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Analytical Review Article

THE HAMOODUR RAHMAN COMMISSION: LESSONS FROM THE PROPAGANDA, AND PUBLIC PERCEPTION DURING NATIONAL CRISES 1971

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Abstract

Information is one of the most powerful instruments of governance. Beyond military and economic strength, governments shape public understanding through communication systems that influence political legitimacy, social cohesion, and national decision-making, particularly during times of crisis. The 1971 crisis, as examined by the Hamoodur Rahman Commission, demonstrated the consequences of information failures, propaganda, and restricted communication. Significant differences between official narratives and realities on the ground contributed to public misunderstanding and hindered effective responses to emerging challenges. The Commission's broader lesson is that transparency, credible communication, professional journalism, and institutional accountability are essential for effective governance. While propaganda and censorship may provide short-term advantages, long-term national resilience depends upon public trust, accurate information, and open channels of communication.

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Introduction

The history of political authority is inseparable from the history of communication. States have always depended upon information systems to govern populations, coordinate institutions, manage crises, and sustain legitimacy. Communication enables governments to explain policies, justify decisions, mobilize support, and respond to public concerns. Conversely, failures of communication may contribute to misunderstanding, distrust, polarization, and instability.

Modern political communication scholarship increasingly recognizes that information is not merely a reflection of political reality but also a force that shapes political outcomes. Citizens form opinions through information environments. Institutions make decisions based upon information flows. Political legitimacy depends partly upon communication effectiveness. Consequently, information management has become a central component of governance.

National crises magnify these dynamics. During periods of uncertainty, citizens seek information to understand events, evaluate risks, and assess leadership performance. Governments simultaneously face pressures to coordinate responses, maintain stability, manage narratives, and preserve legitimacy. The quality of communication during such periods often influences the trajectory of the crisis itself.

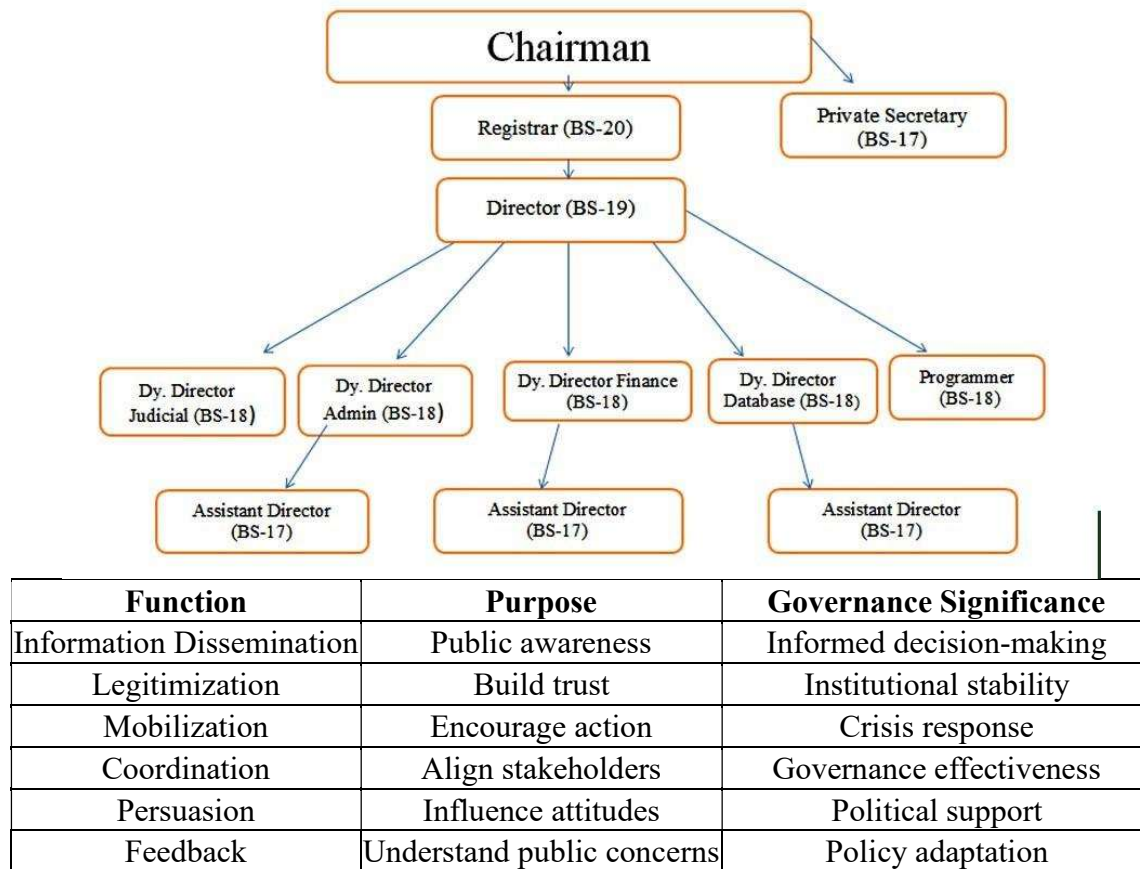
The 1971 crisis represents an important opportunity to examine these relationships. Beyond military and political dimensions, the crisis involved communication challenges concerning public understanding, government messaging, media narratives, institutional transparency, and information credibility. These issues remain highly relevant because contemporary governments confront similar challenges in increasingly complex information environments.

Theoretical Framework: Political Communication Theory

Political communication theory examines how information is created, transmitted, interpreted, and utilized within political systems. Communication serves multiple functions. It informs citizens, facilitates participation, influences attitudes, shapes identities, and legitimizes institutions.

Political communication is not a one-way process. Governments communicate with citizens, but citizens also respond through elections, public discourse, social interaction, and media consumption. Effective governance therefore depends upon communication systems capable of supporting dialogue rather than merely transmitting messages.

National crises place extraordinary demands on these systems. Governments must communicate rapidly, accurately, and credibly while simultaneously managing uncertainty. Failure to satisfy these requirements may weaken public confidence and reduce institutional effectiveness.



Political communication therefore operates at the intersection of governance, legitimacy, and public opinion.

Agenda-Setting and Framing Theory

Agenda-setting theory proposes that communication systems influence not necessarily what people think but what they think about. Media institutions and governments shape public priorities by determining which issues receive attention. Framing theory extends this insight by examining how issues are presented. The same event may be interpreted differently depending upon language, context, emphasis, and narrative structure. Frames influence public understanding by highlighting certain aspects of reality while minimizing others.

These theories are particularly relevant during crises because uncertainty increases dependence on information sources. Citizens often rely upon official statements, media coverage, and social networks to interpret events. Consequently, communication strategies significantly affect public perceptions.

Key Mechanisms of Media Influence and Public Opinion Formation

Mechanism	Description	Potential Effect
Agenda-Setting	Prioritizing specific issues and topics in public discourse	Shapes public attention and issue salience
Framing	Presenting information through particular perspectives or interpretive structures	Influences understanding and perception
Priming	Establishing criteria or standards for evaluating issues, events, or leaders	Affects judgment and decision-making
Narrative Construction	Creating coherent stories that connect events, actors, and meanings	Builds shared understanding and social meaning
Symbolic Communication	Using symbols, images, metaphors, and visual cues to convey messages	Generates emotional influence and audience engagement

Information as a Strategic Resource



Islamabad : Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of National Security Committee, on 07 May, 2025.

Contemporary strategic studies increasingly view information as a form of power. Information influences perceptions, decisions, behavior, and legitimacy. States therefore compete not only through military and economic capabilities but also through narratives, communication systems, and information environments.

Information serves several strategic functions. It supports decision-making, facilitates coordination, shapes public opinion, influences international perceptions, and contributes to national resilience. Effective information systems enable governments to understand changing conditions and respond appropriately.

The strategic significance of information becomes especially apparent during crises. Decision-makers require accurate information regarding events, risks, and public sentiment. Citizens require credible information regarding government actions and national conditions. Institutions require communication channels capable of coordinating responses.

Failures in any of these areas may produce significant consequences. Inaccurate information can distort decision-making. Poor communication can weaken trust. Narrative fragmentation can undermine cohesion. Consequently, information management represents a critical component of national security.

Information therefore functions simultaneously as an administrative, political, and strategic asset.

Strategic Function	Purpose
Situational Awareness	Understanding conditions
Decision Support	Improving policy choices
Public Communication	Maintaining legitimacy
Institutional Coordination	Enhancing effectiveness
Narrative Competition	Influencing perceptions
Crisis Management	Supporting resilience

Government Communication Systems

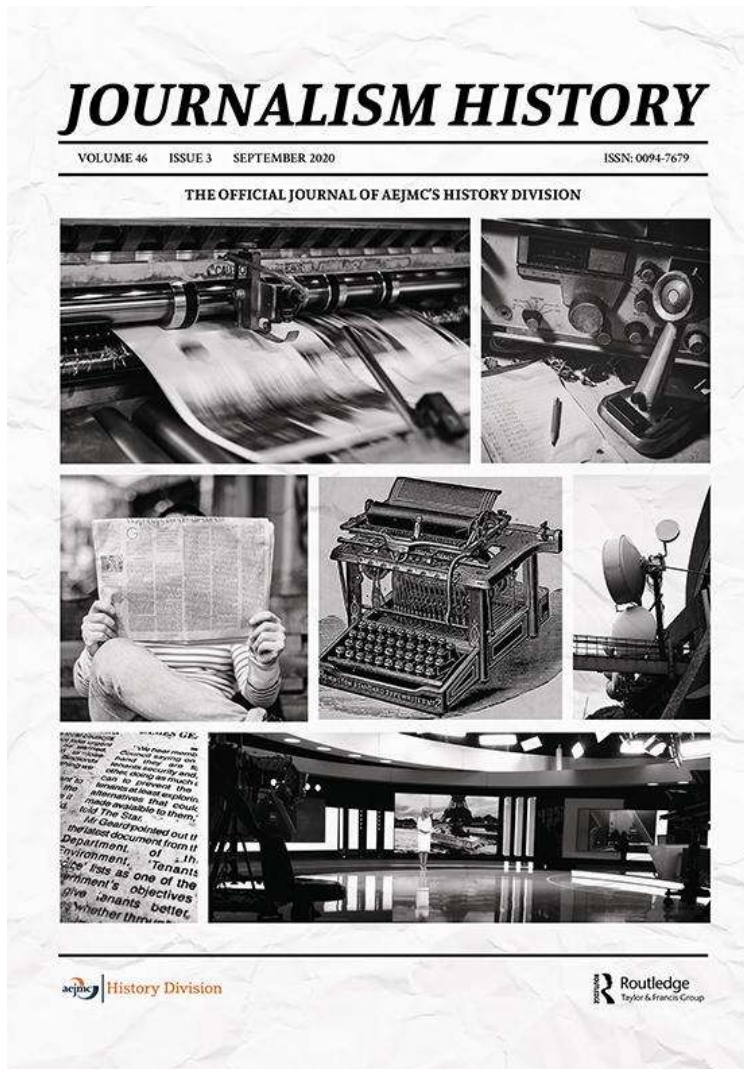
Governments rely upon communication systems to connect institutions with citizens. These systems include official statements, public information agencies, broadcasting services, press offices, administrative reporting channels, and strategic communication mechanisms.

Effective communication systems generally possess several characteristics. They provide timely information, maintain consistency, support transparency, encourage feedback, and preserve credibility. These characteristics become especially important during periods of uncertainty.

Government communication also performs an internal function. Institutions require information to coordinate activities, implement policies, and evaluate conditions. Consequently, communication failures may occur not only between governments and citizens but also within governmental structures themselves.

Public administration theory emphasizes that governance effectiveness depends heavily upon information quality. Institutions cannot respond effectively to challenges they do not understand. Therefore, communication systems influence both policy formulation and implementation.

Media Environment and Public Information



Media institutions occupy a unique position within political systems because they function simultaneously as information providers, public forums, agenda-setters, and accountability mechanisms. Media influence governance by informing citizens, scrutinizing institutions, and shaping public discourse.

The structure of media environments varies across political systems. Some environments emphasize state-owned media. Others prioritize independent journalism. Many combine public and private institutions. Each arrangement involves trade-offs concerning information control, accountability, pluralism, and credibility.

During national crises, media organizations face particularly difficult challenges. They must balance public information needs, national security concerns, verification requirements, and ethical responsibilities. Governments likewise confront tensions between transparency and information control. Media studies research suggests that public trust depends heavily upon perceived

credibility. Information sources regarded as trustworthy exert greater influence than sources viewed as unreliable. Consequently, credibility represents one of the most valuable assets within any communication environment.

Function	Governance Impact
Information Provision	Public awareness
Accountability	Institutional scrutiny
Interpretation	Meaning construction
Public Forum	Discussion and debate
Verification	Information quality
Crisis Communication	Public guidance

These functions help explain why media environments become strategically significant during periods of national uncertainty.

Information Control and Narrative Management

The Logic of Information Restriction

Governments frequently attempt to manage information during crises. Such efforts may involve censorship, information restrictions, narrative coordination, message discipline, or strategic communication campaigns. These approaches are often justified by concerns regarding security, stability, or operational effectiveness.

However, information control involves significant risks. Restrictive communication may reduce transparency, weaken credibility, and encourage alternative information sources. Public trust may decline if citizens perceive discrepancies between official narratives and observed realities.

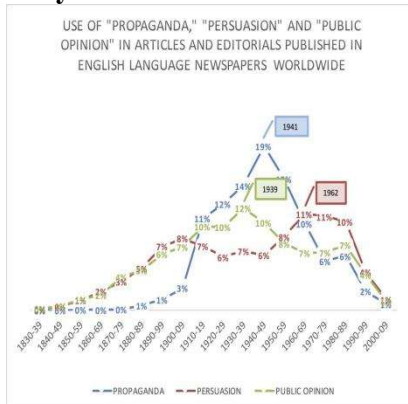
Governance theory suggests that legitimacy depends partly upon transparency. Citizens are more likely to trust institutions perceived as honest and accountable. Consequently, information control strategies must balance security requirements with credibility considerations.

The central challenge for governments is therefore not simply controlling information but maintaining trust. Communication strategies that sacrifice credibility for short-term narrative management may generate long-term legitimacy costs.

Strategy	Intended Objective	Potential Risk
Censorship	Information security	Credibility loss
Narrative Coordination	Message consistency	Reduced transparency
Information Restriction	Operational protection	Public distrust
Strategic Messaging	Public reassurance	Perception management concerns
Controlled Disclosure	Stability maintenance	Alternative narratives

These tensions remain central to crisis communication policy.

Why Narratives Matter During National Crises



Information alone does not determine political outcomes. Information acquires political significance only after it is interpreted, organized into narratives, and incorporated into public understanding. Consequently, governments confronting national crises must address not only the distribution of information but also the interpretation of events. Citizens rarely evaluate complex crises through direct observation. Instead, they rely upon narratives that explain causes, identify responsibilities, define threats, and propose solutions.

Political communication scholarship increasingly recognizes that narratives function as frameworks through which

individuals understand political reality. Narratives simplify complexity, reduce uncertainty, and provide coherence during periods of confusion. During national crises, citizens seek explanations that help them understand rapidly changing circumstances. Governments, media institutions, political actors, and social groups therefore compete to define dominant narratives.

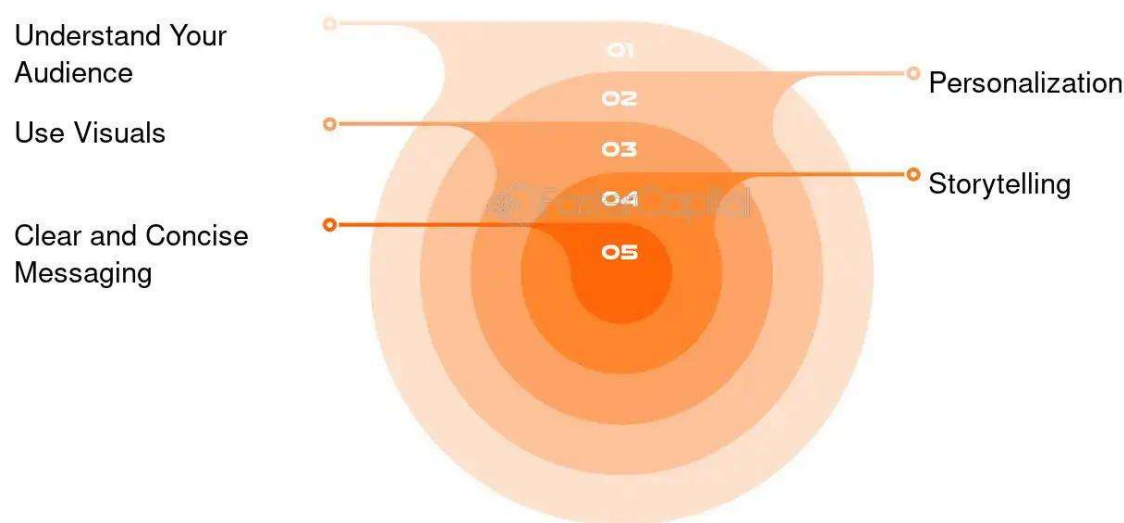
The significance of narratives extends beyond communication. Narratives influence legitimacy, trust, national identity, policy support, and political behavior. Governments that successfully communicate credible narratives often maintain public confidence even during difficult periods. Conversely, governments that lose narrative credibility frequently encounter declining legitimacy regardless of their formal authority.

The 1971 crisis illustrates the importance of this relationship. Political conflict was accompanied by competing interpretations of events, differing perceptions of responsibility, and divergent understandings of national reality. The resulting information environment contributed to broader challenges involving governance, legitimacy, and national cohesion.

Propaganda Theory and Strategic Communication

The term propaganda is often associated exclusively with deception or manipulation. Contemporary communication scholarship, however, approaches propaganda more analytically. Propaganda refers broadly to organized efforts designed to influence attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, and behavior through selective communication.

Adapting Communication Strategies



Propaganda can operate through multiple mechanisms. It may emphasize certain facts while minimizing others. It may employ emotional appeals, symbolic imagery, national identity themes, or strategic framing. Importantly, propaganda does not necessarily rely upon false information. Selective emphasis, contextual framing, and narrative construction can influence public perceptions even when information is technically accurate.

During crises, governments frequently engage in strategic communication intended to preserve morale, maintain stability, support policy objectives, and strengthen national unity. Such efforts often overlap with broader propaganda functions because both seek to influence public understanding.

The challenge lies in maintaining credibility. Communication strategies perceived as excessively manipulative may undermine trust. Once credibility declines, official narratives often become less effective regardless of their content.

These techniques appear across political systems regardless of ideology or regime type.

Technique	Purpose	Potential Impact
Selective Emphasis	Highlight key themes	Shapes priorities
Emotional Appeals	Mobilize support	Strengthens identification
Symbolic Messaging	Reinforce values	Builds cohesion
Narrative Framing	Define interpretation	Influences understanding
Repetition	Increase familiarity	Enhances acceptance
Simplification	Reduce complexity	Facilitates communication

Strategic Narratives and Political Legitimacy

The Construction of Political Reality

Strategic narrative theory examines how political actors create stories that explain events, define identities, and justify actions. Narratives perform several functions simultaneously. They establish meaning, reduce uncertainty, assign responsibility, and guide expectations.

Governments often rely upon strategic narratives during crises because uncertainty creates demand for explanation. Citizens seek answers regarding what happened, why it happened, who is responsible, and what should be done next. Strategic narratives provide frameworks addressing these questions.

The effectiveness of narratives depends largely upon credibility. Publics are more likely to accept narratives consistent with their experiences, observations, and existing beliefs. Narratives perceived as disconnected from reality often encounter resistance.

The relationship between narrative credibility and legitimacy is particularly important. Legitimacy depends partly upon citizens' confidence in official explanations. When significant discrepancies emerge between official narratives and public perceptions, trust may decline. Consequently, strategic communication must balance persuasion with credibility.

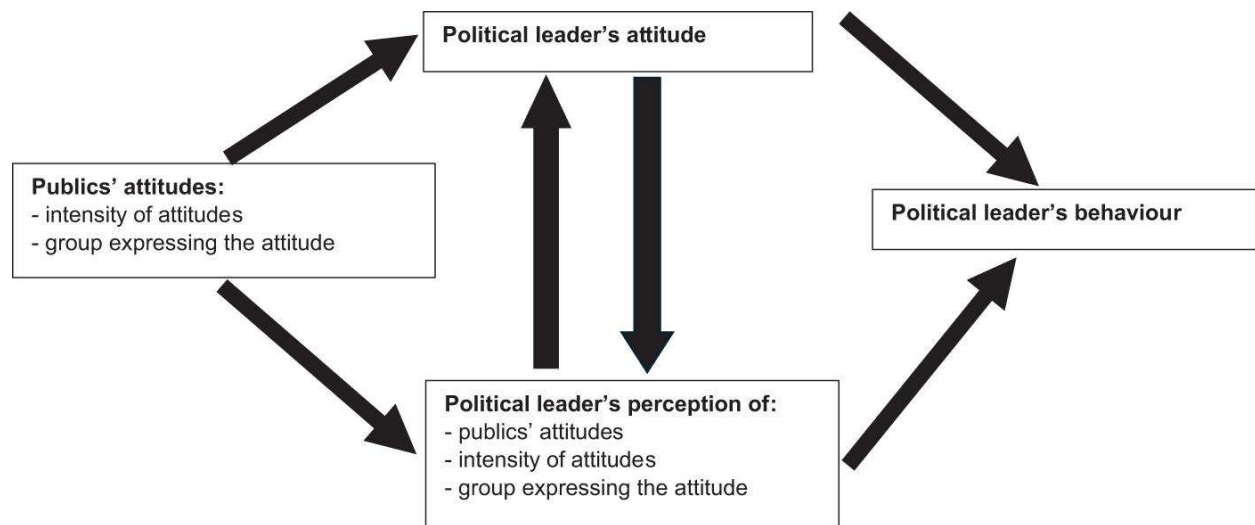
Public Opinion as a Dynamic Process

Public opinion does not emerge automatically from information exposure. Individuals interpret information through psychological, social, cultural, and political filters. Public opinion theory therefore emphasizes that citizens actively construct meaning rather than simply absorbing messages.

Several factors influence this process. Prior beliefs shape interpretation. Social networks influence attitudes. Media environments affect exposure. Trust in institutions influences credibility assessments. Emotional responses often affect judgment alongside factual considerations.

Periods of crisis intensify these dynamics because uncertainty increases demand for information while simultaneously reducing confidence in existing assumptions. Citizens become more

attentive to communication yet may also become more susceptible to emotional appeals, simplified explanations, and identity-based narratives.



Consequently, governments operating during crises must understand not only what information reaches citizens but also how citizens interpret that information. Effective communication requires appreciation of audience perceptions rather than merely message transmission.

Public opinion therefore reflects complex interactions among information, psychology, and social context.

Factor	Influence on Perception
Prior Beliefs	Interpretation framework
Media Exposure	Information availability
Institutional Trust	Credibility assessment
Social Networks	Opinion reinforcement
Emotional Responses	Attitude formation
Identity Factors	Narrative acceptance

Trust, Credibility, and Information Acceptance: The Central Role of Credibility

One of the most important findings in communication research is that credibility often matters more than message content. Citizens are more likely to accept information from sources they trust than from sources they distrust. Consequently, credibility functions as a strategic resource.

Trust develops gradually through consistency, transparency, competence, and honesty. Once established, trust facilitates communication because audiences are more receptive to official messages. Conversely, credibility erosion makes communication increasingly difficult because citizens begin questioning information regardless of accuracy.

National crises frequently test institutional credibility. Governments may face pressures to manage information, maintain morale, and protect sensitive operations. However,

communication perceived as misleading may damage trust. Rebuilding credibility after such damage can be extremely difficult.

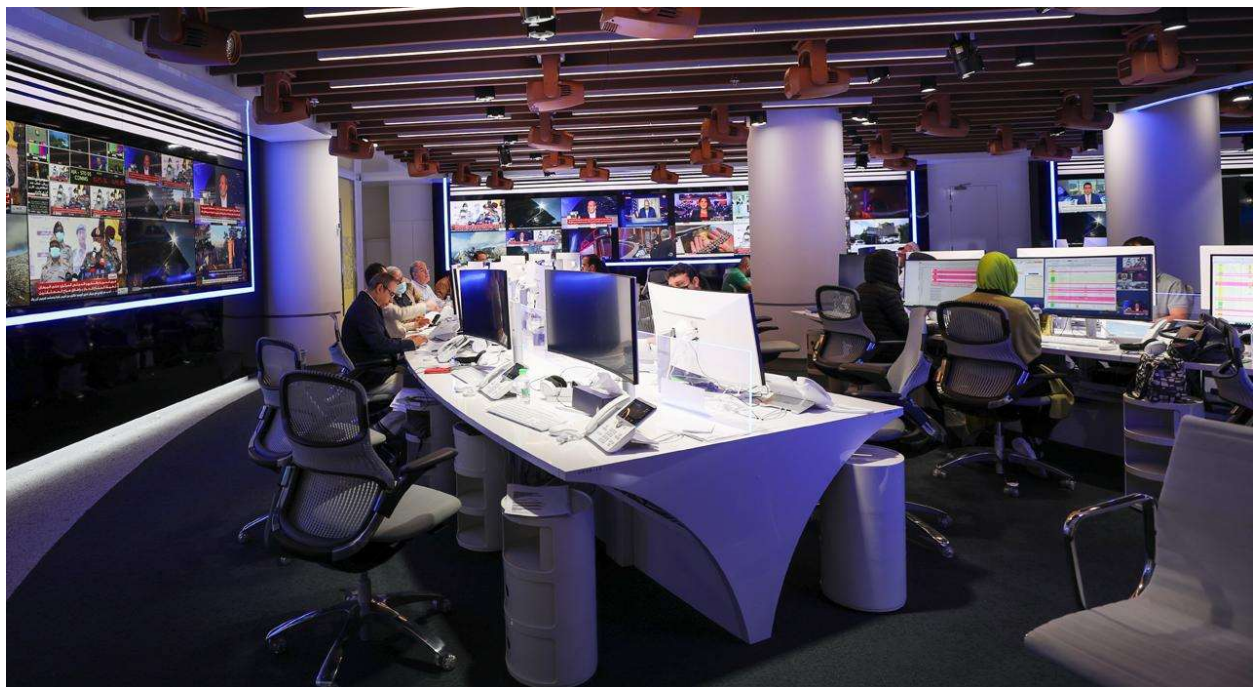
Political legitimacy therefore depends partly upon communication credibility. Institutions unable to maintain trust often struggle to influence public perceptions effectively.

Media Influence and Perception Management

Media institutions influence public perception not only by providing information but also by interpreting events. Journalists select topics, frame issues, prioritize stories, and provide contextual explanations. These processes significantly influence public understanding.

Media influence becomes particularly important during crises because citizens often depend heavily upon news organizations for information. Consequently, media narratives can reinforce, challenge, or complicate official narratives.

Media-state relations therefore represent a critical dimension of crisis governance. Governments require communication channels capable of reaching the public. Media organizations require access to information. Tensions frequently emerge concerning transparency, independence, and narrative control.



Comparative research demonstrates that governments often attempt to influence media coverage during crises. Such efforts may include information restrictions, strategic briefings, message coordination, or public relations campaigns. The effectiveness of these approaches depends largely upon credibility and media independence.

Media therefore functions as both an information source and a perception-shaping institution.

Function	Effect on Public Perception
Information Distribution	Increases awareness
Interpretation	Shapes understanding
Verification	Enhances credibility
Agenda Setting	Directs attention
Framing	Influences evaluation
Accountability	Scrutinizes authority

Competing Narratives and Divided Societies

Information Competition During Political Crises

The complexity of political crises often generates multiple competing narratives. Governments promote official interpretations. Opposition actors advance alternative explanations. Media organizations provide differing perspectives. Citizens develop localized understandings based upon personal experiences.

Divided societies are particularly vulnerable to narrative fragmentation because different groups may interpret identical events through distinct political, cultural, or regional frameworks. Information environments become contested spaces in which competing narratives seek legitimacy.

The 1971 crisis illustrates how narrative competition can influence political stability. Political disagreements were accompanied by divergent understandings of governance, representation, legitimacy, and national identity. Information systems became arenas for broader political conflict.

Narrative competition is not inherently negative. Democratic systems often benefit from pluralistic debate. Problems emerge when communication systems become incapable of supporting dialogue or when competing narratives become completely disconnected from one another.

Understanding these interactions is essential for analyzing crisis communication.

Information Management and National Cohesion

National cohesion depends partly upon shared understandings of political reality. Communication systems contribute to cohesion by providing common information, facilitating dialogue, and supporting trust in institutions.

However, communication failures may undermine cohesion. Contradictory messaging, declining credibility, restricted information flows, and fragmented narratives can weaken public confidence and increase polarization. Consequently, communication should be viewed as a governance function rather than merely a technical activity.

Political stability therefore depends not only upon institutional performance but also upon public perceptions of institutional performance. Communication systems influence these perceptions directly.

Information as a Strategic Determinant of State Stability

The preceding analysis demonstrates that information management is not a secondary aspect of crisis governance but one of its central components. National crises are simultaneously contests over material realities and contests over interpretation. Governments must manage military, political, economic, and administrative challenges while also addressing public understanding, institutional legitimacy, and narrative competition. The effectiveness of crisis governance therefore depends partly upon how information is collected, interpreted, communicated, and trusted.

The 1971 crisis highlights the dangers associated with communication failures. Information asymmetries, credibility problems, competing narratives, institutional communication weaknesses, and limited responsiveness contributed to broader governance challenges. While political and military factors remained central to the crisis, communication failures amplified existing tensions by weakening trust and reducing the effectiveness of institutional responses.



The broader lesson is that legitimacy increasingly depends upon communication credibility. Citizens evaluate institutions not only according to outcomes but also according to transparency, honesty, responsiveness, and accountability. Governments that maintain credibility often preserve public confidence even during difficult circumstances. Governments that lose credibility frequently encounter escalating challenges regardless of formal authority.

The Hamoodur Rahman Commission indirectly reinforces this conclusion by highlighting the importance of understanding realities accurately, responding to grievances effectively, and maintaining institutional accountability. Communication failures often impede these objectives by distorting information flows and weakening public trust.

Vietnam War and Credibility Gaps

The Vietnam War provides one of the most frequently cited examples of communication challenges affecting political legitimacy. Government communications increasingly diverged from public perceptions and media reporting, producing what became known as the "credibility gap." As discrepancies between official statements and observable realities widened, public trust declined.

The Vietnam experience demonstrates that information control may achieve short-term objectives while generating long-term legitimacy costs. Citizens who perceive official communications as unreliable often become skeptical of future messaging regardless of content.

Falklands War and Strategic Communication

The Falklands War illustrates a different model. The British government sought to maintain message discipline while providing relatively consistent communication regarding strategic objectives. Public understanding was supported by clear narratives, identifiable goals, and sustained media engagement.

This case suggests that credibility is strengthened when communication remains coherent and aligned with observable developments.



Gulf War and Media Management

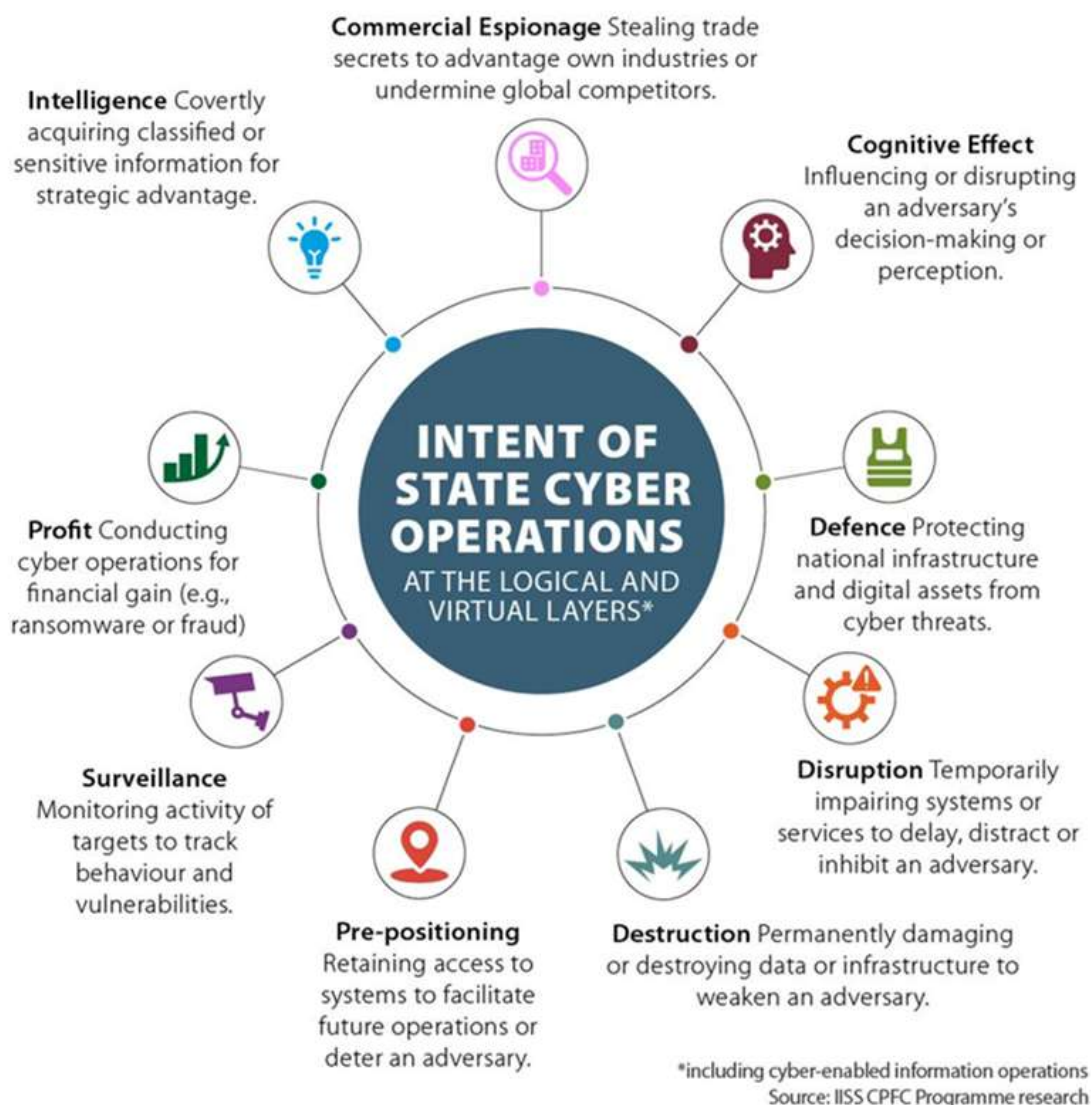
The 1991 Gulf War demonstrated the growing importance of real-time media coverage. Governments increasingly recognized that public perceptions could influence strategic outcomes. Communication strategies therefore became integrated into military planning.

The Gulf War also highlighted tensions between operational security and transparency. Governments sought to manage information flows without completely restricting media access.

These experiences reveal recurring patterns across diverse contexts.

Crisis	Communication Challenge	Key Lesson
Vietnam War	Credibility erosion	Trust is difficult to restore
Falklands War	Strategic narrative management	Consistency supports legitimacy
Gulf War	Real-time media environment	Communication must adapt rapidly
Iraq War	Competing narratives	Credibility influences long-term support
COVID-19 Pandemic	Public uncertainty	Transparency improves compliance
September 11 Era	National trauma communication	Trust becomes a strategic resource

Information Warfare and National Security



Contemporary national security environments increasingly recognize information as a domain of competition alongside land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace. States employ communication strategies to influence domestic audiences, international opinion, and adversary perceptions. Information warfare encompasses activities ranging from strategic messaging and influence operations to misinformation campaigns and psychological operations.

The significance of information warfare lies in its ability to shape perceptions without direct coercion. Public attitudes influence political stability, policy support, and institutional legitimacy. Consequently, communication capabilities have become important components of national power.

The lessons of the 1971 crisis remain relevant because they demonstrate how information environments affect governance outcomes. Governments unable to communicate effectively may struggle to maintain legitimacy. Conversely, governments possessing credible communication systems often demonstrate greater resilience.

Modern governments must therefore integrate communication capabilities into broader national security strategies.

Dimension	Strategic Objective
Narrative Competition	Influence interpretation
Psychological Operations	Shape attitudes
Public Diplomacy	Influence external perceptions
Strategic Communication	Support policy objectives
Information Security	Protect sensitive information
Counter-Disinformation	Preserve credibility

The Transformation of Information Ecosystems

The digital revolution has transformed information environments fundamentally. Traditional communication systems operated through relatively centralized structures involving governments, broadcasters, newspapers, and established institutions. Contemporary ecosystems are decentralized, networked, and interactive.

Social media platforms enable rapid dissemination of information but also facilitate misinformation, disinformation, rumor propagation, and narrative fragmentation. Information can now spread globally within minutes, often bypassing traditional verification mechanisms.

These developments create new governance challenges. Governments must communicate effectively within environments characterized by information abundance and declining attention spans. Public trust becomes more difficult to maintain because citizens encounter competing narratives from numerous sources.

At the same time, digital technologies create opportunities for transparency, engagement, and responsiveness. Governments can communicate directly with citizens, provide real-time updates, and facilitate public participation. The challenge lies in using these capabilities while preserving credibility.

The digital era therefore increases the importance of communication governance.

Challenge	Governance Implication
Misinformation	Public confusion
Disinformation	Deliberate manipulation
Information Overload	Reduced comprehension
Echo Chambers	Polarization
Rapid Information Flows	Verification difficulties
Declining Trust	Legitimacy challenges

Communication as a Governance Function

The study's findings suggest that communication should be treated as a core governance function rather than a peripheral public relations activity. Effective communication supports policy implementation, institutional legitimacy, crisis management, and public trust.

Governments require communication systems capable of balancing transparency and security. Excessive secrecy may undermine credibility. Excessive disclosure may create operational challenges. Successful governance therefore requires calibrated approaches grounded in accountability and public trust.

Public administration scholarship increasingly emphasizes communication capacity as an indicator of institutional effectiveness. Organizations that communicate clearly, respond rapidly, and maintain credibility generally perform more effectively during crises.

Communication thus contributes directly to governance quality.

Policy Recommendations

Government Communication Reform

- Establish permanent strategic communication units integrated into national crisis-management structures.
- Develop evidence-based communication strategies grounded in transparency and credibility.
- Strengthen communication coordination across government institutions.
- Expand public access to accurate information during crises.
- Institutionalize crisis communication training for senior officials.

Media Governance Reform

- Promote professional journalism standards.
- Encourage independent verification mechanisms.
- Strengthen media literacy programs.
- Improve relationships between government institutions and media organizations.
- Support responsible reporting during national emergencies.

Information Management Reform

- Create integrated national information systems.
- Improve interagency information sharing.
- Develop early warning systems for misinformation.
- Enhance public communication infrastructure.
- Strengthen strategic communication capabilities.

National Security Reform

- Recognize information resilience as a component of national security.
- Integrate communication planning into crisis management.
- Strengthen capabilities for countering disinformation.
- Improve public trust through transparency.
- Expand research on information warfare and strategic communication.

Future Prospects

Future crises will increasingly occur within digital information environments characterized by artificial intelligence, algorithmic amplification, social media networks, and transnational information flows. Governments will face growing challenges involving misinformation, deepfakes, narrative manipulation, and information overload.

Emerging technologies may improve communication efficiency while simultaneously creating new vulnerabilities. Consequently, future governance systems must prioritize information resilience alongside traditional security concerns.

Research should increasingly focus on the interaction between communication systems, public trust, institutional legitimacy, and national resilience. Comparative studies across democratic and developing states can provide valuable insights into effective communication governance.

The enduring lesson of the 1971 crisis is that information management cannot be separated from broader questions of governance and legitimacy. Communication failures often reveal deeper institutional weaknesses. Addressing these weaknesses requires reforms extending beyond media policy into governance structures themselves.

Conclusion

This study has examined information management, propaganda, public perception, strategic communication, media environments, narrative competition, and crisis communication through the analytical lens provided by the 1971 crisis and the broader insights associated with the Hamoodur Rahman Commission. The evidence demonstrates that information is not merely a supporting element of governance but a central determinant of legitimacy, stability, and institutional effectiveness.

Several major findings emerge from this analysis. First, information functions as a strategic resource influencing governance, national security, and public trust. Second, communication credibility is one of the most valuable assets available to governments during crises. Third, propaganda and strategic narratives shape political outcomes by influencing public understanding rather than simply transmitting information. Fourth, public opinion formation reflects complex interactions among media exposure, institutional trust, social identity, and

psychological processes. Fifth, communication failures can amplify existing political and governance challenges by weakening legitimacy and reducing public confidence.

The study further demonstrates that information control involves significant trade-offs. While governments may seek to manage narratives for security or stability reasons, excessive restrictions often undermine credibility. Long-term legitimacy depends more upon trust than upon control. Consequently, effective communication strategies must balance transparency, accountability, security, and responsiveness.

The Hamoodur Rahman Commission's broader significance lies in its emphasis on understanding realities accurately and responding effectively to institutional challenges. These objectives require communication systems capable of conveying information honestly, facilitating accountability, and supporting informed decision-making. Communication failures frequently impede these goals by distorting perceptions and weakening trust.

For contemporary governments, several lessons are especially important. Political communication must be integrated into governance rather than treated as an afterthought. Media governance should prioritize credibility and professionalism. National security institutions should recognize information resilience as a strategic capability. Crisis management systems should incorporate communication planning from the outset. Most importantly, governments should understand that legitimacy increasingly depends upon communication credibility.

For democratic societies operating in the digital era, the challenge is not simply managing information but building trust. Citizens exposed to vast quantities of information require credible institutions capable of providing reliable guidance during periods of uncertainty. States that cultivate transparency, accountability, and communication effectiveness are more likely to maintain legitimacy and resilience than states relying primarily upon information control.

Ultimately, the central lesson of this study is that communication and governance are inseparable. Information shapes perceptions, perceptions influence legitimacy, legitimacy affects stability, and stability determines the effectiveness of institutions. The 1971 crisis demonstrates the consequences of communication failures, while contemporary information environments underscore the continuing relevance of these lessons. Governments that understand this relationship will be better positioned to manage future crises, strengthen public trust, and enhance national resilience in an increasingly complex information age.



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