

Dubai: A New Media Paradise

Citizen Coverage of Mumbai Attacks

GLOBAL JOURNALIST



Winter 2008

Digital Edition



Will
E-Readers
Save
Newspapers?

Inside

Photo Story: Iran's
Complex Relationship
with the West

Bolivia's Pressure From
the Left and Right

The State of the News
Business in Central Asia

SHOW CONTENTS



Features

Tainted *By Robert Chang*

Netizens' online investigation overshadows delayed coverage by the traditional media in the milk scandal in China.

Mumbai Under the Lens *By Sakshi Gupta*

Citizen journalists stepped up during conflict leaving some to question traditional news.

East Meets West *By Mohammad Kheirkhah*

An Iranian photojournalist captures the daily reality of a cultural occupation.

Journalism With Strings Attached

By Timothy Kenny

Journalists are stifled in Central Asia, a region plagued by excessive government control and financial instability.

Bolivia Out of Balance *By Annie Murphy*

Journalists come under attack from the right and left.

Dubai: Will Media Glitter in the Golden City? *By Richard Robert Gross*

With business and entertainment journalism as supporting actors, the stage is set for media growth.

Kosovo's Fresh Start *By Kaare Melhus*

Journalism education debuts in a country that has recently declared its independence.

Departments

WORLD WATCH

TECH NOTES

By Roger Fidler

Can E-Readers Save Newspapers? The daily news evolves with technology.

POINT OF VIEW

By Peter Preston

BBC: Tangling Public Service. Debates rise over the functions of a public service.

DEATH WATCH

BOOK REVIEW

By Steve Weinberg

The Big Gang Theory: Covering violence in impoverished nations.

FINAL WORD

By Stuart H. Loory

Journalism's Brave New World: Saving newspaper journalism in an Armageddon.

ABOUT THE COVER:

E-readers—lightweight handheld devices that can display on a screen newspapers, books, magazines and other documents—are becoming a popular alternative to ink printed on paper.

ILLUSTRATION BY AIMEE WACHTEL

GLOBAL JOURNALIST

Digital Edition

VOLUME 14 NUMBER 4

Global Journalist reports on the state of press freedom around the world, covers developments in international journalism and serves international journalists.

| | |
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Global Journalist magazine is a quarterly publication of the Reynolds Journalism Institute, Missouri School of Journalism.

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Journalists protest the incarceration of newspaper editor Ibrahim Eissa in Cairo Sept. 28. Eissa, one of at least seven journalists sentenced in Egypt in September, was later pardoned.

Jailed poet denied medical treatment

AZERBAIJAN Sakit Mirza Zakidov, a poet, journalist and satirist, was removed from a prison hospital where he was held under treatment for a long-standing heart condition and beaten in his stomach and kidneys in the penitentiary, according to his wife.

The details were made public by the Institute for Reporters' Freedom and Safety that said Zakidov, while in the hospital, wrote a poem titled "Forward with Ilham" which was published by the opposition newspaper Azadig Oct. 15, the day of the presidential election in Azerbaijan. Zakidov is serving a three-

year sentence in Baku for what are considered to be trumped-up drug charges from 2006.

Delegates from the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe along with ambassadors from various embassies met with Zakhidov Oct. 27. According to them, he reports improvement but remains unwell.

Newspaper distribution obstructed

BRAZIL Bandits in Brazil's Rio de Janeiro and Rondonia states have taken obstruction of the free press to a new level.

In three separate incidents, groups of men have threatened distribution directors and have bought or stolen tens of thousands

of copies of independent newspapers in order to halt distribution.

In the Baixada Fluminense region, armed men purchased 30,000 copies of the newspaper *Extra* Sept. 28, in effect stopping the paper from reaching the public. According to International Freedom of Expression Exchange, the front page is thought to have incited the obstruction. A prominent article alleged that members of congress lied to the public in order to safeguard their salaries.

Prosecutor Rogerio Nascimento, who ordered the police investigation of the *Extra* case, say that attacks often occur against smaller, local circulation newspapers. "Brazil has a history of coercion against the small press, and it tends to increase if there is not a strong institutional response," he says. "The regional press in Brazil is heroic."

The distribution of the Seropédica-based *Foco Popular* newspaper was affected Oct. 2 when three men stole 10,000 copies of the paper. The Brazil Association of Investigative Journalists (ABRAJI) reports that

Foco Popular had reproduced an "Extra" report about allegations of irregularities committed by a member of the state government and candidate for local elections, Anabel Barbosa of the Humanist Solidarity Party.

In yet another incident, the newspaper in the northern city of Porto Velho, *Imprensa Popular*, halted distribution when eight men threatened the distribution coordinator, João Paulo dos Santos. According to the newspaper's directors, the men said they were defending Mayor Roberto Sobrinho of the Workers Party, who was up for re-election.

Imprensa Popular director Aldrin Willy has decided not to file a police complaint because, based on past experiences, complaints do not yield significant results. ABRAJI reports Willy as saying the intimidation of *Imprensa Popular* is related to the publication's "combative editorial line with respect to the public administration." He added, "If we don't develop a mentality of effective respect for democracy, we will suffer the effects of authoritarian acts."

Politskovskaya trial closed to public

RUSSIA

The trial for three men accused of killing journalist Anna Politkovskaya began Nov. 19, but despite assurances to the contrary, the court remained closed to the media and the public. The decision by judge Yevheny Zubov reverses his promise to keep the trial open two days earlier. Jurors, who were selected the previous day, refused to enter the courtroom while cameras and journalists were inside due to safety concerns, according to the *International Herald Tribune*.

Preliminary hearings began Oct. 15. The attorney representing Politkovskaya's family was absent.

More than two years after the killing of journalist Politkovskaya, police still have not identified the gunman or the person who ordered the contract-style killing.

The *Moscow Times* reports that three men have been charged with involvement in the murder: Chechen brothers Dzhabrail and Ibragim

Makhmudov and Sergei Khadzhiburbanov, a former police official in Moscow's organized crimes unit. A fourth, former FSB secret service officer Pavel Ryaguzov, is being tried because of his connections to Khadzhiburbanov.

Her former boss Dmitry Muratov, editor-in-chief of *Novaya Gazeta* newspaper, told the Interfax news agency in June that he was frustrated by the slow progression of the investigation. "I am sick and tired of claims that the case is solved and will go to court," he said. "The case can't be solved when the person who ordered [the murder] isn't identified, and the killer isn't caught."

Hundreds of people gathered in central Moscow Oct. 7, the anniversary of Politkovskaya's death, in remembrance of the slain journalist. She became well known for reporting on human-rights violations in Chechnya and public opposition to then-President Vladimir Putin.

TV official acquitted, released

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF
CONGO

The local magistrate's court of Kinshasa acquitted the Global TV studio manager Daudet Lukombo Oct. 29, ending his 41-day detention in the Kinshasa penitentiary. Arrested Sept. 11 during a police raid of the station, Lukombo faced charges of inciting rebellion and offending a head of state, according to International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX).

The charges stemmed from a press conference held earlier that day where Né Muanda Nsémim, a military policeman and spiritual leader of the Bunda Dia Kongo spiritual and political group, allegedly accused members of the government in Kinshasa of being responsible for the present state of the eastern region of the country. In this region, the Armed Forces of the DRC-national army, FARDC, clashed with Laurent Nkunda's rebel troops in the province of North Kivu.

Kidnapped correspondent freed

Thomas Scheen was released Nov. 7 along with his Congolese inter-

preter, Charles Ntiricya, and his driver, Roger Bangué. The release follows their Nov. 4 kidnapping while reporting on the war in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Committee to Protect Journalists reports that pro-government Mai-Mai militiamen in Kiwanja abducted Scheen, a correspondent for the German *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, and the others, where Scheen was reporting on the village's security plight.

Thought dead, found alive

The International Freedom of Expression Exchange has learned that journalist Alfred Munyamaliza Bitwahiki Njonjo, who was previously thought dead, is in fact alive. Reports surfaced that Njonjo, presenter of the Kinyarwanda-language news program on Radio Communautaire Ushikira, was killed during crossfire between the National Congress for the Defense of the People and the Mai-Mai militia in Rutshuru. Njonjo and fellow RACOU journalist Faustin Tawite were in the protective care of a United Nations Mission camp as of Nov. 7.

Newspaper editor pardoned

EGYPT Ibrahim Eissa, editor-in-chief of the independent daily *Al Dostour*, was issued a presidential pardon Oct. 6, according to the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights. Eissa was first sentenced to six months in prison for publishing false information and rumors about President Mubarak's health. The sentence was later reduced to two months before Eissa was pardoned. (See photo on page 4.)

Doctored photo brings heavy fine

The Egyptian government fined independent journalists Adel Hammouda and Mohammed el-Baz of the *Al-Fagr* newspaper \$14,500 for defamation of the country's leading cleric. The two were brought up on charges after a doctored photograph surfaced of al-Azhar Sheikh, Mohammed Sayyed Tantawi. The picture showed Tatawai wearing papal garb; underneath a caption read, "The Grand Vatican Sheikh." This picture was published after Tatawai made a controversial visit to the Vatican.

Hammouda welcomed the

fine and said he would remain opposed to the Egyptian government's control over the media. The Middle East Times reports him saying, "It's really a big shame that we still have laws in Egypt that subject journalists to jail sentences."

Hammouda and el-Baz's fine follows a string of several other libel cases against journalists and publishers in Egypt.

Coverage of court cases forbidden

The president of the criminal court in south Cairo Nov. 16 upheld the prosecutor general's prohibition of media coverage of the trial of the alleged perpetrators of Lebanese artist Susan Tamim's murder. All note-taking was forbidden, and the only public documents pertaining to the case will be the court record and the publication of any final decision.

The Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (ANHRI) and the Hisham Mubarak Law Center submitted the August appeal. ANHRI said the decision was motivated by political and personal reasons. The case involves a promi-

ment Egyptian businessman who is related to the first family, according to an ANHRI press release.

Two editors and three journalists from their publications were accused of violating the press ban by publishing a witnesses testimony. The accused denied the charges, claiming the testimony they published was a court matter and was therefore exempt from the ban, Menassat.com reported.

Daily Mail pays athlete damages

ENGLAND London's *Daily Mail* paid libel damages to Italian soccer player Marco Materazzi for false reports regarding a statement made to French player Zinedin Zidane during the 2006 World Cup final, *The Guardian* reports.

The *Mail* alleged that Zidane was provoked by "vile racist abuse" when he struck Materazzi with a head-butt during the game and ran numerous stories covering the incident including a front-page story entitled, "Revealed: The insult that made Zidane see red."

Materazzi launched action against the *Mail* following the

publication of the articles. He did admit to insulting Zidane but denied racially abusing him.

Materazzi had already won damages from newspapers the *Sun* and the *Daily Star* in relation to similar racist allegations. The *Mail* offered substantial damages and apologies just days before a five-day trial had been due to start.

Editor jailed for misidentification

ETHIOPIA The editor-in-chief of the private weekly *Enbilta*, Tsion Girma, was convicted Nov. 3 of "inciting the public through false rumors," according to the IFEX. She is being held in Kality Prison outside of Addis Ababa, the capital.

Girma was charged under Article 486 of the revised penal code and faces up to one year in prison, says Kassahun Asefa, her former lawyer. Local reporters told the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) the conviction was over a reporting mistake made by an *Enbilta* staff member.

The Oct. 3 edition of *Enbilta* misidentified the judge overseeing the high-profile trial of Ethiopian pop

musician Teqodros Kassahun. Judge Mohamed Amin was named instead of Judge Mohamed Umer, which is correct. Although Girma as editor chose not to run a correction in the paper, the next issue of *Enbilta* used the accurate name of the judge.

According to IFEX, Girma is the second journalist to face criminal charges this year over the coverage of Kassahun's trial. Editor Mesfin Negash of *Addis Neger* received a one-month prison sentence after publishing an interview that was critical of the judge who formerly oversaw the Kassahun proceedings.

Outspoken editor beaten unconscious

Several assailants brutally attacked Amare Aregawi, editor of the *Amharic* and English-language paper *The Reporter*, following a parent-teacher meeting at his son's school. He was struck on the back of the head, then left lying on the ground, bleeding and unconscious. Medics rushed him to a hospital in the capital, Addis Ababa, from which he was released Nov. 4.

CPJ reports that several people witnessed men approach Aregawi from behind and strike him in the

head with a stone. The attackers repeatedly beat him until he was unconscious. They then attempted to flee in a getaway car, but were stopped by a traffic jam. Two of the assailants were apprehended at the scene, a third was captured Nov. 2, and a fourth remains on the loose.

This is not Aregawi's first encounter with attacks stemming from controversial reports published by his newspaper. According to CPJ, Aregawi and other staff members of *The Reporter* have recently received anonymous threats due to a series of articles claiming that the close friends of Saudi-Ethiopian billionaire Sheikh Mohammed Hussein a-Amoudi were mishandling his finances. Additionally, Aregawi was arrested in August and held for six days in conjunction with a story about a labor disagreement at government-run brewery.

Journalist pressured to reveal sources

FRANCE Joseph Tual of France 3 television has been asked by a judge to reveal sources used in a report about new developments in the investigation

into the 1965 disappearance of Moroccan opposition politician Medhi Ben Barka in Paris on suspicion of “violating professional confidentiality.”

“It is outrageous that prosecutors are pressuring a journalist to name his sources for a report of a very political nature,” said Reporters Without Borders.

Retired senior Moroccan official Miloud Tounsi, who is suspected of organizing Ben Barka’s abduction, issued a complaint regarding Tual’s France 3 broadcast Oct. 22, 2007, the day French President Nicolas Sarkozy arrived on a visit to Morocco. In response to the complaint, Tual was summoned to court Nov. 20.

According to Tual’s report, French investigating judge Patrick Ramaël had issued five international warrants for the arrest of senior Moroccan officials in connection with Ben Barka’s disappearance.

“The right to confidentiality of sources allows Tual, like any other journalist, to remain silent,” said RSF. When asked in his court appearance to reveal his sources, Tual refused.

Amendments threaten rights

GERMANY The International Press Institute released a statement Oct. 1 expressing concern over a set of draft amendments to the German criminal code that would restrict journalists’ rights to keep the confidentiality of their sources.

The amendments are part of a counter-terrorism bill and give the Federal Criminal Police the freedom to evaluate on a case-by-case basis if a journalist has the right to secrecy regarding sources.

“If these amendments are allowed to become law, German journalists will no longer be able to guarantee their sources the confidentiality they need, and many stories of public interest may never reach the public,” says IPI Director David Dudge.

Currently, the legislation, called the Law on the Defense of the Dangers of International Terrorism through the Federal Criminal Police, is passing through the German parliamentary process.

If passed, journalists would be stripped of the automatic right to

protect sources' confidentiality, but clergy, defense lawyers and parliamentarians would retain the same rights.

Irish Times stopped for a day

IRELAND The Irish *Times* was forced to stop its presses Nov. 28 after receiving threats of injunctions along with three other Irish newspapers to prevent them from printing the main conclusions of the Moriarty tribunal, the Irish Public Inquiry Court. The public inquiry had been investigating whether telecommunications contracts had been affected by payments from Irish businessmen to former prime minister Charles Haughey and former communications minister Michael Lowry.

The tribunal threatened the *Times* and the *Sunday Business* if the newspapers printed the preliminary reports of the inquiry.

The *Times* was forced to destroy 25,000 copies of the issue.

Army investigation into death closed

The Israeli army has closed the

official investigation into the death of Reuters cameraman Fadel Shana. Shana was killed in April by Israeli tank fire in Gaza City when troops mistook his camera for a weapon.

Israel's senior military lawyer said troop fire was justified because it wasn't clear if Shana was holding a weapon or a camera; however, conflicting reports have said that Shana had been standing in a designated press spot and that his vehicle had clear press markings.

According to the Institute for Middle East Understanding, Reuters Editor-in-chief David Schlesinger believes the tragedy highlights the daily risks still facing journalists. "All governments and organizations have the responsibility to take the utmost care to protect professionals trying to do their jobs," he said.

The investigation's official close comes as a Reporters Without Borders analysis ranks Israel 149th in press freedom worldwide, 46 spots down from last year's assessment.

Mafia plan hit on journalist

ITALY Police uncovered an Italian mafia plot Oct. 14 to kill journalist and writer Roberto Saviano. Saviano has been under police protection since his book criticizing the Naples-based mafia was published two years ago. Saviano's book, *Gomorrha*, exposes the criminal activity of



Italian writer Roberto Saviano presents *Gomorra*, an expose on the Naples mafia, at the Federal Press Conference in Berlin, Germany, Sept. 5, 2007. Saviano is considering leaving Italy to protect himself from the angered mafia.

the Camorra group in Naples.

The popularity of Saviano's book, which has also been made into a screenplay, has raised concerns for the Camorra godfathers over the now worldwide insight into the devastation of organized crime.

According to a former mafia member turned informer, the group set a Christmas deadline for Saviano's hit, which involves blowing up his car.

Since publishing his book, Saviano has also written numerous anti-mafia articles for newspapers and magazines and, although he is in hiding, still makes regular appearances on television and radio denouncing the Camorra.

Television crew harassed

An Italian TV crew from the state-owned RAI 1's news program TG1 was harassed Nov. 23 in Il Trullo, a suburb of Rome, Reporters Without Borders reports.

The crew had been doing a report about racist attacks on immigrants by young Italians following the arrests of five young residents on charges of theft and

racist remarks the day before.

While reporter Alessandra Di Tommaso was conducting an interview, a young masked man arrived and began to shove the crew while a woman insulted and threatened Di Tommaso. The crew was forced to leave accompanied by police.

The journalists' committee at RAI 1 said, "The violent attack on the TG1 crew confirms the existence of an oppressive climate affecting all those who try to inform the public. Those who believe in press freedom can no longer tolerate such episodes."

Alleged false statements incite arrest

KENYA Police arrested the head of the Kenyan chapter of Seafarers assistance program, Andrew Mwangura, a former journalist, Oct. 1 for allegedly making false statements. According to Reporters Without Borders, in his report concerning the destination of the Ukrainian cargo ship the Faina, Mwangura contradicted the official version released by the government. Pirates had seized the Faina Sept. 25 off the coast of Somali, en

route to Kenya's Mombasa port.

The ship's capture has created much speculation about the intended destination of the cargo: 30 Soviet-made assault tanks, rocket launchers and anti-aircraft batteries. Although both the Kenyan and Ukrainian governments state the ship was headed for Kenya, Mwangura claims the arms were destined for South Sudan. He charges that he has seen documents supporting his argument.

Police apprehended Mwangura as he departed the offices of *The Standard* newspaper in Mombasa, and they transferred him to the police station.

A Mombasa court ordered Mwangura to be freed on bail Oct. 7 for just over \$2,700. Because his family was unable to raise the required amount, authorities transferred him to Shimo La Tewa Prison.

After being held for nine days, Mwangura was freed on bail Oct. 10. Happy with the court decision, Mwangura returns to work in the fight against piracy in the region.

Magazine's edition banned

MOROCCO

Morocco banned distribution of the international edition of the French magazine *L'Express* Oct. 31 because of a report published the day before. Three days later, Algeria and Tunisia followed suit in banning the Oct. 30-Nov. 5 edition, according to Reporters Without Borders.

The report, titled "The Jesus-Mohammed Shock," was declared an "insult to Islam" by Moroccan authorities. Inspired by a book by the magazine's managing editor Christian Makarian, the articles presented portraits of the two religious founders, reports the Arab media Web site Menassat.

The report was published the same week that Pope Benedict XVI held a meeting in Rome between Muslim and Catholic dignitaries. Both the meeting and the *L'Express* report were meant to foster interfaith dialogue.

"In respect to the religious sensitivity of our Moroccan readers, we took care to conceive a cover specially dedicated to the international edition, with the

face of Mohammed being veiled in conformity to Islam's customs," Makarian told Menassat. "The image used is issued from an Ottoman manuscript of the 16th century and was not modified. Despite this special attention which shows our respect to the Moroccan public and Islam, we were banned. I don't understand."

Newspaper Web sites hacked

MYANMAR

The Web sites of Mizzima News were hacked into Oct. 1, Mizzima's webmaster reports. Unidentified hackers took advantage of poor encryption to delete files and temporarily disable several of the agency's sites.

The hacker's IP address was traced to a U.S. server, but Mizzima couldn't confirm whether Myanmar's ruling military junta was behind the breach.

"It is hard to tell who is behind the attack, but someone who has a special interest could be the culprit or culprits," Managing Editor Sein Win told Mizzima.

The New Delhi-based Mizzima

News, an independent Myanmar media group that offers news in English and Burmese on several linked Web sites, has been effectively banned by Myanmar's ruling military junta. However, citizens have found ways to bypass government controls and access the sites.

This is just the most recent in a string of attacks on exiled Myanmar news agencies, IFEX reports.

Connections implicate journalist

NICARAGUA According to CPJ, Carlos Fernando Chamorro Barrios has been the target of politically motivated investigations. The administration of President Daniel Ortega accused the Center for Media Investigations, which is headed by Chamorro Barrios, of money laundering and funneling money from foreign governments to Nicaraguan civil organizations that are not authorized to receive those funds.

Chamorro Barrios is also the host of the radio show *Onda Local*, and editor of the newsweekly, *Confidencial*.

Known for his criticism of the Ortega administration and his investigations into corruption, Chamorro Barrios is the son of Violeta Barrios Chamorro (who defeated the then-incumbent Ortega in the Nicaraguan presidential election in 1990 and served until 1997) and Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, the editor of the Managua-based paper, *La Prensa*, who was assassinated during the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza.

Journalists injured in crossfire

PHILIPPINES Reporters Without Borders noted that a group of journalists was fired upon in the Maguindanao province in the Philippines Oct. 1. Three correspondents were reported shot during a supposed conflict between the army and alleged members of separatist group Moro Islamic Liberation Front. However, the group denied claims of crossfire, saying there were no troops of theirs in the area when the incident happened. According to IFEX, the group also accused the government of shooting at the

journalists to stop them from taking photos.

The *Philippine Daily Inquirer* reports the fighting started around 9 a.m. when the army allegedly spotted members of Moro Islamic Liberation Front along the national highway. Agence France Press photographer Mark Navales, *Philippine Daily Inquirer* correspondent Jeffrey Maitem and GMA-7 News correspondent Ferdinand Cabrera were taking photographs and footage in a nearby village recently destroyed by Moro rebels at the time, says Reporters Without Borders.

“We ducked for cover inside our van, and our driver hurriedly left the area. Some sniper bullets were going our direction,” Navales told the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*.

Both the army and the liberation front have denied shooting or even being in the area when the incident took place. Army spokesman Maj. Armand Rico told GMA-7 that “a lawless group” fired at the journalists. Moro Islamic Liberation Front spokesman Eid Kabalu told the *Inquirer* that

they had no troop movements and “The bursts of fire that happened came from the government side.”

“I think it’s only part of their move to prevent reporters from taking pictures of houses still on fire,” Kabalu added.

Murdering masterminds missing

A finance officer and an accountant believed to have commissioned the March 2005 murder of reporter Marlene Esperat are on the lam. *Inquirer.net* reports Osmeña Montañer and Estrella Sabay both of the Department of Agriculture in Central Mindanao were nowhere to be found when the warrants for their arrest were served days after charges were filed Oct. 20.

Arrested for killing of Esperat, Sgt. Rowie Barua confirmed earlier this year that he was paid to kill the journalist and fingered Montañer and Sabay as having hired him. According to IFEX, Esperat, had been a “fertilizer scam whistle-blower,” exposing corruption related to the Department of Agriculture before her death.



Polish journalist Monika Olejnik is seated with President Lech Kaczynski before a radio debate in Warsaw, Poland, Oct. 7, 2005. Kaczynski has supported attempts to make journalists publicly declare links to Communist-era secret police.

Central Mindanao Police Director Felizardo Serapio attested that law enforcement believes Montañer and Sabay are hiding somewhere. “We don’t really know where they are,” he said, but “most likely they are still in the country.”

The Department of Justice secured a travel ban against the two officials so as to keep them inside the country. Montañer, however, had managed to slip out of the Philippines once before, despite his having charges implicating him in the Esperat murder filed.

President threatens journalist

POLAND Immediately following an Oct. 15 interview for TVN24’s program Dot on the I, Poland’s President Lech Kaczynski allegedly threatened the journalist who had questioned him. Kaczynski is said to have verbally berated star reporter Monika Olejnik, accusing her of working under code-names for the special services. Olejnik had asked the president about his decision to attend the European Union summit and about a former Polish president’s candidacy to be a member of a group that advises the EU.

According to Reporters Without Borders, Kaczynski harassed Olejnik in the presence of several witnesses saying, “I am going to deal with you. I am going to have you crushed. You are on my short list, and you are going to regret it. The special services agents and the [TV station] will not manage to defend you.”

The president called Olejnik later that same day to request forgiveness; Olejnik accepted Kaczynski’s apology.

TVN24 has issued a complaint against President Kaczynski. Of the incident, the station’s spokesperson Karol Smolag says, “This is an unprecedented event that is very disturbing for press freedom, the basis of democracy.”

Nyarugenge. He had been incarcerated since September 1994.

This brings an end to an arduous battle for Makeli, who was arrested on charges of inciting genocide in reports. According to Reporters Without Borders, in an article he wrote about an alleged sighting of the Virgin Mary in Kibeho, Makeli quoted the Virgin as saying, “The parent is in heaven.” The prosecutor in his case interpreted the supposed quote as, “President Habyarimana is in heaven,” leading some to believe Maleki supported Habyarimana and, by proxy his massacring the Tutsi people. Maleki along with numerous local observers had contested this charge at the time, but exoneration was tediously unhurried for the reporter.

Rwandan liberated after 14 years

RWANDA Rwandan former reporter Dominique Makeli has been liberated after 14 years of imprisonment. Makeli’s release, which took place Oct. 13, stemmed from an Oct. 5 acquittal by a gacaca, or popular tribunal in the Kigali district of

Magazine defames prime minister

SINGAPORE Banned in Singapore, the Hong Kong-based magazine *Far Eastern Economic Review* and its editor, Hugo Restall, were found guilty of defaming Prime Minister Lee Hsein Loong and his father Sept. 24, according to *Sing Tao Daily*.

As requested by the Lees, the court made a ruling without the case having gone to trial. Singapore's high court agreed with the applicant that the defense arguments were baseless, according to the newspaper *Straits Times*. Damages are to be assessed at a later date.

The case concerned an August 2006 article about opposition leader Chee Soon Juan entitled "Singapore's Martyr" *The Straits Times* says the article was "calculated to disparage both leaders by suggesting they were corrupt and unfit for office."

The editor Restall told Reuters he was disappointed in the court decision, and he added that the magazine is considering making an appeal. "It is notable that the court has determined that the public interest privilege that is available in the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth countries, is not applicable in Singapore," Restall said.

The U.S.-based business publisher Dow Jones & Company owns *Far Eastern Economic Review*.

Two arrested covering Basque protest

SPAIN

A five-month prison sentence was requested Nov. 3 for two journalists who covered a demonstration by a radical Basque nationalist group in Pamplona, in the northern region of Navarre, Reporters Without Borders reports.

Reporter Asier Velez de Mendizábal of the daily *Gara* and photographer Lándar Fernández de Arroyabe of the Argazki Press agency were arrested and Arroyabe's cameras were confiscated June 17 during a demonstration outside the Pamplona city hall. Basque Nationalist Action staged the demonstration in protest against the closure of some city hall offices because of its alleged links with the armed separatist group ETA.

Six demonstrators were charged with disturbing public order and disobeying authorities. The journalists were charged with "complicity in disturbing public order."

"The prosecutor's position is incomprehensible," Reporters Without Borders attested. "Firstly, because in his account of the events, he accepted that the two journalists were not part of the

demonstration. Secondly, because they had press accreditation and were just doing their work.”

Newspaper stands by photo caption

SRI LANKA In a letter dated Sept. 25, a spokesman writing on behalf of Sri Lanka’s military headquarters requested that the Colombo-based, Tamil-language *Sudaroli* newspaper change an inflammatory photo caption, Free Media Movement (FMM) reports.

The photograph, which originally appeared on the BBC Sinhala Web site, depicts five school children in the Vanni districts covering their ears and looking fearfully up at the sky during what appears to be a bomb raid. Frequent clashes in the area between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Sri Lankan military have displaced thousands of residents.

Sudaroli reprinted the photo with the caption, “Oh my God, don’t drop bombs on us.”

In the letter, Brigadier Udaya Nanayakakara relayed the military’s concern that the caption unfairly

implies that Air Force attacks have endangered civilians and that it will “create tension among the people and confuse the Security Forces who are serving to safeguard the sovereignty of the country.”

The request comes in the wake of increasingly strict controls on freedom of expression in Sri Lanka, FMM reports. “We regard it as wholly unacceptable that the military spokesperson should feel entitled to request a newspaper to change or withdraw any expression of opinion, photo captions included,” FMM wrote in a press release about the incident. “This is clearly a violation of press freedom.”

Sudaroli has thus far declined to change the caption.

Publication resumes but editor jailed

SUDAN The National Press and Publications Council (NPCC) lifted its 27-day ban on the English-language daily paper *The Citizen* Sept. 29. According to NPCC, *The Citizen* is now compliant with all their administrative obligations. The ban, implemented Sept. 2, began with

a letter from the NPCC sent to the *Sudan Tribune* Sept. 1 stating that the paper was closing for administrative reasons. According to Reporters Without Borders, this letter followed a run-in with security forces at the printing location of *The Citizen*. Security charged the scene, informing employees of *The Citizen* that its publication was prohibited.

Days after the ban was lifted, *The Citizen* found itself back in poor standing with the government. Editor Nhial Bol was arrested Oct. 10 in the capital of semi-autonomous South Sudan, Juba, due to an article written about corruption in the South.

Reporters Without Borders reports that the publication of Bol's article regarding high salaries paid to justice ministry officials led to his arrest and subsequent transportation to Juba's Malakia's police station. Furthermore, as he was arrested on a Friday, he was unable to request release on bail. In a statement released the same day as his arrest, Bol asserted that the government should have instead sued his newspaper be-

cause the issue was a civil one.

Three days after his arrest, Bol was released. According to Reporters Without Borders, Bol's detention resulted from accusations of libel and publishing false information, although charges have yet to be filed. A court date has thus far not been set.

Television reporter in hiding

TUNISIA

Reporter Fahem Boukadous is wanted by authorities on charges of belonging to a criminal organization, spreading reports liable to disrupt public order, according to Reporters Without Borders. These charges stem from his coverage of protests in the Gafsa mining region for the independent Tunisian television station Al-Hiwar Attounsi and his help in putting foreign news media in contact with the region's labor leaders. Boukadous has been in hiding since July 5.

Boukadous was the first television reporter to cover the unrest and demonstrations in the phosphate mining area. His footage was used by leading pan-Arab

news media and was posted on video-sharing Web sites such as YouTube, which is censored in Tunisia.

Radio broadcaster beaten, arrested

Fatem Hamdi, a reporter at Kalima Radio, was arrested and physically assaulted in front of a Tunis school Nov. 24 before being dragged to the El Gorjani Police Station. According to the Observatory for the Freedom of Press, Publication and Creation in Tunisia (OLPEC), Hamdi was covering student-organized protests in response to police attacks during recent demonstrations.

At the police station, the Kalima reporter was taken to an isolated room where officers continued to beat and insult her, destroying her tape recorder and ID card. They then offered Hamdi money or a military posting if she agreed to leave the radio station, OLPEC reports.

In a statement, the watchdog group called this incident “reflective of a systemic practice by Tunisian authorities against journalists and human rights advocates.”

Uzbek journalist gets ten years

UZBEKISTAN

Independent reporter Salidzhon Abdurakhmanov was sentenced to ten years in prison Oct. 10 for drug possession with intent to sell. Abdurakhmanov has been in police custody since June 7, when traffic officers stopped his car for an ID check and claimed to find quantities of marijuana and opium in the trunk.

He was initially charged with possession for personal use, CPJ reports. After Abdurakhmanov's blood tests showed no illegal drug use, the charges were upgraded in August.

The defense charged that police planted the drugs in retaliation for Abdurakhmanov's recent reports on traffic police corruption. At a Sept. 12 hearing, neither the two police officers who claimed to have found the drugs nor the animal handler whose dog smelled the drugs showed up in court.

Abdurakhmanov works for the independent news Web site Uznews.net, which is based in Germany. His lawyer told CPJ that he will appeal the decision. ■

Will E-Readers Save Newspapers?

By Roger Fidler



ILLUSTRATION BY AIMEE WACHTEL

THE VISION OF paperless newspapers is no longer a pipedream. Electronic paper displays in the form of mobile reading devices called e-readers are finally emerging as a viable “green” alternative to ink printed on pulp paper.

Three companies—Amazon.com, Sony and iRex Technologies—have been pushing paper-like e-readers into the consumer marketplace since 2006. Plastic Logic and Polymer Vision will soon begin selling e-readers with thin flexible displays. Several other companies are expected to join their ranks in 2009.

For newspaper publishers, the e-reader is not just another mobile device; it could be their salvation.

The rapid exodus of subscribers and advertisers from print to online has put enormous pressure on newspaper publishers in this first decade of the twenty-first century. Since 2000, publishers have seen steep declines in their revenues from printed editions combined with hefty increases in production and distribution costs. The market values of media companies have fallen so precipitously in the past few years that some of the world's leading newspapers are now in jeopardy.

The announcement on Dec. 9, 2008, that the Tribune Company, one of the largest U.S. media companies and the parent of the *Los Angeles Times* and *Chicago Tribune*, was filing for bankruptcy protection punctuated the seriousness of the crisis.

Forty years ago newspaper publishers were under similar pressure. Then as now subscribers and advertisers were rapidly shifting from print to a new medium—television. In the 1960s and

How Are E-Readers Different from Tablet PCs?

Tablet PCs are essentially pen-based notebook computers. E-readers are not multipurpose mobile computers; they are electronic display media intended as environmentally friendly alternatives to paper for reading and interacting with documents. Like paper, they are envisioned to be lightweight, thin, easy to use and comfortable to read in nearly every lighting condition from bright sunlight to lamplight. They also are expected to become relatively inexpensive and to have long battery duty cycles.

1970s, however, the problems for publishers were compounded by the burden of expensive, labor-intensive production and business systems that had not changed significantly in nearly a century.

Their salvation was digitization. It began with the insertion of computers into newspaper accounting and production departments. By the end of the twentieth century, digital technologies had replaced nearly all of the industrial-age

systems in the “front-end” departments—editorial, advertising, composing, prepress and accounting.

For those newspaper publishers who successfully negotiated this difficult transition, digitization resulted in dramatically reduced costs and higher profits throughout the last two decades of the twentieth century.

In recent years, publishers have invested in digital technologies to make their “back-end” depart-

ments—pressroom, mailroom and circulation—more efficient and less costly. But rising costs for newsprint, inks, energy, transportation and labor have more than offset the savings.

THE FINAL STEP IN THE DIGITIZATION OF NEWSPAPERS

Today, newspaper publishers are facing a far more difficult and risky transition. Their salvation now depends on how quickly they

can take the final step in the digitization of newspapers—a complete shift from pigmented ink printed on pulp paper to digital ink displayed on computer screens and electronic paper.

Nearly all newspaper publishers clearly see their future in an array of Web and mobile services. What is not clear is where the money will come from. So far the revenue gained from online news services



The Amazon Kindle (left), introduced in 2007, is now the most popular e-reader in the U.S. market. The device has a 6-inch electronic paper display in a plastic case. Its success is attributed to its wireless access to Amazon's online bookstore. The Sony Reader, introduced in 2006, also has a 6-inch electronic paper display, but must be connected to a computer to access the Sony bookstore.

and digital media has not come close to replacing the revenue lost by their printed editions.

Even though most newspaper publishers are quickly shifting resources from print to online and mobile services, few are likely to give up on paper immediately. Despite the phenomenal growth of the Internet and reading on computer screens in this decade, reading on paper is still preferred by a majority of people around the globe, even among those who routinely use computers.

A GREEN ALTERNATIVE TO INK ON PAPER

Back in the 1970s and 1980s, pundits were predicting that by the end of the century personal computers would greatly reduce the demand for paper, but that didn't happen. Per capita consumption of paper actually has grown substantially since the emergence of personal computers.

The reason is that paper has proven to be a difficult display medium for digital technology to replace. Its attributes are so taken for granted that no one thinks of



The iRex Technologies iLiad Reader, introduced in 2006, offers an 8-inch high-resolution electronic paper display and wireless access to the iRex server. A number of European newspapers are now experimenting with digital editions designed for the pen-based iLiad.

paper as the highly evolved technology that it is. The development of paper began nearly 1,500 years ago. The technologies required for producing electronic paper (also referred to as electronic ink) have been under development for less than two decades.

E-readers with electronic paper displays (EPDs) are intended as “green” alternatives to paper for accessing, storing and reading all types of printed documents—newspapers, magazines, newsletters, books, journals, manuals, reports, memos, etc. They retain most of the characteristics of paper while incorporating many of the hypermedia features of the Web.

Newspaper publishers have long held an affinity for the concept of e-readers. In theory, the development and widespread adoption of e-readers with a capacity to wirelessly access and display digital editions of newspapers would allow publishers to eliminate the production and distribution costs associated with their printed editions, which account for more than half of most newspapers’ operating expenses.

Turning this theory into practice, however, will not be a simple matter. Most newspaper companies have huge investments in printing plants and distribution networks, so established publishers are unlikely to suddenly shut them down and give every sub-

scriber an e-reader. A phased transition spanning at least a decade is much more likely.

ELECTRONIC PAPER DISPLAYS STILL EVOLVING

Electronic paper displays are still evolving, but they now are able to provide a reading experience nearly comparable to ink printed on paper. They are reflective, so they can be read comfortably in the same lighting conditions people use for reading on paper, even under bright overhead lights and sunlight. They also require much less power to operate than the liquid crystal displays used in notebook computers, so e-readers with EPDs typically can be used for several days without recharging their batteries.

These attributes would seem to make the current generation of e-readers with EPDs ideal for delivering and displaying digital editions of newspapers, but the devices have several limitations that still make publishers wary.

Their main concerns are the lack of color (all are black-and-white) and the high cost (their

retail prices range between \$300 and \$800). Another often cited drawback is the slow “flip” rate of the electronic ink that causes a slight delay when pages are flipped. This also prevents the e-readers from displaying videos.

For books and documents that are predominantly text, the lack of color and video is not a serious problem. Thirty years ago this might not have been seen as a serious problem for newspapers either. But now readers and advertisers have come to expect full color photos, graphics and advertisements in printed editions. And they now also expect video as well as color on newspaper Web sites.

DIGITAL NEWSPAPERS FOR E-READERS

Despite these concerns, a number of newspapers around the world



In September 2008, iRex introduced its pen-based Digital Reader 1000 series, the first e-readers with a magazine-size (10-inch) electronic paper display. The company expects to release a wireless version in mid-2009. The device can now access more than 800 newspapers from around the world through Newspaper Direct's PressDisplay service at www.newspaperdirect.com.

are beginning to experiment with digital editions designed for e-readers. The Amazon Kindle, which was introduced in November 2007 in the U.S. market only, is the first e-reader to offer a selection of daily newspapers. As of the end of 2008, Kindle owners could purchase subscriptions to 28 newspapers—20 of which are U.S. newspapers—through Ama-

Many factors will influence the pace of the transition to paperless newspapers, not the least of which will be the state of the global economy.

zon.com's online store. Subscriptions range from \$5.99 to \$14.99 per month. All Kindle editions are non-interactive, static snapshots of the newspapers' editorial content delivered wirelessly without advertising.

While the Kindle finally awakened U.S. publishers and the general public to the potential of e-readers, the first iteration of this device has not been well suited to reading newspapers. Its small low-resolution EPD confines presentations to single columns of plain text with a few black-and-white images interspersed. And its menu-based navigation system, which is adequate for reading books, makes browsing newspapers awkward.

The limitations of the Kindle and other e-readers with 6-inch displays, such as the Sony Reader, are somewhat overcome by iRex Technologies' pen-based iLiad with its 8-inch high-resolution EPD. A number of European newspapers

are now experimenting with this device to wirelessly deliver daily editions that include advertising.

For newspapers and magazines, however, letter-size e-readers with at least 10-inch displays are required to provide a reading experience comparable to printed editions. This size allows for visually compelling presentations with multi-column layouts, distinctive typography, information graphics, photos and advertising.

In September 2008, iRex Technologies introduced the Digital Reader 1000 series, the first e-readers with a 10-inch EPD. More than 800 newspapers from around the world can now be accessed and displayed on these letter-size e-readers using software developed by Newspaper Direct.

Many factors will influence the pace of the transition to paperless newspapers, not the least of which will be the state of the global economy. All major technologi-

cal hurdles have been overcome (broadband wireless communications, low-cost mass storage, low-power processors and fast image-rendering software) save one—the display.

Development of thin, lightweight, durable, full-color, video-capable, flexible, low-power and low-cost paper-like displays is essential to the widespread adoption of e-readers and digital newspapers by consumers, publishers and advertisers. This is no small order. Displays that meet all these criteria are at least five years away from commercial production and probably 10 years away from being able to displace printing presses and delivery trucks.

The pressing question today is will e-readers with suitable electronic paper displays arrive in time to help save newspapers? ■



Roger Fidler is the program director for digital publishing at the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute. He is an internationally recognized new media pioneer who has been actively involved in the development of online and digital media since 1979.

Publishing Alliance Seeks To Accelerate Development of E-Readers

More than 30 organizations, including The New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal and Los Angeles Times, are now working with the University of Missouri's Reynolds Journalism Institute (RJI), through its Digital Publishing Alliance (DPA), to develop and test new products and presentation formats that are optimized for e-readers. The DPA members also are devising and evaluating business models that could help publishers negotiate the final step in the digitization of newspapers and other forms of print media.

The central premise of the DPA, which is headed by the author, is that publishers must work together to accelerate the development and adoption of digital alternatives to ink printed on paper. And that they

must move quickly to adapt their content for reading on e-readers and other mobile display devices.

The DPA's first project involves the production and test marketing of a new revenue-generating digital product for publishers that the author calls "Digital Newsbooks." Digital Newsbooks are substantive, visually rich e-books designed for downloading quickly and reading comfortably on e-readers, tablet PCs and notebook computers.

Their content consists primarily of journalistic investigative and explanatory reports that were originally published in newspapers or magazines. The book-size format blends the readability of printed publications with the interactivity of the Web while preserving each publisher's typographic branding.

RJI has been producing electronic versions of Global Journalist magazine in the Digital Newsbook format since December 2006. They can be found at www.globaljournalist.org/emprint-edition/.

In November, RJI partnered with eReader Outfitters to launch a pilot online store where Digital Newsbooks produced at RJI for DPA members could be marketed and sold. It can be found at www.ereaderoutfitters.com/RJI+Digital+Newsbooks.110/.

The RJI Digital Newsbook Publishing Project employs a "long-tail" marketing strategy. Only a few copies of individual newsbooks might be sold each month, but over the course of several years the aggregated revenue could be significant. Educators, students and policy makers are among the most likely consumers. But newsbooks also may appeal to newspaper and magazine readers who would prefer reading a timely series or long special report in a more convenient book-like package. ■

More information about the Reynolds Journalism Institute, the Digital Publishing Alliance, the Digital Newsbook Publishing Project, and e-readers can be found at: www.rjionline.org.

BBC: Tangling Public Service

By Peter Preston

HERE'S A NEW DILEMMA running out of control: What, exactly, does public service broadcasting amount to? We have an American definition because the Public Broadcasting System encapsulates it. We can probably sort out rules of thumb from India to Australia. But consider the tangle—the BBC—beginning to tie knots in British understanding.

The BBC collects \$6 billion a year in license fees (which are, effectively, a tax for all those owning a TV or radio). That cash, guaranteed presently until 2013, buys you comedy shows, pop, drama, classical orchestras, serious news, investigations—indeed, everything under the sun. A full public service serving, well, the public. But why, other broadcasters now demand in these credit-crunched times, should our own news bulletins, our documentaries, our Beethoven and Brahms, not attract some of that money, too? We are required, as part of our entry fee to broadcast via terrestrial TV, to give undertakings about the cultural balance of what we provide. One broadcaster, Channel Four, is allowed to take advertising but also obliged to tick many specifically worthy public boxes because it's another legally designated public service company. Another, the purely commercial ITV, is required to support 500 or so regional news journalists. Why not hand them a slice of BBC revenue carved off the top, otherwise known as top slicing?



Peter Preston, editorial director of the Guardian Media Group, is an IPI Global Journalist columnist. He was the chairman of IPI from 1995 to 1997.

That debate has been raging for months already and shows no sign of early resolution. But give it an extra twist before you stick over any quavering answer. For who says that public service begins or ends with a button on your TV? The BBC already spends over \$212 million of license fee money on its Web sites, sending news and videos around the world. In that process, inescapably, it competes with British newspapers great and small—some reaching for salience in global markets, some merely happy to keep news flowing to local towns and villages.

When the BBC pushes to collect money from advertising in the U.S. or Europe, for instance, it elbows the Telegraph, Times and Guardian aside. When it announces a dramatic upgrading of video news on its 65 local news Web sites, it causes a competitive grief to local newspapers in exactly the same line of service struggling to make sense of a lousy economy. Why, then, should broadcasting itself be left as the only media area where top slicing could conceivably apply?

Why not slice away a few million more to help local papers keep the public informed about things it has a right to know but won't as the cutbacks continue?

That's the argument raised recently by the state regulator Ofcom and it automatically lands slap in the middle of a hot pot of debate for the BBC's governing Trust, as well as Ofcom, to try to sort out.

Ridiculous? Observe, indeed, how the concept rolls merrily along. Begin by funding one giant state corporation devoted to quality, neutrality and all things nice. End by slicing the cash far thinner and giving it to commercial broadcasters who want their news programs paid for and local papers who can't afford to be left out of the action. In one sense, this is perfectly consistent. The cash goes to worthy things in print or on screen. In another sense, though, it's a bad headache waiting to happen.

Why, on a channel free to make money from selling advertisements, should the tax payer have to step in to fund expensive

things like news, leaving the channel's owners free to concentrate on game shows and celebrity specials? Why should that same taxpayer be asked to support a local paper he doesn't read? And how is an editor to balance popular content, which has to pay its way against less popular content that wins a state check (probably after due deliberation by a slicing authority of great and good public dignitaries)? The scope for bureaucratic leaning and meddling is just too big while the gains from any such arrangement are pitifully small.

Nevertheless, don't simply dismiss the arguments with a shrug. They are the work of well-intentioned, thoughtful journalists struggling to come to terms with economic hard times and earnest regulators (such as Ofcom) who want a plurality of voices to survive. They are seriously wrong answers to a mountain of prob-

lems; answers that chip away at freedom and give the manipulators far too much new scope to interfere.

A better answer would more clearly limit what the BBC can subsidize as it marches on from

**How is an editor to
balance popular content,
which has to pay its way
against less popular
content that wins a
state check?**

Web sites and podcasts towards mobile phones: so far and no further. It would also remind editors — and, more importantly, their bosses — that journalism

doesn't exist for their benefit alone but because voters, viewers, readers and listeners in a democracy need it. In short, that it is a duty, not an optional extra. The alternative route, after all, is deeply disheartening: we'll do the pap and the tat unchecked, you stump millions so we can add the worthwhile bits.

That doesn't sound like any kind of public service. Just greed and desperation running out of control. ■

TAINTED

By Robert Chang

TAINTED MILK, A TAINTED COMPANY, A TAINTED MEDIA. DID THE LACK OF AN INVESTIGATION BY THE TRADITIONAL MEDIA CONTRIBUTE TO THE GLOBAL ESCALATION OF THE SCANDAL?

MONTHS AFTER A CHINESE citizen made a plea on a popular online forum for public attention regarding tainted milk, the traditional media had still not managed to investigate and report the magnitude of his allegations.

In late August, *Changjiang Shang Bao* of Hubei Province reported infants in at least six Chinese provinces were diagnosed with kidney stones, and they all had formula from “the same company.” It was not until Sept. 11 that a report in *Dongfang Zao Bao* of Shanghai began to question whether the cause might be the milk powder products of Sanlu Group, one of China’s oldest and most popular infant formula providers. Overnight, the Hebei

Province-based company admitted that 700 tons of infant milk had been tainted with melamine, an industrial chemical illegally added to boost nutritional content and cheat quality tests. Sanlu is a state-owned company with investments in New Zealand’s Fonterra, which had just become the dairy supplier to the China Astronaut Center in June.

The nationwide investigation that followed found most major Chinese dairy companies had the same problem. The Xinhua news agency reported that by Oct. 11 contaminated milk powder had been blamed for at least four infant deaths and poisoning more than 54,000 others. The scandal triggered another round of recalls and dealt a big blow to the repu-

tation of “Made-in-China” goods, especially Chinese dairy products.

These findings justified Wang Yuanping’s allegations, posted online in May, stating his 13-year-old daughter’s sickness was caused by Sanlu Group’s milk powder.

Wang posted May 20 on

Tianya.cn, China’s biggest online forum, that after his daughter drank Sanlu milk powder her urine became turbid with granule. The problem ceased when she stopped drinking the powder.

The 40-year-old father in Taishun County, Zhejiang Province, called Sanlu Group with



AP PHOTO/WANG JIANKANG

Crowds of Chinese who fed their children the tainted milk powder wait in line for examinations at a hospital in Suzhou City, east China Jiangsu province, Sept. 22. Four deaths and 54,000 illnesses have been blamed on the milk powder. Bloggers question if an earlier investigation into allegations by the media would have kept the situation from escalating throughout China and the world.

his concern, who in turn asked him to mail two packages of his milk powder for lab testing. Wang posted that the company confirmed his packages were genuine products but refused to share the official test results he had requested to see. Sanlu Group did send a representative to Wang with an offer to replace the milk powder, but Wang refused. He said he felt morally obliged to find out the truth given the largest local kindergarten used the same formula. Wang alerted the local industrial and commerce authority that regulates product quality and consumer protection.

He posted that when he and officials went to collect sample formula from the supermarket that sold him the milk powder, they found the disputed products replaced with new ones.

“As a father, as a son, what should I do? Now I could only seek the help of media,” a frustrated Wang concluded on his post. The posting went unnoticed; it generated three responses in the following week, including one of his own. A

popular posting on Tianya.cn could easily surpass 100 responses with in a matter of hours.

The cold response to Wang’s appeal was understandable. Netizens’ and journalists’ attentions were drawn to the May 12 Sichuan earthquake. The chance for journalists to pay serious attention to a nobody’s suspicion on the quality of a well-established brand’s product was slim. Wang even tried to steal some lime-light by giving his posting the headline: “How could such milk powder be used for quake relief work?” (Sanlu Group, like many other dairy companies, donated milk powder to quake victims at that time.)

While Wang tried repeatedly to get the public’s attention, Sanlu continued its negotiations with him and increased the initial offer. A Chinese newspaper, *Western Economic Daily*, uncovered

“AS A FATHER, AS A SON, WHAT SHOULD I DO? NOW I COULD ONLY SEEK THE HELP OF THE MEDIA.”

that the company ultimately offered Wang four cartons of milk powder, valuing nearly \$360, almost 25 times the cost of Wang's purchase. Wang accepted and agreed to ask the forum coordinator to delete his posts, claiming the milk powder he bought before was "counterfeit."

Despite his decision to take the bigger offer, Wang did continue to report the problem to quality supervision authorities with no success.

The post was deleted Sept. 12, one day after Sanlu Group acknowledged the problem, but the coordinator republished it, offering rare "historical evidence" of the incident's earliest warning.

There are now more than 3,000 responses to Wang's original post.

It's not clear why Wang didn't go directly to traditional media. Frequent Internet users in China commonly tend to distrust traditional media because big companies, including dairy firms, are major advertisers.

The scandal eventually mobilized Chinese netizens to search for more details on the Internet

and relentlessly expose those involved in the scandal.

Some netizens found out that China's Central Television program, broadcasted Sept. 2, praised Sanlu Group's quality-control process. At the end of the program the reporter ironically stated, "I wish China will have more companies like Sanlu to cherish the quality of their products."

Following the scandal, CCTV.com quickly deleted the archive video on its Web site. Still, some users found the program's full text and published it online, damaging the reputation of China's official TV station.

Chinese netizens also kept major Internet Web sites in check for objectivity. Baidu.com, China's largest search engine, was accused by sina.com Sept. 13 of cutting a deal with Sanlu Group to filter out negative news about the company. Some people even posted a public relation company's proposal, in which it nudged Sanlu Group to buy a \$340,000 ad on Baidu.com immediately so the search engine would block news reports on the

scandal and ban users from initiating discussions on this issue.

The PR firm denied the allegation, while Baidu.com issued a statement saying they received the proposal twice but rejected it because “it’s a violation of the company’s principle of letting users collect objective information easily.”

The netizens’ consistent efforts in finding evidence not only questioned the credibility of media organizations but led to the resignation of Li Changjiang, the head of the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine. They studied the bureau’s Web site and found a June 30 posting reporting that five children suffered kidney stones after drinking the same brand of milk powder. The administration’s reply on July 2 was: “please provide us with more details so that we can further handle this case.” Taking the blame for lax supervision, Li resigned Sept. 22

Netizens’ prompt and in-depth investigation into this scandal overshadowed the work of many journalists and, compared to citizen journalism in the United States, still

has room to expand its impact.

China Internet Network Center reported in July that China has 253 million Internet users, the biggest online population in the world. Typically Chinese Internet users view cyberspace as a freer place to voice their angers, lodge complaints and expose corrupted officials.

Some traditional Chinese media have noticed the rich and vigorous news leads online forums are offering. So far the majority news leads of traditional media come from old sources—press conferences, government statements or set-up interviews—but online forums have contributed an increasing number of stories that have attracted nationwide attention and debate. Once the Chinese media work out a scheme to identify valuable and legitimate news leads from the Internet, citizen journalism might have a chance to make a difference. ■

The author is an experienced journalist in Shanghai. He is writing under the pseudonym of Robert Chang in order to protect his identity and freedom as a Chinese journalist.



AP PHOTO/GURINDER OSAN

Bystanders outside the Taj Hotel in Mumbai, India snap pictures on their cell phones and digital cameras. Blogs, social networking sites and social news sites were flooded with user uploaded images and videos.

Mumbai under the lens

How new and old media reported terrorism in India

By Sakshi Gupta

A FIRE AND FURY of activity burned through the world of India's online community while gun-shots and fire rocked Mumbai, the country's financial capital. The 60 hours of

terror not only highlighted India's security lapse but also the rising importance of online media and Indian citizen journalism.

The attacks were widely dispersed and affected millions of

people, making it difficult for any news channel to cover it end-to-end. New media complemented effectively by providing coverage and useful information like help-line numbers, which news channels initially ignored.

CNN reported that 80 updates arrived every 5 seconds on Twitter.com, a social network site that provides real-time social messaging and statuses between co-workers, friends and family.

Twitter user naomieve captured the feeling well: “Mumbai is not a city under attack as much as it is a social media experiment in action.”

Its updates served as public service announcements on where to donate blood, a news ticker with death toll updates and even comic relief.

One Twitter user wrote, “Random 3 a.m. question while we wait for news to filter in: Why doesn’t our PM move his facial muscles when he communicates?”

Numerous blog posts and thousands of pictures were uploaded on Flickr, an image hosting and online community platform.

Google mapped the attack sites and a Wikipedia page has been updated at least a thousand times with full descriptions of the attacks’ strategic sequence.

Social news sites like Mahalo and Ground Report have also been active in Mumbai, and covered the attacks with as much activity if not more than traditional media channels.

Blogs like Mumbai Help (www.mumbaihelp.blogspot.com) proved helpful with providing information on helpline numbers in the city and suggestions like, “Suggest you avoid calling. Lines are bound to be screwed.”

New social media gave common Indian citizens an opportunity to come together, discuss their woes and create their own action plans with a global appeal and reach beyond traditional media. The traditional media’s push mechanism provides only select opinions while new media’s pull mechanism is designed for more interactivity and a wider spectrum of opinions.

People around the world posted their comments and view-

points on the Mumbai attacks. One British citizen commented on a blog post that expressed shame over India's recurring violence, "There is no need to be ashamed—Islamic terrorism affects all countries in the world. Very, very sad to see this happen to such a wonderful country like India. My thoughts and prayers are with you ..."

Selections from video-sharing Web site YouTube supplied personal experiences and multiple perspectives of people who managed to use their cameras. Videos from local news channels to those captured by eyewitness and even from Pakistanis taunting the Indian army are available. A timeline-based, live-streaming news feed software, Dipity, even tracked unfolding events by plotting news stories and YouTube videos.

It's not as if the traditional media was caught napping. They did a great job at providing up-to-the-minute informa-

tion despite clear safety risks. Hundreds of reporters gambled their lives to cover the entirety of attacks. News channels and print publications rallied hundreds of thousands of people together to build campaigns against the lax administration and talk shows

provided citizens platforms to vent anger and ask direct questions of the administration.

Some traditional me-

dia might have sensationalized certain things, but in a way this helped the general public redeem their anger against the government. For instance, R. R. Patil, the now ex-Deputy Chief Minister of the state of Maharashtra, was made to resign for one irresponsible statement he made to the media. He said that small incidents like this keep happening in big cities like Mumbai. His statement reeked of political arrogance, and the media gave a message to politicians that at the end of the day they are account-

'Anger at the media for the coverage of the terror attacks in Mumbai is apparent on the blogosphere.'

able and reinforced confidence in the media's power.

But was all this to help the general public or to just a scoop to raise their ratings? Why did they announce that their channel was the first to flash a story, some exclusive pictures or an interview? In their eagerness to be the first to break a story, didn't they also provide the terrorists an easily accessible, up-to-the-minute information source? Imagine the Indian commandoes trying to "sneak" in while TV channels covered their movements live.

"Anger at the media for the coverage of the terror attacks in Mumbai is apparent on the blogosphere," UK blogger Neha Vishwanathan wrote on her blog www.withinandwithout.com. "The mainstream media appears to have taken the approach of 'shock and shake,' as opposed to verifying rumors before reporting them."

Vishwanathan wrote that she believed first-hand accounts posted by various bloggers were more reliable sources than traditional media and that their per-

sonal accounts conveyed the pain and twinge of the moment better than news channels.

Arun Shanbhag, a south Mumbai blogger, wrote, "When I saw the dome of the Taj burning, my heart! It is all in knots! I am overwhelmed! Finally tears, in torrents! ...Will the Taj be there when I wake up?" It is unlikely that a traditional reporter would have written the same.

Was the traditional media in a way responsible for the deaths of dozens of Indian troops and hostages? They might have to pay for it if they were. A petition from the specially-made site www.smallchange.in has been signed by more than 20,000 and filed in the High Court against the media channels.

The petition says, "What they were broadcasting in the name of the news, were in fact the exact operational procedures, locations, and actions of our anti-insurgency forces! Minute-by-minute!"

On another disappointing note, these channels focused all their attention on the two big venues of The Taj and The Obeori,

perhaps because of the celebrities stuck inside. The Taj might be the icon of modern Mumbai but does that warrant channels to completely ignore the place where it all started—the Chatrapathi Shivaji Terminus (CST) railway station? Were they too busy showcasing fancy people in distress and expensive furniture to be bothered with the 30 dead bodies scattered all over the CST?

All these news channels and publications created a huge outcry over the disunity of India's political parties at the time of a national crisis. But did any one of these channels come out of the rat race and try to join hands with the other in an attempt to build a more powerful organization, such as a joint campaign to fight corruption and improve administration? All they did was keep flashing that they were the first to report news. If they can be competitive at a time of such national crisis, why blame the politicians alone?

At the same time, one may claim that even bloggers blog for visibility in an attempt to be

recognized as leaders. They were also looking for scoops but in the case of traditional media channels, scoops are linked more to commerce.

Is social media really the answer to the flaws of traditional media? Popular wisdom never fails to condemn actions based on profit. Maybe the traditional media's actions are just that, or maybe something more.

“The role of the online community in India has not ended with the Mumbai terror attack,” blogged social media enthusiast Gaurav. “We need to come together to shape a moderate, nuanced online discussion on the 11/26 Mumbai terror attack to bring back calm and peace to Mumbai and ensure that we don't repeat the mistakes others have made after such tragedies.” ■



Sakshi Gupta is a research analyst specializing in the health care industry. She graduated with a degree in commerce from Lady Shri Ram College for Women in

New Dehli. Gupta is an avid blogger and a social network enthusiast from India.

MIDEAST MEETS WEST

A PHOTOJOURNALIST DOCUMENTS IRAN'S COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP WITH AMERICAN CULTURE



Iranian women attend a demonstration to commemorate Student Day in front of the former U.S Embassy in Tehran, Nov. 4, 2007. Iranian universities have long acted as incubators for political and ideological uprisings among Iranian youth seeking to democratize and secularize the country.

PHOTOS BY MOHAMMAD KHEIRKHAH, COURTESY OF UPI

IRAN IS NO STRANGER TO CULTURE WARS. Situated at the crossroads of some of history's most powerful Western and Eastern empires, the country has long struggled to absorb the cultural, religious and political residue of foreign systems. Today, a variety of ideologies continue to clash at the intersections of East and West, but the threat of encroaching Americanism looms largest.



(Above) An Iranian woman passes by the mural-covered wall of the old U.S Embassy on Taleqani Street in Tehran. Militant students stormed the embassy Nov. 4, 1979, and held 52 Americans hostage for 444 days in what later became known as the Iranian Hostage Crisis.



(Left) An Iranian woman holds her two-year-old daughter, Kianaz Keyvani, up to kiss a statue of Shrek, a character from a popular U.S. film series, at a coffee shop in Qazvin province. Authorities have expressed concern over Iranian children's growing interest in Western toys and icons.



An Iranian woman rests next to a tableau carpet featuring Western actors Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet in a scene from the Oscar-winning film "Titanic" during the 16th Persian Carpet Grand Exhibition in Tehran, Iran, Aug. 25, 2007. Iran has a flourishing film industry, but American movies remain popular.

Iran and the United States have been divided by decades of mutual accusation and distrust, and the troubled diplomatic relationship between the two countries is often understood in terms of this longer history, in terms of tensions as intractable as they are old.

But amid the divisive, East-ver-

sus-West rhetoric emerging from either side of the ideological divide, rumbling more quietly than the drumbeats of war or the cries of impassioned reformists calling for renewed dialogue, this cultural clash is also playing out in the daily lives of Iranian citizens.

A strong sense of national

identity and government-mandated resistance to Western thought haven't shielded Iranians from the mass-exportation of American culture. Indeed, traditional Iranian conservatism now runs daily up against Western styles and mores, especially in Iran's larger cities. In the capital city of Tehran, the "moral police" have recently cracked down on the invasion by arresting an increasing number of Iranians for looking or acting too Western

Around every corner, relics of the Western world threaten to intrude: caricatures of U.S. political figures, statues of beloved American cartoon characters, fast food restaurants. Some of these artifacts provoke strong emotion, while some merely entertain.

Some are embraced and some are recoiled against. Either way, they are becoming increasingly difficult for Iranians to avoid. Here, award-winning Iranian photojournalist Mohammad Kheirkhah documents the everyday lives of the Iranian citizens struggling to navigate this strange new terrain. ■

— Erin J. Bernard

Mohammad Kheirkhah, born June 24, 1986, has worked as a photographer for the United Press International News Agency since June 2005. Kheirkhah began his career as a professional photographer in 2001. Since then, he has produced work for several Iranian news agencies and newspapers, including Quran News Agency, Fars News Agency and Iranian Labour News Agency. He was also a photo editor for Negah Varzeshi newspaper from 2004 to 2005. Kheirkhah's work has been widely published in American newspapers and magazines, including The New York Times, Time, Guardian, Washington Post and Newsweek. His photographs on topics ranging from drug-addicted youth to Ramadan to the lives of Iranian women have been exhibited in Iran, Turkey and the U.S. Kheirkhah has received a variety of awards and commendations for his work, including a 2007 award of excellence from Pictures of the Year International, the 2007 "Kaveh" award of excellence in Iranian photojournalism and selection as top photographer in the second Iranian Periodicals Festival.



JOURNALISM

with Strings Attached

CENTRAL ASIA'S PUPPET THEATER

Self-censorship runs the show in a stifled region.

By Timothy Kenny

SPEND TIME REPORTING IN Central Asia and two things quickly become apparent: fact-based journalism is languishing badly in the region, and much of the blame can be placed at the feet of an insufficient press.

This was not what the West had hoped for following the demise of the Soviet Union 18 years ago. It once seemed possible that journalism in **KAZAKHSTAN**, **KYRGYZSTAN** and **UZBEKISTAN** might be headed toward a Western-style system that if not unfettered was at least fair. But initial optimism that reporters might provide information untainted by “hidden advertising” or the practice of under-the-

table payments called envelope journalism has largely failed to materialize in Central Asia.

Central Asian journalism has not been ignored by Western efforts, however. United States and European governments, as well as non-profit journalism foundations, have lavished generous attention on Central Asia since 1989. American funds for media assistance around the globe total more than \$760 million and, according to my research, a great deal of it is spent in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. European governments have done even more. A one-year financial snapshot shows European governments spent approximately



\$421 million worldwide, according to figures compiled from a 2007 media report written by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development. Over the last 19 years, European funds for media development and training have run to an estimated \$7 billion.

While there has been modest success in developing a fact-based and even-handed journalism in

Central and Eastern Europe, similar efforts have flagged badly in Central Asia. The reasons are complicated and many, based on strictures of regional clan and culture, governmental control, financial security and a powerful self-censorship that urges reporters and editors to avoid the critical, nosy behavior of a journalism grounded in public accountability.

Of those listed reasons, it seems

to me that self-censorship—the fear of overturning the cultural apple cart and upsetting the status quo—is the driving force behind a Central Asian journalism that remains lifeless, limited and woefully inadequate.

None of Central Asia's five countries has a free press, according to the 2008 Freedom House assessment of press practices around the world. Kazakhstan, adds the Washington, D.C.-based non-profit, is the only one in the region that is not a "failed nation." It is also Central Asia's largest and wealthiest country, with an economy growing at 9.5 percent in 2007 and a per-capita GDP of \$11,000. Despite its economic progress, however, journalism in Kazakhstan "is worse than in the first five years after the revolution," said Kairat Zhantikin, the Almaty-based executive director of Internews, an international media development non-profit based in California. "It was more free (earlier) and independent and the government control was not as strict as it is now."

Mariya Rasner, the Almaty-based Internews deputy regional

director for Central Asia, was just as forthright in her assessment of journalism in Kazakhstan.

"Money is the ruling king here," she said flatly. "A lot of people are doing it [journalism] for money. They don't care what they do. I'm not even sure if they stop and ask, 'Is this the right way or the wrong way?' They're making money. Everyone is still following orders. It's still puppet theater here.

"The media," added Rasner, "has bought into the state agenda."

Similar complaints about journalism are heard in neighboring Kyrgyzstan, a secular Muslim nation like the whole of Central Asia and a place once considered a regional bastion of free speech. Such heady optimism has largely disappeared following parliamentary elections in December 2007. That vote, widely believed to be rigged by President Kurmanbek Bakiyev and his Ak Zhol Party, brought an end to Kyrgyz media reform. Long-running efforts to carve a public broadcasting agency from the state-run national system—a critical ingredient of Kyrgyzstan's 2005 Tulip Revolution—have disappeared.

A journalism free from the obligation of outside interests, which once seemed possible in both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, is gone. Today it is clear that the profession has been mugged by government repression, stymied by unprofessional behavior and paralyzed by self-censorship. Conditions in **TAJIKISTAN, TURKMENISTAN** and Uzbekistan are worse, with Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan listed among Freedom House's "10 most repressive media environments" in the world.

"We try to be critical of government policies but in a diplomatic way, not in a sharp or hard way," said Umed Babakhanov, one of a handful of media owners in Tajikistan. Babakhanov, interviewed in Dushanbe by my colleague Peter Gross of the University of Tennessee, called self-censorship the "biggest problem in Tajik journalism." Akbarali Sattorov, president of the Tajik Journalism Union, agreed: "Everyone practices self-censorship —media owners, editors and journalists. A phone call will draw your attention to what you can and cannot write about."

Taboo subjects for journalists are remarkably similar throughout Central Asia and provide any working newsman or woman with a template for what is possible and what is best ignored. "The forbidden ground is internal and foreign policy, oil profits, local politics and bribery in government," Alyona Alyoshina, a journalist from the western Kazakh city of Aktobe, told me in 2005. "Every journalist should know what he can do and what he can't. Sometimes reporters are able to tell the truth, sometimes they aren't. It usually depends on what kind of information you're going to write." Her comments remain as relevant as ever.

Unlike many of their regional colleagues, however, journalists in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have had the benefit of seeing how the profession functions elsewhere in the world. "Our journalists are well trained by Western experts now," said Gulnar Assanbayeva, a lecturer at KIMEP, the highly regarded Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research in Almaty. "People know

how to cover things objectively,” she added. “A lot of Kazakh journalists have trained in the U.S. and in Europe.”

The problem, as she and others noted, is the profession itself. “Media was a tool for propaganda (during the Soviet era); now it is a tool for business,” Assanbayeva said. “The best journalists are moving into advertising or public relations because there are no headaches” from the government or big business. “As one former journalist told me, it’s better to sell beer than newspapers in this country.”

In Central Asia today, it is public relations—not journalism—that is held in high esteem. PR pays better and is far safer to practice. Often, however, it is confabulated with journalism, intertwining the two professions into one new occupation that mixes both.

“There is no strong distinction between public relations and journalism here,” said Assel Karaulova, president of the Kazakhstan Press Club in Almaty, in reality a public relations firm with government connections. “Ordinary people do not understand—and I think many

professional players do not understand—the differences between PR and journalism.”

Public perception of journalism in Central Asia—what ordinary citizens of the region believe journalism to be—remains at odds with established Western practices.

Kyias S. Moldokasymov, the president of the National Broadcasting Corp of Kyrgyzstan, said, when interviewed in 2007, about the role of the media in Kyrgyzstan, “Media has a huge effect on people and can be positive or negative, depending on how the media does its job. If they report negatively on things, there won’t be stability in society. That is vital. We follow the state policies. And for the state the most important thing is for people to live in stability.” ■



Timothy Kenny, an associate professor of journalism at the University of Connecticut, is former USA Today foreign editor, non-profit foundation executive and Fulbright scholar. He has reported widely from Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia



NOAH FRIEDMAN-RUDOVSKY

Bolivian cameramen run through clouds of tear gas during a demonstration in May 2005 in La Paz, Bolivia. Political polarization in Bolivia has led to more difficult working conditions for the press. Journalists are seen as biased actors by one side or the other.

BOLIVIA OUT OF BALANCE

JOURNALISM CAN BE
HAZARDOUS NO MATTER
WHAT SIDE YOU'RE ON

By Annie Murphy

IN SEPTEMBER, CIVIL VIOLENCE shook Bolivia. Looting and take-overs of government institutions escalated. Almost two dozen people were killed. The events revealed an increasingly polarized country, as well as the delicate and divided state of Bolivian journalism.

During the conflict, both anti-government groups and government supporters attacked journalists. Pablo

Ortiz is national editor of the center-right newspaper *El Deber*, the largest publication in Santa Cruz.

“As the political climate polarizes, we don’t feel that there are any guarantees for members of the press in conflict situations,” Ortiz said.

“To make the situation worse, most of the press is picking sides, too, rather than striving for balance. Objectivity is hard to come by in Bolivia.”

September’s violence began in Santa Cruz, the heart of Bolivia’s resource-rich tropical lowlands and the center of opposition to indigenous president Evo Morales. The departments of Santa Cruz, Tarija, Pando and Beni form a region commonly called the Half Moon, where local governors lead increasingly radical anti-government movements.

Bolivia’s first indigenous president, Evo Morales, is an Aymara Indian and former coca farmer

who rose to power on promises to redistribute natural resources to better serve his country’s impoverished indigenous majority. Since then, Morales has nationalized oil and gas resources, telecommunications and parts of the mining industry. Meanwhile, an assembly of 255 elected delegates drafted a new

“To make the situation worse, most of the press is picking sides, too, rather than striving for balance. Objectivity is hard to come by in Bolivia.”

— Pablo Ortiz

constitution that sets the stage for a broad redistribution of land and resources. The violent protests were an effort by opposition to block the calling of a general referendum to approve the

Magna Carta, now scheduled for Jan. 25, 2009.

In the midst of the crisis, Reporters Without Borders issued a letter addressed to both President Morales and departmental prefects, urging both parties to protect journalists following incidents that included fascist, pro-autonomy youth group Union Juvenil Cruceñista (UJC) setting fire to

the state television offices in Santa Cruz, the kidnapping of a journalist in Beni by opposition supporters and press intimidation by pro-government groups.

Bolivia is ranked 115th out of 173 countries in press freedom by Reporters Without Borders; in 2007, it ranked 68th out of 169.

In its letter, Reporters Without Borders condemned opposition violence and also asked the government to show more resolve “in the face of excesses by some of its most radical supporters. The dialogue which is beginning between you must lead to a clear joint will to save public freedoms.”

The question of who exactly is responsible for threats to those public freedoms sparks impassioned debate in Bolivia. Government opposition often uses pro-democracy rhetoric to blame the Morales administration for a political situation that frequently hovers near chaos. When President Morales made a trip to Washington in mid-November to address the Organization of American States (OAS) and give thanks for its support during the September conflict, he was met

by a small group of protestors. According to the Washington Post, protestor Elena Abolnik made the following accusations:

“We are here to denounce what Evo is doing to our democracy, to our freedom of the press, to our constitution, to our human rights,” said Abolnik, who is the vice president of the Pro-Santa Cruz Committee, an opposition group based in Virginia.

The current constitution explicitly protects freedom of the press, as would the new constitution if passed in January. An August recall vote showed the president’s approval rating at 67 percent, while organizations from the South American Union of Nations to the OAS strongly back Evo Morales as the face of democracy in Bolivia and condemn opposition groups for destabilizing the country.

Left- and right-leaning journalists alike say problems facing the press are not caused by the government, but by civil society. Though Pablo Ortiz pointed out that the government should indeed be held accountable for any inaction in processing citizens who attack journalists, he stressed

that the state isn't the source of the aggression.

"Any journalist is a target, and the attacks come from civil society groups," he said.

María Eugenia Rojas, a print and radio journalist and former editor of the progressive weekly *Alerta*, which is published from a pro-government neighborhood in Santa Cruz, says that she was covering mounting tension in Santa Cruz for the government affiliated radio station Erbol in early September. Amalia Pando, who has a popular political talk show on the state television station, invited Rojas to appear on her show in La Paz.

As soon as the show was over, Rojas received a string of anonymous phone threats in which callers insulted her, accused her of being a "traitor to Santa Cruz," and dared her to return to the city. Rojas arrived in Santa Cruz as street riots began, and like many others sympathetic to the government, went into hiding during the week of violence that followed. In recent months, the offices of *Alerta* were ransacked twice, and the paper now operates out of the director's home.

"All of us are taking sides here," said Rojas, who has also been asked to leave certain restaurants and businesses when conservative press members requested she be removed. "I happen to be one of the few journalists with a leftist perspective in a place that is militantly conservative."

Even journalists who work for mainstream publications feel the pressure. Gerson Rivero is a Santa Cruz-based journalist who writes on culture and society for *El Deber*, as well as for local and national magazines. He says he used to focus on political writing, but feels uncomfortable adopting a party line. According to Rivero, that usually means a dead end for a journalist in Bolivia today.

"There's a pressure here to have the same politics as everyone around you, and in Bolivia, journalism is enormously political," Rivero said. "I now write only about culture and avoid talking politics with my colleagues."

"At a certain point, you begin to self-censor if you want to continue working here."

Ortiz, Rivero, and Rojas agree that Bolivia needs greater respect

for journalism as a profession, which means protecting the press as well as establishing and adhering to journalistic standards that make it possible to work even in a politically charged environment.

All three journalists also recalled Bolivia's recent history of dictatorships and its even more recent return to democracy as vital to understanding their country's press.

From the late '60s to 1982, Bolivia endured a series of military dictatorships that targeted and often tortured or killed anyone deemed subversive. There was no independent press to speak of. Following the return of democracy in 1982, a handful of traditional political parties managed leadership.

Then came the Water War in 2000; a fight for public control of the water system in the city of Cochabamba was fought in the streets across the country. The event is widely regarded in Bolivia as a sort of explosion of political and ethnic tensions, and signaled the need for unity amongst the country's numerous social movements. It changed the face of Bolivian politics, paving the way for the ousting of two

presidents—Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada in 2003, and Carlos Mesa in 2005—as well as the election of Evo Morales in December 2005.

Rivero described 2003 as the moment everyone—journalists included—was implicitly told to choose sides.

“We hadn't seen the expulsion of a president in a long time, and all of a sudden we all became political actors with political aims. Including journalists,” said Rivero.

Rojas believes what Bolivia needs now is fair and free press that strives for balance.

“[The Uruguayan writer and activist] Eduardo Galeano talks about journalist-soldiers,” she said. “But Bolivia has seen enough martyrs. Right now what we need are simply well-trained journalists who are accountable to a certain code of ethics, and who enjoy a certain degree of security.” ■



Annie Murphy is a freelance journalist working in print, radio, and multimedia. She was a 2005-2006 Fulbright Scholar to Bolivia, and is a Middlebury Fellow in Environmental Journalism. She is currently based in the Andes.



Dubai's Media City is the free zone home to stalwarts like CNN and locals like MBC.

Dubai

Will Media Glitter in the Golden City

Story and Photos by
Richard Robert Gross

THE REPORTED \$23 MILLION display of 100,000 Gucci-designed fireworks that erupted for nine minutes was greater in scale than the fireworks displays that opened and closed the Beijing 2008 Olympics—combined. If you were an astronaut on the Space Station, you could watch the display from your earth-orbiting perch.

The official opening of planet earth's most opulent resort, Atlantis The Palm, took place at Dubai's own mythical island, The Palm Jumeriah, Nov. 20 and hosted 2,000 celebrity guests worldwide.

While the partygoers reveled, bankers and government officials from New York to Zurich watched nervously as the financial crisis that began on Main Street, USA continued to snake its way bank-by-bank around the globalized world toward arguably the per capita oil-wealthiest, construc-

tion-boomiest, and therefore most at risk place on earth, The United Arab Emirates and its signature city-state, Dubai.

The local stock market plunged 60 percent year—to-date, and the price of crude oil dipped below \$50 for the first time in four years.

The party's over in Dubai. Has the hangover begun for the UAE?

The United Arab Emirates is a federation of seven Islamic states situated at the narrowest point of the Arabian Gulf: the capital Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Umm al Quwain, Ras al-Khaimah, Ajman

and Fujairah. Established as a nation only 37 years ago, the discovery of oil and natural gas has resulted in the UAE rapidly becoming the site of possibly the greatest concentration of per capita wealth in the region, with Dubai hosting 20 percent of the world's construction cranes engaged in the world's



Dubai's diversity results in a broad range of publications in Arabic, English and the European languages.

“Media in the UAE are commercial. They follow a business model for success.”

Ben Smalley

single largest construction project. Known oil reserves are greater than those of Russia and Nigeria combined.

Dubai has become known around the world for a series of eye-candy firsts of which Atlantis The Palm is merely the latest. There's Ski Dubai, an indoor ski slope complete with a chair lift. The Palm Jumeirah on which Atlantis rests is one of four land-reclamation projects underway in The Gulf, the most fantastical of which is The World, a series of reclaimed islands designed to resemble a Mercator projection of the globe.

“Dubai has created its own media image,” says Eric Mirabel, director of business development of the Omnicom Media Group. “It's ‘Wow!’” The media in the UAE mirror the spectacular, sometimes chaotic growth of Dubai and, to a lesser extent, of Abu Dhabi and the other emirates. Some observers see in it a uniformity of purpose.

“At the end of the day,” concludes Ben Smalley, “media in the UAE are commercial. They follow a business model for success.” In Dubai, that means making money, particularly in the print sector. “Here,” affirms Smalley, “news-papers have to meet the marketplace test. They need eyeballs to justify their existence.”

Smalley is editor of the *Middle Eastern and North African Media Guide*, an *Editor and Publisher Annual Market Guide*-like publication that is the region's foremost authority on media and media contacts in the UAE.

In addition to seven dailies in Arabic, English-language newspapers in the UAE include the *Gulf News*, *Khaleej Times*, the free *7 Days*, *The National*, a new daily based in Abu Dhabi, *Al Ain Times* in Al Ain, the *Gulf Today* in Sharjah, *Emirates Business 24/7* covering primarily news of business and commercial interest and the weekly *XPRESS*.

There are several English-language newspapers, all often seen as suffering from major flaws, in particular being written and edited by non-native speakers. It is hoped that *The National*, launched earlier this year with former *London Daily Telegraph* editor Martin Newland at the helm of a staff of approximately 200, will boost the quality of the English-language press.

Smalley, also a former bureau chief of the *Gulf News*, believes that so far, “*The National* is well-written and well-structured when compared with other English-language newspapers in the region. And it has brought a breath of fresh air by bringing in experienced Western journalists who can string together a sentence in English.”

Not everyone agrees. A former staffer at *The*



Dubai's emerging media scene, like its ancient and futuristic skyline, consists of a mix of old and new elements. Pictured above: the Burj Al Arab hotel rises from the Gulf over a resort using Arabian windtowers.

National said she was returning to South Asia to resume work as a freelance journalist after less than a year reporting for the paper. "It's just like the other (English-language) newspapers in the region. It is mostly interested in business. And most of the reporters are both young and inexperienced or well past their prime." Underscoring the paper's business focus is the hiring of Bill Spindle, the former corporate finance editor of *The Wall Street Journal*, as business editor.

Like most media in the UAE, *The National* is not independently owned, but rather was established by The Abu Dhabi Media Company, a public stock company owned by the Abu Dhabi government.

Government exercises considerable influence over all media and telecommunications in the UAE. Telephone and internet service was a monopoly of state telco, Etisalat, until the 2006 launch of rival provider du. Incoming internet sites are monitored by an Etisalat proxy server, which excludes banned sites, primarily

pornography. Service through du increasingly falls under the proxy. Voice over Internet Protocol telephone services like Skype are nominally illegal.

Newspapers are federally licensed. Three satellite television channels in Abu Dhabi and four in Dubai are private spinoffs of Abu Dhabi Media Company and Dubai Media Incorporated respectively. City 7 TV in Dubai is independent and offers local news and business programs in English. There is one nightly news broadcast, Emirates News, on Dubai One TV.

Arabic and English-language consumer magazines are highly popular and frequently launched. Business, fashion and celebrity titles dominate.

Radio in the UAE consists of a hodge-podge of 11 Arabic stations, seven in English and eight in Hindi, Tagalog, Urdu, Malayalam or a combination. English stations offer little news, essentially playing pop and Top 40 music from the UK and oldies from the U.S.

With only one locally produced daily television news broadcast

and virtually no news broadcasts on radio, newspapers remain the primary source for local news in the UAE. Press freedom is cause for concern throughout the Arab world, and the UAE is no exception.

The UAE has established a National Media Council, which, according to official published sources, is intended “to oversee media development in the UAE and support media initiatives.” But the six-person, Abu Dhabi-based Council is chaired by the UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs with the Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs serving as deputy, leading some to express concern about the political makeup of a body with a nominally impartial task. The UAE is among 13 Arab nations that recently endorsed a press covenant that outlines the rights and obligations of the press and specifically outlaws seditious libel.

No one believes that outright censorship is practiced in normal times in the UAE, but Omnicom’s Mirabel says the press engages in a more insidious practice.

“They’ve gone to self-censor-

ship,” states Mirabel flatly, “which is a much bigger problem.”

This is no doubt a reaction to the nation’s ambivalent recent press history. Last year, two *Khaleej Times* journalists, the Indian managing editor and an Egyptian senior reporter, were each sentenced on appeal after being convicted in Dubai Court of misdemeanor libel against an Iranian woman in a 2006 article. The move stunned local journalists and expatriates because it was the first time such an incident involved the local press.

But in an even more stunning response, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the ruler of Dubai, personally intervened to ban the jailing of the two journalists and decriminalize the professional activities of journalists. Sheikh Mohammed’s decision was announced by Media Council Head Sheikh Abdullah who praised the move, saying, “The ban expresses [Sheikh Mohammed’s] deep belief in the freedom of the press and its role in society.”

The decision was praised throughout the media and by

“The newspapers are too close to the government. They have a Federal license to publish.” *Eric Mirabel*

the International Federation of Journalists, as was Sheikh Mohammed’s urging that there be a speed up in the drafting of a new press law to clarify the appropriate role of the press. A code of ethics signed by the editors of most dailies followed. The draft legislation dimmed the praise by noting that, while journalists could not be jailed and their professional behavior was decriminalized, fines of up to \$25,000 could be imposed for “offenses” against the new law.

At an Oct. 15 press conference in Dubai organized to discuss the quality of journalism in the UAE, Gulf News Editor-at-Large Francis Matthew expressed concern over the draft press law, noting it does not address online media and that it contains a clause that would forbid printing stories that would “cause damage to the country’s reputation.” He specifically cited recent dramatic coverage of the stock market downturn asking

rhetorically, “Does reporting on the stock market damage a country’s reputation?”

Does this story damage the country’s reputation?

As journalists and editors ask this question of themselves, they may censor their own work further than would the National Media Council.

“The newspapers are too close to the Federal government,” says Omnicom’s Mirabel. “After all, they have a Federal license to publish.”

Some newspapers try to maintain a level of independence by avoiding designation as a daily, and accorded the extra scrutiny thought to be given to dailies, by not publishing a weekend edition. Some of the story choices and reporting of the free local 7 Days are thought by many to be most like newspapers in the West, covering stories ranging from expatriate worker labor camps to animal cruelty.



Hollywood stars who've graced the gilded city's DIFF red carpet include A-listers George Clooney, Oliver Stone, Goldie Hawn, Salma Hayek and Danny Glover (above).

Ben Smalley dubs *7 Days* a success because “based on it’s letters (to the editor) page, people are reading it.” But he suggests its content is not adequate for local needs.

“It’s a five-minute flick-through of a read,” says Smalley, “comparable with the kind of papers in the UK that are available free to riders of the metro.”

The horizon would appear to

be brightened by other developing media and media-related enterprises. Cinema is booming. Urged on by the success of locally shot films like George Clooney’s *Syriana* and the controversial *The Kingdom*, Dubai and Abu Dhabi are anxious to emulate Hollywood for the Arab world.

Dubai has established Media City, a concentration of primarily broadcast outlets in what are

known as “free zones,” areas of the city that offer a variety of business incentives and, it is thought, might someday encourage media to operate on a more Western model. Dubai Studio City has been established as a free zone. The Abu Dhabi Media Company formed a strategic alliance in October 2007 with Warner Brothers Entertainment and developer Aldar properties.

Writing in an Oct. 17 editorial in the *Gulf News*, Naila Al Awadhi, member of the Federal National Council and CEO of Dubai Media Incorporated, encouraged development of cinema from an Arab perspective. “We need to tell our stories,” she argued. “And building a film industry will give us a powerful platform to do just that.” Nationals and expatriates alike seem riveted by the potential for the worldwide attention that could follow the nurturing of a homegrown film industry. Dubai hosted its fifth annual Dubai International Film Festival for seven days beginning Dec. 11. The DIFF spotlighted Oliver Stone’s *W*, with Stone receiving

an award at the opening-night gala. The Middle Eastern International Film Festival just concluded its second year in Abu Dhabi, and the second annual Gulf Film Festival will take place again in Dubai beginning April 9.

All these efforts seem to have focused on entertainment media, not on the development of local and regional news. That has been the domain of Doha, Qatar-based Al Jazeera. However, other partnerships and the establishment of an information technology and education infrastructure with foreign investors and firms may have the effect of diversifying media programming output in the UAE.

In Dubai, the Internet City free zone serves as host to a gathering of IT businesses while Knowledge Village and Academic City are home to a growing number of certificate programs and the Dubai branches of foreign universities.

Can a truly Western-style democratic free press grow from this increased emphasis on encouraging the growth of primarily entertainment media? Both Small-

“Right now, I don’t see a sense of mission in local journalists. There isn’t that fire there.” *Eric Mirabel*

ley and Mirabel believe such a change will come.

“Right now, I don’t see a sense of mission in local journalists,” says Mirabel. “There isn’t that fire there. Journalism as it’s practiced in the West requires a sense of mission, of dedication, of ambition. Change will come, but [the UAE] will change when it needs to change.”

Smalley agrees, but cautions that journalism education is holding back the development of the local and regional press. “Not enough money is being devoted to training journalists,” he worries. “And English language skills need to be developed for that portion of the press to improve.” But he sees the region’s Golden Calf as its possible path to press improvement. “Business is the key. If change does come, it will come through business journalism.”

Which brings us back to that financial dark cloud snaking its way toward the UAE.

At a Nov. 26 press conference, Chairman Mohammed Ali Alabbar of Emaar Properties, a leading UAE developer, dismissed increasing speculation that Dubai will need to sell assets or seek a bailout from oil-rich Abu Dhabi to service the more than \$80 billion in primarily construction debt threatening to bring a prolonged pause to the growth of Dubai and the UAE.

Press coverage of the opening of Atlantis The Palm made no mention of how many of the 100,000-plus fireworks used turned out to be duds. ■



Richard Gross is currently a Dubai-based journalist and journalism educator. He helped found the journalism and broadcast programs at American University in Dubai. His extensive work experience includes globally syndicated work and is complemented by two graduate degrees, including a doctorate from the Missouri School of Journalism.

Kosovo's Fresh Start

The Kosovo Institute of Journalism and Communication trains journalists to preserve a new democracy and build a sustainable free press.

By Kaare Melhus

ON FEB. 17, KOSOVO DECLARED independence from Serbia and took its first steps toward integration into Europe. The new nation is struggling with unemployment, corruption, ethnic tensions, and lacks basic infrastructure. It also lacks a democratic political culture to deal with the problems.

Established in 2005, the Kosovo Institute of Journalism and Communication (KIJAC) graduates 25 M.A. candidates in journalism every year. They are given the tools they need and gain understanding of the role of free media in a democracy.

In their second year at KIJAC, students do either TV documentaries or feature articles under the supervision of seasoned international journalists. Albana Isufi did a documentary about a dilapidated power plant outside Pristina and

its possible connection to the area's high cancer rate. Former BBC producer Keith Bowers supervises these documentaries.

"It's been fascinating to see what ideas the students have come up with. Some have tackled political or investigative subjects but others have tackled surprising ideas such as blood feuds or hen parties. What we are trying to do is to give the students the right production skills so they can continue to explore and reflect Kosovar society long after they have left KIJAC," Bowers says.

INSTITUTION-BUILDING

The idea of a journalism school was discussed among Kosovar and international journalists involved in the restructuring of Kosovo after the 1999 NATO bombing campaign in Serbia.

By the late '90s, the Serbs were persecuting the Albanian majority in the impoverished Serbian province of Kosovo. All of the University of Pristina's Albanian professors and students were expelled. Armed hostilities broke out between the two ethnic groups, and Albanians headed for the neighboring countries in increasing numbers. By 1999, NATO moved in to prevent downright ethnic cleansing.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) in Europe, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, and other organizations involved in Kosovo after the brief war brought in journalist trainers from Europe to hold workshops on election coverage prior to the general elections held in Kosovo in 2000.

Senior OSCE Media Advisor Willem Houwen thought that the

KIJAC students work from this recently renovated building. They get hands-on multimedia experience and opportunities to exchange with a diverse group of international journalists.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KAARE MELUS



PHOTO COURTESY OF KAARE MELLUS

KIJAC's Florent Gorqaj (right) guides a student as she works on putting together her first radio story. KIJAC's technical resources have been a source of income for the school, which offers UN-sponsored media training to government officials.

journalism training should be institutionalized. One of the press officers in NATO's Kosovo Force, Kenneth Andresen, was also a journalism teacher at Norway's Gimlekollen School of Journalism and Communication. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was contacted through Gimlekollen and start-up funds were secured.

Gimlekollen assumed a leadership role in setting up KIJAC. Since few Kosovars were qualified to teach, the task was two-fold. A faculty of international caliber needed to be built, and in the

meantime, scholars and seasoned journalists from abroad filled most teaching positions.

Gimlekollen staff and a network of experienced journalists were called in. They had backgrounds from major news organizations like BBC, *Time* magazine, CBC, London's *Sunday Telegraph*, and The Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation. They taught practical, hands-on journalism courses. Scholars from Cardiff University took responsibility for communication theory and research methods. Experts on web journalism from the University of Nebraska

set up KIJAC News Net, modeled after NewsNet Nebraska. Some of the web journalism courses are taught online, while other parts are taught with Nebraska instructors present at KIJAC.

Two leading journalists from Pristina were selected to go abroad for Ph.D. programs. Avni Ahmetaj—a former camera man and stringer for CNN, BBC, Reuters and other visiting news crews—earned an M.A. in journalism at Cardiff. He now runs the technical side of KIJAC operations, with Florent Gorqaj, who was in KIJAC's first graduating class.

Dukagjin Gorani heads the KIJAC Center and is responsible for non-academic training and production of TV programs. The technical equipment also generates income. Politicians and bureaucrats from various government ministries, including the Office of the Prime Minister, receive media training paid for by the United Nations Development Program.

Willem Houwen, head of school, acknowledges that KIJAC walks a fine line in its cooperation with the government, but notes that, in

a country with little or no tradition of democracy, it's not enough to only teach students these ideas.

“In order for free and diverse media to prosper, attention should also be paid to the challenge of democratic institution building, as a sine qua non condition,” Houwen said.

NATIONAL DIALOGUE

KIJAC is at the center of a national dialogue. Students are recruited from both the Albanian and Serbian communities and both are represented in the local faculty. Prime Minister Hashim Thaci spoke at a KIJAC conference on transitional justice in Kosovo in June.

“KIJAC has all the ingredients that should become standard to a successful educational center in the future Kosovo: a professional approach, common values and, above all, an integrational, supra-ethnic perspective,” Thaci said.

In 2009, KIJAC plans to produce a series of talk shows where Kosovar Serbs will be given an opportunity to voice their concerns. Serbs in Kosovo number about 200,000

and are scattered in enclaves of various sizes. Many Serbs left before the proclamation of independence. Those who stayed don't have a unified platform to speak to the broader Kosovar society.

Gorani came up with the idea for the talk show, and notes that it fits into the original idea of KI-JAC. "A window to knowledge for members of non-Albanian communities: This was also among key reasons why KI-JAC came to existence, in 2005. In Kosovo, where the wounds of aggression and ethnic conflict are still open, quality journalism should be both a job and a mission," Gorani said.

In Kosovo, where the wounds of aggression and ethnic conflict are still open, quality journalism should be both a job and a mission."

— Dukagjin Gorani

from Eastern Europe. Harrison teaches regularly at KI-JAC —especially on investigative journalism. In the West, this subject has the allure of adventure and fame.

But journalism is dangerous in many emerging democracies, and if KI-JAC students' training is tough, their lives as journalists will be even tougher. Powerful groups see the new political system as

a threat to their privilege. If these groups are not exposed and neutralized, democracy will not flourish. The KI-JAC staff and students are making a small, but important contribution to the struggle for freedom. ■

THE WATCHDOG ROLE

David Harrison, senior correspondent with the *Sunday Telegraph*, won the Paul Foot award for investigative and campaigning journalism in 2006 for a series of investigations into sex trafficking



Kaare Melhus is an associate professor and international director at Gimlekollen School of Journalism and Communication, in Kristiansand, Norway.

Croatia

Journalists **Ivo Pukanic** and **Niko Franjic** were killed Oct. 23 when a car bomb exploded in front of an NCL Media Group offices in the Croatian capital, Zagreb. Pukanic was the owner of NCL. He had received numerous threats, including an assassination attempt from an unknown gunman in April. Franjic was marketing director of *Nacional*, a weekly newspaper published by NCL. Two other National employees were injured in the attack.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Didace Namujimbo, 34, a journalist for Radio Okapi, was fatally shot in the head outside his home in Bukavu Nov. 21. Radio Okapi is known for its central role in combating violence in Eastern Congo, putting its reporters at risk.

India

Vikas Ranjan, correspondent for the *Hindustan*, was shot dead by unidentified attackers Nov. 26 in the Samastipur district of Bihar. According to reports from the *Hindustan*, three gunmen on motorcy-

cles were waiting for Ranjan when he left the newspaper office. The three men escaped after opening fire indiscriminately. Ranjan wrote extensively on crime and corruption and had been receiving threats for some time. The threats had been brought to the attention of senior police officials. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar ordered the formation of a high-profile team to investigate the case and identify the killers. Following Ranjan's murder, area journalists and businessmen reacted with riot-like chants of anti-police slogans and demands of immediate arrests.

Jagajit Saikia, 30, Kokrajhar correspondent for the daily *Amar Asom*, was shot Nov. 22 while riding his motorcycle home from work in the town of Kokrajhar in Assam. Saikia was taken to a hospital where he died from injuries he received in the shooting.

Konsam Rishikanta Singh, 22, trainee sub-editor of English daily *Imphal Free Press* in Manipur capital Imphal was shot dead Nov. 17 by unidentified men. His body was

found that afternoon with his hands tied behind his back; he was blindfolded, and his mouth was gagged with a piece of cloth. Imphal Free Press editor Pradip Phanjoubam said he did not think the shooting was linked to any report published in the newspaper. Following the murder, Manipur newspapers suspended publication in protest for 11 days until authorities handed the case over to the Central Bureau of Investigations.

Iraq

Journalists **Musab Mahmood al-Ezawi**, **Ahmed Salim** and **Ihab Mu'd** of al-Sharqiya TV were found dead Sept. 13 a short distance from where they were kidnapped while working. Mahmood, a senior correspondent, and cameramen Salim and Mu'd were with a larger crew filming a show in the al-Zanjali district of Mosul when they were kidnapped along with their driver.

Mexico

Armando Rodriguez, crime reporter for *El Dario* in Ciudad Juarez, was shot in his car out-

side his home Nov. 13. In recent months, Rodriguez, who had covered crime and drug violence for 10 years, received multiple death threats but declined a state government offer for protection. Many journalists who cover such issues refuse to put bylines on their stories, and some newspapers have stopped covering the drug gangs altogether. Although officials did not immediately have a suspect, a special federal prosecutor in charge of journalist killings will investigate.

Nepal

Jagat Prasad Joshi, editor of *Jahadisha* daily's Dhangadi edition and president of the Revolutionary Journalists' Association in Kailali, went missing Oct. 8. His body was found one month later. Maoists are suspected to be behind Joshi's murder, which followed the murder of another journalist and the disappearance of a third.

Philippines

Radyo Natin broadcaster **Leonilo Mila**, 38, was shot by unknown assailants outside his office in San

Roque, Northern Samar, Dec. 2. Mila was known for outward opposition against taxation leveled by the National People's Army. Police are investigating whether the attack is related to death threats from a teacher and a local official because of his commentaries. Mila was shot six times and received wounds in his torso, legs and head that killed him on the site.

Journalist **Aristeo Padrigao**, a radio commentator for Radyo Natin, was shot by assassins Nov. 17 while taking his 7-year-old daughter to school in Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental. His death is believed to be related to his frequent exposes on illegal logging activities in Gingoog City. Misamis Oriental Governor Oscar Moreno released a statement condemning the attack and told police to "leave no stone unturned."

Sri Lanka

Rashmi Mohamed, correspondent for Sirasa TV, was killed Oct. 6 in an explosion. He was covering the opening ceremony of the new office of the United National

Party in Anuradhapura. The attack killed more than 20 people; 80 others were injured.

Thailand

Editor of *Den Siam*, **Wallop Bounsampop**, 52, was shot in the head by two unidentified assailants Oct. 5 in the province of Chonburi while helping his wife into a restaurant. Bounsampop's articles have caused controversy in the past. As an active member of his district council, he criticized his opponents in articles about local elections.

Jaruek Rangcharoen, 46, reporter for the *Maticchon*, was killed Sept. 27 in the province of Suphan Buri. Rangcharoen was shot in the head several times while shopping for food on his way home. The shooting has been linked to Rangcharoen's reporting on corruption in the local administrative organization. Police arrested two men Nov. 2 in connection to the killing. ■

The Big Gang Theory

By Steve Weinberg

SAVVY INTERNATIONAL JOURNALISTS understand that corruption and violence permeate everyday life in dozens of nations around the world, from the Americas to the fringes of Europe to Asia to Africa. Those same journalists understand that the corruption and violence are connected to abject poverty in many of those nations.

The difficulty for so many international journalists lies in determining the linkages among corruption, violence and poverty. Do corruption and violence usually precede poverty? Or does poverty—leaving millions of citizens within a given nation desperate—beget violence? And does the violence then beget

military rule with the rulers feeling entitled to steal a nation's resources from the starving masses?

A year ago in this same magazine (Winter 2007), I reviewed a telling book by a gutsy academic researcher who conducted high-risk field research to explain the corruption portion of the equation. She is Carolyn Nordstrom, a University of Notre Dame anthropology professor. The book is *Global Outlaws*, published by the University of California Press.

Now it is time to turn to university scholars again,



Steve Weinberg reviews books regularly for this magazine, concentrating on journalistic technique rather than summaries of content.

Economic Gangsters: Corruption, Violence, and Poverty of Nations

By Raymond Fusman and Edward Miguel;
Princeton University Press, 240 pages.

as they explain not only corruption but also its linkages to violence and poverty. The academics revealing a heightened understanding of how the world works are Raymond Fisman, a professor of social enterprise at the Columbia University Business School, and Edward Miguel, an economics professor at the University of California.

Early in *Economic Gangsters*, Fisman and Miguel explain the basic argument between divergent camps of economists

revolving around an issue of vast importance to most international journalists—the issue of foreign aid. For example, have the U.S. government and other relatively wealthy governments given too much money to help Kenya out of poverty, or not nearly enough money?

“The answer,” the authors say, “turns out to hinge critically on one’s views of the roles that cor-

ruption and violence play in the impoverishment of nations. Maybe corruption and violence are just the symptoms of poverty. If this is the case, once rich-country donors finally send enough money to Kenya to jump start economic growth, its citizens will no longer have to fight one another

to survive. On the other hand, if foreign aid is lost to the grabbing hands of corrupt officials or destroyed in civil strife, how could aid dollars ever lift countries like Kenya

out of poverty? More aid would just enrich an already corrupt elite, and potentially make the twin problems of corruption and violence worse by giving people even more money to fight over.”

Because the corruption-violence-poverty equation varies from nation to nation, Fisman and Miguel cannot provide one-size-fits-all formulas for journalists to ferret out unambiguous truths.

The authors say they hope their research ‘can give the world’s poor billions some inspiration and ammunition in their struggle.’

The economists can, however, offer understandable methods for determining such vital matters as how much smuggling across national borders harms or helps the citizenry on each side of the border. The economists can also estimate the costs and benefits of corruption embedded in government-corporate connections.

Fisman and Miguel are determined not only to offer theories that journalists can apply to their reporting, but also to make theory interesting (even fun) to learn. Those didactic goals lead the authors to tentatively gauge the corruption level in every country by studying parking tickets issued to United Nations representatives based in New York City. If Swedish diplomats, for example, pay all parking tickets despite the ability to invoke diplomatic immunity, then Sweden as a nation is quite likely to eschew corruption. If Bulgarian diplomats rarely pay parking tickets, then Bulgaria as a nation is likely to tolerate corruption.

Whenever they think their data yield knowledge suggesting ef-

fective reform, Fisman and Miguel float solutions. For example, they suggest that doubling painfully low salaries for Kenyan police officers would reduce widespread bribery. A poorly paid police officer “will inevitably be tempted to shake down passing motorists for bribes. And anyway, what’s he got to lose if he gets caught, bribe in hand—a crummy job that barely pays him more than he’d earn working on a farm. But double his police salary, and he might think twice about taking a bribe.” Why? Because the higher salary could lead to fear of losing a relatively high-paying job if police authorities discover the shakedown.

The authors say they hope their research “can give the world’s poor billions some inspiration and ammunition in their struggle.” If journalists learn the implications of the research and ground their reporting in its logical extensions, perhaps they can assist in comforting the afflicted while forcing the comfortable to discourage corruption and violence. ■

Journalism's Brave New World

By Stuart Loory

THESE DAYS, MANY IN THE AMERICAN NEWS business see newspapers as having arrived at an Armageddon of sorts. But are newspapers really at a similar moment in the history of journalism as the horse-and-buggy business found itself when the internal combustion engine hit the scene?

There are two ways to look at it: the optimist's view and the pessimist's view. The newsroom optimist says, "Of course newspapers will survive, but they'll be in a much different form, and we can't yet tell you what that form will be."

The pessimist, on the other hand, believes the time has come to say goodbye to the mainstream news business; that readers, viewers and listeners—those who consume the news—have abandoned the market to youngsters who want their information on handheld screens—mobile phones, BlackBerries, iPods and platforms yet to come. The pessimist interprets this to mean the kids aren't interested in real news any longer, and that they're happy to get their information from sources such as YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and Yahoo.

Those who speak of Armageddon base their argument on the impacts economics and technology have made on the news business. The big spenders in the American news business have come to grief during the past two years—and they've carried all of us along. Sam Zell, the real estate magnate who bought



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the Tribune Co. and took it private, has declared the bankruptcy of an institution that includes some of the nation's most important dailies. McClatchy Newspapers, which bought Knight-Ridder Newspapers, then the second-largest chain in the country and arguably the best, has seen its value plummet 85.62

percent in 2008.

Lee Enterprises, which bought the once prestigious *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, has suffered a 97.34 percent drop in its stock price on the New

York Stock Exchange. On the day I checked (Dec. 18, 2008), only one publicly listed publishing company showed a gain. It was Marvel Entertainment, the comic book publisher.

Much of the deluge is credited to the recent economic recession, which has destroyed economic progress throughout the world. But serious journalism does not have to suffer as it does when it is

“Twittered” away.

It's clear that the answer to the news business's problem is the successful migration of newspapers to electronic publishing. Ink and paper, the mainstays of information dissemination since the 15th century introduction of movable type, are no longer a necessity.

Instead, the focus has shifted to digitized type and audio and video generated by microchips and viewed on plasma screens.

Roger Fidler, the first fellow at the Reynolds

The big spenders in the American news business have come to grief during the past two years—and they've carried all of us along.

Journalism Institute of the Missouri School of Journalism, describes in this issue of *Global Journalist* (Pg. 24) how digital publishing works and what its benefits are. In brief, tablets on which electronic ink display news and information are the platforms of the future. Lightweight, multimedia-ready and in color, they are already replacing convenient laptop and notebook computers. They will give serious

news consumers the opportunity to meet all their needs on a single platform that offers something more than the hand-held iPhone can.

If Armageddon is really upon us, must we come up with a solution to help the forces of good (those who will figure out how to rescue newspapers) withstand the forces of evil (the aggregators, algorithmers, bloggers, Web site proprietors and advertisers who are scuttling down the mooring lines of the sinking SS Fourth Estate)? And what about the hardware developers and software writers who have thrown out the lines?

The answer has two parts: first, there is no need; and second, it would be counter-productive. The facts are that the old economics of the news business are gone and that a new model must be developed to enable the new distribution. This new model will rest on selling consumers—the subscribers, listeners and viewers but not the advertisers—the products produced by journalists. In the old economic model, the news busi-

ness paid lip service to the idea that it had a responsibility to the public, but it didn't always live up to its word. In this new model, consumers will be of central importance.

Gone are the days when free over-the-air radio and television ruled. Now, digital distribution rules and buyers pay happily for good products. Consumers have learned to pay for television and are learning the value of paid radio. They are also paying for text messaging and Internet services on their hand-held devices.

Obviously, these technological and economic changes will also mean a change in how good journalism is produced. The key word here is “good,” and it need not be compromised. The people will pay, and it's more important for proprietors of news business organizations to understand that than to lament the good old days when you could hold a paper product in your hands, carry it wherever you were going and read it at your pleasure. A world of possibilities is upon us, and that world will only expand in the years to come. ■