



Thai Broadcast Journalists Association

Media Reform going

BACKWARD?

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80 1925
2005
80 years for
social democracy





Media Reform going Backward ?

Edited by Sopit Wangvivatana

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Thai Broadcast Journalists Association

Development of The Association

Thai Broadcast Journalists Association (TBJA) was initiated as part of the broadcast reform process, mandated by the 1997 Constitution that will eventually end the state and military monopoly of television and radio frequencies and ensure fair allocation of the frequencies to the public.

Founded on 25 August 2000 by a group of Thai broadcast journalists, senior radio and television station managers and journalists and independent productions houses, the association is to support this reform process and ensure that the broadcast frequencies are freed up and broadcast journalism skills improved.

TBJA is the first independent broadcast organization that advocates freedom of expression and serves the public's right to know.



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OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure a fair and transparent frequency allocation process and to prevent it from being controlled by a minority group of people.
2. To develop skills of broadcast journalists in order to produce high quality programs.
3. To provide a forum where members can meet, discuss and share plans and activities such as seminars, training, sports, etc.

TBJA Board and Members

The board must have 15 members representing radio or television stations in Thailand. They will be elected during an annual meeting and serve a two-year term.

Members must be professional broadcast journalists who work for radio or television stations. They are eligible for participation in seminars, conferences, scholarship, fellowships and other overseas or in-country training.

Contact us.

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Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), Thailand

FES is a German non-profit foundation committed to social democracy. It has operated cooperation in Thailand since 1970s with the focus on promotion of democratic development and the social dimensions of economic development. Since the 1990's, FES has emphasised international dialogue both within Asia and between Asia and Europe, as well as issues related to international crisis prevention.

Current significant issues are:

- social justice and labour
- democratic media reform and human rights education
- gender equality in political representation and labour relations
- international understanding and peace

Means of cooperation are conferences, publications and exchange programs. FES offers an open platform for a constructive and fruitful exchange among social movements, government institutions and politicians in Thailand.



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Some of our counterparts are Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, workers' organisations, Human Rights Commission, media's associations, universities, parliamentarians, etc.

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Preface

*T*he discussions over media reform have been going on for a long time and yet the issue continues to be incomprehensible and confusing to many, even among those in the industry.

It is quite disheartening to hear people ask “what is media reform?” especially if those who ask the question are academics or even journalists who are supposed to have a good grasp of the changes the broadcast industry has been pushing.

It is also disappointing that those who do not fully understand the implications of media reform seem to ignore it, instead of making an effort to learn more about it by discussing it with people who have knowledge of it.

The broadcast media is likewise guilty of failing to educate the public about it. Television and radio stations rarely provide time and space for a discussion of media reform because they are owned by the state and will be directly affected by planned changes in the industry.

Newspapers, on the other hand, seem to have tired of covering what they consider an old issue even though there is still need to fully explain its complexities to the public.



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Given this situation, the people hardly have a venue to monitor the progress of media reform and know about what is happening. It is in this light that this book was published – as a guide for all who want to know everything and anything about media reform.

The Thai Broadcast Journalists Association hopes that this book will be able to explain the milestones in the long drawn out reform process. The association also hopes that the book, in exposing irregularities and the dishonesty that have taken place along the way, would encourage readers to closely monitor the media reform process and prevent it from fading and eventually failing.

Developments have taken place while we were working on this book so new information was added to several articles, among them the latest results of the selection process for the National Broadcasting Commission. If there are any errors, I take the blame.

I would like to thank all guest writers, translators and editors for devoting precious time to contribute to the book. My profound thanks go as well to the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung (FES) for its support for this book, the other endeavors of the Association, and for the campaign for press freedom.

Sopit Wangvivatana
The editor





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