



FABC
OSC

Communication | N F O

FEDERATION OF ASIAN BISHOPS' CONFERENCES - OFFICE OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

P.O. Box 2036, Manila 1099 Philippines

Tel: (+63 2) 732 7170, 338 7769 Fax: (+63 2) 732 7171

Email: fabc_osc@pldtdsl.net

Vol. XXII, No. 9
September 2007

MALAYSIA: REGIONAL MEDIA BODY HOLDS ANNUAL MEET

This year's annual meeting of Malaysia's Regional Commission for Social Communications (RCSC) was held in Bundu Tuhan, Kota Kinabalu diocese from June 25-26. Eleven representatives from Kuala Lumpur and Kuching archdioceses, the Dioceses of Kota Kinabalu, Keningau, Miri and Sibiu and the Apostolic Vicariate of Brunei met to share experiences in Church communications. Present was Archbishop Murphy Pakiam, president of Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei bishops' conference and its episcopal social communications commission. The participants agreed to hold a media trainers' workshop in Miri and to organize a "Malaysian Media Awards Night" in the near future. Next year's meeting in Kuching June 23-25 will begin with a half-day recollection, the participants said. (CATHOLIC SABAH)

MALAYSIA: 'CATHOLIC SABAH' MARKS 50 YEARS OF EVANGELIZATION THROUGH THE WRITTEN WORD

This year marks the 50th year of continuous publication of "Catholic Sabah," the four-language monthly newspaper of Kota Kinabalu (KK) and Keningau dioceses in Sabah. Instead of a big celebration, the newspaper's Editorial Board decided to use the time for inward reflection focusing on ways by which the paper could improve. Msgr Primus Jouil, editor of the Church organ, says more stories related to faith should be written for village folks and especially for young people. Catholic Sabah started in 1957 as the Sunday Church bulletin of St Michael's Church in Penampang. In January 2008, the monthly publication will convert into a fortnightly. Sabah is the Malaysian state located on the northern portion of the island of Borneo. (CATHOLIC SABAH)

INDIA: KOLKATA SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

Chitrabani, Kolkata announced that it is now accepting entries for the 4th Kolkata Short Film Festival (KSFF) scheduled for December 2-8 this year. Application forms are available at <www.chitrabani.com> Chitrabani is the social communication centre sponsored by the Kolkata Province of the Society of Jesus. Contact the Festival Director, P. J. Joseph, sj at cbcal@chitrabani.com

BANGLADESH: DANCING AND SINGING GREET NEW DHAKA PARISH

A boisterous cultural program with comedy skits, dances and songs followed the solemn inauguration of Mary Queen of Apostles Parish September 7 in Mohammadpur, northwest Dhaka. The new parish with some 1,759 Catholics including 350 families was carved out of St. Christina's Parish. The makeshift tin-roofed bamboo shelter the residents built in 1985 for Masses and other religious activities turned into Mary Queen of Apostles Church in 1995. From then on, the area was known as a sub-parish in the outskirts of Dhaka. The sub-parish recorded 268 baptisms from 1995 to 2006 and established an elementary school in 1999. (UCANEWS)

INDIA: BISHOPS HAVE A GO AT 'E-LEARNING'

Twenty-two archbishops and bishops including Cardinal Telesphore Toppo of Ranchi, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI), took a short basic course in computer science and Internet August 20-23 at St. Aloysius College in Mangalore. The workshop, dubbed "Shepherds of the Media Age," preceded a national conference of Catholic communications at the same venue on August 23. Cardinal Toppo, while opening the workshop, said: "We are here as shepherds of the media age to acquaint ourselves with the computer and Internet skills, so that we can be more effective in our service to the Church and to the people of India." The workshop and conference were organized by the CBCI Commission for Social Communication. (UCANEWS)

INDIA: JESUIT DATABASE ON ECOLOGY HELPS MEDIA PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Since December 2006, the "Taru Mitra" (friends of trees) group has been gathering and digitalizing information on Bihar state's bio-diversity and ecology. Journalists now regularly access the database for information on ecology and "this has generated more pro-environmental stories in local newspapers," observed Jesuit Father Robert Athickal, the director of Taru Mitra. Fr Athickal said the group's campaign for the environment now has the support of the "journalists' mighty pen and camera." This is important beside the "simple weapons" of rallies, poster campaigns and tree plantings, he added. Taru Mitra opened an office in March 2007 where they can receive journalists seeking information on the ecology in electronic or printed form. (THE HERALD)

KOREA: NUNS' BOOKSTORE PROVIDES TEA, COFFEE AND A CATHOLIC ATMOSPHERE

The Sisters of Palma of the Blessed Korean Martyrs opened the "Palma Book Cafe" in front of Namchon Cathedral in Busan (Pusan) last year for people to gather and spend time over a cup of coffee or tea. The trendy bookstore introduces Christianity in a "comfortable way" by providing books, music, herbal tea and coffee, says Sister Sollina Choi Gum-hee, superior general of the congregation. Bishop Augustine Cheong Myong-jo of Pusan asked the nuns working in his diocesan office to open and run the cafe, a few months before he died of lung cancer in June 2007. Busan is the second largest city in South Korea. (UCANEWS)



INDIA: PRINT MEDIA WILL NEVER LOSE RELEVANCE SAYS CATHOLIC MAGAZINE EDITOR

The role of Catholic media is to enlighten and inspire readers, spread the Good News and help people discuss issues from a Christian point of view, says the editor of "The New Leader" based in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Jesuit Father Joe Antony, who is editor of the magazine for 17 years, says books and magazines will never lose their readers who like to hold printed magazines in their hands, enjoy the warmth of the paper and look at it. The Internet, on the other hand, is only available to a small fraction of the population, added the 55-year old priest. One easily loses a page on the world wide web, whereas the magazine stays. The New Leader is one of India's leading national English-language Catholic publications. (THE HERALD)

HONG KONG: ASIAN CATHOLIC STUDENTS PUT FOCUS ON MEDIA

Thirty five members of the International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS) and the Hong Kong Federation of Catholic Students met at Ma On Shan Caritas Secondary School August 12-15 to study the nature and effects of mass media, and to reflect on their own role as part of the media in communicating the Christian message. The participants representing Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, Macau and Hong Kong studied the role of media in forming attitudes in society. At the opening Mass, Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-kium encouraged the participants to reflect on the spirit of Christianity and to follow Christ's example. (SE)

INDIA: MUSLIM BUSINESS MAN TAKES OVER KERALA'S CENTURY-OLD CATHOLIC DAILY

M.A. Pharis, a 46-year-old Muslim with business and political interests in Kerala state, has become the chairperson of Rashtra Deepika Limited company that owns "Deepika" (little lamp), Kerala's oldest Malayalam-language daily. He replaced Bishop Mathew Arackal of Kanjirappally, who had led the company since 2003. Bishop Arackal reportedly brought in Pharis to invest in the company to help get over the financial losses incurred since ownership shifted to laypeople, dioceses and congregations. Deepika was launched in 1887 by the Kerala-based Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI). The newspaper functioned under the CMI until 1989. (THE HERALD)

INDIA: DAILY CHRISTIAN TV PROGRAM LAUNCHED IN RANCHI

A daily Christian television program "Nutan Dhara" (new spring) was launched in Ranchi on August 7. Cardinal Telesphore Toppo, archbishop of Ranchi, said the program was setup to meet the "moral growth and spiritual renewal of Christian families." Nutan Dhara will be telecast daily from 7:30pm to 8:00pm in Nazar TV, a popular local cable TV channel in Ranchi city. (CNUA)

INDIA: CYBER FRAUDS HACK CATHOLIC PUBLICATIONS' EMAIL

Internet frauds have hacked into the email identity and database of the Catholic weekly "Indian Currents" from Delhi sending a strange letter seeking money. Even the South Asia Religious (SAR) News received an email purportedly from Indian Currents asking for money transfer. Another email ID was thus set up <icdelhi@gmail.com> to forego the old one which was hacked, says Fr Jacob Kani, editor of the weekly. A "techie" (technology expert) from Bangalore says to avert such crimes passwords should be changed frequently. Firewalls and anti-hackware should also be installed in office computers. (SARNEWS)

PAKISTAN: NEW EDITION OF URDU BIBLE SHOWCASES ECUMENICAL COOPERATION

Catholic and Protestant leaders have hailed the publication of a new edition of the Catholic Urdu Bible as an ecumenical effort. The ninth edition of the Catholic Bible in Pakistan's national language was unveiled July on 29 at thanksgiving Masses held simultaneously at 9 am in Catholic churches throughout the country. The project was the result of the collaboration between the Catholic Bible Commission of Pakistan (CBCP) and the Pakistan Bible Society (PBS), resolved at a national consultation held on November 10 last year. The PBS contributed colored maps of Palestine and Jerusalem at the time of Christ, and oversaw the typesetting of the entire Bible. Both Protestant and Catholic organizations proofread the manuscript before it was sent to the Korean Bible Society in Seoul for printing. (CNUA)

SINGAPORE : CATHOLIC THEATER GROUP STAGES PLAY WRITTEN BY JOHN PAUL II

"The Jeweller's Shop," the play written by Karol Wojtyla (later Pope John Paul II) in 1960 when he was auxiliary bishop of Krakow archdiocese in Poland, was performed for the first time in Singapore on September 4-6 at the



Jubilee Hall of Raffles Hotel. The play was put together by Walk on Water Productions, a local Catholic ministry established in 2005, in cooperation with Couples for Christ. (CNUA)

HONG KONG: CATHOLIC PUBLISHERS JOIN BOOK FAIR

Catholic publishers and diocesan organizations joined the Hong Kong Book Fair held from July 18 to 24 receiving support from lay people from different sectors. Joining the book fair were the Diocesan Audio Visual Centre, the Catholic Centre Bookstore, the Hong Kong Central Council for Catholic Laity and the diocesan weeklies, *Kung Kao Po* and *Sunday Examiner*. Other publishers present were Vox Amica Press, Studium Biblicum OFM, the Catholic Truth Society, Caritas- Hong Kong, St Paul Publications, the Salesian Catechetical Centre and the Couple Co-creation Society Limited. (SE)

INDIA: SPEAK FOR OTHER MINORITIES, RESPOND PROMPTLY ICPA CHIEF TELLS BISHOPS, PRIESTS

"Communicators in the Catholic Church grossly lack speed in responding to crisis situations. Newspapers and TV channels are not interested in press releases and press conference invitations because they are either sent too late or are often highly churchy," president of the Indian Catholic Press Association (ICPA), Bangalore diocesan priest Father Adolf Washington, told priests and bishops attending a National Conference of Communicators in Mangalore, August 23. If the Catholic Church has to make its presence felt in mainstream media, it has to assert its opinion on issues affecting other minorities as well, or on issues affecting the country at large, the priest said. (SARNEWS)