

## Bangladesh CR stations played key role in addressing cyclone Komen

*Note: Cyclone Komen underscored the importance of community radio in reckoning with disaster. Even before the cyclone struck the country, seven community radio stations ensured that timely information reached local communities as discussed in the following story.*

Seven Community Radio Stations that operate in coastal region of Bangladesh continuously broadcast 65 hours of programmes to address cyclone 'Komen' in line with Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD) of Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. The activities were initiated about a week prior to Komen's onslaught.

Information was provided to the community regarding preparedness for saving their lives and assets by about 425 community broadcasters and volunteers around the radio stations. The stations maintained full time liaison with the disaster monitoring cells at district and upazila (sub-district) levels. They also kept contact with Red Crescent members, scouts, and disaster volunteers at local levels.

This apart, the members of Radio Listener Club carried out awareness raising campaigns regarding preparedness with their community, neighbours and relatives. Considering the importance of the situation, the community radio stations situated in coastal zone namely Community Radio Nalta 99.2 (Kaliganj, Satkhira), Community Radio Lokobetar 99.2 (Barguna Sadar), Community Rural Radio: Krishi Radio 98.2 (Amtali, Barguna), Community Radio Sagargiri 99.2 (Sitakunda, Chittagong), Community Radio Naf 99.2 (Tekhnaf, Cox's Bazar), Community Radio Sundarban 98.8 (Koyra, Khulna), Community Radio Meghna 99.00



**Making disaster preparedness work**

(Charfason, Bhola) were put on full alert. They broadcast special bulletin, PSAs, docudrama, and magazine programmes continually. These facilitated timely preparedness which in turn reduced the extent of possible damage.

The stations were instructed to keep their stations on-air for 24 hours. Generator and fuels were reserved to ensure adequate alternative power supply, in the event of any disruption in notational power supply grid which could hamper the broadcasting.

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## Get set, Ghana!

AMARC 11 is all set to happen – the 11th world conference of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters is taking place in Accra, Ghana between August 10 and 14, 2015 in partnership with the Ghana Community Radio Network (GCRN).

AMARC 11 - an open and participatory event - will bring together more than 300 community broadcasters and stakeholders from over 100 countries in all regions of the world. It will be a place to reflect on the growth of community media worldwide and to respond, through international solidarity, to the challenges that we continue to face in creating new forms of popular communication.



The AMARC 11 conference will include, among other issues, sharing of good practice in community media; advocacy to improve media policies; laws and regulations; joint action through community media for social justice; gender equity and a sustainable planet;

knowledge sharing on the use of new communication tools and technologies; strategies to empower and support communities faced with conflict, emergency and disaster.

A rich, reflective agenda has been finalized by the AMARC International Board in consultation with the AMARC Regions, the AMARC Women's International Network, and AMARC friends and partners.

## CR UPDATES

# Sustainability research on CR shows gaps in participatory processes

Over the years, a critical question for community radio (CR) has been that of sustainability. Ideosync Media Combine, New Delhi, with support from CEMCA and UNESCO, implemented a participatory research project to explore sustainability indicators for community radio stations in South Asia.

Working with 12 purposively selected CR stations from India, Nepal and Bangladesh, representing the diversity in geography, ownership and management structures and guiding policies, the research, based on Ethnographic Action Research principles, used qualitative and quantitative data collection tools to explore financial, institutional and social sustainability of the CR stations. The research methodologies were validated through a stakeholder process. Community researchers from each participating CR station were trained in ethnographic research tools. Data was collected over six months during 2014 and included weekly diary notes, significant good practice stories, a survey questionnaire, annual budgets and monthly expense sheets of the CR stations. Ideosync researchers undertook field visits and in-depth interviews with CR staff, volunteers and management committee members.



*Participation is the key*

A desk research guided the formulation of important ideas around sustainability. Core principles of community media were centred throughout the analysis to seek answers to the critical questions – ‘What are the key practices that help CR stations sustain?’ And, ‘what challenges do they see to their sustainability?’

Key outcomes of the research indicate that CR stations in South Asia have evolved several robust ways to engage and enable participation of their geographical communities, especially for content creation. Most CR stations report a fairly large number of women among their staff and volunteers. However, the quality of participation of community members, particularly that of marginalised communities and women, was varied. Few CR stations enabled marginalized community members to be key decision makers at the CR station.

Further, the research shows that financial decision-making was not fully in the hands of the CR station’s management committee, with very few CRs having their own separate bank accounts. CR stations have also not yet evolved processes that would help them be accountable to their communities. They seemed to be largely controlled by the parent organizations, with few mechanisms for financial transparency in

place. This is not to say that CR stations and their parent organizations did not want to be transparent, but that processes and methodologies had not yet been evolved to ensure financial independence and transparency.

In terms of models for resource generation, several CR stations supported by large and medium-sized NGOs are able to generate funds through development projects. Overall, CR stations were low on community-generated financial support. The research further showed greater diversity of funding among smaller, more community-driven and cooperative-based CR stations than in CRs supported by larger NGOs or educational institutions. The research establishes the need for public funding for community radios in poor, remote and sparsely populated regions where local communities have no financial resources to contribute for the CR station’s financial sustainability.

Some of the other key outcomes of the research include:

- CR Stations supported by large parent organizations enjoyed greater infrastructural stability, However there were concurrent anxieties around closure of the CR in case the parent organization’s support is withdrawn.



*Radha Shukla outlines the challenges*

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## INTERNATIONAL

# Community Radio organized in Islamabad



**Exploring CR in Pakistan**

Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Islamabad, and Pakistan Community Media Network in collaboration with Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), New Delhi organized the 'National Consultation on Community Radio for Learning' in Islamabad, Pakistan on May 25, 2015.

While chairing the consultation's preliminary session, AIOU's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Shahid Siddiqui announced the University's decision to strengthen media support through an enhanced FM radio network for its students. Underlining the importance of radio broadcasting in education and societal reformation, the Vice-Chancellor also emphasized its relevance in terms of easy accessibility.

More than 45 academicians, media experts, social workers and broadcasters participated in the consultation and included representatives from Radio Pakistan, China Radio International, Community Media Pakistan, FM-100 Islamabad, Dil FM, Health Communication Resources (HCR), UNESCO, UNICEF, DFID, British Council, and Educational Broadcasters' Forum (EBF) Pakistan.

Dr. Ankuran Dutta, Programme Officer, CEMCA, took part in the event from New Delhi through video conferencing. He articulated the role of community radio in societal development and elaborated how community media could reach the last person in a community. Instead of top-down models of knowledge dissemination, he advocated the relevance of co-learning through a medium like community radio.

The consultation was also addressed by Dr. Syed Abdul Siraj, Chairman, Department of Mass Communication, AIOU, Dr. Mukhtar Hussain Tarpur, Director, Institute of Educational Technology, and Mr. Masoodul Hasan Akhtar, Executive Director, Pakistan Community Media Network. Mr. Akhtar appreciated CEMCA's technical support which would make it possible to develop an "initiative on community media in Pakistan on a small scale." He also discussed the network's plan to share the concept of community media with the college/university students as well as commercial radios.

Mr. Zahid Majeed, Director, International Collaboration & Exchange Office, AIOU, asserted that the Government of Pakistan and the AIOU attached great importance to community radio in the context of education, health, peace, religious harmony as well as culture, traditions and values. He hoped that the collaboration would achieve "such targets."

**A CEMCA Report**

## CR sustainability: the way ahead

*Continued from Page 2*

- Capacities of staff from the parent organization to bring in funds and /or the size and track record of the parent organization helped in creating greater financial resources for the station.

- CR stations that have had prolonged community engagement stand a better chance of generating community funding.

- Higher the community participation in program production, lower the overall monthly expenditure of the radio station.

- Almost all CR stations in the study are perceived as being "for the community" - both by the volunteers and team members working at the station, as well as by listeners. The terms 'of the community' and 'by the community' are

less clearly understood or articulated.

- Gender parity is high in most stations. However, only five community radio stations out of twelve that participated in the study have formally adopted a gender policy.

- Stories that emerged as significant good practices show a high number of good practices around content and production. In contrast, there were fewer or almost no good practice stories around internal CR policies.

The research shows that while many CR stations have come a long way in building their local communities, more work needs to be done to help them become stronger and more independent media institutions. This will require

greater capacity building in terms of clarifying the purpose and goals of free and plural community media. It will also involve formulation of principles and practices for transparent and accountable institution-building in order to strengthen the overall institutional sustainability of the CR stations.

The research has also resulted in the drafting of 'Key Sustainability Guidelines' for CR stations in the region. These guidelines can be accessed in the full report which is available here: <http://cemca.org.in/ckfinder/userfiles/files/CR%20and%20Sustainability%20Report.pdf>

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## EDITORIAL

# Six years of CR News

*CR News* was launched in July 2010 as a newsletter with both a print and an e-version. It sought to cover news and events related to the community radio stations in India and to track the progress of the CR sector in the country as a whole. After the initial two years, the scope of *CR News* was expanded to include the community radio scenario in South Asia. This was also the time when its production was brought under the aegis of the UNESCO Chair on Community Media within the Department of Communication, University of Hyderabad. *CR News* was supported financially by UNESCO from 2010 to 2014. The support for its publication in 2015 came from CEMCA, New Delhi.

The UNESCO Chair on Community Media would continue to bring out *CR News* on a regular basis, but as the funding for this project has dwindled and substantial grants are not easy to come by, *CR News* would now be available only online as an e-newsletter. We have decided to cease bringing out a printed version of the *CR News*. The e-newsletter would have all the features of *CR News* as you have known it, plus more. The effort would be to make it more interactive with provision to post feedback and comments. We would also enable posting of audio and video stories as we go along.

As editors of *CR News*, we thought of making this transition special by including in this issue a recap of all the editorials that have been included in *CR News* up until now. The journey so far has been exciting for us and we would like to step back and recollect some of our ideas and thoughts of the past before we venture into the new media ways of interacting with our readers.

The first issue of 2010 started with expressing the long overdue need for a *CR newsletter* to track developments, share experiences, discuss problems and develop strategies to ensure that marginalized voices take centre stage in community radio development. *CR News* was launched with a view to learn and share from each other's experiences and as a platform to discuss, deliberate and dialogue on concerns within the field. The second issue came out in time for AMARC 10 - the 'Tenth World Conference of Community Radio Broadcasters' held from November 8 to November 13, 2010 in La Plata, Argentina. The editorial expressed the hope that AMARC 10, through sharing of

experiences and concerns among community radio stakeholders, would emerge as a seedbed for new ideas and strategies; partnerships and alliances; as well as approaches and capacity sharing. This would, in turn, help to strengthen the global community radio movement and network.

In 2011 there were three issues of *CR News*. The first editorial discussed the front burner issues that emerged during the 3rd National Consultation on Community Radio organized by UNESCO in partnership with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB), the Community Radio Forum (CRF), and the Ford Foundation in New Delhi. The editorial of the second issue called attention to the fact that limiting the notion of CR to different facets of development only would tantamount to an exceedingly narrow vision for such a versatile medium. CR stations can be the conduit for creative expressions of local culture as well as a repository and purveyor of cultural diversity. The third issue highlighted the experiences of community radio stations located in urban areas.

The *CR News* issue of 2012 was all about the staggering spectrum fee hike by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. The editors argued that international experiences confirmed a reverse trend indicating a reduction in spectrum fees. It drew experiences from countries like Australia, Canada, Denmark, South Africa, Uruguay and the US that did not levy a spectrum fee as well as others such as Bangladesh and Colombia where the amount ranged from moderate (USD 480) to low (USD 150). But India apparently preferred to look the other way. The editorial in the second issue spelt out the need for a policy review to make it more enabling so as to tackle issues such as the ban on news and the formalization of spectrum fee hike roll back.

The first editorial in 2013 emphasized the role of CR in disaster mitigation and the relevance of allocating emergency CR licenses to aid relief operations in the context of the Uttarakhand calamity. In the following issue, the editorial called for collective action to strengthen CR in the South Asian region. It also sought annulment of the prohibition on broadcasting of news on CR stations. The next issue of *CR News* had a special focus on gender and women empowerment. The editorial examined the opportunities for, and challenges facing women who participate in CR.

The editorials in 2014 focussed on the themes that ranged from the core non-negotiable principles of CR, to the peer review process undertaken by MIB and also the formation of the South Asian Network for Community Media (SANCOM). The underlying idea was the need to strengthen the community media canvas in the region and thereby promote access to information, freedom of expression and gender equality over the airwaves.

The 2015 editorials have reflected so far on youth-driven programming in CR stations and the vulnerability as well as indispensability of CR stations in the face of the disasters such as the Nepal earthquake. We hope to continue to get feedback from you online as we bid good bye to the print version with this issue of *CR news*.

**The UNESCO Chair on Community Media would continue to bring out *CR News* on a regular basis, but as the funding for this project has dwindled and substantial grants are not easy to come by, *CR News* would now be available only online as an e-newsletter.**

**Kanchan K. Malik & Ashish Sen**

## INTERNATIONAL

# Media at the margins are adaptive to local needs: Rodriguez



**Clemencia Rodriguez**

Eminent community media scholar, Clemencia Rodriguez has advocated that instead of excessive focus on media technologies in community media, we explore 'media at the margins' in terms of how these technologies are used by people to meet the always shifting local information and communication needs.

Rodriguez, who is a professor of Colombian origin at the University of Oklahoma in the U.S., is known for her pioneering work embodied in books such as *Fissures in the Mediascape* and

*Citizens' Media against Armed Conflict*. Delivering a plenary address at the recently concluded conference of the International Association for Media & Communication Research in Montreal, she drew attention to how specific media ecologies develop at the margins. "At the margins, media tend to be less universal, less driven by global trends and markets, and more grounded in local time, place, interest, and needs." Various called alternative media, community media, citizens' media, and social movement media, media at the margins, she suggests,

exist as a plurality, with each margin producing its own type of media.

Exploring media practices in the geographic margins of Colombia, Rodriguez underlined how some of these initiatives have developed 'idiosyncratic media pedagogies' based on local languages and aesthetics. Giving the example of the use of the 'human microphone' by the Occupy protesters of Zucotti Park, New York City, she seeks to demonstrate how community communicators identify communication needs and use their skills and available resources to get around a problem. Rather than looking for linearity and homogeneity in community media, she says, scholars must more productively focus on processes of cross-pollination, adaptation, hybridization, and replication that are often visible in grassroots media.

Advocating a shift away from 'technological fascination' bias, Rodriguez wants community media scholars to understand what she calls, 'communication rhizospheres,' the micro-structures and processes that promote a range of media and communication practices within social movements. Grassroots communicators exist in a communication rhizosphere where media use is not determined by whether technology is old or new, digital or not digital; "what determines media use is a flux of historical information and communication needs, and how embedded community communicators employ available technologies to address these needs."

**Vinod Pavarala**

## New journal on community media launched at IAMCR

A new journal called *Journal of Alternative and Community Media* was launched in Montreal, Canada at the recently concluded annual conference of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR). With Chris Atton and Susan Forde as editors, the peer reviewed journal will be published online by Griffith University's Griffith ePress in Australia. The journal will focus, among other things, on protest movements and media, citizens' and participatory media, activist and radical media, media regulation and policy, and community media audiences and producers. The international editorial advisory



board for the journal include scholars such as Nick Couldry, Nico Carpentier, Alfonso Gumucio-Dagron, John Downing, Bruce Girard, Arne Hintz, Adilson Cabral, Kate Coyer, Natalie Fenton, Dorothy Kidd, Clemencia Rodriguez, Jo Tacchi, Pradip Thomas, and Vinod Pavarala.

Call for submissions for the first volume and other details can be accessed at [www.joacm.org](http://www.joacm.org).

**CR News Bureau**

## CR stations ensured timely preparedness for Komen

*Continued from Page 1*

Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) ensured full-time contact and coordination with the coastal community radio stations with support from Free Press Unlimited.

According to Ashish Sen who was in Bangladesh recently, a mapping of the CR Stations in Bangladesh shows that many of them have proximity to areas that are vulnerable to floods and

cyclones. Many of the rivers have also in their midst small islands which are virtually cut off from all communication during floods and cyclones. For them, the community radio represents a vital lifeline. The interactive and dialogue based programs of the radio stations nearby, facilitate direct communication between the affected communities and local authorities.

*(The story was posted before cyclone Komen struck Bangladesh)*

**Source:** <http://www.bnnrc.net/home/bnnrccomen>



## INTERNATIONAL

# Community Radio in Bangladesh

Over the years, phrases like voice of the voiceless and including the excluded have been increasingly associated with community radio. But what do they really mean? Unfortunately, their frequent usage by advocates of community radio would not appear to be adequately justified given the gaps between such precepts and actual practices at the field. Apart from diluting their credibility, such phrases are often dismissed as jargon or platitudes.

However, every once in a while there appear silver linings which provide cause for cheer. A recent visit to Bangladesh in May and June 2015 punched the point home. Bangladesh, before the monsoon breaks, is hot. The sultry weather is more conducive to long afternoon siestas rather than venturing outdoors. This visit proved to be a welcome exception. The sight, sound, and action that emerged from the five community radio stations I visited made me sit up. They were eye-openers in more ways than one!

While field visits often provide useful anecdotal data, this experience struck deeper chords and demonstrated the transformative potential of community radio to be an active agent of social change.

*Reena Haridwar belongs to the Dalit Community. She is a first generation literate. Despite acute poverty, unemployment and lack of resources, her father was determined that Reena would study. Amidst her struggle to be educated, Reena's childhood dream was to be in the media. When Radio Borendro in Naogaon gave her the opportunity through the Women's Fellowship Program – it was literally a dream come true. Reena says that it has been life changing and hopes to be permanently integrated in the station. She feels her involvement as a producer has made a big difference in addressing the Dalit community's needs as they are more comfortable talking with her. She is also now respected and seen as a change agent by many in the Ukilpara, Naogaon community.*

Child marriages are a frequent occurrence in Bangladesh, especially in the rural areas. The roots of the problem lie not so much in traditional or orthodox customs but more out of abject poverty and economic need. The issue was a consistent feature in all the field interactions across all the five community radio stations which were a part of the visit (Padma, Mahananda, Borendro, Mukti and Bikrampur). What was interesting was how listeners and volunteers alike echoed the value of the community radio station in not only providing awareness about the issue but often also actively preventing child marriages from occurring.

The experiences of the community radio stations – ranging from anecdotal data to more conclusive trends supported by documentation and records – underscore

the point. A community reporter from Radio Borendro described how she was informed of a child marriage that was to take place three days earlier. After getting details from a community member, the radio station informed the local authorities. The child marriage was stopped and corrective action was taken on the concerned.

Another station, Radio Mahananda started a helpline to combat child marriage with a toll free number 10921 in December end 2014. There were only six calls in the first month, but by January 2015 the number had increased to 109. In February, the number of calls went up to 118 while in March there were 106 calls.



Taposh Chowdhury at work

# esh – Including the excluded

In quite a few of the stations, the data also indicated an impressive number of strike rates. For instance, Radio Bikrampur recorded 35 cases of child marriages in a year which were prevented by the community after they listened to the relevant programmes broadcast by the station. What was also encouraging was the emergence of the community radio station as a trusted and often the initial contact point by the local community in redressing grievances or social problems.

Underlying the changes at the societal and community level, the stations' transformative impact at the level of the individual was also evident. And in more than just a few cases the individual came from less privileged or marginalized sections of society. The interactions with Reena Haridwar and Taposh Chowdhuri from Radio Borendro and Radio Bikrampur substantiate the point. (See Box).



*Reaching out to children from the margins*

While it would be simplistic to view community radio as a magic bullet resolving a complex issue like child marriage, its track record as an effective and credible vehicle promoting good governance would appear to have been recognized by the Bangladesh Government. A recent statement by the Bangladesh Minister of Information, Mr Hasanul Huq Inu, indicated that his ministry would take initiatives to enable community radio stations to be set up in every upazilla (sub-district). This is good news: especially in a country whose trust with freedom of expression and independent media has been fractured and volatile.

Admittedly there are challenges that confront community radio's growth in Bangladesh. The cause for cheer is that while community radio in the country may have many more miles to go, some of the milestones it has already registered indicate that the effort has been more than worthwhile.

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**Taposh Chowdhury** is a Dalit youth who is a volunteer with Radio Bikrampur. The evaluator chanced to meet Taposh while he was on peer to peer exchange visit at Radio Mahananda. Like Reena, Taposh is a first generation literate. The youngest in his family, he has been associated with the radio station for three years. For Taposh, Radio Bikrampur has been "transformative" both in terms of providing a platform for the Dalit community to articulate their views and concerns and also at a personal level. He informed the evaluator that there were several policies on reservation and livelihoods that the Government had introduced for marginalized and Dalit groups. However, the Dalit community did not have relevant information about them. This, however, had changed because of the programs produced by Radio Bikrampur. Moreover, Taposh's participation in the radio station's activities has also been a bridge for the community who now is more trusting and engage more actively with the community radio station. At a personal level, Taposh affirmed that the station had substantially impacted his life. Apart from improving his confidence and his communication skills, he also pointed out that the station helped him to gain more knowledge on current affairs. Currently pursuing English at the University, Taposh aspires to also study law and join the administrative service. This is also his father's dream. Like Reena, Taposh is now recognized and appreciated as a useful and contributing member of the community.

**Ashish Sen**



## SNIPPETS

### Zambia govt says no to State funding of CR

Minister of Information and Broadcasting Services Chishimba Kambwili said Government is making efforts to fund public media institutions and has a burden to come up with a policy to support community media stations. Winding up debate in Parliament, after the committee on Information and Broadcasting Services presented a report on information and broadcasting services, Mr Kambwili said community media should be driven by the community. "I can only advise the community media stations to be aggressive in securing adverts, but we do understand that in some situations, it is difficult to get adverts," he said. Mr Kambwili said Government is doing everything possible to ensure that media houses, including community radio stations, are supported. "Let me make it very clear that it will not be possible for Government to fund community radio stations. Already we are struggling to fund our own ZNBC, Times of Zambia, Zambia Daily Mail and ZANIS, and it will be hard on public coffers to come up with support for community radio stations," he said.



Zambia PC - Daily mail

Committee chairperson Kabinga Pande said the report recommends the Government to formulate and implement a national community media policy that will recognise the unique role the sector is playing. Mr Pande said it is in this vein that the committee urges Government to expand the mandate of the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) by creating a community media fund to support community stations and that Government should allocate annual grants.

Source: <https://www.daily-mail.co.zm/?p=35011>

### Radio plays vital role in quake-ridden Nepal



Where CR is a life line

The horrendous earthquakes that ripped through Nepal in April and May 2015 killed thousands of people, seriously injured many more, and flattened much of this mountainous country's infrastructure, including its government, commercial and community radio stations. In the wake of these disasters, Nepal's broadcasters have stood up for their people by doing whatever it takes to get their life-saving transmissions back on air.

Given the extent of the damage, the level of human tragedy that has affected all Nepalese and the country's limited communications, electrical and emergency response capabilities, these efforts are nothing short of heroic. But Nepal's broadcasters understand that their broadcasts are lifelines for listeners seeking life-saving assistance, information, and a sense of connection with the rest of their fellow citizens.

"After the jolt of 7.8 magnitude, during the initial and largest earthquake on April 25, most of the radio stations were damaged and some were collapsed in quake-hit districts," said Gopal Guragain, senior journalist and CEO of Nepal's Ujyaalo Radio Network and Ujyaalo Online. "It was important to resume their broadcasts because true information and life-saving education was the only remedy to reduce rumors and panic among the people."

Read more: <http://www.radioworld.com/article/radio-plays-vital-role-in-quake-ridden-nepal/276736> by James Careless

### Mangalore University seeks license for Radio Mangala

Mangalore University will have its own community radio — Radio Mangala, if the government approves a proposal sent by the department of journalism. Mangalore University department of journalism is gearing up to commence the FM community radio, which will be available in 15 kms radius of the university campus. The department has already submitted a proposal to the government in this regard and work will be started soon after the approval.

Journalism department chairman G P Shivaram told TOI that a proposal to commence community radio was submitted to the state government four months ago. "We have sought the government an approval to open community radio under Rashtriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) project. Once the proposal is cleared, then the department will commence the preliminary work of setting up a studio and lab," he said adding that the community radio will be accessible to people in 15 kms radius of Mangalore University.

Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mangaluru/Mangalore-University-plans-to-start-community-radio/article-show/47666385.cms>

### Radio station to preserve Malva language

A group of professionals have decided to launch a community radio in Malavalli town of Mandya district, Karnataka to teach students English and work towards retaining the vanishing Malva language. Madhukar G Appaji, project director of Mysore Heritage Centre, will lead the team which includes Capt Preetham Madhukar of the merchant navy, MS Divyanand, an IT professional and Arpita Chandrashekar, an IIM-K graduate and Suresh, an Intech IBM alumnus.

Appaji said, "Malavalli town still has all features of a classical Old Mysore village. It has been identified as one of the most backward taluks according to the Nanjundappa committee report. We are in the process of launching a community radio station that will be linked to social media — WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter and so on. The test transmission on WhatsApp and podcasting will be launched soon."

Source: <http://www.bangaloremirror.com/news/state/Radio-station-to-preserve-Malva-language/articleshow/47558077.cms>



## TRACKING CR

# Dost wins CR Video Challenge Award 2015

Can you present an audio medium with the help of a video? This unusual challenge was successfully organized by CEMCA, in association with UNESCO and Apeejay Institute of Mass Communication (AIMC). The challenge prompted some inspiring entries, many of which were proud recipients of the Community Radio video challenge awards at a packed function in the India International Center, New Delhi on June 30, 2015.

The 3-minute video challenge on the theme "Community Radio: Citizen's Voices, Empowering Societies" was organized for the students of Indian media schools. The second and third positions were bagged by videos like 'Radio Se Shauchalaya Tak', 'Meri Awaaz' and 'Namma Vanoli', 'Mrityur Mukh Theke', 'Gungunaati Ansuni Aawazein', 'Jaano Adhikar', 'Apna Radio', respectively. The event also saw a few faces from the previous year's challenge. Said Shilajit Dey from ILEAD, Kolkata, the proud winner of the Community Radio Video Challenge, "Last year I was a runner's up and this year I won this competition, so it's a progress for me." His video, 'DOST', won the first prize because of its concept and good cinematography.

The awards were distributed to the winners by a panel of eminent guests who also congratulated the organisers for their efforts and the students for their creativity. Mr. Bhaskar Ghose, former Secretary Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Ministry of Culture, Government of India gave valuable insights on the importance of community radio in the development of the grassroots people. Mr. Sunit Tandon, Director General of Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) spoke about the importance and relevance of community radio and appreciated the initiative of the organisers. RJ Raunak from 93.5 Red FM entertained people with his hilarious gigs.

The award ceremony began with the welcome address



*Dost takes centre stage at award ceremony*

delivered by Dr. Ramesh Sharma, Director, CEMCA. This was followed by the opening remarks from Mr. Shigeru Aoyagi, Director and UNESCO Representative to Bhutan, India, Maldives, and Sri Lanka. Prof. Ashok Ogra, Director, AIMC explained the Jury process of the video challenge. A member of the Jury, Dr Manoj Patariya, Additional Director General, Prasar Bharati was also present along with the representatives from different organisations. Ms. Nidhi Ralhan of UNESCO announced the results of the CRVC 2015. Mr. R Thyagarajan and Ms. Monica Sharma of CEMCA delivered the concluding remarks and the vote of thanks respectively. This ceremony was coordinated by Dr. Ankuran Dutta, Programme Officer, CEMCA.

**A CEMCA Report**

## CR gives voice to the youth in Kashmir

Although grass roots community radio came to India nearly a decade ago, its entry into Jammu and Kashmir has been relatively recent. It was only on April 6, 2012 that Community Radio Sharda went on air thanks to the efforts of the NGO, Pir Panchal Cultural, Educational, Social, Environmental and Sports Organization (CESES) that applied for a license in 2011.

Radio Sharda's mandate has been to revive and preserve the cultural ethos of community it serves. Towards this end, it has especially focused on the needs of the Kashmiri Pandits. The content of Radio Sharda is in Kashmiri and Hindustani, broadcast on FM 90.04 in and around Jammu City. Adhering to its motto of Booziv ti khosh rooziv (listen and be

happy), the station has consistently striven to keep social welfare and community development as its central focus.

Given the vulnerability of the Kashmir valley to conflict, it was perhaps not surprising that community radio was a late entrant.

However, the idea and the relevance of community radio began as early as 2009 when Panos South Asia started a community-based radio programme for the Awantipora community in collaboration with the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST). Its programme 'Pesh Kadam' (a step forward) comprised a combined production by Awantipora youth and students of IUST and was broadcast till

March 2011. 'Pesh Kadam' programmes were related to career, health, and general issues of the locality, like water, electricity, and agriculture. Its main objective was to give voice to the youth of Kashmir in general and Awantipora in particular.

Now solely run by IUST, this initiative produces a weekly programme by students, which is broadcast from Radio Kashmir 102.6 FM. The issues cover a wide range of subjects: from livelihoods to governance and also include segments related to culture, economy, health, career and many other aspects of the community it serves.

**John Babu**  
Central University of Kashmir

## INTERNATIONAL

# The story of 3CR 855 AM: An activist hub

Last year in November, I had the opportunity to visit 13 different community radio stations in Australia, made possible through the Australia India Youth Dialogue (AIYD) Alumni Grant. I decided to attend the annual CBAA (Community Broadcasting Association of Australia) conference in Adelaide to network and meet with different people.

Among them was Rachel Maher, a former 3CR Program Manager, and a former Trainer at CBAA. Over coffee one afternoon discussing the role of women in community radio, she insisted that I visit 3CR 855AM. She vouched for the station's strong feminist fibre and suggested that I meet with Juliet Fox to understand the radio.

Soon I was at the station located at Smith Street, Fitzroy in Melbourne. The first thing that caught my eye was the 2012 CRAM Guide which states "Invest in Independence." The Guide discusses the dire state of Australia's media ownership and emphasizes the need to invest in independence, a motto that this community radio station has religiously pursued.

Since 1976, 3CR has been Melbourne's "voice of dissent," a heritage in which they take great pride. With programmes that range from women immigrants, refugee rights and women revolutionaries to issues of climate change, corruption, capitalism, military hypocrisy, oil and coal mining, workplace justice and domestic



*Melbourne's voice of dissent*

violence, the station has consciously contributed to alternative views, and promoted analysis, public debate and discussions.

This has been made possible by its policy to raise funds independently, without government or corporate support through a community and listener subscriber structure – a practice that merits emulation both in terms of developing sustainability and building diverse content.

During the course of our conversation, Juliet mentioned that women are part of the fabric of the station. 3CR has a strong feminist ethic, which is evident with some

of the programmes like "Women on the Line", one of the oldest programs distributed nationally, and at present through the Community Radio Network (CRN). A current affairs programme focussing on women, it provides an in-depth analysis of contemporary issues, through a gendered framework. Some of these include "Accent of Women" – by and about women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, "Feminist Focus" – another current affairs program, with a strong focus on conversations with activists, authors, academics, "Girls Radio Club", a project for women from different backgrounds such as indigenous, refugee, asylum seekers or migrants in the age group of 15-20, "Femme Freestyle," which explores issues in the community through music, poetry and storytelling among the others. Interestingly, most of the shows are not confined by a particular geography, dismissing the argument of a homogenized, geographical community or that the content of community radio must be limited to a particular boundary within the coverage area.

The important take-away for me from 3CR was the immense possibility for an "alternative view point" and, "access to marginalized communities." With over 400 volunteers, the station is buzzing with activity, and produces as many as 120 shows.



*A People Powered CR station*

*Continued on Page 11*



## VOICES FROM THE FIELD

# Radio Active turns eight

Radio Active's eighth birthday was special. Its listeners and supporters took centre stage in more ways than one. First, the birthday party was hosted by Paradigm Shift- a Vegan café and activist centre run by Radio Active's supporter, volunteer and well-wisher, Sowmya Reddy. Another supporter, Anita Cherian, captured the appropriateness of the setting when she wished the station on Facebook: "Congratulations and all the best. Paradigm Shift suits the occasion in more than one way :) Love the way Radio Active makes it a point to balance listening and voicing..."

Another supporter, Meetal Mukherjee, provided more food for thought when she suggested that we use the infinity symbol for the eighth anniversary poster because the number 8 represents infinity. It is fluid, and has no beginning or end. And so, the theme became infinite possibilities....

Everyone who came in had to get a basket of eight possibilities for the station – which resulted in yet more food for thought! Some of the interesting possibilities included – increase/expand reach, better reach, start signature campaign to sort out frequency issue, develop mobile app, introduce live streaming, policy advocacy for news, transcribe audio stories to print- more than reaching out to more, increase reach through convergence, institutionalize experiences, explore different genre of music, better office space, use community radio as an organizing tool, introduce sports based programmes such as commentary during matches, more documentary, voices to tell other people stories (including stories from the state or other states), introduce fellowships, reach out to other different communities of interest – like the bands that play at the weddings, the dhobi (washer men) community, the old tanga community that Bangalore lost, and many others. On Ashish Sen's suggestion, the station decided to put up the Wall of Remembrance, to record people's association with Radio Active. Some of the



*Writing on the Wall of Remembrance*

comments that the wall received were: "community space", "voice for the voiceless", "relationships", and "beyond boundaries." Those that could not write, painted flowers and smiles to express their feelings. From flowers, to pet friends, the celebrations had a steady stream of visitors.

Many of the volunteers also re-lived their association with Radio Active, and made everyone nostalgic. It was a perfect day to let one's hair down. Introductions, interactions and networking with diverse groups jostled for space as communities of interest and supporters danced, and the festivities ended only when the café shut down late at night. We left with an emotion lingering in our minds that the station is full of unlimited possibilities.

**Team Radio Active CR 90.4MHz**

## 3CR: A people-powered radio

*Continued from Page 10*

The popular term used to describe the station is "activist hub" and rightly so, given that 90 different groups came together to form 3CR in the early 1970's. Standing testimony to this is a framed photo of early founders calling for an "Independent Radio."

Its activism has often resulted in 3CR being criticized from many quarters. There have been attempts to brand it as "terrorist radio" because of its support for the Palestinian struggle. Others have called it "anarchist" because of the

station's programme "Anarchist World this Week". Volunteer presenters have been threatened for speaking about Tamil people's fight to restore their traditional homeland in Sri Lanka.

3CR was granted full metropolitan broadcast coverage status only in 1988. At 3CR, the Community Radio Federation (CRF) continues to be the peak decision-making body, comprising 10 subscriber representatives and 10 station worker representatives (elected by 3CR subscribers and station workers) as well as one representative from each of the organizations that have joined 3CR as

affiliates. They meet every quarter to make decisions about governance or operational changes. Of these, 15 members are voted into Committee of Management that meets once a month. As I leave for my next meeting, I carry indelible images of a people-powered radio at its best.

**Pinky Chandran**  
**Director, Radio Active CR 90.4 MHz**

*Part I of Pinky's Australian CR experiences was published in CR News, April-June 2015 issue.*



## CR UPDATES

# Radio Madhuban assists local administration in relief efforts

Abu Road region was disconnected for three days from the rest of the world following unprecedented rainfall, the heaviest in the history Mount Abu, which started on July 26 and continued incessantly for five days.

The heavy rainfall caused severe disruption of public life and infrastructure. As the conditions of the roads and bridges deteriorated, it became difficult for people to travel from home to work and many were stuck in schools, offices and other market places. The entry into most villages was blocked, and this restricted relief teams from entering the region. Panic and distress were the obvious outcomes of the situation.

Radio Madhuban 90.4 FM came to the rescue of the community by spreading updated information about the situation. Radio Madhuban connected with the local authorities and government officials and provided regular updates about the condition of villages and progress on the relief efforts. Suresh Thingar, municipal



chairperson, Mt. Abu, updated the listeners about the condition of roads and entry points into Mt Abu. The sub-divisional magistrate of Pindwar and Revdar blocks gave inputs about the situation in these areas. Block development officer, Manihar Vishnoi, and Editor, Abu Times, Sanjay Agarwal also connected with listeners through the radio to inform them about the relief efforts being undertaken and

steps they should take to keep safe during heavy rains.

A promo was aired on Radio Madhuban 90.4 FM to request the local community to call in and give updates about their villages and surrounding places. Several people called in to share updates about the conditions in their villages and helped each other to get home safe.

**Radio Madhuban Team**

## Call for contributions

The editorial team seeks contributions by way of news reports, features, opinions announcements on recent community radio activities in your organization/ region/nation. Voices/Stories from the field, including interviews with community members (listeners and producers) are especially welcome. Contributions should be in English, restricted to 300 words for news/event and 450-500 words for opinion pieces and features, and typed double spaced. Contributions may preferably be accompanied by photographs/illustrations. Contact address and details of authors/ organization should accompany the contributions.

The last date for submissions is **Sept. 20, 2015**

Electronic submission of contributions is recommended. Please email your articles/reports/features to: [newsr2010@gmail.com](mailto:newsr2010@gmail.com)

You can also post them to:

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**ANNOUNCEMENT:** *CR News* will now be available only online as an e-newsletter. It will incorporate features that make it more interactive with provision to post feedback and comments. Posting of audio and video stories will also be enabled. If you are not on the *CR News* mailing list, please send your mail ID to [newsr2010@gmail.com](mailto:newsr2010@gmail.com) to subscribe.