

This document is downloaded from DR-NTU, Nanyang Technological University Library, Singapore.

Title	AMIC Workshop on Editorial Management For Senior Women Journalists (Local Language Press) : Lahore, Pakistan, Dec 8-15, 1993 : [inaugural speech]
Author(s)	Majeed Nizami.
Citation	
Date	1993
URL	http://hdl.handle.net/10220/1494
Rights	

Inaugural Speech

By

Majeed Nizami

**INAUGURAL SPEECH OF MR MAJEED NIZAMI FOR
WORKSHOP ON "EDITORIAL MANAGEMENT FOR
SENIOR WOMEN JOURNALISTS"**

Mr Virgilio Laborador, Head of the Seminars and Institutional Development Programme of Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, Singapore.

Mr Raziuddin Shaikh, Honourary Director Press Institute of Pakistan, Lahore.

Respected guests and dear participants.

I feel honoured to have been asked to inaugurate this important workshop on Editorial Management for Senior Women Journalists this morning and take great pride in it. First of all, I must thank Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre for selecting the historic city of Lahore as a venue of this workshop. We consider it to be a very proud honour bestowed on us. I extend on

behalf of the citizens of Lahore a very warm welcome, despite our mild winter, to all the participants, particularly to those who have come from India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh. I wish them a very pleasant and comfortable stay in Lahore.

Ladies and gentlemen, you will all agree with me that there is no end to learning. In fact, enhancement of knowledge is a life-long affair and profession of journalism is no exception. All journalists need training at various levels to augment their professional knowledge and add new dimensions to their skills in the fast-changing and increasingly challenging world of print media. Such workshops enable journalists to move beyond national parameters to regional and international ones. A culturally and intellectually diverse group of journalists participating in this workshop will in itself be an enriching experience.

In Pakistan, like most other countries in the region, print media has become highly competitive and professional,

3

increasingly in line with the standards of international journalism. With a world 'in flux', readers' expectations from local papers and periodicals have undergone a qualitative change. Readers expect to be provided with a perspective on current events from both reporters and commentators instead of only from news reports. To respond to this expectation, journalists require an understanding of macro-level issues that influence world affairs. I believe such programmes can help them acquire this understanding.

In Pakistan, scant attention was paid to the training of journalists in the first 35 years of its establishment both by the government and the publishers. Responding to this need, the leading publishers along with their supporters in media, including some advertising agencies, got together and decided to set up the Press Institute of Pakistan.

The Press Institute of Pakistan is only a few years old with two chapters, one in Lahore and the other in Karachi. While the Lahore chapter is fortunate in having

its own premises, that in Karachi is still housed in a rented building. There is no set or regular funding of the Press Institute of Pakistan and the senior staff at both the places is working in an honorary capacity. Despite the paucity of funds, the Press Institute of Pakistan has regularly been holding workshops and training courses. In the past four years, hundreds of journalists belonging to different parts of the country have benefited from these workshops.

The present workshop is the first international workshop jointly organised by the Press Institute of Pakistan and the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, Singapore. With its success, we hope, it will be followed by more workshops in future with mutual cooperation. We will also send our representatives to participate in courses organised by the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, Singapore, outside Pakistan, as and when required.

Women, though relatively new in the field of print media, are playing a significant role in this part of the region. In Pakistan the number of women entering journalism is fast increasing. Today women are not merely confined to magazines and home and style sections, but are also working as news editors, reporters, editorial writers and analysts. Some of the leading periodicals and newspapers' weekend magazines in Pakistan, particularly the English ones, have women editors and a female-dominated staff. Women journalists have demonstrated a constructive role in journalism and brought fresh perceptions to it. Apart from giving an active 'voice' to women's concerns, they have raised vital issues pertaining to human rights, environment and development, among others.

While women have come a long way in the print media, a few have ventured into the realm of reporting. This field is still wide open to them and publishers should encourage more women to this area as well. The induction of women in the mainstream print media needs

to be fully supported and I believe there should be no discrimination in terms of their hiring, assignments, promotion and salary.

Having quite a few women journalists on The Nation and Nawa-i-Waqt staff I can confidently say that they are doing as well, if not better, than their male colleagues. Whenever a women journalist has taken an initiative, we have responded to it positively and will, *inshallah*, continue to do so.

Dear participants, this workshop, which is being organised at a big financial cost, provides you an ideal opportunity to learn from the views and experience of the respected speakers, many of whom are well known for their professional excellence. It also provides you with an ideal opportunity to make friends with journalists from neighbouring countries. My experience is that friendships developed at such live-in courses last for ever. The knots of friendships tied here would further strengthen relations among SAARC countries. Being journalists your

endeavour should be to break the existing barriers. You must act as ambassadors and promoters of peace in the region.

Finally, I wish the organisers all success in their efforts, and hope that the participants will make the most of this workshop.