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News of ABU activities and the broadcasting industry in the Asia-Pacific

ABU NEWS





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From the editor

Welcome to the 1st quarter 2024 edition of ABU News.

The Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) team held another successful Digital Broadcasting Symposium (DBS) where we explored the benefits and challenges of artificial intelligence (AI). This year's DBS also marked the event's 20th anniversary. The event's longevity is a testament to the strength and uniqueness of the DBS event in spotlighting the broadcast industry's most relevant technological updates, news, trends as well as dilemmas.

The new year has been busy for ABU in other areas as well. In January, our Secretary-General, Ahmed Nadeem, paid a visit to the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU), and in February, to India's Prasar Bharati, and the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB). The visits sealed the commitment of ABU to work and collaborate with its member organisations more closely, marking a solid footing into 2024. The WBU/UNDRR Media Saving Lives initiative recently entered Phase 4 with more activities and initiatives ramped up. Read on further for news on other departments and divisions too, including from the sports, legal and programming departments.

To end this message, ABU would like to wish happy 78th and 74th anniversary to Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM) and Radio Nepal respectively. Here's to more years of relationship and collaboration.

And not to forget, a warm welcome to the new staff who were recently appointed to ABU.

Here's to a good remaining 2024 ahead.

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DBS2024: Celebrating a 20-year legacy of broadcasting excellence and innovation

The 20th edition of the Digital Broadcasting Symposium (DBS) concluded successfully, with participation from nearly a thousand individuals and 300 organisations across 50 countries. The event was hosted from March 4 to 7 at the Royale Chulan Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The theme of this year's event was 'Navigating the AI Horizon', exploring the opportunities and challenges of artificial intelligence (AI), including legal and ethical dilemmas posed by this technological advancement.

The use of AI is growing at an unprecedented rate, and the broadcasting industry is one of the areas actively implementing AI technologies. DBS2024 brought together industry players and professionals from across the region and beyond to exchange ideas about AI.



DBS2024 was officially opened by Malaysia's Deputy Minister of Communication, Teo Nie Ching. In her keynote address, she stated that broadcasters should be mindful of ethical and social responsibilities when using generative AI and be aware of issues such as algorithm bias.

"The rapid pace of AI innovation brings with it a host of ethical, social, and regulatory considerations that demand our attention and diligence," Teo said. "Issues such as algorithmic bias, data privacy, and the societal impact of AI-driven automation require thoughtful reflection and proactive measures to ensure that AI technologies are developed and deployed in a manner that is ethical, transparent, and equitable."

ABU Secretary-General Ahmed Nadeem welcomed delegates to the symposium, saying, "The overall aim of the symposium is for people to learn from each other. The biggest worry for us is not new technology but how to keep pace with it."

There were 22 sessions at the event, consisting of 12 conferences, 8 workshops, and 2 masterclasses. Nearly 80 experts and speakers presented, seeking to find solutions and share experiences on issues ranging from digital transition to enhancing user experiences.

The discussions focused on the ability of AI to improve efficiency, offer more personalised content for the audience, and enable virtual production. The use of AI for non-profits was also highlighted, such as digital radios for disaster preparedness.



Testimonies from ABU members



"I am impressed by how DBS2024 has evolved and grown, stage by stage, over the years. There is more participation, different people, more industries, better programmes, new technology, and new content creation methods."
– Sharad Sadhu, media specialist and ABU's former technology director.



"DBS is a good opportunity to learn from different experts and different companies from all over the world who share their expertise about broadcast and broadband technologies."
– Dr. Mohieddin Moradi, Director General of the R&D unit at the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB).



While some speakers debated whether AI brings more harm than good, expressing concerns that the technology might replace workers in the future, others, like Lindsay Cornell, Principal Systems Architect at BBC Digital in the UK, assured otherwise, saying, “People use AI for everything. There is a fear of the unknown, such as what people felt during the radio a hundred years ago, but things keep getting faster. Do we humans run out of capacity to adapt to change? I don’t think so.”

This year’s Best Booth Award was won by Malaysia’s Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM). Director General Datuk Suhaimi Sulaiman announced that the public broadcaster is in talks with potential partners to leverage AI in generating news and enhancing news presentation.

Since its inception 20 years ago, the symposium has covered wide-ranging topics such as remote production technologies, studio automation, Big Data, 5G technology, sustainability, and the role of broadcast media during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the closing ceremony of DBS2024, Dr Veysel Binbay, Director of ABU Technology and Innovation, said, “I would like to thank the attendees, exhibitors, sponsors, ABU staff, and the student volunteers who helped make the event a success.” ■■■

AI brings greater data-driven workflow strategies

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is improving the capabilities of cloud technology and people's data-driven workflow strategies, said Mardhiah Nasir, Executive Director of IPBS Technology, Malaysia, at the pre-DBS2024 workshop on March 4.

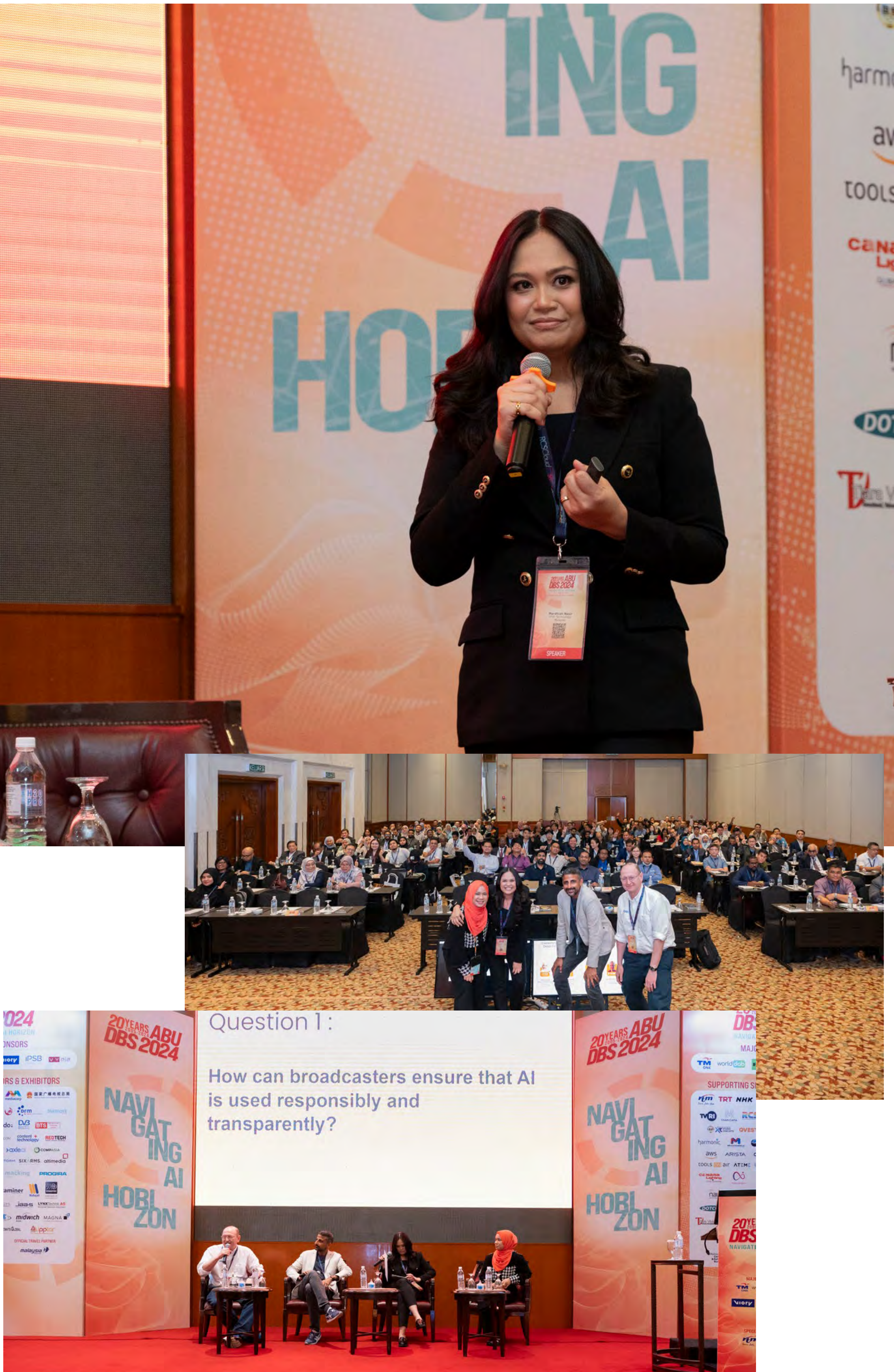
“In the future, it is all about collaborative work and development,” she said, citing the use of AI cloud by news outlet Fox Sports already during the Qatar World Cup telecast.

Mardhiah explained that the strength of AI cloud technology is that it can be incorporated into work processes without changing everything. She also emphasised the technology's great ability to launch onto the market.

Mardhiah noted that some people are afraid that AI cloud will pose security risks, but she assured that choosing the right data cloud provider is integral in ensuring privacy and security. During her presentation, Mardhiah also touched on other aspects including managing bandwidth and latency, ensuring file integrity, the integration with existing systems and workflows and the speed in which broadcasters can access content immediately.

Mardhiah was speaking at a workshop on the power of cloud, AI, data-driven workflow strategy and monetisation, led by Alia Sarah Binti Zainal Abidin, Head of Marketing & Business Development, IPSB Technology.

“It's always good to be partnering with ABU and we would like to dig into the power of AI together,” Mardhiah said to a room full of audience, before the DBS event kicked off into full gear the next day. ■■■





Contributing to a sustainable media ecosystem

The technical operational director of Televisi Republik Indonesia (TVRI) Satriyo Dharmanto said that broadcast media in the digital era calls for a holistic approach to sustainability.

Presenting at the ABU Digital Broadcasting Symposium 2024, he said that this approach includes environmental responsibility, social equity, economic viability, community engagement, ethical content creation and technological innovation.

Satriyo said that as an example, TVRI is trying to reduce the national power consumption of the implementation of Digital TV DVB-T2 Network, its energy cost, and also carbon dioxide emissions.

“In the industry that uses large amounts of energy for cameras, lighting, and studio equipment as well as post-production, and digital transmission system, the broadcasting industry in Indonesia plays a role in supporting Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC),” he said.

“By embracing this responsibility, the industry can drive positive change towards a media ecosystem that serves the greater good,” he said. “Together we have the power to reset the narrative and create a better world with AI.” ■■■



WorldDAB Emergency Warning System (EWS) to hit market by year-end

The WorldDAB Emergency Warning System (EWS), an advanced alerting system for disaster management, is expected to be available in the market by year-end.

This was announced by Lindsay Cornell, Chair of the WorldDAB Technical Committee, at the ABU Digital Broadcasting Symposium 2024.

The EWS will deliver critical emergency information such as notifications regarding natural disasters, and alerts about chemical spills.

The EWS is designed to function as a part of a comprehensive public warning system, together with cellular network providers, radio and TV broadcasters, cable TV providers, wireless cable systems, satellite operators, and wireline operators to disseminate crucial information to the public.

An important component of the EWS is the wake-up synchronising scheme, specifically engineered to minimise audio loss, having proven to be effective in alerting people during floods in Germany. ■■■





ABU hosts A24 Global Coordination Conference in Kuala Lumpur

The A24 Global conference and shortwave coordination went smoothly in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. About sixty Frequency Managers from across Asia, Australia, Arab states, Europe and Americas attended the five-day conference from January 15 – 19.

According to ABU Technology, the conference helped to coordinate shortwave frequency schedules for the A-24 (Summer) season. This included member representatives from Lembaga Penyiaran Publik Radio Republik Indonesia (LPP RRI), Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT), the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK), and other organisations including Radio Miami International, the U.S. Agency for Global Media, Reach Beyond Australia, Vatican Radio, Broadcast Belgium and THALES.

ABU Technology promoted the event for the benefit of the HFCC/ABU-HFC members to get other important information regarding the shortwave coordination.

The frequency channel for shortwave radio is subject to change due to the 11-year solar cycle and seasonal effects, as well as new or changed frequencies of shortwave broadcasters around the world.

Hosted by ABU, the global coordination conference was organised jointly by the High Frequency Coordination Conference (HFCC), ABU itself, and the Arab States Broadcasting union (ASBU).



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2024 Global News Forum welcomes all ABU members this July in Bangkok

Registrations for the 2024 Global News Forum have opened.

The Forum and associated meetings will be held at the Sukosol hotel in Bangkok on 17-19 July.

All ABU members are invited to register, via the ABU event page. More than 120 people are expected to attend.

The theme this year is The Future of News. It will also be the title of an ABU News report, to be launched at the Forum.

Co-host Thai PBS and ABU News are well advanced with planning for the events, which will include a tour to Thai PBS.

The annual Asiavision Awards will be held on the evening of Global News Forum.

To register, click [here](#).





VOV hosts multiplatform news workshop

Voice of Vietnam vice-president Pham Manh Hung has highlighted the importance of training and new skill sets in a rapidly changing media landscape, at the closing ceremony of a two-day ABU News workshop in Ho Chi Minh City in March.

VOV hosted the Multiplatform Production and Distribution Workshop at its HCMC bureau. The workshop was attended by 26 people, with another 10 from VOV offices across southern Vietnam joining online. The participants included journalists and producers from Vietnam Parliament Television, Voice of Ho Chi Minh City and the VOV Traffic channel.

Vice President Hung congratulated the participants and encouraged them to share their new skills with colleagues.

The interactive, hands-on workshop featured a series of exercises which culminated in participants producing highly engaging social media videos using a range of story-telling tools including pieces to camera, walk and talks, fast and slow motion, vox pops, on-screen text and the use of satellite imagery and maps.

The trainers were ABU Director of News Deborah Steele and the Head of Digital Strategy at ABS-CBN, Biena Magbitang. Biena demonstrated her mojo tool kit, including apps such as Canva, Capcut and Teleprompter Pro. ■■■



Experts address workshops on social media and election reporting

Lessons from TRT World's Instagram coverage of the war in Gaza were featured during the 2024 Asiavision Coordinators' meeting, with members encouraged to remember the three second rule on capturing the attention of audiences, the power of stories about people and the importance of tailoring content to suit each platform.

The executive producer of video at TRT World's Digital channel, Emre Unal, shared his experience and examples to demonstrate why TRT's social media platforms have seen significant audience growth since the war began. He also explained the key characteristics of viral videos, focusing on narrative and impact.

On Day 2, Senior TRT producer/correspondent Ali Burak Biber shared more insights on why audiences are moving to social media and how to optimise social media content. He highlighted the importance of building trust rather than sharing clickbait and urged delegates not to overuse breaking news

hashtags and banners. He said headlines should not promise more than stories deliver. He also encouraged delegates to analyse their social media data.

Emphasising the importance of data journalism and data visualisation, Lee Long Hui, a front-end developer and former journalist at Malaysiakini, shared his skills and knowledge of journalism and computer science for better storytelling.

Thai PBS Senior News Producer Jeerapa Boonyatus explained Thai PBS World's strategic approach to distributing content across various social media platforms to maximise viewership and engagement. TVB Principal Editor Billy Chu discussed TVB's social media strategy to reach and engage with audiences effectively.

A workshop on election reporting included a presentation by 360info editor Shahirah Hamid, who explained how 360info can be a resource for newsrooms and journalists when identifying interview talent for election coverage and looking for digital content.

TVRI World Producer Almar Reihan provided an overview of the main candidates and issues for Indonesia's elections, as well as sharing TVRI's plans for covering election day on 14 February.

CNA's Kuala Lumpur correspondent Afifah Ariffin shared her experience during the Malaysian 2022 election, including the challenge of keeping up with the travel schedule of candidates, reporting from multiple locations on a single day, providing updated information in live crosses and responding to breaking news.

Earlier, ABU News Director Deborah Steele spoke about the role of the media in reporting elections, identifying the issues that matter most to voters, fact-checking and verification. She also highlighted the importance of journalistic ethics, trust, and safety and the risk of sharing disinformation.

About 35 people participated in the two workshops, which took place on January 23-24 at the Royale Chulan Kuala Lumpur.





ABU News proposes new committee structure

A proposal to reactivate and expand the ABU News committee structure was among the issues discussed at the 2024 Asiavision Coordinators' meeting in Kuala Lumpur on 23 January.

Under the proposal there would be an ABU News Group committee and a separate Asiavision committee, with the aim of encouraging more members to nominate and participate in ABU News activities.

Fifty-seven ABU members took part in ABU News activities last year, while the number of Asiavision members increased from 28 to 31.

Other issues discussed at the meeting included Asiavision's new Asia Pacific View (APV) platform, ways to improve TV news scripting and Asiavision's plans for 2024. ■■■





Happy 40th birthday Asiavision!

The Asiavision video news exchange celebrated its 40th birthday recently.

On 16 January 1984, the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union's news exchange was launched, initially as a single daily satellite feed for television news.

Today it's a 24/7 cloud-based platform, providing breaking and headline news, issues-based content and human interest stories for all media including social media.

Throughout, Asiavision's purpose has remained the same – to be a valued source of international news, free of commercial or political aims and with members driving changes and improvements.

News Group chairman Indra Singh accepted the honour of cutting the cake at the celebration of Asiavision's 40th birthday.

Indra Singh, who is the Director of News at FBC Fiji, joined representatives from other Asiavision members and Secretariat staff at a dinner in Kuala Lumpur on 23 January.

The Secretary-General of the ABU, Ahmed Nadeem, awarded certificates of appreciation to representatives of the founding members of Asiavision, including the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK), Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM), Televisi Republik Indonesia (TVRI), DD India, the Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation (SLRC) and China

Central Television (CCTV). Nadeem thanked members and made special note of NHK's role and vision in helping to establish Asiavision.

He highlighted its evolution from being a single, daily satellite feed, to a cloud-based platform and congratulated current and former ABU staff, including all the former directors of ABU News.

There are currently 30 Asiavision members: RTA and Ariana TV Afghanistan, BTV Bangladesh, RTB Brunei, CCTV China, FBC and Fiji TV in Fiji, TVB Hong Kong, TVRI Indonesia, DD India, NHK Japan, KBS Korea, TDM Macau, RTM Malaysia, PSM and SS Media in the Maldives, MRTV Myanmar, TV5 Mongolia, NTV Nepal, Pasifika TV New Zealand, ABS-CBN in the Philippines, Mediacorp in Singapore, SLRC and MTV in Sri Lanka, Thai PBS and MCOT in Thailand, TRT in Türkiye, TVTM Turkmenistan, MTRK Uzbekistan and VTV Vietnam.





Asiavision spotlights women's empowerment stories

Asiavision members have shared stories of women's achievements and struggles across the globe, from Easter Island to the Ukraine, to mark International Women's Day.

This initiative stems from discussions during the Asiavision Coordinator's Meeting in January 2024, aiming to foster collaboration on major events and occasions through the ABU's news exchange.

The stories, ranging from a Japanese woman being recognised by the US State Department for speaking against sexual harassment, to the enlistment of women in Vietnam's military service, highlight diverse facets of women's empowerment and resilience.

In India, the focus is on women's growing role in aviation, while in Niue, women are praised for their multifaceted contributions to society. A special report from Easter Island discusses efforts to combat violence against women.

Other stories include the recruitment of women in Ukraine's underground mines amid the war with Russia, and a women-led cooperative in Türkiye, where women are engaged in the production and sale of local delicacies. ■■■

VTV tops Asiavision uploads

Asiavision members uploaded 15,917 video news stories in 2023, of which 42 percent were same-day items.

An analysis of Asiavision statistics for 2023 shows the top contributors were VTV Vietnam with 2,362 items, TVRI Indonesia with 2,249, CCTV China with 1,937, NHK Japan with 1,153, and Thai PBS Thailand with 796 items.

In the first year of Asiavision including ready-to-broadcast packages and reporter walkthroughs, members shared 816 reporter packages and 116 pieces-to-camera.

Members who excelled in delivering same-day stories include FBC (91%), TRT (89%), TVB (86%), BTV (83%), Thai PBS (83%), DD India (79%), NHK (73%), ABS-CBN (71%), SLRC (66%), and PasifikaTV (60%).

Other topics covered by members included climate change and sustainable development (5% contribution), natural disasters (2%), feature news (13%), that included stories on culture, arts, technology, innovation, and human development.

A comprehensive analysis of Asiavision's performance in 2023 was presented at the 2024 Asiavision Coordinators' Meeting on January 23. ■■■

Entries now open for 2024 Asiavision Awards

Members are invited to submit their works across nine categories until the final deadline on 15 May 2024.

The competition, aiming to honour journalistic excellence, allows submissions from items uploaded between 01 June 2023 and 30 April 2024. Categories include:

- Best news story (up to 4 minutes)
- Best breaking news coverage
- Best disaster coverage
- Best international news reporting
- Best sports report
- Best reporting on climate change and sustainable development
- Best reporting by a small newsroom
- Best coverage of an issue of public interest
- Best reporter package

The awards ceremony will take place at the Global News Forum in Bangkok on 18 July. ■■■

The Radio Festival kicks off World Radio Day 2024 in Delhi

The ABU joined more than 400 delegates at the 7th edition of The Radio Festival, celebrating 100 years of radio. The event was hosted at the India International Centre, New Delhi, and supported by India's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB), ABU member Prasar Bharati and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Under the theme “100 Years on Air: Keep it Loud!”, the three-day event, comprising a conference, workshop and masterclasses, celebrated not only World Radio Day, but also the 20th anniversary of community radio in India.

In his keynote address, Sanjay Jaju, Secretary, MIB, congratulated everyone on World Radio Day and said that radio has a huge role in advancing democracy and education, and that radio reflects the voices of all communities.

Ms. Vasudha Gupta, Principal Director-General of Akashwani (AIR), highlighted the importance of content, especially through radio. She said, “In the age of digital media, radio's advantage is that all its content can be accessed by anyone, anywhere and at any time”.

Head of ABU, Radio Olya Booyar, said that the conference, which included deliberations and discussions, reflected on radio's remarkable past, its present relevance, and the promise of a dynamic future. “It was also an opportunity to emphasise the importance of local languages and dialects in fostering communication with audiences, whether through public, private, community radio, or podcasts”.



ABU joins UNESCO-led initiative celebrating World Radio Day 2024

The ABU joined a UNESCO-led initiative on February 13 to ensure radio's continued success as the world marked the 100th anniversary of the first radio broadcast, an event commemorated annually as World Radio Day.



A joint statement, endorsed by sister unions and spearheaded by UNESCO, urged governments, regulatory bodies, the technology and automotive industries, and the global radio community to implement measures guaranteeing radio's longevity.

It called for actions to maintain radio's role in offering free and unrestricted access to diverse opinions and reliable information, to support communities and speakers of minority languages by ensuring they receive information and participate in democratic processes, and to guarantee radio's accessibility to all, regardless of financial status or personal circumstances.

This year's theme, "Radio: A Century Informing, Entertaining, and Educating," celebrates the medium's enduring influence and significance over the past century.

"The year 2024 signifies a notable moment in the history of this medium: it marks the centenary of the first live radio broadcast of the Olympic Games, coinciding with the eve of the upcoming Games in Paris," stated Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, in a press release.

Malaysia's Minister of Communications, Fahmi Fadzil, expressed his thoughts on X (formerly, Twitter), highlighting radio's critical role in information dissemination, entertainment, and education across all societal segments.

Radio continues to play a crucial role in disaster preparedness in the Asia-Pacific region. For instance, in Tonga, on January 15, 2022, emergency radio broadcasts provided early warnings to the populace about the 7.8-magnitude earthquake and ensuing tsunami that struck the country.



ABU Children's Drama celebrates 20th anniversary

ABU Children's Drama Series is marking its 20th anniversary this year. The Programming Department launched the series in 2004 with a mission to produce children's stories from across Asia and Pacific.

As part of the celebration, Thai PBS will host an event from April 23-25 in Bangkok, Thailand. ABU Programming

Department has sent out the call for participation with guidelines and detailed information.



Head of ABU Television, Hanizah Hamzah, said since its inception, the series has witnessed transformative changes within the industry and has played a pivotal role in driving participating producers. She said that a team of seasoned professionals from NHK-Japan and EBS-Korea, as Executive Producers, have continued to lead the way, and set production standards.

The 20th anniversary is not only a celebration of excellence, but a testament to ABU Children's Drama Series' ability to adapt and thrive in the ever-evolving media landscape.





First ABU Prizes workshop for 2024 held in Jakarta

The Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), in collaboration with Televisi Republik Indonesia (TVRI), recently conducted a training programme to enhance the knowledge and skills of Indonesian broadcasters in preparation for the ABU Prizes 2024.

The workshop, held from February 26 to 28 in Jakarta, saw 52 producers from national TV headquarters and TVRI regional stations benefiting from the expertise of professionals from media organisations such as Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK Japan) and Korean Broadcasting System (KBS). The training covered a range of topics, from programme production techniques and the complexities of international festival submissions to the qualities of award-winning programmes.

The participants gained insights from the documentary category winner of ABU Prizes 2023, “Discharged by Death,” presented by NHK Japan’s Senior Producers of Culture, Yuki Umehera, and Senior Producer of Welfare, Mano Shuichi. The participants also

gained valuable insights into documentary filmmaking from the Executive Producer of KBS Korea, Lee Hyung-Gwan, who graciously shared his award-winning documentary “The Vicious Cycle of Child Abuse,” which secured the ABU Prizes News Reporting Category in 2022.

The participants also had the opportunity to delve into the ABU Prizes Entertainment Category winner, “Journey of Chinese Art on The Scroll” from Sri Lanka’s Capital Maharaja Group (CMG)/China Central Television (CCTV) which was presented by Director of ABU Programming, Yasu Nagahata. He advised participants how to direct and organise entertainment programmes effectively and explained the importance of exchanging perspectives and understanding in the production process.

Hanizah Hamzah, Head of ABU TV, announced the timeline for the ABU Prizes 2024, which opens now until June 30 and encouraged participants to submit their best works.

TVRI world news reporter and producer, Shavira Juniar Talib, who was one of the

participants, said: “I am truly grateful for the presence of Director of ABU Programming, Yasu Nagahata, and the Head of Television at ABU Programming Hanizah Hamzah, who actively encouraged us to pose questions to deepen our understanding of the documentary filmmaking process. Drawing from my passion for the broadcasting industry, interacting and engaging with the winners and the experts has been a rewarding experience for me.”

Johan Setiawan, Head of the TVRI Training Center, thanked ABU for its support in organising the workshop. He stressed TVRI’s dedication to quality and expressed hope that the event would inspire producers to create content that appeals to international audiences.

In 2023, TVRI received an award in the ABU Perspective category with their documentary “Green Hero”. This year, the public broadcaster aims to submit several works for consideration.

ABU Prizes is the most prestigious competition in the Asia-Pacific region, recognising the best in radio, television, and digital media content from member organisations. ■■■



ABU Prizes 2024 now open for entries

ABU Prizes 2024 are now accepting submissions until the deadline June 30, 2024.

The competition celebrates outstanding content in radio, television, and digital media from ABU members, giving them a platform to show their creativity and innovation, and elevating their accomplishments on an international scale.

Each year, the competition receives more than 300 entries.

This year's award presentation ceremony will take place at ABU's 61st General Assembly gala event in Istanbul, Turkey, to be held in October.

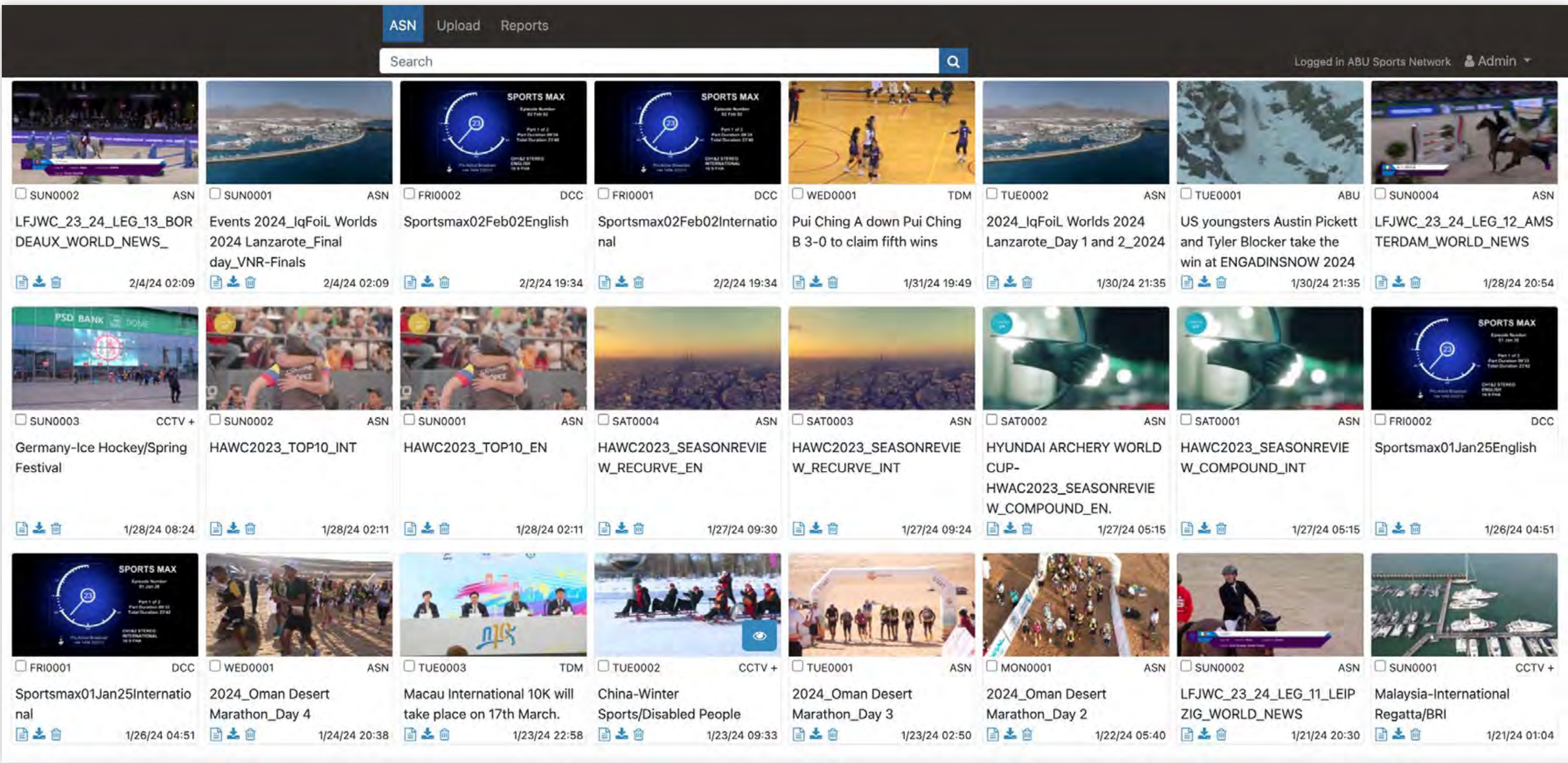
Winners will be awarded a trophy, a certificate, and a cash prize of USD1,000. ■■■

The ABU Prizes Reform Working Party Meeting meets online

The ABU Prizes Reform Working Party Meeting, held once every two years, recently took place online on March 11, 2024. It was chaired by Clarie Gorman, the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, and attended by 22 delegates from 15 media organisations, including the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), the Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) and China Media Group (CMG). Secretariats of ABU Programme Department also attended the meeting.

Attendees agreed on several things, including renaming the categories from Radio to Radio/Audio and from TV to TV/Screen, the selection of juries, and the themes of the ABU Perspective Awards.

The entry for ABU Prizes 2024 opened on March 15 and closes on June 30. ■■■



ABU Sports & Entertainment Network sees increasing activity

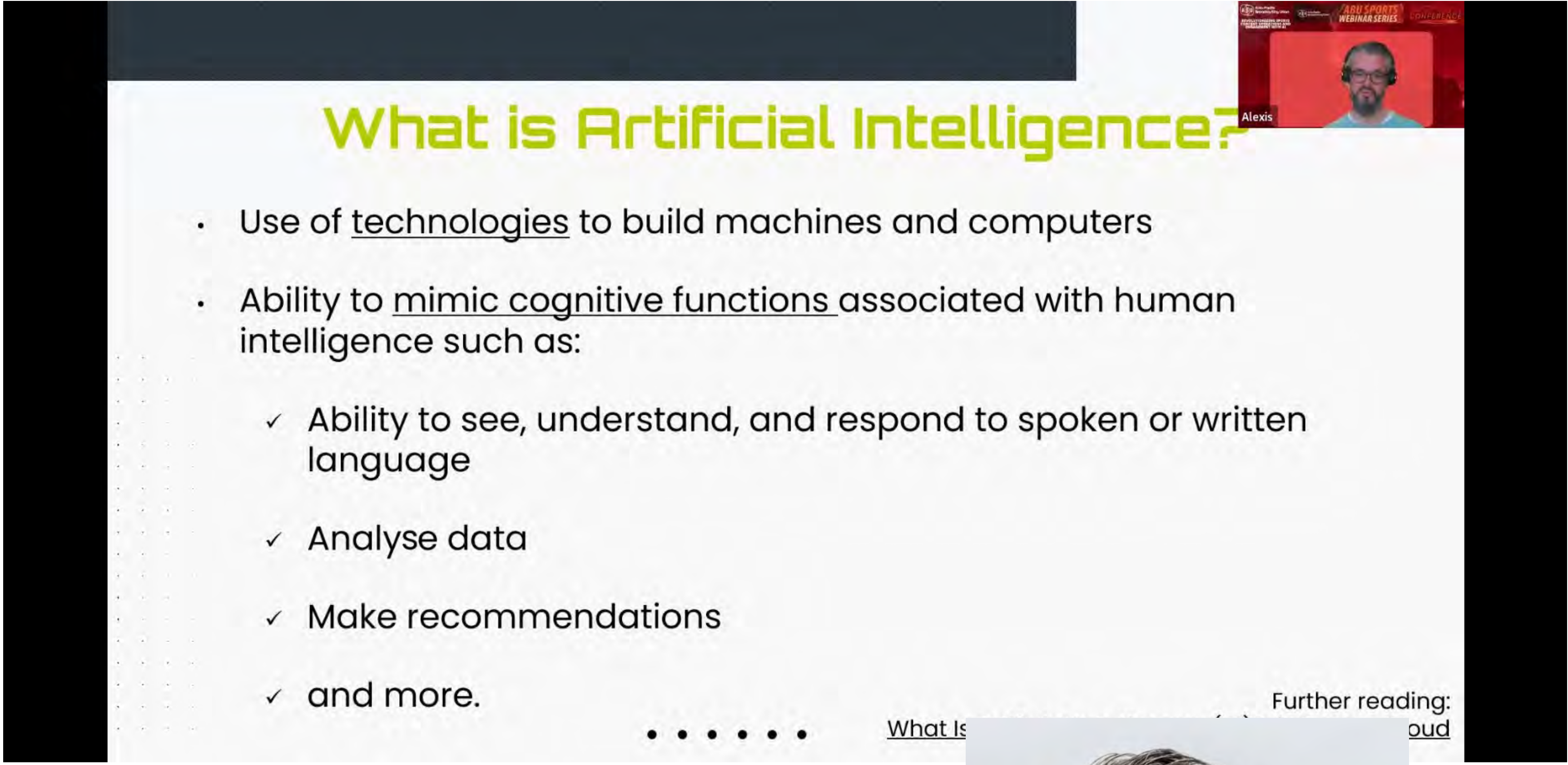
ABU Sports & Entertainment Network (ASEN) saw increasing activity from December 2023 to February 2024, with uploads almost daily.

Almost 300 sports-related media files, mostly long-duration sports event highlights of 30 to 60 minutes, and shows were exchanged.

SportsMax, the magazine show continues to be a weekly feature. Regular users include Ariana Television Network (ATN Afghanistan), Fijian Broadcasting Corporation (FBC Fiji), Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation (MBC Mauritius), Papua New Guinea’s EMTV, Televisi Republik Indonesia (TVRI Indonesia), Public Service Media (PSM Maldives), Myanmar Radio and Television (MRTV Myanmar), Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM Malaysia), and DD India among others.

ASEN shared the highlights of the Pacific Games, Asian Archery Championships, 2024 Asian LeManns Series, Dubai Electric Scooter Cup, to name a few. China Central Television (CCTV China) and Teledifusão de Macau (TDM) remain the leading contributors among members with over 100 sports-related news.

35 ABU members are registered to ASEN as of January 2024. The network is working to boost a vibrant exchange of sports-related content between and among members.



What is Artificial Intelligence?

- Use of technologies to build machines and computers
- Ability to mimic cognitive functions associated with human intelligence such as:
 - ✓ Ability to see, understand, and respond to spoken or written language
 - ✓ Analyse data
 - ✓ Make recommendations
 - ✓ and more.

Further reading: [What Is Artificial Intelligence?](#)

ABU holds expert-led webinar on the role of AI in sports



The ABU Sports department hosted a webinar on 28 February called “Revolutionising Sports Content Operations and Engagement with AI” featuring eminent sports expert Alexis Schäfer.

Alexis is a trailblazer in Paralympic sports marketing – from 2008 to 2022, he spearheaded the commercial and marketing efforts at the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), which significantly contributed to the event’s success. He recently completed a course on sports and technology with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

The webinar emphasised the significant role of artificial intelligence (AI) in reshaping the sports content landscape. As sports media organisations continue to embrace AI technologies, they are poised to unlock new opportunities for innovation, growth, and fan engagement in the digital age.

AI can generate real-time match updates, player statistics, and game analysis. AI algorithms

can also analyse large amounts of data and provide insights that help sports journalists and commentators create engaging and informative content.

Furthermore, AI-powered chatbots can interact with sports fans, answering their questions and providing personalised recommendations.

Through AI-powered tools, sports organisations can streamline content creation, distribution, and engagement processes, leading to more personalised and interactive experiences for fans. AI algorithms can analyse vast amounts of data to generate insights on fan preferences, trends, and behaviours, allowing sports content creators to tailor their content to specific audience segments.

AI can also automate tasks such as video editing, highlight reel creation, and real-time data analysis, enabling sports media organisations to produce high-quality content more efficiently. Overall, AI enhances the sports content experience by providing accurate information and enhancing fan engagement.





AESF renews partnership with ABU

The Asian Electronic Sports Federation (AESF) has renewed its partnership with the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), reaffirming both organisations' commitment to strengthen engagement and optimise mutual benefits in fostering and developing broadcast and Esports initiatives.

This renewal of partnership underscores the collective interest of our member organisations in advancing the broadcast and Esports industry.

Sebastian Lau, AESF Director General, and Ahmed Nadeem, ABU Secretary-General, signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 27 February 2024 at the ABU Headquarters in Kuala Lumpur.

The MoU reaffirms the strategic partnership between AESF and ABU, extending beyond co-hosting events and sessions, such as forums and workshops, to creating and

promoting Esports-related content.

The new agreement elevates the partnership to a new level by having ABU join the AESF Partnership Commission as a member.

AESF and ABU will also collaborate on joint programmes, including charity-based or social responsibility-based competitions. These initiatives align with AESF's program, 'Your Home Your Arena,' aiming to promote goodwill and community engagement, among other collaboration areas.

Sebastian Lau, AESF Director General, said, "The renewal of this Memorandum of Understanding between AESF and ABU marks another significant milestone in further elevating our partnership, especially as AESF has recently introduced our Partnership Commission as part of our initiatives to strengthen relations with important stakeholders for the benefit of the Esports community."

Nadeem said, "Through our renewed partnership with AESF, we aim to harness the power of broadcasting by exploring new avenues for collaboration, including joint programmes and charity-based competitions, that will not only showcase the spirit of competition but also contribute to positive social impact."

He said this collaboration is a testament to the shared vision of using technology and media to create positive social impact.

Over the past five years, AESF and ABU have collaborated, with AESF taking part in the 65th ABU Sports Group Conference & Associated Meetings. AESF actively engaged in the Esports Forum, contributing to discussions on major tournaments, the Esports landscape, and its promising future as one of the rapidly expanding sports. In addition, AESF organised Esports demonstration games during the event. ■■■



ABU members broadcast Singapore Women's Open Golf 2024

Televisi Republik Indonesia (TVRI), the Fijian Broadcasting Corporation (FBC), Teledifusão de Macau (TDM), and Papua New Guinea's EMTV have broadcast the Hana Financial Group Singapore Women's Open live.

Following negotiations with Mediapro Asia, the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) acquired broadcasting rights for the event in select Asian countries.

Mediapro Asia expressed satisfaction with the results of their collaboration with ABU in distributing the event, while Members expressed their gratitude towards the organisation for facilitating access to high-quality content at no cost.

Renowned as a highlight in the women's golf calendar, the Hana Financial Group Singapore Women's Open draws elite competitors globally, vying for a prize fund of S\$1.1 million. This year, the title was claimed by Kim Jae-he from South Korea. ■■■



ABU takes E1 World Championship to its members

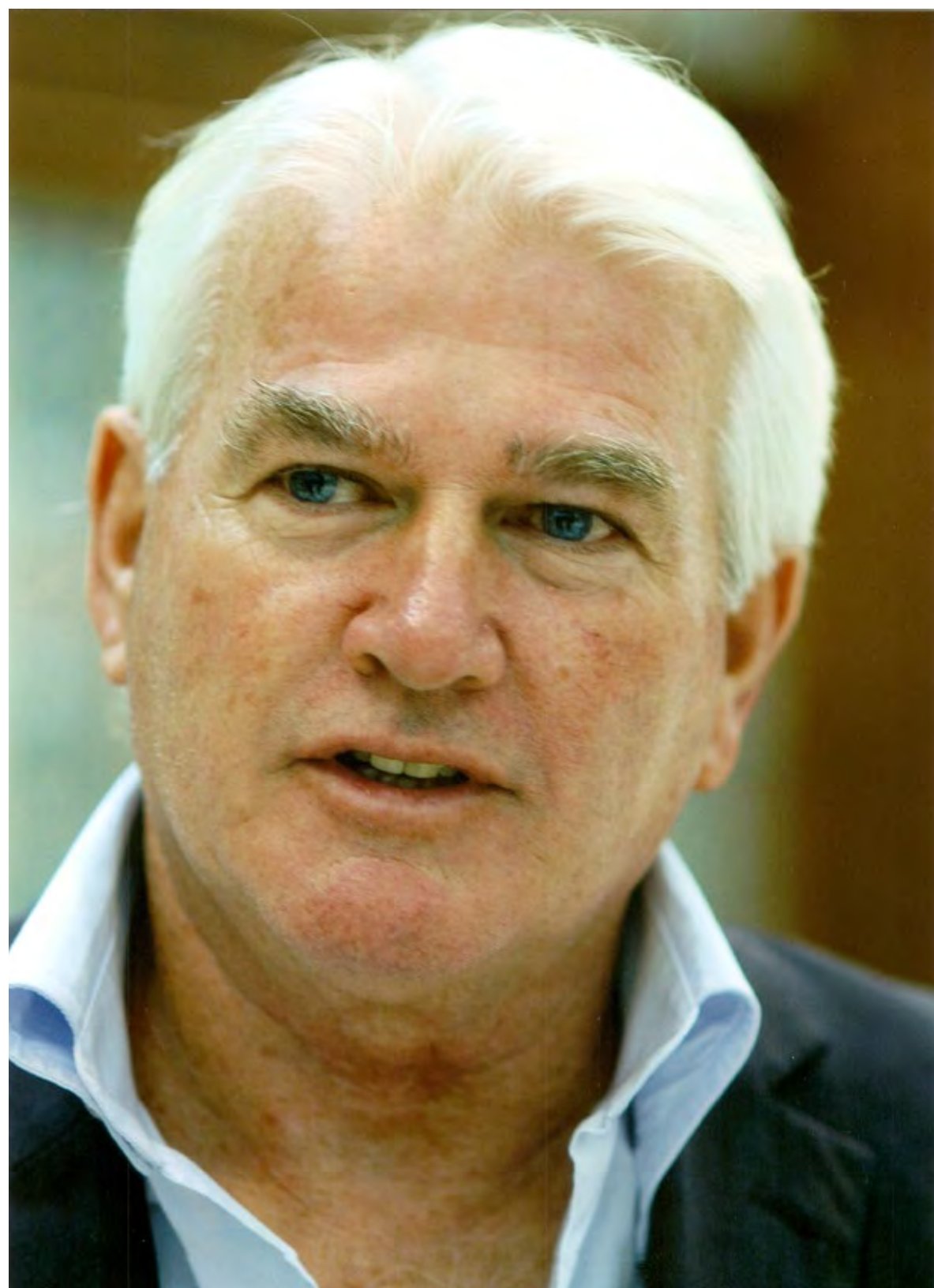
ABU has signed a two-year partnership contract with Electric Sea Racing Limited to distribute E1 World Championship for two seasons: 2024-2025. Under the partnership, ABU will distribute the event to its members on a non-exclusive basis. Members can opt to broadcast live as well as on a delayed basis.

The first race kicked off in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on February 2 to 3. Ariana Television Network (ATN Afghanistan), Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation (MBC Mauritius), Televisi Republik Indonesia (TVRI), EMTV Papua New Guinea, and Fijian Broadcasting Corporation (FBC Fiji) broadcast the championship. The highlights were also made available via ABU Sports and Entertainment Network (ASEN).

E1, the first electric race boat championship sanctioned by the Union Internationale Motonautique (UIM), was established by the Chairman of Formula E and Extreme E to create a new and competitive on-water racing proposition based on clean technologies. ■■■



Former ABU Sports Director John Barton passes away



John Barton, a former Director of Sports for ABU and a dedicated journalist, producer, and anchor-man, passed away peacefully in Brisbane, Australia, on February 17 at the age of 73.

During his tenure from 2002 to 2013, John was instrumental in securing broadcasting rights for ABU to several of the world's top sporting events, including the Olympics, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, and FIFA tournaments. His visionary leadership and unwavering passion for sports broadcasting significantly enhanced ABU's sports coverage and left a legacy on the industry.

ABU Secretary-General Ahmed Nadeem lauded him as a visionary leader whose contributions transcended the professional realm and touched the lives of everyone he worked with.

Nadeem remarked, "John's exceptional dedication and contributions have indelibly shaped the essence of sports broadcasting within ABU, leaving a profound impact on all who had the honour of working alongside him."

Cai Yanjiang, the current Director of ABU Sports, expressed gratitude for John's significant contributions to the field. Hanizah Hamzah, Head of TV at ABU, remembered John as both resourceful and immensely supportive.

Retired Colonel Chuchat from Thailand, a long-time friend and industry colleague, reflected on how John will be remembered with affection and respect for his efforts to elevate international sports coverage and for initiating the ABU sports fund, which continues to benefit ABU members.

Alan Williams, former Director of News and colleague, shared his memories of John as a kind, generous, and charming individual whose work ensured that ABU members had access to major sporting events, highlighting his pivotal role in the 2008 and 2012 Olympics.

John leaves behind three sons. ■■■

ABU Media Academy: empowering media professionals

The ABU Media Academy (AMA) stands as a beacon of excellence, offering cutting-edge training and development opportunities tailored to the dynamic needs of the broadcasting industry. Established in 2020 in response to member demands, the academy is committed to equipping media professionals with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in today's rapidly evolving landscape.

AMA [courses](#) are designed to be accessible to all ABU Members, providing them with the tools they need to excel in their roles. From multimedia storytelling to technical innovations, including using artificial intelligence (AI) in broadcasting, our curriculum encompasses a wide range of topics, ensuring that participants stay ahead of the curve in an ever-changing industry. Non-members can also enroll in our courses, albeit at full fee rates, as part of our mission to foster growth and development across the entire media sector in the ABU region.

ABU Media Academy also offers range of self-paced [ABU Media Academy Courses](#). These courses cover a variety of topics related to media and broadcasting and are designed to enhance your skills and knowledge in these areas.

At the heart of the ABU Media Academy's mission is a vision of empowerment. We believe that every media professional should have the opportunity to enhance their skills, adapt to change, and embrace emerging technologies. By partnering closely with member organisations and partners, we aim to elevate in-house training initiatives, provide access to world-class expertise through our international networks, and facilitate further educational opportunities at recognised tertiary institutions.

As we look ahead, our commitment to excellence remains unwavering. We are dedicated to supporting the ongoing growth and success of media professionals throughout the Asia-Pacific region, empowering them to shape the future of broadcasting with confidence and innovation.

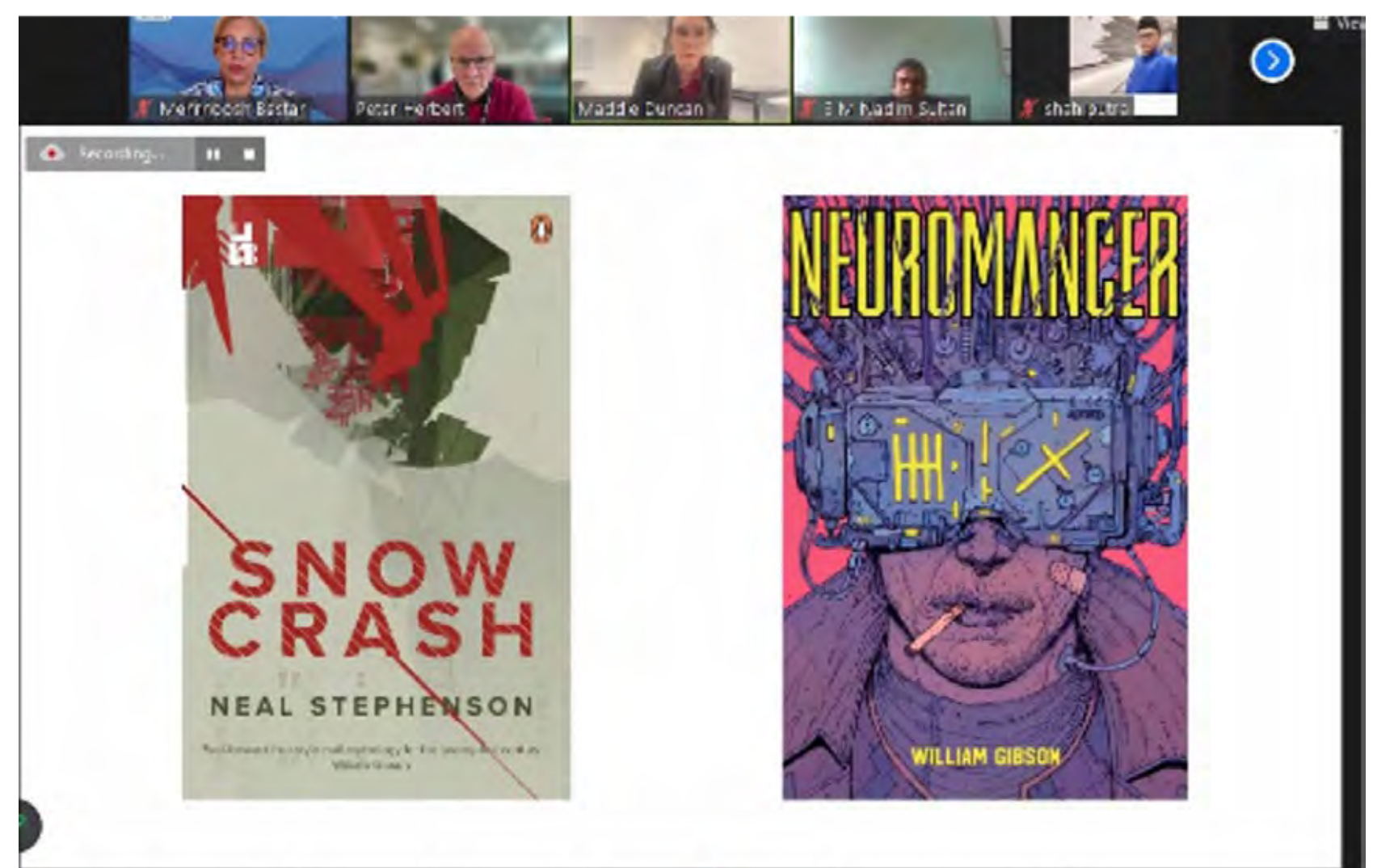


Broadcast Skills:

- Immersive Training is very important
- Learn to read and write in broadcast style
- Learn proper camera techniques



The differences between Television and Film Productions





ABU Legal Division keeps busy with AI-related developments

The ABU Legal Division is busy with capacity building initiatives and keeping abreast of AI-related developments.

Perhaps the division's most important event – the much-anticipated 30th ABU Intellectual Property & Legal Committee (IPLC) – took place recently on 6th and 7th March.

The first day of IPLC was a closed-door meeting involving ABU members. Ahead of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) 45th SCCR, ABU members discussed a draft resolution on a proposed broadcasting treaty with an urgent view for members to adopt it.

The IPLC conference took place the following day. It was officiated by Director-General of the Malaysian Intellectual Property Office (MyIPO), Tuan Kamal bin Kormin, who delivered a keynote address. Experts gave presentations on the legal and ethical implications of AI. Among the speakers were prominent media law expert Dr. Venkat Iyer who delved into various aspects of media ethics.

The ABU Legal Division is closely monitoring the legal developments related to AI and generative AI. They attended the 9th WIPO Conversation on Intellectual Property & Frontier Technologies remotely. The theme was 'Generative AI: Navigating Intellectual Property', reflecting the ever-changing developments related to generative AI and their impact on laws and regulations across the globe.

As a follow-up, the ABU Legal Division will be attending the 45th session of WIPO SCCR in-person to express its commitment to the proposed broadcasting treaty.



ABU leads broadcast media in disaster risk reduction



ABU/UNDRR MEDIA FOR DRR INITIATIVE

The Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU), recognised as the largest broadcasting organisation, not only supports the development of broadcast media in the Asia-Pacific region but is also deeply involved in harnessing the significant impact and reach of media for socio-economic advancement. The ABU initiated and guides the Media Stakeholder Group within the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Long recognising climate change and disaster risk reduction as transnational issues, the ABU has been an early leader in ensuring that media professionals and journalists in Asia and the Pacific are fully briefed on how to communicate information on disaster preparedness and prevention, including early warning systems, to their radio and television audiences.

The media's capacity to expedite climate action and readiness for disasters remains underutilised. There is ample opportunity for the media to extend its reach and educate broader audiences on the impact of climate change on their daily lives, as well as the efforts of governments and numerous intergovernmental organisations such as the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to mitigate threats to lives, health, food, water, and national security.

Media is now recognised as a partner, not just a 'microphone' for disseminating other stakeholders' messages. The partnership between the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and World Broadcasting Unions (WBU) brought to life the ground-breaking WBU/UNDRR 'Media Saving Lives' initiative.

Nearly 90 broadcasting organisations joined the initiative since its launch in 2021 with over 2000 media professionals trained online and in practical face-to-face activities. The first three phases of the project also produced several co-productions on DRR issues as cooperation between Asia-Pacific, African and Caribbean media outlets.





After successful implementations of three phases, Phase 4 is focusing on the UN's Secretary-General Antonio Guterres's campaign Early Warnings For All (EW4All). The campaign is aiming to cover every person on the planet with an adequate efficient Early Warning System.

Building on the earlier phases, Phase 4 wants to make Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) a regular part of how media organisations operate. This includes creating working groups with NDMA, Met Services, and Broadcasters and developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Early Warnings during disasters. The project will also cover more countries from the priority list of the EW4All campaign in Asia-Pacific, Africa, the Caribbean, and Arab states.

The Climate Change Summit

As part of its long-term campaign 'Saving Lives: Building Resilient Communities', in 2014 the ABU launched in Jakarta the 'ABU Media Summit on Climate Action and Disaster Prevention'. Since then, the Summit has travelled to Krabi (2016), Dhaka (2017), Fiji (2018); Kathmandu (2019) and was held online in 2021. In 2023, the Maldives welcomed the Summit delegates.

This year, the ABU will invite its members, as well as members from its sister unions the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU), the African Union of Broadcasting (AUB), the Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU), and the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), along with its international partners, to convene in Bali, Indonesia, a region that is particularly susceptible to the impacts of climate change.

As we commemorate the 20th anniversary of the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami, this year's summit will centre around the theme 'From Awareness to Action: Media's Vital Role in Early Warnings', emphasising the critical role of early warning systems in mitigating the impact of climate-related disasters. With climate change exacerbating the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, there is an urgent need to enhance early warning capabilities and improve disaster preparedness across the Asia-Pacific region.



Jeanette Elsworth, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR): ‘Media plays an important now than ever in disaster preparedness’

Jeanette Elsworth, Chief, Communications, Advocacy, Knowledge Management and ICT, at United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), speaks to ABU about the importance of risk communication in these increasingly environmentally-hazardous times.

As our exposure to extreme climate events and other hazards grows, so does our need for reliable, accessible and trustworthy information. Risk communication continues to be a core element of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and UNDRR’s work.

As the Media Saving Lives project moves into its fourth phase, in the context of an increasingly complex communications landscape, and growing risk, the role that the media plays is more important than ever.

I often say that risk communication is the hard work that takes place between disasters. Building our capacity to unpack and report on disasters, building trust with our audiences and making sure we can communicate in a way that will be heard, both in language and cultural terms. It does not happen overnight, and it is threatened by mis- and dis-information, that is often shared in our most fearful moments.

When the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for everyone to be covered by a multi-hazard, end-to-end early warning system by 2027, UNDRR’s partnership with the members of the ABU and World Broadcasting Union (WBU) was already well established. This meant that we were already in a strong position to support this important initiative. By pivoting our activities, we were able to immediately support this. And the reality is this: the best early warning system in the world won’t be able to save lives if people do not receive, understand and act on the message.



As we continue our work together, we move into another important phase – institutionalising what we have learnt in our day-to-day work. In practical terms, this means building relationships with the Meteorological Offices and National Disaster Management bodies in countries, building regional and global networks of media working on risk communication and DRR, and ensuring media themselves are protected and prepared for disasters so that they can continue to deliver life-saving information to people when they need it most.

UNDRR values the fantastic partnership with ABU, the WBU and the other broadcasting Unions and looks forward to building on the strong foundation of trust and engagement that we have created to prevent disasters and deliver our ultimate goal: a world where disasters do not threaten lives and livelihoods. ■■■

Kamal Kishore of India appointed head of UNDRR

The Head of India's National Disaster Management Authorities Kamal Kishore has been appointed the United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction.

He succeeds Mami Mizutori of Japan, who led the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) between 2018 and 2023 and who successfully engaged all DRR stakeholders, especially civil society groups such as women, youth and the media.

Kishore brings to the position nearly three decades of experience in disaster risk reduction, climate action and sustainable development at the global, regional, national and local levels, having worked in government, the UN and civil society organisations. He has been a regular contributor to programmes and videos produced over the years by ABU as part of its DRR and Climate Action Projects.

Kishore was interviewed by the ABU-led global teams for syndicated coverage of the conference of the parties (COPs) in Glasgow and Sharm El-Sheikh, and the 2022 Global Platform for disaster risk reduction (DRR) in Bali. He also took part in 'Climate Talk', an online programme jointly produced by ABU and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC).

Before joining the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Kishore spent nearly thirteen years with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Geneva, New Delhi and New York. Prior to UNDP, he served as Director of Information and Research, and Manager of the Extreme Climate Events Programme covering Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam at ADPC in Bangkok from 1996 to 2002. ■■■





ASBU Academy to train Arab media practitioners on disaster preparedness

The Arab States Broadcasting Union Academy (ASBU Academy) will be hosting a training session for Arab journalists and producers, focusing on the critical role of media during natural disasters. The training, titled “Media in Disaster Risk Reduction and Saving Lives” will be held in Tunis, Tunisia on April 22 to 25, 2024.

Collaborating with the United Nations Disaster Reduction Programme (UNDRR) and other international bodies, the initiative aims to equip participants with the necessary tools to effectively inform and raise awareness during disasters, ultimately contributing to saving lives.

The programme will cover various aspects, including understanding UN initiatives for disaster risk reduction, the importance of accurate media coverage during crises, leveraging early warning systems, utilising documentary and educational formats for awareness, and implementing media strategies for disaster prevention.

The training will be led by expert trainers and will also introduce an Arabic version of the UNDRR’s free online course on mitigating risks and saving lives in natural disasters, accessible through the ASBU Academy’s online platform. By arming journalists and producers with knowledge and resources, the initiative seeks to enhance the media’s capacity to disseminate crucial information swiftly and effectively, aiding Arab communities.

More details at the ASBU Academy [website](#).



World
Broadcasting
UnionsUNDRR
UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

WBU/UNDRR Media Saving Lives Initiative



‘Media Saving Lives’ initiative welcomes fourth phase with several trainings

The long-running global initiative ‘Media Saving Lives’ has now entered its fourth phase, focusing on enhancing Early Warning Systems for disasters in the most vulnerable countries of the Global South. Several trainings were held to welcome Phase 4 of the initiative:

Two online consultations with the Pacific Islands

The Pacific Islands face unique challenges due to their geographical isolation and vulnerability to natural disasters, which demands tailored approaches to disaster risk reduction. Strengthening meteorological and seismic monitoring capabilities, enhancing public awareness and education, and promoting sustainable development practices are therefore important.

Recently, the ABU conducted two separate consultations with five Pacific Islands members: Session 1, which took place on March 12 to 14, was conducted with the Samoa Broadcasting Corporation (SBC), and the Tonga Broadcasting Commission (TBC). Meanwhile, Session 2 was held with the Broadcasting and Publication Authority (BPA) and Hope Radio, Kiribati and the Tuvalu Broadcasting Corporation (TVTC) on March 18 to 20.

Facilitators such as Natalia Ilieva, Consultant on ABU external projects and Global Project Manager of WBU/UNDRR Media Saving Lives Initiative, and Fabian Randerath, Team Leader Promotions and Creative Content, Fijian Broadcasting Corporation (FBC), and Media Specialist, Sharad Sadhu, brought decades of experience and expertise to the discussion.

Timoa Tokataam, CEO of BPA, highlighted radio’s significance in reaching vulnerable populations with critical information during disasters. New legislations related to disaster management, such as Tonga’s Disaster Management Act 2007, was also mentioned. Challenges such as funding constraints and resource limitations were also discussed, along with the importance of providing information in accessible formats and addressing post-disaster trauma.



Capacity-building of Caribbean media professionals

The 'Media Saving Lives' initiative recently provided a capacity-building training on disaster-preparedness for media professionals from the Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU). The event was hosted at the facilities of CBU member, the Caribbean School of Media and Communication (CARIMAC), at the Kingston, Jamaica campus of the University of the West Indies from February 22 to 24.

Important topics include the importance of coordinating with emergency response agencies, as well as collaboration among media professionals, National Disaster Management Agencies, and Meteorological Services. The training emphasised the dissemination of timely, accurate, relevant, and actionable Early Warnings.

Sanka Price, CEO of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), said, "It was a great opportunity for us to reassess our current policies and procedures. While CBC has preparedness plans and equipment like two satellite phones, albeit aged ones, the sessions revealed areas where we can improve, particularly the need for ongoing training at all levels. We will definitely utilise this information to enhance our preparedness and share our knowledge with the public."

He added, "If the forecasters are correct, we are facing an exceptionally gusty hurricane season this year, which compounds our challenges due to an impending drought and the possibility of other hazards. In such an unstable environment, planning based on knowledge is our best recourse. This workshop helped prepare me for the worst."

Capacity-building training in Africa

More than 70 participants from African national broadcasting organisations in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Malawi attended online training sessions on disaster risk reduction from March 25 to 28, 2024.

Each of the four-hour online sessions included background information on disaster risk reduction, early warning systems and common alert protocols (CAPs) – all tailored to the needs of broadcasters. The sessions also focused on promoting relationships between broadcasters and meteorological services.

"Broadcaster participation was very high as more and more journalists are feeling the growing need to improve their reporting skills to cover climate change and disaster risk reduction issues, which have become a crucial part of their daily news coverage and work, which is a very good sign," Margaret Komol, who organised the implementation of the project at the African Union of Broadcasting (AUB), said.

This is the fourth year that AUB has worked with UNDRR and other partners, organising learning sessions on DRR in Africa, engaging English and French-speaking journalists and giving radio journalists the opportunity to understand their role in the early warning chain and prevention policies. Africa is highly exposed to the risk of many disasters such as droughts and floods, and journalists are in great demand for information on what can be done to reduce their negative effects. Over 150 African journalists have already joined the WBU initiative, and more will do so in the next phase of the project which is due to start in July 2024.





PACIFIC MEDIA 2034: CHARTING A COURSE FOR THE NEXT DECADE

29 - 30
APRIL 2024

BRISBANE,
AUSTRALIA

ABU Pacific Media Partnership Conference (PMPC) to be held 29 - 30 April in Brisbane

The 2024 edition of the Pacific Media Partnership Conference (PMPC) will take place in Brisbane, Australia, on April 29 - 30, 2024.

The theme is 'Pacific Media 2034: Charting a course for the next decade'.

On the agenda will be discussions on story sovereignty, journalism in an age of social media, emergency broadcasting, and what the region needs in its next generation of media leaders. It will also cover coordinating donor funding, women in leadership, measures to protect journalistic and media freedom and digital transformation.

The PMPC is an opportunity to harness the collective wisdom and experience of the region's most experienced broadcasters and the resources of the world's biggest broadcasting union to map a path forward. Attendees will work together on practical issues in workshops, masterclasses, expert guests and working groups. There will also be opportunities for formal and informal networking.

PMPC 2024 will be held at the ABC's headquarters in Brisbane, which is part of the popular Southbank cultural precinct and a 10-minute walk from the city center.

For more information, including how to register, click [here](#). ■■■



ABU Sports Media Conference returns to Kuala Lumpur

The ABU Sports Media Conference will take place in Kuala Lumpur, May 14 to 16 this year. The event is one of the premier sports media and industry gatherings attended by ABU members and sports channels in Asia.

The 2024 conference will feature keynote presentations, panel discussions, members forum, and a pitching session by members and partners. A workshop on sports news reporting featuring expert Darryl Gibson will be held, along with a workshop on sports production.

The conference will also feature a masterclass on ABU Prizes 2024, and a masterclass on sports rights acquisition. Among the sessions that will be covered are the role of AI in sports coverage, the future of sports in Asia, sports radio and podcast, among others.

Meanwhile, members will be kept updated on upcoming sports events, particularly the Olympics.

The three-day conference will also deliberate on the renewed role of ABU Sports, including diversification of services and production projects in collaboration with members. ■■■



ABU-Rai Days 2024

11-12 June 2024

Naples, Italy

6th edition of ABU-Rai Days to be held in beautiful Naples, Italy

ABU is set to welcome participants to the 6th edition of ABU-Rai Days which will take place at Palazzo Partanna, Naples, Italy, from 11 to 12 June 2024.

Themed ‘AI meets public service media: a global perspective’, this exclusive conference aims to unite decision-makers, thought-leaders and stakeholders of public service media (PSM) from Europe, Asia-Pacific and Africa.

The rapid integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into our daily lives is undeniable, with Large Language Models and Generative AI already reshaping the landscape of the media industry, fundamentally altering how we work, produce, and consume content.

Attendees will gain valuable insights and perspectives and engage with industry peers

and experts. Keynote speakers will delve into discussions on how PSM can collaboratively navigate the challenges and opportunities posed by AI on strategic, ethical, legal, content, and technical fronts.

While AI’s presence in the media is not new, the event will spotlight current financial, commercial, and reputational issues through real-world demonstrations, showcases and case studies presented by expert panellists.

This gathering is tailored for CEOs, Heads of AI, CTOs, Legal and Policy professionals, as well as content and media executives from international organisations who wish to explore the impact of AI in their work.

For more information and how to register, click [here](#). ■■■



ABU CON-FEST 2024

2-4 July 2024 | Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



#ABUdigital

Embrace for another exciting CON-FEST

This year's ABU CON-FEST, set to take place July 2 - 4 in Kuala Lumpur, is not to be missed.

ABU CON-FEST strategically brings together ABU's signature content events: ABU TV-CON, ABU RadioSonic and #ABUdigital, all in one place, with the vision to create a single gathering of producers to share experiences and talk about creating content that matters.

ABU TV-CON features presentations and discussions by past ABU Prize winners and top media creators. Participants will be introduced to new ideas and techniques for future TV productions. ABU TV-CON is also a stage show with comedy and music mixed in, letting all participants gain information and have fun at the same time.

ABU RadioSonic brings together radio and audio content expertise from across our region and

around the world to share experiences, showcase new content initiatives and workshop solutions to common challenges. Originally staged as RadioAsia, the conference has been re-branded to signify the innovation of radios. It marks the transition from old-style terrestrial radio to the digital media world of multiplatform audio, which includes streaming, audio-on-demand, podcasting, hybrid convergence and artificial intelligence (AI).

Meanwhile, ABU's premier digital media and content show #ABUdigital is a one-stop comprehensive event for all things digital, featuring thought-provoking keynotes and expert talks to provide an exciting learning space for content creators interested in the latest digital trends.

ABU CON-FEST 2024 will take place at Avante Hotel in Bandar Utama.

More information can be found [here](#). ■■■

ABU Secretary-General makes courtesy call to full member Prasar Bharati

ABU Secretary-General Ahmed Nadeem paid a courtesy meeting with Gaurav Dwivedi, CEO of Prasar Bharati, on his visit to the BES EXPO 2024 in New Delhi, India, on February 15.

The meeting aimed to strengthen the collaboration and cooperation between ABU and Prasar Bharati, which is the umbrella company of the broadcasting arms Doordarshan and AIR India, who are full members of the ABU.

Nadeem also met with the ABU Vice-President, Shri Sunil who is also the President of Broadcasting



Engineering Society India (BES). The expo was inaugurated by Anurag Singh Thakur, who is the Minister of Information and Broadcasting and Minister of Sports, Youth Affairs, together with Minister of State for I&B Fisheries and Animal Husbandry, Dr L Murugan, and Sanjay Jaju, who is the Secretary at the Ministry of I&B.

At the expo, Nadeem also chaired the session 'ATSC 3.0 Broadcasting' with discussants which highlighted the advanced applications and implementations of ATSC 3.0 - one of the advanced digital broadcasting standardisations in the world. ■■■



ABU Secretary-General Ahmed Nadeem also paid a courtesy visit to ABU full member Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) recently.

During the visit, the Secretary-General held a series of meetings with Dr Abbas Mohammadnejad, Director General of International Affairs, IRIB, to discuss mutual interests and explore enhanced cooperation between ABU and IRIB.

Nadeem engaged with key IRIB figures, including Dr. Peyman Jebelli, President of IRIB, and Dr. Ahmad Noroozi, Vice-President for World Service,

ABU Secretary-General visits full member IRIB

who led him on a tour of Press TV and HispanTV. Additionally, Nadeem visited the Iran Press News Agency and IRIB University, guided by Chancellor Dr. Shahab Esfandiary, and covered content exchange, advanced training, co-productions, the sharing of technical expertise, and joint ventures, aiming to improve the broadcasting landscape in the Asia-Pacific region.

In a separate meeting on February 20, discussions with Dr. Yousef Afsharnia, General Manager at IRIB, Isfahan, underscored the commitment of both ABU and IRIB to strengthen their partnership and advance the broadcasting industry. ■■■

3rd Arab Media Congress sets important AI frameworks and guidelines



The 3rd Arab Media Congress, initiated by the Arab States Broadcasting Union, (ASBU), recently took place in Tunis, Tunisia, on January 17-18. The congress, titled “Media in the Artificial Intelligence Era: Opportunities and Challenges”, emphasised the need for comprehensive frameworks and

guidelines in embracing artificial intelligence (AI).

ABU Secretary-General Ahmed Nadeem represented ABU. In his speech on the technical and technological aspects of using AI, Nadeem said: “Broadcasters should explore and implement AI technologies within their operations, to benefit from the speed and efficiency improvements it provides”.

The congress came up with several recommendations and guidelines based on papers presented by experts from the region and across the world over the course of two days.

The congress also recommended developing clear legislation for the use of AI which would refer to existing international legislations. It also emphasised the need to establish regional and national governance structures, including scientific panels, AI Boards, and advisory forums, to oversee AI practices and ensure accountability.

Resources to develop technical infrastructure and invest in AI tools that enhance content creation process were also recommended, along with training programmes to upskill media professionals in AI technology.

The recommendations are in line with the commitment of media outlets and journalists in the region towards upholding journalistic ethics, which includes promoting inclusivity and diversity in the process. ■■■

ABU and Astro discuss potential collaborations



The Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) and Malaysian satellite TV service company Astro held a meeting on March 27 to discuss potential avenues for collaboration.

Among the key focus areas identified for collaboration were

sports, co-production ventures, news broadcasting, and training initiatives aimed at upskilling industry professionals.

One primary conversation topic was the potential for joint sports broadcasting ventures, leveraging Astro’s extensive experience and ABU’s regional

network to deliver high-quality sports content to audiences across the Asia-Pacific region.

The meeting reaffirmed the commitment of both organisations to collaborate and drive the broadcasting industry forward. ■■■

ABU receives certificate of appreciation from IPPTAR



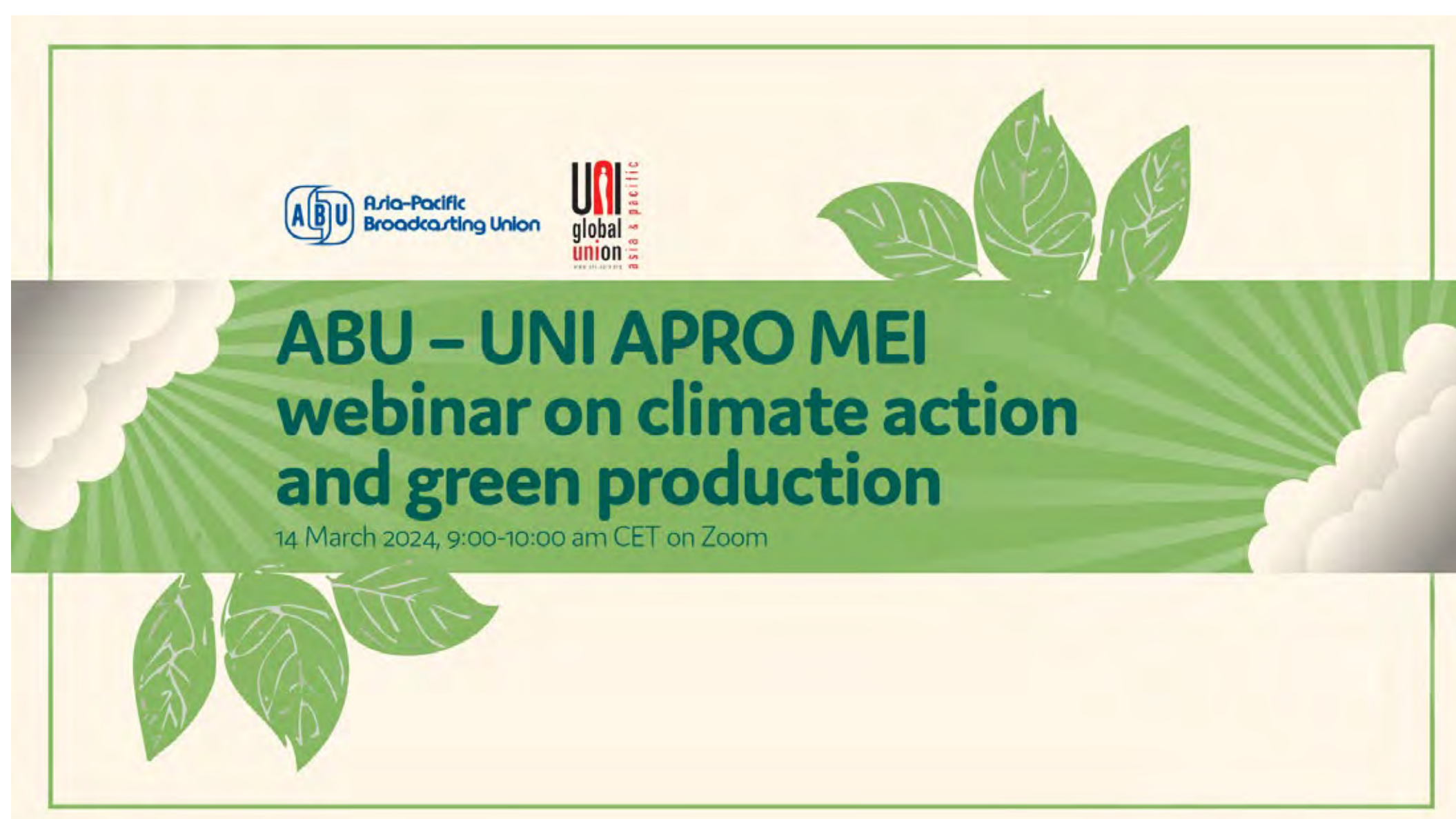
The Tun Abdul Razak Broadcasting and Information Institute (IPPTAR), under the Malaysian Ministry of Communications, awarded the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) with a certificate of appreciation, acknowledging their strategic partnership.

The presentation was made by Malaysia's Minister of Communication, Fahmi Fadzil, during the inaugural IPPTAR Day on February 20, with ABU's Programming Director, Yasu Nagahata, receiving the certificate on behalf of ABU.

IPPTAR Day brought together government officials, industry leaders, and representatives from both public and private higher education institutions for the first time to share knowledge and insights on the broadcasting industry.

This event celebrated IPPTAR's 53 years of contribution to broadcasting and information training, featuring seminars and discussions on technological advancements in the sector. Roslan Ariffin, Director of IPPTAR, highlighted the institution's commitment to staying abreast of the shift from analogue to digital broadcasting, reflecting the government's dedication to embracing current trends in the industry. ■■■

ABU and UNI-Apro MEI hold climate action and green production webinar



ABU, together with UNI Apro Media, Entertainment, and Arts (MEI), hosted a webinar on March 14, focusing on climate action and green production in the broadcasting sector.

The webinar brought together a diverse group of industry experts, broadcasters, and stakeholders to discuss the critical challenges of climate change and explore sustainable practices within the broadcasting industry.

Throughout the event, participants engaged in insightful discussions on various topics, including the impact of climate change on broadcasting operations, strategies for reducing carbon footprint, and the implementation of eco-friendly production techniques.

Moving forward, ABU remains committed to supporting initiatives that promote environmental sustainability and foster green innovation within the broadcasting sector. ■■■



ABU Diversity and Inclusion Task Group holds meeting

The ABU Diversity and Inclusion Task Group (DITG) commenced the new year by bringing together members across the Asia-Pacific region to discuss key initiatives and strategies for advancing diversity and inclusion in the broadcasting industry.

The meeting highlighted recent developments and initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality, diversity and inclusion within ABU member organisations. Members shared updates on ongoing projects and activities, including efforts to enhance representation and inclusion in programming and content production.

Special guest speaker, Janice Singh, Director Human Resources of the Fijian Broadcasting Corporation (FBC), delivered a presentation on actions and strategies implemented to foster diversity and inclusion in the organisation.

Janardan Bista, Deputy Director, News and Chief of Training and International Relations, Radio Nepal, shared the progress and initiatives of Radio Nepal's Gender and Diversity Action Plan.

Meanwhile, Chrissie Tucker, Chairperson of the DITG, announced the upcoming launch of the ABU Diversity and Inclusion Media Awards 2024, which seeks to recognise excellence in inclusive workplaces.

Part of the Broadcasting for All: Gender and Diversity in the Media Initiative, the DITG is committed to fostering inclusivity and representation in media organisations.

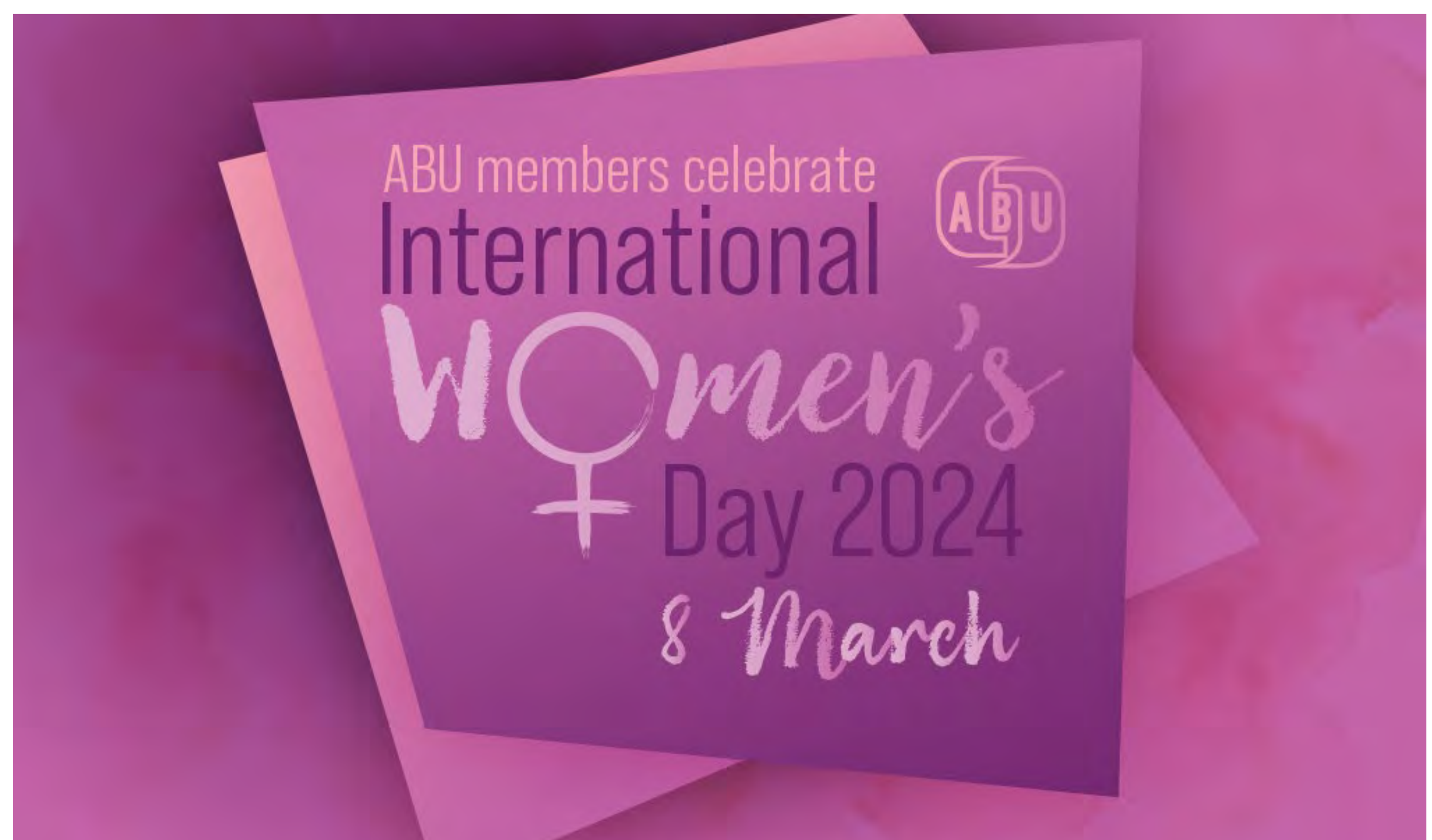


ABU members celebrate International Women's Day 2024

ABU members across the globe celebrated International Women's Day 2024 recently which fell on March 8.

The National Broadcasting Services of Thailand (NBT) released a statement, affirming the country's stance promoting gender equality, saying: "As a member nation of the United Nations, Thailand demonstrates its commitment to these goals by prioritising the status and roles of women across various aspects. Through legal measures, policies, and initiatives against violence, Thailand endeavours to enhance women's quality of life and promote their fair treatment and equality."

Sri Lanka's Capital Maharaja Group (CMG) celebrated the day by holding the Vanithabhimana" ('Women Empowerment') 2023 Grand Finale. In its fourth year, the event took place at the prestigious Stein Studios. It acknowledged outstanding Sri Lankan women, across various sectors including business, education, sports, healthcare, and the arts, from bustling cities to remote villages, with the aim to empower them and dismantle socio-economic barriers.



Nominations for these awards are open to all females in Sri Lanka throughout the year. 19-year-old Tharushi Karunaratne was crowned the Most Popular Woman at the award show. Tharushi brought glory to her country by securing a gold medal at the Asian Games in the women's 800m event. Now she stands tall as a national hero, inspiring a new generation of female athletes.

Meanwhile, Nepal celebrated the day by making it a public holiday. Radio Nepal broadcasted messages from the President of Nepal, as well as its Prime Minister, Speaker of the House of Representatives,

Minister for Women Affairs and former president. The radio also featured a special featuring the beginning of women's day celebration around the world, the opinions of women in Nepal from all walks of life, and an interview with ministry officials.

Italy's public broadcaster Radiotelevisione italiana (Rai) celebrated the day by featuring a line-up of women-themed programmes across its television, radio and online platforms. President Marinella Soldi said: "On this symbolic day, I would like to recall the commitment that Rai must exercise alongside women for an inclusive public service that



is open to a plurality of ideas and voices. Gender equality is a pillar of civilisation, progress and sustainable development of a country.”

Meanwhile, Director for Programs Asia at DW (Deutsche Welle), Debarati Guha, said she felt honoured to have been gifted a piece of Ajrak from the president of Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, Mohammed Ahmad Shah. Ajrak is a unique and traditional form of block-printed shawl or scarf indigenous to the Sindh region of Pakistan and parts of India. Debarati was also presented with an excellence award by the Karachi Press Club.

This year's rallying cry for International Women's Day is 'Invest in Women, Accelerate Progress'. Despite some gains, women and girls in Asia-Pacific still lag in various spheres.

For example, despite their increased proportion in political leadership, the numbers are still below the global average of 26.5 percent and very

far from achieving parity. Female labour force participation in the region has also been on the decline since 2005 and dropped to 43.6 percent in 2023, making the rate of Asia-Pacific below the world average.

“Investing in women is not merely a choice, but an imperative for sustainable development,” Sarah Knibbs, Deputy Regional Director of UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, said at the annual IWD commemoration hosted by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UN Women in Bangkok, on March 8.

“Imagine a world where closing the gender employment gap could increase GDP per capita by 20 percent across all regions,” she said. “Picture the impact of investing in care services, not only reducing the burden of unpaid care work but also creating millions of jobs. This is not a distant dream, but an achievable reality.” ■■■

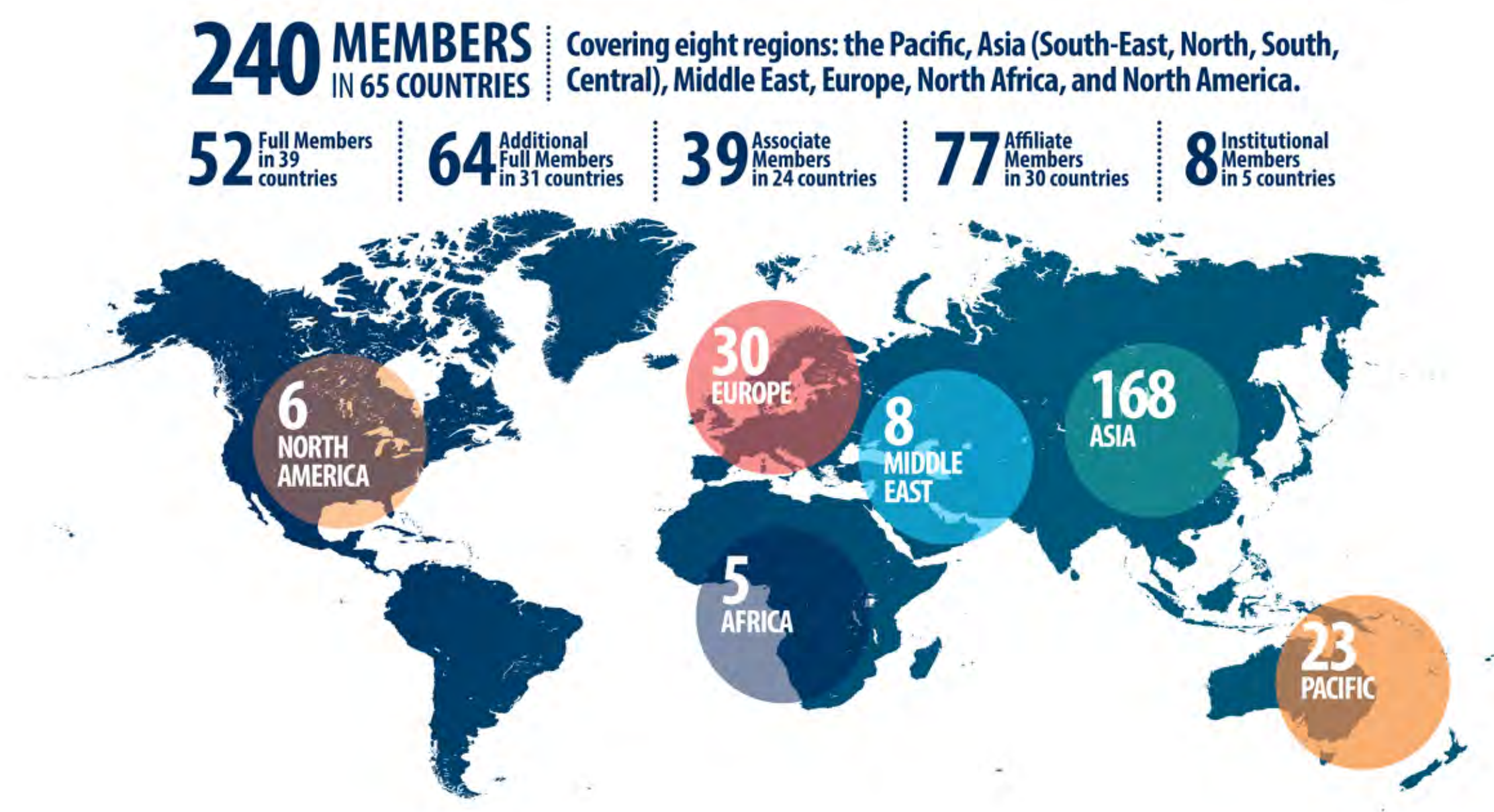
ABU's core mission: serving members and strengthening collaboration

In the dynamic landscape of broadcasting, the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) stands as a beacon of support and innovation for its members. At the heart of ABU's mission lies a clear and ambitious strategy aimed at empowering its diverse membership base across the Asia-Pacific region.

Central to ABU's strategy is a commitment to fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing among its members. Through a variety of initiatives, ABU facilitates the exchange of best practices, expertise, and resources, enabling broadcasters to thrive in an ever-evolving industry.

One key aspect of ABU's strategy is its emphasis on capacity building. Recognising the importance of skill development in an increasingly competitive market, [ABU Media Academy](#) offers a range of training programmes, workshops, and seminars tailored to the needs of its members. These initiatives cover a wide array of topics, including content production, technology adoption, and audience engagement, equipping broadcasters with the tools they need to succeed in the digital age.

In addition to capacity building, ABU places a strong focus on advocacy and representation. As the collective voice of broadcasters in the region, the [ABU Legal Department](#) actively engages with policymakers, regulatory bodies, and industry stakeholders to advocate for the interests of its members. By providing a platform for dialogue and advocacy, ABU ensures that the voices of its members



are heard, and their concerns addressed at the highest levels.

In line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the ABU is actively contributing to global efforts through two key initiatives: 'Media Saving Lives' and 'Broadcasting for All: Gender and Diversity in the Media'.

The 'Media Saving Lives' initiative harnesses the power of media to address pressing societal issues, including health, education, and disaster preparedness. By leveraging the reach and influence of broadcasting platforms, ABU members collaborate to disseminate life-saving information, raise awareness, and drive positive behavioural change within communities across the region.

Moreover, ABU is committed to promoting diversity and inclusivity within the broadcasting industry. Recognising the power of media to shape perceptions and drive social change, ABU works to support initiatives that celebrate diversity, foster inclusion, and promote cultural understanding. Through 'Broadcasting for

All: Gender and Diversity in the Media' initiative, ABU highlights the importance of diverse representation in media and encourages its members to embrace inclusivity in their programming and organisational policies.

ABU also champions initiatives that promote environmental sustainability, peace-building efforts, and community empowerment across the Asia-Pacific region. 'Together for Planet, People, and Peace Awards' aims to acknowledge and celebrate the transformative impact of media organisations that prioritize ethical reporting, inclusive storytelling, and advocacy for social and environmental justice.

Ultimately, ABU's main strategy to serve its members revolves around collaboration, capacity building, advocacy, diversity, and innovation. By fostering a culture of partnership, knowledge exchange, and empowerment, ABU enables its members to thrive in an ever-changing media landscape, fulfilling its mission to advance the broadcasting industry across the Asia-Pacific region.



Happy 78th anniversary RTM!



Radio Television Malaysia (RTM) celebrated its birthday on April 1, marking 78 years of commitment towards excellence in informing, educating and entertaining generations as Malaysia's first broadcaster.

In 1946, broadcasting in Malaysia began with the establishment of Radio Malaya. In 1963, the country's first television network, TV1, was launched, followed by a second channel TV2 in 1969. Both radio and television networks were

subsequently merged as the broadcast arm of the Ministry of Information and renamed Radio Television Malaysia (RTM).

RTM operates from its headquarters in Angkasapuri, in the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur. RTM's radio broadcasts are in Malay, English, Mandarin, Tamil and native dialects, reflecting the country's multicultural diversity.

ABU Secretary-General Ahmed Nadeem wished RTM a happy anniversary: "On behalf of ABU, I extend our warmest congratulations to RTM on its 78th anniversary. As the pioneering beacon of broadcasting excellence in Malaysia, RTM has not only shaped the nation's media landscape but also contributed significantly to the region's broadcasting heritage. Here's to many more years of innovation, diversity, and public service broadcasting. May RTM continue to inspire and enlighten audiences across Malaysia and beyond, serving as a steadfast guardian of information, culture, unity and national identity." ■■■

Radio Nepal celebrates 74th anniversary with music competitions



Radio Nepal turned 74 on April 2, celebrating the occasion with nation-wide competitions on classical and modern songs.

The ceremony was inaugurated by the Secretary at the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology and Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Radio Nepal, Ram Krishna Subedi, who said Radio Nepal has played a crucial role in the conservation, promotion and expansion of classical and modern Nepali music, reflecting their significance in the country's cultural heritage.

Executive Director of Radio Nepal, Buddhi Bahadur K.C, said Radio Nepal has been recording the songs and music of all the national languages, conducting voice tests, fixing rankings, and digitising songs and audio materials.

21 selected contestants from across the country participated in the modern song competition, selected from a batch of 48 applicants. Milan Pariyar, from Morang, won the competition under the singing category.

A state-owned radio broadcasting organisation, Radio Nepal airs programmes on shortwave, medium wave and FM frequencies. ■■■

Media Prima Audio appoints Shah Hayatudin as Group Network Director



Shah Hayatudin has been appointed Group Network Director at Media Prima Audio. He is responsible for building native and digital content strategies for the five radio brands under Media Prima, namely Hot FM, Kool 101, Fly FM, Molek FM and Eight FM in creative ways. In digital content, there is also Audio+, the all-in-one powerhouse app and a wide variety of podcast titles.

Media Prima is the largest media and entertainment conglomerate in Malaysia with business interests in television, print, radio, out-of-home advertising, content creation and digital media. ■■■



Thailand's NBT appoints first female DG

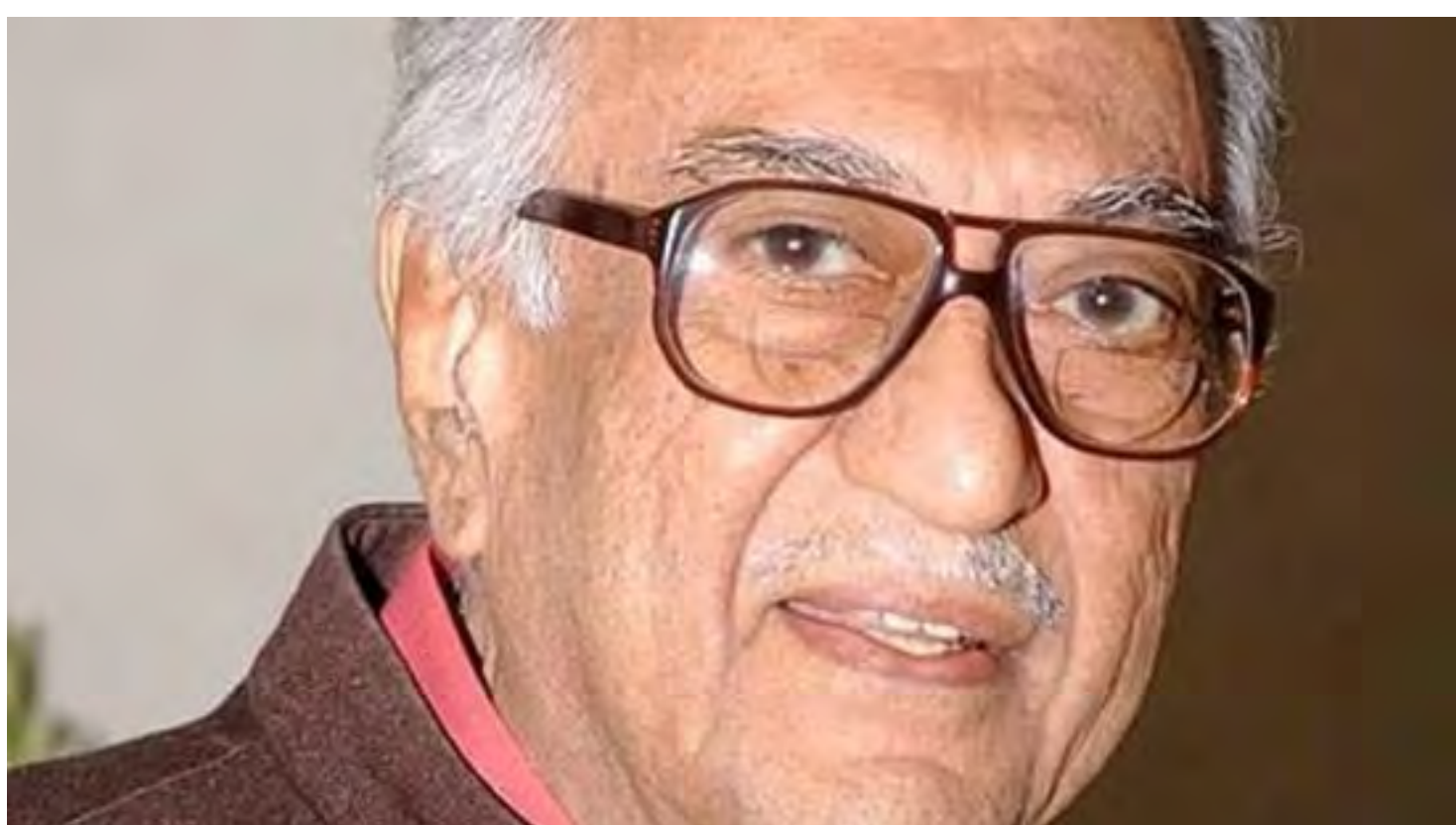
The National Broadcasting Services of Thailand (NBT) has appointed its first female Director-General, Sudruetai Lertkasem.

Her appointment follows the departure of Lt. Gen. Sansern Kaewkamnerd who retired last September.

Sudruetai is the former Deputy Director-General of NBT and has served in the organisation for over 20 years. She has extensive experience in media and broadcasting, including international affairs.

In a statement, NBT says that it looks forward to strengthening relations and friendship with international media partners. ■■■

Long-time Indian radio host Ameen Sayani dies



Ameen Sayani, known for his soothing voice on Indian radio airwaves, has passed away at 91, following a heart attack.

Ameen began his career in 1952 at Radio Ceylon (now Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation) where he hosted the popular show called 'Binaca Geetmala', which became a rage around the region with its exciting mix of songs.

Ameen's illustrious career also included some 58,000 radio programs and 19,000 radio spots and jingles. "Swanaash," a 13-episode series on HIV/AIDS broadcasted on All India Radio (AIR), was produced by him.

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi was among those who expressed their condolences. ■■■



NHK's Akinori Hashimoto retires

Akinori Hashimoto has retired after a long and illustrious full-time career at the public broadcaster Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK). With his retirement, he also steps down as ABU's NHK Liaison Officer.

Hashimoto-san concluded his distinguished career at NHK in February 2024, marking 43 years of dedicated service. His journey with NHK commenced in 1981, where he began as a reporter specialising in disaster reporting. Following this role, Hashimoto-san joined the Bangkok Bureau before being appointed the editor-in-chief for the Kyushu region in 2005, with a primary focus on international reporting.

Recognised for his exceptional skills and leadership, Hashimoto-san assumed the role of head of International News in 2010, where he played a pivotal role in overseeing NHK's international reporting on a global scale. Building upon his wealth of experience and expertise, Hashimoto-san rose to the position of Director-General of the NHK World Department three years later, cementing his legacy as a respected figure within the organisation.

Throughout his illustrious career, Hashimoto-san demonstrated unwavering dedication, professionalism, and a relentless pursuit of excellence in journalism. His contributions have left an indelible mark on NHK and the field of international news reporting, and he will be fondly remembered for his significant impact and leadership. Hashimoto-san continues to engage



with NHK as a freelance journalist.

Speaking about the impact Hashimoto-san left on ABU, the Secretary-General, Ahmed Nadeem, said, "Hashimoto-san's dedication and love for the ABU were evident in every interaction and initiative. His unwavering commitment to our organisation has been a guiding light, inspiring us all to strive for excellence. As we bid him farewell, we are grateful for his tireless efforts and the warmth he brought to our ABU family. Hashimoto-san's presence will be greatly missed."

The former Secretary-General of ABU, Dr Javad Mottaghi, said that it was a "pleasure, privilege, and honour" to have worked with Hashimoto-san. "Your invaluable knowledge, wisdom, sense of teamwork, sense of humour, ethics, passion, patience, dedication, sincerity, humility, hard work high level of professionalism, accountability, and transparency mixed with humble friendship have always been a source of inspiration for me and the whole union," he said, adding that Hashimoto-san was always ready to shoulder difficult tasks, and played a crucial role in many cases when the union was facing challenges.

ABU is fortunate to have had the opportunity of working with Hashimoto-san, and for that we express our appreciation.

On behalf of the secretariat and all ABU members, we wish Hashimoto-san a fulfilling retirement and wonderful future.



Grand Prix Nova now open for innovative radio entries

The Grand Prix Nova, organised by the Romanian Radio Broadcasting Corporation, is now open to entries from public broadcasters and independent producers from all over the world.

The festival is particularly interested in rewarding innovative artistic works that explore new approaches to radio broadcasting. It defines innovation as allowing new generations to discover, experiment and implement more efficient technical and aesthetic approaches to deliver its message.

The festival has three competitive sections: radio drama, binaural drama and short forms.

Since its creation, the Grand Prix Nova festival has earned a great reputation in the international



broadcasting arena – the quality of the productions selected in the competition places the GPN among the most recognised promoters of experimentation in radio creation.

The 12th edition of the Grand Prix Nova International Radio Drama Festival will be held between June 23 to 28, 2024 and include open listening for all the radio drama productions selected in the three categories (Drama, Binaural Drama and Short Forms). The festival will be broadcasted online on the festival's Facebook page.

The winners will be announced on the last day of the festival at a special awards ceremony.

More details about the Grand Prix Nova Festival are available [here](#). ■■■



NHK's Japan Prize 2024 welcomes submissions

Japan Prize 2024 is officially open for entries until the deadline June 6, 2024.

The competition by the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) seeks to recognise excellence in educational television and foster mutual understanding between societies and cultures by celebrating works that make innovative use of visual media.

Since its establishment in 1965, it prides itself for awarding outstanding works that foster people's aspirations to further learn, reflect, empathise, and act for the betterment of the world.

For more details on categories, and how to register, click [here](#). ■■■

Shanmugam Nadasan set to retire

ABU is bidding farewell to its long-time Senior Administration Assistant Shanmugam Nadasan who is set to retire this May. As he prepares for a new chapter, bosses and colleagues are reminded of his great expertise, contribution to the organisation, and his kind personality.

“Shan has been the heart and soul of our team, and is known for his warmth, dedication, and unwavering support,” Shabana Jan, ABU Human Resources Manager, said. “Throughout his time with us, Shan has been the go-to person for all, never shying away from any task. His kindness and helpful nature have made him a trusted confidant and friend to everyone in the office. Shan’s integrity and reliability have been his defining qualities.”

As Shan begins this new chapter, we express our gratitude for his years of service and friendship. While we will miss him dearly, we take comfort in knowing that his legacy of kindness and dedication will continue to inspire us. ■■■



ABU welcomes new staff



Anis Aiman Bin Mohd Ithnin, Administrative Assistant – Secretary-General Department

Born in the serene Malaysian town of Jerantut, Pahang, Anis Aiman’s educational journey began at Sekolah Kebangsaan Temin. He continued his studies at Sekolah Sains Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah in Pekan, Pahang. Driven by curiosity and a passion for learning, Anis then pursued a Diploma in Quantity Surveying at Politeknik Kota Bharu, Kelantan, which equipped him with essential skills on cost estimation, project management, and resource allocation in the construction industry. His professional experience spans various domains, including customer service, scaffolding and logistics.



Mohani Raja Shaharul Niza (Mohani Niza), Communications Officer – Publications Department

Mohani Niza holds a bachelor’s degree in journalism and has more than a decade of experience in the media industry and civil society sector. She is skilled in feature writing, online journalism, editing, proofreading, translation and qualitative research. Mohani volunteers with women’s rights organisations in her spare time. At ABU, she oversees the organisation’s communication activities, such as the website, weekly newsletters, social media platforms, quarterly ABU magazines, technical reviews and annual reports.



Siti Balqis Binti A Sudirman, Team Assistant – Technology Department

Balqis holds a bachelor’s degree in applied English language from Kolej Poly-Tech MARA (KUPTM), and has worked in diverse fields, including customer service, event coordination, and luxury item appraisal. Balqis brings a wealth of experience to ABU, having played a vital role in successful collaborations with Astro Malaysia for prominent events such as the Astro Didi and Friends: Konsert Hora Horey (2018) and the Astro XTY Happy Castle Live Concert (2019).



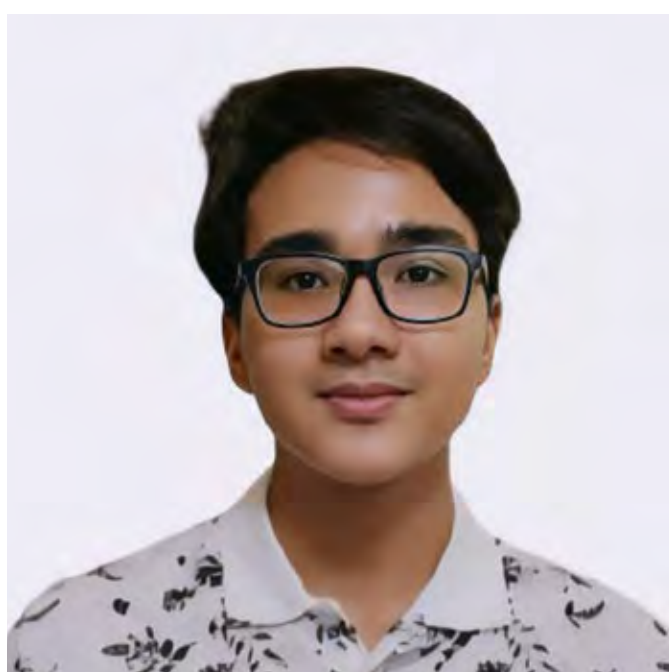
Badrul Iman bin Abidin, Part-time Web Developer – Technology Department

A dedicated web developer, Badrul contributes a unique blend of creativity and technical skills to ABU. He has a master's degree in physics from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman and brings a solid foundation in problem-solving and analytical thinking. His passion lies in crafting seamless online experiences through web design and development. Whether it's building user-friendly interfaces or optimising code, Badrul thrives on turning ideas into reality.



Mohammad Naim bin Ramin, Team Assistant – Programming Department

Mohammad Naim studied mass communications for his diploma, and political science for his bachelor's degree. A brief stint at Multimedia University (MMU) exposed him to the world of cinematic arts, fuelling his passion for camera work, video editing, and media practices – skills that he continues to sharpen in ABU. Previously, he worked at Cultural Impact, where he collaborated with a diverse team from France, the Netherlands, and Taiwan on intercultural exchange programs and team bonding workshops. The experience sharpened his ability to adapt to people of various backgrounds, bridge cultures and foster collaborations on an international scale.



Naqib Yazid, Team Assistant – Programming Department

Naqib holds a bachelor's degree in tourism management from the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and provides vast expertise to ABU. He handles his tasks with a desire for continuous learning, having gained experience in event management and coordination during his time in Tourism Selangor Promotion Sdn Bhd. Naqib is committed to organising successful events and encouraging cultural interchange.



June Moh, News Producer – News Department

June comes with more than 12 years of experience in journalism, having worked with The Online Citizen Asia, The Malaysian Reserve, Star Media Group, The Sun Daily, New Straits Times, HCK Media Group, and Malaysia SME. She specialises in politics, business, social-economic news, community issues and lifestyle topics. Among the stories she has covered include the disappearance of MH370, the MH17 tragedy, the April 2015 Nepal earthquake, and the murder of North Korea's Kim Jong-nam at Kuala Lumpur airport. She graduated with a double major in journalism and psychology, and speaks Mandarin, Cantonese, Malay and English.



Muhamad Khamsi Fatihah Bin Abdullah, Accounts Assistant – Finance Department

Muhamad Khamsi Fatihah holds a diploma in business studies, majoring in book-keeping and accounting. At ABU, he provides administrative support and assists with tasks such as data entry, financial records, invoicing, filing, reconciling, among other things. He has more than a decade of diverse work experience, including in the oil and gas company Petronas. ■■■

Voice of Vietnam presents awards to best radio writing entries

Public broadcaster Voice of Vietnam (VOV) has awarded the winners to its radio writing contest. Launched last November to mark World Radio Day, which falls on February 13 every year, the contest received hundreds of entries from listeners of all ages. The oldest contestant was 90 years old and the youngest was 11. Many entries were hand-written or included audio and video clips, and some even cartoons.

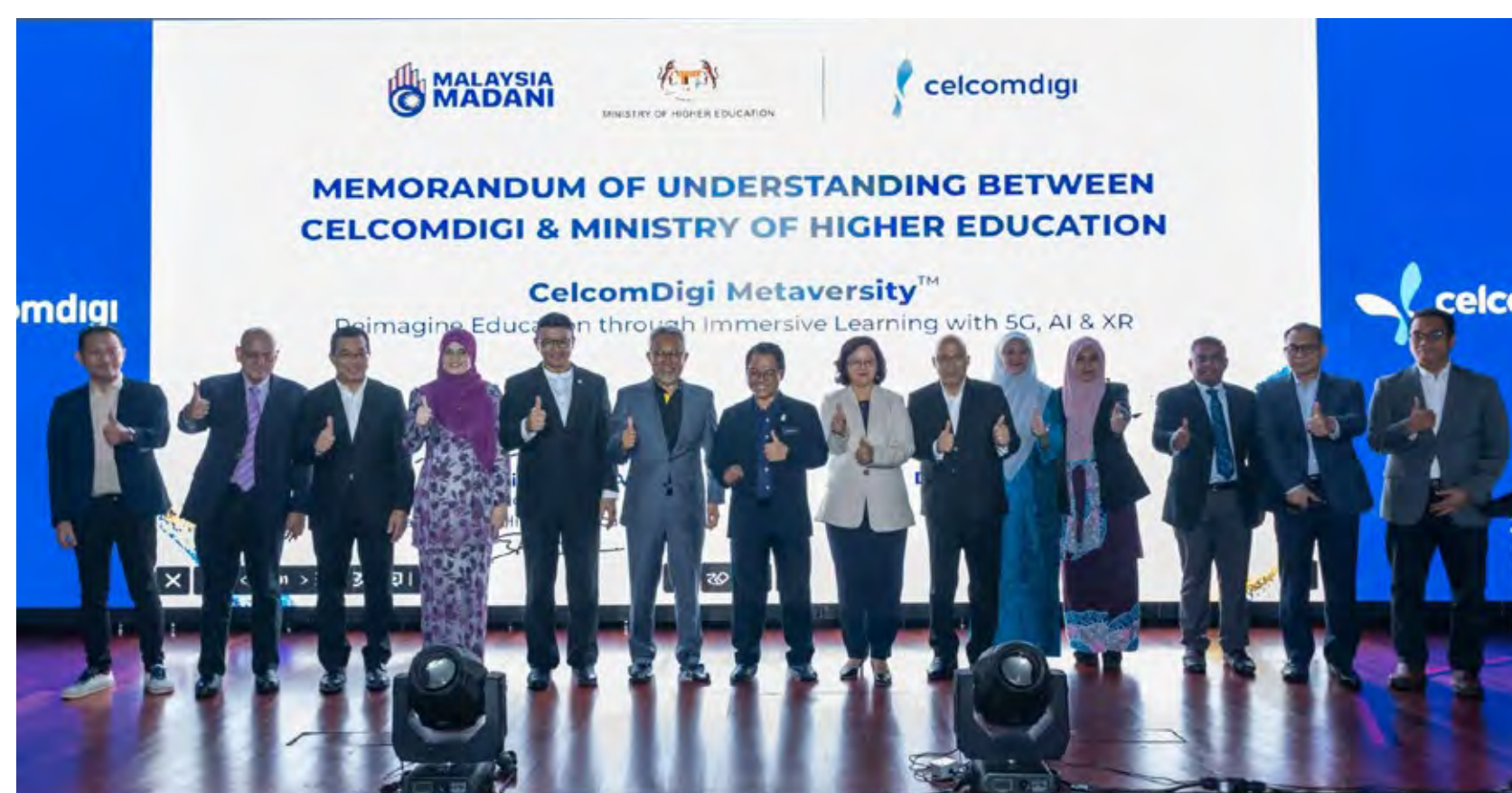
VOV President Do Tien Sy said, "All entries were well prepared both in content and format, illustrating listeners' love for the Voice of Vietnam. They are the manifestation of VOV's contributions to Vietnam's national development and of the development of Vietnam's radio broadcasting industry in general and VOV in particular."



One of the two special prize winners was Dang Dieu Ha who won a trip to Indonesia.

To mark the occasion, a special exchange program between listeners was held. Denny Abdi, Indonesian Ambassador to Vietnam and Milen Mitev, Director General of the Bulgaria National Radio, discussed the role of radio throughout history, as well as its development, opportunities and challenges in the digital era.

Malaysia's CelcomDigi brings metaverse, XR, AI, and robotics to university students



Malaysian communications conglomerate and telco provider CelcomDigi has launched the country's first experiential and immersive learning environment to students from 10 homegrown universities.

The CelcomDigi Metaversity™ initiative, which began in September 2023, seeks to reimagine learning experiences for tertiary education institutions nationwide, pioneer learning, and

develop the next-generation Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR4.0) talent pool in Malaysia, who can then apply their skills in fields such as healthcare, engineering, robotics, cybersecurity and more.

Datuk Idham Nawawi, Chief Executive Officer of CelcomDigi, said, "AI is changing the world and Malaysia needs to be ready. Our ambitions here are clear – we want to help accelerate the preparedness of Malaysia's future talents and position our homegrown universities as some of the most advanced learning institutions in the region. By leveraging the power of 5G, AI, metaverse, and Internet of Things technologies, we can enhance how we educate and train our future doctors, engineers, scientists, and technicians alike."

Collaborations are underway for the adoption and implementation of innovative metaverse, XR, and AI learning and education solutions across 21 universities nationwide soon.

Mediacorp wins Silver Innovation Catalyst Award

Mediacorp has won the Silver Innovation Catalyst Award at Singapore Media Marketing Awards 2023.

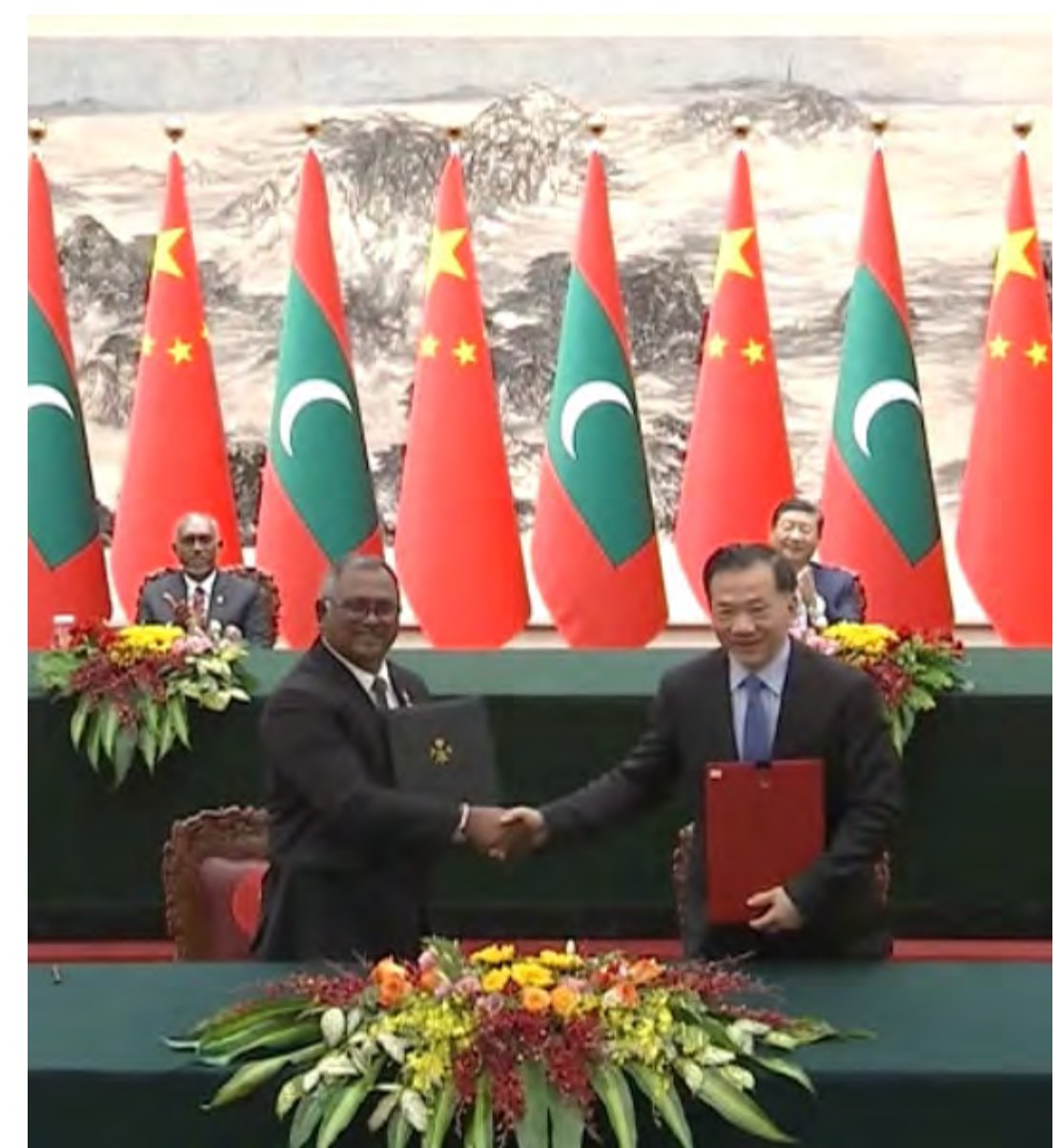
The award is given to a publisher/media owner who sets a benchmark for content creation, distribution, or monetisation innovation. This is achieved by the use of new formats, cross-platform integration, or creative use of data.



According to Singapore media marketing awards, the winning entries demonstrated how innovation enhanced consumer experience, generated engagement, and resulted in business growth.

Mediacorp, Singapore's national media network and the largest content creator, is committed to driving innovation and optimise engagement through expansion of social media. It says innovative technological integration on its data-driven SocialHub platform further optimises brand activation.

Singapore Media Marketing Awards is unique amid the vast global and regional recognition landscape. It pays tribute to the talent, hard work and creativity in local and multinational organisations in Singapore.



Maldives' PSM signs MoUs with Chinese media outlets

Maldives' state broadcaster Public Service Media (PSM) has signed agreements with Chinese media organisations to cooperate on the development of the Maldivian media sector. The agreements were signed during President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu's state visit to China.

During the ceremony held to sign key agreements between the Maldives and China in Beijing, PSM signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoU) with China Media Group. PSM also signed a MoU on News Cooperation with Xinhua News Agency of China.

The agreement with China Media Group will allow PSM to receive assistance in staff training, service exchange, content creation and archiving. Under the agreement with Xinhua News Agency, the company will share news information and facilitate staff training in the future.

CNA's Pradhana Vizha Awards celebrate Singapore's Indian entertainment



Pradhana Vizha 2024 celebrated the best of Indian entertainment in Singapore on 24 February, giving out a total of 26 awards.

The drama Kattradhu Kadhal clinched three awards – Best

Drama, Best Writing (Scripted) and Best Original Screenplay, emerging the biggest winner of the evening.

Best Actor went to Vishnu M Anandh, while Best Actress was awarded to Udaya Soundari, both of them earning recognition for their powerful portrayals in the dramas Aathman and Kattradhu Kadhal, respectively.

A lifetime achievement award was presented to the legendary L. Vijayandran, a virtuoso in song and dance. This year's awards, produced by MediaCorp Vasantham to celebrate the island's finest Tamil productions, marks the 19th year they have been held.

Singapore's CNA celebrates 25th anniversary by scaling up plans



Mediacorp's news and current affairs brand Channel News Asia (CNA) will focus on reaching new audiences in regional and international markets such as Indonesia, East Asia, US, and the UK, while continuing to deliver top-notch content to Singaporean audiences.

The announcement was made at CNA's 25th Anniversary Gala Dinner recently.

Mediacorp Chairman Niam Chiang Meng said, "We aim to be present at every touchpoint in people's lives, engaging them through a combination of our own platforms and third-party platforms. This multiplatform approach is anchored on our understanding of how people consume content today – across platforms and devices, languages, and genres."

CNA will make an inroad to the US, Canada, and the UK markets in phases across a combination of platforms: television streaming services, YouTube, and a curated edition of the CNA website. This undertaking will cater to people curious about news from Asia – in particular China, Japan, and Korea.

CNA will also boost its China coverage, with plans to open a new bureau in Shenzhen, and potentially place more correspondents at its Beijing and Shanghai bureaus.

Other new developments include a new special called East Asia Tonight, and the launch of cna.id, a website in Bahasa Indonesia, which utilises AI technology in translating content.

Since its launch in Singapore in March 1999, CNA has grown from a local news channel to a network consumed around the world, reaching more than 94 million homes and hotel rooms in Asia Pacific and the Middle East.



Mediacorp's radio reach hits 3.9 million listeners weekly

Mediacorp has recorded breakthroughs in its radio reach and engagement across multiple platforms.

Its reach, measured by the total number of unique, unduplicated radio listeners, grew to a record 3.9 million listeners weekly and achieved substantial gains across several key audience segments. The segment includes professionals, managers, executives and business people aged 15 and above, as well as youths aged between 15 and 34.

These findings are based on the latest Nielsen Radio Survey conducted from August to October 2023, which tracked radio listenership via diary recordings by 2,034 adults aged 15 and above, with the results weighted by age, sex and race to be representative of the Singapore population.

Channel News Asia says that across social media platforms - Facebook, Instagram and TikTok - Mediacorp's radio stations have witnessed a 23 percent increase in followers, with its top three stations, Yes 933, 987 and Oli 968, making up a cumulative 1.3 million followers.

In a press statement, Mediacorp's Chief Customer & Corporate Development Officer said: "Mediacorp is constantly looking to redefine audio entertainment, transcending traditional broadcasting to create a holistic lifestyle experience that is seamlessly integrated into the daily lives of our audiences."

Mediacorp commands 82.2 percent of the radio market share and owns eight out of Singapore's top 10 radio stations.



Aljazeera Media Institute holds 'Media Skills Week'

The Al Jazeera Media Institute recently conducted a training to hone and polish the journalism skills of students at Al-Mahra University, Yemen.

Held on February 25 to 29, 'Media Skills Week' consisted of four courses and were attended by 60 trainees in fields of digital storytelling, news verification,

mobile journalism and press narration.

Montaser Marei, Mohammed Ahdad, a journalist in Initiatives Department and supervisor of Al-Sahafa magazine, Amr Al-Qazzaz, director of Sanad Digital Agency, and Abdullah Al-Shehimi, a producer in the digital newsroom of Al Jazeera Media Network, conducted the sessions.

"Media Skills Week" is part of the Al Jazeera Ambassadors Initiative to bring expertise and competencies to develop media capabilities in Al-Mahra Province. It emphasises the importance of giving back to the community and building a strong media landscape in war-torn Yemen.

Australia's ABC to help Timor-Leste's RTTL make switch to digital TV

ABC International Development is helping public broadcaster Radio and Television Timor Leste (RTTL) to transition from analogue to digital television soon.

This is part of ABC International Development's Timor-Leste Media Development program under the Australian government's long-term Indo-Pacific Broadcasting Strategy.

Recently, ABC International Development hosted Timor-Leste's Secretary of State for Social



Communications Expedito Ximenes in Canberra, along with RTTL's President Jose Belo.

The Timore visit included discussions on digitising more than 25 thousand video tapes stored at RTTL which capture the early years of the young democracy after it gained independence in 2002.

They also discussed investigative reporting training, mobile journalism training and exchanges for Timorese content-makers to spend time at ABC bureaus in Australia.

China Media Group's Spring Festival Gala captivates millions



This year's Spring Festival Gala, an annual celebration produced and broadcasted by China Media Group (CMG), unfolded on the eve of the Chinese New Year. This occasion signifies a cherished time when Chinese people around the world gather with their families to welcome the Chinese New Year.

As China's most-watched TV program, the gala has been an annual tradition since its first broadcast in 1983. This year, the gala's live broadcast set new records for both the number of viewers and total views. As of 8 a.m. on February 10, it drew 795 million viewers through new media platforms, with total views soaring to 1.689 billion, a 15.13 percent increase from the previous year.

The mobile-optimised vertical format of the gala proved especially popular, garnering 423 million views, a 48.14 percent jump from last year, and achieving a new peak for the third consecutive year. The gala has prompted lively discussions and attracted many favourable comments on social media, with discussions related to the gala jumping 49.76 percent from last year to 26.7 billion.

This year, the gala showcased a mix of performances, from music, comedy and traditional arts like opera and martial arts to spectacular acts such as magic and acrobatics. It also incorporated cutting-edge technologies like extended reality (XR) and immersive stage interaction technologies to enhance the viewing experience.



ABC Australia wins 11 ACCTA Awards

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) has won 11 ACCTA awards, including five for its hit drama series, The Newsreader.

Depicting an Australian TV newsroom from the 1980s, The Newsreader was named best drama series for the second year at the 2024 Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) awards which took place on February 8.

In the best children's program category where the ABC swept the nominations, global phenomenon Bluey won from fellow nominees Beep and Mort, Turn Up the Volume, Crazy Fun Park and The PM's Daughter.

Heart-warming ABC series Old People's Home for Teenagers took out the best factual entertainment program, the wildly popular Tom Gleeson and the team behind Hard Quiz won best comedy entertainment program while Gardening Australia was named best lifestyle program.

ABC Chief Content Officer Chris Oliver-Taylor paid tribute to the ABC's AACTA award winners: "Congratulations to all the AACTA award-winning ABC programs. I'm so incredibly proud of the depth of talent across the entire slate that saw an astonishing 60 nominations, showcased with wins across Drama, Factual, Entertainment and Children's content."

The ABC received more nominations than any network or streamer at the AACTA awards that highlight and celebrate screen excellence in Australia.

‘Global Media Dialogue’ fosters China-Africa collaboration

The China Media Group Africa and the University of Abuja recently organised the Global Media Dialogue on March 18 in Abuja, Nigeria, aimed to foster China-Africa collaborations. The dialogue also sought to capitalise on China’s strategies with Africa’s development needs.

The dialogue, titled “Enhancing China-Africa Cooperation in New Quality Productive Forces to Realize High-Quality Growth”, was attended by around 50 people including political party representatives, government officials, scholars, media representatives, and students from the University of Abuja.



The Vice Chancellor of the University of Abuja, Abdul Rasheed Na’Allah, expressed the university’s willingness to partner with China, especially in the fields of aerospace and agricultural science. He said, “The University of Abuja has established an innovation centre and hopes to jointly promote the research and development of new quality productive forces with China, thereby leading Nigeria development and progress.”

Meanwhile, Chinese representatives at the event said that their country can help African countries achieve digital transformation in industries such as finance, medical care and education.

DRM showcases new technology at BES Expo



The Digital Radio Mondial (DRM) Consortium had its most ambitious BES presence so far at the 28th international Broadcast Engineering Society (BES Expo) on Broadcast & Media Technology in New Delhi, India between February 15 to 17 2024.

The DRM Consortium and several of its Indian and international members and partners (CML Micro, Fraunhofer IIS, Gossell, NXP, RFmondial

and Starwaves) welcomed for three days hundreds of visitors to its booths.

On February 15, the DRM Consortium showcased DRM Digital FM reception on a mobile Android phone. What was shown was that DRM Digital FM reception does not depend on proprietary receiver technology. It can be received on a mobile phone using an existing, off-the-shelf analogue FM tuner chipset, as already used in

billions of devices.

A car parked in the spacious DRM booth gave visitors the chance to compare old analogue sound with excellent live DRM digital Medium Wave audio and text in a car (video).

During the exhibition there was great interest also for the CML Micro new energy and cost-saving allband DRM1000 receiver module available in volume soon.



China Media Group releases broadcast plan for major 2024 sports events

China Media Group (CMG) has unveiled the list of mega-sporting events it will broadcast in China in 2024, including 32 “golden” competitions and 9 special ones.

During the event, the Chinese sports-themed art exhibition “From Beijing to Paris – Olympic Tour of Chinese and French Artists” was also launched.

CMG President Shen Haixiong, Deputy Director of the General Administration of Sport of China Zhang Jiasheng, and Vice President of China Disabled Persons’ Federation You Liang attended the event.

Sports communication is not only one of the most innovative and dynamic areas of CMG, but also a key part of the high-quality development of CMG,

said Xue Jijun, a member of the editorial board of CMG.

In 2023, CMG broadcast and promoted the Chengdu World University Games and Hangzhou Asian Games and Para Asian Games, Xue said.

CMG has promoted exchanges and cooperation with international sports organisations and continued to expand its influence in China and abroad, he added.

In 2024, CMG, which owns the broadcasting rights of many international sporting events within China, will continue to improve its brand with “golden” sports events and innovative trials.

CMG, which has signed an agreement with the Olympic

Broadcasting Services (OBS) on the production of international broadcast feed for Paris 2024, will fully apply the advanced “5G+4K/8K+AI” technology to provide top-notch audio-visual services to hundreds of millions of audiences around the world.

In compliance with the consensus reached by the presidents of China and France, CMG will work with Chinese and French artists to deeply explore the cultural and spiritual connotation of the Olympic movement, tell the Olympic story, and promote country-to-country and people-to-people relations via sports.

CMG will produce international broadcast feed for events in four sports, namely gymnastics, table tennis, badminton, and sport climbing.

Qatar to aid the development of Bangladesh media



Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) says it is committed to improving the media industry in Bangladesh.

Chief Executive Officer Sheikh Abdul Aziz bin Thani Al-Thani made the assurance during a meeting with Bangladesh’s State Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Mohammad Ali Arafat, on February 24, held on the sidelines of the Islamic Conference of Information Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member states in Istanbul, Turkey.

Qatar has a long experience with establishing global media networks in the country, including the Al Jazeera broadcast channel.

Both parties expressed optimism that this collaboration would significantly enhance the bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Qatar, paving the way for a richer media and cultural landscape in Bangladesh.

Indonesia's TVRI hosts broadcasting field trip for students

Indonesia's public broadcaster Televisi Republik Indonesia (TVRI) hosted a field trip on February 12 for 50 second grade students and their teachers from Hope Academy Elementary School, Jakarta.

The television staff welcomed the enthusiastic youngsters who came prepared with questions. This is not the first field trip hosted by TVRI. As a public broadcasting institution, it says it has always been their mission to serve and educate the community, including the younger generation.

During the visit, the students were taken to various



broadcasting facilities to get a bit of a taste of television journalism. They were given a tour of Studio 7, and then of Newsroom and finally to Studio 6 where they observed TVRI host Louisa Kusnandar present the programme "Economic Outlook". After that, Louisa fielded questions from the eager students.

Their teacher expressed her appreciation for the valuable experience and knowledge that her students were able to learn from the study trip.

Investing in radio campaigns can double their effectiveness, study finds

A study which looks at advertising practices has found that investing in just 11% of the budget for radio campaigns can already double their impact.

The findings of the study, which analysed data from the Advertising Council of Australia's Effectiveness Database, were revealed by Professor Mark Ritson at HEARD 2024, the annual Australian audio showcase hosted by Commercial Radio & Audio (CRA), attended by who's who in the radio sector.

"Radio has been underrated in



maximising the overall impact of your marketing," Professor Ritson, who is one of the world's leading marketing educators, said. "For the best bang-for-buck, marketers should consider radio as an integral part of the channel mix – and an 11% investment can double your campaign's impact."

"Radio doesn't need to be the hero, or the lead media, but it does drive a disproportionately

large impact for a relatively modest investment of just 11%. It's the ultimate sidekick," he added.

Professor Ritson was welcomed to HEARD by Ciaran Davis, Chairman of CRA and CEO and Managing Director of ARN Media, who said, "If advertisers aren't thinking about investing in radio, then they're missing a significant opportunity to drive ROI for their business."

Thai PBS launches ASEAN journalist fellowship

Thai PBS is calling for applications for the Thai PBS Journalist Fellowship Program 2024.

The aim of the program is to foster mutual understanding among journalists in Thailand and neighbouring countries.

Successful applicants will have the opportunity to visit Thailand for two months, while working alongside Thai colleagues, developing their network of industry peers and improving their understanding of ASEAN issues.

THE THAI PBS JOURNALIST FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Fostering mutual understanding and collaboration among journalists in Thailand and neighboring countries

Now accepting applications!

Apply by 1 June 2024
for a chance to be part of this transformative experience!

Who should apply

- ✓ ASEAN media practitioners
- ✓ At least 3 years of experience
- ✓ Strong English skills

Fellowship details

Successful applicants will engage in various journalistic activities and exchanges. The program offers an enriching 2-month stay in Thailand, complete with support for travel, accommodation, and related expenses.

Don't miss this opportunity to join a network of skilled media professionals and deepen your understanding of ASEAN dynamics.

For more information

Application form

ASEAN journalists with at least three years of experience and strong English-language skills are invited to apply.

The deadline is 1 June 2024.

Radio listeners in Australia getting younger as streaming soars, survey finds



A survey has found that an increasing number of young Australians are tuning into radio, following the rise in popularity of DAB+ radio and streaming technology.

Commercial Radio & Audio (CRA) welcomed the results which showed that there was a 1.3 percent jump in the number of listeners aged 10-24 to 2.8 million.

Commercial DAB+ stations saw growth in younger audiences, with listeners aged 10-24 up by 5 percent to 899 thousand.

“We are really encouraged by the first survey results for 2024, which show commercial radio continues to grow its audience and bring in younger listeners,” CRA chief executive officer Ford Ennals said.

“Audiences are continuing to explore their digital options, with 3.2 million people aged 10 and over listening to commercial radio via streaming, and 4.7 million listening to commercial radio on a DAB device,” he said.

“CRA has just invested in a major advertising campaign around DAB+ in January and February, and we are pleased to see that could be having an impact,” Ennals said.