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**Paper No. 10**

**Promoting People's Participation, Transparency and Responsiveness Through Media**

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The problem can be seen from different angles. One of them is how to attract people to mass media institutions through which the People's participation, transparency facilitate state management. The other angle considers the media as a tool to promote the people's participation, transparency and responsiveness in social activities.

I would like to speak on this topic as a <sup>media practitioner</sup> ~~journalist~~. I'm interested in gathering readers around media institutions and with the help from media, readers can participate in various social activities, can make governmental officials do their job better.

The mass media is a bridge linking authorities and people. So first of all, to become attractive, a newspaper should prove itself as a reliable source of information for everyone. Only if people read and believe in the social picture you draw up, you can hope to influence the public (for example to attract them to your work).

I give you an live example. Weeks ago there was a worst flood in the middle area of Vietnam. Thousands people became homeless and face the threat of hunger and diseases. After newspapers reported the call of Government to all nation for providing help, many newspaper institutions turned out to be the real donation center. People brought money, clothes, various things to journalist because they trust them. They believe things they donated could be passed to the victims' hands and not "dropped" on the roads.

I know several governmental officials want mass media become their voice, become the place which advertise their good side. They even think mistakes in State management must not ever appear in the newspaper pages. But if they treat the media like this they're better not to expect any consensus in society through it. The problem is very simple: how people could be responsible for any social activities if they don't know exactly the current issues and events happened every day.

One of the favorite <sup>Saigon</sup> ~~thesis~~ of a certain newspaper is to come out as a public tribune. Responding to it, readers often send articles sharing their opinion, their feeling their critics with journalists. So the next thing I want to mention here is the mass media attitude toward the readers' opinion is the vital factor of gaining any success in encouraging people's activeness in society. Some media institutions due to different reasons (subjective or objective) pretend not to know public opinion. Many governmental officials intentionally or

unintentionally forget public call. In that case without the people's participation, an environment for good governance will never be created.

I'm the one who think opinions of readers' Majority always like good advises. We often say media is a kingdom. So in the history I'm sure not only in Vietnam, a kingdom would be collapsed if the king don't listen to the good advises.

To conclude my speech, I want to express my opinion on the question that I know many of you want to ask. In the country like Vietnam, where all media institutions belong to the government, how media can publish those peoples' opinion that criticise governmental institutions. I see no contradiction in here. In reality, the government takes variuos measures to reach the established targets. Sometimes the right measures are taken but sometimes the wrong ones. And often the peoples' opinion in newspaper pages point out the mistakes they make. A newspaper at one time propagandise government policies at the same time help government officials know beter about the public reaction from these.

We, in every issue of SGT, have a readers' column and a opinion section, in which we regularly publish readers' opinion of different social events especially in economics affairs. And we receive a good feedbacks not only from our readers but also from the gov officials.

**Seminar on Media and Good Governance  
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**DAY TWO**

**November 11, 1999**