



13 Saal, Bemisal – Radio Bundelkhand celebrates 13 years

The celebration of 13 years completion of Radio Bundelkhand was held on 23rd October 2021 at TARAGram Orchha, Madhya Pradesh.

Radio Bundelkhand is the first community radio station running under the NGO operated model of community radio in Madhya Pradesh. It is also India's second community radio station. Operated by Development Alternatives in Niwari District of Bundelkhand Region, it was started on 23rd October 2008. Today it broadcasts 11hrs in a day through a 50W power transmitter from TARAGram Orchha and reaches a 15km radius of the area.

It is a region affected by the recurring drought, which has immensely impacted grain production, horticulture crops, animal productivity, unemployment, migration, community water conflicts, and hunger owing to altered dietary preferences in the area. Therefore, the radio station's communication strategy was examined by looking at the structure and substance of its programmes, as well as the manner in which it engages the community and its role in improving the lives of its people.

The ceremony was held to commemorate Radio Bundelkhand 90.4FM, Apna Radio Apni Baatein, which has been empowering lives, encouraging local participation programmes, and overall community development in the Bundelkhand region. A tool for community empowerment, Radio programmes have piqued the interest of the community for the past 13 years. The event "13 Saal, Bemisal" brought together 60 participants from the public, CSOs, government stakeholders, business leaders and other local stakeholders. The event was also focused on how panchayats, the government, civil society

organisations, and local stakeholders can contribute to the effective and long-term implementation of Radio Bundelkhand by suggesting inclusive policies, programmes, and partnerships. Shri Pradyuman Singh Tomar, Madhya Pradesh State Energy Minister was the chief guest at the event which also saw participation from Shri Amit Rai, Member, Ministry of Telecommunications Consultative Committee Government of India, Telecom Ministry Advisory Committee, Government of India, Shri Mohd Naeem, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, Bundelkhand University and Mr. Bhupesh Pal, DDM, NABARD along with audience members, folk song performers, self-help groups, CSO partners, school teachers, and other community members joined the Radio Bundelkhand team in celebrations.

The chief guest lit a lamp to commemorate the inauguration. He also launched the Radio Bundelkhand website and app, then spoke to the audience about Radio Bundelkhand's work and its contribution in the development of the region as well as extraordinary work done in combating the corona epidemic. Col Shantanu Chaudhary, in-charge of Bundelkhand, DA, highlighted the work done and pointed out that everyone's participation is essential for development of any programme. He said in 13 years, Community Radio Bundelkhand Orchha has not only planned a wide range of programming, but has also spreaded messages on moral values in the form of edutainment programmes on issues like cleanliness, health, livelihood, climate change, women empowerment, knowledge and employment information, news, literature, art and culture besides agriculture, Bundeli Traditional food, nature conservation, protection of Bundeli folk art. Radio Bundelkhand has played an important role in the development and renaissance of Bundelkhand's culture.

Community radio has provided a unique platform for the area's talent. Radio Bundelkhand has received around 3000 Bundeli folk tunes from folk performers, establishing its identity in the region. Many orthodox customs, including the purdah system and the early marriage of females, have also been abolished by women. While addressing everyone, Vineeta Khatri, Development Alternatives, said that in addition to singing and music, the radio station broadcasts many other programmes that are valued not only in Bundelkhand but throughout the country for long-term national development. Development Alternatives' Tara Award for team participation honours excellent contributions, the 2009 Global Competition (Climate Adaptation) on reality-show format strives to teach women and youth about climate change (Climate Adaptation). In 2011, a Special Jury awarded a Certificate of Recognition in the category of Promoting Local Culture. The radio also received the first CEMCA Community Radio Award for Good Behavior and the Manthan Award as Special Mention. The Radio was also awarded with Certificate of Appreciation for continuous support and contribution during "Poshan Maah 2018," by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, and for creating community awareness in 2019 Lok Sabha Elections with the support of UNESCO Chair and Election Commission of India.

The station manager of Radio Bundelkhand, Chandra Prakash Niranjana, addressed the audience and emphasised on the importance of the radio station as the people's voice, as opposed to yellow journalism. Over the course of 13 years, the radio station's programmes have been improved dramatically to meet the audience's needs. On the radio, new programmes were introduced, which were eagerly awaited by devoted listeners.

A large number of community women took part in the ceremony and were given radio sets in recognition of their effective listenership of Radio Bundelkhand. When asked if they listen to the radio, the majority of these women respond no. However, if you ask them if they listen to Radio Bundelkhand, they will affirm that they do. These are the "community women role models" who have stood up to help

the Bundelkhand Region reach out to more women. Furthermore, Community Radio is a wonderful tool for connecting with people in the area. To highlight that this is the community's achievement too, 13 transformation stories from the community were documented and shared. These 13 community members were also recognised as 'Community Mentors.'