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<th>Title</th>
<th>Country paper : Bangladesh</th>
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Country Paper: Bangladesh

By

M Muzakkyer
Bangladesh is situated in the north eastern part of south­ east Asia. A country with an area of 144000 sq. km, it has approximately 110 m. population. About 85% of the population live in rural areas. Literacy rate of the country is about 27% at the moment.

Bangladesh is mainly an agricultural country though rapid industrialisation is underway in recent years.

Bangladesh is essentially a developing country. Since it is a developing country and most of the population live in rural areas Radio Bangladesh plays a very vital role in influencing their life and living.

Radio reaches every nook and corner of the country. So before I go into details about broadcasting of programmes, I would like to give a brief account of Radio set up.

Radio Bangladesh is purely a Government organisation and is financed by the Government. It is headed by a Director General. There is a National Broadcasting house at Dhaka, the capital of the country, five other regional stations and three relaying stations situated in strategically important cities of the country. Besides, there are ten other Directorates namely;

a) Directorate of Programme Planning
b) Directorate of Farm Broadcast.
c) Directorate of Population control programmes.
d) Directorate of External Service.
e) Directorate of Transcription Service.
f) Directorate of Commercial Service.
g) Directorate of Education Broadcast.
h) Directorate of Listener’s Research.
i) Directorate of Music
j) Directorate of Administration.
There is separate Engineering Department and also separate News and Monitoring Departments under Director General.

For home listeners Radio Bangladesh broadcast eighty six hours programme a day from various stations while six and a half hour programme is broadcast from External Service in Six languages.

While broadcasting programmes we follow certain broadcasting code which is briefly mentioned here:

1. To provide maximum benefit to the listeners. Listener's interests are put above everything.
2. To promote the advancement of education, art and culture.
3. To prepare and plan programmes for all sections of people with particular emphasis on the improvement of the lot of common masses.
4. To promote communal harmony, Religion's tolerance and international understanding.
5. To respect human rights and dignity.
6. To inculcate the spirit of national development.
7. To maintain the high standard and decency and decorum of programme.
8. To prepare programmes according to the need of the hour.

Programme Policies and broad based outlines are given by the Ministry of Information in consultation with programme experts and authorities of Radio Bangladesh. The directives deal with programmes of national and international importance. There is also a parliamentary committee which reviews the activities of Radio Bangladesh from time to time and gives necessary advice for smooth functioning of Radio.
There are various types of programmes broadcast everyday. These include educative, informative and entraining programmes.

In preparing programmes we attach maximum importance to the acceptability of the programmes. In producing a programme we first take into consideration its Viability, necessity and demand. Then we form some distinct ideas within ourselves. When the theme is finalised we chalkout a plan and finally go for production. Once the programme is prepared the stage of presentation comes. We put the programme on air. After broadcast we wait for feedback. Programme feedbacks are received through letters from the listeners, personal contact and through questionnaire. Innovative approaches are always there for the preparation of standard and effective programme. Each programme contains as many new ideas and new approaches as possible.

Personal recruitment are made through open competition. Persons with literary and cultural background and with creative ideas are given priority.

For training the newly recruited staff there is a staff training Institute known as National Institute for Mass communication which imparts training on programme planning, production and presentation. Staffs are also trained in leading broadcasting countries of the world.

At present Bangladesh is fighting against poverty, illiteracy and population boom. Though we have nearly achieved self sufficiency in food successfully combating the population growth. We also launched a crash programme for eradicating illiteracy. In these areas we are yet to achieve complete success. The democratically elected Government of Bangladesh has taken a number of steps to bring down the population growth rate considerably by the year two thousand and improve the literacy rate to a great extent during the same period. In successful implementation of these projects Radio Bangladesh has a vital role to play. It is the solemn duty of Radio to educate and motivate the general masses.
The world at present is faced with growing international, political and economic problems. Environment pollution is also a serious problem for mankind today. Radio as one of the most effective mass media can play a formidable role in bringing about peace and harmony among the nations of the world.

Whatever progress the radio has been able to make so far there is hardly any scope for complacency. It is obvious that with the advance of time and growth of science and technology the Radio will be confronted with new challenges in the days to come. In order that we may meet those challenges it will be necessary for us to evolve new approach, new ideas and new outlooks, so that in the field of mass communication the Radio can retain its unrivalled tradition and glory.

(M. Muzakkyer 7.9.93)
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