

Voices from Bangladesh on the Occasion of World Radio Day 2018



Anna Minj
Chairperson, Bangladesh
Community Radio Association
(BCRA), and
Director, Community
Empowerment, Integrated
Development and Gender Justice
and Diversity Programme, BRAC

13th February is the World Radio Day. The day was first observed through declaration by UNESCO in 1911. Since then the day is being observed every year with due importance. This year the theme is “Radio and Sports”. The theme is very important in the context of current situation of instability, humanity, dignity, tolerance etc. throughout the world.

Since 2011, Community Radios in Bangladesh have been broadcasting radio programmes and playing an important role as a media for the community people. At present 17 community radios have been initiated and other 15s are on the list of initiation. These media are covering information of local community people relating to their life, culture, literature and sports including women empowerment and women rights with direct participation of local community people in their programmes in local dialects.

One of the significant objectives of this year’s programme is social integration and gender balance through promotion of sports. Radios can play a very important role as a powerful media to spread the news of sports in every corners of society and radios are doing the same in our country. A study shows that 75% people in the developed world being benefited through listening to radio programmes. Radio programmes strengthen the cultural traditional spirits;brings diversity of thought among community people. In the context of gender balance, radios can promote participation of women in the fields of sports and culture. Radios are broadcasting news of local community level sports which in result promotes cultural heritage in the societies.

A report of UNESCO shows that in the radios only 4% of women are participating in sports related events in the media. Only 12% women are engaged in broadcasting sports related and other news items. Bangladesh Community Radio Association has been working in Bangladesh with the objective to ensure equal participation of women in radio programmes. At present in Bangladesh around 700 women are engaged in 17 community radios as permanent volunteers. It is a new arena where women are playing important role for social transformation.

It is necessary for us to increase the number of community radios in Bangladesh to ensure access to information of all rural citizens. We all should give importance on the issue of increasing participation and engagement of women in radios. Our goal for observance of World Radio Day this year would

be to strengthen the participation of women in the fields of sports and to broadcast more programmes highlighting the issues of women in the fields of development of Bangladesh.



AHM Bazlur Rahman S21BR
CEO

Bangladesh NGOs Network for
Radio and Communication
(BNNRC)

ceo@bnnrc.net | www.bnnrc.net

Today, 13 February, 2016 the “World Radio Day” is celebrated worldwide. The theme of the day this year is “Radio and Sports”. Radio is still playing a powerful medium for encouraging sports in the world as well as in Bangladesh. However, it was revealed in a study that only 4% of the programs broadcast by World Radio were broadcasted on women's sports. 12% of sports news is presented by women, which is very frustrating.

The main impact of the current 17 Community Radios in the context of Bangladesh is that this mass media set up at the doorstep of the people has created a chance for the poor and marginalized population to speak their own words directly. This new media has given the right to information and communication rights to the people living in rural areas for the issues of social, political, economic, cultural and environmental conditions. In order to ensure good governance, the opportunity to facilitate public dialogues among public representatives, GOs and NGOs, and communities have been created.

Opportunities for direct access to communities with the main sectors of Sustainable development targets and the Seventh Five-Year Plan has been created. Community Radios have been played a significant role in protecting people's lives and resources by providing update information on the natural disasters to the people. During the cyclone- Mahasen, Comen and Roanur, local administration has directly share their instructions through Community Radios to make the local people cautious. Thus the risks of the disaster reduced.

However, the position of the community radio in our country is not as widespread as the broadcast of sports related to traditional sports, equality between men and women, and promotion of peace and development initiatives in sports broadcasts.

It was found in a recent survey of Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC) that 17 Community Radios have been broadcasting 144 hours radio programs and news daily where the slot for news on sports (local, national and international) is only 2 hours and 37 minutes. On the other hand, 12 Community Radios (except 5 radio stations namely Radio, Padma, Radio Naf, Radio Sundarbans, Radio Meghna and Radio Sagordwip) has been broadcast 6 hours sports program on

weekly basis. Male broadcasters present the sports program at all radio stations on the titles like-playground, galleries, Mahananda sports, sports updates, Sarabella sports etc.

Generally, the representatives of local sports organizations, local former and current players, coaches, officers from administration, teachers (physical exercises), sports journalists, students and sports fans usually participate in these national and international level sports programs. It is notable that the participation of women in these programs is very poor.

In this situation, the timing and space need to be increased for local, traditional and domestic sports events on the community radio, in order to purify the principles of non-violence, tolerance, solidarity and family values in the society as well as to comprehend the current rules and concepts of gender. On the other hand, to increase women's centred sports events as well as program presentation in broadcasting is needed urgently.

So all the radios will soon be responsible for strengthening the broadcast of traditional sports, bringing equality between women and men in sporting events, and strengthening the sports business to increase peace and development initiatives. Thus, the common people will be reunited with their own culture and heritage, the opportunity of freedom of expression will be created through cultural expression and discrimination between women and men will be reduced dramatically in sports broadcasts and the establishment of justice will be established.



Ms. Lutfah Ahmed
Consultant DW Akademie
DW Akademie

Radio can not only promote traditional games, but in doing so, can also bring social cohesion and pride in ones' own culture and heritage. Local radio coverage of local sporting events in Bangladesh can revive interest and highlight traditional games such a Ha Do Do, Dariya Bandha, Chi Buri, Shat Chara and many others. Engaging and interactive radio content linked to such sporting events can help increase engagement of young listeners, encourage participation and celebration of such games. Radio is an ever popular communication platform in Bangladesh and is available in remote areas of the country and these can be utilised to promote and highlight a diverse range of local sports.

UNESCO can play a huge role in proving support and encouragement to such endeavours and its recent support to the research on Traditional Games of Bangladesh with Dhaka University for example, will be a useful resource for Radio stations, especially those operating at very local levels such as Community Radio and local FM Radios. These small radio stations can explore opportunities for new coverage and creating engaging content on local sports. I look forward to hearing more on the topic of local sports on Radio in the near future.



Md. Moniruzzaman
National Information Officer
UN Information Centre
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Indeed, it is a good news that theme of this year's World Radio Day is "Radio and Sports". Both radio and sports are effective tools to enhance harmony and peace in the society. Radio is a popular and powerful broadcast media to communicate with local people all over the world. Apart from other regular and entertaining programmes, it reaches mass people from urban to rural areas with various traditional and local sports news.

We have experienced in global and South Asian perspectives that sports sometimes contribute to reduce the risk of unstable and conflict situation by the participation of head of government/state in person in a sports event such as cricket, football and other popular traditional games. Radio can connect local people including girls and women by engaging them in sports and by messaging it widely. In Bangladesh, Bangladesh Betar with the cooperation of UN in Bangladesh regularly broadcasting SDGs talk shows. Collaboration between UN and community radio may bring better result to reach our common goals.

I hope upcoming Winter Olympic will also be an opportunity to bring world people together. I conclude with a quote of UN Secretary-General's Messages of World Radio Day 2018 "let us celebrate both radio and sports as ways of helping people achieve their full potential."



Rafiqul Islam
Voice actor at freelance and a player
of traditional games

In the era of development of communication technology, radio is going ahead with lots of possibilities day by day. Mostly radio can bring a lot of people under the communication structure especially the marginal people. In 2012, UNESCO has declared 13 February as International Radio Day and From then every year the day celebrated splendidly.

I am extremely happy to know that the theme of the Radio Day- 2018 is traditional games. I played various kind of traditional games like Hadudu, Dariabandha, Bouchi, Gollachot, 16 Bades etc. from my childhood. But as a player of this enjoyable games I am also sad to share that these are losing their place just for the lack of proper inspiration. All I just want and hope that these games shall live with their glory.



Sudip Chakroborthy

Assistant Professor, Department of Theatre and Performance Studies, Dhaka University & currently studying PhD at Goldsmiths, University of London

Radio is most convenient and vibrant community media all over the world. It would be a great initiative to connect people with their traditional games through a regular Radio program in Bangladesh.

Radio has a wider community of listener and they can select the games by proposing to their listeners to deposit audio games and the story and history related to it, in any language and dialects in Bangladesh, which Radio station will be able to download for broadcasting all year long.

To connect all ages, different backgrounds and different regions games, Radio is the best and powerful way. We need to utilise this communication medium.



Dr. Sydur Rahman Lipon

Lecturer, Department of Theatre and Performance Studies, Dhaka University & Researcher on Ethnological and Indigenous Performance

Since the beginning, Radio, the most effective tools of communication, has played a vital role to share, exchange or broadcast news, information, education and entertainment; transmit social values and foster community interest. Radio became an essential part of professional activities and an inseparable tool of daily life for many communities. It is worth recorded in the history that, Radio helped to raise voices of the oppressed and united mass-consciousness against invaders during the liberation war in 1971. Now a days, as we living in internet based hyper-textual reality, I do believe that, Radio can still be a tool of trustworthy airwave for those who living their lives within the context of both agricultural or/and techno-cultural society in the world.

Traditional game is the most aggregated form of performance that celebrates social form of communitas and entertainment. Traditional game as 'collective memory' upholds cultural harmony, encourages social discipline, commitment, teamwork and mobilize the collective imagination. Traditional Games, in the context of Bangladesh has a very rich and rooted history. Unfortunately many of them are not seen in much practice as it is seen in the game of popular and professionally valued games like football and cricket. Moreover, traditional game losing its value and necessity to play rather than playing invented game as the product of ever growing techno-capitalized society.

On World Radio Day, let us organize to strengthen Radio an effectively easy accessible media of mass communication, to show the spirit of traditional game to foster social potency, unity and identity of the people of diverse community.