

A stronger beginning, together!

“Airwaves constitute public property and must be utilized for advancing public good...it is the duty of the State to see that airwaves are so utilized as to advance the free speech right of the citizens which is served by ensuring plurality and diversity of views, opinions and ideas.”



That was the landmark verdict of the Supreme Court of India delivered by Justice P.B. Sawant and Justice S. Mohan on February 9, 1995, which ushered in the establishment of community radio stations in India. Due to the initiative taken by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India and the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), as many as 107 delegates representing the functional community radio stations of the country assembled in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, from April 7-9, 2011, for the first Community Radio Sammelan, to share their experiences as a part of the community radio movement. The delegates also felt that if the movement had to be taken forward and if a more democratic space had to be created, then all community radio

stations would have to come together. It was in this spirit, that 52 community radio operators signed a declaration on April 9, 2011 to form an association of the functional community radio stations of India.

This signing of the declaration was followed by a meeting of representatives from nine different states of the country in Delhi on July 13, 2011 which led to the formation of the Community Radio Association (CRA). The objectives were clear - to provide a platform to all functional community radio stations to voice their experiences/voices, to strengthen and develop the community radio movement in India and to give a voice to the voiceless community's they served. Subsequently, CRA was registered under the Societies Registration Act. XXI of 1860 in Delhi on August 23, 2011.



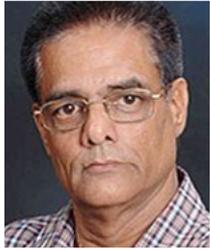
CRA members with Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of Communications and Information Technology

I am glad to share with you that within a span of one and half years, more than 90 operational CRS have joined the association and helped CRA become a force to reckon with. It is CRA which raised and successfully lead the community radio operators of the country in taking constructive actions towards resolving the issue of the spectrum fee hike. We are proud to announce that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has accorded due recognition to CRA by including it as a member in the community radio screening committee and provided an opportunity to contribute to the revised policy guidelines consultations. The Ministry has further assigned us the responsibility to organize three CR Awareness Consultations in Dibrugarh, Ooty and Goa during 2012-2013.

I take this opportunity to congratulate all of you for the achievements of CRA, which could not have been possible without your collective effort. I seek your active support and cooperation in its future endeavors. I firmly believe that together we will be able to bring more power to the voices we represent and the communities we work with. I am confident the community radio movement will only get stronger and more visible in the years to come!

Dr. Kandarpa Das, President, CRA

Reflections from across the country



I am extremely happy that Community Radio Association has brought out this much needed newsletter to show case the achievements and share the problems of the more than 100 Community radio stations in India. I

do hope that the editorial team will reflect the work of all CR stations without any reservations or bias. This newsletter will be crucial in not only advocating for a more conducive environment essential for the survival of the community radio stations but also focus on the ground realities and experiences from across the country.

I congratulate the team in taking this initiative and wish the newsletter success. I trust that *In the Loop* will one day become a collector's item and will truly reflect the potential of this medium and serve as an useful source of information on CR stations in India.

Dr. Sreedher Rammurthy is a Media expert and a Community Radio Practitioner.

BUILDING CAPACITY

Consultation Workshops by CRA

State Level Consultations organised by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting will be hosted by CRA in Dibrugarh on January 21-23, in Ooty on February 16-18, and in Goa on March 22-24, 2013. The consultations aim to:

- Sensitize the participants on concept of community radio
- Emphasize on the need for community participation and ownership
- Demystify the application process and the associated challenges
- Provide exposure to the equipment and technology and associated challenges
- Share experiences in CR and examples of innovation in programming, technology, human resources and revenue generation from functioning CR stations
- Assist the participants in establishing linkages and get support while setting up CR station.

The purpose is to assist community radio aspirants in the application process and encourage more and more not for profit organisations to join this movement.

Governing Body Meets in Delhi & Madurai

Two meetings of the governing body (GB) were held in May and September, 2012, in Delhi and Madurai, respectively. The meetings discussed a varied range of subjects which could not only help in strengthening the CR movement but also enlarge the presence of the Association. To mention a few: the issue of spectrum hike by the WPC was discussed and it was decided to hold a meeting with Mr. Kapil Sibal to bring to his notice the injustice meted out the CRs. To ensure the smooth functioning of CRA, the roles and responsibilities of each member were clearly laid out. Sub-committees were formed to look into issues of the CRA website, MOA amendment, central liaison & policy, media coordination, research and development and others.

At the meeting held at Madurai, the CRA unanimously decided to have a HIV/AIDS campaign in the month of December to coincide with the World HIV/AIDS day.

Governing Body members for March 2012 -February 2014

President	Dr. Kandarpa Das
Secretary General	Mr. Virender Singh Chauhan
Treasurer	Ms. Archana Kapoor
Vice Pres. (East)	Mr. N.A. Shah Ansari
Vice Press (North)	Ms. Barsha Chabaria
Vice Pres. (N-E)	Dr. Ankuran Dutta
Vice Pres. (Central)	Mr. Jitender Sharma
Vice Pres. (West)	Dr. Amol Goje
Vice Pres. (South)	Fr. Thomas J. Therakam
Joint Secretary	Ms. Pinky Chandran
Joint Secretary	Mr. Pankaj Athawale
Joint Secretary	Mr. Brham Prakash Yadav

ZONE UPDATES

South Zone discusses content sharing and financial sustainability



The South Zone consultation received an overwhelming response with participation from 16 community radio stations of Southern India. The consultation held on April 21, 2012 at Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, was hosted by Periyar CRS. Elections for the executive committee of the zonal chapter were held and Dr. Fr. Thomas J. Therakam from Kerala was elected President, Prof. Thangaraj from Tamil Nadu Vice President and Ms. Pinky Chandran from Karnataka Secretary of the South Zone. Mr. Karthikeyan and Ms. Shirley Deepak were elected Joint Secretaries and Mr. Shyam Bhat Treasurer. At the consultation, on the initiation of Secretary General, Mr. Virender Singh Chauhan, it was resolved to seek rollback in spectrum fee.

KEY DECISIONS

At least one workshop on sharing of experiences to be conducted by all four states for community RJs and Station Coordinators

Regular update of programmes on EDAA website would be ensured to facilitate content sharing.

Resolution demanding rollback of spectrum fee should be passed



West Zone aims for sustainable CRS

CRA's first West Zone (Maharashtra, Goa, Gujarat and Rajasthan) meeting on April 1, 2012 was held at Nasik. The meeting had participation of community radio stations operational only in Maharashtra. Dr. Amol Goje was elected President, Mr. Navin Chandra Vice President, Mr. Sanjay Chandekar Secretary and Mr. Vishwas Thaku Treasurer. Rest of the posts were left vacant due to no representation from Goa, Gujarat and Rajasthan. Discussions were held to initiate a mechanism to market local songs and musical content generated by individual radio stations and to develop a common advertisement rate to ensure packages for all radio stations in the west zone for advertisements. The zonal meeting also decided to set up of a corpus fund for the West Zone and have more engagement with the Central and State Government to ensure projects. Sharing similar concerns, like that of the South Zone with regard to content sharing, the West Zone decided to share content from Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University.



CHAPTER UPDATES

Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka - Chapters

Kerala Chapter

The first meeting of the CRA India Kerala chapter was held on June 5, 2012 at the SIET office. Representatives from Radio Mattoli, Radio Benziger, Radio Macfast, Radio Media Village and Radio DC participated. Fr. Ferdinand Peter from Radio Benziger and Mr. K Vipin Raj from Radio Media Village were elected as Convenor and Joint Convenor of the Kerala chapter. This was followed by meetings in August and November, 2012. These were attended by all stations. The members decided on the importance of accreditation with PRD and DAVP to be able to broadcast government advertisements. It was also felt that interactions with government agencies like ATMA, NABARD, UGC for financial assistance should be taken on priority. The meeting also focused on the need for active participation in National Community Radio Awards hosted by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

Karnataka

The community radio stations from Karnataka met at the Agricultural University in Dharwad on November 16, 2012. Radio Sidharth, Radio Janadhvani, Radio Ramanadhwani, KLEBPP CRS, Radio Active CR 90.4 MHz, Krushi CRS and Manipal Development Communication CRS attended the meeting which was called to plan the

formation of the Karnataka Chapter. It was decided that the formation and the elections for the Karnataka Chapter will be held after the CR Sannelan in February 2013. The need for assistance from the Department of Information, Government of Karnataka, to support this initiative was also discussed.



CRS of Karnataka come together in Dharwad

Tamil Nadu-Puducherry Chapter

Representatives of functional and upcoming stations from Tamilnadu and Puducherry met in Madurai on March 16, 2012 to form the Tamilnadu-Puducherry Chapter. Elections were conducted and Dr. R Lakshmi pathi was elected Patron. Dr. K Thangaraj, Kongu CRS and S. Soundar Rajan, KSR CR were elected as President and Secretary. Mr. James Rajsekaran, PARD CRS and Karthikeyan, Pudu vai Vani CRS were elected as Vice Presidents and Mrs. G Gandhimathi, Periyar CRS was elected as Treasurer.

The meeting emphasised on the need for DAVP empanelment, quality of content being broadcast and content sharing. It was felt that the CRS should be given the status of "Press". Experiences of various CRS

operating in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry were also shared and solutions to a number of challenges faced by the stations were sought.

In addition, a two day Consultation/Workshop on Women, Children and Community Radio was conducted by the People Studies, Loyola College in Chennai with the support from UNICEF on August 10-11, 2012. More than 17 functional community radio stations participated. Another workshop was held on October 17-19, 2012. Both these workshops highlighted the need for content sharing, DAVP empanelment, grants from the State and Central Government for the operation of CRS, capacity building trainings, future course of activities and developing an E-newsletter for the chapter.

All members are requested to send in photographs of meetings/events to communityradioassociation@gmail.com

HIV/AIDS Campaign welcomed by CRSs



Campaign conducted by Vasundhra Vahini CRS in Baramati

The campaign saw active participation from community radio stations. They created special series of programmes on HIV/AIDS, organised rallies, produced songs, dramas and conducted interviews with experts and community members. The campaign aimed to increase awareness, educate and inform and fight prejudices. The result of the campaign which involved different categories of the awards like best radio series, the best campaign, best outreach event and the best RJ would be announced shortly.

The month of December saw community radio stations across India come together and participate in a month long campaign to promote HIV/AIDS communication to encourage engagement with the local community. The campaign aimed to engage local communities through live phone-in programmes and bringing together NGOs and community workers. The stations were required to broadcast a minimum of 10 episodes with out reach activities as well.

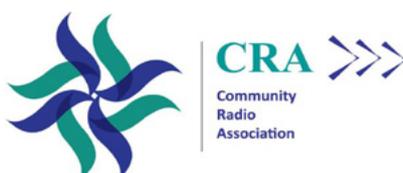


MOP Vaishnav CR 107.8 MHz conducting AIDS awareness campaign with Auto drivers

In the Loop invites members interested to be a part of the editorial team. We also invite opinions, articles, experiences with CR and information about any new and innovative programmes aired on your community radio from its readers. From the next issue, we would be featuring RJs or a Community Radio engaging extensively with communities and sharing their story. You can contribute through photographs, articles or interviews by emailing us at communityradioassociation@gmail.com. Please add the profile of your community radio station with your article.

To become a member of Community Radio Association,
contact Archana Kapoor at communityradioassociation@gmail.com

Produced by



Editorial Team: Archana Kapoor (Radio Mewat 90.4 MHz)
Pinky Chandran (Radio Active 90.4 MHz)
Vandana Radhakrishnan (Radio Active 90.4 MHz)

Design: Vandana Radhakrishnan