rate
Because of financial inabilities	18	33.90%
Failure to implement the agendas of the authorities during the war period	12	22.60%
Because it is individual media, and not corporate media	8	15.10%
Because of the owner's decision	-	-
A dispute between the owners	3	5.80%
Absence of media freedoms and restrictions on independent media	12	22.60%
Because the owner has died and his heirs can't renew the permit in their name	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The previous table shows the financial inability was one of the most important reasons for stopping some independent media in Yemen, by a rate of (33.9%), because that many independent media are not institutional. The second place occupied by the two phrases; failure to implement the

agendas of the authorities during the war period, as well as the absence of media freedom and the restriction on independent media, a rate of (22.6%) for each. Because of being individual media, and not corporate media ranked fourth by a rate of (15.1%), which is what most independent media suffer from in Yemen. At the bottom of the list came a dispute between the owners of these media.

**- Motivations of journalists to work in independent media:**

**Table No. (19) explains why journalists prefer to work in independent media**

Reasons for working in independent media	Repetition	Rate
To defend people's issues and interests	14	22.20%
Because it is respected by people	4	6.30%
Because it agrees with my inclinations	10	15.90%
Because he doesn't have a job opportunity	6	9.50%
Because it has an area of freedom more than other media	9	14.30%
To become a famous	1	1.60%
Because it expresses and defends the interests of the people	9	14.30%
Because its pay of is more than government and party media	2	3.20%
Because it adheres to neutrality in the media coverage process	8	12.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The previous table shows that journalists prefer to work in the independent media in order to defend people's issues and interests, which came in the first place by (22.2%), followed by that because it agrees with the inclinations of the journalists by a rate of (15.9%). Because the independent media statement has an area of freedom more than other

media and that it expresses and defends the interests of the people ranked third by a rate of (14.3%) for each. The absence of a job opportunity ranked fourth by a rate of (9.5). Adhering to neutrality in the coverage process ranked fifth by (6.3%), and because it pays more than the party and government media ranked sixth by a rate of (3.2%), while the reason of becoming famous has got a rate of (1.6%).

## The third axis: the policies that must be followed for the development of independent media

**Table No. (20) shows the order of priorities that lead to the development of independent media from the point of view of journalists**

Priorities of independent media development	Repetition	Rate	Ranking
Keep pace with modern media technologies	7	15.90%	2
Professionalize its performance	9	20.50%	1
It is based on an institutional basis	7	15.90%	2
Make its content better	5	11.40%	3
Adopts an independent and free media	4	9.10%	4
Meet the needs of the people	3	6.80%	5
Qualified editors	3	6.80%	5
Providing modern technologies needed to develop work	4	9.10%	4
Attracting top writers	2	4.50%	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	

The results of the previous table in this axis indicated that the most important priority developing the independent media from the point of view of journalists is mainly professionalizing its performance, by a rate of (20.5%), followed by keeping pace with modern media technologies in the field of media, and building it on an institutional basis in the second place. by (15.9%) for each. The third priority the media's content better, by 11.4%). The adoption of independent and free media ranked fourth by a rate of (9.1%). Meeting the needs of the people and the qualified editors ranked fifth by a rate of ( 6.8%) for each.

**- Policies that must be followed to be an independent media**

**Table No. (21) shows the order of policies that the media outlet should follow to be independent media from the journalists' point of view**

<b>Policies followed by media outlets</b>	<b>Repetition</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Rankings</b>
Reliance on self-financing	10	14.10%	2
Independence from subordination to any political party	12	16.90%	1
Adopting an independent media away from political and ideological influences	10	14.10%	2
Not relying on others in the financing process	3	4.20%	7
Rely on advertisements as a primary financial source of support only	4	5.60%	6
Finding institutional media that meets all the needs of independent media	6	8.50%	5
Unification with businessmen	3	4.20%	7
Finding investments to support independent media	7	9.80%	4
Unification with other independent media	2	2.8%	8
Improving professional work to gain as much audience as possible	6	8.50%	5
Defining editorial policies aimed at serving the audience	8	11.3%	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	

The previous table shows that independence from subordination to any political party is the first policy that must be followed by the media outlet to , by a rate of 16.9%), This policy will give the independent media a wider area of media freedoms. The two policies ranked second are the reliance on self-financing and the adoption of independent media away from political and ideological influences, by a rate of 14.1%) for each. These will make the independent media more objective in addressing various issues. The finding of investments to support the independent media ranked third by a rate of (9.8%), because it is important to find the capital promoting the professional performance of the independent media away from the influence of advertisers or businessmen. Last, creating institutional media meeting the needs of the independent media, and the improvement of professional work to gain the largest amount of audience, ranked last by a rate of (8.5%) for each.



**Table No. (22) shows the characteristics of the study sample**

Respondents			Education level				Job type											
Gender	R	%	School		BA & +		Owner		Editor-in-chief		Managing Editor		Editorial Secretary		News manager		Editor or Presenter	
	Males	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	R	%	
Females	6	33.3	-	-	18	-	1	5.6	8	44.4	2	11.1	2	11.1	1	5.6	4	22.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

The previous table shows the characteristics of the respondents, as (18) people answered the questionnaire, including (12) by a rate of (66.7%), and (6) females by a rate of (33.3%). The results also indicate that the education level of the respondents are holding a Bachelor's Degree or above by (100%), which is an optimistic indicator that journalists working in the independent media have university qualifications and above. The job type as shown in the table, we note that among those who responded to us were one owner by (5.6%), eight editors-in-chief of news websites by (44.4%), the two managing editors and two editorial secretaries by (11.1%) for each, one news director by (5.6%), and four editors or presenters by (22.2%).

## Study suggestions and recommendations:

1. Stopping all kinds of suppression against the freedom of the independent media and enable it to cover the events in Yemen, which is a fundamental right of the media and society.
2. Stopping all forms of prevention, warning, and threats against the independent media in Yemen over its professional media coverage for events and transmitting information to the community.
3. Reconsidering the legislation regulating media work so to be based on the principle of the right to freedom of expression and access to information as basic human rights, allowing to establish independent media institutions without restrictions or hindrance conditions.
4. Providing official and civil support for the independent media to carry out its role in covering events in an independent professional manner.
5. Strengthening the administrative and financial institutional building to ensure the continuity of independent media and access to successful models capable of withstanding and facing various challenges.
6. Building the capacities of media cadres working in the independent media in order to keep pace with the rapid professional and technical media developments at the national and international levels.
7. Developing new models of independent media institutions based on the principle of collective ownership of journalists working in them according to financial and administrative institutional systems that preserve the

- rights of journalists and contribute to the development and growth of these institutions.
8. Establishing a minimum pay of for journalists working in independent media institutions and finding clear mechanisms for calculating production allowance of freelance journalists working on a piecework basis.
  9. Working on devising new means to attract societal support for independent media so that the audience contributes to sustain the media and prompting its role in community service.
  10. Avoiding the polarization process taking place in the independent media in favor of one of the parties to the conflict, and working on an independent editorial line based on respect for the journalism values , the defense of rights and freedoms and the main issues of society.
  11. Creating a code of conduct by the Syndicate of Journalists to which all journalists are bound.
  12. Helping media to keep pace with modern media technologies.
  13. Activating the principle of transparency so that the media can derive information from its various sources.
  14. Implementing the Right to Information Law and holding accountable those who refrain from disclosing information and practice deliberate blocking from the audience.
  15. Finding clear and transparent criteria for describing those belonging to the profession of journalism so that the profession is purified from intruders or those who practice behaviors that contradict the values and principles of media work based on responsibility and audience service.

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