

Climate in Crisis: Media Echoes from Vulnerable Frontiers (Pakistan, Bangladesh and Thailand)

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: This study examines how climate-vulnerable countries (Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Thailand) cover climate change in their leading English-language newspapers. The research focused on analyzing the extent of media coverage, the framing of climate issues, and how international reports like the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) influence climate reporting in the region.

Methodology: In the current study, a quantitative approach using content analysis was adopted. It examined news stories and editorials from three prominent newspapers: *Dawn* (Pakistan), *The Daily Star* (Bangladesh), and *Bangkok Post* (Thailand). 837 news items/editorials published in three selected newspapers between April 4, 2021, and April 3, 2023, were analyzed. The research evaluated frequencies and frames before and after the release of the IPCC AR6.

Findings: The findings showcased evident variations in climate change coverage across the three countries. *Dawn* published the highest number of articles (47.9%). News stories (67.86%) were more frequent than editorials (32.14%). After the release of AR6, media coverage of climate content increased by 34.46%. The most used news frame was "Attribution of Responsibility" (35.72%), while "Biodiversity" and "Morality" were the least used frames in selected newspapers. Interestingly, socio-political news stories/editorials appeared more frequently than natural disaster events, but the difference was not statistically significant.

Conclusion: The study concludes that press (newspaper) coverage of climate change differs among the selected South and Southeast Asian countries. The release of AR-6 by the IPCC positively affected the volume of climate reporting, however, there is a noticeable lack of balance in the framing, with limited focus on morality and biodiversity frames.

Keywords: Climate Change, IPCC Report, Climate Coverage in Southeast Asia, Climate Coverage in South Asia, Climate Framing.

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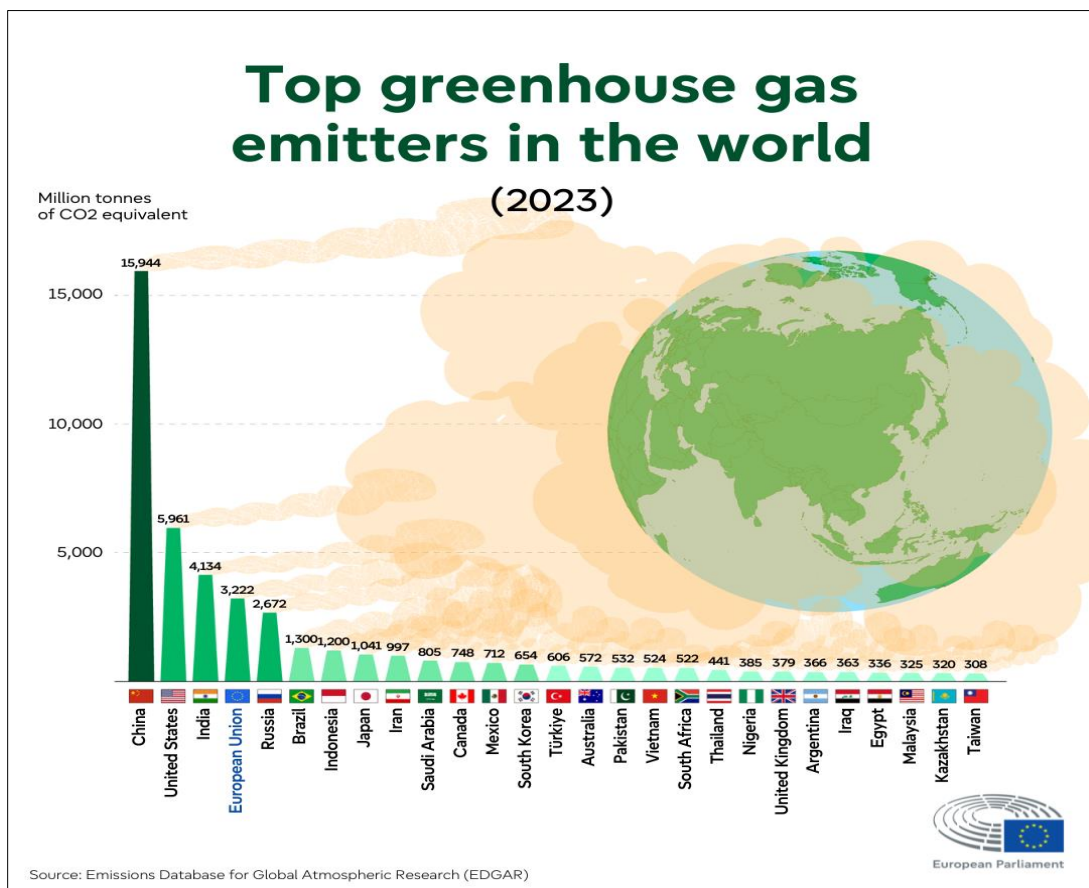
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1. INTRODUCTION

In the current era, climate change is one of the most serious threats to humanity, largely initiated by human activities such as the emission of greenhouse gases. Shifting climate patterns have led to catastrophic events, ranging from heat waves and droughts to heavy monsoon rains and urban flooding. Human actions have been a major cause of the global temperature rise of 1.1°C since 1850. It is predicted that the increasing intensity and frequency of life-threatening weather events will have severe consequences for people across the world (IPCC, 2022).

According to Climate Watch, (2022) the top ten greenhouse gas-emitting countries are responsible for 68% of total CO₂ emissions, while the 100 lowest-emitting countries contribute only 3%. However, emitting less carbon does not necessarily mean a country is less vulnerable to climate impacts. In fact, the ten most climate-vulnerable nations are not among the top carbon emitters (EEA, 2023)



Source: *Emission Database for Global Atmosphere Research (EDGAR)*

A similar situation is observed in South Asia (Pakistan and Bangladesh) and Southeast Asia (Thailand), where a complex mix of socio-political, geographical, and economic factors makes the region highly vulnerable to climate change. Most countries in these regions contribute little to global carbon dioxide emissions, yet they are among the most affected, facing extreme rainfall, flooding, rising sea levels, and intense heat waves (Baniya & Aryal, 2022; Byravan & Rajan, 2011).

To monitor and address the harmful effects of climate change, the United Nations established the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 1988. The IPCC is considered a significant step

toward advancing climate research, primarily focusing on assessing and sharing updated scientific findings on climate change and related policy issues. One of its key contributions is the publication of Assessment Reports (ARs). The latest report, AR6, highlighted the alarming state of global warming and its negative outcomes for the planet (IPCC, 2022). On the other hand, the Paris Accord is considered a milestone in tackling the growing global threat of climate change. On this occasion, all nations agreed that joint efforts are urgently needed to take concrete steps to address the harmful impacts of climate change (United Nations, 2022).

Around the world, it is widely believed that the media plays several important roles, including agenda setting and opinion formation on various issues, including scientific topics like climate change. This study aims to explore how the media, specifically newspapers, in climate-affected countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh (South Asia) and Thailand (Southeast Asia) covered climate change-related issues, and which news frames were commonly used in their coverage.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Climate change is a pressing global issue with serious regional consequences, especially for South Asia and Southeast Asia: the regions that are highly vulnerable to the impacts of global warming. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), in its final report AR-6, stressed that mounting global temperatures, largely human-induced activities, and GHG emissions are causing powerful changes in global climate systems. Even though countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh (South Asia), and Thailand (Southeast Asia) contribute a comparatively small amount of GHG, these nations still face a couple of the most damaging climate risks, including heat waves, floods, rising sea levels, and food insecurity. In these circumstances, the media plays an important role in raising awareness, shaping public perception and opinion, and affecting climate policies at the decision-making level. Previous research studies have explored climate change reporting at the national level, there is a lack of comparative research on how the media in different South Asian and Southeast Asian nations cover climate change and related issues. This study aims to fill that gap by comparing and analysing the climate change coverage in the media (newspapers) of three climate-vulnerable countries: Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Thailand.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the extent of climate change coverage in leading English newspapers of the climate-vulnerable Asian countries: Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Thailand.
2. To analyze the variation in climate change reporting in these newspapers before and after one year of the publication of the Sixth Assessment Report by the IPCC.
3. To examine how climate change is framed in the newspaper coverage of Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Thailand.

1.3 Significance of Study

This research will contribute to an improved understanding of:

- How newspapers in South and Southeast Asian countries, specifically Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Thailand, cover the issue of climate change.
- How the release of major international reports, particularly the Sixth Assessment Report by IPCC, has influenced media coverage in these countries.
- Whether climate-related catastrophes or socio-political events are more prominently featured in newspaper reporting.

Due to the critical role and extensive reach of the media, it is important to examine how South and Southeast Asian newspapers, especially in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Thailand, report on scientific issues like the environment and climate change.

1.4 Hypotheses

1. Climate change coverage varies across newspapers in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Thailand.
2. Climate change coverage in newspapers from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Thailand has likely increased following the release of the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6).
3. The framing of climate change issues is expected to differ among newspapers in climate-hit countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Thailand.
4. News items on extreme weather events are likely fewer in number compared to reports on climate-related socio-political events in newspapers from these three countries.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the South Asian and Southeast Asian regions, a couple of countries are among the top ten most severely affected by the negative repercussions of climate change. Many socio-political disagreements, including extensive poverty, massive population, poor governance, limited literacy rates, marginalized income, inadequate awareness, and high unemployment, deepen their vulnerability. The geographical and demographical features of the region, such as huge populations, low-lying lands, and a substantial dependence on agriculture, additionally expose them to the destructive impacts of climate change, including global warming, extreme rainfall, frequent flooding, and extended droughts (Prakash, 2018; Sentian et al., 2022).

Many research studies on climate change disclosed that inhabitants in these regions (South Asia and Southeast Asia) significantly rely on diverse mass media to access knowledge on scientific matters, including environmental issues, global warming, and climate change. Results of the research studies suggest that the media, particularly newspapers, serve as a pivotal source of information about climate issues, along with environmental educational classes, NGO workshops, seminars, webinars, and interpersonal communication with family members and fellow. Subsequently, the media, and its various platforms, particularly newspapers, play a vital and dynamic role in the transmission, production, and reproduction of information, meaningfully contributing to the masses' awareness and understanding of climate challenges (Ahmed & Kashif, 2025; G. Akram et al., 2023b; Carvalho, 2010; Madhubhashini, 2019; Muhammad et al., 2024; Raza & Shah, 2024; Sentian et al., 2022).

Numerous scholars around the globe noted that over time, climate change research has expanded and diversified, but much of it has focused on developed countries in Europe and North America, including the USA and the UK. In contrast, the damaging outcomes of climate change are unduly affecting developing nations across Asia, Africa, and Latin America, particularly in South Asia and Southeast Asia. Despite their worsened vulnerability, these zones often remain played down in scholarly discourse, especially about media coverage of global warming and climate change (Raza et al., 2025; Raza & Shah, 2024; Schäfer & Schlichting, 2014)

2.1 Climate Change, Media, and Pakistan

According to the Global Risk Index, Pakistan contributes less than one percent to total global emissions, yet it remains one of the most climate-affected countries in South Asia. Its ranking consistently fluctuates between fifth and eighth among the top ten nations most severely impacted by climate change. Summer and monsoon seasons have become increasingly destructive, with temperatures in some regions surpassing 50 degrees Celsius. Severe heatwaves and catastrophic floods stand as stark examples of the abnormal and intensified weather patterns now afflicting the country. During the catastrophic floods of 2022, approximately one-third of Pakistan's land area was submerged, leading to the coining of the term "Super Flood" to capture the unprecedented scale of the disaster. According to official data released by the Government of Pakistan, around 32 million people were directly or indirectly affected by the intense rainfall and subsequent flooding (Ahmed & Shah, 2023; G. Akram et al., 2023b; Ejaz & Najam, 2023; Rashid & Shah, 2025; Raza & Shah, 2024; Riaz, 2018; Tahir & Ahmed, 2025).

According to Ejaz & Najam, (2023) most of the climate-related research in Pakistan has centered around a few key themes, primarily examining how various segments of society influence climate journalists and identifying the major barriers journalists encounter while reporting on climate stories.

A lack of scientific knowledge about climate change, limited allocation of resources for climate reporting, low incentives provided by media organizations, and, most critically, the political and governmental disinterest in climate issues, have been identified as major barriers faced by climate journalists in Pakistan (Akram et al., 2023; Sharif et al., 2023).

The available data highlights that in Pakistan, only a few research studies exist on media coverage and framing of climate change. Furthermore, it reveals that climate stories, columns, and editorials are not priorities at the governmental level or within media organizations. In traditional media platforms (electronic/ print media), issues such as war conflicts, crime, political developments, the war on terror, and regional stability dominate coverage, repeatedly overshadowing climate and environmental reporting (Kashif et al., 2025). However, a slow shift has been observed, as media organizations are increasingly starting to cover climate topics, even though on a limited scale. However, the prime focus of such coverage remains targeted on extreme weather events or international socio-political developments linked to climate change (Javed et al., 2020; Raza & Shah, 2024; A. Sharif & Medvecky, 2018).

2.2 Climate Change, Media, and Bangladesh

Bangladesh, being a third-world country, contributes insignificantly to global carbon emissions yet bears disproportionately from the impacts of climate change. Despite being responsible for only 0.35% of global emissions, Bangladesh continuously ranks among the top ten most climate-hit countries. The unfavorable implications of climate change experienced by Bangladesh include prolonged monsoon seasons in summer, sea-level rise, rising temperatures, and an increased intensity of cyclones. As a result of the environmental hazards, Bangladesh's socio-economic development is being severely affected. As fertile lands, homes, and livestock are destroyed by the negative implications of global warming and climate change, large-scale displacement of natives is one of the damaging consequences. Communities are left struggling for survival amid these devastating losses. Owing to the direct and lethal effects of climate change, Bangladesh has been appropriately termed the "Ground Zero" of climate vulnerability (Barua et al., 2022; Sikder et al., 2021).

Media coverage of climate change in Bangladesh has increased in recent years, reflecting an escalating commitment by local media to address climate-linked challenges and boost public awareness. Moreover, in Bangladesh, the patterns of media coverage repeatedly stress the need for the attribution of responsibility, proactive climate action, and calls for compensation from the Western world (Carvalho, 2010).

In a research study conducted by Al-Zaman & Khan, (2022) claimed that environmental news stories published between April 2013 and April 2021 were systematically collected and analyzed. The researchers observed that Bangladeshi newspapers published 1,119 news items related to global warming, environment, and climate change during this period. The study further noted that the volume of climate coverage has shown a gradual increase in the local media, particularly after 2016.

2.3 Climate Change, Media, and Thailand

According to the Global Climate Risk Index, Thailand, as a member of ASEAN and situated in Southeast Asia, ranks among the top ten climate-hit countries worldwide. The country is facing a range of climate challenges, including water scarcity, unprecedented precipitation, rising sea level, and significant disruptions to ecosystems, all of which have led to severe impacts on public health and agricultural productivity (Amnuaylojaroen et al., 2022; Eckstein et al., 2021).

A detrimental mixture of natural disasters and human activities has led to severe heat waves and heat stress, becoming a main cause of death in Thailand. Human-induced interferences to the ecosystem are

not only disturbing Thailand but are also adversely affecting the broader Southeast Asian region (Paengkaew et al., 2020).

According to the Asian Development Bank, coastal regions of Thailand, particularly the prominent tourist destination Koh Phi Don, are gradually at risk due to extreme weather events and rising sea levels, both of which are direct consequences of climate change (Asian Development Bank, 2021).

According to Schmidt et al. (2013) marginalized research work was conducted on climate change coverage in local/national media across Southeast Asian countries, particularly in Singapore and Thailand, from 1997 to 2009. During said time, several socio-political issues often overshadowed climate reporting in the region (Southeast Asia).

With the passage of time, the number of news stories containing climate change content has been regularly increasing in South Asian and Southeast Asian media, with environmental issues grabbing more attention, including in Thailand. Media coverage tends to swell particularly during major international events on climate change, such as the signing of climate agreements, the release of IPCC reports, or global climate protests (Akram et al., 2023a; Grundmann, 2022).

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The current study revolves around the following theoretical framework.

To examine and explore comparative analysis of climate-hit countries in South Asia and Southeast Asia, the agenda-setting theory was used at the first level, while framing theory was used at the second level, with the prime focus to assess both the extent of media coverage and the framing patterns in news items and editorials. This study is limited to the media agenda of climate-vulnerable countries (South Asia and Southeast Asia) about climate news stories and editorials.

Globally, many studies have sought to examine the extent of efforts made by local, regional, and international media to cover climate change. These studies assert that climate change represents a profoundly alarming issue for many countries, including South Asia and Southeast Asia. Moreover, the coverage of environmental and climate-related issues is often juxtaposed with the reporting of other science-related topics. Findings suggest that climate change has been receiving progressively greater media attention, particularly since the advent of the new millennium (Iftikhar & Shafiq, 2019; Schäfer, 2015).

2.4.1 Farming and Climate

In her 2009 research article titled “*Agenda-Setting and Climate*,” Pralle offers a thought-provoking analysis of the connection between governmental attention and public issues, with a particular focus on climate change. This study not only reinforces the agenda-setting theory but also engages with and supports Kingdon’s Multiple Streams Model related to agenda formation.

Several studies suggest that when a country’s government, political institutions, and media consistently engage in the decision-making process regarding climate change, it can lead to a more extensive and sustained public discourse on the issue, both within the realms of litigation and news media (Ahmed et al., 2024; Mahmood, 2022; Mahmood & Ahmad, 2013; Wonneberger & Vliegthart, 2021).

Various scholars across the globe have employed a wide range of news and climate frames; however, the present study was confined to utilizing only six specific news and climate frames as outlined by (Li & Su, 2018; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

Attribution of Responsibility Frames: These frames depict problems or issues by assigning blame or responsibility, identifying who is accountable for the situation, and who is expected to address or resolve it.

Economic Consequences Frames: These frames portray issues or events through the lens of their economic impact on individuals, communities, organizations, institutions, nations, or global regions.

Public Health Frames: These frames highlight public health concerns and risks associated with climate change, encompassing the incidence of illness and mortality resulting from various climate-related threats, such as rising temperatures and severe heat waves.

Human Interest Frames: These frames stress the human angle of an issue, incident, or problem, often suggesting emotional responses by focusing on personal narratives or individual experiences.

Morality Frames: These frames are associated with a religious, ethical, or moral approach to any problem, issue, or event, highlighting questions of duty and justice, right and wrong.

Environmental and Biodiversity Frames: These frames emphasize the influence of climate change on broader ecosystems, including flora and fauna, underlining the threats to plants, species, wildlife, and the environment.

3. METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on a quantitative approach, and a comparative content analysis is used to examine climate coverage in climate-victim countries, specifically Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Thailand. As mentioned by Krippendorff, (2022) content analysis is a research technique used to establish a replicable and reliable linkage between data and its context. At the same time, Kerlinger & Lee, (2000) stressed that content analysis is used to explore and scientifically analyze communication objectively and quantitatively to measure variables within recorded data.

In this study, the researcher used a comparative content analysis method to explore climate change coverage and its framing in the South Asian and Southeast Asian media (newspapers) by analyzing similarities and differences in the framing strategies employed by selected newspapers.

3.1 Sampling

Based on the Global Climate Risk Index, three countries ranked among the top ten most climate-vulnerable nations were selected through purposive sampling, including Pakistan, Bangladesh (South Asia), and Thailand (Southeast Asia). For each country, one leading English-language newspaper was chosen: *Dawn* (Pakistan), *The Daily Star* (Bangladesh), and *Bangkok Post* (Thailand).

3.2 Timeline/ Significant Event

As far as the significant event and timeline are concerned, this study focuses on the release of the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report, published between 2021 and 2023. This report claimed that unchecked GHG emissions could force the Earth's climate beyond critical tipping points, leading to potentially irremediable and permanent loss. The study period is spreading over to one year before and one year after the release of the AR6's covering April 4, 2021, to April 3, 2023.

3.3 Sample Size

All news stories and editorials published in three leading English-language newspapers from climate-vulnerable countries—*Dawn* (Pakistan), *The Daily Star* (Bangladesh), and *Bangkok Post* (Thailand)—between April 4, 2021, and April 3, 2023, were collected and analyzed. By adopting an enumeration study method, a total sample of N = 837 was examined in this study.

3.4 Categorization Scheme

Newspapers: 1= *Dawn*, 2= *The Daily Star*, 3= *Bangkok Post*

Length of Story: 1= Below 500 Words, 2= 501 to 1000 Word, 3= Above 100 Words

Type of Story: 1= News, 2 = Editorials

Timespan: 1 = Before AR-6, 2 = After AR-6

Climate Categories: 1= Extreme Weather, 2 = Socio-Political Events

Frames: 1= Attribution of Responsibility, 2= Economic, 3= Human Interest, 4= Public Health, 5 = Morality, 6= Biodiversity

In the present study, three newspapers from climate-affected countries, two from the South Asian region (Pakistan and Bangladesh), and one from Southeast Asia (Thailand), were selected for content analysis. These international English-language newspapers were reached through LexisNexis, accessed via the US Embassy in Islamabad. The data pool was established based on LexisNexis' selection criteria, which included all news stories and editorials containing the term "climate change" from these newspapers over two years, spanning from April 4, 2021, to April 3, 2023, before and after the release of AR6.

The data from three newspapers were analyzed, interpreted, and explained using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Various statistical tests, including frequencies, percentages, cross-tabulation, and Chi-Square, were employed in the analysis.

3.5 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis is regarded as a fundamental component of research; however, it varies across studies depending on the research design and the nature of the inquiry. It may range from a single word to an entire paragraph, or from an individual theme to a complete article, serving as the basis for systematic examination (Neuman, 2013).

In the present study, the unit of analysis is the entire newspaper; the sampling unit comprises complete stories (including news items and editorials), while the coding unit focuses on specific words related to natural disasters and socio-political events.

3.6 Conceptual Definition of Climate Change

"Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns." (United Nations, 2023). The term 'climate change' refers to a period spreading over at least 3 decades (WMO, 2021).

3.7 Operational Definition of Climate Change Weather Event

According to United Nations, (2023) the following catastrophic events were defined as climate change and natural disasters.

- Rains / Floods
- Heatwaves
- Rains / Floods
- Glacier Melting/ Sea Level
- Drought
- Hurricanes/ Tornados/ Cyclones/ Storms
- Global Warming
- Human-Induced/ CO2 Emission / Fossil Fuel

The following are Socio-Political Events associated with Climate Change, as explained by Schmidt et al., (2014), United Nations, (2023) and Ali et al. (2025).

- INGOs Data/ Research Studies
- Local/ International Protests
- CoPs/ Conferences / Accords/ Webinars
- UN/ IPCC Reports
- Others

4. DATA ANALYSIS

The prime objective of the study is to investigate the extent of press coverage of climate change on a South Asian/Southeast Asian scale. In the current study, the researcher selected three South Asian/Southeast Asian newspapers to examine frequencies and frames used in the regional press, and how the different countries (Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Thailand) highlight climate-related issues, whether their focus was on extreme weather or social-political events.

Table 1: *Climate Change News/Editorial Frequencies in Climate-Hit Countries*

Newspaper	Frequency	Percent
Dawn	401	47.9
The Daily Star	191	22.8
Bangkok Post	245	29.3
Total	837	100.0

Table 1 shows that *Dawn* (Pakistan) provided the highest number of news and editorial articles on climate issues, with 401 items (47.9%), followed by the *Bangkok Post* with 245 items (29.3%). *The Daily Star* ranked third, with 191 articles (22.8%).

At the same time, 568 items (67.9%) were news reports, while 269 items (32.1%) were editorials in three newspapers. Based on this data distribution, H1 is accepted, indicating that climate change coverage varies across newspapers in South Asia and Southeast Asia.

Figure 1: *Distribution of News Coverage in Newspapers*

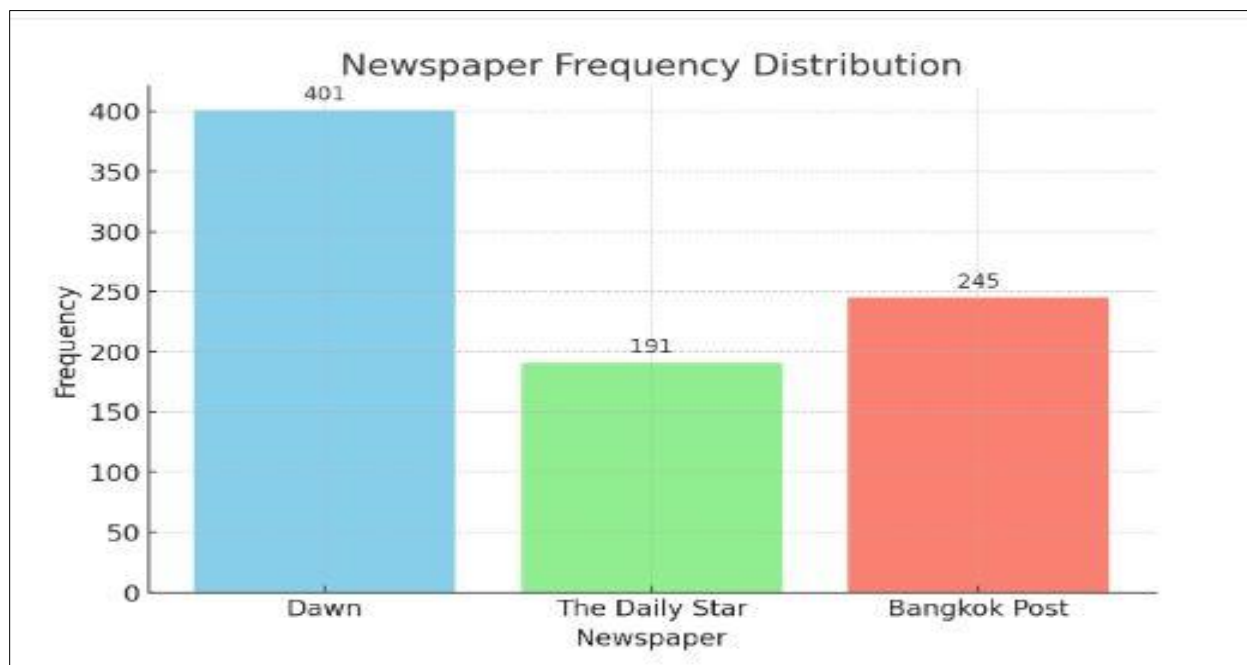


Table 2: Climate News Coverage and Length of News Stories in South Asian Press

News Coverage Length	Frequency	Percent
Below 500 Words	283	33.8
501 to 1000 Words	410	49.0
Above 1000 Words	144	17.2
Total	837	100.0

Table 2 indicates that most news articles and editorials fall within the 501–1000 words category (49%), followed by those with fewer than 500 words (33.8%). The smallest proportion of coverage is found in the category exceeding 1000 words, accounting for 17.2%.

Table 3: Climate News Coverage Before and After One Year of AR-6

Newspapers	Before AR-6	After AR-6	Total
Dawn	145	256	401
The Daily Star	94	97	191
Bangkok Post	118	127	245
Total	357	480	837
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.316 ^a	2	.001

Data in Table 3 shows that three selected newspapers (*Dawn*, *The Daily Star*, *Bangkok Post*) published more stories on climate issues after the release of IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report i.e., 480 (57.34%) while before the release of this report, 357 (42.66%) news and editorials were published. Moreover, the chi-square value is 13.316, while $p = 0.001$, which shows the influence of the IPCC's report on climate coverage. Hence, H2 is accepted that IPCC's AR-6 increased the number of news and editorials in the selected press.

Table 4: Cross-tabulation of Climate Frames with Newspapers

Climate Frames	Dawn	The Daily Star	Bangkok Post	Total
Attribution of Responsibility	167	66	66	299
Economic	81	38	75	194
Public Health	39	24	39	102
Human Interest	58	38	32	128
Morality	31	13	15	59
Biodiversity/ Species	25	12	18	55
Total	401	191	245	837
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	
Pearson Chi-Square	26.903 ^a	10	.003	

Table 4 results show that the attribution of responsibility frame was the most frequently used across all three selected newspapers: *Dawn* published 167 stories (55.86%), *The Daily Star* published 66 stories

(22.07%), and Bangkok Post published 66 stories (22.07%). Overall, the attribution of responsibility frame was present in 299 stories (35.72%). In contrast, biodiversity frames were the least used, appearing in only 55 stories (6.57%) overall, with few negligible variants at the individual newspaper level. The chi-square value of 26.903 with a p-value of 0.003 indicates that the framing of climate change differs significantly across South Asian and Southeast Asian newspapers. Therefore, H3 is accepted, confirming that the framing of climate change issues is expected to differ among newspapers in climate-hit countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Thailand.

Table 5: *Newspapers crosstab with Climate events*

Climate Events	Natural Disaster	Socio-Political Events	Total
Dawn	183	218	401
The Daily Star	73	118	191
Bangkok Post	101	144	245
Total	357	480	837
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.198 ^a	2	.202

Table 5 presents interesting results: all three newspapers gave more coverage to sociopolitical climate-related items, i.e., *Dawn* 218 (45.42%), *The Daily Star* 118 (24.58%), and *Bangkok Post* 144 (30%). Socio-political events include IPCC’s official reports, the release of UN official data, seminars, and webinars on climate issues. Jointly, the three newspapers published 480 stories (57.35%) on socio-political issues and 357 stories (42.65%) on extreme weather events. Numerically, social political stories are more than natural disaster news stories, but the statistical test, chi-square, disagrees with the results. The chi-square value of 3.187 with a p-value of 0.202 shows that this difference was not statistically significant across newspapers (at the individual level).” So H4 is rejected.

5. DISCUSSION

The boost in media coverage of climate change in the South Asian and Southeast Asian press after the publication of AR-6 by the IPCC is aligned with existing literature, which highlights that international reports on climate-related issues have an extended influence on media coverage and the public discourse. Research results also reveal that noteworthy international publications by well-reputed bodies, for example, the IPCC, often grab the media’s attention and public awareness of climate and environmental issues. The results from the study verified this trend, claiming that major assessment reports can successfully mobilize journalistic resources toward climate reporting (Akram et al., 2023b; IPCC, 2023; O’Neill et al., 2015; Raza et al., 2025; Raza & Shah, 2024; Sharma & Hossain, 2021).

The attribution of responsibility is a commonly used frame in the current study, which is aligned with the prior studies. For example, as noted by Billett, (2010) South Asian print media generally present the climate issues in terms of responsibility and risk, showing a reaction where the 3rd world developing nations feel climate vulnerable, yet think wealthier nations are responsible for this climate hazard. On the other hand, biodiversity frames were the least in number; overall, 6.57 % of stories contain biodiversity frames, with small and minute numbers at newspapers individual level (Painter, 2015). Additionally, the limited use of morality frames in selected newspapers raises some serious questions about the nature of climate change reporting in South Asia and Southeast Asia. The ignored morality frames may refer to unethical reporting on climate change.

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There are some interesting debates regarding whether selected newspapers gave more coverage to extreme weather or socio-political issues; findings show that, numerically, socio-political news items and editorials are much in number in South Asian and Southeast Asian newspapers, which highlights broader media trends in the region. Sharma & Hossain, (2021) noted that climate change reporting often connects with socio-political narratives, particularly in regions like South Asia and Southeast Asia, where governance and policy responses are critical to addressing climate challenges.

As highlighted by the recent report of World Bank, (2023) South Asia and Southeast Asia are among the most vulnerable regions in the world in terms of climate change. Still, media coverage of climate catastrophes and environmental issues is not up to the mark. Disconnected efforts/ media coverage are among the major causes of low public awareness, marginalized public engagement, and poor policymaking regarding climate change.

6. CONCLUSION

Results and findings suggest that there are variations in climate in climate coverage throughout the South Asian and Southeast Asian Press. Meanwhile, the findings also provide sufficient evidence to claim that the sixth assessment report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change pointedly affected the climate change coverage in Pakistan, India, and Thailand

Findings and results also recommend that there is a need for the South Asian and Southeast Asian press to use diverse frames during climate reporting. Using biodiversity and morality frames, media organizations can promote more discussions and public discourse to enhance widespread action regarding climate catastrophes.

The findings show that there is dialogue and discussion about responsibility at the media level, central areas like biodiversity and moral issues are often missing in climate change stories. This lack of balance may cause the public and decision-makers to have an inadequate understanding of climate-related stories.

The results showcase useful ideas about how South and Southeast Asian press (newspapers) report and frame climate change. If the media adopt a balanced approach by giving coverage to both socio-political factors as well as urgent environmental issues, it can help to create improved public understanding and support stronger policy actions to deal with the adversities of climate change.

Some diverse results from the current study show the need for a more balanced way of reporting climate change in South Asia and Southeast Asia, which includes both sociopolitical issues as well as the real effects of extreme weather events. Continuous media coverage on climate problems can lead to public pressure for powerful policies. So, better coverage of extreme weather and socio-political stories can help people identify the issues more clearly and support important changes.

Furthermore, media stories/editorials often focus on the views of powerful groups and may not fully cover how climate change affects weaker and marginalized communities. By utilizing more inclusive reporting, the media can help raise public perception and build support for fair climate actions across South Asia and Southeast Asia.

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Conflict of Interest

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