



- Newsletter -

September 2007

Year 3, no. 3

CONTENT:

SOUTH KOREA:

VOICES LOCKED UP IN '1W' PAGE: 2

AFGHANISTAN:

NAI SETS UP FIRST COMMUNITY RADIO STATION IN LAGHMAN PROVINCE PAGE: 3

TALIBAN SET RADIO IN MAIDAN WARDAK ON FIRE PAGE: 3

INDIA:

UPCOMING CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOPS ON COMMUNITY RADIO PAGE: 4

NEPAL:

COMMUNITY RADIO SUPPORT CENTRE COMMENCES SUPPORT PAGE: 4

ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY RADIO BROADCASTERS IN NEPAL
HANDS OVER RADIO EQUIPMENT PAGE: 4

RADIO PURBANCHAL - ALL WOMEN'S RADIO ESTABLISHED PAGE: 5

FIJI:

EMERGENCY LAWS REACTIVATED, POTENTIALLY CURBING FREEDOM
OF EXPRESSION, MEDIA PAGE: 6

BANGLADESH:

BANGLADESH IS ON THE WAY TO OPEN-UP THE COMMUNITY RADIO:
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION FORMS A HIGH LEVEL COMMITTEE PAGE: 7

JAPAN:

AMARC-JAPAN WORKING GROUP FORMED IN KOBE, JAPAN PAGE: 8

INTERVIEW:

"IT'S NOT JUST A QUESTION OF BREAD-VERSUS-RADIOS"
FREDERICK NORONHA INTERVIEWS THE AUTHORS OF
OTHER VOICES: THE STRUGGLE FOR COMMUNITY RADIO IN INDIA PAGE: 9

THE PHILIPPINES:

RADYO CAGAYANO RISES FROM THE ASHES PAGE: 14

RADIO AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH WORKSHOP PAGE: 18

SOUTH KOREA:

VOICES LOCKED UP IN '1W' - MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION MUST INCREASE THE OUTPUT OF COMMUNITY RADIOS

On September 7 and 14, 2007, the Community Radios Broadcasting Association of Korea (CRBA) held demonstrations in the front of the Ministry of Information and Communication, demanding an increase in the community radios' output/transmission power in their districts.

They demanded more powerful transmitters for community radios because the current limit of one watt causes difficulties for the existing eight community radio operations. Radio listeners cannot or hardly hear the programs. Even those who are within one kilometre range have difficulty in receiving clear signals.

The authorities, however, have so far ignored the demands of CRBA and have failed to make any serious effort to resolve the issue. Although the broadcasting law was revised last year to allow community radios' to increase output up to 10W, the Ministry of Information and Communication refused to issue its clearance citing the unchanged radio wave law. Representatives of the Ministry, in a press interview expressed negative opinions about the demand to increase transmission power.

The only way to make community radios 'audible broadcast' is to increase the output.

The CRBA held a second round of demonstration on September 14, 2007. They met the minister to reaffirm their demands and deliver the result of one week's signature-collecting campaign. The CRBA's demands are as follows.

The Ministry of Information and Communication must:

1. Assure the increase of community radio's output up to 30W at least;
2. Actively extend community radios nationwide;
3. Commit to increase the output in writing before starting the official community radio; and
4. Cease policy research and make an effort to revise the radio wave law concerned right away

By YOON JIN KIM, editorial board member of <ACT!> and translated by SEUNG YUN JO

Source: MEDIATE's Newsletter [inter-ACT!] #12 - Sept. 27th, 2007. [inter-ACT!] is a monthly English newsletter by MEDIATE <http://www.mediact.org>, a media center based in Seoul, South KOREA. It aims to connect the media and communication movements in South Korea with those in other places. For details, please contact MEDIATE's policy & research department, Ji Hyun Kim, imaginekim@empal.com or Chae-eun Park, rosa1919@gmail.com

AFGHANISTAN:

NAI – SUPPORTING OPEN MEDIA IN AFGHANISTAN SETS UP FIRST COMMUNITY RADIO STATION IN LAGHMAN PROVINCE

Nai Supporting Open Media in Afghanistan has just launched the first independent community radio station, “Kawoon Ghag”, in Laghman province east of the country. The establishment of “Kawoon Ghag” is supported by the US government with the aim of creating local communication channel informing Laghman citizens of municipal, service news and programming. It also aims to strengthen citizens’ participation in the public life based on democratic dialogue and information exchange.

The station transmitting power is 500 Watt covering Mehtarlam city and other districts nearby, “Kawoon Ghag” will broadcast six hours daily on an experimental basis, including 3 hours of Salaam Watandar to provide national news and current affairs.

Mujeeb Khalwatgar, Executive Director of Nai SOMA has said “we are very happy for the citizens of Laghman to have their own independent community radio station, and we are looking from them to support “Kawoon Ghag” by their own ideas, it will be open for the young to create local programs and highly participate in running the station.”

Another work in Laghman province done by Nai SOMA is to install three repeaters for Salaam Watandar in its three districts “Qaraghaee, Dawlatshah and Alishing.” Similarly, transmitter power of governmental radio RTA has been increased from 150 to 500 Watt.

Source: Media Watch Report, Volume 27, September 2007. For details, please contact: Sediqullah Tauhidi, Media Watch Project Manager, tauhidi@nai.org.af, web: www.nai.org.af

TALIBAN SET RADIO (YUWALI GHAZH) IN MAIDAN WARDAK ON FIRE

On August 12, 2007, sixteen armed Taliban men entered the premises of Radio Yuwali Ghazh of Syed Abad district of Maidan Wardak and set it on fire resulting in the burning and destruction of all the equipment and properties of the radio station. The Taliban tied the guards, sprayed petrol and burned the radio station. “Nothing is left” Hazratuddin, in-charge of the radio told the Media Watch reporter. Internews, an international media development NGO is going to help the station. Gavin Unsworth, technical advisor of Internews said “we are organizing to re-establish the radio soon but it will be smaller size than the previous one”.

However, Gen. Muhammad Ewaz, police commander in Wardak had a different story. He claimed that as a result of a two-hour battle between the Police and the Taliban attackers, the Taliban fired a rocket propelled grenade that set the station on fire. Radio Yuwali Ghazh was established and began broadcasting with the help of Internews in September 5, 2003. It did very well during the last three years by covering local issues. The burning down of the station has deprived people from local information.

The incident of Yuwali comes at a time of when the number of offences against local stations in the provinces is increasing. It is worth mentioning that in the same day last year Isteqlal local Radio in Lugar was on set on fire by an unidentified armed group.

It is the government's duty to protect the media and guarantee the safety of journalists. If any media comes under attack by the oppositions, the government should compensate for the damages and facilitate for the media continue their programs. The neglectful attitude of government is one of the reasons as to the inability of the media to recommence activities in a regular manner. Media Watch pleads for financial assistance from all national and international donors to participate in facilitating the resumption of the radio station operations.

Source: Media Watch Report, Volume 27, September 2007. For details, please contact: Sediqullah Tauhidi, Media Watch Project Manager, tauhidi@nai.org.af, web: www.nai.org.af.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN INDIA:

COMMUNITY RADIO FORUM OF INDIA (CRF) IN ASSOCIATION WITH ITS MEMBER NGOS ANNOUNCES FOUR STATE-LEVEL CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOPS ON COMMUNITY RADIO:

State	CRF in Association with	Dates	Location	Outreach	Contact
Gujarat	Drishiti & Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS)	5 - 6 October 2007	Ahmedabad	100 Groups	Drishiti: Nimmi Chauhan 079 - 26851235 / 66614235 drishitiad1@gmail.com
Andhra Pradesh	Deccan Development Society (DDS)	11 - 13 October 2007	Pastapur & Machnoor Village	20 Groups	DDS: Jayasri 040-2776 4577 / 2776 4722 ddshyderabad@gmail.com
Himachal Pradesh	One World South Asia (OWSA) & Local Partners	9 - 10 October 2007	Dharamshala	20 Groups	OWSA: Sameen Siddiqui 011 - 41689000 Extn: 113 sameen.siddiqui@oneworld.net
Uttarakhand	Ideosync Media Combine, OWSA & Mountain Forum Himalayas	16 - 17 October 2007	Dehradun	25 Groups	Ideosync: Anisha Gupta 0129-4131883 / 6510156 anishag@ideosyncmedia.org

Those interested to participate in the workshops can contact the organizers directly.

NEPAL:

COMMUNITY RADIO SUPPORT CENTRE AND FREE VOICE, NETHERLANDS COMMENCE SUPPORT FOR CRS IN NEPAL

Community Radio Support Centre (CRSC)/NEFEJ and Free Voice, Netherlands have begun their second phase of support to Community Radios in Nepal. Support extended by CRSC includes financial support for basic equipment purchase, in house training and mentoring, and specialised training programs in production, management and technical areas. The total sum of the collaboration is approximately 200,000 Euro. In the last phase of its support CRSC had generally supported all community radio stations that had applied for assistance. In this phase the Centre has taken a policy of supporting only a select group of stations in order to be able to provide complete and holistic support. One of the key components of the CRSC/FV project is the establishment of Radio Knowledge Centre for community radio knowledge management. The Knowledge Centre will carry compendiums of success stories including translations in English for international dissemination, collection of success stories from other parts of the world, complete information on community radios in Nepal, publications related to community broadcasting in Nepal, etc. The Knowledge Centre will eventually have an online outlet as well. Similarly, initiatives have begun for establishing a focal station in Eastern Nepal for providing maintenance and other technical support to community radios of that region. The CRSC/FV project includes lobbying and advocacy package as well.

In addition to the above activities, CRSC has also initiated “Radio for all” campaign to distribute FM receivers to far flung populations. The distribution is carried out through a community radio station of that area so that a direct link can be established between the people and the station. The station has to distribute the receivers along with a commitment to broadcast in the local language of the area where the receivers are being distributed. CRSC has initiated a campaign of raising funds through individuals to buy the receivers. So far 1200 receivers have been distributed.

For further details, please contact Raghu Mainali, Coordinator of CRSC, rmainali@wlink.com.np or crsc@nefej.org.np, internet: <http://www.nefej.org/crsc.htm>

ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY RADIO BROADCASTERS IN NEPAL (ACORAB) HANDS OVER RADIO EQUIPMENT SUPPORT TO 17 COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS:

August 31, 2007, Kathmandu. ACORAB has handed over studio equipment to 17 community radio stations under the “Strengthening the Community Radio for Democracy, Development and Peace Building” supported financially by DanidaHUGOU (Danish Aid Agency). Additional 15 radio stations will receive support for acquiring transmitter and antenna system in near future. Altogether 35 community radio stations have been selected so far to receive support.

The equipment support is expected to enhance the role of community radio stations in contributing in the upcoming election of the constituent assembly as well as the ensuing constitution making process. The support will also strengthen the independence of the community radio stations and their ability to access and disseminate information sustainably.

In order to maintain transparency and fairness, ACORAB made a public call for applications for proposal on May 8, 2007 in one of the main vernaculars of Nepal. The call for application

was also posted in ACORAB's website along with guidelines for application in Nepali and English languages. The guidelines clearly mentioned the support criteria, including the size and quantity of equipment support. Altogether 64 applications were received. On the basis of the documents submitted, interviews and field visits, an independent committee made the final recommendations for support.

For further details, please contact: Pramod Tandukar, Executive Director, ACORAB email: info@acorab.org, internet: www.acorab.org

RADIO PURBANCHAL - ALL WOMEN'S RADIO ESTABLISHED

Radio Purbanchal – a community radio station governed and managed entirely by women has begun its services in the town of Biratnagar in Eastern Nepal. The station where the entire team of producers, reporters and technicians are women has a transmitter of 100 watts. It began test transmission from September 27, 2007. Radio Purbanchal, which is the first ever women's radio station in Nepal has received support from CRSC.

For further details, please contact: Mrs. Kamala Kandel, Chairperson, email: crsc@nefej.org.np

FIJI:

FIJI INTERIM GOVERNMENT STEPS AWAY FROM DEMOCRACY: EMERGENCY LAWS REACTIVATED, POTENTIALLY CURBING FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, MEDIA

September 25, 2007. The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) has expressed its concern at reports that Fiji's interim government has reactivated emergency laws which potentially curb Fijians' rights to freedom of expression and free media, among other human rights infringements.

According to reports, Fiji's military rulers were already actively intimidating the media, arbitrarily detaining citizens, searching premises without warrants, and restricting Fijians' rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and privacy.

Then, on September 7, interim ruler military chief Commodore Frank Bainimarama re-imposed the Public Emergency Decree, giving the military increased powers and less accountability.

IFJ Asia-Pacific Director Jacqueline Park said this recent development undermines the government's promise to re-establish the rule of law and democratic society, following the military coup d'etat in December 2006.

"Despite Mr. Bainimarama's promise of establishing democracy in Fiji and recognising the rights of citizens, progress in achieving these goals is yet to be realised," Park said.

"By reimposing these emergency laws, the government is going backwards in their commitments of developing a Fijian democracy."

Recent announcements from Fiji's military council have made it clear that neither the deposed Prime Minister, Laisenia Qarase, nor the main opposition party, Soqosoqo Duavata ni Lewenivanua (SDL), is permitted to run as a candidate in the next national election.

Also disturbing is the interim government's attempts to silence human rights advocates, signifying their objection to free discussion and undermining their once stated concerns of protecting human rights and democratic values.

The IFJ supports the initiative of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) in urging Fiji's interim government to take all possible steps to develop democracy and return Fiji to the rule of law.

**SOURCE: International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Brussels, www.ifj.org;
Distributed by IFEX CLEARING HOUSE; Internet site: <http://www.ifex.org/>**

BANGLADESH:

BANGLADESH IS ON THE WAY TO OPEN-UP THE COMMUNITY RADIO: MINISTRY OF INFORMATION FORMS A HIGH LEVEL COMMITTEE

An eight member high level committee comprising of Government Officials and representative from Community Radio Advocacy Group has been formed by Ministry of Information of Bangladesh.



Mr. Md. Mahbubul Alam, the Director General of Bangladesh Betar (Bangladesh Radio) is the Convener of the committee. Other members of the committee are: Mr. Iftekher Hossain, Principal Information Officer (Current Charge), Mr. Nasimul Kader Chowdhury, Deputy Director General (News), Bangladesh Betar, Mr. Md. Abdur Rouf, Director (News) Bangladesh Betar, Mr. Mohesh Chandra Roy, Senior Engineer, (Research and Receive Cell) Bangladesh Betar, Mr. Faroha Suhrowardi, Deputy Director (Liaison) Bangladesh Betar, Mr. Kamrul Hasan Monju, Executive Director, Mass-Line Media Centre and Mr. AHM Bazlur Rahman-S21BR, Chief Executive Officer, Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication(BNNRC). The committee will submit a concept note, guideline and a regulatory frame (draft) of Community Radio to the Secretary of the Ministry of Information within a month.

Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) along with other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) has been carrying out advocacy and lobbying activities over the last several years to put pressure on the Government to open up the Community Radio in Bangladesh.

Just last year, a National Consultation on Community Radio was jointly organized by MMC, BNNRC, FOCUS, YPSA and VOICE and supported by UNESCO, UNICEF and UNDP-Bangladesh with the goal of identifying course of action on how to proceed for introducing Community Radio in Bangladesh. At the end of that consultation, participants agreed to put more focused effort on Community Radio piloting and the enactment of the draft Broadcasting Act 2003. However, no pilot CR project has been started in Bangladesh so far

despite the fact that several organizations of the advocacy group have capable human resources along with ready content and organizational motivation to initiate, manage and sustain pilot Community Radio projects.

For further details, please contact: AHM Bazlur Rahman-S21BR, Chief Executive Officer, BNNRC, e-mail: ceo@bnnrc.net, bnnrc@bd.drik.net, internet: www.bnnrc.net.

JAPAN:

AMARC-JAPAN WORKING GROUP FORMED IN KOBE, JAPAN

June 23, 2007, Kobe, Japan. The AMARC-Japan working group has been launched today in Kobe by the community radio workers and activists working in Japan. The inaugural meeting of the group, which took place in the Takatori Community Centre, has formed an executive committee comprising of four members. Earlier, the meeting endorsed the Establishment of AMARC Japan Working Group Declaration, which facilitated the way for the formal establishment of the AMARC-Japan working group. A set of guidelines and constitution was also passed on the occasion.

Speaking earlier in the meeting, Junichi Hibino, President of the community radio FMYY spoke about the importance of the principles of AMARC and the need to work with AMARC to promote the community radio sector in Japan. The meeting was also addressed by Matsuura Tetsuo, the Vice President for East Asia in the AMARC Asia Pacific Board. He talked about the objectives of AMARC and how the group could work with AMARC to advance its objectives.

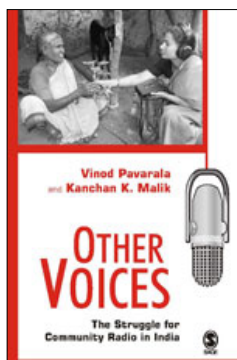
Following him, Suman Basnet, Regional Coordinator of AMARC Asia Pacific made a presentation on the state of the Community Radio Sector in the Asia Pacific region, the challenges and opportunities and what AMARC as an international network offers to its members.

The meeting of the AMARC-Japan working group issued the Kobe Note, which outlines the mission, policies and activities of the group. The meeting was hosted by the Community Radio FMYY and more than 35 community radio workers, activists and academics from Kobe and other cities of Japan participated. Following the meeting, a celebration dinner was organized at the Takatori community centre, which houses several civil society organizations along with the Community Radio FMYY within its premises.

To receive more information about the AMARC-Japan Working Group, please contact: Tetsuo Matsuura, matfite@gmail.com and Junichi Hibino, hibino@tcc117.org

[AMARC Japan special edition of e-newsletter to be published in the first week of October 2007 will carry details related to the launching meeting of AMARC-JAPAN Working Group]

By Frederick Noronha



'Other Voices: The Struggle for Community Radio in India' by two University of Hyderabad scholars -- Vinod Pavarala and Kanchan K. Malik -- has just been published by Sage.

Publishers Sage called the title "a significant study of an emerging alternative media scene in India, in the larger context of the globalisation of mass communication" and said it explores community radio in India.

Noting the global media trend towards mergers, acquisitions and concentration of ownerships in "fewer and fewer corporate hands", Sage said this study investigates the ideologies and communication practices of various community-based organisations that have been using community radio as a means for empowerment at the grassroots. The authors look at radio projects in four large regions of India -- in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat and Jharkhand.

Frederick Noronha interviews the authors of the book: Vinod Pavarala, who is Professor of Communication and Dean, Sarojini Naidu School of Communication, University of Hyderabad and Dr Kanchan K Malik, who is a lecturer there.

FN: Briefly, what is the book all about?

VP: This book basically documents the four major community radio initiatives in India that have been going for the past eight years or so. That's the Deccan Development Society of DDS (in Medak in Andhra Pradesh), Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (in Gujarat), Nammadhwani project in the Kolar district of Karnataka, and the Challa Ho Gaon Mein in Jharkhand. Looking at those four projects we tried to analyse the ideologies and philosophies of community radio, the degree of involvement and participation in local communities in programme production. Importantly, these are mainly non-literate rural communities. We also looked at the ways in which their listeners have responded to the programmes.

FN: What would you see as the issues emerging?

VP: One interesting thing is the period we cover is just the same period when all these communities have been waiting for licensing regime to emerge from the national capital of New Delhi. All these people had come up with creative ways to do audio production in the absence of the right to broadcast themselves.

Nammadhwani did it with "cable radio", while DDS did it with narrow-casting (or distributing recorded tapes).

All of them were fulfilling an important need in areas that were largely under served by the mainstream media. These were communities whose issues and problems rarely get reflected in the mainstream media, and they found these alternative media outlets ideal to highlight their local problems, to articulate local identities, in their own languages...

KM: Yes, language is an important thing. Being able to broadcast in the local dialect (is crucial).

FN: Interesting....

VP: In a country where language changes every few kilometres, the projects we studied show that radio done by people in their own languages could be a most effective tool for addressing problems of development.

In Jharkhand, when we asked some listeners why they don't listen to All Indian Radio Ranchi. One man said, "Woh Hindi humko Angrezi lagta hai!" (Their brand of Hindi sounds almost as alien as English to us!) It only shows how deeply the linguistic identities run in our country.

The programming of 'Chalo Ho Gaon Mein', for instance, uses a combination of the Maghi and Bhojpuri. They call their version of the spoken language "Tutti-Footi Hindi" (broken Hindi).

I think what is happening in the country is that a lot of identity politics that started unravelling in the 1980s and 1990s were an outcome of attempts to homogenise our cultural diversity in the names of one-nature, one-culture, one-language. The Punjab, Assam, Gorkhaland agitation, and also identity politics in the south through political parties like the Telugu Desam then became visible. There's nothing wrong in saying in you're a Telugu first and an Indian next.

KK: It was the initiative of the NGOs working in the area, and came out of their whole approach to development. It wasn't a top-down form of development you see in other organisations. Here they were thinking of a participatory approach. Lot of other projects are also following that approach.

VP: All India Radio (AIR) also tried its own experiments with local radio, much earlier. State-run radio stations like ones at Nagercoil or Hospet were there with good intentions and good station managers. But they failed. They were wound up very soon, partly because this kind of participatory mode of radio programming of an already established culture of participatory development (didn't work with them). You can't knock on people's doors and suddenly say you make radio programmes on your own.

Some of the NGOs we studied, the DDS for example, have worked in the area for 15 years. On issues of land, food security, biodiversity, water, gender equality... issues of survival.

They've done it in a way that involved communities, and empowered women's collective. There was an ethic of people doing something for themselves. Media came at the end of it all, not overnight. People were trying to take control of their culture, their land, their markets. When the media solution came to them, they just thought it was very natural.

They ask: why can't we tell our own stories through our own eyes. Why should others tell our stories, second-hand?

FN: Are you optimistic about the (limited) experience for "community radio" in India so far? Do you believe it can be scaled-up?

VP: Absolutely.

We aren't quite sure that the Johnny Apple-trees approach -- plant apple trees everywhere to get a forest of apples -- just because there is a policy available now. I think the need should be felt by the community. They should perceive a lack of voice, in representing their issues and their problems. They should be searching for some tool.

Somebody can suggest it. You can't say let's have 5000 radio stations (across a huge country like India) and overnight hope to have it... it doesn't work like that.

One interesting thing was that when we spoke to some people, some asked questions like, "We don't even have food to eat. Can radio give us food to eat?" The answer, we found there itself; many times you don't have food to eat, because you don't have a voice to ask for it.

Radio might not give you food, but it might give you a voice to ask for it. Bread versus radio is a little bit of an unfair question. People probably need both, and perhaps one is even linked to the other.

FN: What about people's participation in such initiatives?

We often say people should participate in radio programming. We say that people should come into their station and give their time. We found that where people were involved, listenership also increases, simply because audiences know people from their village participated. Participation in programmes seems closely tied in listenership.

KM: We also trace the complex history of the Indian broadcasting policy, from its early colonial days to the more recent GoI guidelines till the November 2006 period, when the Indian Cabinet approved community radio (in the proper sense).

We also undertake an analysis of documents available from the 1950s. For a long time now, the Government of India has been talking about making airwaves more democratic...

VP: There are some wonderful nuggets of wisdom hidden in some of those reports. But the great intentions never get implemented. The Prasar Bharat Review Commission 2000 chaired by (IT mega-entrepreneur Infosys's) Narayanmurthy, has some amazing stuff about how radio should be local, about recognising local identities and such issues.

KM: One broader thing we're trying to argue is that in order to be good citizens in democratic societies, one needs to participate in the larger democratic sphere in terms of both information consumption and information production and transition.

Many people continue to be marginalised and left out as nonentities. We are suggesting that community radio in India has the potential to create an alternative public sphere where the unlettered, marginalised could participate with some confidence and play a role in nation building.

FN: But there still seems to be fear in India over the possibilities of empowerment, and what it involves.

VP: It looks like that the current regime is making all the right noises about the empowerment of people by bringing up issues like the Right to Information, the National Rural Employment

Guarantee Act, etc. There's scope for optimism that the rulers are catching up with the reality of grassroots empowerment. We need to see....

There's absolutely no ground for fear. Official organs of the state are now talking about need to be more participatory. Why not take further steps and give them a voice? By announcing policy guidelines, this government has moved away from the fears previous governments have had.

FN: What about the situation elsewhere, in other countries?

KM: We also looked at comparative CR policies of other countries - Canada, Ireland, US, South Africa and Australia, UK to some extent.

These countries were picked because they gave us some examples of durable community radio policies, which have withstood the test of time. Or in the case of South Africa, though relatively new in its origin, its policy represents a very liberal, very pluralistic and very democratic broadcasting approach in the post-Apartheid Constitution. It creates the kind of structure we have been dreaming of.

FN: Tell us a little about your own involvement with the issue of community radio?

KM: I was introduced to CR by Dr Vinod (my PhD guide). I've been broadly involved in communication and development.

VP: I could practically link it to the UNESCO conference we at the University of Hyderabad co-hosted in July 2000 in Hyderabad, and the Pastapur Initiative (accepted by campaigners from across India subsequent to that event).

It involved co-hosting conference. I was myself quite involved with that. In many ways, we enjoyed being part of community of campaigners for community radio in India today. It's like an extended family. Then, we also have the CR-India online network [<http://mail.sarai.net/mailman/listinfo/cr-india>]

We also put together a special issue on community radio for the Economic and Political Weekly, an academic journal with wide reach.

FN: What were the lessons learnt while writing this book?

KM: There was lots of theoretical reading done ... but not too much connection with theory is seen in field. Lot of things were talked about in theory, participatory approaches, empowering women... at the grassroots, one has to hope for change. In the universities of the North, often radio is not seen as having such a big potential to bring about change.

But even in a place like Bhuj (in rural Gujarat), a lot of women reporters trained say they had never earlier worked. Interacting with men is something they've never done before. Now they go to the government offices, and question officials about policies and things like that. Earlier, they were even afraid of talking to people.

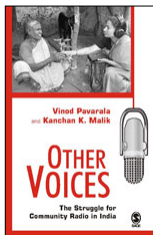
Most people don't know what radio is all about. And they surely don't know what community radio is. When they hear the term, the closest they get to community-radio is thinking of some concept like (one-to-one conversations of) HAM radio.

VP: There are still a lot to be done on issues of gender.

In a place like Jharkhand, a radio reporter, a woman called Silvanti Biranchi was telling us how difficult it had been as a woman, going out and working. One gets looked down upon. There are all kinds of prohibitions. One is expected to play the role of being a daughter, an in-law, and a wife. But change has started coming

In some areas of Jharkhand, some villages didn't have electricity and no roads. But there are radios everywhere. You can see people hanging a radio on the branch of a tree, while they work in their fields. Or blacksmiths working to the voice of a radio. In a way, there are signs of hope. We'd like to think our work involves some kind of action-research approach, with not too much of ivory-tower theorising and analysing, leading to some kind of action. We are also part of the community radio movement.

Frederick Noronha can be contacted at: fred@bytesforall.org; <http://fn.goa-india.org>; phone: +91-832-2409490



2007 / 322 pages, Cloth: Rs 650.00, 978-0-7619-3602-2. To buy Other Voices, please contact: <http://www.sagepub.in>

For the latest from the community radio sector of Asia Pacific, please join the AMARC email list by following the link <http://lists.amarc.org/mailman/listinfo/asiapacific-general> Or just email to amarcap@wlink.com.np to have you subscribed to the list.

THE PHILIPPINES: ONE YEAR AFTER ITS BURNING: RADYO CAGAYANO RISES FROM THE ASHES

By Raymund B. Villanueva

It was the first of July, a Sunday. People were rushing over to the public market after the Mass in Barangay San Jose, Baggao, Cagayan. A van parked amid the many tricycles and the farmers' kuliglig (generator-powered vehicles). Several people alighted and started the sound system up. Within minutes, Radyo Cagayano's voice went back on air. Literally rising from the ashes Baggao's peasant community radio station was heard once more.

“Naimbag nga aldaw, gagayem ken kakabsat ditoy Baggao! (Good morning, town mates and friends here in Baggao!) As of today, Radyo Cagayano is back on air - the voice of the poor, the voice of peasants! A year after our station was burned down it is rising once more to serve the people. Agbiag ti Radyo Cagayano!” (Long live Radyo Cagayano!)



Two speakers on the vehicle carried the announcer's voice far and wide. Many stopped on their tracks. Even more listened.

Attack before dawn

July 2, 2006. Six Radyo Cagayano staff members were sleeping soundly inside the small station at two o'clock in the morning. They stayed overnight to have an early start the next day, hoping to broadcast the station's first Catholic Mass at Baggao's St. Dominic Church. The station was located a few steps from the church itself.



DWRC disc jockey and technician Eric Ayudan said a man in fatigue uniform suddenly kicked the door open and pressed a .45 caliber pistol at his neck. He grappled with his assailant as more armed men barged inside. He was then subdued. The other attackers were armed with M-16 rifles and wearing combat boots and military-style wristwatches. They addressed one of the attackers as “commander” and “sir”.

The five other radio personnel were rudely roused from sleep, Eric's cousin Joy Marcos, station manager Susan Mapa, Arnold Agraan, Arlyn Arella, and Armalyn Baddua. More armed men entered the room. They ordered the victims to sit on the floor, blindfolded and tied them up using the station's microphone and headphone cables.

The assailants ransacked the station and took the victims' money and seven cellular phones. They were then dragged out of the station and ordered to sit just three steps from the station. Through his loose blindfold Eric counted no less than eight assailants, some of whom stood around the station near the surrounding trees and the station's antenna. Meanwhile, two of the attackers poured gasoline on the station's equipment and set it on fire. Eric said the explosion was so huge it reached the top of the old narra tree nearby. The perpetrators did not know there were gallons of paint and thinner, which the staff intended to use to spruce up the station, inside the room. The fire also reached and singed the victims, burning Joy's left cheek and Armalyn and Arlyn's legs and feet.

The attackers fled after the explosion. The victims managed to free themselves. Susan then dashed to the nearby convent to seek the parish priest's help.

Baggao Police, led by SPO3 Jose Durwin, visited the burnt station at nine o'clock in the morning or seven hours after the attack. The town people were already gathered at the site as they came in droves after hearing about the news of the attack. What the victims can not understand was why the police left the evidences like bullets, shells and magazines inside the station. "It was as if they want to make it appear that we were armed ourselves," Joy said.

International condemnation

Condemnation of the attack from local and international media organizations was swift. The very next day, a press conference was held in Manila. It was attended by Susan, Jose Torres Jr of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, Bianca Miglioretto of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (Amarc), and Isabelo Adviento, secretary general of the Alyansa iti Mannalon iti Cagayan (Cagayan Peasant Alliance) or Kaguimungan. Kaguimungan built and operated Radyo Cagayano.

Miglioretto said that community radio stations give voice to the voiceless. Preventing people to air their sentiments are grave violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, she added.

Torres said the attack was a knife thrust on the hearts of all journalists and broadcasters worldwide. He challenged the Arroyo government to investigate the incident and punish the perpetrators.

It took Kaguimungan five long years to save enough funds, buy equipment and build the community radio station. DWRC Radyo Cagayano had its initial test broadcast on April 28, 2006. After three weeks, lightning struck its antenna. Undeterred, the peasants took what remained of the antenna and attached it to a nearby tree. They resumed broadcast in the third week of May 2006. Effectively, DWRC's humble station was in use for only a month. Then it was attacked and burned.

Through AMARC's network of 3,000 community radio stations worldwide, the incident was reported in many countries. Local and international news networks fired stories about the attack left and right. And why not? During the dark days of Martial Law, stations were merely closed not burned.

Many are convinced that the perpetrators were elements of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. AFP Civil Relations chief Brig. Gen. Jaime Buenaflor was swift to deny it.

Why the AFP is being suspected

The Philippine Army had long persecuted the peasants of Baggao. In the late 70s five farmers were beheaded by suspected elements of the 21st Infantry Battalion, then of the Philippine Constabulary before it was transferred to the Philippine Army. The farmers waged protest actions that drove the unit out. The 21st IB was then transferred to Mindanao where it was nearly wiped out by Moro rebels. Curiously, this unit's slogan is "Invincible."



In its place, the 17th IB now terrorizes the people of Baggao. Like its predecessor, the 17th IB is part of the notorious 5th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army.

When the station was still being built by the peasants themselves, Kaguimungan leaders and members suffered unrelenting harassments from the soldiers. In May 2003, then Kaguimungan president Joey Javier was walking home after working on building the station all day. He and his companions were accosted by soldiers and Joey was hacked on his left arm.



Joey was killed on November 11, 2006. His widow Dominga and daughter Helen Joy are convinced the 17th IB had a hand in the killing. On November 27, 2006, Anthony Licyayo, who took over from Joey as Kaguimungan president, was himself killed. Anthony was carrying his two-year old son on their way to his farm when he was shot.

“They (soldiers) were the only ones who were angry at my husband. His assassins fled toward their camp’s direction. It is impossible for them not to have seen them. They also killed Anthony. They also burned our station down!” Dominga said.

“The day they killed my father was the day they ended my future,” Helen Joy, 15 years old, said.

A year after the burning

Cousins Eric and Joy never went back to the station since the attack the year before. They are afraid. They feared they might lose their lives if they did.

We visited them at the farm they were working on to convince them to come with us. At the site Joy went directly to the corner where he left his first-ever leather shoes. There it was, already hardened and glued to the floor.

“We are simple peasants. We just wanted to have our own radio station. What was wrong with that?” Eric asked.

There is nothing wrong with a community radio station that wanted to discuss farmers, women and youth sector issues. What was wrong was a military that was not comfortable with an empowered citizenry.

“We had lots of visitors here when we were on air. They asked us to greet their friends and families, even broadcast messages on air. Baggao was much livelier then. We had our own radio station,” Joy remembered.

Now, only rusted steel and ashes remain of what was once a lively radio station.

Radyo Cagayano is back on air

Kaguimungan is weathering the station’s burning and the killings of its leaders and members. Their active campaign produced support from fellow broadcasters in Germany who sent donations for basic equipment. These were the equipment used in the “Live Broadcast” last July 1 to announce Radyo Cagayano’s rebirth.

Lina Dagohoy was “on board” that day. Lina’s husband, Isabelo Adviento, is one of the remaining Kaguimungan leaders. But he can not go home because of relentless military harassment and threats. Lina took over from Isabelo's duties as Kaguimungan spokesperson—not unlike how Gabriela Silang led the Ilokos Revolt after the death of her husband Diego. Lina's first husband, Reynaldo Dagohoy also offered his life to the struggle for land for the people of Baggao.

“This is how we started anyway,” Lina said. “We made the rounds of the market, the milling place, wherever there were people, using the public address system. We did that regularly until we were able to build Radyo Cagayano. We do not mind going through it all over again,” she added.

The van drove around Barangay San Jose’s market place a couple of times. The vendors were delighted to hear their radio station is back on air. Not a few asked about the date of the regular daily broadcasts.

Lina repeated the announcement over and over again. “Kamannalon ken kamarigrigat.. (fellow peasants and poor people) Radyo Cagayano is here once more to serve you. It is back as the voice of the peasants, the voice of the poor, the voice of the people of Baggao. Long live Radyo Cagayano!”

Raymund B. Villanueva is head of the Radio Cluster of Kodaao Productions. Kodaao trained Radyo Cagayano staff members prior to the test broadcast.

THE PHILIPPINES: RADIO AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH WORKSHOP BOLSTERS WOMEN’S ESTEEM

By Bianca Miglioretto

Fourteen participants composed of female high school students, two midwives, mothers, and members of Aguid Chatil Organization, a local people’s organisation attended a workshop on community radio in Aguid, a town in Sagada, Philippines. The training, held from May 31 to June 2, 2007, aimed to promote reproductive health in the community through radio. It was organized by the Philippine Health Social Science Association Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) chapter, a partner organisation of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in collaboration with Isis International-Manila.



On the first day of the workshop, participants were divided into three groups and were asked to draft running sheets for a 10-minute radio programme that they will be producing during the workshop’s duration. On the second day, after learning the “Dos and Don’ts of Radio Interview,” participants engaged in field work as they interviewed community women on the topics of “Early Pregnancy,” “Drinking, Smoking, and Going Out at Night of the Youth,” and “Advantages of Women Organising.”

Not having experienced an interview before, one of the participants was all smiles after she interviewed members of the local women's organisation and related how insightful the experience had been for her. After overcoming their shyness, participants were eagerly looking for other women to interview.

An improvised mobile studio was installed in the trainers' boarding house on the last day of the training. After the trainees had prepared the editing plan for the interviews, their scripts for the anchoring, and the music and other sound effects, they then recorded their features in the studio.



The youth group had difficulty at first but after several tries, they were happy with their radio plug "Tinig Kabataan" (Voice of the Youth). The group on "Early Pregnancy" started their feature very creatively with a short radio drama, which was successful in attracting everyone's attention. The group on "Women Organising" was the last to record but proved how quickly they learned as they were able to do the recording without the trainer's assistance.

Participants were indeed very proud of what they have produced. At the end of the training, one participant said that "When we drafted the running sheet of the feature, it looked easy. But doing radio is hard work, [but] it is fun."

The following day, the trainees were invited by the Radyo ng Bayan's (Government owned) anchor in the nearby town of Bontoc to present their features. The Radyo ng Bayan anchor was impressed by the productions. The anchor then interviewed the students, wherein the participants realised that talking live over the radio is yet another learning experience. When they were offered a 30-minute weekly radio show, they happily committed themselves. Now, "Tinig Kabataan" airs on Radyo ng Bayan in Mt. Province every Sunday at 2 pm.

Bianca Miglioretto, Radio and alternative Media Officer, Isis International-Manila 3 Marunong st., P.O. Box 1837, Quezon City 1100, Philippines, T (00623 2) 928 1956 Ext. 109, F 924 1065, bianca@isiswomen.org, www.isiswomen.org

OBITUARY



Mr. Zainal Suryokusumo
[May 25, 1939 - August 30, 2007]

Mr. Zainal A. Suryokusumo of Indonesia passed away on August 30, 2007 at 5:30 AM in his home in Jakarta, Indonesia. He had been unwell for some time.

Pak Zainal and Babeh as he was lovingly known to his friends and colleagues was a champion of community radio in Indonesia. He was one of the leading figures for promoting press freedom and freedom of expression. A long standing journalist, activist and writer, Pak Zainal was an inspiration and guide to many.

A '1966 activist,' (period of students' uprising against Sukarno) he founded the ARH FM 'movement radio' in Jakarta, named after Arief Rahman Hakim, a student hero who died during the 1966 protests. Pak Zainal was on the advisory board of ARH FM and also contributed to several other media related organizations until his final days. In the year 1970, he co-founded PRSSNI (Indonesia Commercial Radio Association). He has authored and edited number of publications including Hand Book for Rural Broadcasting in 1975.

In 1998, he co-founded the Indonesian Press and Broadcasting Society (MPPI) to advocate for press law, telecommunication Law and broadcasting Law. MPPI also worked closely with the Indonesian Community Radio Association (JRKI) to develop its organizational capacity until its first congress in 2004. Pak Zainal was at the forefront in establishing emergency radio in Aceh post Tsunami in 2005 and also in Yogyakarta, after the earthquake of 2006.

He provided invaluable support in organizing the first AMARC Asia Pacific regional conference in Jakarta in November 2005. Even though Pak Zainal - a personal friend of many of us in the community radio sector - is no longer with us, his work will continue to inspire us and guide us for a long time.

AMARC offers its heartfelt condolences to Pak Zainal's bereaved family. May his soul rest in peace.

For sending contributions to AMARC Asia Pacific e-newsletter, please contact:

AMARC Asia Pacific Regional Office,
Kathmandu, Nepal.

Phone: +977 1 5554811

Fax: +977 1 5521714

Email: suman@wlink.com.np

Website: <http://www.asiapacific.amarc.org>

[Note: All articles in this newsletter can be freely reprinted and distributed]