



Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union

NHK to host disaster meeting

In the wake of Asia's tsunami disaster, Japan's public broadcaster, NHK, is to hold an emergency workshop on natural disasters for broadcasters from around the region.

The workshop, to be held with the active support of the ABU, was being planned as this issue went to press. It is likely to be held in Tokyo in February or March.

The focus will be on evaluating the role that broadcasters can play in relaying early warnings so that casualties from natural disasters can be minimised.

It is hoped that the workshop will receive a progress report from the taskforce established by the US, Japan, Australia and India to examine the feasibility of replicating the Pacific Ocean tsunami early warning system in the Indian Ocean region.

Determining how broadcasters can link into such a warning system to enable them to deliver timely messages to their audiences will be a key objective of the workshop.

ABU broadcasters in the worst affected countries will also be invited to



A man looks at the wreckage of his property in the southwestern Sri Lankan coastal town of Galle - photo by Jimin Lai, AFP

share their experiences in covering the disaster and the difficulties they faced.

NHK, which has considerable expertise in covering earthquakes, tsunamis and other natural calamities, will in turn share its own ideas and advanced techniques for covering disasters.

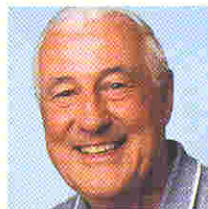
For updated details on the workshop, please see the ABU website: www.abu.org.my

The national broadcasters of the four worst hit countries – Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand – are all members of the ABU's satellite daily news exchange, Asiavision. They provided extensive coverage from the moment the disaster struck on 26 December (*see story on page 3*).

As the world continues to count the cost of the tragedy, the ABU broadcasters covering it have been facing up to sorrows of their own.

(cont'd on page 3)

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(from page 1)

Ten staff members of TVRI-Indonesia based in Banda Aceh, the capital of Aceh province, were missing and feared dead. The province was devastated by the tsunami, with up to 100,000 people killed.

About 100 TVRI families lost their homes or were badly affected, and TVRI transmitters, studios and other equipment were severely damaged. Meanwhile, about 2,000 people who lost their homes took refuge in a park in the TVRI complex, where TVRI staff helped care for them.

In Sri Lanka, an SLRC member of staff was among more than 1,000 people killed when the tsunami devoured a train near the southern city of Galle.

An SLRC outside broadcast crew in the nearby town of Matara were luckier. Covering an unrelated story, they were trapped in their hotel when the tsunami struck but were later rescued and began covering the tragedy.



A scene of utter devastation in Aceh, Indonesia - AFP Photo

SLRC itself mounted a big relief operation for victims of the disaster. After on-air appeals brought in big donations, the national broadcaster sent more than 200 lorry loads of food, clothing and medicine to badly hit areas in the island's north, east and south in less than 72 hours. It also sent medical teams to many affected areas.

"A large number of volunteers worked round the clock with the staff of the SLRC to make this possible," its Director-General, Nishanta Ranatunga, said.

DDI-India reported no staff casualties but severe damage to TV transmitters on Car Nicobar, the northernmost of the Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal. □

Covering nature's horror

When the tsunamis struck Asia on 26 December, Asiavision members quickly swung into action to provide full coverage of the terrifying events for the news exchange.

With India, Sri Lanka and Thailand among the countries worst hit, the AVN transmission on December 26 included extensive footage from DDI, SLRC and MCOT.

SLRC followed this up with a news flash later in the day, as the death toll continued to mount.

The next day, with Asia reeling at the extent of the disaster, the AVN feed again contained detailed coverage from DDI, SLRC and MCOT. RTM-Malaysia sent graphic coverage too, while CCTV-China, NHK-Japan and Channel NewsAsia-Singapore provided related coverage.

Shortly afterwards, TVRI-Indonesia sent a news flash on the devastation in north Sumatra – the region closest to the epicentre of the earthquake that caused the huge waves.

Asiavision's coverage of the aftermath has continued every day since, demonstrating the dedication and professionalism of Asia's national broadcasters at a time of shared grief and horror. □



DDI



RTM



MCOT

Broadcasting experts join ABU

The ABU has begun an ambitious programme to expand its range of activities by making direct use of the expertise of its members.

At the heart of the programme is a secondment scheme under which experts from member organisations spend a year at the Secretariat, helping out on key projects.

The experts' home organisations continue to pay their salaries during their secondment, with the ABU meeting some of their other expenses.

First to take part in the scheme is KBS-Republic of Korea, which has sent two senior staff to the Secretariat in Kuala Lumpur for a year each.

An engineer, Woo-Young Lee, has joined the ABU Technical Department, reporting to its Director, Wayne Heads. He will assist the department to increase the ABU's services to members on digital TV development.

Young Nah, a programme producer, is working with the International Development Projects Officer, Craig Hobbs, and will manage several new development projects during the year.

Before his secondment, Mr Lee was Deputy Manager, Radio Station Management, in KBS's Department of Technical Management. He holds a master's degree in electrical electronic engineering and has worked for KBS since 1982.

Mr Nah worked most recently in KBS' Cultural Programmes Department. He has been with the Korean national broadcaster since 1997 and has a master's degree in design for interactive media.

"We are very grateful to KBS for being the first member to second



Woo-Young Lee (left) and Young Nah

expert staff to the ABU," the Secretary-General, David Astley, said.

"This will enable the ABU to undertake more activities in 2005 than would otherwise have been the case, and also expand the expertise available within the Secretariat to carry out services to members.

"Whilst the secondment scheme is clearly to the benefit of the ABU and its members, we hope that the secondees themselves, and their organisations, will benefit from a year spent at the Secretariat.

International exposure

"We believe that their secondments will give them good exposure to what is happening on the international broadcasting scene, and provide an opportunity to gain industry knowledge that may be more difficult to acquire in their home organisations.

The ABU will be seeking staff to fill two other positions in the Secretariat through secondments over the next six months.

One position will be for an additional engineer to look after the technical requirements of the ABU's satellite news exchange, Asiavision, and also to assist the Technical Department to evaluate proposals for a new multi-media exchange platform.

In addition, there is a need for someone in the sports area. Mr Astley said it was hoped one of the ABU's members could provide an assistant for the Head of Sports, John Barton.

This is an area in which we found the ABU was definitely understaffed in the lead-up to the Athens Olympics Games. With several other major international sports events such as the Doha Asian Games on the horizon, this is an area in which we need more resources," Mr Astley said.

"A secondment to the Sports Department could provide valuable experience to a young, up-and-coming sports producer who needs to gain exposure to international negotiations for broadcasting rights and the arrangement of the coverage and distribution of sports events." □

Arab broadcasters urged to broaden content exchanges

A live telecast of a professional discussion on the dialogue of civilisations was a special feature of this year's General Assembly of the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) which was held in Algiers in December.

The professional discussion was staged in two parts with representatives of international broadcasting organisations contributing to the second debate which focused on the role of broadcasters and broadcasting unions in encouraging more dialogue between different cultures.

The ABU's Secretary-General, David Astley, was a speaker. He said that most Asians outside the Islamic countries in the region knew little about the Arab world.

Rich Arab culture

"They see news reports about the war in Iraq, the Palestinian conflict, the hunt for Osama bin Laden, and the bombings in Saudi Arabia, but they rarely see anything about the way of life in the peaceful Arab nations, or about the rich Arab culture," he said.

"It is therefore understandable why many in the Asia-Pacific see the Arab world as a region of conflict, and one that has an association with terrorism and religious extremism".

Mr Astley said broadcasters could play a valuable role in correcting misconceptions about other cultures through the exchange of programme content, aside from news.

"News is not a good platform for promoting inter-cultural understanding because it is mostly about the things that are going wrong in our world.



The opening of the ASBU General Assembly

"We need to see more content about interesting people in different countries, about their achievements, about their cultures, and present these stories in ways that make compelling television viewing or radio listening and thus stimulate interest in how different civilisations live."



Abdelhafidh Harguem

The ASBU Secretary-General, Abdelhafidh Harguem, agreed with these views and said that broadcasters in the Arab countries needed to broaden their content exchanges with broadcasters outside of the Arab states.

He noted that many thousands of hours of Arabic programming was exchanged each year between the members of ASBU, but only a very

small proportion of this was ever seen outside of the Arab world.

He said that if this could be expanded then broadcasters would be promoting better cultural understanding between nations, and thus contributing in a tangible way to a productive dialogue between civilisations.

Other speakers contributing to the professional discussion were the Secretary-General of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), Jean Reveillon; the Director General of the Asia-Pacific Institute of Broadcasting Development (AIBD), Javad Mottaghi; and the Secretary-General of the Permanent Conference of Mediterranean Audio-Visual Operators (COPEAM), Alessandra Paradisi.

The ASBU General Assembly elected a new President, Hamraoui Habib Chawki, the Director General of Algerian Television, and paid tribute to the achievements of the outgoing President, Hassan Hamed, the Chairman and CEO of the Egyptian TV & Radio Union (ERTU).

The 2004 General Assembly was hosted by Algerian Television and attended by the Algerian Minister for Communications, Dr Boudjemaa Haichour.

The 2005 General Assembly will be held in Tunis. □

Broadcasters' treaty one step closer

A diplomatic conference on a Broadcasters' Treaty is one step closer after a tough meeting of the WIPO Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR) in Geneva on 17-19 November.

A diplomatic conference is the final step in developing a new international treaty.

The Chairman of the 12th Standing Committee, Jukka Liedes of Finland, said that progress in the SCCR session was quite promising, as member states' positions showed increased flexibility and a will to move forward towards the formal treaty negotiation process.

Regional meetings

Consultation meetings will be held over the next few months in Geneva and in regions where requested by member states.

The Chairman of the Standing Committee will prepare a second revised version of the consolidated text of the treaty. A working paper on alternative non-mandatory solutions on the protec-

tion of webcasting organisations will also be prepared to accompany the second revised version of the consolidated text.

The working paper will address whether and how protection should extend to webcasters, entities that transmit over the Internet either directly or as an adjunct to traditional broadcasting activities.

Majority support

While the delegates of India, Iran, Brazil, Argentina and Egypt raised certain procedural objections, an overwhelming majority showed support for the chairman's conclusions which included the holding of regional consultation meetings.

"The next session of the Standing Committee will take into account the progress made in the regional consultations, paving the way for the adoption of a new treaty," said Rita Hayes, the WIPO Deputy Director General who oversees its work in the copyright field.

"Most member states are confident that differences on key issues can be



Maloli Manalastas

narrowed in the final negotiating process," she said.

The chairperson of the ABU Copyright Committee, Maloli Manalastas, said that the progress made had been encouraging but it was important for developing countries to let their voices be heard and to indicate their support for the regional consultations leading towards a diplomatic conference.

Essential role

"In many developing countries, broadcasters are deemed as motors of social and economic development and play an essential role in making available news, sports, entertainment and comment on social, cultural and political issues," she said.

"In order for broadcasters to continue performing this important role, the 43-year-old rights of broadcasters at the international level must be upgraded".

The Broadcasters' Treaty has been the subject of 12 meetings since 1998, and the latest meeting followed the recommendation of the General Assembly of WIPO that the Standing Committee should move swiftly towards the convening of a diplomatic conference. □



A WIPO meeting in session in Geneva

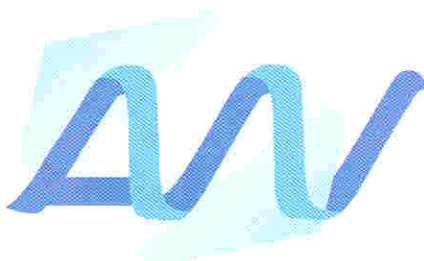
AVN prepares for second feed

The stage is set for Asiavision to launch a second daily feed early in 2005 – this time for at least a year.

The success of a month-long AVN-2 trial, a major event in Asiavision's 21-year history, prompted the News Group to cash in on the optimism and go for a longer trial period.

The group, which sets policy for the news exchange, decided to try out a second feed for a year. During the year, the group will review the feed and decide whether to make it a permanent feature of AVN daily life.

The ambitious project calls for detailed preparations both at the AVN centre and at every individual



member's end, to achieve the desired target.

The centre, which will soon shift to new, larger offices in the Radio Television Malaysia complex, is in the process of bolstering its staff strength to cater exclusively for the second feed.

More crucial is the right response by members, upon whose commitment rests the success of this exciting new

chapter in Asiavision's life.

Same-day coverage made up nearly 90 percent of the content of the month-long trial feed in August 2003. Members hold the key to carrying those impressive statistics over into the 12-month feed.

Feedback from AVN members and affiliates after the trial showed a strong preference for continuing a second feed. If the year-long second feed is as successful, it will be a real breakthrough for AVN after more than two decades of international news exchange.

The existing daily feed is from 0830 to 0900 GMT on AsiaSat 2. The second feed will be from 1215 to 1230 GMT on the same satellite. ▣

IRIB journalist enjoys AVN stint

Putting names to faces was one of the pleasures for **Alireza Mohammadzadeh** when he spent a month on attachment to the Asiavision centre in Kuala Lumpur.

As a member of the news exchange department at IRIB-Iran, Alireza had worked closely – from a distance – with Asiavision's small team of news coordinators. During November-December 2004, he became part of that team.

He was the fourth journalist from an AVN member to spend time at the centre since the attachment scheme resumed in March.

"It was a very useful experience," Alireza said.

"Among the key things I learned were how to prepare the daily

transmission schedules and edit the list of offers that we send out members each day."

Working against the clock to compile the list of members' offers, he quickly came to appreciate the importance of members submitting the details of their offers promptly each day.

"In winter, Tehran is four-and-a-half hours behind Malaysia. We begin work at IRIB at 7am but this is already late morning in Kuala Lumpur, so we have to work quickly."

The AVN attachment scheme originally ran from 1991 to 1999. The ABU News Group, which sets policy for the news exchange, reintroduced it to strengthen the links between the AVN centre and the newsrooms of member broadcasters.

Two young journalists from MCOT-Thailand and one from RTB-Brunei



Alireza Mohammadzadeh

spent time at the centre earlier in the year.

A father of two, Alireza holds a masters' degree in political science from Imam Sadegh University in Tehran. This was his first visit to Malaysia.

"Kuala Lumpur was very interesting for me," he said. "Everything was new. I enjoyed my stay here very much." ▣

Covering ethnic issues better



Vilamoura...venue for the meeting

Broadcasters need to attract more journalists from minority ethnic groups – not because it's politically correct but because it's essential for connecting with all sections of the audience.

This was one of the points made during a lively session on ethnic diversity at a meeting of the European Broadcasting Union's News Group in Vilamoura, Portugal, in November.

The meeting, which brought together senior broadcast journalists from Europe and beyond, looked at how broadcasters can best meet the needs of minority groups within their audiences in an era of rapid change.

There was widespread agreement that broadcasters need to do more to reflect the views of ethnic minorities in their daily news coverage. How to do this sparked a spirited debate.

A participant from Dutch national TV, NOS, described how the broadcaster had

set up a multicultural news desk to find stories in the bigger cities that were of interest to young people from ethnic backgrounds.

The aim was to overcome a feeling among some people that the mainstream media did not represent them properly.

She noted, though, that this did not satisfy everybody. Some people from ethnic backgrounds simply wanted to be approached as Dutch rather than as representatives of a minority group.

Diversity desk

Belgium's public broadcaster, VRT, said it had established a "diversity desk" to help its journalists reach out to ethnic minorities and groups such as senior citizens and people with disabilities.

The desk's responsibilities included maintaining a database of expert contacts from within ethnic communities, and providing training on diversity for journalists.

One participant said some journalists preferred to use their own contacts. To overcome this, it was useful to arrange meetings between journalists and experts within minority groups.

As one delegate noted, networking was essential. Journalists should not get in touch with contacts in ethnic communities only when they needed them; they should stay in touch regularly.

Experts from these groups should also be approached to discuss "mainstream" issues such as law and the economy rather than simply being asked to comment on ethnic matters, the meeting heard.

There was consensus on the importance of hiring journalists from among minority groups but many felt the issue needed to be handled sensitively.

Don't expect people from ethnic backgrounds to be grateful for getting a job, one participant said. Accept that they will broaden your news coverage and have a lot to offer.

Communicate openly about the need to hire more journalists from minority groups, another advised. This would help reduce possible unhappiness among journalists from a mainstream background.

Some participants felt that having targets for hiring more journalists from ethnic backgrounds was better than imposing fixed quotas. Merit should always be the key factor.

A French journalist noted that it was forbidden in France to state one's religion or race on any official application form or document. All French broadcasters could do was try to recruit the best people coming out of universities regardless of race or background.

A Swedish journalist felt that people from immigrant groups did not always enjoy the same educational opportunities as others, and special efforts were needed to recruit them.

Other points of advice offered:

- Take care to pronounce ethnic names properly in your news bulletins. People will appreciate this.
- Make sure stories on immigrant groups are not always negative. There's a need to look beyond issues such as crime and the pressure on health services.
- Heads of news should lead the way in expanding coverage of ethnic issues rather than leaving it to less senior staff.
- Don't show footage of mosques when talking about terrorism – this could create an unfair link in people's minds.

As a Dutch journalist noted, nine percent of the country's population was from an ethnic background. Broadcasters who failed to address the issues of interest to them were not doing their job properly. □

Globalisation threatening the success of football in Asia

Asian football was under threat by globalisation, the President of the Asian Football Confederation, Mr Mohammed bin Hamman, told Soccerex.

"It is an issue that needs to be addressed by FIFA and government bodies so that football development was balanced," Mr bin Hamman told the delegates.

"We must give the fan the right to follow their local team on television."

The Soccerex conference took place in Dubai on 29-30 November.

Mr bin Hamman said the growing success of European leagues especially the English Premier League on Asian satellite platforms had dampened interest in the local product.

"The future of football in our region is about achieving a successful

TV platform for all members of the AFC."

Football in Asia had more potential than anywhere else in the world because of the sheer size of its populations.

Future projects

He said that as the AFC moved to the end of its jubilee celebrations it was time to carefully examine future projects so that they could keep providing valuable resources to its 45 members.

"Our vast human resources in Asia must be fully equipped with professional skills.

"The AFC is at the forefront of marketing and communications programmes where we will be able to develop a business environment to assist our members, Mr bin Hamman said. □



The Soccerex conference

Heard at NewsXchange

"What we want from the Arab media is ethics and credibility. Most are moving in that direction."

— **King Abdullah** of Jordan, in a keynote address

"They treat journalists with the same dignity and respect as they do any other non-combatant out there."

— **Bryan Whitman**,
US Assistant Defence Secretary,
on the attitude of the US armed forces
to journalists covering the conflict in Iraq

"They were very angry about a lot of the coverage."

— Australian journalist **John Martinkus**, on the gunmen who held him hostage for 20 hours in Iraq

"I had bad dreams."

— NBC video editor **Brian Donald**, on watching footage from Iraq; some of which was too violent to put to air

"Talk to your mates, talk to your managers. It's okay to get help."

— **Mark Brayne**, Director of the Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma, on how journalists can overcome the trauma of covering conflicts.

"It's not possible to go into Iraq any longer without proper security."

— **Chris Cramer**, CNN

NewsXchange 2004:

HDTV: "Ideal for news coverage"



Kei Yoshida of NHK addresses the conference

High definition television is a valuable tool for journalism, an international conference of broadcasters has been told.

Kei Yoshida, a news director at Japan's national broadcaster, NHK, said HDTV was ideal not only for grabbing a moment of history in high quality but for preserving it for the future in high quality digital data storage.

Speaking at the annual NewsXchange conference in Vilamoura, Portugal, he said that by capturing the atmosphere and the facial expressions of people in the news, HDTV made news reporting more powerful.

"It pulls people into the reality that journalists face on the site."

Mr Yoshida said high definition and standard definition footage could be mixed in news bulletins.

This meant broadcasters could upgrade little by little while continuing

to use standard definition for present coverage.

One change with HDTV news coverage was the way it was filmed and edited, he said. Because the picture quality was so much better, editors used more medium and long shots, and held a picture on screen for longer without cutting it.

Cost effective

Mr Yoshida predicted HDTV news coverage would become cost effective "in the very near future", using the latest technologies.

NHK is a world leader in the development of HDTV. Since 2000 it has established an HD network around the world to carry pictures to Japan for its news bulletins and other programmes.

It has used HD to cover such events as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the recent US presidential election. □

Media has key peace role, says Jordan's king

The media should help world leaders "keep their eye on the prize" in the quest for peace, Jordan's King Abdullah has told an international gathering of journalists.

"We human beings have an urgent need to understand each other better," he told the annual NewsXchange conference in Vilamoura, Portugal, in a live satellite link up from Amman.

"You as the media have the ability to bring us all together."

At the same time, the king urged the media not to give publicity to extremist groups.

"Extremists don't seek dialogue, they seek a platform and exposure. Responsible journalists deny it to them."

He praised the Arab media in general for its coverage of the Middle East, saying its role in recent years had

been a "tremendously positive" one.

However, some elements had not always been constructive, he said, noting that his government had temporarily closed down the Al Jazeera channel's operations in Jordan in the past because of what he called its inflammatory reporting.

"But this doesn't last long because we do believe in freedom of the press.

"What we want from the Arab media is ethics and credibility. Most are moving in that direction."

King Abdullah paid tribute to journalists killed while reporting in areas of conflict. "The greatest honour we can pay them is to continue to promote peace," he said.

The two-day NewsXchange conference brought together more than 300 journalists and opinion makers. It included a session on the role of the Arab media. □



Participants listen as King Abdullah speaks

"We didn't want to say later in the night, 'We got it wrong.'"

– **Wolf Blitzer**, CNN, on the cautious network coverage of vote-counting in the US presidential election

"I appreciate the coverage we are receiving because at home this coverage is non-existent."

– **Zimbabwe opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai**, on foreign coverage of the country

"For the past two to three years it's been increasingly difficult to cover Zimbabwe but we still endeavour to cover it wherever possible."

– **Nigel Baker**, APTN

"One of the problems of 24-hour news is that most of the people who watch it are other journalists."

– **Jon Snow**, ITN

"(It is) the gold standard of television journalism."

– **French broadcast journalist Christine Ockrent**, on the BBC

"Communications run the world today – I truly believe that."

– **UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy**

"I would wish for a clearer sense of priority from the press."

– **Mia Farrow**, UNICEF goodwill ambassador, on the need for more coverage of humanitarian issues

Hutton Inquiry 'good for BBC in long term'

The outcome of the Hutton Inquiry into the BBC's coverage of events surrounding the war in Iraq will prove to be a good thing for the BBC in the long run, a top official of the corporation has told an international conference in Macau.

Simon Milner, the BBC Secretary, said the outcome of the inquiry had been a disaster for the BBC in the short term, but that there would be a number of long term benefits.

Mr Milner was addressing a conference of Public Broadcasters International (PBI) on 28 October. PBI brings together more than 20 leading public broadcasters from around the world.

The Hutton Inquiry ruled that the BBC's coverage of a British government dossier on Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction had been faulty in several respects. The ruling led to the resignation of the BBC's Chairman, Gavyn Davies, and Director-General, Greg Dyke.



Historic Macau was the venue for this year's PBI conference

Mr Milner said Lord Hutton's failure to criticise anyone in government while finding all the key protagonists in the BBC guilty had been astounding.

"It's fair to say that most observers of the evidence presented to Lord Hutton felt he had seriously misjudged events and that his report was deeply unbalanced," he said.

But the BBC had accepted that the decision was final and had acted on it. It had re-examined some of its fundamentals: its journalism, its governance and its accountability to the public through complaints.



TDM's CEO Manuel Goncalves announces that next year's host for the PBI conference will be NRK Norway. On his left is the Director-General of NRK, John Bernander



Simon Milner

Among other things it had launched a new training programme that all 7,000 BBC journalists would complete by March 2005. It was also launching a BBC college of journalism, and introducing clearer guidelines on editorial responsibility.

In addition, the BBC's Governors would have a greater degree of separation from management, with greater independence

in the conduct of their business. And the BBC's system for handling complaints had been improved.

"In short, the BBC accepts it got some things wrong and made some misjudgements," Mr Milner said.

"We have now learnt from these mistakes and put various measures in place to ensure events could not take a similar turn in the future. We hope we've got it right."

He said there were two main reasons why the outcome of the Hutton Inquiry would be beneficial for the BBC in the long run:

- The BBC would be less arrogant and more accountable to its stakeholders.
- The government would be loathe to attack the BBC as an institution for fear of the public outcry this would create.

"BBC journalism has had a wake-up call over the last year. Starting now, the BBC's journalists will be better trained,



Macau has a unique mix of Chinese and Portuguese cultures

particularly about the use of sources, the importance of accurate note-taking and the delivery of stories to air."

Anyone who complained about a BBC programme should feel that their complaint had received appropriate consideration. If they were not satisfied, they would have a right to independent adjudication within the BBC.

"Although I wouldn't wish the events of the last 18 months on any other

broadcaster here today, I would encourage you also to learn from the BBC's mistakes," Mr Milner told delegates.

"The BBC's inherent strengths, including the deep commitment of many millions of people to it, helped the organisation survive the crisis.

"A broadcaster in a weaker starting position might not still be here in similar circumstances." □

India's DDI launches free DTH service

India's public broadcaster Doordarshan (DDI) has launched the country's first free-to-air direct-to-home satellite service.

The Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, launched DD Direct Plus, which includes 33 television channels and 12 radio channels, at a ceremony in New Delhi in December.

Viewers will make a small one-time investment for a dish and set-top box but, unlike for other DTH services, will not have to pay a monthly subscription.

Nineteen of the TV channels are Doordarshan's own. Also included are private channels, among them Star Utsav, Aaj Tak, BBC World, CNN, Sun TV (Tamil), Kairali (Malayalam), Zee Music and ETC Punjabi.

More channels planned

Under India's broadcasting regulations, DDI does not pay to include these private channels on its platform, nor does it charge for them.

DDI plans to increase the number of TV channels on its platform to 50 by the end of next year.

Mr Singh hailed the launch of the service as a "landmark event" in India's broadcasting and communications history.

He said the digital revolution now made it possible to reach vast numbers of socially and economically disadvantaged people in the country.

DDI becomes the second DTH operator in the country after the Zee-promoted ASC Enterprises' Dish TV, which has been in operation for about one year. □

Fostering cultural diversity

Public radio broadcasters should foster cultural diversity as a counterweight to globalisation, a top Canadian broadcaster has told a conference in Beijing.

Sylvain Lafrance, a Vice President of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, said the struggle to ensure the respect of distinct cultures and identities would be a determining factor in the evolution of public radio in the years ahead.

Mr Lafrance, who has responsibility for CBC's international service, Radio Canada International (RCI), was addressing the Radio Development Forum in October, an event hosted by China National Radio.

He told participants that recent new directions in RCI's programming were very much influenced by the dynamics of cultural diversity. The CBC's radio services had adopted an action plan organised around three major thrusts:

- *Openness to the world* – seen as a way of describing to Canadians the

big issues at stake in the world in an age when ignorance and misapprehensions among peoples could lead to great upheaval.

- *Regional roots* – to reflect regional realities within distinct Canadian territories but retain the fundamental role of acting as a link between fellow citizens.

- *Supporting musical talent* – launching a new radio network fully dedicated to musical diversity.

Mr Lafrance said that with globalisation had come fears that individuals, communities or entire nations could see their local cultures swept away.

"The issue is thus more than topical, and a direct call to broadcasters, who must play an active role in developing the information society and promoting cultural diversity.

"I am convinced that any public radio service that is concerned about its future... has a duty to fully appreciate the complex issue that is diversity and the



Sylvain Lafrance

central role that the media can and should play in this new dynamics of cultural diversity."

No other public broadcaster in North America could claim to be comparable to major broadcasters like the Australian Broadcasting Corporation or Japan's NHK in that way that the CBC was, he said.

Fully independent

None of CBC's radio stations aired any advertising. Funding was provided entirely by the Canadian government, but the CBC maintained full independence from political and government action.



"It's often been said that radio is first and foremost a tool for bringing people closer together. And that it still true. But the notion of 'closer' has evolved a great deal.

"Thanks to advances in communications tools and the advent of the information society, we can be closer to a fellow citizen through a common religion, ideals or interests – and technology affords us the wonderful ability to communicate instantaneously with that person," Mr Lafrance said.

"The radio must be a window for citizens on to their streets, their cities and their countries, and from there to an entire planet that seems to shrink a bit more every day.

"Radio is a technically simple and flexible medium, which arguably makes it better equipped than any other to respond to the new challenges that come with a commitment to cultural diversity."

He said this was especially true of public service radio, whose job it was to defend the interests of citizens in the face of the economic and commercial interests omnipresent in a globalising world.

CNR hosts forum

The Radio Development Forum, which took place in Beijing on 25-27 October, was initiated and sponsored by China National Radio.

The forum, first held in 2003, discusses the future and the development of the radio industry, both in China and internationally.

Addressing this year's event, CNR's Director-General, Yang Bo, said it was dedicated to building a bridge

for friendship to enhance mutual understanding, communication and cooperation.

He said that for the 2004 forum, more emphasis had been put on advanced media concepts and practical experience.

"We are convinced that, through this conference, the communication and cooperation between broadcasting in China and the world will embark on a brand new chapter." □

"It is by forging vast strategic alliances, that public broadcasting will succeed in presiding over the development of an international environment that is sustained by sufficient diversity, and that promotes the safeguarding of distinct cultures.

"As public broadcasters, we are duty-bound to ensure a strong presence on the world scene so that we may better foster cultural diversity – which, it hardly bears repeating, is a necessary counterweight to globalisation." □

Delegates to the 2004 China Radio Development Forum pose for a group photograph with the then Minister for the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT), Xu Guangchun



ABU children's drama co-production attracts EBU

By: Chung Hyunsook, Executive Producer, ABU Co-production of Children's Drama Series

European youth programme experts have welcomed the idea of a future children's drama exchange between Europe and Asia.

During the annual European Broadcasting Union TV Youth Programmes Experts meeting held in Lugano, Switzerland on November 28 to December 1, around 70 professionals from 28 organisations listened to a presentation on the ABU Children's Drama Co-production.

They also watched and applauded an episode of the ABU drama series, which paved the way for a discussion on the possibility of a future children's drama exchange between the ABU and EBU.

As executive producer of the ABU Children's Drama Co-production, I



The EBU meeting

was invited to attend the EBU The event is mainly for children's drama and documentary exchange.

Unlike the ABU where the Item Exchange Meeting is the only meeting we have that is focused on children's programming, the EBU has meetings concentrating on specific areas depending on the age group and the genre of the children's programmes. These include the item exchange meeting, drama (age 6-9), documentary (age 9-11) and animation co-production.

During the first two days of the meeting, the producers, directors, and decision makers viewed the 2004

EBU Children's Documentary and EBU Children's Drama programmes.

The first day was for documentary screening and discussion. Participants watched no fewer than 18 episodes. There were also more participants (26 organisations) for the 2005 EBU documentary series. The quality of programmes was satisfying and the contents were attractive for the main target group, children aged 9 to 11.

Documentary appeal

I hope the ABU can start a project on children's documentaries in the near future as many ABU members are fond of the documentary format, which can appeal to children in older age groups.

The second day was devoted to the drama series 2004. There were 12 episodes and each screening was followed by a lively discussion. In the morning, four EBU episodes were shown and finally it was our turn to introduce an ABU episode to EBU members for the first time.

For the first test screening, I chose NHK's episode, *Omelette*, because it was easy to understand without dubbing into English.

Simple but beautiful! It was well received and led naturally into a



Chung Hyunsook (centre) with Kalle Furst, head of children and youth programmes at NRK-Norway (left) and Jeroen Depraetere, head of special events in the EBU's television department

discussion about the possibility of a future children's drama exchange between the ABU and EBU.

Through this process, I was satisfied with the fact that we, ABU children's programme producers, have done something together for the first time and it was definitely more than experimental. We have built a meaningful basis for co-production. The quality of each episode in the ABU drama series is competitive I am sure we can create something better year by year.

Natural flow

What we need to do is bring programmes to life, even though we do not accept lip-sync dialogue. Story telling with a natural flow can attract more children.

On the third day, producers and directors attended a debriefing session in the presence of their executive producer.

The discussions covered all aspects of production: the theme and production process, camera work, acting, casting and editing. It was valuable for the producers and directors in terms of sharing experience in detail.

Co-production has recently become an important concept worldwide in the broadcasting environment.

My hope is that this will help audiences appreciate the cultural diversity of the world, and the importance of their own identity in this changing world.

I strongly believe that the ABU Children's Drama Co-production, which is supported by UNESCO's International Programme for the development of Communication (IPDC), is a valuable project for the future. The possibility of a children's drama exchange between the ABU and EBU could be an important step forward. □

Channel NewsAsia switches on in China

Viewers in China's top hotels and foreign residential compounds have been able to tune in to Singapore's Channel NewsAsia since mid-November.

This followed an agreement signed between MediaCorp, which operates Channel NewsAsia, and China International TV Corporation in Beijing on 14 May 2004.

Under the agreement, Channel NewsAsia has been granted rights by China's State Administration of Radio, Film and Television to broadcast to viewers in China's top hotels and foreign residential compounds.

Also under the terms, China's CCTV-

MEDIA CORP
News



CHANNEL NEWSASIA

9 English language channel is being carried on cable in Singapore by a local pay-TV operator, StarHub CableTV.

Channel NewsAsia is also looking forward to increasing its programming and marketing activities in China, including business seminars and trade events in Beijing and Shanghai in the coming months. □

Singapore's Channel i closes down

The English language channel of Singapore Press Holdings' MediaWorks, *Channel i*, has closed down following the merger of the television and free newspaper operations of Singapore's MediaCorp and SPH.

The two parties decided that *Channel i* was not commercially viable because of the fragmented and small English language TV market.

The merger was legally completed at the end of 2004, after which the holding company would be 80 percent owned by MediaCorp and 20 percent by SPH.

The new holding company MediaCorp TV Holdings Pte Ltd, comprising MediaCorp TV Pte Ltd (MCTV) and

MediaCorp Studios Pte Ltd, operates four channels, namely *Channels 5, 8, U* and *TV Mobile*.

The other TV channels within the MediaCorp stable, such as *Channel NewsAsia*, *Suria* and *Central*, continue to be 100 percent owned by MediaCorp and their operations are unaffected by the merger.

MediaCorp and SPH carried out a staff rationalisation exercise following their agreement to merge.

They said it affected 429 staff from SPH, most from SPH MediaWorks.

Of these, 200 were being transferred to MediaCorp, 97 were being absorbed by SPH and 132 were being retrenched, they said. □

Japan Prize draws big list of entries

The Japan Prize, one of the most prestigious annual awards for television programmes, has been won by **CNN presents: Surviving Hunger**, produced by Insight News Television (United Kingdom) and CNN (United States). Yumiko Tomomune, Deputy Secretary General, Japan Prize, NHK, reports.



Jury members hard at work

A total of 234 entries from 48 countries and regions competed for this year's Japan Prize.

The eight days of judging came to an end on 2 November when the awards ceremony took place at NHK Hall in Tokyo. Attended by Japan's Crown Prince, the 90-minute ceremony was broadcast live nationwide.

From Asia, we had 62 programmes entered in the programme division, two websites in the web division and 24 proposals in the programme proposal division. Two programmes from Australia were also entered.

Long hours

Seventeen jury members from 14 countries were confined from morning till night in a conference room at NHK Broadcasting Centre to judge the entries.

Their deliberations were not open to the public but jury members called on us when they had something to ask. Sometimes their remarks surprised us. The most impressive remark for us was when one jury member said:

"We expected to encounter innovative youth-targeted programmes in the Youth Education Category, yet many of the programmes entered in the category were youth-featuring programmes for adult audiences."

In fact, teenagers are tough critics. They dislike programmes that pander to them too much. They dislike being educated. It seems to be a commonality that in many countries and regions, producers struggle to produce TV programmes that attract teenagers.

The Programme Proposal Division was introduced last year. The purpose is to enable producers in countries with limited means to see their proposals brought to fruition and put to air. We watched the programme *School Among Glaciers*, last year's award-winning proposal written by Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS).

This year, we had 39 entries in the Programme Proposal Division. The Hoso Bunka Foundation Prize for the best proposal went to *Embraced with the Flame* written by a producer at the Committee of Freedom of Speech and Expression, Uzbekistan. In central Asian

countries, many women try to kill themselves with fire, but why? We hope the proposal will be realised as a powerful programme next year.

The Japan Prize offers awards for innovative, educational TV programmes. The definition of "educational" TV differs from country to country, and from producer to producer. Some use a narrower definition, for example, a school classroom TV programme.

Broader definition

Others use a broader one that includes most documentaries and some dramas. Year after year jury members and Secretariat members discuss these issues. The definition that the Japan Prize supports is somewhere between the very narrow and the very broad.

An award-winning programme in the Early Education Category was a typical case. This is an entertaining children's show including a scene where children order adults to play tricks.

For example, the children use a headset to order a man to remove a "Wet Paint" sign. When the man

hesitates, a child says: "Do it! It's your mission!" Some jury members and participants thought this entertaining while others felt it was too naughty and not particularly educational. We often face this type of controversy in the Japan Prize judging.

The Grand Prix Japan Prize went to *CNN presents: Surviving Hunger* produced by Insight News Television (United Kingdom) and CNN (United States). There was a controversy over this programme too, because it is a documentary but with a "reality show" format.

The executive producer for this programme said: "Twenty years ago, I had been deeply affected by the coverage of the 1984 Ethiopian famine. What struck me was the anonymity of the tens of thousands of people who featured in the television coverage of the crisis. The end result was that these

thousands of people represented an African "victimhoodness" which belied the truth." He said this was the reason why they produced *CNN presents: Surviving Hunger* in the style of a reporter experiencing actual hunger.

These days the genres of prize-winning programmes have become wider. But the winning programmes must be innovative, and on the frontier of education production.

Winning programmes

This year's winners will be available through the Japan Prize Video Library, which also includes prize-winning programmes from previous contests. They are available in VHS format for research and reference by educational programme producers and others involved with educational television. More information is available at our website: <http://www.nhk.or.jp/jp-prize/>

In addition to the contest itself, NHK held two events supported by the ABU. The first was the five-day *Asia-Pacific Producers' Workshop for Educational Programmes*. Participating producers came from China, Fiji, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Vietnam. They discussed international co-production through the *ABU Voyage to the Future* and the *ABU Co-production of Children's Drama Series*.

The second was the *Japan Prize Asian Forum*, held in Hong Kong in July and co-hosted by Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK).

Times are changing, TV is changing and educational programmes are changing. We never know where we will find ourselves. There is no clear box in which we can file "educational effects". We keep searching for the educational effects television can offer. □



The prize winners

ABU, AIBD hold metadata workshop

Participants from eight countries have attended a four-day workshop on metadata for video and audio material, held by the ABU and AIBD in Kuala Lumpur in October.



Fikriye Berker

The workshop began with a few key definitions:

Participants were told that a video or an audio programme referred to as a media file, on its own is known as essence, and only when combined with its descriptive information does it become content. Adding intellectual property rights information (IPR) to content makes it an asset.

Participants then heard a presentation by Fikriye Berker of TRT-Turkey introducing metadata and the metadata standard used in TRT.

She and Turgay Cakimci, TRT's Head of Archives, discussed the TRT experience in detail.

TRT have conducted extensive studies and research to develop their new archive facility, which is due to come on

stream in the near future. It has taken them nearly three and a half years and has cost around US\$1.5 million.

The initial system will store up to 5,000 hours of video material.

Micheal Hafner, archivist from Deutsche Welle, conducted the rest of the workshop, taking the participants through more definitions, and discussing the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative, launched in 1995 to find resources on the Internet.

Central influence

The changing role of the archive is significant. From being a place where programmes are stored for later possible use, the archive is now becoming a central influence in programme development and production.

The workshop also included a discussion led by Karl Lippe of the AIBD on database solutions for metadata management.



Michael Hafner and Turgay Cakimci

The ABU and AIBD funded the workshop with support from UNESCO and the Deutsche Welle Academy.

Participants were from EAP-Sri Lanka, TV5-Mongolia, RTB-Brunei, LNR and LNTV-Laos, MRTV-Myanmar, IRIB-Iran, MediaCorp Technologies-Singapore, and Measat Broadcast and TV3-Malaysia. □



Karl Lippe and Sharifah Norzilaili

ABU coordinates conservation coverage

The Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) in collaboration with the Com+ Initiative for Sustainable Development (Com+), IUCN-The World Conservation Union and the government of Thailand implemented an initiative for the broad news coverage of the 3rd annual World Conservation Congress, held in Bangkok on 17-25 November 2004.

The initiative resulted in the production and airing of broadcast reports from the World Conservation Forum held during the first three days of the Congress. The forum, attracted some 5,000 representatives of States, government agencies, NGOs, business leaders, scientists and politicians.

Through the creation of video reports and distribution to regional and global broadcasters, the ABU - Com+ collaboration aimed to increase awareness of conservation and environmental issues while building broadcaster participation and responsibility in bringing the issues to the attention of their audiences.

Local languages

Fourteen participating broadcast journalists from different national television organisations from throughout Asia created daily reports in their national language on issues covered in the forum. They also reported on the implications for their home countries.

Issues covered included ecosystem management; bridging sustainability and productivity; health, poverty and conservation; biodiversity loss and species extinction; and business and the environment.

The ABU played a coordinating role in the satellite delivery of the "con-



The ABU's Craig Hobbs in a discussion with CCTV's Zhang Li

servation reports" to the broadcast journalist's home station and to other interested parties. The result was the creation of awareness among national broadcasters and their audiences of the environmental and conservation challenges addressed at the forum.

Satellite report

Reports followed standard news report lengths of no longer than 2.5 minutes each and were available via satellite to more than 150 broadcasters across the Asia-Pacific and were also offered to European broadcasters via satellite.

Participating broadcast journalists represented BTV-Bangladesh; RTB-Brunei; TVK-Cambodia; CCTV-China; DDI-India; TVRI-Indonesia; IRIB-Iran; KBS-Korea; LNTV-Laos; RTM-Malaysia; NTV-Nepal; PTV-Pakistan; GeoTV-Pakistan; Eagle Broadcasting-Philippines; SLRC-Sri Lanka; Channel 7-Thailand and VTV-Vietnam.

The journalists interviewed conservation experts and heads of various organisations including Ian Johnson, World Bank Vice President for Sustainable Development; Richard Grimmett,

Head BirdLife International Asia Division; Achim Steiner, IUCN Director-General; Gert van der Linden, Vice-President, Asian Development Bank, Robert J. Dobias from Asian Development Bank and various Ministers.

"The idea of the ABU having such a programme in line with an event such as the World Conservation Congress was superb and innovative as it gave us an opportunity to work with fellow journalists from different countries," said Asmatullah Niazi, journalist from Pakistan Television.

The ABU also helped to coordinate a 'live' interview between a representative from Asian Development Bank and Star TV Hong Kong.

National Broadcasting Services of Thailand (NBT) and Channel 11, Thailand provided two camera crews including three crew members, Betacam SP Pal cameras and appropriate lighting and audio equipment each.

NBT and Channel 11 also provided two Betacam SP Pal portable edit units and two editors as well as a satellite news gathering truck with two technicians. □

China eases TV investment rules

China has announced new rules allowing international media groups to invest in Chinese television production joint ventures.

Under the rules, announced by the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT), foreign companies can hold up to a 49 percent stake in production ventures, which must have initial capital of at least US\$2 million, or US\$1 million in the case of animation companies.

Foreign partners must be "specialised radio or TV ventures", a requirement aimed at ensuring the liberalisation brings in expertise that will help the industry. Local partners can be private, but must be existing holders of a production licence.

The new rules, which took effect on 28 November, are seen as an important step in the opening up of China's media sector.



The new rules were announced in Beijing

SARFT announced earlier in 2004 it would lift the ban on foreign investment in the domestic TV industry. But it held off from issuing the terms on which international companies can enter the market until November.

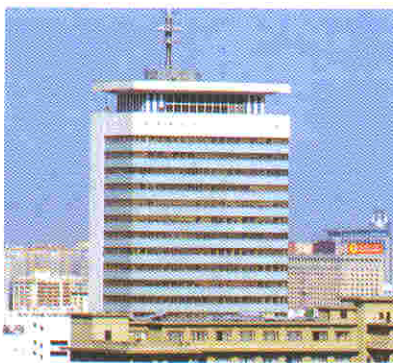
Singapore's Straits Times reported that US media giants Viacom and News Corporation were among the many overseas companies seen as likely to take quick advantage of the new rules announced by China. □

CCTV ad auction tops US\$600 million

China Central Television (CCTV) earned a record sum of US\$634 million in an auction of prime time advertisement slots held in the Beijing Media Centre in November, the China Daily newspaper reported.

Procter & Gamble Co emerged as China's top advertiser, bidding US\$46.5 million for spots. A local beverage company, the Hangzhou-based Wahaha, followed, bidding more than US\$36 million.

The newspaper quoted Guo Zhenxi, director of CCTV's advertising department, as saying: "Foreign companies' participation indicates they are paying greater attention to the huge domestic



market and also proves their confidence about the market."

Yuan Fang, media director of CTR Market Research, said part of the reason for the growing foreign spending on ads was the rapid growth of domestic companies, which put pressure on their foreign counterparts.

The auction also showed a diversified industrial development trend, Mr Yuan said.

A large number of food processing companies attend the bidding, spending a total of US\$169 million, 20 percent higher than the sector's spending in the previous year.

Daily consumer goods providers, both foreign and domestic, spent US\$85 million.

The annual auction result was more than US\$100 million up on the previous year's figure of US\$532 million. It is estimated that the auction provides 70 percent of CCTV's annual advertising revenue. □

CCTV wins again

CCTV-People's Republic of China won the Asiavision Award for the second month in a row for its coverage of a plane crash on 21 November.

The China Eastern Airlines CRJ-200 aircraft plunged into a lake in Inner Mongolia shortly after take off from Baotou city, killing all 54 people on board.

CCTV responded quickly to the tragic event and was able to offer good quality footage to the AVN daily feed. It followed this with updates on search operations and investigations into the crash.

CCTV won in October for its coverage of a coal mining disaster in Henan province that killed more than 140. □



Deutsche Welle signs deal with MCOT

Deutsche Welle has signed a TV production and staff training cooperation accord with MCOT-Thailand.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Bangkok by the Director-General of Deutsche Welle (DW), Erik Bettermann, and the MCOT President, Mingkwan Sangsuwan.

Under the MOU, Deutsche Welle will provide TV programmes, including "Magazine 52" and "Euromaxx", for MCOT's Modernine TV. The programmes feature news, background reports, lifestyle features and music.



MCOT's newsroom

DW's radio programmes will be broadcast on MCOT's Bangkok-based English language radio station, Metropolis 107.

The German broadcaster will also assist MCOT in launching its planned global English-language TV channel, "MCOT One". □

Fiji TV buys EM-TV

Fiji Television has bought Papua New Guinea's EM-TV for around US\$1.6 million from Nine Network Australia.

Fiji TV confirmed the sale, which sees it taking control of EM-TV's parent company, Media Niugini Limited, although the sale is still subject to regulatory approval. ABC News reported that the sale followed a tender process that was said to include interest from landowner and logging companies.

Fiji TV operates both a free-to-air channel (FIJI 1) and three pay-TV channels (SKY Sports, SKY Entertainment and SKY Plus) in Fiji.

The station recently launched its new direct-to-home (DTH) satellite service, SKY Pacific, serving the Pacific region with a 12 channel package.

The channels include FIJI 1, ABC Asia Pacific, CNN, Turner Classic Movies, E!, ZEE and pay-per-view services. □

Al-Jazeera chooses Malaysia

The English-language news channel, Al Jazeera International, will establish its Asian base in the Malaysian capital, Kuala Lumpur.

This was announced after executives from Al Jazeera International visited Kuala Lumpur to finalise negotiations

for office and studio space in Malaysia's multimedia super corridor.

The new Qatar-based satellite channel, to be launched in 2005, will have regional hubs in London and Washington, as well as its Kuala Lumpur base and headquarters in Doha. The channel aims to provide in-depth

coverage of Asian issues and news.

The managing director of Al Jazeera International, Nigel Parsons, said that Kuala Lumpur had been chosen as the Asian hub for purely operational reasons.

"We felt Kuala Lumpur best met our requirements in terms of its geographical location, infrastructure, local labour pool and cost base," he said. □

New appointments at ABU

The ABU has welcomed three new staff at its Secretariat in Kuala Lumpur.

Joining as Senior Executive, Programmes is Francis Kok Heng Nang. He replaces Sangeeta Mahawar who returned to Singapore in November.



Francis Kok Heng Nang

Since 1993, Francis has been involved in TV production, planning and airtime sales. In his previous employments, he has directed and produced TV commercials and drama series, documentaries, corporate videos, news features and various videography projects.

He was attached to a privately-owned production house in 1997 and thereafter joined MediaCorp TV12 Singapore as Business Development Manager overseeing programme and airtime sales for Suria, Art Central and Kids Central.

Francis has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Wichita State University.

Joining the ABU as Publications Officer is Carol Murugiah. She replaces Amy Ariffin who resigned in December.

Carol joined the News Straits Times in 1999 and after spending a year in the Kuala Lumpur headquarters, was posted to a bureau in another state where she assisted in overseeing the day-to-day operations of the seven-man bureau.

After her four-year posting, she was assigned back to the Kuala Lumpur head office and worked mainly on assignments relating to foreign affairs, health, environment and domestic trade.

Before joining the NST, Carol was employed as an English Editor for educational materials with Pelangi Publications, an academic publishing house.

Carol has an Honours degree in Communications, majoring in journalism and minoring in management.

Vanessa Ching joins the ABU as

Communications Officer, a newly created position.

Over the past few years, Vanessa has been working as a freelance journalist focusing on the areas of media and technology, and has also been involved in website development projects and in the implementation of strategic PR-related activities.

Before that, she headed the PR and Communications activities for regional software distributor Intranesis Communications, where she was responsible for the set-up and management of the company's operational headquarters in Malaysia.

Vanessa has a business degree from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. □



Vanessa Ching and Carol Murugiah

JRTV appoints new DG

Dr Mohamed El Sarayrah has been appointed Director-General of Jordan Radio and Television Corporation.

Before joining JRTV, Dr Sarayrah was Secretary General of the Higher Council of Media. A professor, he holds a Ph. D in Mass Communications from Ohio University in the United States.

He has held several key positions, including Secretary General of the National Population Council, Head of the Journalism and Communication Department at Yarmouk University and Director of the Jordanian Studies Centre.

Dr Sarayrah is the author of several books on mass communications. □

The Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), an international association of broadcasting organisations based at Angkasapuri, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, is seeking an experienced radio production executive to fill the position of:

SENIOR OFFICER FOR RADIO

Under the supervision of the Director, Programme Department, the successful applicant will be responsible for planning, organising, and managing the following activities to assist ABU members to raise the standard of their radio broadcasting and programming skills:

1. Audio news exchange within the ABU membership and with other broadcasting organisations (English and other languages)
2. Co-production projects within the ABU membership and with other broadcasting organisations, production houses, etc;
3. Seminars and workshops related to programme development and production;
4. Programme advisory services to ABU members in developing countries;
5. The ABU Prizes competition for TV and radio programmes, and other international competitions.

For further details of the position's responsibilities, please see the Position Description on the ABU's website at www.abu.org.my

Experience/Qualifications Required:

1. Experience in Radio programme (news and current affairs) development and production in a broadcasting organisation;
2. Experience or knowledge in the exchange of audio files;
3. Experience in event management such as seminars, workshops, etc. involving 30-50 participants;
4. Ability to develop ways to assist ABU members to develop a vibrant broadcasting culture in the Asia-Pacific region;
5. Good organisational and administrative skills and a high standard of fluency in spoken and

The position requires a self-starter with enthusiasm and energy, and the ability to relate well to people of different cultures. Salary is negotiable according to experience.

Applications should include full details of work history, a recent photo and current salary details.

Please send applications by mail to:

The Director, Programme Dept
Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union
P.O. Box 1164
59700 Kuala Lumpur
or by email to: sakitsu.h@abu.org.my

Deadline for applications: **15 January 2005 for local applicants**
15 February 2005 for foreign applicants

ABU CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Events of interest to the ABU and its members in the coming year

JANUARY 2005		
16-19	PTC 27th Annual Telecommunications Conference (PTC'05)	Honolulu
24-28	ABU-HFC Coordination Meeting	Kuala Lumpur
31- Feb 2	Seminar on Business Planning & Financial Analysis for Engineers	Singapore
FEBRUARY		
17-19	Broadcast Engineering Society (India) – 11th International Conference & Exhibition on Terrestrial & Satellite Broadcasting (BES Expo)	New Delhi
21-March 4	ABU/IABM Training Course on Radio Transmitters s	New Delhi
22-25	2nd World Broadcasters Meeting for 2006 Winter Olympics	Torino
MARCH		
2	ASTRA Conference	Sydney
7-18	ABU/IABM Training Course on TV Studio Equipment	New Delhi
8-10	Middle East International Cable, Satellite, Broadcast & Communications Exhibition (CabSat) 2005	Dubai
8-13	APT Preparatory Meeting WRC-07	Bangkok
14-15	AVN Coordinators' Meeting	Penang
14-16	Sportel Asia	Hong Kong
21-23	China Cable Broadcasting Network Exhibition (CCBN) 2005	Beijing
APRIL		
16-21	NAB2005	Las Vegas
20	ASTRA Awards	Sydney
20-22	ABU Copyright Committee Meeting and Seminar	Seoul
21-22	WBU-TC Meeting	Las Vegas
21-23	Eurasian Media Forum	Almaty
25-27	ABU Study Tour 2005	Seoul
30-May 14	ITU-R Study Group 6 Meetings	Geneva
MAY		
5-6	78th ABU Administrative Council meeting	Islamabad
9-11	Asia Media Summit 2005	Kuala Lumpur
16-20	36th ABU Sports Group Conference and Associated Meetings	Bangkok
25-27	NATPE 05	Las Vegas
30-June 4	ABU Documentary Exchange Meeting and Workshop	Hong Kong
31-June 1	WBU/ISOG Broadcasters' Meeting	Geneva
JUNE		
13-17	BroadcastAsia 2005	Singapore
25-29	ISBT 2005	Beijing
JULY		
3-9	International Olympic Committee Session	Singapore
4-10	ABU Children's Programme Item-exchange Meeting & Workshop	tbc
18-21	14th AMIC Annual Conference - "Media and Society in Asia: Transformations and Transitions"	Beijing
22-Aug 1	ABU Voyage to the Future 2005	Borneo
AUGUST		
27	ABU Robocon Beijing 2005	Beijing
SEPTEMBER		
8-13	IBC 2005	Amsterdam
OCTOBER		
12-14	PBI Conference	Oslo
NOVEMBER		
12-19	1st Asian Indoor Games	Bangkok
30-Dec 2	News World Nature Media Environment Summit	Kuching

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