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Deutsche Welle - AMIC
Seminar on

RADIO PROGRAMMING
IN A MULTIMEDIA AGE

COUNTRY PAPER – INDIA

jointly organised by

Deutsche Welle Radio Training Centre
Köln, Germany

and

Asian Media Information
and Communication Centre (AMIC)

River View Hotel, Singapore
Text of Speech of Dr. P.C. Hembram,  
Deputy Director General,  
All India Radio.

Dear Friends,

I have come here with best wishes from my fellow communicators from All India Radio, which is one of the largest broadcasting networks in the world. All India Radio has started broadcast way back in 1927 with the inauguration of Mumbai Station. At that time it was known as Indian Broadcasting Company. After one month Calcutta station was started.

Over the years All India Radio has evolved a three-tier system of broadcasting – National, Regional and Local. It caters to the needs of the audience through its 195 stations in 24 languages and 146 Dialects to almost the entire population of the country. Needs of information are catered through 290 News Bulletins per day broadcast in 109 languages. For entertainment radio broadcasts, humor programmes with film music,
light and folk music. Education programmes are active in formal and non-formal areas inclusive of school and university broadcast and farm school on the air, adult literacy. Social service and many more other areas of learning.

Local radio and community radio is comparatively a new concept of broadcast in India. Each of the stations serving a small area provides utility services and reaches right to the core of the heart of the people of a community. The microphone is used to voice their feelings, reflects their lives and enriches them. Local Radio is different from the regional network in its down to earth approach.

This was the starting point of local broadcast of All India Radio, which were started with a clear objective of establishing a two-way communication system. The proposed community radio in the North-East will be an abridged version of the local radio catering to still smaller groups in their own dialects and idioms. Each of these stations will
serve a small area providing a basic utility service and would reach right into the heart of the community to reflect and enrich its life and artistic expression. The emphasis will be on handling local problems, local news and views and local talents. The main thrust area for the programming of the community radio would be farming, rural development, health, family welfare, education, local handicrafts, entreprenuership and employment guidance.

There are 427 tribes and sub-tribes in the country and more than halves of them are concentrated in the Northeast. East tribe has its own distinct culture and way of life. They have their own customs and traditions, folk music and folklore. Setting up of a community would help them nurture their talent, preserve their heritage and fulfill their cultural aspirations.

At present All India Radio is utilizing INSAT-1D, INSAT-2A and INSAT-2B for distribution of its programmes. For the national networking, All India
Radio uplinking set up at Delhi is used for up-linking seven S-band carriers and four C-band carriers. Additionally, four S-band carriers are also up-linked through DOT up-link at Secunderabad. For the regional up linking All India Radio Captive Earth Stations at 15 state capitals and DOT up-links at Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai are used. About 191 broadcasting centers have facility to receive S-band signals and 17 centers have facility to receive C-band signals. In addition, four TRACTS, one in each zone, for coverage of sports programmes and other important events at remote OB locations, are available. Four SNG systems, which can be set up at short notice to cover the news gathering requirements, have been provided at four zonal stations. Twenty more stations of All India Radio are being provided with C-band facilities. Four more Captive Earth Stations (CES) at Kohima), Imphal, Aizawl and Agartala are being provided. A two-channel CES is being provided at AIR Chennai and AIR Calcutta to avoid dependence on DOT earth station. To improve the quality of network of Vividh Bharti Programme, a system using digital
signals is also being provided. AIR is operating 20 channels of Sky Radio services through the TV up linking of Doordarshan.

The AIR archives library is a library storing about 40,000 tapes of various formats which include vocal and instrumental music of both Hindustani and Karnatak styles: light, folk, tribal and patriotic music of different regions and also orchestral composition. Besides, the archives has the voice recordings of distinguished personalities like Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Subhas Chandra Bose, Sardar Vallabhbai Patel, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, Sarojini Naidu, Aruna Asaf Ali and many others. Apart from this, the speeches delivered by all Presidents and Prime Ministers are being preserved.

AIR broadcasts 40 percent of total broadcast for music in classical, light, folk, film & regional languages. This year Akashwani organized Sangeet Sammelan concerts at 22 stations and
featured very eminent and popular artists of India who performed before an invited audience. In addition, classical vocalists, artists presented patriotic songs before and invited audience at Delhi. In the Golden Jubilee of Independence, AIR also selected 50 patriotic songs in different languages and released a set of four CDs and four cassettes named ‘Azadi Ke Geet’ and also excerpts from the speeches of National leaders. AIR also broadcast a special feature at the midnight of 14 August 1997 befitting the occasion. A number of Nationals programmes including ‘Bapu Ke Priya Bhajan’ on 2\textsuperscript{nd} October, have been broadcast in the National Programme of Music. Community Singing Cell has prepared community songs in different languages, which are being broadcast all over the country.

The programmes are specific, flexible and spontaneous enough to enable the stations to function as the mouthpiece of the community. From broadcasting All India Radio is proceeding to narrow casting. We have programmes for special audience with specific needs – Agriculture and

Apart from listeners in the country All India Radio has its language services targeted to listeners abroad in daily broadcast of 69 Hours 45 Minutes in 24 languages (16 Foreign Languages including 8 Indian Languages). The target areas to which External Services are addressed include Asia, Africa, Australia, Newzealand, Europe and the United Kingdom. Introduction of Internet broadcasting by All India Radio has enabled its listeners in various parts of the world like U.S.A, Canada to know more and more about India. It caters in Arabii, Baluchi, Burmese, Chinese, Dari, English, Fresh, Indonasiian, Nepali, Persian, Pushtu, Russian, Sinhala, Swahili, Thai and Tibetan.

Besides these regular broadcasts External Services Division supplies recordings of music, talks, plays, features, operas and other programmes to about 150 countries and foreign
broadcasting organizations under cultural exchange agreements and All India Radio's Programme Exchange Services. Its journal - 'India Calling' provides advance information of the Programme broadcast by External Services. It is supplied free of cost to its listeners.

All India Radio started its entertainment channel – Vividh Bharti in 1957. After 10 years commercials were introduced now extended to 99 Primary Channel Stations, 30 Vividh Bharti Channels, 72 Local Radio Stations and 5 FM Metro Stations. It is a very popular service providing 14 hours of entertainment through all its stations. FM has un-interrupted 24 hours entertainment service from metro cities like Delhi. Radio is working as lifeline of the nation.

To reach cent percent population and cater to its vast and varied needs All India Radio has set up an in-house training Institute for training its human resources in Programme and technical so as to enable them to keep pace with technological
development in creating state of the art programmes. Every year it conducts 131 training programmes for technical Programme and administrative staff.

‘Radio-on-Demand’ service on 2\textsuperscript{nd} FM channel transmission and All India Radio News on telephone are latest development in the field of latest advancement. Any body, any time, anywhere in the country is able to listen to latest happenings in the world it is just a telephone call away. It is a revolutionary change in the field of communication that keeps ahead of print media.

It is essential for any broadcasting organization to produce excellent programmes, which can be achieved by healthy competition and award and rewards for excellent work. To recognize such talents and to honor them, All India Radio has established Annual awards in 1974. These include best Programme in different categories, best maintained station, correspondent of the year and Audience Research surveys Reports. We have
observed that institution of these awards has a positive impact and encouraged programmes to bring out best of talent – known and latent.

To ensure free and fair expression of the people for the people and by the people an Autonomous body is constituted – Prasar Bharti. Its board members represent each and every field. Dr. O.P. Kejariwal is the Chief Executive Officer of Prasar Bharti. After Prasar Bharti is operational, there is a new wave in Indian Broadcasting. It has created new broadcast opportunity for all – ‘SAB KE LIYE’ in the Programme where any body can walk in, record his Programme and listen to his own voice being heard by all. No tight rules no hassles, no formal audition this Programme is like a launching pad. Talent is the only condition. This experiment is popular one and attracted a lot of talent artists, poets, and writers to come to All India Radio.

Among other successful experiments we have carried out in recent days are Interactive Phone-in
programmes in peak hours - These are programmes on Health, Social issues, and Current affairs. All India Radio has made privileged ones to answerable to under privileged. Any body can ask a question, raise an issue and get immediate answer, a possible solution. Ministers, top officials are within the reach of common man. These programmes are exceptionally popular and doing a social service and acting as a help line. This service is used successfully in Distance Education Programmes of Open Universities. Kavita Samay - Its poetry time is another such Programme where an eminent poet is invited to the All India Radio studios. Invited audience has a chance to talk to him or her and have the pleasure of hearty chat and exclusive poetry recitation. This is an hour long recitation carried over national hook-up. To keep one in good humor and best of spirit All India Radio has humor time – laugh, laugh and laugh to laugh off all the worries. It is very good in keeping harmony, better interpersonal relations and make a house – a happy home.
All India Radio has done well-planned radio serials on Environment, problems of Adolescent, Human Evolution. These are yearlong radio serials to inculcate Eco-friendly attitude. These include Programme in collaboration with International agencies and Mich, a place of their own in the scenario of International Broadcasting. We are always anxious to have cooperation from other broadcasting organizations and offer the same to them. I hope it will bring us closer to each other and we will have better understanding.

Thank you.