

Guyana Elections Commission
Media Monitoring Unit (MMU)
Monitoring Report: 1st April 2009 – 30th June 2009

Introduction:

This media Report is the second to be produced by the Media Monitoring Unit (MMU), of the Guyana Elections Commission, for this year (2009). It is a document which objectively attempts to highlight the Unit's observations, analyses, conclusions, and recommendations in relation to local media performance for the period 1st April, 2009 – 30th June, 2009.

In similar vein to our initial Report for the first reporting period (1st January, 2009 – 31st March, 2009), the format remains basically the same, with separate categories for the Government, and the five (5) Parliamentary Political Parties. Moreover, the Unit's observations of the flows of information emanating from each TV channel, newspaper, and the country's lone radio station, and their likely influence on the public's perception of the Government, and the Parliamentary Political Parties, are condensed and reflected in the figures displayed in the matrices and pie-charts constructed for each media entity. The sections (or reporting categories) from which the information was sourced are conveniently listed in the left-most cells of each matrix for easy reference. Further, the pie-charts displayed for each TV channel, radio station, and newspaper, are drawn to scale to show the break-down of the figures from each matrix category in their respective percentages.

In some sections of this Report, selective comparisons are made of media performances between the first quarter of the year and this reporting period, to spotlight similarities, trends, improvements and /or regressions that have occurred between the two (2) reporting periods; information that is statistically and evidentially instructive to the deliberate processes that inform the Unit's analyses of media behavior for each reporting period.

The local media's coverage of the Government and the five (5) Parliamentary Political Parties, outside of an election period, measured by the Unit in minutes (TV and Radio), and column inches (Newspaper), during the above-stated period was taken from:

Television

GEN Ch 2
CNS Ch 6
WRHM Ch 7
HBTv Ch 9
NCN Ch 11
VCT Ch 28
MTV Ch 65

Radio

Voice Of Guyana (VOG)

Newspaper

Stabroek News

Kaieteur News

Guyana Chronicle

Guyana Times

The media's reportage on the activities of the following Parliamentary Political Parties have been examined and analyzed in detail in this Report: **PPP/C, PNCR-1G, AFC, GAP/ROAR and TUF.**

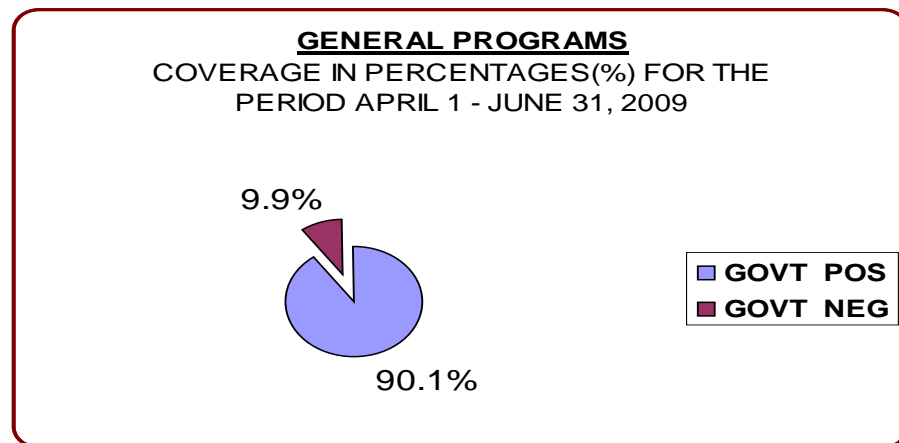
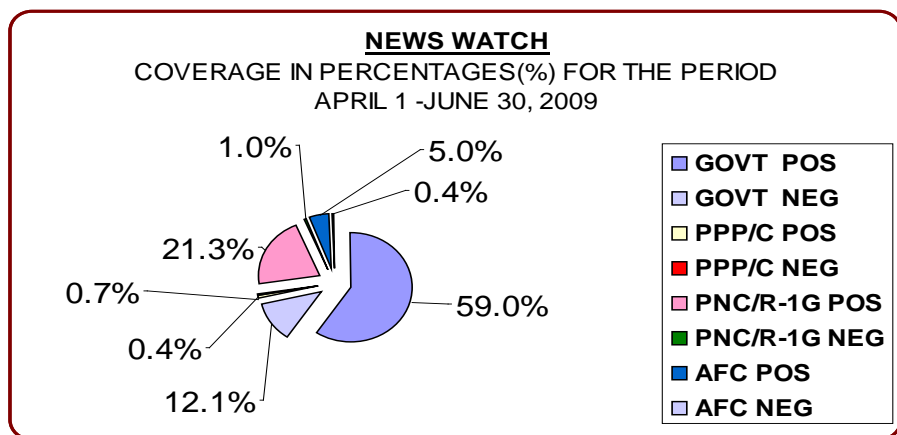
The Unit continues to gauge local media performance by their compliance or non-compliance with the spirit and intent of the **2006 Media Code of Conduct (MCC)**, and their general adherence to the renowned best practices of professional journalism.

TELEVISION

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE COVERAGE FOR THE PERIOD APRIL, 1-JUNE 30, 2009

GEN CH 02

CATEGORY	GOVT (in minutes)		POLITICAL PARTIES (in minutes)									
			PPP/C		PNCR-1G		AFC		GAP/ROAR		TUF	
	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG
NEWS WATCH	611.6	-125.2	7.7	-4.1	220.6	-9.9	52.3	-4.5	0	0	0	0
TALK SHOWS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
GENERAL PROGRAMS	64.5	-7.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



Observations/Analysis

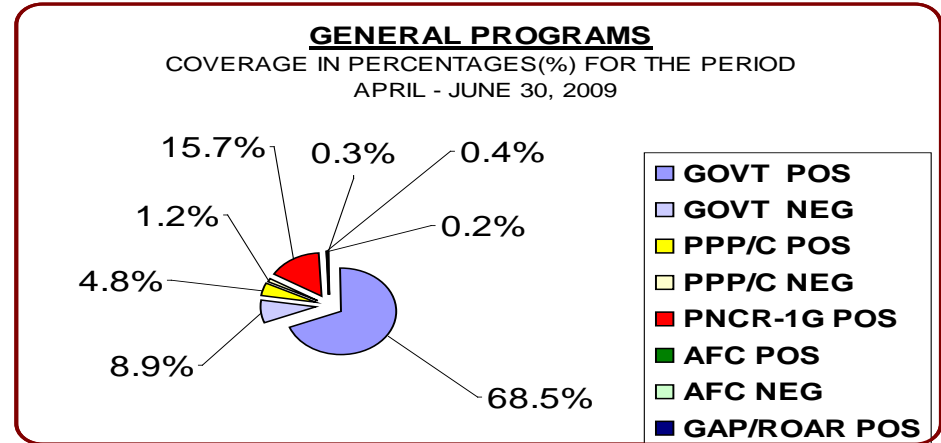
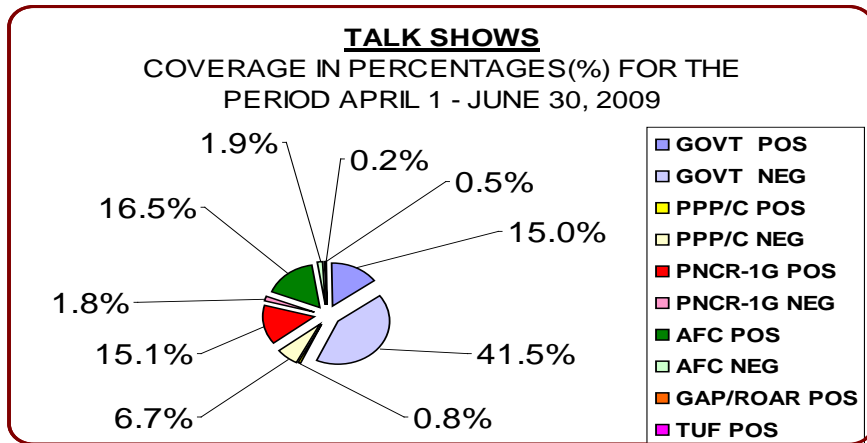
For the above-stated period in review, the **News Watch** newscast provided coverage for the Government and the Parliamentary Political Parties as follows: the Government was portrayed significantly more favorable than unfavorable, receiving almost **5** times more positive than negative publicity. The spread of coverage amongst the political parties, revealed that the PNCR-1G was highlighted most approvingly by the newsteam over the past quarter, followed in

order by AFC and PPP/C. All three (3) political parties that attracted measurable coverage from the newsteam received net positive publicity, however, the PNCR-1G received more than **treble** the amount of positive coverage allocated to the AFC and PPP/C combined. Relatedly, the PNCR-1G was the most negatively portrayed political party on the newscast, and was trailed not too distantly by the AFC and PPP/C, in that order. The figures churned out by the newscast conveyed that the Government was dealt a fairly good hand by the newsteam in the news disseminated over the past quarter to the general public. Likewise, the opposition political parties - PNCR-1G and AFC – were also afforded generous publicity of their programs and activities for the same period. Clearly, there is irrefutable evidence indicating that for this reporting period, the newsteam managed to produce a thoroughly professional newscast, which was commendably underpinned by the tenets of equity, balance and fairness.

The Channel did not show any local **Talk-Shows** over the course of this reporting period; and from the sparse local programming delivered through the **General News** category (which were for the most part GINA produced), the Government hogged a disproportionate amount of positive publicity, which in the circumstance, was not unexpected.

CNS CH 06

CATEGORY	POLITICAL PARTIES (in minutes)											
	GOVT (in minutes)		PPP/C		PNCR-1G		AFC		GAP/ROAR		TUF	
	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG
TALK SHOWS	66.3	-183.5	3.6	-29.7	66.7	-8.1	72.8	-8.4	2	0	1	-0.2
GENERAL PROGRAMS	469.7	-61.1	33.2	-8.3	107.4	-0.5	2.9	-1.4	2.1	0	0	-0.2



Observations/Analysis

For the current reporting period, no newscast was produced by, or broadcast from this Channel. However, the usual variety of local Talk-Shows and General Programs were aired.

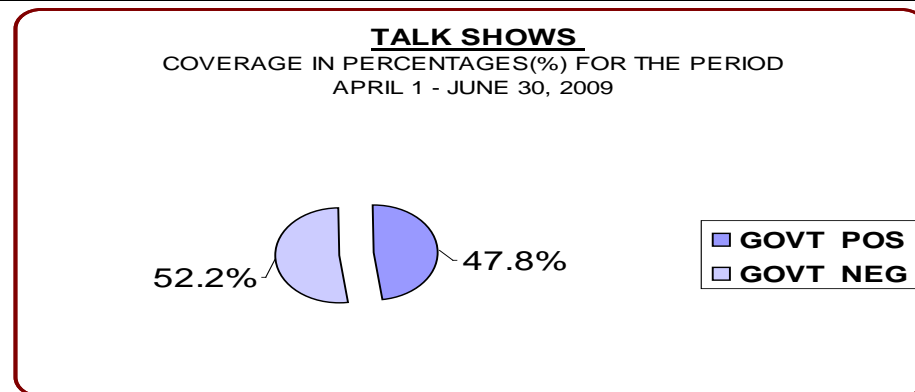
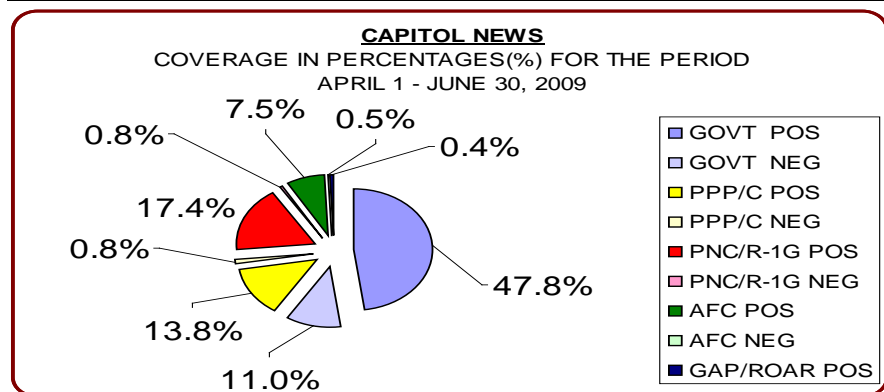
In the **Talk-Shows** category, the Government attracted almost **3** times more negative than positive coverage. And, amongst the Parliamentary Political Parties, the AFC outdistanced the field with the highest amount of positive coverage, closely followed by the PNCR-1G, then PPP/C, GAP/ROAR, and TUF, in that order. The PPP/C accrued the largest amount of negative coverage, followed by the AFC, PNCR-1G, and TUF. The AFC's ratio of positive to negative coverage was over **8:1**, and the PNCR-1G's was approximately the same (**8:1**). Coincidentally, the PPP/C's negative to positive coverage was the same proportionality (i.e. **8:1**), while GAP/ROAR and TUF received measurable, but minute single-digit quantities of positive coverage. The figures condensed from the Channel's Talk-Shows effortlessly directed one's attention to the dissimilarities in coverage between the Government and the ruling party (PPP/C) on one hand, and the Parliamentary Opposition Parties – specifically the PNCR-1G and AFC – on the other. The figures displayed for the Government and the PPP/C, and the PNCR-1G and AFC, were uncannily similar to those produced during the first quarter of the year. Further, they (the

figures) served to reinforce the logical induction made then by the Unit, which is, the Government and the ruling party are the whipping-boys of the caustic political rhetoric articulated through the programs produced for this category of the station's programming by vested parliamentary and extra-parliamentary opposition political interests. Moreso, the programs being alluded to are: **Facing the Nation** - PNCR-1G, **AFC on the Move** – AFC, and **Voice of the People** – JFA.

In the **General Programs** category, the Government was publicized far more positively than negatively, achieving in the process, a positive to negative ratio of over **7:1**. All the political parties, with the exception of TUF, individually accrued more positive than negative coverage. However, the PNCR-1G captured the bulk of positive coverage allotted, trailed in second position by the PPP/C, followed by the AFC and GAP/ROAR in that order. Contrastingly, the PPP/C obtained the largest portion of negative coverage, followed in sequential order by the AFC, and PNCR-1G. The PNCR-1G accumulated almost **3** times more positive coverage than the PPP/C, AFC, and GAP/ROAR combined. And, the PPP/C's positive to negative coverage was approximately **4:1**; the AFC and GAP/ROAR **2:1**, respectively; and PNCR-1G, a whopping **215:1**. The distribution of coverage in this category though highly skewed in favor of the PNCR-1G, was nevertheless far more acceptable, compared to the spread from the Talk-Shows category, since the Government and all the major Parliamentary Political Parties were given satisfactory levels of 'good' publicity, of varying extents, similar to the distribution of coverage afforded these same entities during the first quarter of the year.

WRHM CH 07

CATEGORY	POLITICAL PARTIES (in minutes)											
	GOVT (in minutes)		PPP/C		PNCR-1G		AFC		GAP/ROAR		TUF	
	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG
CAPITOL NEWS	180.2	-41.3	52.2	-3	65.7	-3	28.2	-1.8	1.6	0	0	0
TALK SHOWS	1.1	-1.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
GENERAL PROGRAMS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



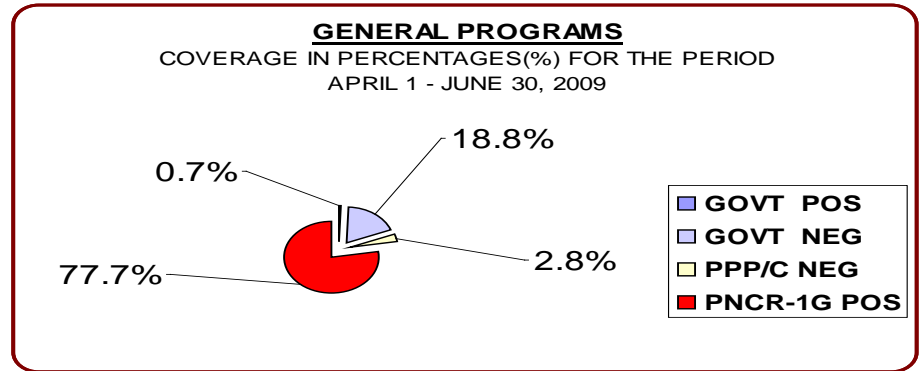
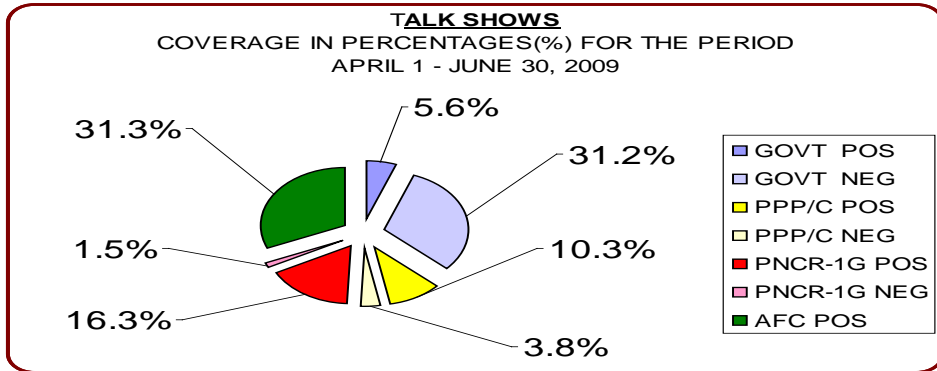
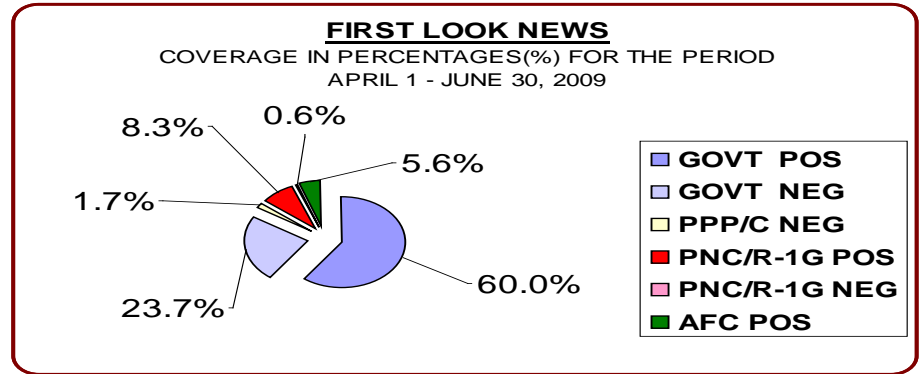
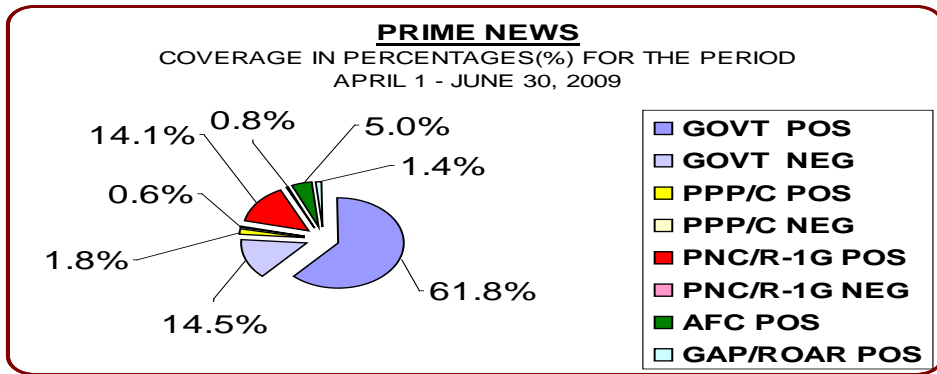
Observations/Analysis

For the period in review, the newsteam of **Capitol News** dispensed coverage to the Government and the Parliamentary Political Parties as follows: the Government was given quantitatively more positive than negative coverage, disbursed in a ratio of approximately **4:1**. The PNCR-1G garnered the largest quantum of positive coverage, followed in order by the PPP/C, AFC, and GAP/ROAR. The PNCR-1G and PPP/C jointly occupied the top position for negative coverage, with AFC positioned in the rear. The PNCR-1G's positive to negative ratio of coverage was just around **22:1**; the PPP/C **17:1**; and the AFC over **15:1**. GAP/ROAR did not attract any negative publicity from the newscast. In essence, the scenario presented, was that the Government and all the Parliamentary Political Parties were credited by the newsteam with varying, but acceptable levels of net positive publicity. In addition, the figures generated from the newscast for this reporting period, exemplified commendable balance and equity in news coverage and reporting, that bespoke a willingness on the part of the newsteam to keep the public informed and updated through news and information that was accurate and objective. Moreover, the newscast's performance for this quarter was by no means a fluke or an isolated phenomenon, since the same high levels of balance, equity and fairness were demonstrated by the newsteam during the first quarter of the year.

Only two (2) local programs – **Eye on the Issues and Time Out** – circulated within the **Talk-Shows** category of the Channel for this reporting period, and the figures culled from them was for the Government only, and did not require an analysis, because of the inconsequentiality of the statistics generated.

HBTV CH 09

CATEGORY	GOVT (in minutes)		POLITICAL PARTIES (in minutes)									
			PPP/C		PNCR-1G		AFC		GAP/ROAR		TUF	
	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG
PRIME NEWS	218.6	-51.3	6.5	-2.3	49.8	-3	17.7	-0.2	4.8	0	0	0
FIRST LOOK NEWS	103.2	-40.8	0.3	-3	14.3	-1	9.6	0	0.5	0	0	0
TALK SHOWS	25.7	-143.4	47.2	-17.6	75	-7	144.1	-0.2	0.3	0.8	0	0
GENERAL PROGRAMS	4.4	-115.5	0	-17	476.7	-0.2	0	0	0.3	0	0	0



Observations/Analysis

For the current reporting period, the newsteam of **Prime News** allotted coverage to the Government, and the Parliamentary Political Parties as follows: the Government's share of positive coverage was correspondingly larger than the negative coverage they were exposed to. In fact, the proportion of positive to

negative coverage the Government received was just around **4:1**. Amongst the political parties, the PNCR-1G topped the positive columns, followed in chronological order by the AFC, PPP/C, and GAP/ROAR. Likewise, the PNCR-1G was given the most negative publicity, closely trailed by the PPP/C and AFC, in that order. However, even though the PNCR-1G accumulated the most positive coverage from the newscast, overall, its (PNCR-1G) ratio of positive to negative coverage was a little over **16:1**, compared to the AFC's, at more than **88:1**. The PPP/C's positive to negative ratio was around **3:1**, while GAP/ROAR did not attract any negative coverage. The figures taken from the newscast manifested a commonality, in that, the Government and all the Parliamentary Political Parties that received coverage, also received net positive publicity. And, notwithstanding the fact that the PNCR-1G achieved the largest amount of positive coverage apportioned by the newsteam, the picture that emerged from the statistics provided indicated that the AFC commanded the best proportion of positive coverage amongst the political parties featured on the newscast, during the quarter. In general, the newsteam's coverage of the Government and the Parliamentary Political Parties for this current reporting period was from all indications fair, equitable, and beyond reprimand.

First Look News generated figures which conveyed that the Government was generously featured more positively than negatively on the newscast, achieving a more than **2:1** positive to negative ratio of coverage from the newsteam. The newsteam also covered the Parliamentary Political Parties in the following manner: the PNCR-1G was given the most positive publicity, closely followed by the AFC, GAP/ROAR, and PPP/C in that order. Only the PPP/C and PNCR-1G attracted negative coverage from the newscast, with PPP/C trumping the PNCR-1G for the pole position. The PNCR-1G ratio of positive to negative publicity from the newscast was approximately **14:1**, while the PPP/C negative to positive coverage was exactly **10:1**. The newsteam's coverage of news stories for this quarter was primarily focused on the public and parliamentary activities of the Government, the PNCR-1G and the AFC, and as such, the poor showing of the other Parliamentary Political Parties, specifically the PPP/C, is a direct consequence of the newsteam's imposed limitations in their selections, coverage and reportage of the news.

The Station's **Talk-Shows** elicited figures for the Government that were considerably more negative than positive. The Government's negative to positive publicity through this section of the channel's programming averaged over **5:1**. Contrastingly, the PPP/C, PNCR-1G, and AFC, individually amassed more positive than negative coverage, while, the small GAP/ROAR party accumulated slightly more negative than positive coverage. The AFC emerged as the title-holder for positive publicity, outdistancing the PNCR-1G, PPP/C, and GAP/ROAR, respectively. The AFC's positive to negative ratio of coverage was an impressive **720:1**; PNCR-1G, over **10:1**; and PPP/C more than **2:1**. The PPP/C absorbed the highest amount of negative coverage, followed in order by the PNCR-1G, GAP/ROAR, and AFC. The negative coverage ascribed to the PPP/C was more than **double** the combined total negative publicity received by PNCR-1G, AFC, and GAP/ROAR. The superfluous amount of negative coverage that the Government attracted, and the strong performance of the AFC and PNCR-1G, was attention-grabbing, since it replicated the performances of the three (3) entities within this section of the station's programming during the first quarter. As stated then, and still applicable now, is that the ongoing trend is being driven by the time-dominance of the PNCR-1G and AFC produced programs screened from this section of the Channel's output. However, the net positive publicity achieved by the PPP/C was revealing and understandably somewhat surprising, since the Party, over time, has been a casualty of the genre of programs disseminated from this category of the station's programming. Interestingly, all the positive publicity indexed to the PPP/C was sourced from the program **SPOTLIGHT**, which injected some needed balance into the predictable one-dimensional type programming that typified the station's Talk-Shows.

In the **General Programs** category, the Government suffered a deluge of negative publicity which caused the relatively moderate positive coverage it received to pale into insignificance. The Government's disproportionate negative to positive coverage in this section of the station's programming was a hefty **26:1**. Moreover, the coverage accorded the Parliamentary Political Parties, resulted in the PNCR-1G recording an incontestable amount of positive publicity, while the PPP/C grabbed the greater share of negative coverage on offer. The Government and the PPP/C's showing in this section, can be better understood

when cognizance is given to the fact that the output from this category revolved around one (1) program – **Nation Watch** – which is produced and disseminated by the PNCR-1G.

Comment

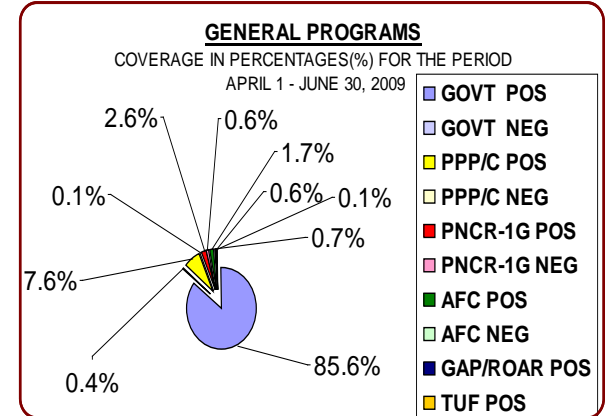
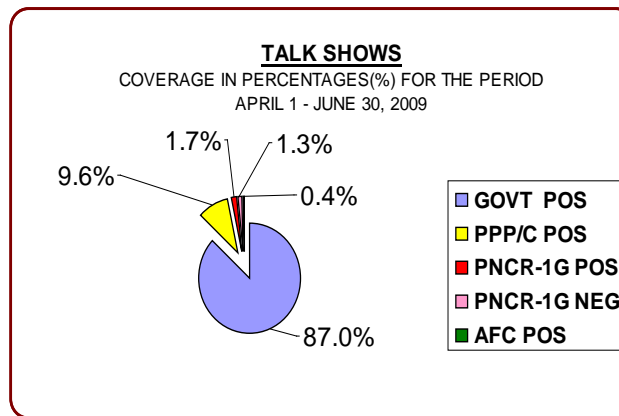
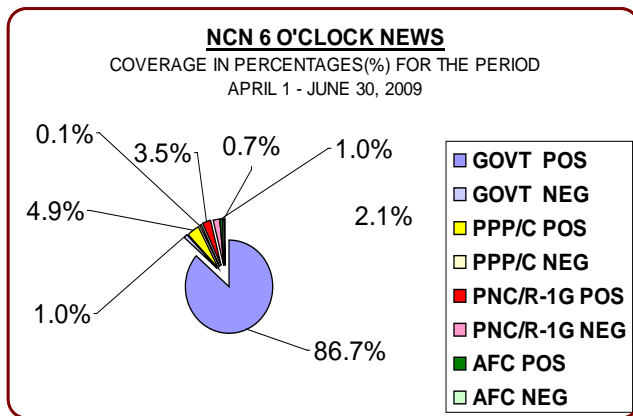
The Unit’s monitoring team identified and documented a pattern of news reporting originating from **First Look News** in which opinions rather than facts were propagated as News by the News-anchor, and reporters attached to the newscast. The Unit documented five (5) such instances for this reporting period, which is startling from the point of view that the opinions expressed are socially and politically divisive. A typical example of the behavior being referred to, follows:

First Look News- 1st June, 2009

Anchor: “Agriculture has been the focus now once again, especially at this time of the global economic crisis, but local farmers who play the key role in this industry **are constantly ill-treated and oppressed.**”

NCN CH 11

CATEGORY	GOVT (in minutes)		POLITICAL PARTIES (in minutes)									
			PPP/C		PNCR-1G		AFC		GAP/ROAR		TUF	
	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG
NCN 6 O'CLOCK NEWS	1099.8	-12.2	61.9	-1.4	45	-26.4	12.9	-8.4	0.6	0	0	0
TALK SHOWS	552.4	-0.5	60.9	-0.4	10.6	-8.5	2.8	0	0.5	0	0	0
GENERAL PROGRAMS	2316.1	-10.6	205.7	-2.8	69.9	-16	47.3	-18.1	17.2	0	3	-0.5



Observations/Analysis

For the current reporting period, the newsteam of **NCN 6 O'clock News** covered the Government and the Parliamentary Political Parties in the following manner: the Government obtained exceedingly more positive than negative coverage, securing a proportionality of coverage in the vicinity of **90:1**. The PPP/C gained the most positive coverage, followed in sequential order by the PNCR-1G, AFC, and GAP/ROAR. Only three (3) parties were covered with negative publicity, and the PNCR-1G collected the most, followed by the AFC and PPP/C. Altogether, the PPP/C's positive coverage was a little more than the combined positive coverage accrued by PNCR-1G, AFC, and GAP/ROAR; while the PNCR-1G's negative coverage was more than **double** the same coverage given to the AFC and PPP/C, combined. The figures generated by the newscast for this reporting period reflected net positive publicity for the Government, and all the political parties that were covered and reported on by the newsteam. However, the relatively high levels of negative coverage that conspicuously decorated the PNCR-1G and AFC columns, detracted signally from the positive publicity that the two (2) parties were given by the newsteam. Our (the Unit's) analysis of the newscast's contents over the past three (3) months suggested that the disproportionate amounts of negative publicity that the

PNCR-1G and AFC absorbed was rooted in the consistency in which the views of the two parties were not reported in the many news items that negatively profiled their public images. In essence, the positive coverage given to the two (2) parties was unrequitedly assailed by the concatenated pattern of imbalanced news reporting, observed and alluded to, for this reporting period.

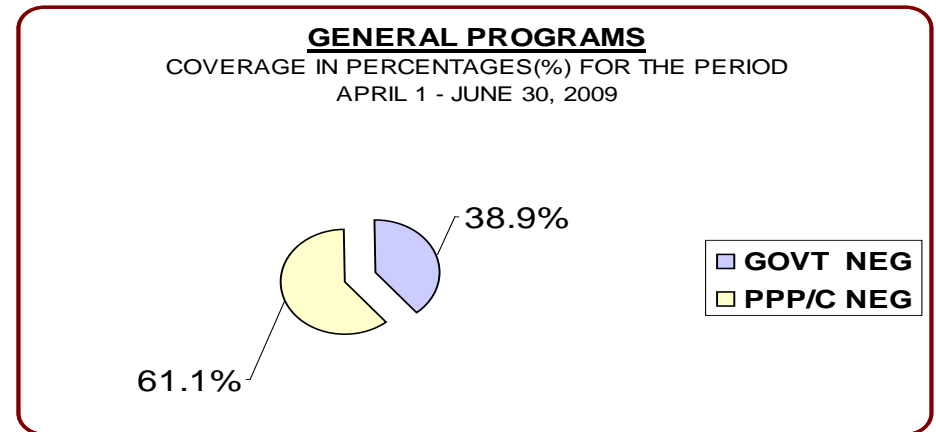
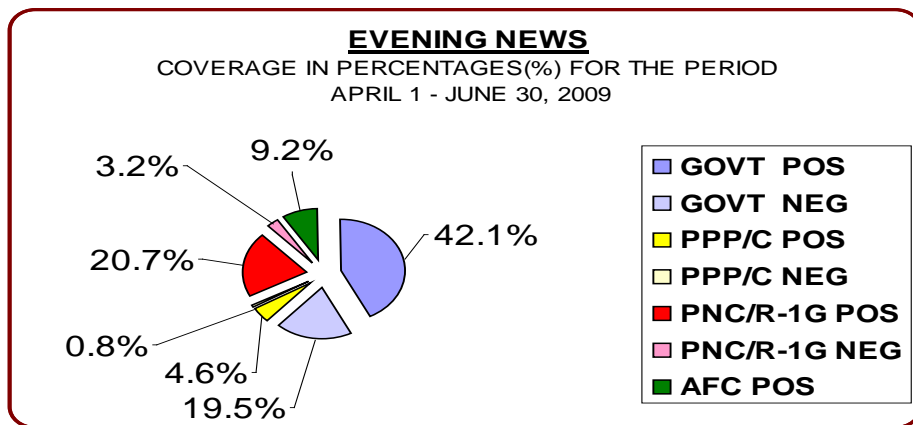
The figures taken from the Channel's **Talk-Shows** showed that the Government received virtually unrivaled positive coverage, while amongst the political parties, the PPP/C captured the highest amount of positive publicity, trailed by the PNCR-1G , AFC, and GAP/ROAR, in that order. Only two (2) parties received negative coverage, and the PNCR-1G controlled the most, followed by the PPP/C. The PPP/C's share of positive coverage was over **4** times the combined positive coverage given to the PNCR-1G, AFC, and GAP/ROAR, while, the PNCR-1G's negative coverage was more than **21** times the negative coverage given to the PPP/C.

The Station's **General Programs** posted figures which showed that the Government acquired a lop-sided amount of positive coverage compared to the negative publicity they attracted; the ratio of positive to negative coverage being over **218:1**. From the ranks of the Parliamentary Political Parties, the PPP/C led the way in accumulated positive coverage, followed in order by the PNCR-1G , AFC, GAAP/ROAR, and TUF. The AFC topped the negative columns, closely trailed by the PNCR-1G, PPP/C, and TUF, in that order.

The Government and the PPP/C's dominance of positive coverage within the Talk-Shows and General Programs categories was always predictable, since it is a trend underpinned and influenced by the surfeit of GINA programs that constitute the bulk of the programming schedules of the two (2) sections.

VCT CH 28

CATEGORY	GOVT (in minutes)		POLITICAL PARTIES (in minutes)									
			PPP/C		PNCR-1G		AFC		GAP/ROAR		TUF	
	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG
EVENING NEWS	144.2	-66.6	15.6	-2.8	71	-10.8	31.4	-0.4	0.2	0	0	0
TALK SHOWS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
GENERAL PROGRAMS	0.7	-13.3	0.7	-20.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



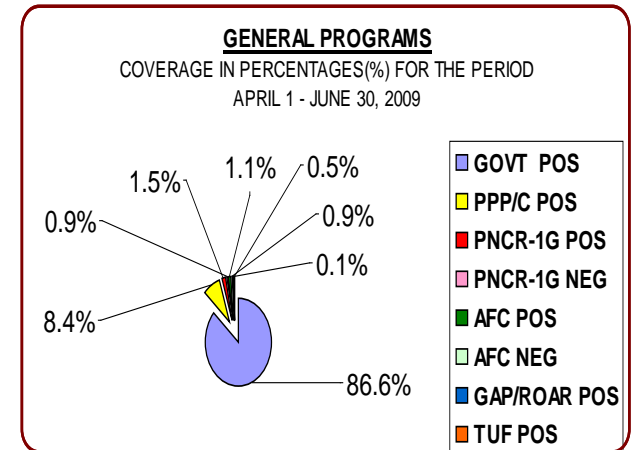
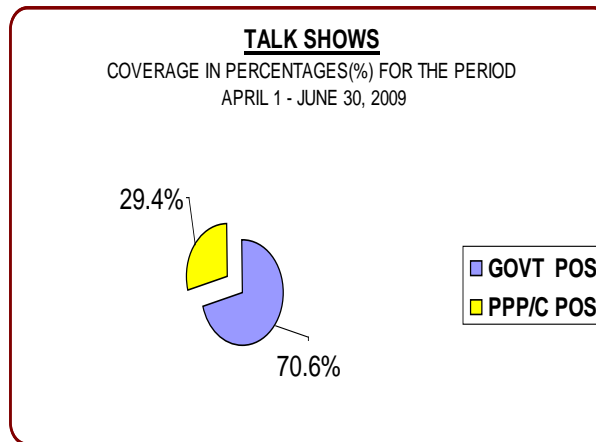
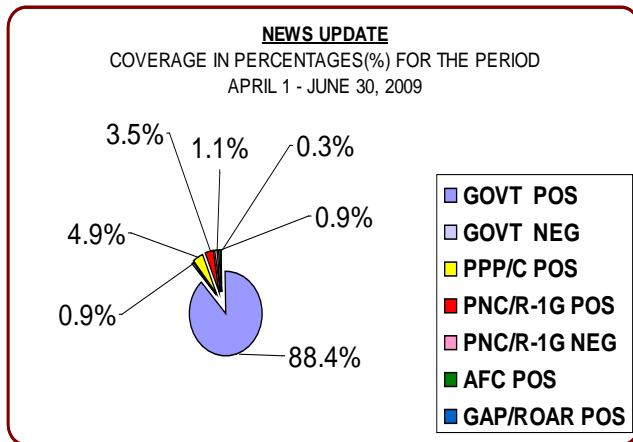
Observations/Analysis

The **Evening News** for this reporting period, produced figures of which the Government benefited from a comparatively more positive than negative exposure, in a ratio of approximately **2:1**. Amongst the political parties, the PNCR-1G copped the lion's share of positive coverage, followed by the AFC, PPP/C, and GAP/ROAR. The PNCR-1G also absorbed the greatest amount of negative coverage, with the PPP/C and AFC in second and last positions respectively. The PNCR-1G's positive to negative ratio of coverage from the newsteam was over **6:1**; the AFC over **78:1**; and the PPP/C over **5:1**. The displayed figures in the above matrix, suggests that even though the PNCR-1G was portrayed through the newscast more favorably than the other political parties, overall, the AFC was more positively covered, when the amount of negative coverage the PNCR-1G contracted is factored in. The Party's (PNCR-1G) comparatively large serving of negative coverage was over **3** times the combined negative coverage given the PPP/C and AFC, resulting in a net quantitative depletion of its overall positive projection through the newscast. This aside, both the Government and all the political parties covered, received net positive publicity for this reporting period, and this is despite the change in ownership and management of the Channel from around the latter half of May, 2009.

The timings taken from the Channel's **General Programs** showed that the Government was adorned with net negative coverage, while the PPP/C was the only party from amongst the political parties that attracted coverage which was significantly more negative than positive, with the disparity being almost **30:1**. The accumulation of negative publicity by the Government and ruling party is accounted for by the fact that only one (1) program – **Commentary** – was seen and heard in this section of the Station's programming; and this in itself explains why the Government and the PPP/C were coated with so much negativity.

MTV CH 65

CATEGORY	GOVT (in minutes)		POLITICAL PARTIES (in minutes)									
			PPP/C		PNCR-1G		AFC		GAP/ROAR		TUF	
	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG
NEWS UPDATE	1025.2	-10.2	57.3	-0.9	41.1	-12.6	9.9	0	3	0	0	0
TALK SHOWS	66.5	-0.1	27.7	-0.7	0	-0.2	0	0	0	0	0.1	0
GENERAL PROGRAMS	733.7	-0.4	71.2	-0.2	13	-7.6	9	-7.5	4.1	0	1	0



Observations/Analysis

For the period under review, **News Update** newscast provided coverage for the Government and the Parliamentary Political Parties in the following manner: the Government was granted considerable positive coverage which overwhelmed the negative coverage it received by over **100:1**. The spread of coverage amongst the Parliamentary Political Parties positioned the PPP/C to the top of the positive coverage list, followed chronologically by the PNCR-1G, AFC, and GAP/ROAR. The PNCR-1G and the PPP/C were the only two (2) parties covered negatively, with the PNCR-1G obtaining the greater share. The PPP/C's positive to negative coverage was over **63:1**, and the PNCR-1G's was a little more than **3:1**. On the negative side, the PNCR-1G acquired exactly **14** times more negative coverage than the PPP/C. The newsteam's coverage of the Government and the Parliamentary Political Parties was despoiled somewhat by the relatively high level of negative publicity appended to the PNCR-1G. However, to their credit, the newsteam managed to allot net positive coverage to the Government and all the Parliamentary Political Parties – that is, those that merited coverage. And notwithstanding the obvious partiality to the Government and ruling party (PPP/C), the observed imbalance, though professionally unacceptable, wasn't all that pronounced to justify overt criticism of the newsteam's performance for this reporting period.

The figures generated from the Channel's **Talk-Shows** for the current reporting period were shared almost completely between the Government and PPP/C. The positive timings came exclusively from two (2) sources: the PPP/C produced program, **Getting It Right**; and the ubiquitous GINA programs, which constituted the entirety of programming delivered to audiences over the course of this reporting period.

In similar fashion the statistics displayed in the **General Programs** category suggested that the information delivered to the public from this section of the channel's programming mainly benefited the Government and the PPP/C, since the Government received a huge amount of positive publicity, and barely measurable negative coverage. Moreover, the coverage the political parties accumulated was as follows: the PPP/C gained the most positive coverage and was distantly trailed by the PNCR-1G, AFC, GAP/ROAR, and TUF, in that order. The PNCR-1G absorbed the highest amount of negative coverage, closely followed by the AFC, with the PPP/C bringing up the rear. The PPP/C's accretion of positive coverage more than **doubled** the combined positive coverage accumulated by the PNCR-1G, AFC, and GAP/ROAR. The comparably high levels of negative coverage the PNCR-1G and AFC amassed statistically diminished the positive publicity the parties attracted, and in effect removed the semblance of equity and balance that characterized this section of the Channel's programming during the first quarter of the year.

Comment

The Unit's monitoring team identified and documented a pattern of news reporting originating from **News Update** in which opinions rather than facts were propagated as News by the News-anchor, and reporters attached to the newscast. The Unit documented three (3) such instances for this reporting period, which is unnerving from the point of view that the opinions expressed are socially divisive and politically contentious. A typical example of the behavior being referred to, follows:

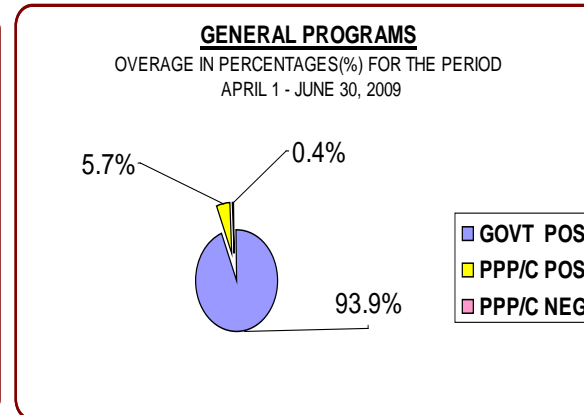
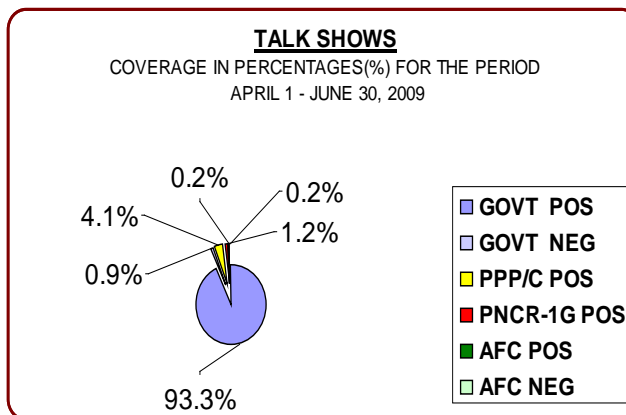
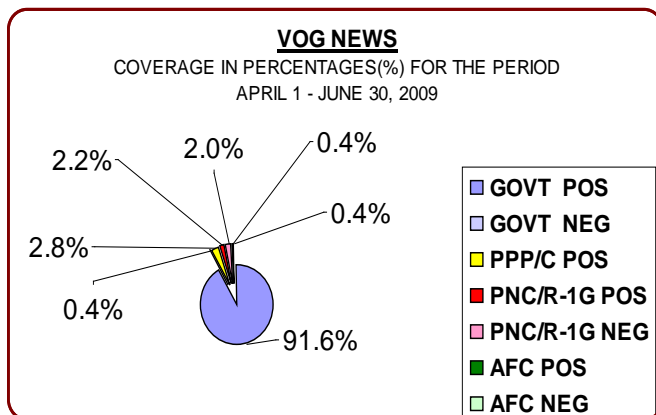
News Update- 14th May, 2009

Anchor: **"The PNCR today confirmed through its utterings that it is indeed a party that wants confrontation with the Government."**

RADIO POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE COVERAGE FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 1-JUNE 30, 2009

VOG

CATEGORY	GOVT (in column inches)		POLITICAL PARTIES (in column inches)									
			PPP/C		PNCR-1G		AFC		GAP/ROAR		TUF	
	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG
VOG NEWS	376.4	-1.7	11.7	0	9	-8.4	1.8	-1.7	0.1	0	0	0
TALK SHOWS	495.8	-4.9	21.6	0	7	-0.6	1.2	-1.2	0.1	0	0	0
GENERAL NEWS	241.7	-0.2	14.6	-1.1	0.6	-0.1	0	0	0	0	0.2	0



Observations/Analysis

For the period in review, the newsteam of **VOG News** apportioned coverage to the Government and the Parliamentary Political Parties as follows: the Government received appreciably more positive than negative coverage from the newscast, to the extent that the negative coverage it was given was relatively trivial. The parceling out of coverage amongst the political parties resulted in the PPP/C gaining the most positive coverage, followed sequentially by the PNCR-1G, AFC, and GAP/ROAR. The PNCR-1G and AFC were the only two (2) parties covered negatively, with the PNCR-1G obtaining the bigger dose, which was approximately 5 times the AFC's amount. However, the PPP/C's positive coverage was more than the combined positive coverage allotted to the PNCR-1G, AFC, and GAP/ROAR. Of note also, was that the negative coverage absorbed by the PNCR-1G and AFC, effectively diluted the positive coverage the two (2) parties attracted from the newscast; while the PPP/C was unscathed by the lack of any negative publicity.

From the **Talk-Shows** section, the Government accumulated superfluously more positive than negative coverage, obtaining a positive to negative ratio of coverage of around **101:1**. Amongst the political parties, the PPP/C topped the positive columns, followed by the PNCR-1G, AFC, and GAP/ROAR. Only the AFC and PNCR-1G received negative coverage, and the AFC's share was **double** the PNCR-1G's. The PPP/C's share of positive publicity more than **doubled** the combined positive coverage accrued by the PNCR-1G, AFC, and GAP/ROAR.

The **General News** category elicited figures which showed that the Government's share of positive coverage dwarfed the relatively infinitesimal amount of negative coverage that it recorded. Similarly, amongst the political parties, the PPP/C's share of positive coverage submerged the comparatively inconsequential amount of negative publicity it attracted; while the PNCR-1G and TUF barely received measurable amounts of coverage, which was paltry in both instances.

In general, for this reporting period, the figures displayed separately and collectively for VOG Radio's three (3) categories, evolved a trend of news and information reportage that was undeniably favorable to the Government and PPP/C; and which did not attempt to give leveling air-time to the other major political players within the country's body politic [read PNCR-1G and AFC]. This observed course of action which was unrestrainedly embarked upon and executed by the Station's management resulted in a noticeable lack of balance and equity in the programming that viewers were subjected to over the past three (3) months.

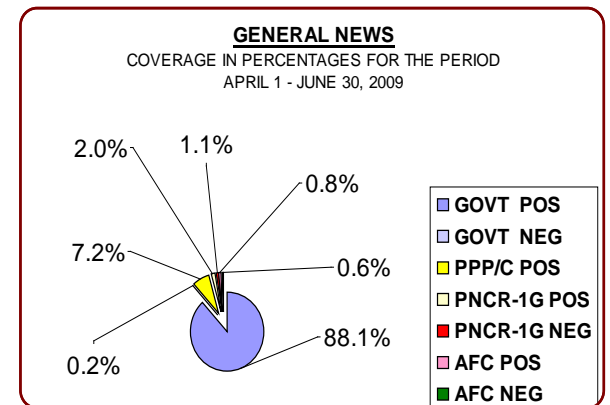
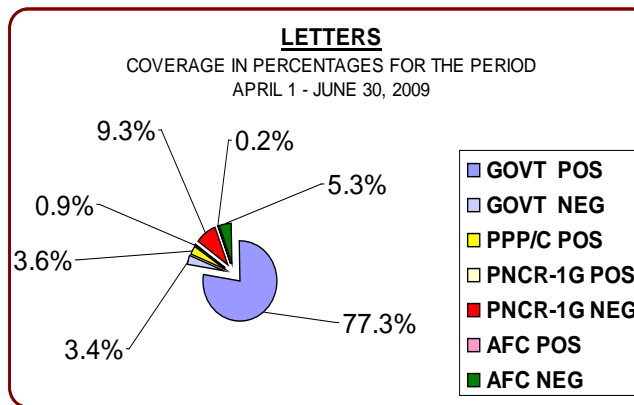
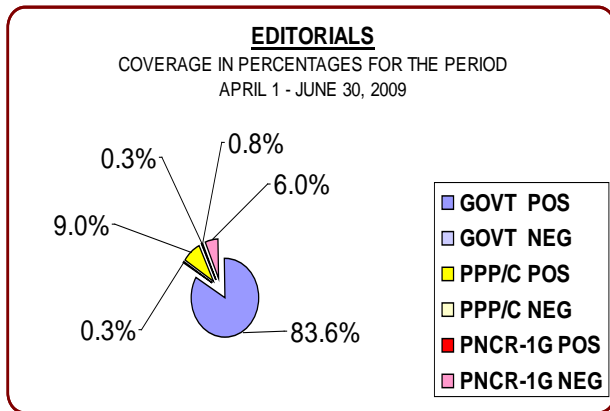
NEWSPAPERS

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE COVERAGE

FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 1-JUNE 30, 2009

GUYANA CHRONICLE

CATEGORY	GOVT (in column inches)		POLITICAL PARTIES (in column inches)									
	POS	NEG	PPP/C		PNCR-1G		AFC		GAP/ROAR		TUF	
			POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG
EDITORIALS	272.8	-1	29.3	-1	2.5	-19.6	0	0	0	0	0	0
LETTERS	614.9	-27.2	28.5	0	7.4	-73.6	1.6	-42	0.8	0	0	0
GENERAL NEWS	8259.7	-20.9	671.1	-12.4	188.7	-101.3	78.6	-56	5.6	0	2	0



Observations/Analysis

For the period under review, the **Editorials** of the **Guyana Chronicle (GC)**, elicited figures from which the Government gained a substantial amount of positive coverage, and a comparably microscopic quantum of negative coverage. At the same time publicity was only extended to two (2) of the Parliamentary Political Parties – PPP/C and PNCR-1G – with the editorial writers favoring the PPP/C with extensive positive publicity and pummeling the PNCR-1G with a considerably disproportionate amount of negative publicity. The PPP/C's positive coverage was just over **29** times the negative coverage the party recorded, while the PNCR-1G was laden with approximately **8** times more negative than positive publicity. The figures adduced from the Editorials for this reporting period suggests that this section of the newspaper was practically void of any anti-government and anti-PPP/C content; but communicated opinions to the general reading public that in the main were singularly critical of the PNCR-1G. Of note also, is that none of the other Parliamentary Political

Parties, specifically, AFC and GAP/ROAR attracted any tangible referencing from the editorial team, resulting in an almost complete Government/PPP-C monopolization of the political opinions disseminated through the forum over the past quarter.

The statistics generated from the **Letters** Column for this reporting period, indicated that the Government was written about more favorably than unfavorably, and this was duly reflected in a positive to negative ratio of coverage that was more than **22:1**. From the publicity gleaned by the political parties, the PPP/C was the recipient of generous positive coverage only, while the PNCR-1G and AFC consumed relatively substantial amounts of negative publicity, compared to the derisory quantities of positive coverage they individually attracted from the pens of contributors to the Letters Column. The PPP/C received the largest share of positive coverage, followed by the PNCR-1G, AFC and GAP/ROAR, in that order. The PNCR-1G obtained approximately **10** more negative than positive publicity; while the AFC's proportion was around **26:1**. What is most obvious from the lay of these figures is that the PNCR-1G and AFC bore the brunt of negative political comments penned by the Column's contributors, who were mainly drawn from a defined group easily identifiable by their "pen names."

In the **General News** category, the news and information that portrayed the Government in a positive light was obtrusive, while the negative publicity they were subjected to, was comparably minor, as reflected in a positive to negative ratio of around **395:1**. The PPP/C skimmed the largest quantity of positive coverage followed by the PNCR-1G, AFC, GAP/ROAR, and TUF, in that order. On the other hand, the PNCR-1G snipped the most negative coverage, followed in second and last positions by the AFC and PPP/C, respectively. Neither GAP/ROAR nor TUF accumulated negative coverage. The PPP/C's positive coverage was more than **double** the combined positive coverage of the other three (3) Parliamentary Political Parties - PNCR-1G, AFC, and GAP/ROAR, while the PNCR-1G's negative coverage was more than the combined negative coverage of the PPP/C and AFC. The dichotomy between the figures for the Government and the ruling party, on one hand, and the Parliamentary Opposition Parties on the other, indicated very pellucidly the observed imbalance that characterized the dissemination of news and information to the general public, from this section of the newspaper.

Comment

The GC published a letter in its Wednesday 20th May, 2009 edition, written by Neil Adams, and captioned, "**The PNC problem is fear of the electorate**" (pg. 7). In the letter, the writer arbitrarily denigrated a major segment of the country's population – Afro-Guyanese – through the public expression of personal sentiments which were illogically based on the misapplication of an odious historical antecedent to the extant Guyana situation. In the letter, the writer stated the following (at para.1):

“The PNC’s problem is not racism, because I expect to see blacks being marginalized and disenfranchised in their own country, the likes of which existed in the USA and South Africa.”

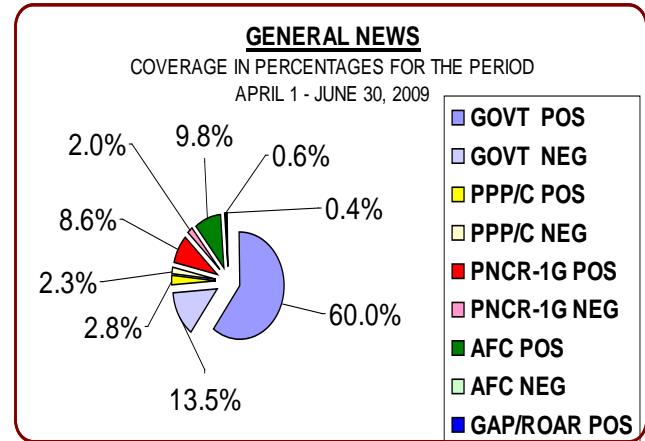
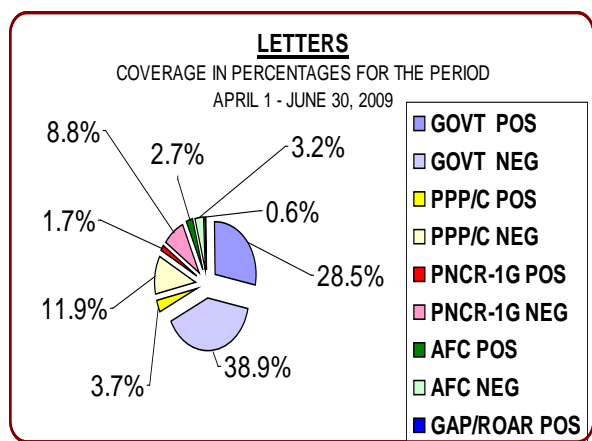
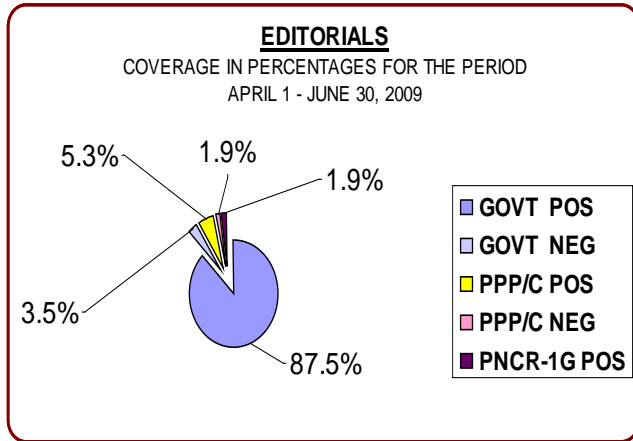
The Unit took a principled position that the writer's unsubstantiated inference that 'Blacks' in Guyana are marginalized and disenfranchised should have been editorially censored (deleted) for lack of veracity and negative racial profiling. This position was communicated to the Editor of the newspaper's Letters Column, who was also duly exhorted to be more discerning and conscientious of the potential polarizing effects that such statements hold for harmonious race-relations in the country.

N.B

The full text of the letter sent to Editor of the GC Letters Column is attached in the appendices.

KAIETEUR NEWS

CATEGORY	GOVT (in column inches)		POLITICAL PARTIES (in column inches)									
	POS	NEG	PPP/C		PNCR-1G		AFC		GAP/ROAR		TUF	
			POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG
EDITORIALS	70.5	-2.8	4.3	-1.5	1.5	-0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
LETTERS	358.9	-489.5	46.4	-149.6	22	-110.5	33.5	-40	7.9	0	0	0
GENERAL NEWS	4490.6	-1007.5	210.4	-173	642.4	-148.8	733.3	-48.6	26.5	0	0	0



Observations/Analysis

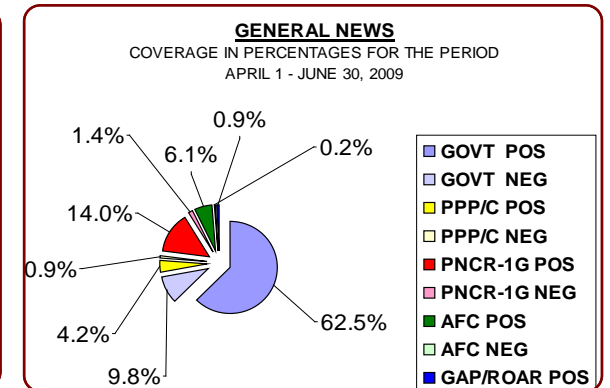
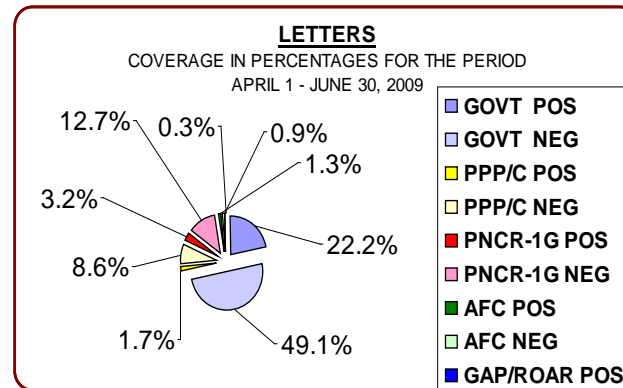
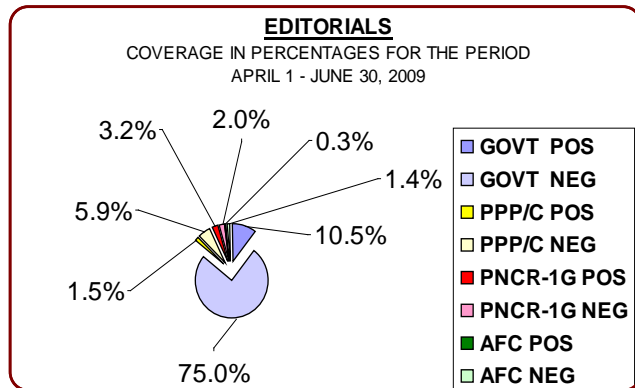
The Kaieteur News (KN) **Editorials** for the current reporting period provided the Government with tremendously more positive than negative publicity, mirrored by a positive to negative ratio of coverage of approximately **25:1**. Only two (2) of the Parliamentary Political Parties – PPP/C and PNCR-1G – were commented upon by the newspaper’s editorial writers, and their annotations resulted in the PPP/C receiving more positive and negative coverage than the PNCR-1G . The PPP/C’s positive coverage was nearly **3** times the same coverage given to the PNCR-1G; whilst its (PPP/C) negative coverage was exactly **5** times the PNCR-1G. In spite of the seeming disproportionate amounts of coverage delivered by the editorial team for the Government, and the two (2) political parties, in the final analysis, all three (3) entities, accumulated net positive coverage of varying levels, from the political and social opinions articulated through the forum (Editorials).

The contributors to the **Letters** section of the newspaper penned largely more negative than positive commentaries about the Government. Likewise, the PPP/C, PNCR-1G, and AFC also suffered the same fate as the Government, while GAP/ROAR received only positive publicity. The coverage that the PPP/C and PNCR-1G attracted stood out conspicuously because of the relatively wide disparities between the positive and negative publicity each acquired. The PNCR-1G's negative to positive coverage was exactly **5:1**, and the PPP/C's was a little over **3:1**. AFC on the other hand, pocketed slightly more negative than positive exposures. An analysis of the figures showed that with the exception of GAP/ROAR, all the other major political players mentioned in the contributions to the newspaper's Letters Column, received net negative publicity. This pattern suggested that citizens were afforded an objective forum through which their views on topical issues were communicated freely to their fellow citizens, subjected only to editorial oversight, which, by the way, did not harbor any "protected species."

From the **General News** category, the Government amassed noticeably more positive than negative coverage, which was encased in a proportion of over **4:1**. And amongst the political parties, the AFC carted away the top position for the largest amount of positive coverage, followed by the PNCR-1G, PPP/C and GAP/ROAR. The PPP/C gained the most negative coverage, pushing the PNCR-1G and AFC into second and last positions, respectively. GAP/ROAR did not accumulate any negative publicity. The AFC's positive to negative coverage was exactly **15:1**, while the PNCR-1G's was over **4:1**. The general trend that emerged from this section of the newspaper's reportage of news and information was the commonality of net positive coverage achieved by the Government and political parties that was largely influenced by the gratuitous space extended by the newspaper's management to the nurturing of a balanced diet of pro and anti-government columns within this category of the newspaper's output.

STABROEK NEWS

CATEGORY	GOVT (in column inches)		POLITICAL PARTIES (in column inches)									
	POS	NEG	PPP/C		PNCR-1G		AFC		GAP/ROAR		TUF	
			POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG
EDITORIALS	30.9	-219.9	4.5	-17.3	9.5	-6	1	-4	0	0	0	0
LETTERS	160.5	-354.9	12.6	-61.9	23.4	-91.5	9.1	-6.8	1.9	0	0	0
GENERAL NEWS	3733.6	-586.4	248.1	-53.1	839.6	-85.9	362.4	-12	55.8	-1	0	0



Observations/Analysis

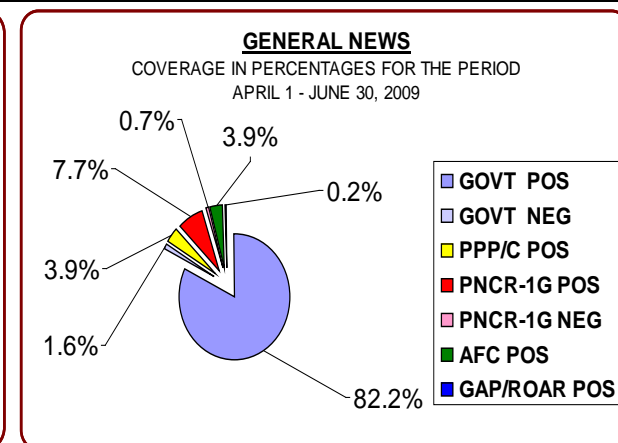
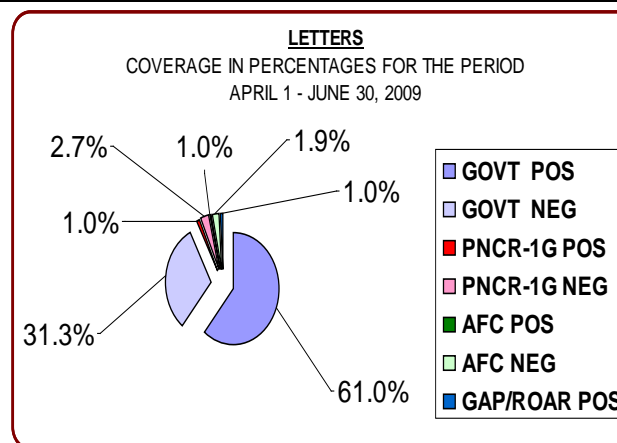
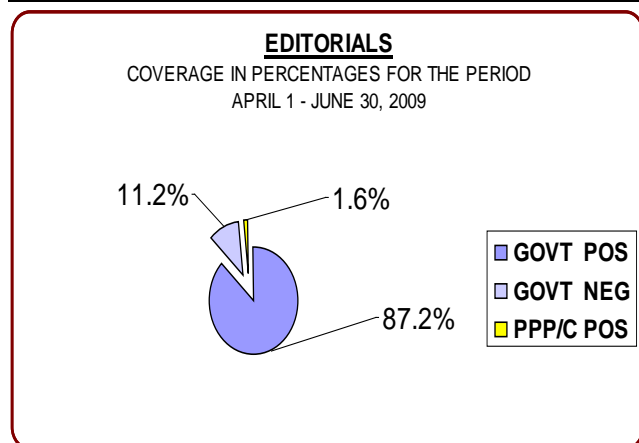
For the current reporting period, the contents of the Stabroek News (SN) **Editorials** painted the Government distinctly more negative than positive. The negative coverage given to the Government was approximately **7** times the amount of positive publicity they were subjected to. Amongst the political parties, the PNCR-1G derived the largest portion of positive coverage, followed by the PPP/C, and AFC. Conversely, the PPP/C contracted the highest amount of negative coverage, ahead of the PNCR-1G and AFC, respectively. The PPP/C and AFC accumulated net negative publicity, while the PNCR-1G gained coverage that was just slightly more positive than negative. The PPP/C's negative to positive coverage was around **4:1**, and the AFC's was exactly the same (i.e 4:1). An objective analysis of the newspaper's editorials over the past three (3) months, did not provide any substantive evidence to suggest that any one of the three (3) political parties covered, was the special recipient of unfair opinion-writing by the newspaper's editorial writers, notwithstanding the fact that the PNCR-1G was the only party that managed to achieve net positive publicity. However, continuing from the first quarter of the year, the Government continues to be the "bull's eye" for the darts (criticisms) thrown daily by the newspaper's editorial writers with unerring accuracy and penetrative consistency.

From the **Letters** section of the newspaper, the Government received **twice** more negative than positive comments from the public. Likewise, the PPP/C was portrayed approximately **5** times more negative than positive; and the PNCR-1G approximately **4** times more negative than positive. On the other hand, the AFC and GAP/ROAR were commented upon more positively than negatively. The PNCR-1G got the highest amount of positive coverage, followed in order by the PPP/C, AFC, and GAP/ROAR. The PNCR-1G also acquired the greatest share of negative publicity, pushing the PPP/C and AFC into second and last positions respectively. Only the AFC and to a lesser extent GAP/ROAR attracted more favorable than unfavorable comments from contributors to the Letters Column, while the Government, PPP/C and PNCR-1G were deluged by a random barrage of negative characterizations which greatly minimized the positive publicity they individually acquired.

In the **General News** category, the Government and all the political parties whose activities merited coverage, recorded extensively more positive than negative coverage. The Government was accredited with over **6** times more positive than negative publicity, while amongst the political parties, the PNCR-1G grabbed the largest amount of positive coverage, followed by the AFC, PPP/C, and lastly, GAP/ROAR. In terms of the proportionality of coverage given to the parties, the PNCR-1G garnered over **9** times more positive than negative coverage; the PPP/C more than **4**; the AFC over **30**; and GAP/ROAR nearly **60** times more positive than negative publicity. This section of the newspaper was the only category in which the Government, the ruling party, and the main parliamentary opposition parties, were spotlighted more positive than negative, and this phenomenon to a large degree is linked to the scarcity of political sentiments/advocacy in the information delivered to the reading public.

GUYANA TIMES

CATEGORY	GOVT (in column inches)		POLITICAL PARTIES (in column inches)										
	POS	NEG	PPP/C		PNCR-1G		AFC		GAP/ROAR		TUF		
			POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	
EDITORIALS	70	-9	1.3	0	0	-0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LETTERS	66.6	-34.1	0	0	1.1	-3	1.1	-2.1	1.1	0	0	0	0
GENERAL NEWS	4538.2	-85.6	213	-1	422.5	-36.9	213.6	-2	11.7	0	0	0	0



Observations/Analysis

For the current reporting period, the Guyana Times (GT) **Editorials** churned out figures which suggested that the editorial team studiously avoided any public expressions that could have been construed as fulsomely favorable or unfavorable to any of the political parties – parliamentary and extra-parliamentary – within the local body politic. And even though the Government attracted a fairly reasonable quantum of positive coverage, and a relatively moderate amount of negative publicity, our (the Unit's) records show that the positive and negative coverage attributed to them (the Government) was not of a political nature. This observation, in effect, further emphasized the apolitical direction and focus established by the editorial team over the past two (2) reporting periods, to date.

The **Letters** to the Editor Column coated the Government with both positive and negative coverage, with the positive outweighing the negative by a ratio of approximately **2:1**. Only three (3) political parties – PNCR-1G, AFC and GAP/ROAR – commanded the attention of letter-writers to the newspaper, and the figures generated for the parties from their discourses, were in each case unsubstantial, and did not warrant an analysis.

In the **General News** category, the Government accumulated significantly more positive than negative coverage, reflected in a ratio of **53:1**. Amongst the political parties, the PNCR-1G garnered the highest amount of positive coverage, followed by the AFC, PPP/C, and GAP/ROAR, in that order. The PNCR-1G was also handed the most negative coverage, distantly trailed by the AFC and the PPP/C. Because of the relatively large quantum of negative coverage that the PNCR-1G accrued, its positive to negative ratio was only a little more than **11:1**, while the AFC was nearly **107:1**, and the PPP/C **213:1**. GAP/ROAR did not attract any negative publicity. In general, both the Government and the four (4) political parties recorded substantial net positive publicity, which evidentially inferred that there was an acceptable level of equitable political and social reportage coming out of this section of the newspaper during the course of this quarter.

Conclusion

Sometimes it is not always possible to derive a true understanding of local media behavior based only on the statistics rolled-out by the Unit's monitoring team. Insofar as a holistic presentation of the facts are required, media performance goes well beyond explicit quantitative figures, to implicit qualitative nuances, which have to be prudently identified, evaluated, and then objectively narrated, as is the case with local media performance for this current reporting period.

Beginning with a critical assessment of the broadcast (TV) media for this quarter, the Unit invariably detected through its daily monitoring activities that purposeful steps were being taken by many TV practitioners (news reporters, anchors, editors, and talk-show hosts) to conscientiously upgrade the level of their offerings to the Guyanese public; and to practise their craft within the confines of the MCC, and the general best practices of professional journalism. However, unfortunately, it must be divulged that despite their model efforts at positioning the medium on an upward trajectory towards excellence, the hitherto improved performance for the current reporting period was unscrupulously hijacked by the injudicious resurrection of politically inspired "opinionated news" imperiously disseminated from the newscasts featured on CH 9 (First Look News) and CH 65 (News Update). This kind of behavior was absent from First Look News for a brief period, after an intervention by the Unit, but has since returned with acute brazenness; while in the case of News Update, it is a continuation of its (the newscast) observed behavior from the first quarter of this year, which forces the Unit to publicly comment again on the issue, because of its inherent catalytic potential to create social and political fissures in the society. The phenomenon is nexus to a false belief by the two (2) newsteams that it is their sacrosanct duty to intemperately advocate on behalf of the Government, on one hand – News Update, and against the Government, on the other – First Look News.

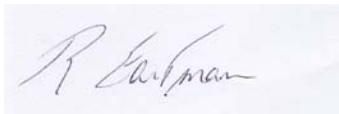
As it stands, both newscasts are equally guilty of intentionally and consistently reporting facts out of context, and/or deliberately obfuscating reality so as to blithely heap public opprobrium on perceived political opponents; a modus-operandi that is galling, obscene, and disdainfully insulting to the intelligence of viewers. Moreover, this type of behavior only serves to lower professional media standards, lessen the credibility of the offending channels, bring news-anchors into disrepute, and diminish the role of newscasts from being objective disseminators of facts, to maligned fountains of political propaganda. The Unit has observed with rueful consternation, the tangible decrepitude that has insidiously mushroomed and despoiled the performance of the broadcast (TV) sector over the course of the past two (2) quarters, stemming mainly from the obliquities of miscreants within the fraternity. And in light of this observation, we (the Unit) would like to publicly proposition the managements of the rogue elements (already identified) to take informed cognizance of the induced damage they are inflicting on the collective integrity of the profession, and to use the available window of opportunity presented, to voluntarily embark on a restorative process, in the interest of higher TV broadcasting standards, by summing up the will to unhinge themselves from their political moorings.

Across in the print media, the situation on the ground was similarly disconcerting. This conclusion was guardedly arrived at after a painstaking and objective analysis of the pertinent facts surrounding the variable performances of the four (4) main players (media outfits) that comprise the hub of the country's print fraternity – Guyana Chronicle, Stabroek News, Kaieteur News, and Guyana Times. True to form, the Guyana Chronicle committed the only recorded breach of media ethics for this quarter, in the print media. The dogged truculence shown by the Chronicle in habitually publishing missives in its Letters Column, which are steeped in racial bigotry and political antipathies, suggest an insouciant editorial policy that is indifferent to logic, rationality, and the norms of the journalistic creed. This newspaper has been cited umpteen times by the Unit in preceding Reports, for the same kind of irresponsible behavior highlighted in this Report, however, despite the many engagements that the management of the Unit has had with the Editor of the Letters Column, relating to responsible

editorship, there hasn't been any encouraging forward movement on the part of the editorial team to clean up its act. The newspaper's inexplicable inertia in urgently addressing its editorial weaknesses is sorely disappointing, since as the putative national newspaper, it is on a pedestal by the very virtue of its defined status, and therefore, should be the beacon for the local print industry; the model of journalistic excellence; and the pace-setter for high professional and ethical standards. Sadly, the reality is that the newspaper has failed miserably to live up to these reasonable public expectations, which, for the time being, remain a chimera.

In contrast, the individual performances of Kaieteur News and Guyana Times were above reproach for this quarter; however, continuing from the first quarter of the year, there has been no discernible toning down in the shrillness of pro and anti-government political commentaries espoused through the Guyana Chronicle and Stabroek News editorials, respectively. But, the uncontroversial and mainly apolitical nature of the Kaieteur News and Guyana Times editorials over the course of this reporting period provided a welcome counterbalance to the extreme editorial positions evinced by the Chronicle and Stabroek News.

Finally, the ongoing deficiencies that the Unit continue to invariably identify in the local broadcast and print media, prodigiously serves to emphasize the fact that the Unit's work in attempting to raise local media standards is still a work in progress, and though local media performance has improved significantly from the time the Unit was set up to the present, there are still too many media 'diseases' active in the body politic that have to be robustly isolated and cauterized, before the local media fraternity can truly announce with aplomb that they have arrived.



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Remington Eastman
Manager
Media Monitoring Unit
Guyana Elections Commission

