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16th AMIC Annual Conference

AMIC hosts the world's first Journalism Education Congress in Singapore

Over 450 attendees comprising media educators, journalists, ex-Deputy Prime Ministers, media experts and practitioners, gathered in Singapore for the 16th AMIC Annual Conference entitled "Media, Education and Development: The Quest for New Paradigms".

The international event, held from 25 to 28 June 2007 at the Grand Capthorne Waterfront Hotel, was held concurrently with the first World Journalism Education Congress (WJEC) representing 27 leading journalism education associations from around the world

"Journalism is in a state of crisis and transition with pressures from new media channels and challenges arising from competition and globalization", said Dr Indrajit Banerjee, AMIC Secretary-General in his inaugural address at the joint opening session. He added that the critical role journalism has played in helping citizens to make sense of the complex and rapidly changing geo-political landscape and profound economic implications. However, he added that "in recent years there was a significant decline in journalism around the world while commercial profits take precedence over professional calling".

"Therefore, this conference is both timely and

critical, and seeks to address core issues within the field ranging from curriculum development, ethics, industry/academia relationships as well as journalistic freedom and responsibility", added Dr Banerjee.

Dr Joe Foote, University of Oklahoma and Chairman of World Journalism Education Congress, in the *Foreword* of the Conference programme, said: "Ours is a young field. Most countries in the world began journalism

Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam, Chairman of the Singapore Press Holding and former Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore, speaking at the joint inaugural session of the 16th AMIC Annual Conference and World Education Journalism Congress (WJEC) on 25 June 2007, Singapore.

Asia to host Global Electronic Media Forum

The third World Electronic Media Forum (WEMF3) will be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 10-11 December 2007, according to an announcement by the World Broadcasting Unions (WBU). The meeting is expected to attract broadcast executives, policy makers, academics, journalists, visionaries and decision makers from around the world. The agenda will include the safety of journalists and preserving the
world's audiovisual archives.

WEMF3's lead organiser will be the Kuala

Lumpur-based Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), in collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) and the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC). The event is being supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP) as cooperation partners. WEMF3 will be held at the new Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre where the GKP's third Global Knowledge Conference (GK3)

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AMIC Annual Conference and WJEC (continued from pg 1)

The two events attracted over 450 attendees comprising media educators, journalists, ex-Deputy Prime Ministers, media experts and practitioners.

A visual feast at AMIC's Gala Dinner. Attendees were being entertained with a presentation by Peter Arnett, Pulitzer Prize winner and former CNN war correspondent and a short film by Dr Vandana Pedenekar-Magal, USA.

programmes less than 40 years ago. We are growing rapidly and becoming ever more important within the university structure. It is time for us to make our presence known and to show the breadth and depth our field has achieved. It is also important for our profession to fully realize the contributions that journalism and mass communication educators are making to improve it".

He also urged the attendees at the Congress to take advantage of the unique opportunity to build a strong foundation for cross-cultural understanding and cooperation.

Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam, Chairman of the Singapore Press Holdings and former Deputy Prime Minister, Singapore, in his keynote address, reiterated the need of the media industry to have high-quality journalism education more than ever before. He told the captive audience that "the true mission of journalists has not changed ... it has broadened to encompass even more res-ponsiblities. It is no longer enough for journalists to inform, educate and entertain. Now they must engage, enlighten and inspire". "To do this, journalists must have strong core skills, deep-rooted professional values and high ethical standards."

He outlined four main factors that will give newspapers the best chance of sucess in the changing media landscape: content, credibility and trust, and the quality of leadership of the media companies. He elaborated that "like in all businesses, the quality of leadership makes all the difference, especially in challenging times. Newspaper boards and managements must make the right decisions and continue to invest for the future".

A document on model journalism curricula for developing countries and emerging democracies was formally launched at the joint plenary by Dr Abdul Waheed Khan, Assistant Director, UNESCO, France. The document was the result of requests for guidance from UNESCO member states seeking to establish journalism programmes within their educational systems. The preparation of the document takes full cognizance of the social, economic, political and cultural contexts of developing countries and emerging democracies.

One of the major achievements of the events was the Declaration of the Principles of Journalism, which was endorsed by 27 journalism and mass communication associations present at the Conference. The principles guiding the declaration include a balance between the conceptual, philosophical and skills-based content and the fact that journalism educators should be a blend of academics and practitioners as well as having experience working as journalists.

The Declaration also states that the journalism curriculum includes a wide variety of skills and includes study of journalism ethics, history, media structures at both the national and international level as well as critical analysis of media content and journalism as a profession. Other principles include journalism educators having an obligation to collaborate with colleagues worldwide to provide assistance and support so that journalism education can gain strength as an academic discipline and play a more effective role in helping journalism reach its full potential. (For full list of the Declaration, log on to www.amic.org.sg)

The four-day Conference and Congress featured the Third AMIC Distinguished Forum, twelve plenaries, fourteen parallel sessions, six research sessions, and three workshops. Both events had some common panels and overlapping sessions while at the same time each of the conferences maintained their specific focus. The AMIC Annual Conference alone attracted 185 articles from 35 countries indicating an overwhelming response to the call for papers and presentations before the deadline in March 2007.

AMIC Young Communicators Network (AYCN) launches at the Annual Conference

The AMIC Young Communicators Network (AYCN), a YouTube for communication students, was formally launched at the 16th AMIC Annual Conference held in Singapore. The network and portal aim to create firm and lasting friendships between young communicators across the world, which is critical for increasing awareness and understanding, not only about the media and communication sectors in various countries, but also about the relevant political and socio-economic conditions in these countries.

The formation of AYCN will create a platform for networking and knowledge sharing between all students of media, information and communication across the world to organise activities and events that will enable students to share and present their works in areas of journalism, broadcasting, the internet, multimedia, public relations and advertising. In addition the portal will include information on an array of issues from environment to health from organisations such as UNESCO, the United Nations and other key agencies so that students can use the material as resources for their academic work.

It will also provide opportunities for young communicators in terms of student exchanges, internships, and job placements, which will enhance their career profiles and opportunities.

Interested students of journalism, media and communication from around the world can register online at www.aycn.net , surf and uphold their contents. Or they can send their enquiries to jaspal@amic.org.sg

Third World Electronic Media Forum (Continued from Pg 1)

on "Emerging People, Emerging Markets, Emerging Technologies" will be held on 1–13 December. Both events will benefit from synergies.

In order to ensure a strong participation from throughout the developing world, SDC will be providing financial assistance to facilitate representation by speakers and delegates at both the WEMF3 and GK3 events.

WEMF2 in Tunis in 2005 was attended by more than 300 people from 70 countries. A similar attendance is expected at WEMF3. The agenda and speakers will be announced in the coming months.

Secretary-General of the ABU, David Astley, said he was grateful for the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP) to enable the third WEMF to be staged in Asia, which would benefit the many broadcasters in the developing countries of the region that did not have the opportunity to participate in the first two events in Geneva and Tunis.

Secretary-General of AMIC, Dr Indrajit Banerjee, said that he was delighted to be a co-organiser of this important event. He believed that it was extremely relevant to host WEMF3 in Asia given the dynamic expansion and vibrant growth of broadcasting across Asia.

Head of the Information and Communication Technology for Development Division of the SDC, Dr Gerolf Weigel, said: "The media world is undergoing tremendous changes due to the interplay between technological innovation and the growing role of the audience in content production. The world's leading broadcasters, innovators, practitioners and thinkers will discuss at WEMF3 the latest trends, lessons and perspectives. This will include reflection about the future role of media in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). After the outstanding performance at the first two WEMF events in 2003 and 2005, we expect the WEMF3 to continue this tradition and provide a unique forum for exploring the latest trends in the interface between media innovation and socio-economic development."

World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

The first and second World Electronic Media Forums were held in conjunction with the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) which was held in two phases in Geneva (2003) and Tunis (2005).

In conjunction with the WSIS, the two-day WEMF was held to examine more closely the impact that these changes may have on "traditional" ICTs such as radio and television broadcasting, and to discuss how the fundamental transformations that were taking place in the global information society may affect the role of the electronic media in knowledge dissemination, social interaction, economic and business practices, political engagement, media, education, health, leisure and entertainment.
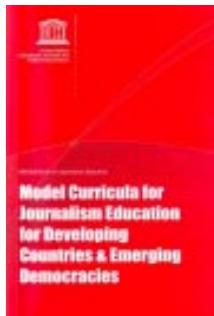
The 148-page document containing the model curricula for journalism education was launched at the AMIC Annual Conference and WJEC in Singapore.

UNESCO model curricula for journalism education launches at the Annual Conference

A 148-page document containing the model curricula for journalism education was formally launched by Dr Abdul Waheed Khan, Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, UNESCO at the 16th AMIC Annual Conference and WJEC in Singapore.

Dr Waheed Khan said that "there has been an increased recognition of the crucial role of journalism in promoting democracy, and this has created an urgent demand for well-trained journalists".

As the lead UN agency in promoting freedom of expression and access to information and knowledge, UNESCO has taken various initiatives to improve the quality of journalism education worldwide. In December 2005, in response to numerous requests from Member States for help in the design of journalism education curricula,

Dr Waheed Khan, Asst Director-General, UNESCO (fourth from left) presented his panel of experts involved in drafting the curricula at a joint plenary session. (L–R): Prof Hans-Henrik Holm, Danish School of Journalism, Denmark, Dr Magda Abu-Fadil, Director, Journalism Training Program, American University of Beirut, Lebanon, Mr Ram, Editor in Chief, *The Hindu*, India, Prof Michael Cobden, University of King's College, Canada, and Prof Gordon Stuart Adam, The Poynter Institute for Media Studies, Florida, USA.

UNESCO convened an experts's consultative meeting in Paris.

A team of four UNESCO experts, commissioned for the initial development of the journalism education curricula initiative, solicited a response to their first draft from twenty senior journalism educators who were deemed to have considerable experience working in developing countries and emerging democracies. Their responses proved to be essential for the establishment of appropriate and applicable curricula.

Journalism instructors with experience working in developing countries or emerging democracies were then carefully selected from Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the America, North and South America to write the syllabuses for seventeen core courses.

The document summarizes university journalism education as typically following three axes or lines of development:
(1) An axis comprising the norms, values, tools, standards, and practices of journalism;
(2) An axis emphasizing the social, cultural, political, economic, legal and ethical aspects of journalism practice both within and outside the national borders; and
(3) An axis comprising knowledge of the world and journalism's intellectual challenges.

It also contains a list of course descriptions and appendices that include descriptions of post-secondary diploma or certificate programmes, detailed sample syllabi as well as a list of expected journalism competencies based on the European Journalism Training Association's Tartu [Estonia] Declaration adopted in 2007.

The currcula, once adapted to local conditions, will lay a foundation for good journalism education. The full document [PDF] can be viewed at www.unesco.org.

Media, Democracy and Development Panel: Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim (centre), former Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, Malaysia, posed for a picture after delivering a speech. He was also interviewed by Dr Indrajit Banerjee (second from left), Secretary-General, AMIC, and Dr Andrew Taussig (far right), Trustee, International Institute of Communications, UK.

(Right) Mr Mohamed Nasheed, Ministry of Information & Arts, Republic of Maldives. He was one of the speakers on the panel of the Third AMIC Distinguished Forum.

Newspapers industry can still withstand the onslaught of dramatic changes

(This is) a time of dramatic change in the media industry worldwide. The days of easy growth—yearly gains in advertising and subscription revenue—are behind us. Two key forces have been responsible for this.

The first is the relentless pace of technological advances, the second is rapidly changing consumer habits. The digital revolution and the convergence of technologies and media platforms have opened up vast new sources of news, analysis and information.

This deluge of material is not just from competing media organisations but also from the new legions of citizen journalists and bloggers. With wide access to the Internet and broadband penetration, almost anyone can now be a publisher and enjoy very low distribution costs for whatever content or material he produces.

This content explosion and the 'democratisation of distribution' have had a profound impact on the media industry.

Consumers, too, have changed. We now have a mobile, technologically savvy, multi-tasking generation with many more demands on its time. Their media consumption habits are vastly different from their parents' generation. Overall, they are consuming more media than before, but they are opting for more targeted channels, fragmenting the market in the process.

They no longer passively consume content, but interact with and participate actively in creating content. In Singapore, almost half of Internet users are creators of their own content, and this number is expected to grow.

As a result of these changes, media companies everywhere are grappling with an unprecedented assault on their business models.

On the newspaper front, with the exception of developing markets such as China and India, most developed- country markets have experienced secular declines in circulation numbers.

In the United States, large metro newspapers are the worst hit and are bracing for more readership declines.

Not surprisingly, advertising trends have followed suit, and classified advertising in particular has migrated to the Internet in a major way. So bottom lines of major media companies are under pressure in almost all markets.

But in the face of grave threats, this is also a time of unique opportunities. In fact, at the recent World Association of Newspapers annual meeting held in Cape Town, South Africa, the mood was appreciably more upbeat, different from the doom

VIPs' Tea Session:
(L–R) Prof Eddie Kuo, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, NTU and AMIC Chairman d'Honneur, Dean Ang Peng Hwa, Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, NTU and AMIC Chairman, Dr Indrajit Banerjee, AMIC Secretary-General, Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam, Chairman of Singapore Press Holdings and former Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore, and Dr Su Guaning (partially shown), President, NTU, Singapore.

and gloom of previous years.

The consensus now—at least outside the US — is that the news business is alive and well, largely because of a flurry of innovations.

At Singapore Press Holdings (SPH), we believe that newspapers will survive — but not all of them. Some will be winners, but quite a few will be losers. The big question is, who will be among the winners? Our sense is that the papers with the best chance of success are those with unique and differentiated content. In short, content is king.

Community newspapers, for instance, may well outlast some bigger dailies. So will newspapers that can offer mass reach. They will be an effective and valuable medium for display advertisers, even as a long tail of niche products try to make their mark.

Another critical factor is credibility and trust. This still is, or ought to be, one of the strengths of the mainstream media. The bigger, or louder, the information explosion, the more consumers will value and turn to sources they can trust and rely upon.

Papers that continue to be trusted as an authoritative source of news and views will have a far better chance of outlasting the competition. But much also depends on the boards and managements of media companies. This is often not well appreciated. Like in all businesses, the quality of leadership makes all the difference, especially in challenging times. Newspaper boards and managements must make the right decisions and continue to invest for the future. Boards and managements which embrace new innovations and inspire their staff to transform their businesses will be rewarded with good results.

The making of the first WJEC

The idea of a World Journalism Education Congress (WJEC) was first mooted during a meeting held by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), USA and the Association for Journalism Education of United Kingdom in London in 2001, revealed Dr Joe Foote in his opening address at the joint inaugural session at the 16th AMIC Annual Conference and WJEC in Singapore.

"They had a vision to gather as many associations as possible around the world to share a common platform where they could deliberate common problems, and provide continual cooperation and communication", said Dr Joe Foote.

An AEJMC's Task Force on Internalization was convened in August 2004 in Toronto where leading journalism educators associations from around the world were invited to present their views for the possible international conference dedicated specifically to journalism education.

Dr Indrajit Banerjee, who was present at the meeting in Toronto, saw it fit to have the first World Journalism Education Congress to be held in Asia. He tabled a proposal that AMIC would be a lead organizer of the Congress based on the following factors:

(1)   The experiences and competency of AMIC in conducting international conference;

(2)   AMIC has the support from key or related government agencies such as the Media Development Authority of Singapore;

(3)   The support of the Wee Kim Wee School of

Communication and Information Studies, and Nanyang Technological University; and

(4)   Singapore's strong commitment to be a global media city.

By the end of 2005, the board of directors of AEJMC unanimously had approved to participate in the 2007 Congress. At that time, there were eighteen organizations onboard the association. By 2006, there were 22. Finally on 25 June 2007 in Singapore, 27 organizations were meeting to represent journalism and mass communication education worldwide. "These represent the five continents except Antartica", remarked Dr Robyn Goodman, the programme chair, WJEC.

Dr Foote dedicated several voluntary academic leaders (see below left picture) who have made invaluable contributions to the success of the Congress: Robyn Goodman, WJEC programme chair Jjotika Ramaprasad and Dennis Davis, paper competition chairs; Suellen Tapsall, Syndicate Groups chair; Charles Self, the global census director and Melinda Robins, public relations coordinator.

He added that "the 27 organizations involved in this enterprise involve an all-volunteer effort with no operating budget". "It has been through the dedication of our member organizations that they had been able to organize three planning meetings and the Congress itself."

Other individuals who had made invaluable contributions include AEJMC Executive Director Jennifer McGill; AMIC's Secretary-General, Dr Indrajit Banerjee, Dean Ang Peng Hwa, Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University.

Dr Foote urged the attendees at the Congress to make the most of the historic meeting, and to build a strong foundation for cross-cultural understanding and cooperation.

Presenting the Declaration of Universal Journalism Principles at the Opening Plenary by Prof Guo Ke, Shanghai International Studies University, China, was one of the four main aims of the Congress.

Global Census of Journalism Education and Regional Report Panels:
(L–R) Prof Robyn S Goodman, Alfred University, USA, Prof Joe Foote, University of Oklahoma (chair person), USA, Prof Guy Berger, Rhodes University, South Africa, Director Suellen Tapsall, AIM-UWA Business School Alliance, Australia, and Dr Charles Self, University of Oklahoma, USA.

A parallel breakout session of the WJEC.

Korean users keep raking up high speed broadband and mobile Internet

Many believed Korea's high-speed Internet market hit a saturation mark in early 2005 when 12 million homes were connected to the broadband for a penetration rate of 75 per cent.

To defy such a belief, however, the rate has continued to rise over the past two years and finally surpassed the 90-per cent milestone in April with 14.3 million subscribers. And the figure further increased to 14.4 million at the end of June, according to the Ministry of Information and Communication.

"We thought the broadband penetration rate had already reached the limit a couple of years ago but it was not the case", said an official at the Information Ministry.

"The number gained about 70,000 a month this year on average, or upside of 400,000 in the first half alone. The overall figure is on pace to approach 15 million late this year", he said.

In particular, almost every household in and around Seoul is linked up to the always-on Internet service with their combined penetration rate over 100 percent. Seoul and surrounding Gyeonggi Province posted 107.7 per cent and 101.2 per cent, respectively. Incheon, also encircled by Gyeonggi Province, came in third with 99.7 per cent.

Mobile Internet users

A majority of domestic cellular phone users log on to the Internet on their handsets at least once a month, according to a research company.

Marketing Inside unveiled the results of a survey on 100,752 people in July which showed that 53.5 per cent of respondents use the mobile Internet from time to time.

Roughly 14,500, or 14.4 per cent, said they hook up to the Internet with their phones once a month while 20.8 per cent said two or three times. More than 5,800 or 5.8 per cent, said they use wireless Web services over eleven times every month.

The active use of the cellular phone-enabled Internet costs respondents 6,707 won every month on average. "The poll shows people are taking advantage of the mobile Internet more briskly than any other country, where the wireless Web has yet to take off", Marketing Inside official Shim Shi-won said.

"The high penetration rate of cell phones has led to more use of the Internet. Such a trend is expected to accelerate down the road", Shim said.

More than 42 million out of the country's total 49 million population carry cell phones. Broken down by wireless operators, subscribers to the business bellwether SK Telecom use the mobile Internet most often, at 56.1 per cent.

Clients of the runner-up player KTF followed with 51.2 per cent and the distant third LG Telecom failed to reach the 50-per cent mark at 48.4 per cent.

The most popular service used was the downloading of ring tones, followed by the transmission of multimedia files such as pictures and games. People were found to be reluctant to purchase products or trade stocks through the wireless Internet.

The Korea Time

Media Pluralism in Asia
The Role and Impact of Alternative Media

This book is the result of a research project covering eight countries in South and South East Asia examining the role and impact of alternative media. The definition of alternative media depends very much on the political, social, cultural and economic environment you live in. Thus, this book gives the reader an idea of the diversity of alternative media sources available across Asia, which is very much a result of the different media regulatory regimes in the countries we have included in this study.

While Bangladesh has had alternative media, in the form of community theatre and other artistic expressions for a long time, yet, community radio is slow to take off, because the regulations still do not allow it. Meanwhile in Indonesia and Thailand, community radio has taken off rapidly, with regulators struggling to come up with a formula to help regulate the sector while not shutting it down. In the Philippine community radio has existed legally for many years and is thriving, thus, there may be lessons others can learn from this experience. In Malaysia, where legislation tightly controls the establishment of media outlets, there are yet, some interesting examples of how alternative media could be effectively operated via the Internet. Sri Lanka, offers an interesting model where elements of community broadcasting could exist within a public service broadcaster.
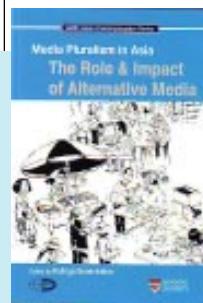
Tech is an organic of youth's life: survey

While young people embrace the Web with real or virtual friends, and their mobile phone is never far away, relatively few like technology, and those that do like technology tend to be in Brazil, India and China, according to a survey.

Only a handful think of technology as a concept, and just 16 per cent use terms like "social networking", said two combined surveys covering 8- to 24-year-olds published recently by Microsoft and Viacom unit MTV Networks, which includes Nickelodeon.

"Young people don't see tech as a separate entity—it's an organic part of their lives", said Andrew Davidson, vice president at MTV Networks International.

The surveys involved 18,000 young people in 16 countries, including the United Kingdom, the United States, China, Japan, Canada and Mexico. Terms most frequently used by the young when talking about technology related to accessing content for free, notably "download" and "burn".

The surveyors found that the average Chinese computer user has 37 online friends they have never met. Indian youth are most likely to see mobile phones as a status symbol, while a third of UK and US teenagers say they cannot live without game consoles.

"The way each technology is adopted and adapted throughout the world depends as much on local cultural and social factors as on the technology itself", Davidson said. For example, the key digital device for Japan's young is the mobile phone because of the privacy and portability it offers those who live in small homes with limited privacy.

The survey found that Japanese children ages eight to fourteen have only one online friend they have not met, compared to a global average of five. Some 93 per cent of Chinese computer users in that age range have more than one friend online they have never met.

Davidson said this was encouraging those ages 8 to 14 in China to select online content over television—a trend not seen in any other market in that age group.

The changes in how the youth market engages with technology is keenly followed by advertisers and content providers. For parents worried about what their children are getting up to amid the wave of gadgets, little has changed in a generation.

The surveyors found that the most popular activities among those in the 8-to-14 bracket are watching TV, listening to music and being with friends. The rankings for those older was similar, though listening to music was top.

www.news.com.com

Internet and terrorism fuels data storage demand

Web videos and surging Internet growth are spurring Internet demand for computer storage much faster than expected by the world's largest computer hard-disk drive maker, Seagate Technology, Chief Executive Bill Watkins said.

Terrorism fears are spawning demand for retaining surveillance video, Watkins said in an interview a day after the company reported better-than-expected quarterly results. As a result security is playing a larger role in the company's revenues.

Seagate is shipping about three times as many disk drives to Internet services companies than it is to large corporate customers such as banks and insurers, he said.

"I was stunned by the amount of storage going into that space", Watkins said. "This trend will continue. That's one of the things that we believe, going forward, is going to be a good source of growth."

Seagate is selling disk drives directly to Internet providers and companies that sell video surveillance equipment to businesses and government agencies, Watkins said.

Web search leader Google Inc, Yahoo Inc and other Internet services companies operate dozens of data centres around the world that provide the infrastructure to power Web services including online video, e-mail and Internet search. Such "server farms", as they are known, are filled with rows of computer servers, data storage and network systems, many using Seagate hardware. Google said in June that it planned to spend US$600 million to build a data centre in western Iowa, the latest in a network of server farms holding the hundreds of thousands of computers that run its Web services.

Watkins said he expects quarterly industrywide unit shipments of hard-disk drives to increase about 15 per cent sequentially, driven by demand for notebook computers and storage-demanding Internet applications such as online videos and pictures that are sent between users and devices. "Everything is being impacted by this content distribution model", Watkins said of the trend of ever-larger amounts of data being stored online. "More and more content gets moved around."

www.reuters.com.uk

China cracks down on Internet gaming

The Chinese government has launched a campaign to limit the number of hours teenagers spend online playing games.

Under new rules that took effect in July, Chinese Internet gaming companies must install a programme that requires users to enter their ID card numbers. After three hours, players under 18 are prompted to stop.

If they continue, the software slashes by half any points earned in the game. All points are wiped out if players stay on more than five hours.

The programme is part of a government campaign to combat Internet gaming addiction, "clean up the Internet environment" and "promote civilized Internet use", according to guidelines issued by China's General Administration of Press and Publication.

About 10 per cent of China's more than 30 million Internet gamers were underage as of the end of 2006, according to the Chinese newspaper *National Business Daily*.

The government guidelines don't flat-out but denounce the popular pastime, saying "measured gaming is good for the brain, but gaming addiction hurts the body". The explanation says the three-hour cutoff is based on the time it takes to play the strategy chess game *Go*.

Gaming companies Shanghai-based The9—which runs the popular "World of Warcraft" online game in China—and Shenzhen-based Tencent both said they have started using the screening software.

The9 spokesman James Zhao said he doesn't expect the new restrictions to affect business because most of The9's users are adults. "World of Warcraft", from Vivendi SA's Blizzard Entertainment Inc, is the world's most popular online game and has more than 3.5 million subscribers in China.

Tencent said in a statement it's too early to tell if the screening will hurt its sales. The *South China Morning Post* quoted a spokesman as saying youngsters can beat the new screening programme by using false identities.

"It's hard to tell online if the player is a teenager or an adult. Many of them can register for the game using someone else's ID or even a fake ID", Song Yang told the newspaper.

Both companies voiced support for the new government measures. The online gaming industry "will develop in a healthy, harmonious direction" because of the monitoring system, Zhao said.

AP

.asia region gets its own domain name

Any person, business or organisation based in Asia will be able to apply for a website address incorporating ".asia" from 17 July. The domain ".asia" will be launched in Feb 2008, nearly one and a half years after ".eu" for "European Union" was rolled out in Europe.

Mr Edmon Chung of DotAsia Organisation, the registry operator for the domain, explained that ahead of its opening to the general public next February, three application phases would be launched to give businesses or those with trademarks first dibs on specific domain names. If a particular domain name has more than one applicant, the name will go to the highest bidder.

The three application phases are:

Phase 1, or Sunrise 1: This phase, from 17 July till 9 Oct, is for governments, which can use ".asia" on their websites after Oct 9.

Phase 2, or Sunrise 2a: To last from 9 Oct till 30 Oct, this phase is for companies which applied for their trademarks and brands before 16 March 2004. They will be free to use their new domain names after 30 Oct.

Phase 3, comprising Sunrise 2b, 2c and 3: This application period, from Nov 13 through to 15 Jan next year, covers three classes of companies. Sunrise 2b is for companies with marks registered before 6 Dec last year; Sunrise 2c is for companies seeking ".asia" domains which combine their trademarks with another word, for example, ABC Toiletries; Sunrise 3 is for all other commercial enterprises. These companies can use their new domain names after 15 Jan.

DotAsia Organisation, a non-profit body headquartered in Hong Kong, will vet all applications. It now has 20 members, mainly country registry operators like the Singapore Network Information Centre.

Applications for a separate Pioneer Domains programme are also open from 17 July until 31 Aug. Under this, organisations eyeing generic domains like music.asia or money.asia may apply to own such domain names. Reaction from the business community to ".asia" was positive.

Mr Raymond Teoh, the assistant vice-president of the Internet Business Unit in Singapore Press Holdings' AsiaOne, said that since AsiaOne was in the business of providing news, it made "good business sense" to book domains like Asiaone.asia or news.asia.

The Straits Times

International Literacy Day, 8 Sept
World news body offers serialized story to promote newspaper reading

The World Association of Newspapers (WAN) and the Breakfast Serials publishing company are offering newspapers the opportunity to commemorate International Literacy Day on 8 September by publishing a free serialized story to encourage reading in the home.

The 17-part story of the Chinese fable, *The Monkey King*, is being made available to newspapers in 800-word segments with illustrations and an activities guide. WAN is encouraging newspapers to launch the series on 8 September to coincide with International Literacy Day, a United Nations initiative to promote universal literacy.

The story and activity guide are being offered in English or Spanish, but newspapers are authorized to do translations into other languages. For further details and downloads: http://www.wan-press.org/nie/articles.php?id=714

"The serial story is making a comeback because it is a powerful tool to encourage a love of reading. It is also a lot of fun, and by offering a teaching guide we make it easy for parents and teachers to use the series to build reading skills", said Aralynn McMane, Director of Young Readership Development for the Paris-based WAN. "We believe that offering this story at no cost is a perfect way to encourage newspapers to commemorate International Literacy Day."

Newspapers worldwide have been historically solid local literacy partners, doing all kinds of activities that promote basic literacy (with programmes for adults as well as children), critical thinking and media literacy", she said. Both the story and the activities guide are available to any newspaper outside the United States.

Founded in 1948, the World Association of Newspapers is the global organisation for the world's press, representing 18,000 newspapers world-wide. Part of its work is to encourage literacy projects through its Newspapers in Education Development Project, which is supported by Norske Skog, the Norway-based paper manufacturer. More on WAN young reader projects can be found at http://www.wan-press.org/youngreader

wan.assoc.fr

Print media not dead yet, says Thai trade group

The growing popularity of digital publishing worldwide is unlikely to force print media such as magazines and newspapers out of the market, according to the Magazine Association of Thailand.

The claim that consumers have gradually stopped reading magazines is a myth, said Wiluck Lohtong, the association's Secretary-General, who is also the CEO of Inspire Entertainment Co, at a seminar on the magazine industry's trends.

Citing research in the United Kingdom, he said it was also a myth that young people do not read print media anymore. He noted that the world's leading magazines had continued to launch new editions in markets such as South Africa, Russia and China.

Meanwhile, new magazines have continued to appear in markets worldwide, Mr Wiluck said, citing a presentation at the recent conference of the International Federation of the Periodical Press (FIPP), which works for the benefit of magazine publishers worldwide.

Print media have not died yet, but publishers should integrate magazines and newspapers, publish existing media digitally and explore new media, said Mr Wiluck, who publishes more than ten magazines including *FHM, Casaviva, Arena and Music Express.*

Compared to other media, magazines have some advantages to win advertisers' hearts. For example, magazines can reach specific target readers and gain their trust. Readers also spend relatively more time with magazines since they provide a rich experience, and many consider print advertisements a form of entertainment.

Thanachai Theerapattanavong, the association's president, said it was hard for digital publishing to steal ad spending from conventional publishing since Internet penetration in Thailand was relatively low, at 12.5 per cent, compared to 68.2 per cent in Hong Kong or 69.2 per cent in North America.

"Audiences in countries that have high Internet penetration rates are likely to shift to reading online, but I do not think that it will happen in Thailand soon", he said. However, he said magazine and newspaper publishers should also publish digitally to maintain ad spending and provide readers with new experiences such as audio and multimedia content. Magazine publishers said ad revenues for the first six months of this year missed their targets due to political uncertainty and the economic slowdown.

Bangkok Post

Indian university launches bilingual quarterly, *Media Meemansa*

Makhanlal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism & Communication at Bhopal, India, has launched a bilingual (Hindi-English) quarterly magazine *Media Meemansa* (Media Critique). The inaugural issue (June–August 2007) was formally released at a function at Bhopal by the eminent journalist and thinker, Dr Ved Pratap Vaidik.

Mr Achyutanand Mishra, an eminent journalist/writer and Vice Chancellor of the University is the Editor of the magazine. In a thought-provoking editorial, Mr Mishra says, "The magazine is an effort to analyze current trends, directions and challenges in/before the media in India, specifically, and, in the world, generally...It is not a house magazine of the University but an open forum for debate on all important issues related to media. For this, we propose to have contributors from a wide spectrum, not just media professionals and/or media educators, but professors, experts, decision-makers, thinkers and writers"

"The magazine in not just one more periodical on media. Our effort will be to make it stand out and stand apart as a store-house of information and opinions by those who have been deep into their respective fields and associated with, in one or the other way, the media", he adds.

The inaugural issue has contributions from journalists, analysts, scholars and media educators – all eminent with long innings in their areas of specialization in media-related subjects.

Prof JV Vilanilam, an eminent media educator and former Vice Chancellor of University of Kerala (India) has expressed his confidence in the magazine being "a great help to the cause of higher education in communication and journalism".

Ms Annu Anand, Editor, *Vidura*, Press Institute of India has expressed the hope that the magazine will cover all the major plus and minus points of media including the growing influence of advertising and market forces over the frank expression of information and opinions by/in the media.

Makhanlal Chaturvedi Nat University

OhmyNews forum examines citizen journalism's growth

The third annual OhmyNews 2007 International Reporters Forum, held from 27 to 29 June, 2007 at the Korea Press Center in Seoul, began with a video message from President Roh Moo Hyun who said, "The most powerful force that raises the standards of the media is no other than the participation of alert citizens".

Speakers at the event from sites like NowPublic.com, Daily Kos and OhmyNews tackled issues such as editorial accountability and sustainable business models for citizen journalism sites that continue to spring up in places like Japan. OhmyNews launched a Japanese version of their site in August 2006.

Spotlighting the growth of citizen journalism, the forum celebrated the birth of new citizen journalism sites in countries like Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Estonia, South Africa and Australia.

OhmyNews has become an international online news website since its founding 2002 in South Korea by Oh Yeon-ho, a professional Korean journalist. Over 50,000 citizen reporters contribute to the publication, whose articles are edited and fact-checked at the publication's Seoul-based newsroom. The majority of the site's articles are written by freelance writers who are not trained journalists. OhmyNews reporting was influential in the 2002 election of President Roh. Rory O' Connor, a documentary filmmaker, journalist and the president of Globalvision, Inc., attended the forum and on his blog said it is "one of the most successful projects in the world involved in the burgeoning field of citizen journalism."

www.ucla.asianmedia.com

Media's Challenge: Asian Tsunami and Beyond

One of the biggest lessons of the tsunami that is unravelling is that the modern journalist can also help to heal communities, rebuild lives, keep families intact and raise funds.

The question of media freedoms is also an important part of this equation. Beyond what journalists can do, there is also the matter of what authorities will allow them to do.

It is in the rehabilitation or healing process that the media face the most challenging task. In many parts of Asia and beyond, the mainstream media has been excessively commercialised. The tsunami became such a hot media issue around the world, because the dramatic pictures available were very attractive revenue making material for commercial broadcasters, but the rebuilding and healing process does not provide such pictures.

It is in such an environment, that this book examines the challenge journalists face in reporting a process that may not provide dramatic pictures. Focusing more on the print media, many interesting issues dealing with the reconstruction and rehabilitation process are explored, with analysis and commentary on why some stories are not given the exposure they deserve and how these issues may be made newsworthy.
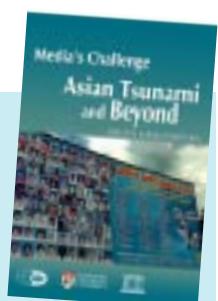
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Common digital TV standard for Asean

Asean countries have adopted a common digital TV standard, joining the global trend of moving away from analogue TV. Because new set-top boxes are needed even to tune in to free-to-air TV, having a common TV standard means similar-type boxes will be used across a region where TV is a must for many lower-income people.

Bulk purchases will thus lower costs for Asean's 500 million people. The aim: to have set-top boxes priced below US$50 (SGS$77) each—down from the current US$80. Asean has adopted the European DVB-T (digital video broadcasting-terrestial) standard, and will now work on the details for each country's rollout.

Broadcasters are keen to go digital because more channels can be squeezed into their given bandwidth. But switching off existing analogue channels will cut off viewers with older TV sets.

Singapore broadcasters are expected to deliver all programmes digitally in the next three to eight years.

Meanwhile, the actual migration to digital TV in Asean may be uneven. Pengiran Dato Ismail Mohamed, Brunei's Permanent Secretary for the Prime Minister's Office, said Asean countries are unlikely to switch off analogue TV at the same time.

But a common standard will boost digital TV pickup in the region, he said at the Infocomm Business Media Exchange (imbX) trade show. The nod for a common digital TV standard came when Asean ministers for information and communications met in Indonesia in May.

Other countries have moved faster. In the US, each household can ask for up to two coupons of US$40 each to buy digital set-top boxes from next year. The US government is prepared to spend US$990 million to get the country to go fully digital by 2009.

Digital TV refers to television programmes delivered to homes using a digital format. Broadcasters worldwide are switching their channels from a decades-old analogue format to the digital format because the new technology lets them squeeze more channels in the limited bandwidth available.

Digital TV can be broadcast in two formats — standard definition or high-definition. As the names imply, standard definition TV (SDTV) offers fewer details on-screen than high-definition TV (HDTV). Broadcasters are now producing more content in HDTV because the format offers images four times sharper than SDTV.   *The Straits Times*

Interactive movies next big thing?

Playing computer games and watching movies may no longer be separate activities in future, judging by the predictions of two leading industry players who spoke at the CNN's Future Summit: Virtual Worlds TV programme.

Zareh Nalbandian, co-founder and managing director of animation powerhouse Animal Logic (which was responsible for big-name projects such as *Happy Feet* and *The Matrix*) see the lines blurring between disciplines. "I see a real convergence of many media and techniques into a heightened ability to create any world and any character we want, digitally", he says.

"I think that digital film-making techniques and the convergence of games and films will see us making films that are more like games." "In three years you may find yourself watching a DVD at home with a movie where you actually choose the plot line you want to follow. You'll be able to interact with the film you're watching and influence the outcome", he says.

Mr Nalbandian feels that these opportunities for convergence are not restricted to animation and gaming, and there are digital creative opportunities that will come out of a convergence of animation, visual effects, live action and games. He expects these four areas to come together to empower digital artists and producers to carve out brand new creative territory.

Trond Aas, chief executive of computer game company Funcom, agrees with Mr Nalbandian about the future convergence of gaming and animation. "I think you will see games that will have an even stronger storytelling element to them, using techniques from animated movies, and you will probably see more intermediary concepts between gaming and movies. You will have concepts like interactive movies", he says.

However, Mr Aas feels that in spite of this future overlap of animation and gaming, both domains will still continue to maintain separate niches. "The difference between making a game, particularly in a massively multiplayer virtual world, a lot of the focus for us is on the players themselves making up the story. It is about social interaction and how you use the community to create a world and a setting. With a movie, it is more like a book with an author or director telling a story. In the future there will be a need for both because each fulfills very different needs", he says.

The Buiness Times

EU endorses Nokia-backed DVB-H mobile broadcasting standard

The European Commission endorsed a Nokia backed mobile TV standard called DVB-H, saying Europe needed to pick one technology over others and promising to look at ways to mandate its use. Europe's choice of DVB-H, or Digital Video Broadcasting for Handhelds, will likely prevent rival standards, such as Qualcomm Inc's MediaFLO and others developed by Chinese and South Korean manufacturers, from gaining ground in the world's richest market. The European Union has 490 million consumers.

Digital Video Broadcasting for Handhelds, an open standard that can be licensed by anyone, developed by European research institutes, has already lined up support from a group of companies headed by handset maker Nokia. Most other phone and handheld companies are on board, too: Motorola, Philips, Sagem, Sony, Ericsson, Samsung and operators Vodafone, O2 and T-Mobile.

The EU said next year would be crucial in the growth of mobile TV; many people are expected to use their phones to watch the Beijing Olympics and the European Football Championship.

It said choosing one standard would "promote consensus" and stop market fragmentation such as happened in the Betamax versus VHS video wars of the 1980s.

The EU has taken the same tack before. It pushed GSM (the Global System for Mobile communications) for mobile phones, a move that saw Europeans switch to mobiles much faster than people in the US.

Now it is asking EU governments and industry to back DVB-H and its strategy for mobile television in Europe. It said it would come up with draft rules to mandate the use of DVB-H "if necessary and appropriate".

Europe risks losing its competitive edge unless it moves fast, Reding said. South Korea has a mobile TV penetration rate of ten percent while Italy, the EU's most advanced market, has less than one per cent.

Mobile TV is still at an early stage in Europe. Italy boasts half a million users, while Finland only launched commercial services in June. France and Spain plan to do the same later this year. Mobile TV trials are taking place in Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Sweden and the Netherlands.

The EU cited research forecasts of a steep increase in demand in 2009 with the worldwide market reaching •20 billion (US$27.6 billion) in sales in 2015.

The European Broadcasting Union—which represents major national public broadcasters such as Britain's BBC and Germany's ARD and ZDF—said it was too soon to adopt one standard for mobile broadcasting.

"It should be up to businesses to define attractive business models that will entice consumers to opt for the standard they like best", it said.

http://www.iht.com

Radio broadcast programming transmitting aroma!

Finally, a radio broadcast programme "Aromatic Radio", which "transmits" aroma, has been realised. The mechanism of "Aromatic Radio" operates as follows:
• A broadcast posts a programme "aroma recipe" on its website, which blends several types of aromas according to melodies or atmosphere of a radio broadcast programme.
• A listener access the website via a PC and downloads the programme file.
• The listener buys an aroma blender called "aromageur" frrom a telecommunications carrier.
• The listener connects the aroma generator to the PC.
• While the listener hears the radio broadcast programme, the aroma generator works with the programme.

This is the first attempt for broadcasting services to enable the listener to not only listen to music, but also enjoy aromas. This broadcasting service was planned by NTT Communications Corp, who provides the aroma recipe and sells the "aromageur", and Tokyo-based local FM radio station, Tokyo FM Broadcasting Co. The broadcast, in its regular radio broadcast programme *Tapestry*, was launched in October 2006 and has gained good reviews.

Although a listener has to buy the aroma blender or "aromageur" costing US$416, the listener can enjoy a variety of aromas by blending six types of fragant materials. It is expected that since users can enjoy various flavours according to music titles, in addition to individual consumers, new service markets will be created, including those for such business use as CD stores or live events.

New Breeze

New TV technology caters to personal viewing preference

AdapTV, a new technology to be developed by the research unit of NHK, Japan, converts content according to the needs of individual viewers.

The technology enables users to view content in a way that suits their personal preferences. That is, it automatically presents programmes tailored to each viewer, and that means users have no need to perform complex operations to get the presentation they desire.

My TV: Broadcasting service that satisfies every viewer

Your television understands your preferences and recommends programmes that will be of interest to you, or records them for you. It will also provide closely tailored services to individual viewers, such as displaying a warning message like "there will be a scene coming up that might disturb you". AdapTV is also capable of presenting "special programmes" produced just for that viewer, by extracting and editing programmes in a viewer's preferred category.

NHK makes its broadcasting services available to viewers nationwide and wants them to be enjoyable to all viewers. AdapTV will be the way to deliver programmes that satisfy the interests of everybody in the country.

Human-friendly TV: Friendly TV that is just right for the user

The next aim of AdapTV is to create a TV system that is user friendly for everybody. For example, programmes will be available with functions that allow visually impaired persons to enjoy them. These functions will include a supplementary speech function to explain the content of the programme. This function will also be useful for describing difficult words or expressions in simpler vocabulary. Unlike conventional TV, which requires that viewers read a manual to learn how to use it, AdapTV is designed to work automatically with each user.

Viewer Community TV: Newly-emerging communities

The individual viewer profiles are registered, and this extends to creating a community profile for a group of people who have similar hobbies and preferences. This will enable the system to convert content to fit the viewing preferences of a group.

Information exchange over the Internet will allow viewers with similar tastes to share the same viewer profile, perhaps creating a fan club for a particular interest or a new community.

Broadcast Technology

India's Content Code: differences persist on classification

With differences within the Information and Broadcasting Ministry persisting on the subject of classification of news channels and telecast of adult content, the draft Content Code is not expected to be finalized for at least two to three months.

As a result, the finalization of the draft of the Broadcasting Services Regulation Bill is likely to be delayed. However, Ministry sources said that the Code is not part of the Bill and can be issued subsequently after the legislation has been cleared by Parliament.

News broadcasters had sought a separate system of categorization for their programmes and said they cannot be governed by the classification set out in the draft Content Code for Broadcasters as these are more applicable for fiction-based programmes.

The News Broadcasters Association expressed the view that the system of Channel Auditor under the proposed content Code may not work in the case of news channels where speed is of essence.

Though some of the broadcasters feel imposition of a Code amounts to policing and infringement of their freedom, the ministry is clear that the only way the proposed Broadcast Services Regulation Bill can be implemented is through the Content Code.

Stressing that the concept of a regulator for the media was not unique to India and existed in most countries, a senior official said that the regulator would in any case not be a government official and therefore apprehensions of a 'big brother' attitude were baseless.

Broadcasters have objected to the procedure for redressal of complaints among other provisions. The Code as drawn up stipulates a three-step procedure for self-regulation and redressal of complaints alleging violation of the Programme or Advertising Codes. The first forum to hear the complaints would be a Content Auditor at the level of the Programme/Service Providers. In case a complaint is not suitably redressed, then it will go to the next stage—respective Consumers' Complaints Committees set up at the industry-segment level organizations. The third and final stage would be the Broadcast Regulatory Authority of India proposed in the comprehensive Broadcast Bill. *www.indiantelevision.com*

Thailand's National Legislative criticised for repressive new media laws

The Campaign for Media Reform (CMR) in Thailand is demanding that the National Legislative Assembly (NLA) stop passing laws, particularly those governing media affairs, which jeopardise free speech under the pretext of strengthening national security.

Ubonrat Siriyuwasak, head of the media advocate group, said the NLA should leave the enactment of major media-related laws to the next government.

Such legislative power should be the exclusive right of a democratically-elected government as public participation was also necessary in drafting such laws.

Ms Ubonrat said the current political situation, with a military-installed government running the country, does not allow ordinary people to freely monitor the legislative process.

In such a situation, the NLA could do what it pleased and was about to pass, or is in the process of passing, some laws which limit public freedoms and access to information, she said.

A case in point is the Cyber Crime Act, which has already been published in the Royal Gazette and would come into effect on 18 July.

She said this would also permit relevant state officials to prosecute computer users if they were deemed a threat to national security and morality.

Ms Ubonrat said there was a danger that computer users who exchange information or post opinions on websites in opposition to the government could be prosecuted as well. This makes the law look unfair, she said.

While the CMR agreed that a different set of rules was needed for an orderly supervision of cyber media, the issue of national security, which is highly sensitive, could be used as a tool to suppress the people's constitutional rights.

Ms Ubonrat said the government was now pushing for the passage of a number of new media laws, all of which demand punishment for those seen threatening national security.

"The government has put together these draft bills with a hidden agenda. Such bills are designed only to empower state officials and the military to exert total control over media outlets", she claimed. Since the constitution only loosely guarantees media and public freedom, it is the organic laws or acts that would matter in the end, she said. Some of the laws deliberated by the NLA had bypassed public participation.

Ms Ubonrat said the legislation process has gone unchecked because people were confused or too busy trying to make sense of the current political events.

Bangkok Post

Chinese government cracks down on fake news reporting

The Chinese government that it will severely punish journalists and news media that fabricate stories. The combined declaration was made by the three departments that control the media: the Communist Party's Propaganda Department, the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, and the General Administration of Press and Publications. It came after the arrest of Beijing TV journalist Zi Beijia for manufacturing a news report on cardboard steam buns.

On 8 July, domestic and international news organizations aired Zi's report showing a street vendor filling steam buns with a mixture of pork and scrap cardboard soaked in caustic soda.

Beijing TV broadcast an apology for the report ten days later. They said that their freelance reporter, Zi, fabricated the video. The station apologized in its evening news for having aired the piece and said that it did not thoroughly examine its content.

The head of Beijing TV, was publicly reprimanded and the editor-in-chief was given a warning. Seven other people are also under investigation in connection with the story.

The three institutions said that the media must ensure the truthfulness of sources and facts and control the manner of news editing. Editors are not allowed to publish or broadcast pieces that are not verified, reported the state-run People's Daily Online.

In a statement, the All-China Journalists' Association (ACJA) criticized Zi and said that his actions violated journalism ethics and tarnished the image and credibility of the Chinese media.

According to the journalist advocacy group Reports Without Borders, the crackdown on fake news in China was also a reaction to by the foreign media reports that Chinese products were health risks to the consumer. In Panama, almost 100 people died after taking Chinese medicines containing deadly substances, while stories about contaminated seafood, toothpaste and pet food from China have been featured in the foreign press recently.

www.asiamedia.ucla.edu

Bangladesh to open up community radio

Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) and with other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) has been continuing advocacy with the Government for a long time to open up the Community Radio in Bangladesh.

Community Radio movement in Bangladesh is a very promising yet critical stage. Different NGOs civil society groups, journalists, intellectuals and other concerned entities of this country are putting continuous and ardent effort in order to come up with a Community Radio friendly regulatory environment through appropriate government regulations.

Just last year, a National Consultation on Community Radio was jointly organized by MMC, BNNRC, FOCUS, YPSA and VOICE and supported by UNESCO, UNICEF and UNDP- Bangladesh with the goal of identifying course of action on how to proceed for introducing Community Radio in Bangladesh. At the end of that consultation, the participants agreed to put more focused effort on Community Radio piloting and the enactment of the draft Broadcasting Act 2003.

But till now, no pilot project has been commenced in Bangladesh as far as the case of true participatory based Community Radio service is concerned. The member organizations of advocacy group already have the human resources, contents and organizational motivation needed to initiate, manage and sustain any pilot Community Radio project.

Advocacy group is to initiate any Community Radio project addressing the issues related with fulfilling Millennium Development Goals (MDG), World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Action Plan, PRSP and knowledge based Society.

Recently, Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) has taken a strategic campaign programme where the Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed, Hon'ble Chief Adviser of the Non-Party Care Taker Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Barrister Mainul Hosein, Adviser of the Ministry of Information and the Mr Didarul Anower, Secretary of the Ministry of Information were included.

Under the campaign programme, an appeal was made to allow the draft broadcasting policy, side by side with the Government, was requested to give permission for launching some community radio as pilot basis. On the basis of the findings of the pilot project, Government can allow the full pledged community radio in the country for long term.

As a result of the strategic campaign, for the first time, a high level meeting was organized by the Ministry of Information regarding community radio.

Mr Didarul Anowar, Secretary of the Ministry of Information presided over the meeting. Among others 15 high officials of the Ministry including the Director General of Bangladesh Betar (Radio Bangladesh), Principal Information Officer (PIO) and Joint Secretary of Ministry of Information attended the high level meeting.

After an elaborate discussion, a high level committee was formed and the Director General of Bangladesh Betar (Bangladesh Radio) was nominated as the Convener. The committee will submit a concept note, guideline and a regulatory frame (draft) of Community Radio to the Secretary of the Ministry of Information.

BNNRC

Mobile TV a personal broadcast experience

Mobile TV should be seen as a personal broadcast experience for consumers who have come to expect convergence of several different devices into a single unit.

Jawahar Kanjilal, Nokia, said mobile TV was set to become a multimedia experience, giving users the ability to interact with and personalise their own devices.

"Consumers expect good picture and sound quality, value for money, the right selection of channels, and service availability from mobile TV. They expect that they should get mobile TV service wherever they have mobile reception. They also want everything in a single device which should be very simple to use", he said.

Mr Kanjilal also said that mobile TV programming will combine both broadcast content, as well as user-generated content as the consumers will be the ones driving the growth of this medium.

"The immediate next step is to find out what the consumers would like and what they want to watch. There is a lot of ground to be explored in order to tap into the vast potential of this medium", he said at the ABU Digital TV Symposium.

Mr Kanjilal also said that advertising on mobile TV would have to be very engaging and entertaining, and the advertising industry will have to rethink their approach and identify new opportunities available on this new platform.

ABU News

Outdoor advertising reinvent itself

Outdoor advertising (OA) is more than just billboards; street furniture, airport displays, mall displays, taxi advertising, mass transit displays, mobile ads and bus shelters today. To explore and discuss the possibilities and span of this industry, the third edition of Outdoor Advertising Convention 2007 was held in Mumbai, India recently.

The optimism felt at the Convention was that outdoor advertising is finally emerging out of shadows of print and electronic media. This huge industry is evolving, defining and experimenting by the day. The digital technology is tapping this sector too—to change ads faster, find new ways of measuring viewers, and billboards that beam information to mobile phones.

Ajay Kakkar of Reliance Capital said, "OA cannot be clicked away, it would stay and grow on the consumer. That is the advantage of OA". He further added that the placement of outdoor advertising should be as such that the life of the consumer becomes life of advertising. Stating the example of Reliance Capital, with many others, he explained how the yellow line at the metro station was marked as 'safety limit' for the commuter. The idea was to catch the potential customer right at the practical danger spot, It worked wonders for the company", he said.

Striking the balance between creativity and sales, Kakkar continued to say that one-off good execution isn't enough, and that award winning ads getting no sales is no good. At the end of the day, an advertising project must ensure and convert sales for the company and not just make people watch the creative, was his contention.

Sita Lakshmi Narayanswami, Senior Vice President and Network Marketing Head, Zee Network, said that "with the incresing number of opportunities available for outdoor advertising and the run-ins with the regulators in our crowded cities, this was a subject that demanded considerable attention from the industry.

"Consumers are intelligent demanding and loyalty is an obsolete word. Word of mouth is spread through language of short messages and blogs these days. People are flirtatious, fickle minded and are socially aware now. Advertisers must look beyond the traditional way of advertising and redefine the objectives of the consumer", she added.

To have an effective outdoor advertising, she urged advertisers to be surprising, be relevant and to engage the consumer. Explaining that the choice was so vast for these days, she pointed out that it had to be astonishingly different for consumer to even consider a switch.

Impact

Call for tougher transnational curbs on tobacco ads

Tougher measures are needed against transnational tobacco advertising via the Internet and live sporting events, to protect the health of young people, Thai delegates told a World Health Organisation conference.

They were addressing the second session of the Conference of the Parties to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in Bangkok.

Hatai Chitanondh, president of the Health Promotion Institute under the National Health Foundation, Thailand said member countries were urged to strengthen a ban on cross-border commercials. "Having strong measures against tobacco advertising in one country can't curb the growing number of cross-border tobacco ads, which have a big impact on the global population, especially the youngsters", he said. "New international regulations are needed to stop the flow of these ads."

Online advertising was an increasingly popular way for multinational tobacco companies to boost sales. It was subject to fewer controls and had a huge influence in encouraging teenagers to smoke. Dr Hatai said Formula 1 racing alone earned up to US$400 million a year from tobacco advertisements. In a study he made of tobacco advertising from August 1998 to July 1999, cigarette logos appeared on the live broadcast about 40,000 times in at least 53 Asian countries.

About 18 per cent of Thais are smokers, according to the Public Health Ministry, with the number of young and female smokers increasing.

Douglas Bettcher, acting director of the WHO Tobacco Free Initiative, agreed cross-border advertising was a big challenge. However, he believed it was necessary for each country to first strengthen national regulations on tobacco control. In the case of live sports events displaying tobacco commercials, tough legal measures to penalise home-based satellite operators beaming signals of the programme could be one way to deal with the problem, he said.

Bangkok Post

Digital media future of advertising

Anyone who's caught the Dove Evolution ad on YouTube feels compelled to forward it to friends. The ad film, that shows an ordinary looking woman transform into a glamorous model thanks to heavy make-up, strong lights and clever Photoshop tools, drives home the message of unrealistic perceptions of beauty.

This is just one indication of how powerful digital media is becoming in communications space. Advertisers and agencies across the world are today looking at channels like web sites, blogs, social networking sites and mobile phones to influence consumer decisions.

"Consumers are beginning to participate in advertising and communication, becoming part of the creative department", says Robyn Putter, creative head of WPP. "Once you do good work, you have the consumer acting as the evangelist."

Digital media today accounts for eight per cent of global ad spend. In UK, it's as high as seventeen per cent. Over the coming years, it is expected to touch about twenty five per cent . "Consumers spend 20–25 per cent of their time online, so ad spend should follow that and stabilise around that level", says Mark Read, WPP's director. He feels that the introduction of IPTV will throw up a host of opportunities as it will widen base Net users. In India, the digital media spend is currently less that two per cent of total ad spend, but the expectation is that it will be eight to ten per cent by 2010.

"After years of stagnation, advertising expenditure in digital media in 2006 showed a steep growth of over 150 per cent over the previous year", says Ruchira Raina, ED of media house Dentsu Communications, who predicts a 50 per cent CAGR (compound annual growth rate) in ad spend on digital media over the next several years.

Online advertising is interactive and has greater measurability, with hits being constantly monitored and in some cases, conversion rates of hits-to-purchase as well.

Search engines like Google are the biggest driving force of online advertising. With Internet phenomena like social networking sites as well as blogging catching on especially among the youth, ad agencies are coming up with different ways of targeting these channels.

"Advertising on blogging and social networking sites offers an opportunity to match unique keywords for each ad unit and narrow the targeting directly to the theme you want. Better targeting offers higher response to your ads", says Raina.

Although number of cellphone users in India is around 150 million and Internet users are only about 40 million, ad agencies are betting higher on Internet than mobile. "For one, mobile phones are far more personal and 'push SMSes' don't work. There is great potential but one needs to work out models to suit the medium", reasons Read.

Times of India

Tobacco billboard ads ban takes effect in Philippines

A ban on billboard advertising for tobacco products has come into force in the Philippines amid a legal challenge by cigarette manufacturers.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque says the health department has ordered local governments to enforce the ban by pulling down all outdoor advertising of cigarettes.

"While a war against cigarettes is sweeping entire continents to create a tobacco-free world, we cannot be the last nation standing without the political will to take the necessary steps against tobacco advertisements", he said.

The Tobacco Control Act was passed in 2003 but the government chose to enforce it only four years later. It prohibits the posting of leaflets, posters, and similar outdoor advertising materials except inside the premises of "point-of-sale" retail establishments.

It also regulates the packaging, use and sale of tobacco products. Violators face a 5,000-peso (about $126) fine and a prison term of up to a year. Local tobacco manufacturers have filed suit to challenge the definition of what comprises the "premises" of these cigarette retailers. Tobacco is commercially grown in the northern Philippines.

Mr Duque agreed the campaign would be "an uphill battle" due to the strong tobacco lobby in the legislature.

"We at the Department of Health, together with other advocates in the health sector, must stand strong against all pressures from the industry to undermine the existing laws on tobacco control in the country", Mr Duque said.

Government data show smoking is linked to five of the top 10 leading causes of deaths in the Philippines, with up to 35 per cent of the population considered as tobacco users.

Forty per cent of Filipino smokers are adult men while 15 per cent are children aged between 13 and 15 years old.

AFP

PMEB not useful as a measure

Whether you are single, married, young or getting on in years, the chances are, you are what marketing types call a PMEB. This stands for Professionals, Managers, Executives and Businessmen (and women, of course).

Media agencies in Singapore have long used this broad category in measuring the effectiveness of advertising campaigns. The idea is that this group is likely to have more money in their pockets.

However, as the Republic develops into a more sophisticated market, there is a growing call for more precise groupings.

"In terms of market definitions, 'PMEBs' are to business, what 'housewives' are to households", said Mr Kim Walker, president and chief executive of M&C Saatchi Asia. "It may be a convenient means to define a market but it is completely useless when trying to communicate meaningfully with them. Beyond this tidy clustering, there are real people with real needs and real emotions", he said.

Media agencies in Singapore are beginning to recognise the limitations of the PMEB grouping and are taking steps to ensure that it does not become too vague a classification.

"To ensure accuracy, agencies try to define their age group, interest, earning income and lifestyle", said Mr Tay Guan Hin, regional executive creative director of media agency JWT.

He said his company recognises that "understanding the needs and likes of the people belonging to this group will be important to differentiate what kinds of PMEBs clients would like to capture".

The Straits Times (Singapore)

Chinese leaders to receive public relations training

With China's global status growing steadily, the ruling Communist Party is grooming the new generation of Chinese leaders to be media savvy and psychologically fit in the age of globalisation.

Communist Party leaders of the future will be better equipped to face the media, well versed in international affairs and more efficient managers, thanks to an enhanced training programme, a senior official said.

The programme is part of the Communist Party of China's (CPC) three-year focus on "governance capability and global vision" of its promising leaders, Director of the Bureau of senior officials training of the CPC's Organisation Department, Li Peiyuan said.

Officials in some schools are getting considerably "public relations training" to be more media savvy. Unlike in India and other Western nations, Chinese leaders remain inaccessible to the media. The foreign media is rarely granted interviews by the top Chinese leadership.

Cadres will be trained in psychology, too, to help them better cope with stress. The course includes 300 questions to assess their character and personality.

According to the 2006–10 National Cadre Education and Training Plan released earlier this year, the country wants to train 500 provincial-level, 8,800 department-level and about 100,000 county-level oficials every year.

www.china.org.cn

Freedom and the Media in South Asia

The 23-minute video documentary was filmed during the first South Asian World Press Freedom Day seminar in Male, Maldives in May 2007.

It was moderated by AMIC's Secretary-General Dr Indrajit Banerjee, and the panel includes Javed Jabbar, a former Information Minister of Pakistan and founder of the South Asian Media Association; the well-known Indian investigative journalist Aniruddha Bahal of Tehelka.com fame; the publisher of the *Himal* magazine in Nepal, Kunda Dixit, who played a prominent role in the recent Nepalese version of people's power; and Andrew Whitehead, who has covered South Asia for the BBC World Service for over a decade.

Available from AMIC at US$20 or SG$30 excluding postage charges. For order/enquiry, contact angie@amic.org.sg

Freedom and the Media in South Asia

A Panel discussion with Media Experts
Filmed at the
First South Asian World Press Freedom Day event
in Male, Maldives

3rd May 2007

A compendium by
AMIC and Television Maldives

Duration: 23 minutes

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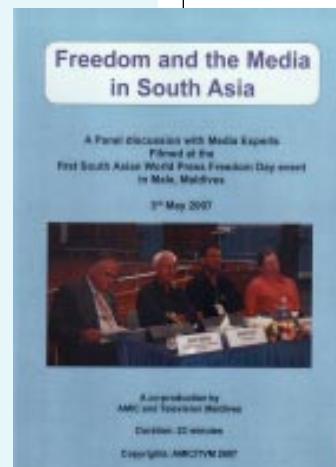
Asia's version of an inconvenient truth

A Bangladeshi man paddles his dinghy, fear etched on his face; the village that has housed generations of his family has been flooded by waters almost 2m high.

He cannot read and is not aware of catch phrases like "save the earth" but he realises the floods, which seem to happen with alarming regularity, are not random incidents.

This scenario is now more fact than fiction if the current climiate changes are anything to go by. To get the point across that Earth's suffering is everyone's problem, Channel NewsAsia (CNA), Singapore, has produced a six-part environmental series *Saving Gaia*, which premieres on 24 July.

Using an old name for the planet—Gaia means Mother Earth and is Greek in origin—as the title of the series underlines the seriousness of this large-scale ecological crisis.

"What we present on the show is not fiction", he said. Ten months in the making, *Saving Gaia* will be narrated by actress Joan Chen. The series examine the adverse effects climate change has had on Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Japan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, China and India.

"In some ways, *Saving Gaia* is our take on *An Inconvenient Truth*", said Woon Tai Ho, managing director of MediaCorp News, referring to former United States Vice-President Al Gore's Oscar-winning documentary. But far from jumping on the "green" bandwagon, Woon said *Saving Gaia* "is a significant milepost in CNA's history. We hope that people will be inspired to do something to save the world". *Today (Singapore)*

Let's make poverty a "copyright free zone"

Nalaka Gunawardene, Director and CEO of TVE Asia Pacific, argues that we all know the power of moving images. Used strategically, moving images can move people to change lifestyles, attitudes and behaviour. Indeed, the right kind of information—whether about microcredit or immunisation—can vastly improve the quality of life, and even save lives that are needlessly lost. Says Nalaka: "Broadcasters need to let go of development related TV content after initial broadcast. They must also allow educational and civil society users greater access to vast visual archives, gathered from all over the world. In this context, I would like to repeat a proposal I first made last year, which I have presented at the UN Headquarters and other forums: Let us make poverty a 'copyrights free zone'".
http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall_readers/message/10338

Long-standing AMIC member honoured

Dr Anju Chaudhary (right), Departrment of Journalism, Howard University, received the Lifetime Achievement Award for her outstanding teaching, research and service from Dr H Patrick Swygert, the President of the University. She is also the AMIC Country Representative, USA.

Man Asian Literary Prize launch

The inaugural Man Asian Literary Prize 2007 sponsored by Man Group plc, a leading global financial services firm based in London, will be awarded in November 2007.

This major new literary prize aims to recognise the best of new Asian literature and to bring it to the attention of the world literary community. It also aims to facilitate publishing and translation of Asian literature in and into English.

The Man Asian Literary Prize is the counterpart of the Man Booker International Literary Prize. The prize is no longer called the Booker since 2005.

Twenty-three Asian authors—half of them from India—have made the longlist for the inaugural Literary Prize and are in the running for the US$10,000. The longlist was chosen from 243 submissions received from across Asia and included submissions from well-established as well as first-time authors, and entries included translated works as well as works originally in English.

"This first year's submissions exceed our expectations both in quantity and breadth", said the chair of the prize, Peter Gordon. "We are very pleased at the reception this inaugural Prize has received throughout the region and to see submissions from almost every country in Asia."
Times of India & books.guardian.co.uk