PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING

All India Radio - Fact Sheet

Broadcasting in India actually began about 13 years before AIR came into existence. In June 1923 the Radio Club of Bombay made the first ever broadcast in the country. This was followed by the setting up of the Calcutta Radio Club five months later. The Indian Broadcasting Company (IBC) came into being on July 23, 1927, only to face liquidation in less than three years.

In April 1930, the Indian Broadcasting Service, under the Department of Industries and Labour, commenced its operations on an experimental basis. Lionel Fielden was appointed the first Controller of Broadcasting in August 1935. In the following month Akashvani Mysore, a private radio station was set up. On June 8, 1936, the Indian State Broadcasting Service became All India Radio.

The Central News Organisation (CNO) came into existence in August, 1937. In the same year, AIR came under the Department of Communications which was shifted four years later to the Department of Information and Broadcasting. When India attained independence, there were six radio stations in India, at Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Tiruchirapalli and Lucknow. There were three in Pakistan (Peshawar, Lahore and Dacca). AIR then had a coverage of just 2.5 % of the area and 11% of the population. The following year, CNO was split up into two divisions, the News Services Division (NSD) and the External Services Division (ESD). In 1956 the name AKASHVANI was adopted for the National Broadcaster. The Vividh Bharati Service was launched in 1957 with popular film music as its main component.

AIR - Today

As India's National Broadcaster and also the premier Public Service Broadcaster, All India Radio (AIR) has been serving to inform, educate and entertain the masses since it's inception, truly living up to its motto – 'Bahujan Hitaya : Bahujan Sukhaya'. One of the largest broadcasting organisations in the world in terms of the number of languages of broadcast, the spectrum of socio-economic and cultural diversity it serves, AIR's home service comprises 385 stations today located across the country, reaching nearly 92% of the country's area and 99.2 % of the total population. AIR originates programmes in 23 languages and 146 dialects. The entire Akashvani network consisting of 277 stations and 432 broadcast transmitters (148 are MW (Medium Wave), 236 FM (Frequency Modulation) and 48 SW (Short Wave) transmitters as on 31.03.2012), provide coverage to 99% of the population spread over the country.

The News Desk

The News Services Division of All India Radio broadcasts 647 bulletins daily for a total duration of nearly 56 hours in about 90 Languages/Dialects in Home, Regional, External and DTH Services. 314 news headlines on hourly basis are also being mounted on FM mode from 41 AIR Stations. 44 Regional News Units originate 469 daily news bulletins in 75 languages. In addition to the daily news bulletins, the News Services Division also mounts number of news-based programmes on topical subjects from Delhi and its Regional News Units.

Linking the Outside World

Programmes of the External Services Division are broadcast in 11 Indian and 16 foreign languages reaching out to more than 100 countries.

Entertainment Zone

AIR operates at present 18 FM stereo channels, called AIR FM Rainbow, targeting the urban audience in a refreshing style of presentation. Four more FM channels called, AIR FM Gold, broadcast composite news and entertainment programmes from Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai and Mumbai.

Transcription & Programme Exchange Service

The Transcription Service was started on 3rd April 1954 and entrusted with the main function of preparing transcription of speeches of all dignitaries with special focus on the Prime Ministers and Presidents of the country.

Doordarshan – Fact Sheet

Doordarshan began with an experimental telecast starting in Delhi on 15 September 1959, with a small transmitter and a makeshift studio. The regular daily transmission started in 1965 as a part of All India Radio. The television service was extended to Mumbai and Amritsar in 1972. Up to 1975, only seven Indian cities had a television service and Doordarshan remained the sole provider of television in India. Television services were separated from radio on April 1, 1976. Finally, in 1982, Doordarshan as a National Broadcaster came into existence. Krishi Darshan was the first program telecast on Doordarshan. It commenced on January 26, 1967 and is one of the longest running programs on Indian television. In the same year, colour TV was introduced in the Indian market with the live telecast of the Independence Day speech by then prime minister Indira Gandhi on 15 August 1982, followed by the 1982 Asian Games which were held in Delhi. Now more than 90 percent of the Indian population can receive Doordarshan (DD National) programmes through a network of nearly 1,400 terrestrial transmitters. There are about 46 Doordarshan studios producing TV programmes today.

Presently, Doordarshan operates 21 channels – two All India channels - DD National and DD News, 11 Regional language Satellite Channels (RLSC), four State Networks (SN), an International channel, a Sports Channel DD Sports and two channels Rajya Sabha TV & Lok Sabha TV for live broadcast of parliamentary proceedings.

DD National

National programmes, mainly aimed at promoting national integration and inculcating a sense of unity and fraternity are broadcast on this channel, which is the Number One channel in the country in terms of absolute viewer-ship. DD National blends a healthy mix of entertainment, information and education. The service is available in terrestrial mode from 5.30 am till midnight. In the satellite mode, DD National is available round the clock. The telecast time of this composite public service channel is so devised that it caters to the needs of different viewers at different timings.

All major National events like Republic Day Parade, Independence Day Celebrations, National Award Presentation ceremonies, President and Prime Minister's addresses to the Nation, President's address to the joint session of Parliament, important Parliamentary debates, Railway and General Budget presentations, Question Hour in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, Election results and analysis, swearing-in ceremonies, President and Prime Minister's visits abroad and visits of important foreign dignitaries to India are covered live on DD National. Important sports events like Olympics, Asian Games, Cricket Tests and One Day Internationals involving India and other important sporting encounters are also telecast live.

The education component is drawn from the contributions from varied sources such as Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), University Grants Commission (UGC), Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) and State Institutes of Education Technology (SIET). In addition, there are sponsored programmes like Turning Point, Adult Education programmes, Terra Quiz and Bhoomi (programme on environment), programmes on issues related to women, tribal affairs and other public service programmes which are broadcast on regular basis.

DD News, launched in November, 2003, is the first and the only terrestrial news channel in the country reaching approximately half of the population.

The bi-lingual (English and Hindi) DD News follows a half an hour dynamic wheel of programming. Besides round the clock telecast of news bulletins, several programmes covering business, sports, health, art & culture are broadcast regularly supported by a network of 23 Regional News Units (RNUs) spread across India. Panel discussions are held on topics of current affairs

A dedicated Digital Satellite News Gathering System, including hi-tech gadgets like Satellite Phones and Video Phones are available for DD News DD News also has a website – www.ddinews.gov.in which, besides streaming bulletins for two hours every day, puts out stories on the various news events throughout the day.

Kendras in North East with dedicated SNG for news feeds are: Shillong, Imphal, Kohima, Itanagar, Agartala and Aizwal.

Courtesy : Prasar Bharati

Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides
Rig Veda

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YOJANA

What is Public?

The debate on Public Service Broadcasting in India has often been sharp and acrimonious. The landmark judgement of the Supreme Court in 1995 declared airwaves to be the public property. The court directed the government to regulate the airwaves in the interest of the public. Ruling against the monopoly control of the airwaves, the court strongly argued that airwaves were essential to ensure the diversity of views and opinion which is the life blood of democracy. The judgement has had far reaching and significant implications on the government policy on radio and television in India. This judgement is rightly considered to be a turning point in defining the relationship of the government and the public so far as the broadcasting arena was concerned. It also opened the debate about the concept of the public sphere in the Indian context and the role of the government in making it vibrant, representative and truly democratic.

The questions relating to Public Service Broadcasting need to be situated in the broader context of what the great German sociologist and critical theorist Jurgen Habermas called the *Public Sphere*. In his view the 'public sphere is a realm within social life in which public opinion can be formed and which is accessible to all'. The corner-stone of the public sphere is the 'rational-critical' debate which infuses vitality and dynamism to the public discourse. The threat to the public sphere can come as much from the government as from the commercial mass media which feeds on advertisement, public relations and dumbing down of the audiences to manufacture a consensus of the mindless kind.

However, it is not so easy to reach a consensus on what constitutes the core values of Public Service Broadcasting. It is also a contentious issue to define the role of the government vis a vis the organs associated with Public Service Broadcasting. But there could be no doubt that the government has to play a critical role in putting in place a transparent mechanism to nurture and protect a thriving public sphere not monopolised either by the government or by a small number of corporate entities dominating the broadcast sector. Indeed ensuring diversity, public funding of the public service broadcaster to facilitate freedom from commercial imperatives and 'enhancing social, political and cultural citizenship' remain the core values of Public Service Broadcasting.

Public Service Broadcasting poses a number of difficult questions before the policy makers in terms of content, technology, administrative structure and its role in society. In the deluge of the glitzy and trivialising media how does one provide development oriented news and current affairs programmes and local content catering to the needs of the people in an interesting format? Should the Public Service Broadcaster adopt the DTH platform, push for IPTV based transmission or invest in Digital Terrestrial Transmission to leverage its large network built over the decades? Who decides where the Public Service Broadcaster is serving only the government and not the public? What model of financing needs to be adopted- advertisement based, license fee based or through direct funding by the government? These are important questions which need to be discussed and a broad consensus reached to have a Public Service Broadcasting in the country that is democratising, empowering and liberating.

Much water has flown down the Ganges since the first SITE experiment in 1975 which was an important landmark in the Public Service Broadcasting in India. The convergence of the TV, Radio and internet and other components of Information Technology has opened enormous possibilities of expanding the reach and effectiveness of the Public Service Broadcasting. The broadcast technology need not be limited to the traditional TV or Radio transmission models. There exists a huge potential to create and foster Digital Commons to cater to the needs of the people utilising the on-demand communication and access to content through various channels of communication. There could be many such possibilities which can be explored to work out a new structure which transcends the existing TV-Radio paradigm of Public Service Broadcasting. Perhaps by utilising the democratising potential of new communication technologies we can build a truly public Public Service Broadcasting. ❑

Prasar Bharati at the Crossroads

Jawhar Sircar

Each crossroad offers a route forward: it can permit leap-frogging to the restless pro-changers and it also has the in-built temptation or danger to get deflected to the left or to the right, by just arguing our heads off, as we often do. Or, we could also move backwards, as we have done at times. So, having placed all the cards on the table, in exercise of the 'autonomy of thought' (a la Sam Pitroda), let us see which direction is finally taken by India

RASAR BHARATI came into being on 28th November 1997 after Prasar Bharati Act of 1990 was finally implemented by the Government and the Directorates of All India Radio (Akashvani) and Doordarshan were separated from Ministry of Information & Broadcasting and placed under an 'autonomous body'. It was a momentous decision that came some seven years after Parliament had taken pains to conceive of a Public Service Broadcaster, whose character was eloquently worded in the Statement of Objects and Reasons:

"To confer autonomy on Akashvani and Doordarshan so that they may function in a fair, objective and creative manner, it was proposed to provide for the establishment of an autonomous corporation and to entrust to it functions which are discharged by Akashvani and Doordarshan. The proposed corporation would function as a genuinely autonomous body, innovative, dynamic and flexible-with a degree of credibility. It would function in a democratic manner which enriches our democratic traditions and institutions, being responsible to the people and Parliament, and keeping in mind the variegated traditions, languages and cultures of the country. Accordingly the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Bill was introduced in the Parliament".

The questions that an Indian citizen may ask after 16 years of the implementation of the Act of Parliament are:

a) Is Prasar Bharati really autonomous?

b) Is it functioning as a genuinely autonomous body that is innovative, dynamic and credible?

It would be difficult to give a straight 'Yes or a No' answer to this question, though many would be tempted to jump to a firm 'No'. There is no doubt that both Akashvani and Doordarshan have been pushed to a corner by more attractive, more dynamic, more colourful, more entertaining and louder channels and radio stations. The course of history cannot be altered by making pronouncements and protestations, and therefore, let us begin with what is factually correct.

In 1997 when Prasar Bharati came into existence, DD had only two channels: DD I and DD II, which had started in the Metro cities and then fanned out to other parts of India on terrestrial mode. This meant that terrestrial transmitters affixed to towers relayed telecasts to each other. In those days, many of the current crop of private 'channels' were incubating on DD as "programmes", like NDTV and Aaj Tak, though a handful of 'TV channels' were also taking birth. They ultimately broke away as separate

satellite channels of their own, once the skies were opened up.

Similarly, on the radio front, FM was at an experimental stage and in 1997 only Akashvani had a small number of FM channels, with few private operators in sight. The simple point is that once air waves were opened up to the private sector, it was only expected that vibrant democracy would respond with such competition as possible. This was also happening in the midst of an upsurge when India was going "fully private" and had had enough of the lethargic public sector.

A small correction needs to be made here: Prasar Bharati is, factually speaking, not a 'Corporation' or a PSU, as the term may denote. It is more of an 'autonomous authority' that administers two major public institutions on behalf of the people of India, and is responsible to Parliament through the Ministry of I&B. Yet, there is no doubt

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that Prasar Bharati, Doordarshan and Akashvani have strong associations with the government and its system of governance: it is viewed as being very 'sarkari'.

And why not? After all, its officers and staff have all been recruited by the Government or their authorised officers, through the Union Public Service Commission or the Staff Selection Commission, and they came with full protection of Government rules and regulations as also pay scales and other attributes of a "secure tenure". After decades of working in a pure governmental environment, it

can only be expected that these same officials, who are at the helm of affairs of every department in Akashvani and Doordarshan, carry with them the 'government mind-set' that is not exactly conducive to open market competition. Besides, the Act has specific Sections that ensure all its Recruitment Rules and other important Regulations be in tandem with those of the Government and therefore "mindset" continues to reign unchallenged and unabated. The Government's inheritance does not, of course, always imply stagnation or that everything about it is retrograde, that there is no professionalism. If such was the case, the proud Delhi Metro and the Indian Armed Forces would not have been our pride or the Indian Railway system (that has one of the world's highest burdens to carry within the stringent Government system) would have been branded as 'non-professional', which it is not!

I would submit that it is neither fair nor proper to continue with this binary thinking because if one approaches the real core of governance, and not get hurt by the prickly outer core of frustrating babudom that every citizen has to face, one would see a degree of professionalism and dedication (and absolute honesty) in what we can call "engine room" of governance. Otherwise things would have come to a halt long, long ago.

So one needs to look at the facts: dispassionately, clinically and where required, ruthlessly. The fact is that DD with its 6 All India channels (DD National, DD News, DD Bharati, DD Urdu, DD Sports and DD India), 11 Regional channels, 4 emerging Hindi heartland channels (that are now "work under progress") and a handful of a 'few-hours-a-day' channels not only survives, but holds its own. It is against tough competition from multi-nationals and big independent business houses. There is no flexibility in recruitment or possibility of minimum incentives to its staff, as government procedures reign and take their own time, everywhere. No fresh manpower, except a tiny number of junior technical hands, was

inducted for nearly 20 years and yet the organisation grew, in leaps and bounds, from 236 radio and TV stations in 1997 to the present staggering number of 455 stations. In a small State like Manipur, Akashvani broadcasts in Manipuri, six major dialects and 23 minor dialects every day! 30 languages: this is what a public service broadcaster has to do, to hold the 'idea of India' together in one common bond. This speaks volumes of Prasar Bharati's tenacity and its capacity to carry out its appointed task, without screaming out to the nation.

There is no perfect rating system or TRPs (Television Rating Points) in India and the only one that exists, executed by M/s TAM-India, reports on over 750 million TV viewers with a sample of some 8,000 'people meters'. One can well understand the small fraction of the viewership that can be calibrated, with any degree of certainty, and even this has also been heavily biased in favour of the urban population. 'Terrestrial TV', which still covers approximately 10% of India's TV population (some say only 8%, while others claim it is 13%), is not covered at all by TAM. So exasperating was the viewership measurement situation that Prasar

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Bharati had to take TAM to a quasi-judicial body for redress. In the last few weeks, newspapers indicate that TAM has started stretching out its 'people meters' to LC1 towns, i.e., small towns of one lakh population or below. Whether as a result of this, or whether as a result of the strenuous efforts that PB put in (with assistance from the MIB) to change its entire 'look and feel', the fact remains that DD's

present ratings are quite comparable to other channels.

In the Prime-Time News segment, between 9 pm and 10 pm, DD News appears first by a wide margin, over all other English News channels and even TAM has been reporting this trend for months together. During the same period, TAM also indicates that DD News is either second or third in the Hindi News segment in Prime-Time (i.e., between 8 pm and 9 pm), well ahead of a large number of Hindi News channels. On the General Entertainment (GEC) front, DD and PB simply do not have the funds and the flexibility to go in for the high cost production of expensive TV programming. Yet, it has managed to remain 3rd, beating some 300 or more competitors, including world-class foreign-owned TV channels

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and others owned by mega Indian business houses. There is, therefore, a space for the 'great Indian median' of entertainment, i.e., a form that can be viewed by a large cross-section of Indian society, from the urban to the deep rural. DD strains to perform this function, without resorting to excess glitz, loud sounds or controversial tastes that often injure sentiments of sections of India's viewership. But such ratings are not the only indices of achievement and there is no doubt that DD and AIR have to struggle against fleet-footed competitors, many of which are foreign-owned entities with deep pockets and decades of experience in devastating old orthodox players in developing countries.

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if an organisation cannot be flexible and cannot adapt to latest techniques and professionalism. Here, there is no doubt that Prasar Bharati and its two bodies have received a battering. Part of the fault lies definitely in its leadership (or the lack of it, as several people claim quite vociferously). But it also lies in the extreme constriction within which it is forced to operate. Under the Prasar Bharati Act, all Regulations relating to Recruitments (including professionals) and all service conditions etc., need prior approval of the Central Government. Thus it becomes very difficult to convert existing posts that were determined decades ago (and are lying vacant for several years) into more dynamic technical or highly professional ones. This is not only because of Ministry of I&B, but simply because this Ministry has to send, under the governmental system of working, every such proposal to other different Ministries and expert bodies. We cannot just look the other way and quote scriptures of governmental procedures, when for two long decades, the organization was gripped with complete demoralization of its huge workforce: as private channels weaned away many good low-paid government-recruited talent with attractive offers and the rest just rotted in Prasar Bharati with neither promotion nor fresh blood: some one has to own up!

The whole process of governmental decisions on any major issues takes its own time: which could run into several years. Thus the leadership of Prasar Bharati, DD or AIR may have been overwhelmed by the entire eco-system or given up after the same proposals came back in a classic governmental mode with the 4th or 5th query, many of which may not be strictly relevant but are asked nonetheless. Or, may simply not have tried sincerely: only examination of files and archives can tell us. One can well imagine what the requirements of 455 TV and AIR stations and over 1900 transmitters scattered in every conceivable part of India are, and the sheer magnitude of the problems that may have been enough to deter any sensible head of

organisation from embarking on too many adventures with the 'existing system'. But, as many Associations say bluntly: the leadership of Prasar Bharati, Akashwani and Doordarshan was just not adequately visionary or persistent: many had other interesting power and other games to play. The Ministry can always say that unless perfect proposals of Prasar Bharati are unanimously agreed upon by several ministries, what can or could they do?

What is the existing scheme of governance in Prasar Bharati? It consists of an 'operational autonomy' within which PB functions, to reach the high levels that one has mentioned in the earlier paragraph. Normally, no worthwhile government has either the time or energy or even the inclination to get into micro details. The PB Board consists of a Chairperson, 6 noted professionals as Part-time Members and 5 Whole-time Members i.e., the CEO, the 2 Members in-charge of Personnel and Finance in PB, 2 DGs of AIR and DD and the Ministry's Nominated Member. This Board meets once in two months or so and takes or approves decisions of the PB Secretariat, which

> Government has delegated it's financial powers up to Rs 300 crores to Prasar Bharati: but every tranche of governmental funding comes after several frustrating delays, meanders and dogged pursuals. With not a single Financial Appraisal Officer in postion despite months of efforts, what does financial autonomy matter?

are usually at a macro or policy level. The Board sets the compass for the organisation as well and guides the executive Members in carrying forward its advice. It has also certain disciplinary powers where employees are concerned, after the amendment brought about by Parliament, at the instance of MIB in 2011. Under this, officers and government employees of AIR and DD have been 'placed on

permanent deputation' with Prasar Bharati. Government has delegated its financial powers up to Rs 300 crores to Prasar Bharati: but every tranche of governmental funding comes after several frustrating delays, meanders and dogged pursuals. With not a single Financial Appraisal Officer in position despite months of efforts, what does financial autonomy matter? The Prasar Bharati Act gives a lot of operational autonomy but Sections 32 or 33 of the Act take away most of these by insisting or approval of government on critical issues: hence the mess! Facts are facts but the Prasar Bharati Board is also unanimous that even if the Act is amended, we must have a proper oversight mechanism in place, because accountability is a must.

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Where funding is concerned, let us look at the 11th Five Year Plan. It would appear both PB and the Ministry, have contributed approximately half each to the 'salary and operational expenses' for running the organisation for five years. This works out to approximately Rs. 6000 crores each. There is no reason why, with extra efforts, Prasar Bharati would not be in a position to cross this 50 percent mark and maintain its large work force, which is almost inescapable for maintaining such a huge and far-flung infrastructure, almost all of which has been bequeathed by government. But after going over salaries and operational expenses, let us see what funds were actually spent in technology and programmes during the last Plan period: as this is different from the original stipulated 'Plan Outlay' or 'Budget Estimate': that keep spiralling downwards to reach reality, with a thud. Only Rs. 1589 crores were spent on Prasar Bharati's for this over a period of five years in the 11th Plan.

Out of this, 'Capital Plan' funds that are for replacement and modernisation of technology, transmitters, studios, cameras, transmission facilities, satellite connectivity, out-door coverage and the lot were only Rs.1152 crores. This means that average expenses per year over the 11th Plan came to Rs.230 crores per annum for an organisation that covers well 92 percent to 98 percent of India's 1.24 billion people, through a large and complex network. We mention the existing resources for process of technology as this is the prime area where we have reached certain critical 'crossroads' where we have to choose our direction.

Let me elaborate the term 'crossroads' by giving one example: that of Digital Terrestrial Transmission. While India has been swept by satellite TV in the last two decades (all 850 odd private channels have received/operate licenses on the satellite mode), it is only DD and AIR that are carrying on telecast/broadcast through both satellites and terrestrial towers. The advantage of this latter mode is that it can be downloaded and viewed with hardly any expense, just a simple aerial or a wire, and seen on a TV set without any recurring cost or monthly payments. Such 'free to air' public service constitutes the core of Prasar Bharati, and despite the fact that this mode of transmission is currently giving way, year after year, to the more popular cable and satellite platforms, the experience of various nations across the world hold some contrary lessons for us. Many nations had moved from terrestrial to satellite but many have come back to the good old terrestrial towers: like UK, Australia, Japan, Korea and many European countries. Obviously, there is some merit to terrestrial television over satellite and it will take too long to explain the technology advantage that only digitization can bring to terrestrial transmission. This digitisation has reached the shores of India, and odd it may sound, the first tranche of 11th Plan funding has now started bearing fruit: as 23 digital terrestrial transmitters are being shipped towards India. Once these digital transmitters

are "operationalized" and once they are incorporated into the TV environment of India, with proper linkages and business models, there is every likelihood of a total paradigm shift. In the cities covered by this new digital terrestrial transmission facility, most people would flock to watch TV programmes being 'streamed' on to their mobile hand-sets or tablets, if they are attractive, as they go about with their busy lives. This has happened all over the world and there is no reason why it should not happen here. But then, we need more than 23 transmitters, even though each of them can carry 8 to 9 SD TV channels, i.e. Standard Definition, which is what is mainly in vogue in India.

In fact, for digital terrestrial technology (DTT), one would not need so many transmitters and only 630 would do against the present 1415 analogue transmitters. Each analogue channel that operates now for one transmission could give way to 8 or 9 SD channels after digitization! Or, if

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we go for High Definition (HD), we could have 2 channels in lieu of one analogue. Prasar Bharati may consider opening up this digital resource to other broadcasters: after guarding its own interests, as content matters more than carriage. But the terms and conditions have to be totally transparent and make economic sense to PB and the people. If this works out, then one would soon

be seeing one's favourite channels (not necessarily DD) on the mobile, tablet or laptop as a young and vibrant India is always on the move, always on the run, with these gadgets as their 'essential survival kit'. The shift everywhere has been in favour of digital terrestrial TV, but where is the funding? DTT is only one of the many modernisation programmes that Government, the Planning Commission, the Ministry and Prasar Bharati have taken up: it cannot be given all that is required. If we go by the resources made available in the 11th and 12th Plans, it would take about 60 years or more to reach the 630rd number of DTT. Though the annual Capital Plan Funds for technology development may go up from Rs. 230 crores in the 11th Plan to approximately Rs. 330-350 crores per year in the 12th Plan (if go by the trend

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of first two years) and this may appear to be a quantum jump, but it really means little where a large country like India is concerned. Frankly, many large public sector workshops or other large single installations spend much more per year in just replacing their spares. This also means that during the 11th Plan, the nation spent less than Rs.3 per citizen for its own Public Service Broadcaster: that brings the 'idea of India' together. Can we forget the role of Vividh Bharati in emotionally uniting India or the far-flung stations perched on icy slopes like Kargil or deep in the forested areas that link this vast nation. So what do we do: wait for 60 years to digitize transmitters or speed up the Plan-funding process to (say) 20-25 years (as if technology

will wait for us to find funds) or pretend that "all is well" or just give up, in frustration?

Where Prasar Bharati is concerned, we may decide to cut down the digitization programme of terrestrial transmitters from the requirement of 630 (let some continue of analogue mode if funds are scarce now) and cover only 50% to 60% of India's geographical area, that has dense urban population, with some 350 to 400 digital transmitters. India has decided on the latest DVB T2 (Digital Video Broadcasting, i.e. Terrestrial Transmission, 2nd Generation), and these 350-400 would require approximately Rs.3000 crores for digitization, though exact calculations are yet to be worked out. The entire tech upgradation could be done with the required speed if this fund is available in 3 to 4 years, without glitches, and put into a Technology Development Fund, rather than approaching a phalanx of Ministry officials for each tranche. Prasar Bharati can also earn extra revenue and enrich this Tech Fund, as we feel that benefits of digitization can only be reaped, only while the iron is hot and India is taken by storm. Like antibiotics the dosage has to be adequate and taken in one time-bound matter, not one capsule a month! Obviously, the Tech Fund and its operation would be with a High Level Technology Committee, with reputed outside experts also, certainly not with non-technical officers or the CEO. And, for total transparency, we suggest a Concurrent Audit Committee with the best available professionals be set up.

There is no doubt that wireless technology is the one which belongs to the near future. We have an assured 660 million activated mobile phone users and 850 million+ 'subscribers' (which includes 'tablets') against some 31 million land lines. Wireless and mobile technology will go up because more and more people are on the move all the time. Hence, reaching them through mobile broadcasting is where the key lies: not in expecting the TV viewers to run around to the nearest fixed point TV or get to the fixed table-top computer,

to see. Their programmes. Frankly, I feel that just like we moved away from the mammoth room-size computers of the 50s and 60s (which churned so little data) to the personal computer (PC) that became smaller and sleeker in the 80s, 90s and thereafter, we will move away (effectively, except on Sundays?) from the 'fixed point TV and computer' at home and in office to the mobile TV and computer. These are already available on hand-held tablets and laptops and if this logic holds good, the 'streaming' of TV services onto mobile sets has to be done forthwith. We have been told that this cannot be expected to be successful through the existing telecom band-width, which some advanced broadcasters are relying on through their special applications (apps). Any major traffic would simply make it unworkable, because once numbers pick up, the services would get considerably 'jammed' or 'buffered'. It is only broadcasting spectrum that can solve this 'TV on mobile' problem and Doordarshan has within its fold hundreds of transmitters

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that are waiting to go digital and 'stream' broadcasting into mobile sets and tablets.

It is not that as if one is placing only figures or rhetoric: it is simply that figures are knocking on our doors, crying for some attention! If we let this option slip past us, a golden opportunity to digitise terrestrial transmitters will be lost. In the last part of the last century and in the first part of present century, India had the option to convert its Public Service Broadcaster from terrestrial mode to an 'only satellite' form of transmission. But this could have excluded the masses and the poorest from availing

of free to air transmission. Again, there was a choice here: government could have subsidized (even the United States and other major western nations do 'subsidize' their Public Service Broadcasters) by offering free set-top boxes to the really poor. In hindsight, some feel that this may have cost less than the expansion and replacement of terrestrial transmission, as well as their costly operation and maintenance in different corners of India. But this is only an opinion which has not been tested fully.

Doordarshan can revolutionise its gigantic transmitters network through vigorous time-bound digitization: provided the first trials succeed and one assured flush of funding is available. Government recently set up an Expert Committee on Prasar Bharati under Shri Sam Pitroda to examine the best options available on every issue. The Committee and its discourse has led to a lot of churning of thoughts in the public domain and within the organisation: it has opened up new vistas and possibilities. One idea that came up during discussions (just an idea

> From defence to space; from telephony and mobiles to wireless services for the police and security forces; from audio transmission to FM radio; from television to the walkie talkie: spectrum is in demand, more and more.

so far) is that Prasar Bharati could even think in terms of 'forward planning' of monetizing 'future receivables'. This line suggests that we plan for immediate or systematic monetization of those transmitters and properties that would soon be redundant and shut down after digitization. Prasar Bharati could liquify these assets to fund the digital modernization of these chosen 350-400 or even 630 transmitters. This is only a preliminary idea, and would require very careful calculation as well as total transparency, to avoid any possible controversy. It would need the complete involvement of all sections

of the organization, but this possibility exists: if government is willing to look at it seriously, as most properties belong to the 'Union of India'. It needs vision and strength to move it forward by all the players.

There is another possibility, which the USA and certain other advanced countries have gone in for, and this is a national policy on utilization of one of the world's most valuable resources: 'spectrum'. Since this has been allocated by the World Frequency Plan, fixed by the International Telecommunication Union (Geneva) through its Radio Regulations, each country is duty bound to make the optimum use of its spectrum for the 40 plus types of users and contesting claimants. From defence to space; from telephony and mobiles to wireless services for the police and security forces; from audio transmission to FM radio; from television to the walkie talkie: spectrum is in demand, more and more. By going digital, India could save a lot of spectrum, but how is it to be implemented? The problem lies in the existing infrastructure that is located and fixed against spectrum of different band-width over the allocated range. To re-farm and compress them within a defined compact band-width is not impossible: it is just a stupendous task, and one that calls for a solid dose of funding. A major Ministry in the Government of India has received several thousand crores of rupees to vacate precious spectrum: so why not MIB and Prasar Bharati also, in the greater national interest?

The solution lies in imaginatively thinking through all the options. The United States spent nearly US$ 2 billion (over Rs.11,000 crores) in distributing vouchers to its citizens, so that spectrum could be saved and sold at much higher prices. Several other countries have followed such major financing routes for the greater good. The deliberations of the Sam Pitroda Committee on Prasar Bharati also appear to be moving in this direction, although it is yet to formulate the final suggestions. This is the first 'crossroad', where we stand today.

and if there is a positive decision in this, Prasar Bharati could also go in for out of the box solutions for a national FM network, on similar lines. No one listens to Short Wave and very few hear Medium Wave: even receiver sets are not available. So why are we expanding or replacing SW or MW? FM reaches millions through mobiles and car radios, but it has a limited range for each channel and needs huge numbers of channels, co-channels, network and transmitters for ensuring that all radio services of AIR, i.e. Primary channels and Vividh Bharati (that are mostly on MW) are also available on FM for simultaneous transmission: so that millions can get to listen. There are other crossroads as well where India's public service broadcaster and

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its infrastructural issues and great opportunities are concerned. But let us first solve the immediate question of digitization of terrestrial transmission of TV services.

Each crossroad offers a route forward: it can permit leap-frogging to the restless pro-changers and it also has the in-built temptation or danger to get deflected to the left or to the right, by just arguing our heads off, as we often do. Or, we could also move backwards, as we have done at times. So, having placed all the cards on the table, in exercise of the 'autonomy of thought' (a la Sam Pitroda), let us see which direction is finally taken by India. ☐

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PSB:Wholesome Entertainment-Education Transmedia Storytelling

Arvind Singhal

Audiences, in general, find E-E to be highly engaging, and E-E campaigns, as evidenced by the growing body of literature have proven to be effective for raising awareness and knowledge, changing individual attitudes and behaviors, and creating conditions to change social and cultural norms

PUBLIC BROAD-CASTING systems all over the world face an existential crisis, caught in the dialectical vortex of serving the public *and* private good, as an agenda-setter *and* democratizer, through technologies of broadcasting *and* narrowcasting, while implementing programming that entertains *and* educates. Whether it is the BBC in United Kingdom, NHK in Japan, Public Broadcasting Corporation in the U.S., the Kenyan Broadcasting Corporation in Kenya, or the Prasar Bharati Corporation of India, public broadcasters must question their meaning and purpose in a world run amuck by bits and bytes, big screens and handhelds, technological convergence and consumptive fragmentation. Digitization, privatization, globalization, localization, customization, democratization, are all here. And, to stay!

Amidst this cacophony of intersecting purposes and interests, shaped by converging technology, expanding connectivity, and consumer fragmentation, no one roadmap exists for public broadcasters to follow. The media and audience-scape in the present 21st century is a system far too complex for public broadcasters to engineer and orchestrate. There are far too many moving parts, closely and loosely coupled, orderly and chaotic, and both indifferent and sensitive to big and small shifts in technology, policy, and global and local exigencies. Further, historical, cultural, social, and political forces exert influence, direct and indirect.

The science of complexity would tell us that when systems are characterized by multiple, interrelated underlying connections and causes, higher order outcomes accrue not by massive machine-like engineering, but rather by charting a steady course, guided by few minimal specifications (Singhal, 2008; Lacayo, Obregon, & Singhal, 2008). In biological and natural systems, we observe many such manifestations of highly complex behavior guided by simple rules-- as in flocking of birds, shoaling of fish, swarming of insects, or herding of animals. Birds and fish engage in complex swirling maneuvers by following a few simple rules: maintain equal distance with neighbours, steering in the general direction of where the mass is moving. From these simple rules, order emerges in a complex environment, allowing for adaptation, self-correction, and onward action.

In rethinking purpose in a complex world, public broadcasters in the 21st century, I would argue, need only focus on a few beacons. In this article, I discuss one such guiding beacon: a striving for *Wholesome Entertainment-Education Transmedia Storytelling*. In so doing, public broadcasting

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systems can lead from the front, while continually adapting and self-correcting on the unfolding path.

Allow me to say more about what I mean by "Wholesome Entertainment-Education" and "Transmedia Storytelling," and let me illustrate with examples.

..."entertainment-education" as a purposive communication strategy is a relatively new concept in that its conscious use in radio, television, popular music, films, and interactive digital media has received attention only in the past few decades.

Wholesome Entertainment-Education Strategy

The idea of seamlessly integrating entertainment with education goes as far back in human history as the timeless art of storytelling. For millennia, music, drama, dance, and folk media have been used in every society for recreation, devotion, reformation, and instruction. However, "entertainment-education" as a purposive communication strategy is a relatively new concept in that its conscious use in radio, television, popular music, films, and interactive digital media has received attention only in the past few decades. (Singhal, 2013a; Singhal, Cody, Rogers, & Sabido, 2004; Singhal & Rogers, 1999; Wang & Singhal, 2009; Lacayo & Singhal, 2008).

In its initial decades, *entertainment-education* (E-E) was broadly defined as "the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message both to entertain and educate, in order to increase audience members' knowledge about educational issues, create favorable attitudes, shift social norms, and change overt behavior" (Singhal, Cody, Rogers, & Sabido, 2004, p. 5; also see Singhal & Rogers, 1999, p. 9). However, in recent years, with the exponential growth in the development and

popularity of digital interactive entertainment, Wang and Singhal (2009) proposed a reformulation: "Entertainment-education is a theory-based communication strategy for purposefully embedding educational and social issues in the creation, production, processing, and dissemination process of an entertainment program, in order to achieve desired individual, community, institutional, and societal changes among the intended media user populations" (pp. 272-273).

In radio, the most well-known E-E application occurred in 1951, when BBC began broadcasting *The Archers*, a British radio soap opera that carried educational messages about agricultural development. As the world's longest running radio soap opera, *The Archers* continues to be broadcast to this date, addressing contemporary issues such as HIV/AIDS prevention and environmental conservation.

In television, E-E was discovered more-or-less by accident in Peru in 1969, when the television soap opera *Simplemente Maria* (Simply Maria) was broadcast (Singhal, Obregon, & Rogers, 1994). The main character, Maria, a migrant to the capital city, worked during the day as a maid, and enrolled in adult literacy classes in the evening. She climbed the socio-economic ladder of success through her hard work, strong motivation, and later developed seamstress skills with a Singer sewing machine.

Simplemente Maria attracted record audience ratings, and the sale of Singer sewing machines boomed in Peru. So did the number of young girls enrolling in adult literacy and sewing classes. When *Simplemente Maria* was broadcast in other Latin American nations, similar effects happened. Audience identification with Maria was strong, especially among poor, working-class women, who looked at Maria as "Cinderella-type" role model for upward social mobility.

Such Cinderella-like characters have inspired global television audiences through the decades, including long-running serial dramas such as *Betty La Fea* ("Ugly Betty") and their Indian incarnations like *Jassi Jaisee Koi Nahin* ("There is No One Quite Like Jassi").

Inspired by the audience success and the unintentional educational effects of *Simplemente Maria*, the entertainment-education strategy was systematized and codified for use in long-running serial dramas. Instrumental in this codification was the pioneering work of Miguel Sabido, a television writer-producer-director in Mexico, who developed and broadcast a series of long-running E-E soap operas, to motivate enrollment in adult literacy classes, encourage the adoption of family planning, and promote gender equality. These programs were also commercial hits for Televisa, the Mexican television network, demonstrating that public and private good, the social and the commercial, need not be at odds with one another (Nariman, 1993).

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The Sabido production method snowballed globally, inspiring the development of television soap operas such as Hum Log (We People), radio soap operas such as Twende Na Wakati (Let's Go with the Times) in Tanzania, and the use of rock music campaigns in Mexico and Nigeria (Singhal & Rogers, 1999). Since the mid-1980s, E-E has continued to expand at a rapid rate (Singhal, Wang, & Rogers,

2013). In the past three decades, the EE strategy has spread to thousands of global projects, spurred by the efforts of dozens of global and local organizations (see video http://vimeo.com/65329767).

A notable distinguishing feature of E-E programs compared to most

> **A majority of E-E interventions from mid-1980s to early 2000s focused on message design and delivery to close gaps in KAP (knowledge, attitude, and practice) and to orchestrate individual and behavioral cognitive change mechanisms through parasocial interaction, role modeling, self-efficacy, celebrity identification, and the mediation of interpersonal communication (Singhal & Rogers, 2002).**

purely entertainment programming is its unflinching attention to formative and summative research. A majority of E-E interventions from mid-1980s to early 2000s focused on message design and delivery to close gaps in KAP (knowledge, attitude, and practice) and to orchestrate individual and behavioral cognitive change mechanisms through parasocial interaction, role modeling, self-efficacy, celebrity identification, and the mediation of interpersonal communication (Singhal & Rogers, 2002).

Audiences, in general, find E-E to be highly engaging, and E-E campaigns, as evidenced by the growing body of literature have proven to be effective for raising awareness and knowledge, changing individual attitudes and behaviors, and creating conditions to change social and cultural norms. (Singhal, Cody, Rogers, & Sabido, 2004; Singhal & Rogers, 1999; Singhal, Wang, & Rogers, 2013).

Soul City: An Ongoing, Multi-Media E-E Program in South Africa

To better understand the role of E-E in large-scale, national-level communication campaigns, let us consider the case of the Soul City Institute of Health and Development Communication in South Africa, an institution regarded as an international leader in E-E (Lacayo & Singhal, 2008). The Soul City multimedia platform reaches 16 million South Africans regularly, influencing their norms, attitudes, and behaviors on a wide range of health and social topics. Its two flagship series are Soul City and Soul Buddyz, each containing a television series, a corresponding radio drama - broadcast in nine of South Africa's 11 official languages - as well as glossy print material, including comic books, life skills materials, and workbooks.

Soul City uses an exhaustive research process to create highly compelling storylines. For each of its series, Soul City chooses to prioritize three or four health and development issues to address, and provides consultations with experts, civil society groups, medical doctors, and scholars. Scripts are developed and pre-tested for their entertainment and educational value, clearing the way for production, broadcast, and distribution of multimedia materials.

A case in point is the fourth Soul City television series in which a well-respected character, Thabang, a school teacher, routinely inflicts physical, verbal, and emotional violence on his wife, Matlakala (Usdin et al., 2004). Matlakala's mother advises her to bekezela, that is, endure the abuse given it was primarily a woman's duty to make a marriage work. Thabang's father agreed, emphasizing that as per tradition a husband must discipline his wife. When Matlakala's beatings got worse, she learnt about South Africa's new Domestic Violence Act, and served Thabang a protection order. Matlakala's father, speaking on behalf

Collective Pot-Banging in the South African E-E Drama Soul City to Stop Domestic Violence.

of his abused daughter, and thereby modeling a new paternal behavior, explicitly urged the neighbors to not be "silent colluders," but rather to intervene. As the story unfolded, and when in an episode Thabang began to beat Matlakala, her neighbors, collectively, stood outside Thabang's house beating their pots and pans. The loud noise of dozens of pots and pans sent a clear message to Thabang that the community disapproved of his actions, and an assurance to Matlakala that her neighbors cared about her (see video http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqR3aUulqMQ).

This pot-banging episode, which earned one of the highest audience ratings in South Africa in 1999, demonstrated the importance of creatively modeling collective efficacy in order to energize neighbors, who, for social and cultural reasons, felt previously inefficacious. By watching the neighbors collectively act against an abuser on screen, viewers learnt and practiced new ways to break the cycle of spousal abuse (Usdin et al., 2004). Pot banging to stop partner abuse was

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reported in several communities in South Africa (including in Khayelitsha Township, Cape Town). Patrons of a local pub in Thembisa Township in South Africa self-organized to reinvent the new collective action they learned. Together, they banged bottles in the bar when a man physically abused his girlfriend (Singhal, 2010).

> **Imagine what a *Balika Badhu*-type program could do for public good if meticulously guided by cutting-edge, asset-based formative research, and transmedia storytelling extensions.**

In sum, I advocate for public broadcasters to focus on the creation of wholesome, socially-relevant, entertaining and educational programs like *Soul City*. Such programs should not be treated as one-off, but should be ongoing, as *Soul City* has been for the past two decades. They should be based on research, tackle new and pressing social issues, and build a healthy brand of wholesome programming.

On Indian television, highly-rated long-running programs such as *Balika Badhu* ("Child Bride"), broadcast on Colors TV since 2008, and now past its 1300th episode, represents a glitzy example of this promise. Imagine what a *Balika Badhu*-type program could do for public good if meticulously guided by cutting-edge, asset-based formative research, and transmedia storytelling extensions.

Turbocharging Entertainment-Education with Positive Deviance Research

One newly-codified formative research approach that holds great promise of integration with E-E is the asset-based *Positive Deviance* approach to social change (Singhal, 2013b, 2010; Singhal, Buscell, & Lindberg, 2010; Singhal & Dura, 2009) that enables communities to discover the best practice and local wisdom they already have, and then to act on it. PD is an assets-based approach, identifying what's going right in a community in order to amplify it, as opposed to focusing on what's going wrong in a community and fixing it.

In the summer 2012, in collaboration with a dozen field researchers, I led a formative research inquiry guided by the Positive Deviance approach. Our purpose was to provide data-driven inputs to the design of an entertainment-education program whose purpose is to promote small family size, emphasizing delay of first child and spacing between children, countering the preference for male children, and encouraging adoption of contraceptive methods.

Instead of gathering deficit-based data, our research was guided by asset-based sensibilities: *Were there individuals, couples, or health workers who had found better family planning solutions than most of their peers without access to any extra resources? If so, what did they do?*

By analyzing archival data and key informant interviews we identified several positive deviants. What were they doing that resulted in highly successful outcomes?

One respondent, a married woman, significantly reduced the risk of pregnancy by closely tracking her menstrual cycle and avoiding sex during the days she was likely to conceive. During these "no, no days" she employed a variety of excuses to avoid penetrative intercourse. She would tell her husband: "I am keeping a fast for a few days for your health." On her "yes, yes days" she coyly noted: "I go out of my way to please him."

While most married women in this setting would be unable to negotiate sex, our positive deviant had found a creative, culturally-appropriate way to reduce the risk of pregnancy. After all, how could a husband overrule his wife's sacred fast—one undertaken for *his* sake!

We also met a health worker who employed certain uncommon practices that yielded high rates of male vasectomy. When he organized vasectomy camps in rural areas, several men who previously had agreed to a vasectomy, either did not show up on the appointed day, or hesitated to be the first to undergo the procedure. Their dilly-dallying negatively impacted other participants' motivations, and many assembled men would dissipate to the chagrin of camp organizers.

To overcome this problem, our health worker arranged for a few men, who were highly-convinced vasectomy seekers, to stride up—in open view of other men—and demand that they be the first to undergo the procedure. Post-procedure, they were purposely urged to stride out like a stallion, boasting about the ease and painless nature of the vasectomy. Such purposive planning and orchestration of vasectomy prospects by the health worker delivered significantly better vasectomy completion rates, in comparison to his peers.

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While most health workers would shrug their shoulders when vasectomy prospects walked away, the PD health worker had hit upon an effective practice: present other men in full view of others as social proof!

The important point here is that the fasting strategy of the married woman and the purposive social proof practice of the health worker

represent exceptional, non-normal actions. These practices were discovered because we actively sought to find the statistical outliers, the positive deviants. In seeking the exceptional among the ordinary and the improbable among the probable, formative researchers who aid the design of E-E programs can uncover solutions that cost little and are more inclusive, adaptable and culturally appropriate. That is, incorporation of PD sensibilities can help turbocharge the practice of E-E.

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Next, I discuss how public broadcasters may further enhance the power of wholesome entertainment-education programming by strategically incorporating transmedia storytelling extensions.

Transmedia Storytelling

With increased digitization, expanding mobile and web connectivity, and the proliferation of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, the reach and impact of entertainment-education programs can be enhanced multiple times through transmedia storytelling extensions (Singhal, Wang, & Rogers, 2013).

Transmedia, or *cross-media*, *storytelling* is a strategically designed process where elements of a narrative are strategically designed and implemented across different communication platforms to create a coherent entertainment experience (Davidson et al., 2010; Jenkins, 2007; Singhal, Wang, & Rogers,

2013). Each communication platform carries the story independently but the interwoven tapestry makes a richer whole, deepening the audience members' relationship with the characters, the plotlines, and the issues. Transmedia storytelling would not have been possible without digitization, miniaturization, and convergence of media technologies and participatory audience culture (Jenkins, 2006).

The mindset behind transmedia storytelling is centered on experimentation, co-creation, and collective action (Singhal, Wang, & Rogers, 2013). Compared to single medium campaigns, transmedia storytelling is open-ended, exploratory, non-linear, and fun! An example of transmedia storytelling is *The Matrix* franchise where key bits of the overarching storyline were conveyed through the trilogy movies, a series of animated shorts, two comic book story collections, and video game tie-ins (Jenkins, 2006). Such a multi-platform storytelling format offers audience different points of entry and ongoing engagement.

There have been numerous effective transmedia examples in recent years, including *EVOKE* (urgentevoke.com), a 10-week crash course in changing the world, that uses a graphic novel as the anchoring text to present a weekly global crisis. Participating players learn skills like creativity, collaboration, entrepreneurship, and sustainability to tackle complex social problems such as hunger, poverty, dependence on fossil fuels, and access to clean water. Within a week of its launch in 2010, EVOKE attracted 8,000 students in 120 countries. Participants are encouraged to come up innovative solutions to urgent problems, report on their activities through blogs and videos, and at the end of the course set themselves up to carry out an actionable project in the real world with others. *EVOKE* was awarded the #1 Social Impact Game by Games for Change in 2010.

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East Los High: A Wholesome Entertainment-Education Transmedia Storytelling Project

An exemplary and wholesome entertainment-education transmedia storytelling project is *East Los High (ELH)* (eastloshigh.com), a 24-episode Internet web series targeted at Latino and Latina youth, the fastest growing demographic segment in the United States. *ELH* began streaming the first week of June, 2013 on Hulu, a web-based platform available in the U.S. that offers advertiser-supported, on-demand streaming video of popular television shows, movies, trailers, and behind-the-scenes footage (see video http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PD3b0KqaBSg). With an all Latino and Latina cast, *ELH* was designed through an extensive process of formative research, including incorporation of positive deviance sensibilities. Scripted by Latino and Latina writers, *ELH* and was completely shot in East Los Angeles, where the fictional storyline unfolds

The Rich Tapestry of East Los High's Transmedia Storytelling Extensions with 15 Clickable Links for Deeper Audience Engagement

in the East Los High School (http://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2013/06/09/executive-producer-of-east-los-high-discusses-show/).

Over three years in development, *ELH* is the brainchild of Katie Elmore Mota, who served as the show's executive producer, and who forged a unique collaboration between Population Media Center, the Vermont-based international non-profit that excels in E-E; *The Alchemists Transmedia Storytelling Company in Hollywood, and various other national, state, and city-based partners like Legacy LA;* Advocates for Youth; National Latina Initiative, Girls, Inc.; National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health; Planned Parenthood Federation of America; National Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned Pregnancy; California Latinas for Reproductive Justice; and others.

> A cursory analysis of the audience chatter on its social media sites suggests that *ELH* audience members love the characters, identify with their dilemmas and portrayed circumstances, and involved viewers are consuming the rich tapestry of transmedia extensions, each building on the other

ELH's purpose is to inform, educates, motivate and inspire positive behavioral changes among Latino and Latina youth around reproductive health, sexuality, and life decisions. A screen shot of the eastloshigh.com website provides a peep into the rich and varied tapestry of *ELH*'s transmedia extensions, toolsets, and offshoots.

After watching a 30-minute episode of *ELH*, a viewer is guided to the *ELH*-website, where in the top row, they can browse and post on the show's Facebook site, follow its Twitter feed, blog on its Tumblr site, and view and post pictures through Instagram. In the bottom row, audience members can click to watch *ELH* episodes, see the latest photos from the *ELH* shoot, read the *ELH*'s Siren Newspaper, and meet the *ELH* cast, following their facebook pages, behind-the scenes musings and dilemmas, and video logs. Further, one of the show's characters, Paulie (center of screen) hosts a video column called "Ask Paulie about Sex and Dating" where he mixes humour with wise counsel, and directs viewers to multiple widgets where they can talk to a sex counselor in a secure and anonymous Planned Parenthood site, or find out about emergency contraception. Above Paulie's column, viewers can click on links to watch video extensions of the storyline, download its music, learn dance steps and post their dance videos, see the healthy recipes of compiled by the character, Maya, and do a deep dive into locally and nationally-available resources for teens. At the very bottom left corner, audience members can click to find a local clinic, make an appointment for consultation about contraception, or discuss an abortion.

Streaming for about a week at the time of writing this article, *ELH* is one of the most watched Hulu programs at the present time as per a *Huffington Post* article (see http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/06/06/east-los-high-hulu_n_3395762.html). A cursory analysis of the audience chatter on its social media sites suggests that *ELH* audience members love the characters, identify with their dilemmas and portrayed circumstances, and involved viewers are consuming the rich tapestry of transmedia extensions, each building on the other (see http://www.thevideoink.com/reviews/hulu-exclusive-series-east-los-high-is-generational-gem/#.UbaxNeesjm8).

It will be several months before the summative evaluation results of the *ELH* project will become available (the present author is co-leading this investigation with Dr. Hua (Helen) Wang of University of Buffalo), but there is little doubt that *ELH* is rewriting what is programmatically possible in the 21st century. It knits together the social and the commercial, the public and the private, and the digital and the real. Simply put, *ELH* breaks new

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ground in its strategic conception of transmedia storytelling, both in terms of width and depth. It meets audience members on different platforms in their space (real and virtual) and on their time. It connects wholesome, research based entertainment-education fare with ground-based service delivery, building a social movement where ideas, interests, and aspirations converge.

Robust and wholesome entertainment-educational programs like East Los High provide a guiding beacon for public broadcasters of the world. In a fast-changing, dynamic, and complex world of public broadcasting, one only needs to ask: Which way is north? ❑

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Why a Public Broadcaster and Communications Policy

B G Verghese

India needs and must demand a vibrant new communications policy in which true autonomy for PB is embedded

MANY ARE critical of the tone and coverage of 24x7 commercial broadcasting but lack any understanding of and therefore see no virtue in a public service broadcaster like Prasar Bharati.

The notion, powerfully held by all too many, the establishment included, is that since Prasar Bharati (PB) is funded by the government it must dance to its tune. This is a complete fallacy. Parliament, the superior courts, the CEC, CAG, UPSC, etcetera are all funded from the budget; but it does not follow that they are therefore or should be handmaidens of the Union government. Prasar Bharati, by statute, is not a creature of the I&B Ministry. It is statutorily an autonomous body, funded by the exchequer and responsible to Parliament.

Nehru promised autonomy to AIR in 1948 on the BBC model but broadcasting remained chained to the government, and the Union Government at that, until the Prasar Bharati Act was enacted in 1990, though only brought into force with amendments in 1997 following the landmark Airwaves Judgement of the Supreme Court. This held that the electro-magnetic spectrum, a finite natural resource, could be regulated by the government but could not be monopolised by it.

However the very Act was deficient and, having enacted it, the Government, Parliament and staff of PB scuttled it with silent public approval. The entire structure of PB was governmentalized. The CEO is drawn from the Government as are the key Directors of Finance and Personnel. The provision for transferring AIR/DD personnel from the ranks of the government to that of the Corporation has not been implemented.

Most recently DD was promised news autonomy for two hours a day from 8 to 10 p.m. Independent anchors were recruited from outside. Things started looking up.

The whole purpose of public funding is to free the broadcaster from the shackles of the advertiser without reducing it to being His Master's Voice. Commercial broadcasting depends on revenues from high spend advertisers and so caters to their tastes and interests to win TRP ratings, itself a flawed system. The *dal-chawal aam admi* is hardly a "consumer" in the advertiser's calculus and so his or her concerns scarcely matter as a priority. In short, while every consumer is a citizen, every citizen is not a "consumer". Maybe 60 percent or more of all

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viewers are not "consumers" whose needs for basic news (not endless partisan commentary), education and empowerment are therefore inadequately catered to.

This is the measure of the yawning social gap that has remained unfilled while the chattering classes are fed on scandals, gossip, "paid news", titivation and sensation. The Radia rapes and IPL scandal are part of the loop. This is not to deny the existence of good commercial broadcasters and programming. But providing "service" to the "public" must be the paramount and not an incidental concern.

Another factor that must not be lost sight of is the growing power of the media and, especially, the broadcast media consequent to the communications revolution. We now live in an instant, global village. Everything is made known in real time to create virtual reality. Competition and ratings dictate being first with the news, hence the premium on "breaking news", often short on fact and perspective but spiced with subjective commentary that often distorts reality or prejudges outcomes by denying or defying due process. These are dangerous trends and vie with match-fixing.

Social media has added to the welter of noise. It is instant, ubiquitous and autonomous but, not being "mediated", represents moods or trends though not evaluated facts. It is also subject to manipulation by peer pressure divorced from reason. This is not to belittle social media but to put it in perspective.

The communications revolution has transformed the media from being the Fourth Estate to the First Estate – the purveyor of the first information report and agenda setting for decision makers, markets and ordinary people. This milieu requires for a public service broadcaster and independent media, subject to a sensible regulatory framework. Rights go with responsibilities as Article 19 (2)

underlines. Self-regulation is good but not sufficient, just as much as careful driving is no substitute for good brakes in a powerfully-engined car.

The debate on public service broadcasting has been thoroughly undermined by a failure to understand what it is about. Indeed, the importance of communications is not understood either, notwithstanding lip service to "Satyameve Jayate".

> The communications revolution has transformed the media from being the Fourth Estate to the First Estate – the purveyor of the first information report and agenda setting for decision makers, markets and ordinary people.

Our classification, archival and cartographic policy and philosophy of official secrecy is an abomination and has kept the country illiterate and dangerously dependent on foreign sources. School books do not carry accurate maps.

To get out of this rut and mark the way ahead, the country would be well advised to set up a high powered National Commission on Communications Policy on the model of the US Hutchins Commission in the 1950s and UNESCO's McBride Commission in the late 1970s. Things have changed since then. Communication and the media are central to everything. Information has to combat disinformation, and cyber war and terror are new scourges that must be overcome.

moving with the times : A must

PB can earn money in several ways in order to reduce its subvention from the exchequer. The oversized engineering and transmission wing could be hived off into an independent profit centre as a PB Transmission Corporation, servicing not just PB but

private channels, corporate houses, the Defence Ministry and others. The R&D wing should similarly be an independent research and marketing unit. Few recall DD's unique contribution in promoting direct home broadcasting for the first time worldwide during the SITE experiment in 1976-77 in collaboration with ISRO through improvised set-top boxes.
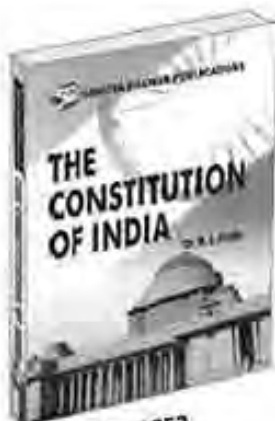
Licence fees should be charged on a one time basis at the source of purchase and broadcast services should be paid for by users in Government or otherwise in the same manner as all other service providers are compensated for supplying water, electricity, telephone connections and so on. The PB Act in fact calls on the Ministry of External Affairs to defray PB's foreign broadcast expenditure. This, however, remains a dead letter. India today has no foreign voice! AIR's monitoring service – that serviced the Home Ministry - has been commandeered and virtually dismantled. Language proficiency has plummeted. We cannot converse with the world – not even in Pushtu, Balti, Burmese and Tibetan.

While TV has blossomed, radio has been treated as a poor relative by the Government. Community radio was discouraged until of late but even now its news services are extremely limited. This has been a most unwise policy as communications could energise panchayati raj and promote grassroots governance and e-governance. Radio is cheap and the transistor ubiquitous. AIR, that once rendered such notable service, has been cruelly circumscribed.

India needs and must demand a vibrant new communications policy in which true autonomy for PB is embedded. The Pitroda committee falls far short of the National Communications Commission recommended. Let Satyameve Jayate come into its own. ❑

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Why Public Broadcasting?

Vinod Pavarala

In rethinking its mission, Prasar Bharati must not only foster good practices of the 'old' electronic media, but also take advantage of the interactive technological potential of new media

UBLIC SERVICE broadcasting (PSB) could be distinguished from broadcasting for primarily commercial or political reasons in the sense that it is expected to operate independent of those holding economic and political power. Public systems of broadcasting originated in the second quarter of the 20ᵗʰ century in Western European democracies, with a commitment to operate radio and later television for the greater public good and in public interest. One of the important media policy documents of the European Parliament suggests that PSB is expected to not only provide information, education, and entertainment to the entire society, but also enhance social, political and cultural citizenship (European Parliament, 2010).Towards that end, PSB is characterized typically by universal access, editorial autonomy and impartiality, variety of programming, high quality, and public accountability.

It is this kind of broadcasting that is under siege all over the world from commercially oriented, profit-driven media (Price and Raboy, 2011). And, India is no exception. In many countries the audience for public broadcasting services has declined to under a 40 share (in some countries less than 10 share of audience in prime time). The commercial broadcasting model, dominant from the outset in countries like the United States, has increasingly begun to hold sway in nations with mixed broadcasting systems. This model comes packaged with the culture of celebrity and seduction -- the weight of numbers of viewers, listeners, and readers (UNESCO, 1996).

If we feel that in India today public service broadcasting is under serious threat, it is because the last 75 years or so of Indian broadcasting is a story of missed opportunities. The Australian media scholar, Robin Jeffrey (2006) is of the opinion that if the implementation of the Prasar Bharati Bill (passed in 1990) had not been delayed for the better part of the 1990s, there would have been a wonderful opportunity for shaping AIR and Doordarshan into 'an attractive trans-national broadcaster' on the lines of the BBC or *Al Jazeera* more recently. I will return later to this serious gap between stated intentions and implementation that has marked the history of India's public broadcasting system.

The terms of discourse on media systems, generally, and on public service broadcasting, more specifically, have undergone a sea-change after the new phase of globalization and liberalization since the 1990s (Pavarala and Kumar, 2002). The onslaught of capitalist globalization has led to concentration of ownership of the cultural industries in the hands of

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ever fewer corporate communications conglomerates at every level -- production, distribution, regulatory environment, access to globalized markets and the political processes. Deregulation and privatization are most visible in the broadcasting sector, which in many countries had been maintained by the state as a non-profit, public service. The transition from national public ownership to global private ownership is almost total (Pavarala and Malik, 2007). As the role of the state declined, transnational media corporations began to invade domestic

> **The critical social functions that media must play in a democratic society are seriously hindered by the global commodification of media outputs that subject media and communication 'products' to the general market rules.**

markets by entering into collaborative ventures with national media firms to produce, provide, and/or disseminate news and entertainment. Advances in satellite broadcasting and advances in digitization have helped these gigantic media corporations gain a firm foothold over the terms of public debate and discourse. Scholars contend that transnational satellite media are part of the same process of globalization as integration of financial markets (Collins, et al., 1988). They threaten not just national sovereignty and identity, but the concept of citizenship that goes with it (Page and Crawley, 2001). We are spectators to "a leaking away of sovereignty from the state, both upwards to supranational institutions and downwards to sub-national ones" (Lipschutz, 1992).

One of the social consequences of the globalization of media and communication is that this sector is a leading 'enabler of globalization' as information and communication technologies facilitate overall globalization, and media industries spread world-wide cultural influences

to promote consumerist and individualistic lifestyles. Further the gradual commercialization of media and communications has had a severe impact on "the formation of individual and community identity, cultural and language diversity, the capacity to participate in the political process, the integrity of the public sphere, the availability of information and knowledge in the public domain and the use of media for development, educational and human rights purposes" (Siochrú, 2004). The critical social functions that media must play in a democratic society are seriously hindered by the global commodification of media outputs that subject media and communication 'products' to the general market rules. In the face of this, there is clearly a need to protect and promote public service broadcasting and also explore alternatives such as community media that would focus on fulfilling social needs and reinforcing human rights.

As media globalization diminishes freedom of information, erodes the diversity and quality of information in the public sphere, civil society becomes increasingly ineffective. This has raised questions about the free flow of information to and from citizens, which is an essential prerequisite if the realm of civil society must include 'organized and substantial capacity for people to enter into public discourse about the nature and course of their lives together' (Calhoun, 1994).

According to communication scholar Dennis McQuail the idea of 'public service' broadcasting encompasses eight principles:

Geographical universality of provision and reception; the aim of providing for all tastes and interests; catering for minorities; having a concern for national identity and community; keeping broadcasting independent from government and vested interests; having some element of direct funding from the public (thus not only from advertisers); encouraging competition in programmes and not just for audiences; and encouraging

the freedom of broadcasters (McQuail, 1994: 126).

Scholars have pointed out that a public service broadcasting system is evident in either one of two different models (Himmelstein and Aslama, 2002). One, a 'trickle-down' national civic model within the ideological context of public service; public discourse, in this model, "trickles down" as the country's public service broadcaster becomes a professional and democratic gatekeeper in the interest of social stability, often implying central control of a select elite over the communication processes. Critics of the ideology of "Trickle-Down" proposed, in its place, a model that could be referred to as the "Bubble-Up" model. This alternative conceptualization assumes that citizens have rights to the greatest possible diversity of personal and social experience and that they also have rights to knowledge and participation. They must be allowed to speak of their own lives in their own

> **With liberalization of the economy in India, broadcasting witnessed backdoor and reluctant privatisation, and eventually, forces of commercialisation prevailed, leading to a shift towards empty entertainment.**

voices. They must have access to the means to communicate their experience through public communications media *without institutional intervention or gatekeeping* (Preston, 2001). This model is epitomized by public access television and community radio.

Radio broadcasting in free India and later television endeavoured to shape up in the mould of Public Service Broadcasting. However, state control over broadcasting ended up following what Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky (1988) sketched out as 'the propaganda model' where media serve "to mobilize support for the special interests that dominate the state and private activity," becoming

a propaganda tool for government policies and actions. With liberalization of the economy in India, broadcasting witnessed backdoor and reluctant privatisation, and eventually, forces of commercialisation prevailed, leading to a shift towards empty entertainment. As Stephen Barnard points out,

The classical argument against commercialisation of mass communication media is that pursuit of advertising revenues encourages programming assumed to appeal to the greatest number, thereby marginalizing less popular tastes and interests. It creates an environment most conducive to reception of advertising message, leading to programming that is undemanding, unchallenging and pacifying (Barnard, 2000).

> The community radio initiatives by several groups across India for a share of the airwaves, which are 'public property', are one significant indication of this popular demand.

Technology-led globalisation of media did not do anything to change the order of things for broadcasting in India. It led to the concentration of ownership in a handful of transnational media conglomerates, further diminishing the freedom and diversity of information. As cultural homogenisation became the order of the day, the uniformity of the content rendered meaningless the increase in the number of information sources (Pavarala and Kumar, 2002). As a result, the shrinking of democratic spaces has weakened civil society, allowing the market to have unfettered control over the minds of the people.

These concerns have been articulated in several reports of committees set up to examine the status of broadcasting in India and also in numerous policy documents. This brings me back to the gap between intentions and reality that I mentioned earlier. In spite of plainly stated objectives, little has been done to re-orient broadcasting to

produce meaningful content that goes beyond rather than emulate practices of commercial broadcasting, and addresses the developmental, social, cultural, communal and democratic imperatives of the country. No effort has been made to ensure that the weakest and the vulnerable are empowered through access and control of media-technologies.

For instance, All India Radio's 77 Local Radio Stations (LRS) were mandated to produce field-based programmes with accent on local problems, news and views, and local talent. The organization's annual report states:

What distinguishes Local Radio... is its down to earth, intimate approach. The programmes of the local radio are area specific. They are flexible and spontaneous enough to enable the station to function as the mouthpiece of the local community (Prasar Bharati, 2002).

In reality, however, owing to inherent deficiencies of a bureaucratic system these stations only replicate the style of working and even the programming patterns of larger stations. Their staff is ill-equipped to run them in a manner that is democratic and participatory. Even as the well-intentioned public broadcaster is frozen into inaction, commercial broadcasting has revived a plummeting medium. But the latter's agenda to accumulate profits renders it incapable of exploiting the potential of the medium for promoting either good taste or propagating social change. This has propelled a number of civil society organizations to articulate the need for alternatives in the form of popular and community-based media. The community radio initiatives by several groups across India for a share of the airwaves, which are 'public property', are one significant indication of this popular demand.

But the continued relevance of Prasar Bharati as a public broadcaster becomes even more imperative, with globalisation and privatisation posing new challenges to the wider media

environment (Kumar, 2003). But the lack of political will and faulty application appears to be killing an otherwise workable proposition. An attempt to revitalize the role of Prasar Bharati as a public service broadcaster was made by setting up of the Prasar Bharati Review Committee that submitted its report on May 20, 2000. The Committee was of the opinion that:

The public service broadcaster plays a key role in any society, especially, in a large and thriving democracy. It must be a part of 'civil society', independent of and distinct from the government. In fact, the public service broadcaster must act as one of the bedrocks of society, and seek to continuously enlarge the so-called 'public sphere'. It must play host to informed debate, provide space for alternative and dissenting viewpoints, be a voice of the voiceless and give substance to the phrase "participatory democracy" (MIB, 2000: 16).

The Committee reiterated that market forces cannot be expected to take care of these objectives and for Prasar Bharati, as the public broadcaster, revenue maximization need not be

> But the continued relevance of Prasar Bharati as a public broadcaster becomes even more imperative, with globalisation and privatisation posing new challenges to the wider media environment

an immediate goal and advertising revenue earned should not be the only yardstick for judging its performance. The Committee suggested several amendments to the Prasar Bharati Act 1990 to enable it to survive in a highly competitive environment created by global media technology and to create public service content of the highest quality. The Committee reiterated its faith in decentralization and devolution and emphasized that the local stations must involve local groups and voluntary organizations in programme

production. It also recommended giving serious consideration to:

... the franchising of local radio stations by Prasar Bharati to selected local community and voluntary groups on an experimental basis. Now that FM radio has been privatised, we do hope that the long-standing opposition and aversion to such a worthwhile step will fade away (MIB, 2000: 37).

> ...the public service broadcaster could assume a role in fostering local community communications, highlight local opinion and local opinion leaders, and advocate and foster social and cultural development of the local community.

The broadcasting debate assumed an altogether new dimension with the advent of cable operators and the beaming of satellite channels by Hong Kong-based STAR TV into India in the year 1991, Conditions for broadcasting changed radically (Pavarala and Kumar, 2002). Faced with the eventuality of private sector competition, autonomy, genuine or otherwise, for state-owned media seemed inevitable. At the same time, the governments were faced with a new set of questions, which they were quite ill equipped to resolve. What should be the structure of regulatory system to take account of the invasion via satellites, and of the new media technologies? What was to be the fate of national (read political) objectives? Competition in programming as well as commerce or advertising was another unfamiliar territory. All these concerns coupled with a few other landmark developments saw the revival of some of the critical issues concerning broadcasting in India after three decades of unimplemented good intentions.

In the face of such challenges, the strategy of the government as well as that of the so-called autonomous corporation, Prasar Bharati can at best be described as 'muddling through'. Competition with commercial media outlets to 'dumb down' content in search of advertising revenues and reduction in the variety and genres of public broadcasting for audience numbers have been combined with protestations over its public character and national mission. There is little doubt that today there is an urgent need to strengthen, rather than weaken, public service broadcasting. This project of revival and reinforcement could include a combination of both the 'trickle-down' and the 'bubble-up' models. Its conventional programming, through appropriate gatekeeping by an independent authority, could continue to emphasize national issues and a sense of national purpose, reinforce solidarity in times of political and/or economic crisis, and stress tolerance of diversity. At the same time, the public service broadcaster could assume a role in fostering local community communications, highlight local opinion and local opinion leaders, and advocate and foster social and cultural development of the local community. Although this latter space is now occupied substantially by community radio, the public broadcaster has a rightful role to play in this arena.

Finally, let me end by invoking the BBC, which had claimed that as a public broadcasting service, it contributes to public value by promoting: democratic value, cultural and creative value, educational value, and social and community value. In the contemporary context of media proliferation – 'the era of plenty' – Prasar Bharati cannot entirely conceive of itself as a dominant institutional voice imposing consensus. It must work through new possibilities of consensus by exploring diversity. In rethinking its mission, Prasar Bharati must not only foster good practices of the 'old' electronic media, but also take advantage of the interactive technological potential of new media. ❑

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YOJANA

Forthcoming Issues

August 2013 & September 2013

August (Special Issue)
Inclusive Democracy

September
Education for All

Developing the Intelligence Capital of a Nation

K P Mohanan

The government, as well as board members of school and college programs, need to understand and appreciate the value of inquiry-oriented education. We hope that such a revolution in education will happen in the not-too-distant future

IN FRAMEWORKS of economics that follow Adam Smith, to measure 'the wealth of a nation' in terms of its GDP (the monetary flow into business for products and services offered), the term 'capital' is typically associated with *financial capital*. However, there has also been a growing recognition that money is only one ingredient of the *tangible capital*. We also need *physical capital*, such as natural resources, and going beyond the tangible, we need the intangible *human capital*, which includes such things as *social capital*, and *knowledge capital*.

The Wealth of a Nation: Money or Wellbeing?

It is not unlikely that at some stage in the future, mainstream economics will connect the idea of 'the wealth of a nation' to Aristotle and the Buddha's idea of 'wellbeing' (*eudaimonia* in Greek). This would require locating economics squarely in ethics rather than in business, and acknowledging wellbeing as real wealth. If so, maintaining and increasing the wealth of a nation would also need *ethical* and *civic capitals*.

My concern here, however, is not with money vs. wellbeing as wealth. What I wish to do is far more modest and limited. Setting aside the question of whether it is legitimate to measure

the wealth of a nation in terms of GDP, I wish to explore the concept of *intelligence capital* as a necessary ingredient in the pursuit of increased profit on products and services.

Knowledge Capital vs. Intelligence Capital

Just as the concept of wealth is impoverished in mainstream economics, so is the concept of knowledge in the terminology of ' knowledge capital' in industry, government, and education. In this discourse, 'knowledge' points to *information* and *know-how* (e.g., technology), not an *understanding* of the world. It does not recognize, for instance, that an understanding of quantum mechanics and relativity theory is part of a nation's knowledge capital. Many people do not realize that building nuclear bombs and nuclear plants requires knowledge of quantum mechanics, that building Global Positioning Systems (GPS) requires knowledge of Einstein's theory (as opposed to Newton's theory), or that modern computers would not have come to exist but for Alan Turing's work on the mathematics of automata.

Now, knowledge by itself is unused money. The enterprise of maintaining and increasing the wealth of a nation through knowledge calls for the intelligence to *apply* that knowledge, to *critically evaluate what is alleged*

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as *knowledge*, and to *generate new knowledge*. This means that, even to pursue economic growth measured in terms of GDP, we must go beyond knowledge economy and knowledge capital, and acknowledge the need for *intelligence economy* and *intelligence capital*.

Intelligence, Education, and Intelligence Capital

Intelligence can be thought of as the *capacity to do things with our mind*, analogous to the capacity to do things with our body. To develop physical stamina, strength, speed, and agility, we need both nutrition and exercise. Likewise, to develop mental stamina, strength, speed, and

> ...the *primary responsibility of education* is to increase the intelligence of the young, by helping them develop their potential intelligence into actualized intelligence, thereby contributing to the intelligence capital of a nation.

agility, we crucially need both mental nutrition and mental exercise. Mental nutrition is knowledge; supplemented by mental exercise, it develops the qualities of the mind that we call intelligence.

The term 'intelligence' has popular associations with IQ scores and with surface smartness that can impress an interview board. It is therefore important for me to clarify what I include under 'mental capacity to do things with the mind'.

Firstly, by intelligence, I mean an individual's mental capacities shaped by learning (*actualized intelligence*), not the genetic predisposition for those capacities (*potential intelligence*). In this sense, a professional mathematician has far greater mathematical intelligence

than a high school student, and a high school student has far greater mathematical intelligence than a five-year old.

Secondly, granted that individuals vary in their potential intelligence, what is relevant for a nation's intelligence capital is the actualized intelligence. Regardless of a body's genetic potential, physical stamina, strength, speed, and agility need to be nurtured through systematic effort. The same holds for the capacities of the mind as well.

Thirdly, intelligence includes *memory*, which in turn includes *knowledge, information,* and *experience*. For instance, to make a recommendation or decision on the legitimacy of stem cell research, balancing the legal and the moral factors, a decision-maker needs the capacity for legal and moral inquiry, grounded in the knowledge of biology and medicine, and experience in handling such matters. All these strands are woven into what I mean by intelligence.

Suppose we accept the concept of intelligence as the capacity to do things with the mind as sketched above. Suppose we also accept that the function of education is capacity building. It follows then that the *primary responsibility of education* is to increase the intelligence of the young, by helping them develop their potential intelligence into actualized intelligence, thereby contributing to the intelligence capital of a nation.

Multiplicity of Intelligences

To address the question, "How do we increase the nation's intelligence capital?" the very first step is to acknowledge the different facets of human intelligence. As Howard Gardner has persuasively argued in his book *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (see http://infed.org/mobi/howard-gardner-multiple-intelligences-and-education/),

intelligence is *multifaceted*: different individuals have different kinds of intelligences: some have monetary intelligence, others have design intelligence, and yet others have musical, mathematical, conceptual, scientific, or person intelligence.

Gardner categorizes intelligences into the linguistic, logico-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. A brief examination reveals that this categorization, while valuable, is not yet an adequate framework of the multiplicity of human intelligences. Take for instance, mathematical intelligence. It calls for the following capacities:

- inventing *mathematical objects, properties, relations,* and *operations,* either by abstracting from the external world, or by building on those that already exist in the world of mathematics;

- coming up with and articulating *definitions* of the above entities;

> ...*intelligence is multifaceted*: different individuals have different kinds of intelligences: some have monetary intelligence, others have design intelligence, and yet others have musical, mathematical, conceptual, scientific, or person intelligence.

- articulating the *axioms* governing the world inhabited by these entities;

- contemplating on them and discovering plausible *conjectures;*

- *proving* those conjectures to establish them as *theorems,* by showing that they are logical consequences of the axioms and definitions, or of already proven theorems; and

- constructing *mathematical models* of the objects, properties, relations, and processes of the

external world, and deducing their *logical consequences/ predictions*.

These capacities would all come under Gardner's 'logico-mathematical' intelligence. Do we have evidence to believe that these capacities are different manifestations of a single form of intelligence, and are all strongly correlated? Ramanujam, the celebrated Indian mathematician, is a case in point: he had a genius for discovering conjectures, but no demonstrated intelligence for proving the conjectures, or for coming up with and articulating definitions or axioms. Such examples suggest the possibility that a person may have acute intelligence in some of these facets, but not in the others.

> **Granted that both Einstein and Hubble were great scientists, Hubble may not have had it in him to be a theoretical physicist. And a brilliant biologist may not have the intelligences to become an equally brilliant physicist.**

Extending this to the distinction between the intelligence for logic and the intelligence for mathematics, it is fairly clear that to be a high caliber mathematician, a person has to have a basic capacity for logical thinking. But this does not mean that the kinds of intelligences that go into the making of a high caliber logician and a high caliber mathematician are the same.

Is the intelligence for scientific inquiry the same as mathematical intelligences? It is true that mathematicians, and philosophers need a high degree of capacity to work with definitions. But scientists need a high degree of observational intelligence, not crucial for logicians and mathematicians. Likewise, it is not clear that the intelligences that experimental scientists and theoretical scientists need are the same. Granted that both Einstein and Hubble were

great scientists, Hubble may not have had it in him to be a theoretical physicist. And a brilliant biologist may not have the intelligences to become an equally brilliant physicist.

Anyone who is dedicated to helping students develop the capacity for academic inquiry knows from experience that these diverse capacities vary across students, in both the potential and the actual. It goes without saying that there would be similar variation within other kinds of intelligences as well. Within musical intelligence, the capacity to sing well and the capacity to compose music would call for different strands of intelligence. Intelligence for managing a research institution and for managing a McDonalds would not be the same

Nurturing Intelligences

Suppose we accept the idea of the multiplicity of mental capacities beyond Gardner's categories. How do we design an educational system that helps students develop the intelligences they will need in their professional, public, and personal life?

It is important to bear in mind that, with the exception of certain professional courses (like medicine, dentistry, or fashion design), it is not possible to predict what profession a high school or college graduate would go into. A physics degree holder may become a minister, a banker, or a journalist, not necessarily as a researcher in physics. Even an IIT graduate may become a civil servant or a CEO, with very little need for engineering skills or engineering knowledge.

Given this situation, it makes sense to develop in students a variety of intelligences that are transferable across domains, rather than training them for specific professions or for specialized higher studies. The skills of solving quadratic equations may be needed for graduate studies in mathematics, but are irrelevant for a bank manager or an IAS officer. However, the capacity to detect logical contradictions, which a good math

education can nurture, is transferrable to any profession, and even public and personal domains. Likewise, the ability to check the steps in a mathematical proof, when generalized, would develop the broader capacity to check step-by-step reasoning in any domain. The dexterity to dissect a frog in a biology lab would not be relevant for a future psychiatrist or administrator; but the broader capacity to design experiments to test causal claims would be of relevance to everyone. Making statistical calculations is useful only for those who need statistics in their professions; but statistical and probabilistic thinking is of value to every educated citizen. A detailed knowledge of Plato's theory of rebirth has no value for a doctor, but the capacity to make decisions that combine moral and pragmatic values, such as those of the legitimacy of stem cell research or of capital punishment is of value to every citizen in a democratic system. Education has the responsibility to aim at such

> **Education has the responsibility to aim at such transferable capacities of the mind that would contribute to the wealth of a nation.**

transferable capacities of the mind that would contribute to the wealth of a nation.

A Curriculum to Enhance Our Intelligence Capital

The core ideas discussed in the preceding sections lead to an obvious question: *What kind of syllabi, textbooks, classroom instruction, and examinations would best contribute to the goal of increasing the intelligence capital of a nation?*

I will restrict my remarks to syllabi, the component of education that shapes the design of textbooks, classroom instruction, and examinations. The syllabi of most educational programs expect students to have:

- *understanding* (an understanding of a body of knowledge); and
- *application* (the ability to apply that knowledge).
- The quest for an educational system that contributes to the nation's intelligence capital requires us to go beyond these, and include educational goals such as the following:
- *independent learning* (the ability to acquire knowledge from textbooks, other reading materials, and the internet, without having to depend on teachers);

> ...education also has a responsibility to develop mathematical temper (the mindset that accompanies mathematical inquiry), philosophical temper (the mindset that accompanies philosophical inquiry) and historical temper (the mindset that accompanies historical inquiry) as important traits of the educated mind.

- *critical understanding* (an understanding of the evidence and arguments that have a bearing on what is presented as "knowledge");
- *critical thinking* (the ability to critically evaluate what is claimed as knowledge);
- *independent inquiry* (the ability to look for answers to questions by gathering new information, and through reflection, thinking, and reasoning, on one's own);
- *innovative problem solving* (in design and policy, relevant for technology, engineering, medicine, law, management...);
- *decision making* (drawing on values, goals, constraints, moral principles, information, and knowledge); and
- *communication* (the ability to *use the spoken and written forms of language* for a variety

of purposes, including those above).

Each of these components of education needs to be fleshed out in detail with great care. By way of illustrating what this would involve, I will explore the challenge of incorporating into school and college education one of these components, namely, *independent inquiry*.

Why Inquiry?

Why should we include inquiry in our curriculum? There could be many responses to this question, but let me pick one: the Indian constitution. Article 51A(h) of the Constitution holds that Indian citizens have a fundamental duty "to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform." If we begin with the premise that we have an obligation to fulfill what our Constitution demands, there are four items that we must pay attention to: scientific temper, humanism, the spirit of inquiry, and the spirit of reform. For the purposes of this article, I will restrict my attention to two of them: scientific temper, and the spirit of inquiry.

I understand 'scientific temper' to be a mindset that underlies scientific inquiry, and is nurtured through the practice of scientific inquiry. It is useful to recognize that education also has a responsibility to develop mathematical temper (the mindset that accompanies mathematical inquiry), philosophical temper (the mindset that accompanies philosophical inquiry) and historical temper (the mindset that accompanies historical inquiry) as important traits of the educated mind. Since scientific, mathematical, philosophical, and historical inquiries are all forms of *rational inquiry*, I will focus on what these different tempers have in common, namely, the *rational temper*.

At the core of 'rational temper' is a commitment to the following canons of rational inquiry, together with a

predisposition to follow them in our professional, public, and personal lives:

- Statements that are claimed as knowleldge must not be accepted merely on the basis of *blind faith* in the 'authority' of the source of assertions, they must be *doubted and questioned.*
- Conclusions that are alleged to be part of our knowledge must be *rationally justified.*
- The body of propositions that are judged as knowledge must be logically *consistent*, and be maximally *coherent.*

If these canons are crucial to rational temper (and hence to the scientific temper), given that our Constitution requires educated citizens to develop the scientific temper, we must conclude that *our current educational system is unconstitutional.*

What is the basis for this conclusion?

Let us take examples. High school students are traditionally taught that the earth revolves around the sun,

> The result of such transmission of assertions without rational justification is that students develop the mindset of blind faith in the authority of textbooks and teachers.

and that the idea that the sun revolves around the earth is 'wrong'. But why is it wrong? What rational justification (evidence and arguments) favours the moving-earth theory over the stationary-earth theory? Textbooks and classroom discussions do not address the evidence. Nor is the issue of rational justification for the moving-earth theory mentioned in our syllabi, or probed in final examinations. As a result, students are forced to accept the theory as *dogma*, not as a scientific theory.

Similar remarks apply to just about everything that school and college students are taught. They are taught that matter is made up of molecules, atoms, and subatomic particles, without presenting any rational justification to support these conclusions. They are taught that all existing and extinct species on the earth descended from a single ancestor species; once again, evidence and arguments are typically not discussed, or if discussed, the arguments are at best sloppy. They are taught the distinction between compounds and mixtures, without the realization that classifying water as a compound and sugar-water solution as a mixture does not follow from the definitions given for 'compound' and 'mixture'.

> ...none of our secondary school programs offer high quality education; hence they fail to meet the legal requirement. This opens up an opportunity to any citizen of India to sue every state and central board of studies of school education for violating the law.

The result of such transmission of assertions without rational justification is that students develop the mindset of blind faith in the authority of textbooks and teachers. If, by 'rational temper', we mean the traits of mind outlined earlier, then our educational system destroys the potential for the scientific temper, and hence the conclusion that it is unconstitutional.

The Constitution also calls for the spirit of inquiry among the citizens. Now, *inquiry* is *the systematic investigation of a question to look for an answer.* It can be unpacked into the following components:

- an *inquiry* question;
- the *trigger* for the question;
- a *methodology* to look for an answer to the question;
- an *answer* to the question, and a *conclusion* based on the answer;

- *justification* of the conclusion (the evidence and arguments to support the conclusion), to convince the inquiry community that it should be accepted; and

- *critical evaluation* of the answer and the conclusion, to *decide* whether to accept the conclusion, reject it, or hold it for future consideration.

To ensure the spirit of inquiry among citizens, it is crucial that our future citizens, namely, our students, systematically *practice* inquiry, and *understand* different ways of inquiring. For this to happen, the design of an educational system must include the components of inquiry in its syllabi, textbooks, classroom instruction, and assessment.

Even the briefest glance at the curricula in our schools and colleges indicates that none of these are part of our educational programs. Thus, our educational system fails to fulfill the constitutional requirement of developing the spirit of inquiry among our students, and hence is unconstitutional.

Let me add one more reason for incorporating inquiry in our curriculum. The Government of India has made a *legal commitment* to providing high quality primary and secondary education to all children in the country. This commitment has two components: quality and coverage. Setting aside the problem of coverage, let us ask what 'high quality education' means, and how it is distinguished from moderate and poor quality education. That would be the only way to determine whether or not a given educational program is successful in meeting the legal requirement.

Let us begin with the premise that the broad aims of education include helping students to develop what we listed earlier, repeated below for ease of reference:

- *understanding;*
- *application;*

- *independent learning;*
- *critical understanding;*
- *critical thinking;*
- *independent inquiry;*
- *innovative problem solving;*
- *decision making;* and
- *communication.*

Suppose we say that a high quality educational program is one that satisfies all these aims. A moderate quality educational program is one that satisfies the first two components (understanding and application), but not the rest. And a poor quality educational program is one that fails to satisfy even the first two components. (A detailed discussion of what "high quality education" means is available in "What is High Quality Education?" at https://sites.google.com/site/sciediiserp/system/app/pages/search?scope=search-site&q=quality+of+education)

Let us take secondary schools. If we define high quality education as we have done, then it is easy to establish that our programs for secondary education fail to nurture the spirit of inquiry among our students. It follows then that none of our secondary school programs offer high quality education; hence they fail to meet the legal requirement. This opens up an opportunity to any citizen of India to sue every state and central board

> The ability to think critically and the ability to engage in independent inquiry are two of the central pillars of human intelligence.

of studies of school education for violating the law.

We can now answer the question, "Why inquiry?" as follows. If we do not incorporate the component of inquiry into our syllabi, textbooks, classroom instruction, and examinations, we fail to fulfill our constitutional and legal obligations. We also fail to nurture an important strand of our intelligence capital that could lead to greater economic progress.

An Inquiry Oriented School and College Curriculum: An Outline

What do we need to infuse school and college curricula with if we wish to nurture a scientific temper and a spirit of inquiry in our future citizens? Given below is a broad outline for the consideration of educational policy makers:

Appreciation of and practice in:

A. *asking questions*, identifying questions triggered by answers, and making it a habit of mind;

B. ways of *looking for answers* and arriving at *conclusions*;

C. different modes of *reasoning* within mathematical, scientific, and conceptual inquiries;

D. following the canons of *rational inquiry*: prohibition of logical contradictions, acceptance of logical consequences, and the demand for the rational justification of conclusions;

E. *doubting and questioning* what is asserted as 'true' or 'useful' by authorities (textbooks, teachers, experts, leaders, ...), peers, and oneself;

F. keeping an *open mind*, and *self-correction*;

G. thinking up, formulating, evaluating, and justifying *definitions*, *axioms*, and *conjectures* (mathematics); and *hypotheses, theories, laws*, and *models* (science);

H. *proving* conjectures, hypotheses, theories, laws and models, and *critically evaluating* the proofs.

We need to incorporate these elements of rational inquiry into our syllabi, textbooks, and classroom instruction, and ensure that they are tested in the final examinations.

Two Initiatives to Contribute to the Intelligence Capital of India

As an experiment to explore the feasibility of a curriculum that incorporates these aspects of inquiry, IISER-Pune has recently initiated five-day summer workshops on scientific inquiry for high school students.

Based on our experience of these workshops, we are contemplating the feasibility of a Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) on scientific inquiry for high school and college students. The 'Proposal for the MOOC', which outlines the rationale for the MOOC, and fleshes out the concepts and abilities of inquiry that the course aims to develop, is available at https://sites.google.com/site/sciediiserp/home/reading-for-sci-inq-workshop

Alongside the workshop and proposed MOOC for students, IISER-Pune has also initiated an eight-month web workshop (with a face-to-face component) for science educators in schools and colleges, and institutes of research and education. (See https://sites.google.com/site/sciediiserp/home?pli=1) The goal of this workshop is to identify educators who are inspired by the vision of Inquiry-Oriented Education, and to help them develop the capacity to contribute to Inquiry-Oriented syllabi, textbooks, and other learning materials, lesson plans, and assessment tasks. The first of these workshops was conducted in 2012. The second one is currently in progress, with the face-to-face component scheduled for the end of June. If we can find the resources, we will build a MOOC on science education as well, such that it can be made accessible to all educators committed to the vision of the rational temper and the spirit of inquiry that our Constitution dreams of.

Given the excitement that both students and educators have exhibited when taken through the workshops on scientific inquiry and inquiry-oriented education, we have no doubt that these interventions have been eminently successful. We are also convinced that the two MOOCs we are planning to design will have a similar impact on students and educators.

The ability to think critically and the ability to engage in independent inquiry are two of the central pillars of human intelligence. It stands to reason, therefore, that our two-pronged intervention for students and educators would have a significant impact on the intelligence capital of the nation. For its full potential to be actualized, however, it is important that these interventions be incorporated into the syllabi, textbooks, classroom instruction, and examinations across schools and colleges. For that to happen, the government, as well as board members of school and college programs, need to understand and appreciate the value of inquiry-oriented education. We hope that such a revolution in education will happen in the not-too-distant future.

And as a by-product of that revolution, our intelligence capital will also be enhanced, contributing to economic progress. ❑

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Re-invigorating Public Broadcasting–Learning from international experience

Daya Kishan Thussu

Given India's size, scale and scope, it remains a key imperative that an Indian perspective on global affairs is vocal and visible. For this to happen, Doordarshan news has to be reinvigorated, professionalized and made available on major satellite networks around the world

LOBALIZATION, deregulation and digitization have transformed public service broadcasting across the globe. A process which began in the 1990s, as a result of the privatization of broadcasting and telecommunication, accelerated by the digital revolution in the past decade, has enabled a quantum leap in the production and instantaneous distribution of audio-visual media products. With the convergence of television and the Internet and the growing availability of broadband, consumers can share information and entertainment programmes and, with digital devices, generate and distribute their own content. At last the dream of a 'global village,' which Canadian media theorist Marshall McLuhan envisaged way back in the late 1960s, appears to have become a reality. In the era of 'real-time' globalized and digitized communication, people all over the world can watch live events unfold – natural or man-made disasters, conflicts and confrontations, pageantry and sporting spectacles.

In such an interconnected world, the traditional view of the national broadcaster itself has been reformulated to take into consideration technological, economic and political changes affecting the broadcasting industry. Historically, broadcasting was considered a national institution: the state played an important role in the development of radio and television, key instruments for national integration and for creating a sense of cultural identity, with a remit to inform and educate as well as entertain. In the communist world, broadcast media were considered part of the legitimate state propaganda machinery. In many developing countries, broadcasting was used by ruling elites to retain their hold on power. Before media globalization, with the possible exception of broadcasters from major powers such as the United States, television networks, were operating within and for the nation-state, making programmes for citizens rather than consumers.

A consumer-oriented broadcasting culture, with its roots in the US-originated commercial model of television, has been globalized in recent decades. Examining media systems in different cultural and political contexts, Dan Hallin and Poulo Mancini noted the 'triumph of the liberal model' - characterised by the central features of the American media system – which was likely to be adopted across the world 'because its global influence has been so great and because neo-liberalism and globalization continue to diffuse liberal media structures and ideas' (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 305).

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It is useful to remind ourselves that, from its very inception, broadcasting in the US had a commercial remit: the US Radio Act of 1927 defined radio broadcasting as a commercial enterprise, funded by advertising. It was argued that public interest would be best served by unfettered private broadcasting and therefore the Act made no provision for supporting or developing non-commercial broadcasting. Television, too, followed the market model, driven by advertising and dependent on ratings with the trio of television networks - CBS (Columbia Broadcasting System), NBC (National Broadcasting Corporation) and ABC (American

> With the globalization of the liberal model of broadcasting, national broadcasters no longer have a monopoly on the airwaves. This has meant a dynamic media, challenging state censorship and widening the public sphere, while at the same time also leading to the concentration of media power among private corporations.

Broadcasting Corporation) - providing both entertainment and information. As the networks' revenue was based on audience ratings, entertainment was an important ingredient of their programming. In this television culture, the notion of the citizen as consumer was deeply entrenched.

With the globalization of the liberal model of broadcasting, national broadcasters no longer have a monopoly on the airwaves. This has meant a dynamic media, challenging state censorship and widening the public sphere, while at the same time also leading to the concentration of media power among private corporations. One key factor for this globalization of audio-visual media has been the growing availability of

affordable communication satellites: more geostationary satellites were launched during the 1990s, than in the previous three decades combined, enabled by international agreements on telecommunications. The resulting proliferation of satellite and cable television has led to unprecedented growth in new television networks. In Latin America, for example, *PanAmSat*, the first private satellite service for the continent, revolutionized broadcasting, providing direct-to-home (DTH) television services. In Asia, the launch in 1990 of the Hong Kong-based *AsiaSat* was responsible for such broadcasters as STAR (Satellite Television Asian Region), part of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, which within a decade from its launch, could claim to be setting the pace of media in Asia, broadcasting in 53 countries. The regional satellite operator *Arabsat* enabled beaming of programmes across the Arab media space including the Arabic diaspora with such pan-Arabic entertainment networks as Middle East Broadcasting Centre, as well as *Al-Jazeera*, the Arab world's first 24/7 news network.

The resulting growth of multichannel networks has made the global media landscape multicultural, multilingual and multinational. Digital communication technologies in broadcasting and broadband have given viewers in many countries the ability to access simultaneously a vast array of local, national, regional, and international television in various genres: news (CNN, BBC World, CNBC), regional news (Sky News, Al-Jazeera), documentary (Discovery, National Geographic), sports (ESPN); and entertainment (Disney, HBO, MTV).

This marketization has brought new vitality to the broadcasting sector and also contributed to increasing commodification of news and information, as growing competition for audiences and, crucially, advertising revenue, becomes intense. In such an

environment, the need to make news entertaining has become a priority for broadcasters, with an increasing emphasis on style, storytelling skills and spectacle. The popularity of reality TV and its relatives - court and crime enactments, docudramas and rescue missions – shows a new interdependency between the news and new forms of current affairs programming, blurring the boundaries between news, documentary and entertainment. Such hybridized ratings-driven programming also feeds into and benefits from the 24/7 news cycle, with its endless demand for content.

This trend for 'infotainment' - a neologism coined in America in the 1980s - has even affected the public-service tradition of journalism in Western Europe. In Italy, infotainment-driven private television catapulted Silvio Berlusconi from an obscure businessman to the office of the Prime Minister in 1994 and helped him to be re-elected in 2001 and 2008. In Britain, with a well-established tradition of public-service broadcasting in the BBC, TV journalism has also been

> India is the world's most crowded television news bazaar (by 2013, the country had more than 140 dedicated news channels) and consequently infotainment is rampant on the airwaves.

influenced by the trend to infotainment. The role of entertainment - the last of the Reithian triad of 'informing, educating and entertaining' the public – has gained greater prominence. One indication of this shift is that the BBC's flagship current affairs series *Panorama*, broadcast since 1953 and which set the standards for current affairs reporting for half a century, was re-launched in 2007 as a shorter, sharper infotainment-driven series. In Eastern Europe and parts of the former Soviet Union, the triumph of market capitalism inevitably undermined the state-driven model of public broadcasting. State

broadcasters were exposed as little more than propaganda networks, losing all credibility. Today the idea of news operating in a marketplace has been normalized in a world shaped by the market. Is the 'tabloid,' version of news, with its emphasis on consumer journalism, sports and entertainment, diluting and debasing public discourse? In the 1980s, American scholar Neil Postman, in his influential book, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, argued that public discourse in the United States was assuming the form of entertainment (Postman, 1985). With the globalization of US commercial model, arguably such concerns now have international echoes.

> The urban middle class has increasingly moved away from the national broadcaster to bourgeoning private networks – attracted by its glitzy and glamorous presenters, with their clipped accents and Hinglish vocabulary.

As elsewhere in the world, public service broadcasting in India is facing major challenges from increasing competition from ever proliferating private media outlets as well as fragmenting audiences for broadcast media as on-line communication technologies grow in importance. India is the world's most crowded television news bazaar (by 2013, the country had more than 140 dedicated news channels) and consequently infotainment is rampant on the airwaves. The growing competition among these channels has contributed to the tendency towards tabloidization of television news, encapsulated by what I have described elsewhere as the three Cs - cinema, crime and cricket – of Indian infotainment (Thussu, 2007). Prominent among these, and one which reflects infotainment trends elsewhere in the world, is the apparent obsession of almost all news channels with celebrity culture, which centres on

Bollywood – the world's largest film industry in terms of number of films produced annually.

Despite severe competition from private networks, the state broadcaster still retains the highest audience share: Doordarshan News, the 24-hour news and current affairs network in Hindi and English, operational since 2003, continues to receive a pan-Indian national viewership. In its most recent weekly ratings (April 2013) the DD Newsnight on Doordarshan News in English topped all news channels for five weeks. Though competition with private networks has improved it considerably, news on Doordarshan has yet to acquire high professionalism, as it is still perceived by educated opinion to be reflecting the official position, despite promises by successive governments to give autonomy to the electronic media. The urban middle class has increasingly moved away from the national broadcaster to bourgeoning private networks – attracted by its glitzy and glamorous presenters, with their clipped accents and Hinglish vocabulary.

As elsewhere, Doordarshan is increasingly under pressure to provide entertainment-oriented programming, as well as coverage of live sporting events, as it is constantly losing audience to private networks. The suggestion that a licence fee on the lines of the BBC to protect and promote public broadcasting should be introduced has not been taken up by the authorities. In its absence the state broadcaster is seen as part of the government, accountable to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting rather than to citizens of India. Public broadcasting in India falls far short of UNESCO's definition: 'Public Service Broadcasting is broadcasting made, financed and controlled by the public, for the public. It is neither commercial nor state-owned, free from political interference and pressure from commercial forces'.

The increasing marketization of television seems to have left out of the picture the majority of India's citizens - the rural poor. Like in many other developing countries, the growing trend towards corporatized news can adversely affect the public-service role of television, whose egalitarian potential remains largely unfulfilled. In a country which is home to the largest population of the world's poorest people (despite impressive economic growth in the past two decades and remarkable success in reducing the number of Indians in absolute poverty), the public broadcaster has a crucial role to educate the population for health and hygiene, gender and caste sensitivity and for creating a pan-Indian identity as well as international affairs. Today in the age of media plenty, the educational and developmental aspects of television have been largely replaced by Bollywoodized infotainment.

It is worth recalling that India was the first country in the world to introduce satellite television for development communication – the

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famed SITE (Satellite Instructional Television Experiment) programme of the 1970s. In keeping with its Citizen's Charter, Doordarshan is committed to paying 'special attention to the fields of education, and spread of literacy...' With this in view, the government, in collaboration with the Indira Gandhi National Open University, has been running two satellite channels, *Gyandarshan*, and *Gyandarshan II*, as well as a FM radio channel *Gyanvani*, dedicated to education.

Given India's vigorous democratic polity, the role of television news acquires a crucial dimension in the political process. In a thriving democratic polity such as India, the media has a crucial 'fourth estate' function, as a pillar on which the political system rests, together with the other three estates – legislative, executive, and judiciary. An independent media can also act as a counterbalance to the three estates, as a watchdog guarding the public interest, and providing a forum for public debate. It can be argued, that this fourth estate function of the media has significantly contributed to India's multiparty, multilingual and multilayered democracy. An autonomous public broadcaster can play a central role in this regard.

Taking a cue from successful public service broadcasters such as the BBC and Japan's NHK, Indian broadcasters should invest to protect and promote India's rich cultural, intellectual and religious heritage and publicise it globally. This combined with highlighting the verve and vitality of a youthful contemporary India would contribute to India's soft power. Finally, a public-service broadcaster should open India's window to the world: at a time when India is increasingly globalizing, its television news demonstrates scant interest in international affairs. Unlike other international news networks – even among major non-English speaking countries which have recently launched 24/7 English language global channels (Russia Today, France 24, Iran's Press TV, Qatar's Al-Jazeera English, Japan's NHK International, China's CCTV News, Germany's Deutsche Welle, among others), Doordarshan news is absent from the world's television screens (though private Indian channels such as NDTV 24x7 and Aaj Tak are visible). Given India's size, scale and scope, it remains a key imperative that an Indian perspective on global affairs is vocal and visible. For this to happen, Doordarshan news has to be reinvigorated, professionalized and made available on major satellite networks around the world (and not confined to webcasting on a primitive-looking website in a country which prides itself as being a global IT hub).

Apart from a strong political will, India has the professional, technological and financial resources to reform its public-service broadcasting, providing this crucial instrument of soft power editorial and financial autonomy and deploying it – in all its forms - radio, television and on-line – as a messenger for a resurgent India. ❑

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What is Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)?

A massive open online course provides online content for anyone without any limit on attendance. In some developed countries, it looks like the future of higher education. In countries like United States, courses have attracted a large number of students. The term MOCC was coined by some Canadian academics around 2008

Through the web, the course aims at wide spread interactive participation. In addition to the traditional course material, opportunities for interaction are also offered. This system of education has been hailed as one which has broken the walls of formal and traditional educational institutions. As MOOC is a voluntary exercise, there is no penalty for dropping or lagging behind. For some subjects huge enrolments have been reported in some western countries. Some prominent universities there have offered to help promote this effort aimed at taking the education to the masses, beyond the classrooms and open learning system. Several experts worldwide have been devoting their time and energy to preparation of curriculum, course material, assessment and analysis. Before the digital age, distance learning had come in the form of correspondence courses. As early as 1922, the New York University had started its own radio station but education through radio could not make much headway due to high attrition level.

MOOC, which originated in 2008, first began with 25 tuition fee paying students of a university. Along with them 2,300 students from general public also joined. Of late, MOOC has been gaining momentum. The students' urge for knowledge along with the flexibility and freedom that this system offers, has led to its growth.

There are several issues with regard to this system which remain unresolved like the cost and payment. There are many for whom the MOOC'– projection as the "next big thing" is a hype yet this system holds a lot of promise in the field of education.

What is Fairplay in the Context of Copyright Law?

Copyright has been an issue of concern for long. With the modern society emerging as a knowledge society, the copyright issue has been acquiring growing significance around the world. The doctrine of fair use tries to balance the rights of copyright owners with wider social interests. "Fairplay" in copyright does not aim at blanket ban of copying but allows socially useful activities like criticism, news reporting, teaching and research

The fairplay doctrine had its own origin in certain judicial pronouncements but with the passage of time some of its salient features have been included in the copyright laws across the world. The factors that determine the fairplay in copying include the purpose of use, nature of the work copied, the amount of portion copied, the effect and use on the market share of the original work. The creativity and enrichment of the general public determines the purpose of copying. It should not supersede the original work. If the purpose is non-commercial and educational, it can be condoned but if the purpose is commercial exploitation of some one else's mental, intellectual or creative efforts, it can attract penalty. If the ownership of a work rightly belongs to public domain, it can come under fair play. The social usefulness of a work can also weigh as a consideration for determining the fair play. The quantity of copyrighted work also matters. The effect of copied work on the market share is also significant. It should not be a direct market substitute. Commercial use and duplication in entirety of the original which supersede the objects of the original which harms the market of the original will surely amount to copyright violation.

The ever widening reach of the internet has been throwing new challenges to copyright protection. Particularly in the developing countries, laws have to keep pace with the explosion of information and advancement of the technology.

(Compiled by Hasan Zia, Sr. Editor, Yojana, Urdu)

Public Service Broadcasting- A Balancing Act

Mark Tully

So public service broadcasting in my experience is all about balance. There is the balance that has to shift continuously between competing with commercial broadcasters to attract audiences and producing programmes which fulfill a public service mandate

THE NOVELIST Stephen Faulks has said BBC Radio 4 Channel's 'humane, upper-middlebrow seriousness has done more both to define British society and to hold it together than any political or artistic movement of the last one hundred years.' It's Radio 4's breakfast show, the Today Programme which sets the political agenda for the day. Although it's radio, not television, it's the programme politicians and other opinion formers most want to appear on. Radio 4 holds this dominant position in news and current affairs broadcasting but it's much more than a news channel. It commissions more drama and comedy than any other radio or television channel in Britain. It's renowned for its radio documentaries and discussion programmes on religious, cultural, and intellectual issues. The variety of Radio 4's output is such that many people in Britain who work at home keep the station on all day. Others mark the passing of the day with it's programmes, getting up to Radio 4, shaving or cooking breakfast to it, catching up with the news at lunchtime, driving home to the office listening to a specially timed current affairs programme, and going to bed with programmes suitable for that time of day. I present a regular programme on Radio 4, an anthology of prose, poetry and music, early on Sunday mornings and late at night. Listeners often say to me, 'I go to sleep listening to your programme.' I'm not quite sure how much of a compliment that is but it does show the power of Radio 4 if people are still listening at 11.30 at night on a Sunday.

Why do I start this essay with a description of the extraordinary position of radio 4 in British society? I start because this phenomenon, so highly valued by Britons, would not exist if there was no public service broadcasting. No commercial broadcaster has ever mounted an effective challenge to Radio 4. I believe it's not just the expense of running a channel like radio 4 and the difficulty therefore commercial broadcasters would have in making a profit from it. In my opinion the absence of any serious speech-radio channel other than Radio 4 is also because of the difference between the ethos of a public service broadcasting organization and a commercial broadcaster.

The basis of public service broadcasting as I have experienced it, working for the BBC as a member of staff for thirty years and then as a freelancer is twofold. The broadcasting organization should be free of commercial pressures, in

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particular should not have to raise revenue by selling advertising time, and should also be free of government or any other organizations which might dictate content, a Church for instance or a political party. Professional broadcasters should be enabled to produce programmes solely guided by public service objectives. The BBC's mission is 'to enrich people's lives with programmes that inform, educate, and entertain'. To fulfill this mission the BBC has a board of management dominated by broadcasters. In a government run broadcasting organization the managers

> In a government run broadcasting organization the managers would be government servants, and in commercial organization marketing executives would be likely to have a louder voice than broadcasters.

would be government servants, and in commercial organization marketing executives would be likely to have a louder voice than broadcasters. The BBC's board of management is subject to trustees, usually distinguished public figures who set the strategy for fulfilling the mission, assess the performance of the board of management and appoint the Director General. In India of course so called public service broadcasters are not free of government control, and the only radio and television alternatives are blatantly commercial. The BBC's independence from government is guaranteed by a Royal Charter. The current charter will have to be renewed in 2016. The corporation's revenue is guaranteed by the television licence almost all households with television sets have to pay for. BBC World Service used to be financed by the Foreign Office but this did not have an impact on the editorial policy. I was working in London in the section of the BBC World Service which broadcast to Iran and South at the time of the uprising against the Shah. The British

ambassador in Tehran and the foreign office let us know in no uncertain terms that they thought our broadcasts were unbalanced and contributing to the Shah's troubles, but their complaints did not affect our editorial decisions. During the movement against Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in Pakistan the British High Commissioner called me in to say that the Prime Minister was very angry with me and suggested very firmly that I should leave the country. I replied, "that just means I will have to stay on longer", which I did.

There have been many occasions when the BBC has come under very public pressure to accept the government's view of editorial issues. Perhaps the most famous occasion was the 1956 Suez crisis when Britain intervened militarily in Egypt. The opposition in Parliament vehemently opposed this action. The BBC gave the Prime Minister, Anthony Eden, the opportunity to broadcast to the nation. But it also gave the leader of the opposition the right to reply. Eden was furious and discussed various ways of punishing the BBC, some reports even suggested he considered taking the corporation over. But in the end he restricted himself to cutting a million pounds off the World Service budget. During the time of the controversial Director General John Birt in the nineties there were allegations that he was too close to successive governments. Those allegations were strengthened when after leaving the BBC he went to work in the office of the then Prime Minister Tony Blair. But there is no perfect design for any organization, and one like the BBC which is very much in the public eye is bound to have a tense relationship and sometimes questionable relationship with the government. All I can say is that in my experience the BBC is a genuinely independent public service broadcaster, showing that such an organization is possible.

There are two sources of revenue which could bring commercial pressures to bear on the BBC's programming decisions. One is the

revenue that the BBC earns from the sale of its programmes and other commercial activities connected with them. The second source of revenue which could be questioned is the breach of the BBC principle that it will not take advertisements. It does take advertisement on its BBC World Television channel. I was concerned that, on a comparatively recent visit to India, the Director General chose to hold a reception in the commercial capital Mumbai rather than the national capital, Delhi, as was the tradition. His decision seemed to indicate that commercial considerations dominated the visit.

The licence system which guarantees the BBC's financial autonomy is threatened by pressure on the government from non-BBC broadcasters. They maintain that the guaranteed income means the BBC does not compete with them on a level playing field, or in other words is unfair competition. The British newspapers complain that the BBC's very popular website with free access undermines the efforts they make to earn revenue form their web-sites.

> There are many reasons for supporting public service broadcasting. The most obvious one is that it provides an independent news service which has credibility.

There are many reasons for supporting public service broadcasting. The most obvious one is that it provides an independent news service which has credibility. The more widely social media is spread, the more important accurate and credible news is, news which listeners, viewers, and those who get their information electronically can trust. The social media provides opportunities for rumor-mongering, spreading slanted stories, and many other ways of deceiving the public. It is impossible to check the authenticity of so much information on the net. This makes having news agencies which can be trusted to provide authentic

information all the more important. In India they were important enough in the days before social media, when the airways were dominated by government controlled broadcasters. In those days when I used to report from the Indian countryside I would sometimes ask why people were listening to the BBC and I was told because 'it gives true news and it gives it first'. When I would ask about All India Radio listeners would dismiss their bulletins as 'government news.'

Public Service Broadcasting does face challenges in maintaining not just an independent news service but also a balanced one. Although Public Service Broadcasting is not commercial and so doesn't have to obtain a large enough audience to satisfy advertisers, it does have to worry about audiences. As

> **Editors seem to believe viewers are overawed by the technological marvel of this coverage and excited because they feel they are on the spot themselves. The result is that the live coverage goes on and on, repeating itself and crowding out other stories.**

someone in almost every house in Britain is required to pay for a television licence the BBC has to attract audiences which will justify this levy. It has to be able to say that the number of people watching its programmes shows that the public sees the licence fee as value for money. That can only be done by winning audiences. So editors of public sector broadcasters' news programmes will inevitably be tempted to go down-market to trivialize or sensationalize news in order to attract audiences. There are those who criticize the BBC's early evening domestic television news programme of doing just that.

There is the seduction of covering breaking news live, a particular bugbear of mine. Editors seem to believe viewers are overawed by the technological marvel of this coverage and excited because they feel they are on the spot themselves. The result is that the live coverage goes on and on, repeating itself and crowding out other stories. Reporters are pressed to report when they have nothing new to say, and presenters, or anchors as they are known in India, ask tired questions such as 'tell us what is happening now', when we the viewers have been told just a few minutes earlier. Victims and their relatives are asked insensitive and often hurtful questions, and efforts are made to think up imaginative but unsubstantiated new angles. In all the excitement of keeping the show going, describing what is happening on the ground, the background to the story is lost. Breaking news coverage can also, as India found in the Mumbai attacks, be very dangerous. The BBC seems to me to be as seduced by breaking news and on the spot broadcasting as all other new channels, even though it does not leave room for what the corporation does best - carefully crafted news stories.

Because Public service news broadcasters' journalists are like other journalists they face the temptation to be swept off their feet by the urge to beat the competition. That desire, and the impact it can have on accurate and balanced reporting, are described by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in his short, hard-hitting, book called On Television. He writes of 'the obsession with scoops and the unquestioned bias in favour of the news that is the newest and hardest to get; or the predisposition to overstatement that comes from attempting to offer the subtlest and strangest interpretation (which often means the most cynical one); or again the predictions game, made possible by a collective amnesia. Not only are these predictions and diagnoses easy to make (like bets in sports events) but they can be made with total impunity, protected as the predictor is by the rapidity with which the journalistic report is forgotten amid the rapid turnover of events.' But at least with public service

broadcasting commercial pressure is not added to the journalistic urge to beat the competition. Certainly when I was in the BBC there used to be daily meetings in departments to review the output. At these review meetings harsh judgments were passed on coverage which was thought to have been shallow, sensational, exaggerated or opiniated.

But as I pointed out at the start public service radio's contribution to the life of a nation can be far greater than just providing news services and current affairs programmes which are trusted. As I have pointed out, part of the BBC's mission is to entertain. They do this by making a very wide variety of programmes. The power to decide what programmes will be made lies with the broadcasters not with marketing executives or officials. It is because there were broadcasters in the BBC who maintained their faith in the power of radio, and in its importance as a creative medium in the dark days when television seemed to be sweeping the board that the BBC's Radio 4 channel survived and plays such an important role in the life of Britain.

But just as there are threats to public service news broadcasts there

> **Any public-service broadcasting organization will have to be dependent on the government ultimately for its survival, so there has to be a balance between preserving independence and maintaining a relationship with the government.**

are also threats to its other output. Creating entertaining and informative radio programmes requires creativity. Programme-makers need the freedom to be creative, adequate finance and other resources including time to make their programmes, and a management which accepts its role is to facilitate and protect them not to be their bosses. The prevalent style of management

coming out of business schools and advocated by management consultants is based on a narrow definition of efficiency. It puts managers above broadcasters, and creates hostility between them. Managers take decisions which broadcasters should take. Broadcasters find their freedom is restricted by bureaucratic controls. Greg Dyke, the former Director General of the BBC said of his predecessor John Birt who was widely regarded as being over influenced by management consultants, "He was more interested in the BBC being the best managed broadcasting organization rather than the best broadcasting organization." Obviously the BBC has to be able to demonstrate that it is not profligate and that it does provide value for money and use resources responsibly but it has to balance those considerations with the very particular requirements of a creative broadcasting organization.

So public service broadcasting in my experience is all about balance. There is the balance that has to shift continuously between competing with commercial broadcasters to attract audiences and producing programmes which fulfill a public service mandate. A public service broadcaster has to serve all its different audiences. It has to be capable of being high-brow and low-brow. Any public-service broadcasting organization will have to be dependent on the government ultimately for its survival, so there has to be a balance between preserving independence and maintaining a relationship with the government. Of course the responsibility for this balance also lies on the shoulders of the government. Then there is the balance between the responsible use of resources and the freedom necessary for creativity to flourish. Finally there is the balance between making use of new technologies and not overusing them. I do believe that if a public service broadcaster which maintained all these balances could be established in India it would vastly enrich the life of India. Public Service Broadcasting undoubtedly enriches the life of Britain. ❑

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Telegram service to cease operations

The Telegram service will be discontinued in the country from July 15. Telegraphy has a long history: it started with the use of smoke signals and then graduated to semaphore, the flag language that allowed messages to be relayed between ships or buildings that were far apart.

But all that changed when Samuel Morse sent what is thought to be the first telegram, on May 24, 1844. Morse sent a message from Washington to his assistant Alfred Vail in Baltimore that read: "What hath God wrought?"

The service came to India in 1850 when 24-year-old Irishman William Brooke O' Shaughnessy, a surgeon by profession, was appointed by East India Company to lay down the country's first telegraph line between Calcutta and Diamond Harbour, an important coastal point in the suburbs of the city.

The line allowed transmission of electric signals over long distances. Leveraging on the tactical advantage that the telegraph services could provide, the British East India Company decided to expand its reach to cover about 4,000 miles connecting important cities like Calcutta, Agra, Chennai and Bangalore by 1853.

NORTH EAST DIARY

'OPERATION GOODWILL'

More than 150 students from various schools in Tawang bordering China were taught about improving their communication skills and personality as part of the Indian Army's Operation Goodwill held in the district. They were also exposed to adventurous activities like mountaineering, trekking and basic skills of rock climbing during the programme. The Tawang brigade commander assured that the Army would continue its endeavour to empower the students of Tawang, to enable them to realize their potential. ❑

TRANSPORTING FOOD GRAINS FOR NORTHEAST INDIA VIA BANGLADESH BEGINS

Transporting food grains for the mountainous northeastern states of India via Bangladesh has begun, and the first consignment is expected to reach Tripura soon.

"A barge carrying the first consignment of 3,000 tonnes of foodgrains for Tripura left Haldia port (in West Bengal) Thursday for Ashuganj river port in Bangladesh. From Ashuganj port, the food grains would be ferried to Tripura by road," a senior official of the Tripura food department has said.

He said: "The first consignment is likely to reach Tripura within 10 to 15 days. In the next few months 10,000 tonnes of foodgrains for Tripura would be transported by this route."

Ashuganj river port in eastern Bangladesh under Brahmanbaria district is 35 km from Tripura capital Agartala.

"Initially, the Bangladesh government has agreed to transport 10,000 tonnes of foodgrains for Tripura through its territory," Tripura Food and Civil Supplies Minister Bhanulal Saha had said.

"Due to shortage of rail wagons, inadequate storage facilities, transportation hiccups and various other bottlenecks, the northeastern states have been suffering from poor supply of food grains for most part of the year, especially during the monsoon," the minister pointed out.

After getting the green signal from Dhaka, the Food Corporation of India (FCI) had initiated the process to transport food grains and essentials using the Bangladeshi river port and the roadways connected to the northeastern states.

"The FCI had earlier floated tenders to select the Bangladeshi transporters. In the first consignment, 10,000 tonnes of rice, wheat and sugar would be ferried to Tripura from West Bengal's Haldia port via the Ashuganj port. After Tripura, foodgrains would be ferried through Bangladesh for other northeastern states, including Mizoram, Manipur and southern Assam to save time and cost," an FCI official said.

Surface connectivity is a key factor as the hilly region is surrounded by Bangladesh, Myanmar, Bhutan and China, and the only land route to these states from within India is through Assam and West Bengal.

During the monsoon season (June to September), road transport becomes very difficult in the mountainous region due to floods and landslides. For ferrying essentials, goods and heavy machinery from abroad and other parts of the country, India has for long been asking Bangladesh land, sea and rail access to the northeast.

Agartala via Guwahati, for instance, is 1,650 km from Kolkata and 2,637 km from New Delhi. The distance between the Tripura capital and Kolkata via Bangladesh is just about 350 km.

Earlier, Dhaka had allowed state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) to transport over dimensional cargos (ODCs) for the 726 MW Palatana mega power project in southern Tripura using the Ashuganj port.

The FCI would carry the food grains in association with Inland Water Transport Authority (IWTA).

Inland Waterways Authority of India chairman Viswapati Trivedi, while addressing a seminar in Kokata recently, said: "India is looking at carrying 30,000 tonnes of foodgrains through the Bangladeshi route annually, if all goes well. That will hugely cut down the cost and time of carrying food grains for the Public Distribution System in the northeastern states." ❑

Why India needs a Freed-up Public Broadcaster

Robin Jeffrey

Internationally, an unchained Prasar Bharati would give India an unrivalled soft-power voice at a time when media organizations everywhere are redefining what newspapers, radio and television do

WHY CAN'T India produce a broadcast service to rival, the BBC, CNN or CCTV (Chinese Central Television)? Why are Prasar Bharati and its two children, Doordarshan and Akashvani, unable to command attention and respect in India or overseas?

As print-based news organizations close down, it becomes even more important that credible news-gathering operations survive. The world is digital, and every corner of the globe has the potential to affect every other corner almost instantly. How stories are told to the world is substantially what "soft power" is all about.

India has the ingredients to create a world-respected news organization. It has vast experience in digital technology, television production and film-making. It has thousands of English-speaking, multi-lingual journalists who come in all shapes, genders, colours and sizes - an appearance for every occasion. It has Indian-origin communities from South America to Japan to provide its correspondents with local knowledge. It's a democracy with a history of struggles to achieve press freedom. And India has its non-aligned reputation going back three generations to lend it credibility.

So why are Prasar Bharati, founded in 1997, and its international television service, Doordarshan India (DDI), founded in 1995, such frail, aimless things? DDI is difficult to find, and if you do find it, you probably won't want to stay for long.

What prevents DDI from becoming the world-class service India and the world need? The answer is: the same things that make Doordarshan and AIR ponderous, uninspired and the broadcaster of last resort for listeners and viewers. As with much that's wrong with India, it would be fair to blame the British ... at least for initiating the problem.

When radio became the rage in the 1920s, the new medium had very different experiences in Britain and India. The times were similar to today's: no one knew where media was going, and radio, the new entry, looked especially dangerous to British rulers if it were to fall into the wrong hands.

In Europe and the US, companies that had developed electronic expertise during the First World War looked for ways to make money out of radio sets. An obvious way was to get into the entertainment business: give people a reason to buy your radio.

In Britain, John Reith, a complex, driven Scot, got the job in 1922 of running the British Broadcasting

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Company, a consortium of radio manufacturers set up to make programs that would induce people to buy radios (http://www.bbc.co.uk/historyofthebbc/resources/in-depth/reith_5.shtml). Within five years, radio had taken off. In 1927, when the licence of the British Broadcasting Company to use the airwaves expired, Reith championed the creation of the British Broadcasting Corporation, a government broadcasting monopoly with an independent board insulating it from government control.

Perhaps the crucial event in establishing the BBC's independence had been the national general strike of 1926 when BBC gained widespread respect by reporting the strike impartially. The right of the broadcaster to run its own news service and gather and transmit news was established, in spite of opposition from newspaper owners who feared the competition.

> **Radio in India owed a lot to the BBC - but vital ingredients of the BBC package were missing and have never been supplied.**

It is instructive to see how Indian radio developed during the time that Reith and his colleagues were struggling to create the BBC model. Radio in India owed a lot to the BBC - but vital ingredients of the BBC package were missing and have never been supplied.

In 1927, the year the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) was established in the US and the British Broadcasting Corporation in Britain, India got its first radio stations that broadcast regularly with a published schedule. They were commercial ventures, and they failed. The Government of India took over the Indian Broadcasting Company and tried to close it down in 1931, but reluctantly kept it going once the BBC started its global shortwave service in 1932. The British in India bought radios to keep in touch with "home."

In Britain, Reith argued that it was in British interest to build up the radio service in India, which he saw as a fine opportunity to communicate and educate. Conservative British civil servants in India, on the other hand, saw radio as a potentially dangerous tool for unrest, rumour and sedition. Films and newspapers were troublesome enough.

Nevertheless, Reith's lobbying got a BBC man, Lionel Fielden, lent to India as controller of broadcasting in the mid-1930s. He became an acquaintance of Nehru and Gandhi, earned the suspicion of British officials and got the name All India Radio endorsed. When he left India in 1940, there were said to be 100,000 radios, and nine towns and cities had stations. This was no media frenzy: the population of India in 1941 was nearly 400 million - 1 radio for every 4,000 people.

The early history of radio in India contrasted with Indonesia and the Philippines. In Indonesia (then the Netherlands East Indies), the Philips company of the Netherlands pushed the colonial government to encourage radio transmission, which covered the whole archipelago by the time the Japanese arrived in 1942. In the Philippines, the US rulers allowed a commercially based radio system to grow up before the Second World War.

In India, on the other hand, the Nehru government inherited in 1947 a tightly controlled, severely limited All India Radio. Vallabhbhai Patel kept the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in his own hands until his death in 1950.

One of Patel's early actions was to ban any performer from AIR whose "private life was a public scandal." Patel's two successors at the IB Ministry were both elitist Gandhians - R. R. Diwakar (1950-2) and the legendary B. V. Keskar (1952-62).

Under Keskar, the ministry was downgraded, and high-brow

programming became the order of the day. The Chandra commission into broadcasting in 1966 recorded that "successive Ministers usurped the policy-making functions of the directorate-general and started interfering even in matters of programme planning and presentation." Keskar banned film music and thereby gave Radio Ceylon the opportunity to become the favoured radio station for much of South Asia in the 1960s.

However, Reith did something that no one in Indian radio achieved. The BBC established a BBC news and entertainment largely free of government interference. In India, there was no wish to do that. All India Radio had been a tool of the British government. Why not of the Indian government?

In any case, India at independence faced horrifying communal riots and a communist insurgency. Such vision as did exist in the Congress Party about the potential of radio suggested some sort of Soviet model. Instructive programs would be broadcast to thoughtful agriculturalists, along with civilising high-cultural items. No need to worry them with anything but officially sanctioned "news."

> **Thus India, world famous for its films, came to be stuck with a television and radio regime that had the worst of all worlds: a government monopoly, steeped in civil-service values and with politicians' fingers constantly in the programming pie.**

Once public figures become accustomed to having the news presented in ways they liked, they were unlikely to give up the pleasure and the power. There is no substitute for controlling a television station or a newspaper and being able to bask in one's own glory, promote one's friends and smother one's enemies. In 2013, dozens of small-time TV channels and

flimsy newspapers around the country attest to the fact.

Thus India, world famous for its films, came to be stuck with a television and radio regime that had the worst of all worlds: a government monopoly, steeped in civil-service values and with politicians' fingers constantly in the programming pie.

The broadcast monopoly in television was broken by the arrival of outside-the-law satellites in 1991. Initially, programs made in India were flown to Hong Kong and Russia to be broadcast back to India by satellite. They were captured on dishes set up by local entrepreneurs who ran copper wire connections to neighbourhood subscribers. It was all gloriously illegal - or at least "unlegal," unimaginable when the Indian Telegraph Act of 1885 was passed.

> Radio, on the other hand, where government still exercises control, permits news and current affairs to be broadcast only on government stations.

Since then, television has become a grey area of do-almost-anything entrepreneurship, often outside the control of authorities. Radio, on the other hand, where government still exercises control, permits news and current affairs to be broadcast only on government stations. Private FM stations transmit music, entertainment and related chatter but no public affairs.

But precisely what prevents Prasar Bharati (PB) from running a public broadcasting service that could be the envy of thoughtful people everywhere?

First, its structure. Politicians and bureaucrats insured in 1997 when PB was created that around its neck would be a tight noose. The chairman and CEO are appointed by the President of India on the advice of a three-person committee made up of the Vice-President of India (as chair of the Rajya Sabha), the chairman of the Press Council of India and a nominee of the President. The same committee appoints the chief executive officer (CEO), whose appointment must still be ratified by the appointments committee of the Cabinet.

In contrast, the Director-General of the BBC is appointed by the BBC Trustees who themselves are selected through a process of advertising and recruitment, though ultimately recommended by the government of the day.

PB's chairman and CEO are therefore appointed by a tiny non-expert committee. That does not necessarily mean poor or inappropriate appointments. But half of the PB board is appointed by the President of India and therefore likely to be nominees of the government of the day. The remainder are ex-officio members, all bureaucrats. Such a board is unlikely to welcome deviation from the government-bureaucracy practices that prevail in Doordarshan and Akashvani. The ethos is not so much of hungry news-hounds as dozing koalas.

This is not surprising since salaries and appointments all emanate from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The chairman, the CEO and members of the board, it is said, have to get a bureaucrat's permission to pay for a taxi ride. Prasar Bharati's budget, which mostly goes to pay salaries, comes largely through the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Every employee is a government servant deemed to be on deputation with the pay scales and security that anyone securing a Government of India job enjoys. In contrast, the annual budget of Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) is approved by Parliament and goes straight to the ABC executive to be spent as its board and the CEO direct.

Sections 32 to 35 of the Prasar Bharati Act give the Central Government power to strangle the organization with rules laid down whenever the government wishes. But not only is Prasar Bharati overregulated, it is overstaffed and understaffed at the same time. As Nalin Mehta, author of *India on Television*, points out in a forthcoming book, PB has 33,000 employees, the largest number of any public broadcaster in the world. But it has a sanctioned strength of 48,000 - 15,000 posts are unfilled. More than 16,000 of the sanctioned appointments are in "administration and finance."

Substantial numbers may be justified. Prasar Bharati, after all, works in 24 Indian languages and runs more than 220 broadcasting centres and 1,000 television transmitters. But even allowing for this, it is widely conceded that productivity in Doordarshan and Akashvani is as low as morale.

What would it take to make Prasar Bharati into the world-class organization that India deserves?

> Prasar Bharati, after all, works in 24 Indian languages and runs more than 220 broadcasting centres and 1,000 television transmitters. But even allowing for this, it is widely conceded that productivity in Doordarshan and Akashvani is as low as morale.

- a budget coming directly from Parliament to Prasar Bharati and bypassing the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting completely.
- a broad-based method of appointing the chairman and the board.
- a CEO appointed by the board after open advertisement.
- pay scales and employment terms established by the board for PB and not tied to the Government of India's hidebound protocols.

ability to hire whomsoever the board thinks appropriate, including foreigners (Chinese television has little hesitation about hiring foreigners)

What would India get from this? Domestically, a standard-setting media organization against which privately owned groups would have to measure themselves. In 2013, whether in news or entertainment, Doordarshan and Akashvani are hardly valued by media professionals. In other countries, however, the public broadcaster is often the place where talented people develop and from which private organizations poach skills and acquire values. In India, it is the other way round: PB tries, with difficulty and limited success, to invigorate itself by hiring talent from outside.

Internationally, an unchained Prasar Bharati would give India an unrivalled soft-power voice at a time when media organizations everywhere are redefining what newspapers, radio and television do. India's talents, experience, non-aligned tradition, language capacity and global reach give it unsurpassed capacity to provide the world with a respected news source and the domestic public with a timely source of reliable news and lively entertainment.

What stands in the way? Media-hungry politicians, contented bureaucrats, fearful unions and a widespread belief that this samosa is too hot to handle. India loses. ❑

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DEVELOPMENT ROAD MAP

Ajeevika

Ajeevika is the name of the project under National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM). It was started by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India in June, 2011. The objective of this scheme is to create effective and efficient platforms for the rural poor to help them increase household income through sustainable livelihood enhancement and better financial services.

NRLM aims at covering seven crore BPL households across 600 districts, 6000 blocks, 2.5 lac Gram Panchayats and six lac villages in the country through self-managed Self Help Groups (SHGs). The scheme aims at empowering the poor with capacities like information, knowledge, skills, tools, finance and collectivization. The purpose is to help them participate in the growing economy of the country.

The Ajeevika programme empowers women through creation of sustainable jobs and means of livelihood. Poverty can not be fought on a long-term basis on doles and charity, therefore this programme will provide opportunity to put one's own capacities and hard work to use in order to earn a dignified livelihood. Earning one's livelihood through one's own hard work and capability makes one feel satisfied.

Under this scheme women self-help groups are being provided loans upto 3 lac rupees at the rate of 7 percent interest per annum. Those group which would repay the loans on time will get 3 percent concession in interest rates. ❑

Roshni programme in left wing extremism affected districts

The Union Rural Development Minster Jai Ram Ramesh announced a new skill development scheme called Roshni on June 7, 2013. It will be implemented in 24 most critical left wing extremism affected districts. The scheme aims at providing skills and placement of fifty thousand youth from these districts.

The beneficiaries will be aged between 18-35 years with requisite aptitude depending on job requirement. At least 50% candidates covered under this scheme would be women. There will be special emphasis on vulnerable tribal groups. Training shall be provided through public-private partnership and public-public partnership. Four training models with duration ranging from 3 months to one year shall be taken up to meet the diverse needs of youth depending on their entry level qualification. Placement linked, market driven fully residential skill training will be provided. ❑

(Compiled by Hasan Zia, Sr. Editor,
Yojana, Urdu)

Community Radio in India: Opportunities and Challenges

Ram Bhat
Savita Bailur

Given the size of our country, the strength of the population, social, economic, linguistic and cultural diversity, India can be host to tens of thousands of community radio stations which truly reflect the plurality and diversity of our peoples

W E HAVE been very privileged to have a democracy secure enough to support and encourage community radio in India. In 1995, the Supreme Court ruled that "airwaves constitute public property and must be utilised for advancing public good." The first community radio policy guidelines were subsequently released in 2003-04. These recognized educational institutions as eligible licensees and from 2004 to 2006, 104 educational institutions were granted licences, starting from Anna University in Chennai. In 2006, the guidelines were revised to include non-profit organizations and agricultural centres (Krishi Vigyan Kendras). However, there remains little awareness about community radio, as well as ongoing restrictions to its potential. In this brief article, we review the current situation in India, assess to what extent community radio can "advance public good" and acknowledge the limitations and government concerns. We then discuss issues of regulation and pricing, and appraise where India stands on the international scene – what can we learn, and what can we contribute? In the final section, we make our recommendations for the future of community radio in India.

Community radio today

To date, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has received 1200 new CR (community radio) applications. Out of 655 applications, 428 have just passed the initial stage, i.e. they are in receipt of a Letter of Intent, 91 have reached the final stage and are ready to broadcast, i.e. have signed a Grant of Permission Agreement with MoIB, and 148 are actually operational. If we analyze the ownership of the operational stations, out of 148, the majority (99) are educational institutions, Krishi Vigyan Kendras and State Agricultural Universities. Fourty Nine are by non-profit organizations. Geographically, we see stations dispersed across Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Naxalite affected states like Orissa, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, insurgency affected areas like North Eastern States and Kashmir, and states bordering Nepal, China, Bhutan, Myanmar and Pakistan have little or no community radio presence.

However, we need to investigate further why out of 1200 applications, 545 have been rejected. Is this because of incomplete or insufficient applications, security concerns, financial concerns or other factors? Similarly, why is there a preference for educational institutions rather than NGOs? More research on why CR stations cluster

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in certain states and not others, is also necessary. Addressing these issues should help strengthen relations between government and the CR movement, and in particular provide guidelines to aspiring stations.

The benefits of community radio

- Community radio emerges out of a core set of principles or values that it is:
- A viable and trustworthy alternative to mainstream media – in terms of news, information and entertainment.
- A platform to enable participation of communities (of interest and defined by geographical boundaries). Participation can be in varying intensities – from lending voice to a program, to

> Whatever one calls it, CR can become a platform for even those without literacy to easily express themselves, potentially restoring self-confidence, triggering dialogues and promoting transparency in various issues: it can be a two-way forum for clarification and discussion.

becoming decision makers on all aspects of management.
- A channel to document and keep languages and cultures alive on a daily basis.
- A means to promote values of access to education, economic and social justice, against gender, race, caste and class based violence and transparency in governance.
- Of priority to minority communities – including sexual, racial, religious, and linguistic minorities.

Most of these are all related to the *content* of community radio. In addition, the *process* of participation in community radio has its own

benefits. Both these can contribute to "advancing public good" as stated by the Supreme Court in 1995. As human beings, expressing ourselves is an essential core of who we are. As technologies advance, the power to express ourselves – both in terms of "transmitting" or "speaking" and "receiving" or "being heard" sometimes gets distorted. Richer urban populations with access to a high speed broadband Internet connection can use voice, text, images, video to send and receive information. A slum or rural inhabitant is much less likely to have these options. Access to infrastructure, affordability of technology, steep learning curves, literacy barriers, are some of the factors which distort our ability to express and interact with each other.

Some have called it lack of voice, lack of agency or disempowerment. Whatever one calls it, CR can become a platform for even those without literacy to easily express themselves, potentially restoring self-confidence, triggering dialogues and promoting transparency in various issues: it can be a two-way forum for clarification and discussion.

"Development" is a loaded term. While meanings attributed to the term have changed over the years, a widely accepted notion of development today would be where the individual has control over his/her life, particularly with respect to income, health and literacy. CR has the potential to do this, not only in terms of access to very useful, localized, contextual information (e.g. health, agriculture, nutrition) delivered by trusted intermediaries, but also in terms of skill and capacity building (radio production, IT skills, administrates, management etc). With a long term aim of self-sustainability, CR should also be a source of job opportunities, in line with NREGA. Finally, from one of the author's PhD fieldwork at *Namma Dhwani* CR in Karnataka, one of the biggest benefits which emerged was

the self-confidence speaking publicly and engaging in the workplace gave to women. We therefore see the benefits of CR as limitless. However, we also understand there are concerns, which are addressed next.

Limitations

It is evident that CR in India, while creditable in the South Asia region, has much to overcome. If only 148 stations out of 1200 applications are operational, clearly there is some disconnect which we should address. Some of the limitations to the potential of CR are purely bureaucratic. We are sure that with streamlining of processes, as occurring throughout governance in India, operating CR stations will become much easier.

The first is that currently communications is centrally governed, as per the Union List of the Constitution. This has implications for CR licensees, as all governance and management of the sector is by the MoIB and MoCIT at New Delhi. This is clearly inconvenient

> Due to necessary measures by different ministries, the current licensing mechanism can be lengthy and bureaucratic. The Letter of Intent is given by MoIB, the frequency allocation is given by MoCIT, the Grant of Permission Agreement is given by MoIB and then the Wireless Operating License is given by MoCIT.

for licensees operating in parts of the country far away from Delhi.

Secondly, CR has both administrative and technical components. Due to necessary measures by different ministries, the current licensing mechanism can be lengthy and bureaucratic. The Letter of Intent is given by MoIB, the frequency

allocation is given by MoCIT, the Grant of Permission Agreement is given by MoIB and then the Wireless Operating License is given by MoCIT. In addition, applications can be further delayed because of the involvement of Home Ministry, Defence Ministry, Ministry of Space, Law Ministry etc.

Thirdly, CR policy guidelines state that "emphasis should be on developmental, agricultural, health, educational, environmental, social welfare, community development and cultural programmes". We do not argue that this information is extremely useful, particularly if localized, contextual, and participatorily created. In addition, the premise of 50% community content is welcome but needs to be clarified.

> The government is increasingly open to investing in infrastructure in sensitive areas. Jairam Ramesh, in late 2011, announced that the government will set up telecom towers in Naxal-hit areas, stating "the single biggest problem in all these districts is connectivity".

Equally, the prohibition of news and current affairs broadcasts limit the value of CR.

Fourth, educational institutions have had a head start from the 2003-04 policy guidelines and cities are now saturated in terms of frequencies. There are three reasons for this scarcity of spectrum. The Department of Telecommunications had informally announced in 2005-06 that a total of 6 frequencies would be reserved for community radio in a given location. Over the years, only 3 frequencies are now informally reserved for community radio. Transparency in reservation of FM frequencies for CR needs to improve. Secondly, there is a lack of clarity on channel spacing. The norm in India is to have a channel spacing of 800 KHz, which means

that if a radio station A is allocated a frequency of 90.4 MHz, then the next available frequency is 91.2 MHz. This limits the space available in the FM band (88-108 MHz). Studies have shown that channel spacing of 200 KHz can increasingly be adopted on devices. Therefore even a safe decision of adopting 400 KHz channel spacing would free up much needed FM spectrum. The third and final reason is the license area guidelines. We need to work on formal CR guidelines. It is informally known that if a frequency is allotted in a given place, then that particular frequency is blocked (for others) for a radius of 100 kilometers. It is believed that this rule has now been relaxed to 50 km for rural areas, 30 km for semi-urban areas, and 20 km for urban areas. Yet the distinction between urban, semi-urban or rural and how these figures have been arrived at is unclear.

Fifth, CR has not been promoted on the scale of MNREGS or other social welfare initiatives. This is a golden opportunity as CR has unbounded potential as outlined above, and in fact, can work in tandem with the MNREGS or CSCs (common service centres). There is an urgent need to promote CR through public and private broadcasters and newspapers (including small and regional media outlets).

We appreciate that the greatest apprehension and why CR has been thus far limited, is the security concern. In 2010-11, 11 applications were received from Jharkhand State. Although MoIB had in principle approved these applicants (which implies approval from a screening committee), the applications were rejected at a Inter-Ministerial Committee level, where Intelligence Bureau officials cited terrorism in these areas. Similarly, there have been instances of applicants from Kashmir, Manipur, Chhattisgarh etc all being rejected because of broader security concerns. These concerns are serious, and yet, they can be mitigated, as has been illustrated in Mexico

and Sri Lanka (discussed further in the article). The Indian government is increasingly open to investing in infrastructure in sensitive areas. Jairam Ramesh, in late 2011, announced that the government will set up telecom towers in Naxal-hit areas, stating "the single biggest problem in all these districts is connectivity". We accept that in these cases, security concerns are not trivial, and stations have to be closely regulated, but this does not mean they should be marginalized altogether.

Regulation

As the CR sector in India is governed by "guidelines", which can be approved at the cabinet level, Parliamentary approval is not required. This is advantageous on the one hand, as reform has come fairly and relatively quickly - from the initial guidelines in 2003-04, it took two years for the revised guidelines to come into effect. The Ministry is currently reviewing the policy guidelines again. On the other hand, it does mean that policy guidelines have not had the scrutiny of formal bills submitted in Parliament. Much

> It would be ideal and more cost-effective if MoIB could support and promote self-regulation agencies like the Community Radio Association of India and Community Radio Forum of India.

remains to be discussed, including fair and clear eligibility for NGOs, campuses, KVKs and SAU; technical issues such as 100 Watts ERP and 30 meters height of antenna; 50% of content to be locally produced in local language/dialect; content to be developmental, and prohibition on broadcast of news.

In terms of evaluation, in addition to the initial screening, we suggest that either government or

its representative agent conducts continuous and ongoing monitoring and evaluation, identifying critical areas of improvement in participation, maintenance as well as any perceived problematic content. Evaluation can also check if stations are producing at least 50% of the content locally. Are they using the license to generate profit for the licensee institution? This can be done either on the basis of complaints – in which case the remedy will be post-facto, or through periodic site check in which case remedies can be preventive. All CR stations sign a Grant of Permission Agreement with MoIB for a period of five years. At

> **India is a CR leader in some respects in South East Asia, one of the first countries in South East Asia to have an explicit third tier of broadcasting. With clear guidelines and regulations, we are in a strong position to advise countries like Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Pakistan, Maldives and Myanmar.**

present, license renewal is automatic provided the applicant pays spectrum fees and completes administrative formalities. Evaluation can test if a particular licensee institution has used the spectrum well for the five year period and should be renewed, or whether there are more deserving candidates in the same location. The question of who conducts all these evaluations is critical. It would be ideal and more cost-effective if MoIB could support and promote self-regulation agencies like the Community Radio Association of India and Community Radio Forum of India.

Pricing

In CR, there are two aspects – one is a Grant of Permission Agreement which is valid for five years. There is no direct cost for this, except a one-time Rs. 25,000 bank guarantee. The other aspect is a Wireless Operating License from the WPC, of the MoCIT, which is priced at roughly Rs. 20,000 every year.

In early 2012, WPC announced a rise in spectrum fees for all terrestrial users of spectrum, on a formula basis. This meant that spectrum fee would be increased by a particular amount depending on strength of transmitter and height of antenna. FM stations run by communities, private-operators and Prasar Bharti were all affected. However, the CR sector was probably the only sector which could not afford the fee hike - from Rs. 19,000 to Rs. 91,000. Following media attention, protests and advocacy, Kapil Sibal announced in late 2012 that the spectrum fee would be rolled back to the existing Rs. 19,000, where it currently stands until September 2013.

While private FM stations go through an auction process to bid for licenses they still pay fixed costs for spectrum. However the dispute around spectrum fees for community radio has raised the question of how much is a license and/or frequency for community radio really worth, especially in urban areas, where demand for licenses and frequencies outstrip the supply. It is noteworthy that Kapil Sibal, the Minister for Communications and IT has stated that the opportunity cost of waiving the fee hike is not more than Rs. 25 lakhs, and would be worth it compared to the benefit of empowered, informed and inclusive local communities.

International Experience: what can we share, what can we learn?

India is a CR leader in some respects in South East Asia, one of the first countries in South East Asia to have an explicit third tier of broadcasting. With clear guidelines and regulations, we are in a strong position to advise countries like Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Pakistan, Maldives and Myanmar. However, in comparison to European, North American, Latin American and Australian community radio, we have much to learn, for example:

Many countries reserve part of the spectrum for community broadcasting, in order to provide equitable access to the spectrum which is considered as a valuable national resource. Notable examples include Colombia, Republic of South Africa, and Uruguay

Press in India is regulated by the Press Council of India, public broadcasting by Prasar Bharti and so on. Similarly it is advisable for an independent regulator, rather than ministries, to regulate, award and renew, or reject licenses for community radio. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) may be a appropriate body for this purpose, just as FCC regulates local radio in the U.S and Ofcom regulates community radio in the U.K

> **...It is advisable for an independent regulator, rather than ministries, to regulate, award and renew, or reject licenses for community radio. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) may be a appropriate body for this purpose, just as FCC regulates local radio in the U.S and Ofcom regulates community radio in the U.K**

In Germany, each state/province has the authority to allocate licenses for broadcasting in its jurisdiction. Since CR is so localized, this decentralization is advisable in India. Of course, frequency allocations, a nationally regulated matter, will have to be worked out, and further checks and balances will have to be provided to avoid politicization of community radio by local political interests.

Similarly, it makes no sense to have a blanket channel spacing policy and instead we could look further to

the U.S policy - if an applicant can demonstrate that he or she can "squeeze in" a radio station in a given location, without interfering with other stations, then that station is granted a license. This is critical if growth in FM is to be maintained in urban areas, where demand is higher than supply of frequencies.

Several countries in the West, including Canada, Ireland and Australia have a pool of funds either from citizens' tax money, or from obligation funds collected from commercial broadcasters, managed by an independent funding body. Some funding schemes support seed funds for new stations, while others support programming, development of minorities, diversity etc. While India is also in the process of developing a CR Support Scheme, overall regulation of the scheme needs to be assessed, as it is currently due to be under the jurisdiction of the MoIB and funds will directly come from the Govt, either through Planning Commission, or through the Union Budget. This may again mean unnecessary politicisation. We should look to Canada, Ireland and Australia to see how these funds are administered.

Conclusion

India is often praised as the "world's largest democracy". The diversity of media is something we should justifiably be proud of. To some extent, the proliferation of community radio has been inspiring, and one that many other countries aspire to. On the other hand, we believe that the CR sector in India has not been able to explore its full potential, largely due to current processes and security concerns. While not trivialising the latter, we believe that the former can be simplified and the latter mitigated, and perhaps it is only a question of time. Given the size of our country, the strength of the population, social, economic, linguistic and cultural diversity, India can be host to tens of thousands of community radio stations which truly reflect the plurality and diversity of our people. ❑

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J&K WINDOW

Aiming to promote industrial development in Jammu & Kashmir, the Centre has extended the special package, under which subsidy on investment and interest rate is offered to business units, to the state for five years till 2017. The total outlay for the period of the new package is Rs 295 crore, according to the Commerce Ministry.

"In order to provide continuity and to maintain the enabling environment for ongoing industrial development of the state of Jammu & Kashmir, it has been decided to extend the incentives under the special package for a further period of five years from June 15, 2012 to June 14, 2017," it said. The incentives under the special package include a capital investment subsidy at the rate of 15 per cent of investment in plant and machinery subject to ceiling of Rs 30 lakh.

However, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) would be eligible for capital investment subsidy at 30 per cent of the investment into plant and machinery subject to a ceiling of Rs 3 crore and Rs 1.5 crore for manufacturing and service sector respectively to all new industrial units and existing industrial units on their substantial expansion.

Besides, it includes interest subsidy at the rate of 3 per cent on the average of daily working capital loan to all new units for a period of 5 years from the date of commencement of commercial production.

The special package also includes a central comprehensive insurance subsidy scheme with 100 per cent reimbursement of premium to all new and existing units on their substantial expansion for a period of five years from the date of commencement of commercial production.

The scheme will be implemented through the state government and funds will be disbursed through Jammu and Kashmir Development Finance Corporation (JKDFC).

The above benefits can be availed by industries set up in notified industrial parks and estates. The list of these notified areas has been expanded in consultation with the state government.

The list of thrust industries which can be set up any where in the state, to be eligible for subsidy under the package, has also been expanded to include flour mills and rice mills, spice grinding, pasteurization or processing of milk and other dairy product, mushroom culture, compost making, dairy farming, packaging industry, bottling of mineral water, stationery items and wood based industry.

All new units in the notified area in Jammu and Kashmir excluding negative list and all new units of thrust industry outside notified area in J&K will be eligible for subsidy under the package for a period of 5 years.

The earlier package of industrial incentives for the state was announced on June 14, 2002 for a period of 10 years upto June 14, 2012 under which, a subsidy amount of Rs 158.45 crore was released. ❑

INDIA TO OPEN HIGHEST FARM SCIENCE CENTRE IN LEH

The country's highest krishi vigyan kendra(farm science centre) will be set up at Nyoma in Leh district of Jammu and Kashmir at a height of about 14,000 feet. The Nyoma krishi vigyan kendra is likely to bring about substantial change in the lives of people of nearby areas, who are mostly nomads and rear pashmina goats.

The region is extremely cold and dry and, therefore, it is a challenge to promote stable agriculture there. The centre will seek to improve fodder production, provide health care to the roaming animals, introduce vegetable production under protected environment and impart training to women on animal care," an official said.

Krishi vigyan kendra's are funded by the Indian Council for Agriculture Research (ICAR) under the Ministry of Agriculture. Their main focus is to bring latest technology to farm fields and they engage in training farmers about best practices in farming. There are 631 such centres across the country. ❑

Bringing The Community into PSB

Kalinga Seneviratne

Neither commercial nor state-controlled, public broadcasting's only raison d'etre is public service. It is the public's broadcasting organisation; it speaks to everyone as a citizen. Public broadcasters encourage access to and participate in public life.

UNESCO/WRTVC, 2001

Community Radio responds to the needs of the community it serves; contributing to its development with progressive perspectives in favour of social change. Community Radio strives to democratize communication through community participation in different forms in accordance with each specific social context.

World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC), 1988

I would like to suggest that the government consider setting up a funding model in the form of a grassroots radio production fund to channel money towards assisting CRCs to produce radio programs on a regular basis

THE ABOVE definitions by UNESCO/World Radio and Television Council and AMARC put into a nutshell the essence of public service broadcasting (PSB) and community radio. Essentially both tend to talk about the same principles of broadcasting – the communication medium needs to respond to community needs. Perhaps the only difference may be that a PSB looks at the community as a nation of millions of people, while community radio may look at a small geographical area of a few hundreds or thousands of people.

In most countries in the world what we call PSB is really SSB -state service broadcasting – national broadcasting systems that are controlled by governments to propagate the government's point of view which is not necessarily the people's voice, even though a majority of the people may have voted for the government in a democratic election. Yet, there are examples of PSB radio that are focused towards addressing community needs and broadcasts into a clearly defined community. It is this type of communication medium I will focus upon in this article.

Commercialisation and the Public Interest

The following observation by Louie Tabing, the founder of Tambuli Community Radio in the Philippines explains very well the state of the mainstream electronic media in countries we call democracies today.

Community radio in the Philippines started as a little experiment in people empowerment. In one way, it was an attempt to present a deviation from the only known trend of broadcast media in the country where the basic reason for operating media facilities is PPPPP – profit, propaganda, power, politics, privilege and/or prestige. Yes, the mainstream electronic media in the Philippines dish out news, information and public service, yet the overriding objective is to make money. The commercial companies, the religious organisations and government have specific agenda other than people empowerment, development and education. May be the social scientists overlooked

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The author is a former Head of Research at the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC) in Singapore. He has recently designed a curriculum for UNESCO to teach community radio as an elective in mass communication courses in Universities in Developing countries. He has written and edited many books on community media.

something when they declared that the media's social functions are to inform and to educate. In my country, these social roles expected of media are only used as an excuse for giving advantages to those who are already advantaged.

Yes, he was talking about this in the Philippines context, but, Philippines is a freewheeling and chaotic democracy like India with a media environment not much different, though smaller in quantity.

There are many definitions and descriptions of PSBs that have come out of conference declarations and academic discourses in the past three decades. All point to the fact, as the UNESCO declaration above says, that, a PSB has to facilitate the public's access to the airwaves so that the citizen could participate in public life. But, when political and commercial objectives overlap what we see is a broadcasting system serving the 5Ps as Tabing explained above.

> if a PSB is really serving the public interest it is a community broadcaster and if a community broadcaster really gives access to the people to air their views, the broadcaster is in essence a PSB.

The two quotes (by UNESCO and AMARC) reflects the fact that if a PSB is really serving the public interest it is a community broadcaster and if a community broadcaster really gives access to the people to air their views, the broadcaster is in essence a PSB.

We have had PSBs in our region that served such a community broadcasting function such as Sri Lanka's Kothmale Community Radio and All India Radio's many Local Radio stations. South Asia's first NGO-run community radio Nepal's Radio Sagarmatha now claims that they have performed the community radio function so well, thus, that they are now a PSB.

Participatory Communications

Understanding the principles and concepts of participatory communications is critical to bringing the community into public service broadcasting. As former UNESCO communication expert from the Philippines, Carlos Arnaldo argues: "Community radio is a social process or event in which members of the community associate together to design programs and produce and air them, thus taking on the primary role of actors in their own destiny".

In the 1980s when development communication experts found that the top-down broadcast strategy practiced by PSB radio in particular in developing countries, to take the development message to the people was not working, they came up with the concept of participatory communications. It basically involved a common intent of actively involving people who were the "subjects" of development in shaping the communication process.

Peoples' participation became defined in many different ways, and this in turn led to numerous unresolved disagreements. What makes community radio different is that in addition to making the broadcasts, providing information with entertainment and perhaps some general enlightenment for its audience, they also seek to facilitate change, social progress and better living condition in the community. This is achieved by being specifically relevant to the particular needs, interests and desires of its relatively small audience. This could be done with the constant involvement of the community in its programing.

Kothmale Community Radio

I think a community radio is not just about radio programs. It's part of the family, the community. Also, we should not create problems in the village. What a community radio should do is the opposite – to pacify people and solve problems.

The above quote from Sunil Wijesinghe, former manager of Kothmale Community Radio (KCR) spells out a strategy for PSBs broadcasting to rural communities, where radio can play a greater role in community development and harmony rather than merely giving them entertainment.

Wijesinghe, though an employee of the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) the government owned PSB, was also a man from the area who understoods very well, the community and their needs. He saw radio as a medium to communicate and educate (in that order). This type of communication could only work if the broadcaster understands the concepts of participatory communications and is prepared to experiment with it and adopt it. During a visit I made to Kothmale a few years ago, Wijesinghe made this passionate defence of a PSB acting as a community broadcaster:

Some may ask if Kothmale is a community radio? I say yes. Is this a government owned institution? I say yes. Then they will ask how is a government owned institution a community radio? I say there is

> We do programs for the community, by the community. Difference is that there are staff here, who have been appointed by the government. But, just because we have staff paid by the government, are we not a community radio?

participatory communication here. We do programs for the community, by the community. Difference is that there are staff here, who have been appointed by the government. But, just because we have staff paid by the government, are we not a community radio?

Under Wijesinghe's guidance, KCR was able to develop a unique model of community broadcasting by a PSB which attracted international attention. They used an innovative mobile

broadcasting studio called 'eTuk Tuk' to go into rural communities to broadcast programs live from there. They trained young people from the community to come into the radio station and broadcast live to air. They created harmony in the community by getting Sinhalese, Tamil and Muslim youth to work together to produce and broadcast programs.

Radio Sagarmatha's Path Towards PSB

After the CA (Constituent Assembly) election, almost all the program producers of Radio Sagarmatha (RS) have been busily engaged in recording peoples' questions and queries; their suggestions and expectations over the CA members. They carry microphones and digital recorders and spread to different directions of the country including the terrain of high mountains

> **Radio producers of RS meet the typical peasants, shepherds, aged persons, disabled people, children and youth, whose voices are rarely heard in other media.**

in the north and southern plains, where the typical rural areas are very hard to explore either because of the geographical complexities or lack of modern infrastructures. Radio producers of RS meet the typical peasants, shepherds, aged persons, disabled people, children and youth, whose voices are rarely heard in other media. They collect their voices and return to the capital city, where RS is located. They meet the concerned authority and do a brief interview in order to respond to the general public's questions, queries, expectations and suggestions from various parts of the country. They bring the voices, sound effects and narration together and develop a smart radio feature including a segment of vox pop (voices) of the people.

This is how former station manger of Radio Sagarmatha, Ghamaraj Luitel described their basic broadcasting

strategy. Established in 1997 as the first independent community radio station in South Asia, operated by a consortium of 5 non-governmental organisations (NGOs), it has evolved into a truly independent and a credible community radio station in Nepal. It has inspired the rapid expansion of community radio in the country after the monarchy was abolished in 2006.

Today RS claims that they are a PSB since Radio Nepal, the government owned station is still controlled by the government and their ability to do community oriented broadcasting is hindered by bureaucratic public service structures. In contrast, Luitel argues that RS's programs are based on peoples' concerns and participation. "Peoples' daily experiences, problems and challenges they face, their happiness and tears, and feelings, are central to the program outline" he argues. One of the unique programs that reflects RS's participatory communication strategy is a program called 'While Walking' broadcast in the evenings at 7.15, which Luintel explains thus:

That brings the voices of marginalized and disadvantaged people such as vendors, cobblers, hawkers, rickshaw pullers, potters, etc as the newsmakers. The producers of RS begin their program productions from the street where they collect short but sharp interviews with grassroots people, who struggle for survival everyday. They talk about the impact of politics and conflicts on their everyday livelihood.

Local Radio and Community Broadcasting

Could India's AIR take a leaf out of Kothmale Community Radio and Radio Sagarmatha to bring the community into Local Radio?

When AIR's Local Radio experiment began in the 1980s, the stations such as the first one in Nagercoil in Tamil Nadu did field based programs with the community

to reflect peoples' voices and their way of presentation. Other stations like Kota in Rajastan also followed suit. But, as former AIR program executive Esther Kar observed: "The experiment was successful in some places where the station directors were dynamic, creative and innovative, but (as soon as) the innovation died down, AIR was back to its top down model of broadcasting". The same has happened to KCR after Wijesinghe retired from service a few years ago.

AIR's local radio however has a long history of broadcasting community-generated contents. Vinod Pavrala and Kanchan Malik's publication 'Other Voices' (2007) has captured several such initiatives since the early 1990s. Many of these were programs produced by NGOs with external funding and AIR providing airtime to broadcast these into the community. Many

> **The producers of RS begin their program productions from the street where they collect short but sharp interviews with grassroots people, who struggle for survival everyday. They talk about the impact of politics and conflicts on their everyday livelihood.**

studies have found that the community involvement in these programming was very low.

Community Radio Collectives - Bringing The Community Into PSB

In India, as well as other countries in Asia, the problem with the NGO run community radio model is that the NGOs are usually dependent on foreign donors, and in turn these donors could dictate the type of programs they could produce such as gender awareness, HIV AIDS and lately climatic change issues. Often these projects take an anti-government stance because many western donor agencies harbour stereo-

typical ideas of especially nationalistic governments in the developing world as corrupt and authoritarian. As a result many governments are also hostile to community media projects funded by international donor agencies.

What I would like to suggest is a model of community radio that could function without the dependency on foreign donors and also a model that is far cheaper to run because you do not need to operate a fully-fledged community radio station. The model I would like to propose is to establish Community Radio Collectives, a model I was part of for over a decade in Australia in the 1980s broadcasting a weekly community radio program to reflect the voices of Third World migrants.

> What I would like to suggest is a model of community radio that could function without the dependency on foreign donors and also a model that is far cheaper to run because you do not need to operate a fully-fledged community radio station.

A Community Media Collective (CRC) could involve anything between 3 to 15 people. They are a production unit and not a radio station. The members should come from within a community. They could even be a sub-set of the community such as farmers, mothers, youth, street or market vendors, fishermen, domestic workers, ethnic or religious groups, etc. They would be trained in basic radio production techniques such as the use of microphones, recorders, editing using simple digital software, presentation skills (this should not be rigid), research, participatory communication methodologies for radio production, scripting for radio (if illiterate this skill could be circumvented with oral production skill training) and formats of radio programs.

This training may be done by professional trainers from AIR, IGNOU or other local training institutions. Once they are trained, they will form into a CRC with a specific program production agenda and the AIR Local Radio station will provide them an agreed time slot – daily, weekly, monthly or whatever. Some assistance may be given to the CRC initially to equip them with at least one cheap digital audio recorder and a laptop with appropriate software for editing. Alternatively they could be given access to the facilities of the local AIR radio station or a community ICT facility.

The CRCs should be self-funded (in fact they could do it without any funds at all, if AIR provides them free airtime), and as part of the training they may also be trained in social enterprise skills to design the CRC as a social business. It is important that before the CRC scheme is introduced that a strong set of program guidelines are drawn up so that the CRC will not become a socially disruptive force which may create political or social conflicts. Instead these guidelines should guide them towards doing programs to promote cross-cultural communications and assist in socio-economic development of the community.

I would like to suggest that the government consider setting up a funding model in the form of a grassroots radio production fund to channel money towards assisting CRCs to produce radio programs on a regular basis. The funding could be allocated on the basis of an annual program production proposal that is endorsed by the AIR Local Radio station, that will guarantee free allocation of airtime for the programs. The basis of funding will include the CRC signing a document to adhere to the guidelines that have been drawn up. AIR may also give a guarantee that as long as the CRCs follow the guidelines it will not interfere editorially in the program contents.

In Thailand, the Thai public service broadcaster, TPBS is funded via siphoning a small percentage (3 percent) of the alcohol and tobacco tax collected by the government to the broadcaster. This amounts to millions of dollars and is not subjected to ministerial approval. Such a funding scheme may be devised in India to fund CRCs or in other words to bring the community into public service broadcasting. ❑

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Future of Community Radio in India

Binod C Agrawal

It is hoped that in the near future, once the Government of India starts giving license easily to civil society, popularity of community radio will be enhanced in the country

IN MOST of the democratic countries "media policies and broadcasting systems are undergoing changes in response to the demand to accommodate voices of the civil society and poor. Looking back, it can be said that broadcasting in India, for nearly eighty years has been dominated by hierarchical and paternalistic 'public' broadcasting fashioned around BBC model. Now, broadcasting has shifted to profit-oriented and market driven business model (Pavarala and Malik 2007: 243). Government of India derived exclusive broadcasting rights over radio and later television from the colonial Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 at the time of independence. The historic verdict of the Supreme Court that airwaves constitute public property and must be utilized for advancing public good brought about unprecedented changes in broadcasting. The verdict more or less coincided with the "economic liberalization" and "privatisation of media" in 1992 adding further stimulus to change.

All these historical media events have directly affected communication climate in the country and demand for community radio. The community radio movement has grown after 1995. Today, community radio has achieved national recognition and has started serving the community meaningfully though in a minuscule way. Radio research studies, though few in number, lack any conclusive evidence to support that the community radio has started playing any meaningful role to assert individual rights and privileges to promote democratic values in India.

Both national and international support for community radio has been forthcoming in varying degrees. Non-government organizations (NGOs), educational institutions and community organizations have been supported for setting up of community radio from time to time though sustainability of community radio is often in doubt once external support is withdrawn. It has taken over several years for the Government of India to lay out policy guidelines for community radio in 2005 for grant of licenses for setting up community radio stations in the country. (www.becil.net/POLICY%20 GUIDELINES.pdf)

It may be mentioned that Government of India finally in November 2006 gave its seal of approval to the community radio policy. In 2007, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India announced its resolve to have 4000 community radios under the new enabling community radio policy. The advocates of community radio felt that the approval of the community radio policy in November 2006 would unleash the potential of radio for achieving participatory development goals. Community radio as viewed is

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"owned and operated by a community or members of a community... is characterized by access, public participation in production and decision-making, and by non-profit listener friendly economics. The management of the station is in the hands of those who use and listen to it" (VOICES-UNDP 2004:2) Community Radio in its brief history, has come a long way. Today, there are reported 126 community radio stations operated and managed by non-government organisations (NGOs) and educational institutions.

Slow Growth of Community Radio

The obstacles in the expansion of community radio is manifold. Due to lack of political will the importance of community radio in economic and social development has been largely ignored. It must be emphasised that community radio by itself is neither an end nor an independent means to reach everyone for achieving social development. It has to be coordinated with ground level initiatives and has to be thought of as an additional arm and means of capacity building (VOICES-UNDP 2004:3).

Business and financial considerations in market driven media may be another major reason why the growth of community radio has been slow. License conditions also implicitly favour well-funded community radio stations as against inexpensive low power civil society supported community radio that run on shoestring budget. Although five minutes of advertising per hour is permissible by the Government on community radio, the advertisement revenue appears to be inadequate.

Community radio needs to cater to both urban and rural marginalized poor. It also requires a fair deal of technical and programming expertise, despite demystified and simplified radio technology. Hence, transfer of programming expertise and technical know how needs to be made available in a timely and regulated manner to promote and expand community radio.

Five functioning community radios in different parts of the country are described and discussed. The case studies will illustrate the potential of community radio for development in a highly stratified, culturally diverse and multilingual country. It is argued that no centralised radio broadcast can be useful where individual linguistic abilities are limited and day-to-day information needs are highly fragmented. It is in this context, community radio seems to provide the best solution to reach out, to have dialogue and two way communication between and among the community members and to the rest of the country and world. It also helps strengthen the democratic political system in a largely monolithic top down non-responsive bureaucracy.

Kunjal Panje Kutch Ji (Sarus Crane of Our Kutch)

Kunjal Panje Kutchji community radio started broadcast since 2001 from All India Radio, Bhuj, Gujarat. The radio broadcast relates to the concerns, aspirations and creativity of the women managed by a non-government women's organization-Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (Kutch Women vs Development Organization). Kunjal Panje Kutch Ji radio broadcast is received in a large number of Kutch villages and in the adjoining districts of Gujarat. The broadcast language chosen is Kutchi (a dialect of Gujarati). Familiar folk forms have been used from among a number of such forms popular in Kutch. The reporters and the radio artists are drawn from the local community. Community radio produces exciting radio programmes featuring local issues, problems and solutions in the day-to-day lives of the listeners. Local community continues to be an integral part of programme production. For the programme content women provide inputs, through exchange of experiences and ideas and presentation format.

Kunjal Panje Kutch Ji originally a sponsored programme and supported by several external and government agencies has incorporated new topics

and issues like "women's leadership and governance, girls' right to education, female foeticide, harassment of brides for dowry, unnatural deaths and suicide by women, the pressure on women to give birth to sons, maternal mortality and disregard of the mother's health" among other topics.

Namma Dhwani (Our Voices)

Namma Dhwani "community cable radio" was a partnership effort of Budhikote community, located in Baugarpet Taluka District Kolar, Karnataka. Namma Dhwani claims to be country's first cable community radio station. The production of Namma Dhwani is centered in Budhikote. Budhikote also has a resource centre with computer facility linked with the community radio. (Anthony, 2004:4). Earlier, it was estimated that some 236 additional cable television families were able to receive Namma Dhwani. Efforts have been made to widen the reach of Namma Dhwani to other regions (Nair 2007 http://ictpr.nic.in/ nammadhwani/2jul.htm). With the aim of expanding Namma Dhwani's reach, loudspeaker broadcast was also started in three other villages in collaboration with local resource centres. This expansion has helped generate income for Namma Dhwani.

Namma Dhwani has more than 60 self help groups in 35 villages in and around Budikote. The Namma Dhwani listeners are mainly poor illiterate women, who have little access to information. Most women listen to the radio broadcast in groups.

Mandakini Ki Awaaz (Voice of Mandakini)

Mandakini Ki Awaaz (Voice of Mandakini) community radio initially started with equal access in collaboration with "Asia Development Satellite Radio Service" broadcast in selected villages of Garhmal region of Uttarakhand. The radio broadcast is followed by group-discussion among listeners facilitated by specially trained village leaders. They highlight the vital issues raised in the community radio broadcast. Voice of Mandakini has a community radio license.

Voice of Mandakini reaches listeners of the Mandakini River Valley, who live in isolated villages of Garhwal Region. At present, the *Voice of Mandakini* covers less than 10,000 listeners at best which are growing. The community radio production centre known as "Community Media Centre" is located in Bhanaj village. Since November 2006, it has a fully functional production facility built and equipped with the IPDC-UNESCO support.

A number of local cable television networks have started broadcasting community radio programmes to increase the outreach of *Voice of Mandakini* like those of *Namma Dhwani*. In this way, a number of families having cable to television connection have started listening *Voice of Mandakini*. In addition, community members have distributed radios in several locations in the same village to ensure access to all sections of the rural community.

In more than one way, *Voice of Mandakini* is an externally induced idea among the villagers. The NGOs appreciated the value of information and "The concept was welcomed by the villager with expressive solidity and enthusiasm" (Singh 2007:39). Initial report indicated "The villagers were concerned about region-specific content for their community rather than the one being broadcast from All India Radio to address the needs of local villagers. People appreciated the need to have their own community radio platform ... to air their views and opinions directly creating awareness on many important issues like right to information ..." (Singh 2007:39). The villagers wanted that the community radio should have an enabling tool to bring transparency into governance. (Singh, 2007:39).

Kelu Sakhi (Listen, Friend)

Kelu Sakhi (Listen, Friend) community radio started its broadcast in November 2006. *Kelu Sakhi* is a collaborative community radio broadcast project undertaken jointly by "IT for Change", Bangalore, *Mahila Samakhya Karnataka* (a grassroots organisation set up by Government of India for women's empowerment) and Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia, (CEMCA) New Delhi.

Kelu Sakhi radio broadcast is meant to educate poor and illiterate rural women through information and knowledge. The listeners are members of *Mahila Samakhya Karnataka* micro-credit rural groups in each village. The programme content includes women's education, health, political institutions and capacity building/self-sufficiency, which broadly fall within *Mahila Samakhya's* development goals.

Production process and the production team evolved over a period of time from among the partner members. Members of "IT for Change" act as resource persons and identify content and individuals who will feature in the programme. The production responsibility is largely shouldered by "IT for Change" team, in which about 20 *Mahila Samakhya* members trained by CEMCA are active having good understanding of the production process.

"Radio Active," Urban

Radio Active in Bengaluru is a community radio launched in July 2007. In keeping with the tradition of promoting the welfare and betterment of society, the Jain Group of Institutions (JGI), a conglomerate of 35 mission driven educational institutions launched campus community radio station. It serves the cause of progress and development of the community at large. *Radio Active* seeks to reach out to Bengaluru's masses on issues concerning health, environment, development, scientific awareness, social issues, among other issues in turn seeking to inform, educate, while entertaining the public (www.jgi.ac.in/radioactive/Aboutus.htm). Although *Radio Active* has a specific listener base, they are not defined by geographical area. Members from these groups act as producers of programmes and also form the listening club. Last reported, it had thirteen and a half hours of transmission a week, and has appointed two radio jockeys from the community (Chandran 2010). *Radio Active* has also currently launched several sponsored radio programmes for revenue generation. These radio programmes range from initiatives in solid waste management to management of street dogs.

Observations

None of the five community radios mentioned started as a community radio. They remain partially community radios. Hence, community radio is yet to emerge in the country to serve the local information needs. It is hoped that in the near future, once the Government of India starts giving license easily to civil society, popularity of community radio will be enhanced in the country. All the five community radios presented were externally supported without any assurance of sustainability. It is therefore important to find ways and means to provide sustainability to community radio. Community radio has been helpful to both rural and urban listeners, especially women in fulfilling some of the development goals.

Community radio is a process and cannot exist in socio-political isolation. Community radio is not simply about producing programmes to broadcast, it requires preparing and creating awareness and information of a community radio from the very beginning. Community radio is about developing a community - a neighbourhood cluster of villages or college campus. Despite the huge gap that exists between policy and ground level realities, the community radio will grow in the future. It is a matter of time. Due to 'slow and steady' expansion of community radio several of them will die out and a large number will be born. It is appropriate to give civil society the time to respond to this opportunity, so that they can utilize the medium in a more meaningful way, as it is meant to be. ❑

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You Need A Voice to Claim A Voice

Frederick Noronha

Clearly, decision-makers need to be bolder in freeing the airwaves if the potential of such a diverse country and its talented people are to be unleashed.

COMMUNITY-RADIO represents the change that is possible, the future that has already descended upon us. It is a big hope, a can-be of our times.

Yet, at the same time, it is also a reflections of the fear of change that we continue to face. Many who have been tracking this field very closely have voiced repeated disappointments over the half-steps, the over-caution and the unstated fears that actually guide policy making in our part of the globe.

One can clearly recall the excitement brought on by the 1995 Supreme Court judgement that "airwaves are public property". Likewise, the Union Cabinet policy approval in November 2006 was a landmark that we took as a culmination.

But, leaving that aside, here we will look at how communication itself shaped the policy, and how simple online tools helped to bring some degree of openness (but not enough) into the country's community radio approach.

One had a personal boyhood fascination with the radio. This probably stemmed from living in a small village then quite cut-off from the outside world. (I still live in the same place, but ICTs have changed the reality today.) Besides, growing

up in activist-influenced times, we were quick to realise the power of the media, and how little we could depend on the corporate-driven agenda in this sector.

Before getting involved with it all, I happened to get in touch with the early campaigners in the CR field, particularly Sucharita Easwar. That somehow led me to Hyderabad. The occasion: the July 17-20, 2000 UNESCO-sponsored workshop, hosted by the Deccan Development Society, in Hyderabad. It ended with the Pastapur Declaration; I couldn't make it to Pastapur, as it would mean another long delay to catch the bus back home.

The energies we saw at Hyderabad were amazing. ICTs and global communications were just then growing. We met a number of campaigners and techies whom we knew just as names in our email in-box.

At the end of three-and-half quick days, I clearly recall thinking and wondering: what next? How could one build on this initiative, over which groups like the UNESCO had obviously spent a lot of money to make happen? Being one of the juniormost participants, this was not my task. Nonetheless, there were possibilities that could be tried.

The answer came in the form of a simple, electronic 'mailing list' [1].

The author is a Goa-based journalist, and has covered development and IT-for-development themes, among others.

This was really old technology by then too, but it managed to weave together a significant number of interesting persons, who used the tool to keep in touch with one another.

Setting up an electronic mailing-list is not rocket-science. Today, Googlegroups and Yahoogroups allows you to do it for free. (Which makes you wonder: why do we have so few such India-relevant networks working on information sharing?)

This is a tool which is inexpensive (almost zero-cost today) and can be used to discuss serious, developmental issues. Keeping it going, of course, entails some patience and persistence.

Friends at Goacom.com and (for a long time) Sarai.net at New Delhi hosted this list and its valuable archives. Any researcher today going through this would be able to piece together a history of the community-radio campaign in India through it. But we do keep getting notice that we need to find a new home for this simple though potent tool of communication.

One would argue that the simple CR-India list actually kept the campaign going, built links between those interested in the issue, and helped significantly to make the policy happen. Along the way, a number of prominent supporters helped in deepening the debate significantly, or running the network -- Subbu Vincent, Dr Pavarala and his researchers in Hyderabad, Ashish Sen, among many others. To take names would be unfair to the many who participated. But one of the major contributors to the list was undoubtedly Sajan Venniyoor, a former government employee who accepted the logic of the CR campaign, in a way that changed his work and his life.

Without going in too much detail, one can say that the lessons learnt are clear. Even campaigners need communication channels. ICTs can offer some of these. Linking up across the diversity of India helps to understand and frame issues better. Without options of this sort, it is hard to imagine how continuinity could be maintained.

But this is still not a victory. Community radio cannot be reduced to campus radio. Nor should it be replaced by NGO radio alone. Clearly, decision-makers need to be bolder in freeing the airwaves if the potential of such a diverse country and its talented people are to be unleashed. ❏

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The Changing context of Centre-State relations

Tridivesh Singh Maini

States to work harmoniously together and not be at loggerheads since a lot of important policies – economic, security and external relations – get relegated to the margins as a consequence

ONE OF the most frequently used words in Indian politics today is 'Federalism'. While the issue of centre state relations, and division of powers between the two in accordance with the constitution, has always been important for Indian politics, it has begun to receive more attention due to a number of factors, the primary one being the rise of coalition politics, and the indispensability of regional parties as a consequence of the same. Yet it is important to understand that the concept of federalism cannot be understood from one lens, and it needs to be examined from numerous stand points.

Some look at federalism merely as the increasing assertion – by states and regional parties on issues of economic and foreign policy as a consequence of coalition politics. Examples of intransigence exhibited by regional parties on issues pertaining to setting up of The National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC), Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in retail and even important foreign policy issues, such as voting at the United Nations and international treaties are cited where states have had the last word on subjects which were earlier the sole preserve of the centre. Those who make this argument believe that national interest is being weakened, since states think of narrow regional interests, and do not have any grand vision for the nation as a whole.

Others perceive federalism as a natural process and look at it as a healthy development for Indian democracy which provides states the opportunity to put forth their point of view on crucial issues. Those subscribing to this view believe that federalism is not merely an outcome of coalition politics, but also other factors such as the economic growth of the states. This point has been well articulated by Ruchir Sharma in *Break Out Nations: In Pursuit of the Next Economic Miracles* (2012) who argues, that a lot of action is now in some of India's states which are growing at incredible rates and attracting investments from both within India and outside.

This aspect of states making enormous strides in the economic realm has been recognized even by other countries, and as a consequence numerous states have been actively building economic ties with the outside world. This trend strengthens the above argument. It has rightly been stated in this context, that:

What has attracted media and policy attention in recent years, is the competition among the states for international attention and for domestic

and foreign private investment. State chief ministers and their finance and industries secretaries to government went abroad, to the US, Western Europe, Japan, in search of private investors, including NRIs. (Rudolph and Rudolph 2001:4)

It would be crucial to mention here, that economic diplomacy is of two kinds, one entails interactions between certain state governments and western countries and ASEAN, while the other is linkages between border states and countries in India's immediate neighbourhood. While economic diplomacy with countries outside the South Asian region have been propelled due to the economic reforms of 1991, ties with countries within the region have been influenced by New Delhi's overtures to India's neighbours.

If one were to look beyond the contemporary debate, it would be important to pay attention to the prophetic words of BR Ambedkar the founder of the Indian constitution whose words are extremely relevant today:

'The political system adopted in the Constitution could be both unitary as well as federal according to the requirement of time and circumstances'

These words clearly reiterate the point, that the founding fathers had the foresight to predict that India would not always be centralized and the political dynamics would change.

While there is no doubt that in the initial years after independence, the tilt was towards a unitary system, due to the changing political centre and state relations have certainly transformed over the past few years as has been discussed above. It is thus important for both the Centre States to work harmoniously together and not be at loggerheads since a lot of important policies – economic, security and external relations – get relegated to the margins as a consequence.

Steps to genuinely strengthen federalism

A few things need to be kept in mind for ensuring that genuine federalism is strengthened.

For genuine federalism, it is imperative that not just the influential regional leaders have a say on important economic policy and foreign policy issues. In this context, it would be a useful exercise for the Prime Minister to have regular dialogue with Chief Ministers from all states, large and small, on issues which concern these states.

Second, National parties need to de-hyphenate the debate of federalism from coalition politics.

Third, there is no sense of coordination amongst states, except when they have to take on the Centre. States too need to find ways for engaging more amongst themselves and

learning from each other's experiences. There is room for more cooperation amongst themselves and learning from each others schemes and programmes. Instead of states learning from each other, it is the Centre which has been learning from some of the successful schemes in the states.

Many also argue, that too much power is concentrated in the hands of the Chief Minister. If these Chief Ministers have influential personalities, then federalism loses its relevance. It has been stated in this context, that:

Across India, there is a worrying concentration of power in most state capitals in the hands of the Chief Minister. There is, admittedly fierce electoral competition in the states, but once a government is elected, the CM reigns supreme (M. Vaishnav 2013: 21)

It is also imperative to make proper use of institutions like the National Development Council (NDC) and the Inter State Council (ISC), which in spite of being handy fora for resolving disputes between the centre and states, have not been utilized. It is also important to give more powers to the Inter state council and energize and strengthen it.

In conclusion, it is crucial for both the centre and states to accept the strengthening of federalism as a growing reality and take concrete measures to keep in sync with this. ❑

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Census indicates alarming level of foeticide in Jammu & Kashmir

Primary abstract of 2011 census, released on Monday, has indicated an alarming level of female foeticide in Jammu and Kashmir as a drastic decrease of 79 females per thousand of children has been noticed in the basic age group of 0 to 6 years. In each unit of 2,000 children, there were 941 females and 1059 males in 2001. The ratio has been found to have fallen to 862 females: 1138 males in 2011.

This phenomenal decline has brought J&K down to the bottom of the list among all Indian States with just Haryana and Punjab behind it. In child sex ratio, J&K was better off with 963 females in 1981. It gradually dropped to 941 females in 2001, dipping further to 862 females in 2011 and raising questions with regard to the official claims about crackdown on prenatal sex determination tests and female foeticide.

As against the national average of 919 females in 0 to 6 years age group, Haryana (834), Punjab (846), J&K (862), Rajasthan (888) and Gujarat (890) have surfaced as the poorest in child sex ratio. Chhattisgarh (969), Kerala (964), Assam (962), West Bengal (956), Jharkhand (948), and Karnataka (948) have recorded the best figures.