



Terrestrial broadcasters facing tough competition

The competitive power of terrestrial broadcasting is rapidly diminishing because of tough competition from new media, delegates attending the ABU Study Tour to South Korea in April were told.

Dr Tak Jae Taek, Principal Researcher at the KBS Broadcast Culture and Research Centre, said a new paradigm of broadcasting was evolving with services and receiving devices that enabled consumers to access any content that they wished, anytime, anywhere.

"The innovative development of communication technology has made us redefine the concept and substance of broadcasting, and rethink the function and role of broadcasting," he said.

He discussed the role of free-to-air broadcasting in the "ubiquitous age" when most media would be personal and on demand.

For public broadcasters he said it was imperative for them to convince audiences of the necessity and value of having public broadcasting services in a multicasting environment.



Abu Bakar Ab Rahim of RTM-Malaysia looks at the world's largest and highest resolution plasma screen (1920 x 1080p HD) on a visit to the Samsung Electronics IT Research Centre

For commercial broadcasters and public broadcasters relying on advertising revenue, he said they would have to strengthen their marketing abilities and create opportunities to generate revenue from other business activities such as the repurposing and sale of archived content.

Dr Tak was one of three speakers who addressed a forum on the opportunities and possibilities for multimedia on the final day of the ABU Study Tour which was hosted by KBS-Korea on 25 to 27 April.

The other speakers were Professor Ahn Jong Bae from the Department of Digital Media and Advertising at Hansel University, and Dr Lee Hee Kook, President and CTO of LG Electronics Inc.

Professor Ahn discussed how terrestrial broadcasters could respond to the many threats facing free-to-air TV such as alternatives to TV, audience fragmentation, advertising avoidance, declining advertising revenues and the cost increases brought about by digitalisation.

(cont'd on page 4)

ABU approves first Institutional members

Five Institutional and three new Affiliate members were approved for admission to the ABU by the Administrative Council at its half-yearly meeting held in Islamabad, Pakistan, on 5 May.

The Institutional members are the International Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, Prix Jeunesse, the World DAB Forum, the Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) Consortium and the Association for International Broadcasting (AIB).

These are the first Institutional members to be admitted to the ABU following the approval of changes to the ABU Statutes approved by the Almaty General Assembly last year.

The Institutional membership category is designed for organisations with which the ABU seeks to have closer relationships via reciprocal membership arrangements. Admission is by the invitation of the Administrative Council.

The three new Affiliate memberships approved were National Geographic Venture, USA; Multi Carrier (Mauritius) Ltd; and Network 1 Pvt Ltd, India.

The Administrative Council also agreed to applications from four broadcasters for Additional Full and Associate membership to be submitted to the Full members for balloting.

With these additions, the ABU now has 148 members in 55 countries and special administrative regions.

The 78th Administrative Council meeting was hosted by PTV-Pakistan. It was opened by the Minister for



Pakistan's Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, is greeted by the Managing Director of PTV, Arshad Khan (left)

Information and Broadcasting, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed.

The Minister told Councillors that Pakistan will shortly introduce legislation to clear the way for licences to be granted for a further 37 private television channels.

The new channels will increase the number of private channels to 52, in addition to the state-owned terrestrial broadcaster PTV, two private Direct-To-Home (DTH) channels and one government DTH channel.

He said that Pakistan was in the middle of a "revolutionary process" in the development of its electronic media.

"Pakistan has a much freer media than other countries in this region with so many TV channels, 55 private radio stations and more than 1,000 newspapers," Sheikh Rashid said.

"We have a hard task ahead of us managing all this competition."

The Minister called on ABU members to exchange knowledge and expertise so that countries like Pakistan could learn from the experiences of others and thus be helped in their broadcast media development.

The acting President of the ABU, Zainal Abidin Ibrahimi, thanked the Managing Director of PTV, Arshad Khan, and his staff for the efficient organisation of the Council meeting.

He also thanked them for the great hospitality that had been shown to all delegates whilst they were in Pakistan.

The Administrative Council also accepted an invitation from Radio Television Maldives to hold next year's half-yearly meeting in the Maldives. □

(from page 1)

Dr Lee spoke about the many substitutes for traditional broadcast media, the new distribution methods brought about by new network technologies, and the fact that many new Internet TV broadcasters were now emerging with consumers becoming content producers.

Many of the delegates said that the forum was a highlight of the Study Tour as it enabled them to crystallise the key messages that they would take home from the tour after two days of visiting locations around Seoul looking at the latest developments in Korea's multimedia services.

The Study Tour was opened on the first day by the President of KBS-Korea, Jung Yun Joo, at the KBS headquarters in Seoul.

He told delegates at an opening conference session that broadcast media in the Republic of Korea was undergoing fundamental changes.

He said media convergence was already a reality with Internet broadcasting having established itself as a major medium in Korea, and digital multimedia broadcasting (DMB) and broadband convergence networks (BCN), poised to take off this year.



KBS staff demonstrate their multimedia interactive services to Mayella Cheung of RTHK-Hong Kong

"KBS Multimedia stands at the forefront of the digital revolution," Mr Jung said.

"As Korea's key public broadcaster, and a last resort of cultural identity, our priority must be to help media consumers appreciate the true value of public service broadcasting."

Mr Jung used his opening address to highlight the key changes occurring in the Korean media environment where he said audiences were now becoming active contributors of media content.

He added that it was important in the future for new media to be designed around the way people live and interact with each other.

Delegates spent the rest of the first day experiencing 'hands-on' the many new multimedia and interactive television and radio services being introduced by KBS to maintain its market position.

The second day kicked off with a visit to SK Telecom where senior management representatives shared their vision of becoming a major media company and discussed their business plans for achieving that vision.

SK Telecom is a 28 percent shareholder in TU Media, Korea's first satellite DMB broadcaster, and is responsible for the management of TU Media.

TU Media, has sold over 20,000 handsets since its commercial launch on 1 May.

The ABU delegates were told that it was TU Media's intention to establish itself as a strong competitor to terrestrial broadcasters by using the power of its platform and providing differentiated content.



Delegates listen to a presentation at KT Corp on their plans for wireless broadband and broadband convergence networks



Jouni Siren and Jari Lahti of YLE-Finland snap a picture of one of the DMB-T receivers at the Samsung Research Centre

The TU Media service has 14 video channels and 22 audio channels and can be received on combined phone/satellite TV handsets that currently cost around US\$800 to US\$900.

The service is transmitted in S-band and about 4,000 gap fillers, utilising a Ku-band input feed, have been built in metropolitan areas primarily to provide coverage on moving subway trains.

It can also be received in moving cars at speeds up to 150kph. The cost of the car receiver is about US\$600 excluding the screen.

SK Telecom believes that there will be rapid take up of the service amongst commuters in metropolitan areas.

Korea is the second country in the world, after Japan, to launch satellite DMB services.

South Korea's terrestrial broadcasters will be launching terrestrial DMB service this year to compete with the DMB-S services. The DMB-T services will be free to air and supported by advertising.

Both the DMB-S and DMB-T players believe that their mobile services will

achieve good take-up rates amongst commuters in Korea.

The Study Tour delegates also visited KT Corp to learn about their Wibro and BcN services to be launched next year, and Samsung Electronics to see the latest terrestrial and satellite DMB handsets, and plasma and LCD receivers.

The second day finished with a visit to the Ministry of Information & Communication where Minister Chin Dae Je personally led delegates on a tour of the Ministry's Ubiquitous Dream Exhibition which was established to promote the digital home network technology products of Korean companies.

After the forum on the third day, the Study Tour concluded with ABU members sharing their own countries' experiences and a roundtable evaluation of the 'take-home' messages from the study tour.

A conclusion agreed upon by all delegates was that it was essential for broadcasters to collaborate with telecommunications and IT industry players because few terrestrial broadcasters would have access to the level of funding that will be required to

remain competitive in the future era of ubiquitous media.

A total of 40 delegates from ABU members around the world attended the Study Tour which was supported by KT Corp, Samsung and the Korean Broadcasting Commission. □



Some of the many DMB-S receivers being offered by SK Telecom for the TU Media service being marketed under the brand name 'June'



Shin Won Sup (third from left) of KBS' 2FM radio explains the concept of the open radio studio to Study Tour delegates



Delegates listen to a briefing on broadband convergence networks at the Samsung Research Centre at Suwon near Seoul

Screen awards concept backed by key regional film markets

An intensive feasibility study to make the proposed Asia-Pacific Screen Awards as an annual televised event is underway, with the concept itself being strongly backed by leading film markets within the Asia-Pacific region.

The study is being conducted by the events management organisation Queensland Events of Australia in collaboration with the ABU.

It will be completed later this year when a progress report, preliminary plan, structure and ceremony concept is presented to the ABU General Assembly in Hanoi, Vietnam.

The Chairman of Queensland Events, Des Power, and Senior Executive (Development), Jane Hickey, recently completed a nine-city research mission involving over 70 meetings and seminars with leading film and broadcast industry figures in the Asia Pacific and Europe.

Strong support

During this critical phase in the Asia-Pacific Screen Awards' development, the vision and concept has managed to attract strong support in the key Asia-Pacific film markets of Hong Kong, Korea, India and Singapore.

"This is very encouraging," said Mr Power. "Time and again we were told by film and television makers of the need for a major trans-Asia-Pacific award to acknowledge outstanding work in the region."

At the Hong Kong Entertainment Expo – which includes the Hong Kong International Film Festival – Director Peter Tsi commended the initiative.



ABU Secretary-General, David Astley (right), and the Australian delegation at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris after meeting with UNESCO Director General, Koichiro Matsuura (third from left) and Assistant Director General (Communications & Information), Abdul Waheed Khan (left)

Ms Hickey also met with Singapore International Film Festival Director Phillip Cheah and the Director of the Pusan International Film Festival, Kim Dong Ho, both of whom threw their support behind the concept.

Ms Hickey said film festivals, film and television organisations, producers and directors were being consulted in order to further develop the Awards concept – particularly the process of nominations and the method of appointment of an international jury.

Some 20 meetings were held in Korea including those with the President of the Korea Film Commission, Lee Choong-jik, and the Dean of the Korean National University's Film, TV and Multimedia School, Kim Hong-Joon. Meetings have also been held with ABU member broadcasters including KBS, MBC, EBS and SBS.

In India, Ms Hickey met with K S Sarma, who is ABU Vice President

and Chief Executive Officer of Prasar Bharati – the country's broadcasting corporation – in New Delhi.

The tour by Mr Power and Ms Hickey also included meetings with European Film Academy Acting Chairman and Producer Nik Powell in London and the Academy's Executive Director Marion Doring in Berlin.

"They were extremely generous in offering their knowledge and experience in creating and presenting an awards-based event that covers 39 member countries of the European Union," said Ms Hickey, who is hoping to use the European awards as a model for the Asia-Pacific Screen Awards.

In Paris, a formal meeting with the Director General of UNESCO, Koichiro Matsuura, was also attended by ABU Secretary-General David Astley.

A primary objective of the mission was to seek endorsement of the

proposed Awards from UNESCO. A formal announcement regarding this matter is to be expected in the coming months.

"We believe the idea for the Awards accords with UNESCO's policies and aspirations for the promotion and preservation of cultural diversity," Mr Power said.

Mr Power later attended and presented a progress report at the ABU Administrative Council Meeting in Islamabad, Pakistan.

In his address, Mr Power clarified some key points about the proposed Asia-Pacific Screen Awards, namely:

- the Awards will not diminish the existing ABU Prizes;
- the Awards are for both film and television, and will also include a children's category;

- the Awards will be open to all member countries of the ABU; and
- the Awards will be administered from Australia but the actual event and awards ceremony will be held in other host countries.

"It is important that we remind ourselves of what inspired this idea in the first place. Hollywood and American television programmes have the single biggest influence on the way global culture is evolving. We see it in the way our children dress, the music they listen to, the new words that creep into their vocabulary, and the film and television shows they watch," Mr Power said.

"There is room for the world at large to be better informed and entertained by the stories, cinematic art, customs, religion and lives of the people in our region.



Des Power (left) and Jane Hickey (third from left) with Australian representatives to UNESCO in Paris

"The proposed Asia-Pacific Screen Awards will bring together the best from the Asia Pacific and showcase it to the entire region. In time we hope the Awards will be seen as the highest honour in Asia-Pacific film and television," he added. □

ABU and UN ISDR to hold disaster mitigation workshops

The ABU has joined forces with the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN ISDR) to beef up the flow of broadcast information in Asia-Pacific countries in order to reduce the impact of natural disasters.

The pact will see a series of regional workshops conducted for radio and TV broadcasters in the region to develop faster and more effective early warning systems of disasters in the wake of the Asian tsunami tragedy.

The workshops aim to:

- increase the rate and accuracy of information flows from weather departments and crisis and disaster management organisations to broadcasters for dissemination;

- ensure a rapid flow of disaster and emergency alerts from broadcasters to the public;
- help to develop faster and more accurate coverage of disasters when they strike; and
- raise public awareness of disaster reduction as well as emergency preparedness by airing special educational programmes and public service announcements.

ABU Secretary-General, David Astley, said the union was strategically positioned to coordinate the improvement of emergency warning systems through radio and TV among broadcasters across the region.

"We are also well positioned to assist in the development of content designed to educate audiences in advance on how

to respond in the event of emergencies and natural disasters," Mr Astley said.

UN ISDR Director, Salvano Briceño added: "Media can achieve a lot. They can warn people without scaring them, they can educate them and better prepare them to face natural hazards, and they are key players in the long chain that ultimately will reduce risk and vulnerability to save people's lives and livelihoods."

The project is a follow-up to the ABU workshop hosted by Japan's public broadcaster, NHK, in Tokyo in February called "Natural Disasters and the Broadcasters' Role". At the workshop, broadcast journalists and engineers called for faster disaster alerts from governments and international agencies. □

AMS 2005 backs proposed treaty on broadcasters' rights

Participants in an international media conference in Kuala Lumpur have thrown their support behind a proposed treaty on the protection of the rights of broadcasters.

In one of a series of recommendations issued at the end of the Asia Media Summit 2005 from 9 to 11 May, they called on all broadcasters to urge their governments to support efforts to conclude the proposed treaty.

The ABU and the world's other broadcasting unions have – for more than a decade – been urging the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) to update broadcasters' rights to meet the demands of modern times and technology.

The recommendation said the existing convention, concluded in 1961, did not grant proper protection against redistribution of a broadcaster's signal, deferred broadcasts or the pirating of signals.

Conference participants also called for domestic legislation to guarantee the independence and pluralism of the media.

In addition, they urged authorities to make efforts to bridge the digital divide by providing universal and affordable access to information and infrastructure.

Participants also called on authorities to set up mechanisms to detect and prevent cyber crime, and said representatives of the media should be full partners in the future governance of the Internet.

"Broadcasting is crucial to development. For many, it remains



Dr Shashi Tharoor (right) receiving the Asia Media Summit recommendations from AIBD Director, Javad Mottaghi

the major source of information and knowledge, and therefore, it requires strengthening and support.

"However, many of the needs of broadcasters, and of society at large, are not yet fulfilled. Further action is essential. We believe more attention should be given to these issues at the forthcoming WSIS," the participants said in a statement.

The recommendations were handed over to United Nation's Under Secretary-General of Public Information, Dr Shashi Tharoor, who will forward them to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) to be held in Tunisia later this year.

Dr Tharoor had earlier chaired an open dialogue on the role of the UN in the New World Order, which sparked a lively debate among panelists and participants on the relevance of the UN in the world today.

Panelist Dr Indrajit Banerjee, the Asian Media Information and Communications

Centre (AMIC) Secretary-General, said: "People state that the UN is no longer relevant. In fact, it is more relevant than ever before."



Dr Indrajit Banerjee

Dr Banerjee went on to say that the UN had to address four key elements – relevance, representation, responsibility and reform – in order to have a positive impact on the new world order.

Organised by the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD), AMS 2005 played host to over 400



media professionals from 64 countries, including those outside the region.

It was opened on the first day by the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, Mohd Najib Abdul Razak, who delivered the keynote address.

Apart from the panel discussions, there were also two special sessions: the Afro-Asia Pacific Media Dialogue and the Arab-Asia Media Dialogue. The dialogues were held to foster co-operation amongst media professionals in African, Arab and Asian countries.

Lessons learned

Meanwhile, the challenges to public service broadcasting were brought to the fore on Day Two of the conference in an engaging session titled, "The state of public service broadcasting – one year after the BBC crisis".

BBC's Director of World Service and Global News, Richard Sambrook, said following the release of the Hutton report on the death of a British weapons scientist who had been interviewed by a BBC reporter, the public broadcaster faced its biggest crisis in 80 years.

"Next year, the BBC Charter – the licence by which the corporation



AMS 2005 delegates in deep discussion during a tea break after one of the sessions

exists – has to be renewed the British Parliament. The crisis of 2004, combined with the debate on Charter renewal, has forced the BBC to think long and deeply about the social role it plays and about its core values.

"We believe there is as strong a role for public broadcasting in the digital future as there has been in the past," Mr Sambrook said.

However, the Gareth Price, the Director of UK's Thomson Foundation – a media training institution – said

while the BBC was scarred by the Hutton affair, it came out stronger in terms of public support.

"The Chairman and the Director-General of BBC had to resign after the Hutton report. The British government may have won that round, but it lost the British audience which trusted the BBC more than the government," Mr Price said.

Jean-Gabriel Manguy, the head of ABC Radio Australia, said that Australian public broadcasters were also facing a challenging year, particularly with the shift to digitalisation and the proposed removal of media ownership restrictions in the coming months.

"Public broadcasters in Australia need to pursue internal reforms over the next five to 20 years to cope with the changes taking place," he said.

The conference also addressed problems faced by the global media on conflict resolution or "peace journalism", the war on terror, the privatisation of broadcast media as well as the negative impact of TV content on children and youths especially in Asia. □



Malaysian students addressing the delegates during the session on children's television

RadioAsia 2005

Asian Radio at the Crossroads: A New Paradigm in the digital age

The RadioAsia Conference 2005 is the first of a planned annual conference on radio in Asia. Despite the growth and proliferation of other new media in Asia, radio continues to play an important role in reaching out to communities. As such, this annual conference would serve as a focal point for the exchange of ideas and concepts and the sharing of information on successes achieved. Participants will also be able to conduct business and network with industry peers.

RadioAsia will bring together leading radio practitioners, communication specialists, policy makers and academics from the Asia Pacific. Some 40 eminent speakers specialising in various aspects of radio and communications will be present to share their perspectives.

The three-day event, which includes a two-and-a-half-day conference and half-day workshops on the third day, will highlight the power of radio and the influence that it still exerts despite pressures from new media. It will also examine how radio can continue to play a vital role in reaching out to the masses in the dissemination of information, and promote regional development.

Key issues that will be discussed:

- Development of Radio: Industry View
- Crisis and Conflict Communication
- Digital Radio
- Audience Research and Radio Advertising
- Radio Regulation
- Radio and Youth
- Development Communication:
People's Voices and Community Radio

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- Media professionals
- Policymakers and planners
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- Civil society organisations

Registration Fees

ABU/AMIC Members

- Early Bird (till 13 May)
SGD \$150
- Regular (till 6 June)
SGD \$225
- On-site
SGD \$300

Non-members

- Early Bird (till 13 May)
SGD \$225
- Regular (till 6 June)
SGD \$300
- On-site
SGD \$375

The registration fees cover the two-and-a-half day conference and the half-day workshops, including daily morning and afternoon tea/coffee breaks as well as conference papers. Lunch is not included, but is available from various outlets in the Expo centre. All delegates will receive an invitation to the networking cocktail function being sponsored by Commercial Radio Australia (CRA) on the evening of the first day of the conference.

Cancellations are non-refundable, although participants can be substituted at any time.

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XI

Broadcasters must prevent post-disaster panic

Preventing panic after a natural disaster is a key responsibility for broadcasters, speakers from tsunami-hit countries have told a conference in Kuala Lumpur.

Prompt, accurate reporting went a long way towards stopping the spread of rumours and panic, senior broadcasters told the Asian Media Summit in May.



Nishantha Ranatunga

"We were required to perform a fine balancing act, to tell the truth but in a way that would not cause more chaos and would calm and stabilise instead," Nishantha Ranatunga, Director-General of Sri Lanka's national broadcaster, SLRC, said.

"People... wanted information about their families and friends. Lack of information caused panic, and in those first days, panic was our main enemy.

"The indispensable and unavoidable role of media in a situation of national disaster is to act as an agent of stability," added Mr Ranatunga.

The Deputy Director-General of the National Broadcasting Services

of Thailand, Pattareeya Sumano, said one of the important lessons learned was that broadcasters should educate the people and raise their awareness of natural disaster preparedness.

Hirose Hirose, Kuala Lumpur bureau chief for Japan's public broadcaster, NHK, noted another lesson – that broadcasters needed to ensure other forms of communication were available to them when telephone lines were down. Satellite phones were a necessity, he said.

The Maldives' Minister of Information, Arts and Culture, Ahmed Abdullah, said the tsunami disaster had shown that the media needed to become more vigilant. People in the Maldives had not been given timely, adequate information, he said.

"Today information and news have become an indivisible part of life. Such information would greatly help early warnings about any potential disasters, sharing of scientific research and technical expertise." □

ABU booth a hit with AMS delegates

The ABU extended its involvement with the Asia Media Summit this year by taking up an exhibition booth at the event in Kuala Lumpur.

Conference delegates visiting the ABU booth just outside the main ballroom had the opportunity to learn about the Union's projects, activities and the services available to ABU members.

Many copies of the ABU's technical publications were also sold, and those

manning the booth received numerous enquiries about the various ABU membership categories.

The ABU has been busy implementing new projects in recent months to in a bid to become more relevant to its members' needs, as well as to add more value to its services.

Other exhibitors participating at Asia Media Summit this year were Radio Television Malaysia, KLOTZ DIGITAL Asia and Malaysia Airlines. □



ABU Communications Officer Vanessa Ching assisting a conference delegate

The ABU News Interview

*These are certainly hostile days for newspeople in the Philippines – a country which has seen a spate of journalist killings recently. ABU News finds out from **Cerge M Remonde**, a Filipino Cabinet member with 30 years' experience as a journalist, what's in store for the future of press freedom in the country.*

Q: Why is the situation so grave in the Philippines?

CR: The media environment in the Philippines is very different and far removed from the situation in most Asian countries. The Philippines has had a very long tradition of press freedom which has always been bordering on licence. As a veteran journalist myself, I consider the killings a part of the continual price we pay for press freedom. We have a very lively press in the Philippines and we are paying for that.

Q: Why are these journalists being targeted?

CR: Most of these targeted journalists are really community journalists. The threats don't happen as much in the bigger cities as they do in smaller communities where things are more personalised. In small communities, journalism and the attacks against journalists tend to be personal. Even the reaction against these attacks is personal. But murder can never be justified.

Q: What about journalists who resort to vigilantism by taking matters into their own hands?

CR: That is the other side of the equation. Violence begets violence. I'm not blaming journalists for doing that, but sometimes the normal way of doing things will also get results. Sometimes, journalists will have to resort to extreme measures to gain attention or action. But again, extreme measures can also elicit extreme reactions as we have already seen.



Cerge M Remonde

Q: What kind of issues normally prompt this type of extreme retaliation?

CR: Normally corruption involving local governments. The social, economic and political structure of the Philippines today remains semi-feudal in a sense that in certain places, there are still the ruling families and small-town politicians involved in corruption and illegal

gambling. Therefore, you have crusading community journalists.

Q: What is being done in the Philippines to protect the journalists?

CR: The media does not exist in a vacuum. It is also part and parcel of society. So all sectors of the Philippine society have to work together to solve this problem. Our president has strongly denounced (the killings). She has recently called for the creation of a special taskforce which has been named "Taskforce Newsman" as a response to these killings, and has allocated money for this.

Q: What is the solving rate like of these journalist murders?

CR: In the last five years, 52 journalists have been murdered. The police have said that they have solved 37 of these cases in the sense that the suspects have been identified and the cases have been filed. But only half of them have been arrested while the rest are still scot-free.



Cerge M Remonde (right) chairing a session on violence and the media at the recent Asia Media Summit 2005

