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# Communication | N F O

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## **PHILIPPINES: CATHOLIC REPORTER AMONG VICTIMS OF MAGUINDANAO MASSACRE**

Catholic journalist Neneng Montano, a volunteer of diocesan radio DXCP, was among 12 journalists killed in the November 23 massacre in Maguindanao, southern Philippines. "Neneng was a courageous collaborator," noted Father Francis Lucas, director of the Catholic Media Network (CMN) of which Radio DXCP is part. "We condemn the massacre and urge (government) to bring to justice those responsible. We urgently need protection for women, lawyers and journalists" against violence and assaults, the priest added. A total of 57 civilians were killed on the day of the attack including these journalists allegedly by members of the private army of a known political figure in the province. CMN is a network of 54 Catholic radio stations and 3 TV stations, some owned by dioceses, while others have been launched by Catholic lay people. The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) also condemned the attack. Over 60 journalists have been killed in the country in the past 20 years. (FIDES)

## **SINGAPORE: 'HAI SING PAO' GOES ONLINE**

*Hai Sing Pao*, the archdiocesan newspaper for Mandarin-speaking Catholics has gone online at [www.carlo.org.sg/catholicnews](http://www.carlo.org.sg/catholicnews). Launched in 1955, the 12-page fortnightly newspaper is committed to spreading the Good News within Mandarin-speaking Catholic communities in Singapore and Malaysia. The online version features selected news in Singapore archdiocese and Malaysia, in addition to regional and international news. The website contains articles and reflections on faith and life contributed by the Mandarin-speaking community, as well as Bible reflections. Editor Patricia Chia said, "We need to make good use of the media for evangelization. Going online means that more people will have the chance to read *Hai Sing Pao*. This is all about keeping up with the times." (CN)

## **INDIA: KERALA CHURCH AIMS TO COUNTER TV'S NEGATIVE INFLUENCE**

On November 9, the Family Commission of the Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council issued a circular to alert Catholic parishes in the state about television channels resorting to sex and violence to attract viewers. "The media are controlling people with programs of inferior quality," bemoans the circular titled "Family and Media." Commission chairperson Bishop Mathew Anikuzhkatil of Idukki has signed it. The family commission wants parents, teachers and parish priests to educate families on the judicious use of television. A Kerala government official has welcomed the Church initiative. Kerala has nine channels in the local Malayalam language, while hundreds of national and international channels are also available. Studies have shown that most families here own at least one TV set. Christians account for 19 percent of the state's 31.8 million people. (UCANEWS)

## **SINGAPORE: CATHOLIC BOOKSHOPS OFFER ONLINE SHOPPING SERVICE**

CatholicNews Book & Media and Carlo Catholic Society have launched an online shopping service for customers. The CatholicNews Book & Media website ([www.catholic.org.sg/bookshop](http://www.catholic.org.sg/bookshop)) offers mostly books and bibles for online purchase, with promotional items on sale occasionally. The Carlo online store ([www.carlo.org.sg](http://www.carlo.org.sg)), meanwhile, offers items such as bibles, books, rosaries, statues and crucifixes for sale. CatholicNews publishes the fortnightly newspaper of the Archdiocese of Singapore. Carlo Catholic Society, meanwhile, was originally established in 1953 as Singapore Catholic Central Bureau. It was given its present name in 1996. Its mission is to spread the Gospel through the media apostolate. (CN)

## **INDIA: 'VISHWA JYOTI' MAKES A UNIQUE LEAP**

Vishwa Jyoti Communications of Varanasi, a Catholic media center working for transformation of society, achieved a unique honor of setting a world record of marathon theater performances and at the same time contributing to world peace and harmony through the medium of dramas. The marathon performances began at 11am on November 21. Thirty-seven plays were performed by 11 artists which stretched for 35 hours with a break of 10 minutes between plays. The "Natya Aushtaan" (theatrical ritual) was concluded at 10pm on November 22. The previous world record is of 29 hours of a single play titled "The Wrap" written by Neil Oram and directed by Ken Campbell in 1997 in England. The Indian Guinness has listed a play of 13 hours as the longest play ever performed in India. (CNUA)

## **BANGLADESH: CHURCH TO LAUNCH MEDIA TRAINING FOR CLERGY, RELIGIOUS**

The Episcopal Commission for Social Communications conducted a seminar on November 14 titled "Present Trends in Mass Media: Role of the Bangladesh Catholic Church" in Dhaka with priests, bishops and heads of religious congregations in attendance. After the talks by experts on various topics related to the theme, the participants decided to introduce media training in all of Bangladesh's formation houses, including major and minor seminaries. Amid a government drive to have the country go fully digital by 2021, the participants decided that the clergy and religious must be updated about the changing communications landscape. The body also agreed to launch a media campaign to publicize the Church and its services through newspaper supplements and cable TV programs especially during Christmas and Easter. Archbishop Paulinus Costa of Dhaka invited the seminar participants to use modern media to share the Good News. "Let's be open to the media and give a clear picture of the Church and its services," he urged. (CNUA)

## **THAILAND: BISHOP OF UDON THANI RESIGNS, SUCCESSOR APPOINTED**

Pope Benedict XVI has accepted the resignation of Udon Thani Bishop George Yod Pimphisian, CSsR on November 14 according to the Code of Canon Law. Bishop George has served as president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Thailand, and chairman of the Episcopal Commission for Social Communications of Thailand for several terms. He was also Board member and Chairman of the FABC-Office of Social Communication for two three-year terms from 1998 to 2004. Under his leadership, the FABC-Office of Social Communication has launched the Asian Research Center for Religion and Social Communication (ARC) at Saint John's University (Bangkok) in 1999. He also helped streamline the operations of the continental station, Radio Veritas Asia, which is an FABC project. His successor as Bishop of Udon Thani is Father Joseph Luechai Thatsiwai, 47, from the same diocese, professor at Lux Mundi Major Seminary in Samphan (Bangkok) and secretary of the Biblical Commission of the bishops' conference. Udon Thani diocese is a suffragan of the Archdiocese of Tharavong. Of its 5.3 million inhabitants, 17,000 are Catholics. (FIDES)



## **CAMBODIA: FIRST-EVER CHURCH SEMINAR ON DANCE**

About 90 classical dancers from all three prefectures of the Cambodian church gathered in a Battambang parish on September 23-25 for the first-ever Church-held seminar on the art of dance. Participants came from Battambang, Phnom Penh and Kompong Cham prefecture. They were taught how to wear dance attire and create new liturgical dances. Monsignor Enrique Figaredo, apostolic prefect of Battambang, said the best way to spread God's word is through culture and classical dance is an important part of Cambodian culture. "Classical dance is an effective way to spread the word of God because the movements convey meaning," the priest added. About 95 percent of the more than 14 million Cambodians are Buddhists. Christians form approximately 2 percent of the population. (UCANEWS)

## **INDIA: POLICE BREAK BIBLE RACKET IN KERALA**

Kerala police arrested and charged Selva Raj, 26, on November 23 following a complaint from the Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council (KCBC) of a bible-smuggling racket selling copies of the book on the black market. Police suspect that the racket has been going on for years and that some of the printer's employees are involved. The bishops have a standing contract with Divine Printing Press to print copies of the Malayalam-language bible. The press is owned and managed by Divine Retreat Centre, run by Vincentian priests. The KCBC Bible Commission, headed by Bishop George Punnakottil of Kothamangalam, has been campaigning to make the Bible available in every Catholic family. (UCANEWS)

The Asian Research Center for Religion and Social Communication (ARC) is organizing a Roundtable on the relation between religion and social communication. The meeting will take place at Saint John's University in Bangkok from February 8 to 11, 2010 in cooperation with the FABC-Office of Social Communication.

## **INDIA: KONKANI MONTHLY 'SEVAK' CELEBRATES GOLDEN JUBILEE**

*Kutmacho Sevak*, a leading Konkani monthly run by the Capuchins in Mangalore, celebrated its 50th anniversary on October 11 at Don Bosco Hall. Bishop Aloysius Paul D'Souza of Mangalore presided the function congratulating the Sevak team for their efforts to strengthen family bonds with value-based articles. The magazine has achieved a unique milestone in Konkani media by successfully completing 50 years, the bishop said. Guest of honor at the function were Ivan D'Souza, vice-president of congress, and Fr. Vincent Gabriel Furtado, provincial of Karnataka Capuchins. (CNUA)

## **SINGAPORE: CATECHISTS LEARN TO USE MEDIA**

Pauline Sister Rose Pacatte conducted two seminars on media spirituality for 55 catechists at the Catholic Archdiocesan Education Centre on October 10. The film/television columnist of St. Anthony's Messenger magazine in the U.S. told the participants that the media through film and television are a powerful way of developing spirituality in children. But she warned that certain aspects about the media are also undesirable. When catechists teach using media, she said, "how you teach is more important than what you teach." "A catechist is someone who makes an echo of faith so that it resounds in the hearts of the catechized. You have the power to influence the video game makers and film makers of tomorrow," the nun said. Sr. Rose also writes a monthly column on media in the U.S. National Catholic Reporter. (CN)

## **MALAYSIA: FIFTEEN THOUSAND BIBLES DETAINED**

More than 15,000 Bibles in Bahasa Indonesia have been detained by the government this past year. One September 11, Gideons International consignment of 5,000 Indonesia Testaments and 5,000 Indonesia/English Bilingual Testaments that Alpha publisher sent from Jakarta to Kuching were detained by the Malaysia Home Affairs Ministry. In March this year, 5,100 Bible in Bahasa Indonesia ordered by the Bible Society of Malaysia were also detained by the same ministry. The reason given for the detention was that they contain the banned words: Allah, Kaabah, Batun and Solat. The Borneo Evangelical Church has written an appeal letter on September 15 to the Home Affairs Ministry in Putrajaya for the release of the consignment. (CN)

## **VATICAN HONORS JESUIT MISSIONARY TO CHINA, FATHER MATTEO RICCI**

A Vatican exhibit was opened on October 30 at Braccio di Carlo Magno in St. Peter's Square to highlight the life of Jesuit missionary, Fr. Matteo Ricci. His extraordinary intelligence, culture and open-mindedness helped bring Christianity to imperial China four centuries ago. The exhibit titled "On the Crest of History, Father Matteo Ricci (1552-1610): Between Rome and Peking" (now Beijing) is part of a series of events marking the 400th death anniversary of Fr. Ricci who spent 28 years evangelizing, absorbing Chinese culture and bringing Western science to Asia. Born in 1552 in Macerata, central Italy, Matteo Ricci entered the Jesuit order in 1571. After years of study, he sailed to India where he was ordained in 1580. After first travelling to Macao, in 1582, he and another priest established a Jesuit residence in Zhaoqing city, in Guangdong province. Fr. Ricci was admired by his Chinese hosts for European scientific instruments he brought along. He also translated works such as a Catholic catechism into Chinese and the teachings of Confucius into Portuguese, the lingua franca of the time. He died in Beijing at age 58. (CN)