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Welcome Address

By

Vijay Menon

DEUTSCHE WELLE-AMIC WORKSHOP ON
"RURAL BROADCASTING MANAGEMENT: ORGANISATION
AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT"

Singapore, March 10 - 15, 1991

Welcome Address by Vijay Menon, Secretary-General, AMIC

It gives me great pleasure to welcome all of you to AMIC and to this Workshop on "Rural Broadcasting Management: Organisation and Personnel Development".

This is a singularly topical and timely workshop. The times are turbulent. Whether viewed from the standpoint of economics or politics, of ideology or technology, change seems to be the only constant. Planning and management, organisation and development assume greater urgency and importance than ever before.

It is an interesting coincidence that the inauguration and development of radio broadcasting in the 1920s, also saw the emergence of management as a profession and a science. While broadcasters look back on the past six decades and more as a period of phenomenal growth, management experts speak of their practice as having matured into a discipline in the last seven decades.

In the wake of rapid advances in communication technologies, a division of functions is emerging between radio and TV. Television is becoming transnational, entertainment oriented and geared to bigger audiences with different cultural backgrounds. Radio, on the other hand, is becoming more of a community medium, catering to smaller audiences and allowing for popular participation. It is also increasingly an information and education medium, more than just an entertainment medium. The greater coverage provided by radio also makes it an important channel for development communication.

This importance of radio as a medium is enhanced if we consider just one of the many problems facing Asia. The 1988 Population Crisis Committee study of the world's 100 largest metropolitan areas provides some grim statistics. By 1990, an estimated 10 per cent of the world's population was urban. By 1950, the proportion had risen to 30 per cent and there were 26 metropolitan areas with a population of 2 million or more. Today, of the world's 100 largest metropolitan areas, thirty are in Asia. Air pollution, traffic congestion, noise and urban

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violence are expected to worsen in the cities in the less developed countries. Communication media, especially radio, have an important role to play in stimulating collective action to counter the problems.

We are glad that the Deutsche Welle Radio Training Centre is our active partner in this workshop. The Centre recognises the developmental role of radio and its importance as a medium in reaching out to the masses, urban or rural. We in Asia owe the Deutsche Welle and its Training Centre a deep debt of gratitude for the many development and listener-oriented training programmes which have benefited radio broadcasters in Asia.

At AMIC, we celebrate our 20th anniversary this year. Training has occupied an important place in our activities during these 20 years. We have organised over 170 conferences, seminars and workshops which have directly benefited almost 4,000 participants, besides many more through our publication, research and documentation activities. We have been aided in our efforts to promote mass communication in Asia by the steadfast support of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and the Government of Singapore, the encouragement and help of cooperating institutions such as the Deutsche Welle Training Centre and, no less, by the response of organisations such as your own.

I would like to thank the Director of the Deutsche Welle Training Centre for agreeing to hold this workshop at AMIC. I have no doubt that Mr. Solbach and Mrs. Marcotty will maintain the highest standards of professional competence that we have come to expect from the Centre and ensure that this is a rewarding experience for your institutions and for all of you.

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