



**The newly completed
International Broadcast Centre**
- Pix by Dandan, BOB

But, in spite of the man-made structures and the new pleasantries, there are things that are seemingly beyond the control of the organisers. And the most threatening is the air quality; the thorny question of pollution. No one can control the weather. We all know that. But give China its due; it is trying valiantly to overcome the laws of natural physics!

When the city is blanketed by particulate matter, as it is so often, the giant coal-fired power stations west of Beijing will be turned down, factories closed, cars removed from the streets, and if that doesn't work they have another weapon.

They are old, from the cold war era, but nevertheless still effective: artillery pieces. Cannons that will fire into the sky iodine chemical shells to artificially create rain.

Sounds bizarre, but true. They will be in the front line in the city's attack on the black carbon, the result of burning fuels in cars, trucks, homes and industries.

There's even a department that the authorities have created to manage pollution. It will be under the control of the Institute for Weather Modification.

Air quality has been an issue which has dogged the organisers ever since they were given the right to host the Games in 2008. Some athletes have already

withdrawn from Beijing over concerns for their health; many others will train in other countries before flying in at the last minute to compete.

The International Energy Agency says that if nothing changes within 25 years, China's pollution will be double that of the United States, the European Union and Japan, COMBINED.

So, don't be surprised if you hear what sounds like thunder on a daily

basis, as the cannons are rolled out, and the rain making shells spear into the nearest clouds!

It would be a great pity if acid rain and noxious pollutants were to pour down on Beijing.

The city is now in thrall of the event. The people, the party, the officials, the world is willing it be what it should be: an Olympic stage, built by the artisans of China to embrace the world as brothers under the five rings: one world, one dream, the Games slogan.

We wish them well. □

The 'Watercube' – venue for swimming events

- Pix by Dandan, BOB



ABU mounts its biggest coverage

ABU Sport has built its biggest Olympic Games platform.

We will be transmitting coverage to at least 26 nations. Sixteen of our members have taken space at the International Broadcast Centre.

The ABU has also built a low-cost facility for members who did not want to invest too much in a unilateral production. It will be known as the 'ABU Common Production Area' and four members will take up space there.

Programming

In partnership with Television New Zealand (TVNZ), the ABU will be transmitting 3,500 hours of pre-recorded and live material covering most heats and qualifying, and all finals.

The Head of Programming and Distribution at the ABU for Beijing 2008, John West of TVNZ, said that the broadcast platform was the most sophisticated they had developed.

"Our partners will receive eight full-time channels, six of which are dedicated to Olympic events. The other two are for news feeds, features and ad hoc requests," Mr West said.

ABU News interview

No one has arguably done more to raise the profile of the Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) technology than **Peter Senger**, who has helmed the DRM Consortium for a decade. ABU News catches up with the recently retired broadcaster as he talks about his past experiences and future plans.

Q: When and how did the idea to set up DRM take off?

PS: We started the DRM Consortium on 3 March 1998, although the idea came about in 1994. There are two major reasons for setting it up. The first is that the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) was asked to develop something that could work on existing long, medium and shortwave broadcasting bands to provide better quality and sound. The other reason is that the transmitter industry was losing business because broadcasters were not ordering new transmitters.

Q: What are the milestones and challenges faced by the DRM Consortium?

PS: One was the technology which was ready after 2003. Then it was tested for two years to ensure that everything worked well. We started marketing it in 2005, but that depended very much on the receivers available. Unfortunately, there were complexities as the people who made the receivers were IT experts and not radio engineers. It took us up to the end of last year to review the receiver technology. Radio receivers made for DRM technology will finally be available in the market this year.

Q: How has the interest in DRM grown over the years?

PS: In Asia, there is quite a lot of short- and medium wave transmissions and these need high investments and powerful stations. To modify them to digital is only possible through simulcast. It takes at least three years to plan and make the investments needed to start digital broadcasts

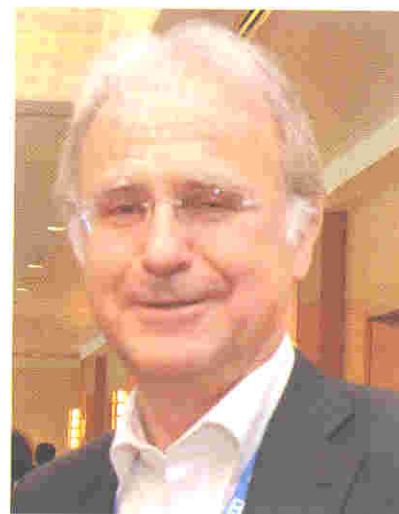
which can be done with DRM. Countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, China and India have already started fielding DRM tests in medium wave. In another three years, there will be more countries, not only in Asia, but in Europe, Africa and Latin America. Once we have many countries switching over from analogue to digital transmissions, the receiver prices will go down.

Q: What are the benefits of switching to DRM?

PS: With the use of this technology, the power consumption of the transmitters will go down by 50 percent, which means the carbon dioxide emission will also go down by 50 percent. So it is not only beneficial for the broadcaster or the network operator, but also for the environment. Also, digital technology makes it possible to have a receiver in many devices, such as radios and mobile phones. The new receivers come with a display so that people tuning in from another country can see the name of the station when they tune in to that particular frequency. Broadcasters can then extend their reach to places where people have never even heard about them before because they are now on the receiver display.

Q: What's in store for DRM over the next five years?

PS: I should talk about DRM+, which is the extension of up to 108MHz for DRM and it goes to the end of the FM band. We have developed the specifications for this already and are conducting tests in Germany. We expect the standardisation of DRM+ to be ready in the summer. And from



then onwards, broadcasters will have a single digital system for long wave, medium wave, shortwave and FM. DRM+ can also be used for video as well as audio. Many countries are waiting for a digital replacement for FM. We will soon be offering a single standard, which also makes it easier for the industry to build receivers.

Q: What will you be doing now?

PS: I will still continue to do something related to DRM. There are now about 80 DRM supporters round the world. They have asked me to become chairman of the supporters group. The beauty of it is that I get to continue the work on DRM on behalf of the standard's supporters. I might also do something for the receiver industry because they also need support. I started my broadcasting career in Rwanda in 1965 with DW-Germany. I spent some time in Portugal, West Indies and Malta before coming back to Germany. The professional career at DW was a dream, and if DRM is realised, then it will be a personal achievement. □

Asian climate change coverage under the spotlight

A new report has highlighted the different ways the print media in various Asia-Pacific countries is covering climate change.

The report by Media Monitors, a regional media intelligence company, focused on climate change reporting in nine Asia-Pacific markets. It was based on an analysis of more than 2,500 media reports in January-February 2008.

The report found that the print media in Malaysia and Singapore were not actively involved in the debate on climate change.

The Malaysian print media reported mostly on what was happening about climate change in other countries, the report said, with little debate on the issue by key stakeholders in Malaysia.

"Like Malaysia, Singaporean media was not actively involved in the climate change debate. Instead they reported on what was occurring overseas, particularly in Japan."

In China, the report said, government officials were the primary source of comment in the media, significantly ahead of any other group.

Indian newspapers devoted a lot of space to a "commercially pragmatic" approach to climate change, including the launch by India of a carbon credits market in January 2008.

In Australia, media coverage was "very focused on what to do, how to do it and when to do it".

Differing opinions

There was strong evidence, the report said, to suggest that pan-Asian publications such as international newspapers did not regard the climate change debate as being as important as national media did.

"Pan-Asian media published the fewest number of articles and, of the 47 articles about climate change, 28 mentioned the topic only in passing."

Overall, the report said, the debate in the Asia-Pacific region was being led by the traditional media, not bloggers.

"Blog discussion was consistently following mainstream media across the reporting period, possibly because the debate has become so significant in the wider public domain."

The report said that in the nine markets analysed, the development of clean and renewable energy was consistently the most advocated solution to climate change concerns.

The report's release coincided with Media Monitors' launch of a new Southeast Asian headquarters, Asia Media Monitors, in Kuala Lumpur. The new office will act as the digital news hub for all media sources the company monitors in Southeast Asia.

Founded as a press clipping agency in Sydney, Australia in 1982, Media Monitors now has over 700 staff in Australia, New Zealand and Asia.

AVN attachment 'valuable'

A valuable experience – that's how Thai journalist Don Pothisoonthorn described his two weeks on attachment to the Asiavision centre in Malaysia.

Don, from MCOT, joined the centre in late April as part of a scheme funded by Asiavision under which journalists from AVN members spend time helping AVN staff coordinate the daily news exchange.

He was the third journalist from MCOT to take part in the scheme. MCOT is one of AVN's most active members, contributing more than 1,600 news items in 2007.

Don described the attachment scheme as valuable for both Asiavision and its 19 members, reinforcing the cooperation among them and helping promote efficiency.

"At MCOT I handle international news and work with Asiavision but I didn't know much about how the AVN centre operates, so I learned a lot," he said.

While at the centre he not only assisted in preparing the daily transmission schedules and scripts, but helped arrange two news flashes from NHK-Japan on the visit by China's President Hu Jintao.

A 12-year veteran of the news business, Don began his career as a print journalist in Bangkok and has been with MCOT for the past four years.



Don Pothisoonthorn

China's CCTV wins prize in Europe



A Nyiregyhaza news crew interviews CCTV's Zhang Channing

China's national broadcaster, CCTV, has won third prize at Reporters Europe Cup, an international news reporting competition held in Hungary in April.

Thirty-four news teams from 25 television stations in 19 countries took part in the contest, held in the eastern town of Nyiregyhaza.

Hungary's Duna TV won, with Hungarian state television, MTV, second. First prize included €2,000 (US\$3,100), second prize €1,000 and third prize €500.

CCTV was honoured for its report on Nyiregyhaza's government-supported

pilot training scheme, the only one in Hungary.

The entries were judged both on their editorial content and their artistic flair, with CCTV's report scoring well on both counts.

The CCTV team of Zhang Lu, Li Na and Bao Hongwei was the first from an Asian broadcaster to take part in the competition, launched in 1994.

CCTV Vice-President Zhang Channing, who attended the contest, said CCTV would show all the winning entries. He described the competition as a good opportunity for reporters from many

countries to communicate and learn from each other.

Competing teams were given two days to produce a two-minute report on topics chosen by the organisers about the town and its surroundings. They were provided with transport and a local translator/fixer.

Jury members

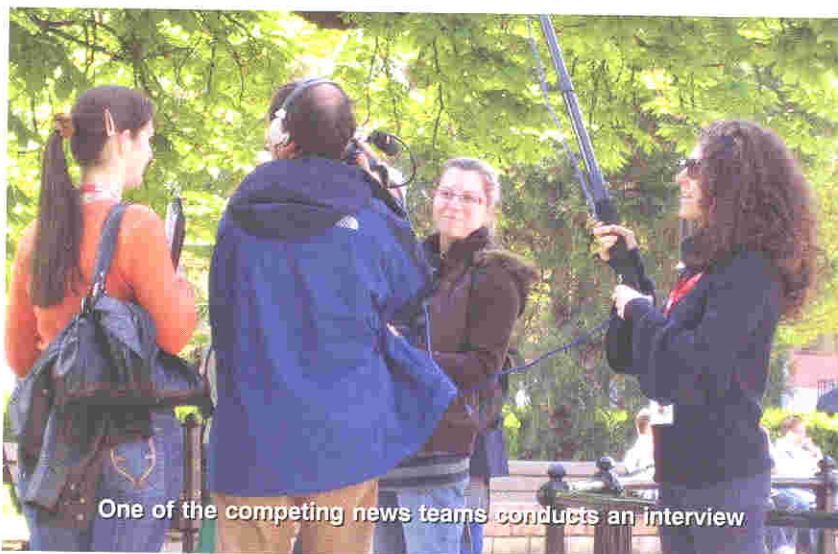
The seven-member jury included Mr Zhang; the Head of Training and Development at the BBC World Service, Jonathan Stoneman; the Deputy Secretary-General of Circom Regional, Catherine Bomeisl; a leading Turkish media figure, Nuri M Çolakoglu; Asiavision's Managing Editor, Alan Williams; and two senior Hungarian journalists.



Attila Bolyaki

The competition is organised by the Foundation for Regions, an organisation set up by Hungarian journalist Attila Bolyaki to promote the country's less prosperous regions.

The event also included a commemoration ceremony in honour of journalists killed while carrying out their work. The function heard that 86 journalists were killed around the world last year – the highest recorded annual figure. □



One of the competing news teams conducts an interview

RTHK-Hong Kong celebrates 80 years of broadcasting

by Chan Man-kuen, Head of Corporate Communications Unit, RTHK



A series of events will also be staged until the end of the year to mark the public service broadcaster's 80th anniversary.

Key highlights

Another key highlight is the commissioning of a radio programme, a TV drama and a documentary series featuring the growth of the Hong Kong broadcasting industry, which will be launched together with a book giving a full account of RTHK's history.

RTHK's programming and website is reported to have been well received by the overseas Chinese community. The broadcaster has also established a link with Radio Rediffusion in Singapore for the relay of cultural and shows and programmes for the elderly in the country.

The move has broadened the station's reach to the Chinese community in Singapore and serves as a good meeting point for programme and cultural exchanges between both countries. □

Radio Television Hong Kong turns 80 this year, having grown from strength to strength since broadcasting was first introduced in the Special Administrative Region of China in 1928.

Starting out as a purely English language broadcaster, RTHK has established itself as a public service broadcaster with radio, television and online programmes in Cantonese, English and Putonghua languages over the years.

"Over the years, RTHK has established its tradition and history, and obtained the confidence and support of the public. With the approach of our 80th anniversary, we hope to build a brighter future for the broadcasting industry in the digital era with the support and encouragement of our audiences," said Gracie Foo, RTHK's Acting Director of Broadcasting.

To celebrate its anniversary in late June, RTHK has set up a website, www.rthk.org.hk/RTHK80, to share with Hong Kong citizens and the overseas Chinese community its vast reserve of video and audio programming and to open a platform for members of the public to share their views about the broadcaster.



Veteran broadcasters Chung Wai Ming (left) and Uncle Ray (right) were presented with souvenirs by Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Frederick Ma

AVN covers China-Japan summit

When China's President Hu Jintao visited Japan in May, NHK spared no effort in covering the event for Asiavision (AVN).

In addition to full coverage in both of Asiavision's daily feeds, Japan's public broadcaster provided two news flashes, both containing live coverage.

These included a 45-minute live feed of a speech the China leader made at Tokyo's Waseda University, in which he vowed that his country would not engage in any arms race.

NHK also provided AVN with live coverage of his joint press conference with Japan's Prime Minister, Yasuo Fukuda, at which the two leaders pledged to cooperate for peace and development around the world.

Mr Hu's visit was only the second by a Chinese head of state to Tokyo and was seen as a determined effort to launch a new era of partnership between the two countries.

The Chinese leader also attended a banquet given in his honour by Emperor Akihito and met four former Japanese

prime ministers, with NHK covering both events for AVN.

China's national broadcaster, CCTV, also covered the visit for AVN, ensuring members of the daily news exchange were well served with coverage of this major regional news story.

CCTV was also quick to respond when a massive earthquake hit central China on 12 May, killing tens of thousands. It provided full coverage for that day's Asiavision feed, a news flash the next day and continuing coverage in the days that followed. □



Screenshots of CCTV's coverage of the earthquake which hit central China on 12 May

Top broadcaster Spencer Moore dies aged 84

A leading figure in world broadcasting for many years, Spencer Moore, has died in Ottawa, Canada, at the age of 84.

A longtime executive of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Mr Moore was the founding Secretary General of the North American Broadcasters Association (NABA) in the 1970s and held the post for more than 10 years.

He died in Ottawa on 1 May after a short illness.

Mr Moore played an important part in establishing the World Broadcasting Unions (WBU), the group that brings together all the regional broadcasting unions including the ABU.

After stepping down as NABA's Secretary General, Mr Moore continued as a consultant to NABA and the WBU

for several years. He was known to many ABU members through his work with the WBU International Satellite Operations Group, WBU-ISOG.

He was also a champion of press freedom around the world, campaigning for the cause until shortly before his death.

The former ABU Secretary-General, Hugh Leonard, who worked with Mr Moore for many years, expressed sadness at his death. "He was indeed a man of great energy and enthusiasm for life. Spencer was also a very warm and caring person and a good friend to all who knew him," he said.

NABA's Secretary General, Dave Baylor, described Mr Moore as a consummate gentleman and a human dynamo, always on the move. "Our industry has lost a unique and memorable man," he said. □

Macau's TDM joins Asiavision

Macau's public broadcaster, Teledifusao de Macau, SA (TDM), has joined the ABU's daily news exchange, Asiavision.

TDM's admission, which took effect on 1 May, brought Asiavision's membership to 19, the highest in its 24-year history.

A member of the ABU since 1983, TDM has two TV and two radio channels broadcasting in Chinese and Portuguese.

Its terrestrial TV and FM radio broadcasts cover the entire territory, a

Special Administrative Region of China with a population of about 450,000.

TDM is the third Asiavision member in China, after the national broadcaster, CCTV, and Hong Kong's TVB.

Asiavision members exchange about 10,000 news items a year. The news exchange has two daily satellite feeds as well as news flashes for breaking stories.

Asiavision is a non-profit activity and has no commercial aims. Its only purpose is to promote the free exchange of news among Asian broadcasters. □

RTB-Brunei set to launch HDTV

Radio Television Brunei plans to introduce High Definition Television (HDTV) soon and to broadcast the opening and closing ceremonies of the Beijing Olympics in high definition.

RTB has been carrying out trials using a new 100W transmitter with an HD channel at its Subok earth station near the capital, Bandar Seri Begawan.

A new 5kW transmitter will be installed by August to transmit RTB's SD (Standard Definition) and HD channels. The transmitter will also be used to launch a DVB-H (Digital Video Broadcasting-Handheld) trial.

The broadcaster has also built an HD studio in the town of Kuala Belait in

the west of the country. It should be operational by the end of July, once all the necessary equipment has been delivered.

Meanwhile, RTB's production and engineering departments will make the long-awaited move shortly to the station's new, fully digital complex at Sungai Akar, just outside the capital.

The other departments will move to the complex over the next two to three years. RTB has a total staff of about 1,200.

Brunei and other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations have chosen the DVB-T (Digital Video Broadcasting-Terrestrial) standard for their digital TV services. □

Tragedy coverage wins AVN awards

TVB-Hong Kong and SLRC-Sri Lanka are the latest winners of the monthly Asiavision Award for outstanding news coverage, with TVB winning in March and SLRC in April.

TVB provided comprehensive coverage for over a week in the search by Hong Kong authorities for the crew of a Ukrainian tugboat which sank after colliding with a bulk carrier off Lantau Island.

The incident occurred on the night of 22 March and Asiavision members were provided with visuals from the day it happened to the day the tugboat was salvaged.

Hong Kong authorities managed to recover the bodies of three of the 18 missing crewmen.

SLRC was quick in offering Asiavision members a newflash on a bomb blast that killed a Sri Lankan cabinet minister on 6 April.

Apart from providing some of the earliest visuals of the bomb attack, SLRC also followed up with updates on the incident.

Sri Lankan minister Jeyaraj Fernandopulle, 55, was among the 13 people killed in the morning blast which occurred before the commencement of a sport event in Waliweriya in the island's Western Province. □

Dubai keeps growing as broadcasting centre

Seventy broadcasters delivering more than 160 channels now operate in Dubai, an international broadcasting conference in the emirate has been told.

The broadcasters are based in the Dubai Media City and Dubai Studio City complexes in a tax-free zone established in 2001 and continuing to expand.



Jamal Al Sharif
gave the keynote address

The Director of Dubai Studio City, Jamal Al Sharif, gave the figure in a keynote address at the opening of the Cabsat 2008 Broadcasting Conference.

The two-day conference was held as part of the Cabsat 2008 exhibition, the Middle East's largest electronic media and satellite communications show. The ABU was the conference's co-organiser.

Mr Jamal said the Middle East, which had only just over 20 free-to-air stations some 15 years ago, today boasted 263 free-to-air stations, and over 100 pay-TV



Visitors walking in a well-landscaped area of Dubai Studio City

channels. Experts were predicting as many as 500 channels in the Arab world by the end of 2008, he said.

"Many factors such as technological advancements, production techniques, market and social forces have acted as catalyst for the current dynamics. In particular, population size and ethnic composition remain critical factors for the number of channels that can be supported by a given market."

The Gulf region, with its sizeable minority groups, thanks to the swelling expatriate community, would continue to support a greater number of channels than a similar size market with a homogeneous population, he said.

Broadcasters or news agencies with regional offices in Dubai Media City

include BBC World, CNN, Bloomberg, Voice of America, Geo TV, APTN and Reuters.

ABU Technical Director, Sharad Sadhu, told the conference that audiences in West Asia were seeking more choices in content and the way it was delivered. It was essential that existing broadcasters reinvented themselves and were ready to face the future, he said.

"The broadcasting industry in the region is currently at a critical juncture. As the industry is expanding fast, particularly in West Asia, entrepreneurs from other industries find it quite attractive to invest in. The entry of such new players puts considerable pressure on the existing broadcasters and production houses."

The organisers of the three-day Cabsat exhibition, the Dubai World Trade Centre, said the demand for exhibitor space was up 30 percent from last year, reflecting a massive growth in the region's broadcasting industry. More than 650 exhibitors took part this year, including major broadcasting industry players. □



Cabsat participants tour Dubai Studio City