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### MediaCorp, Media Prima to co-produce drama series

**SINGAPORE** – Singapore terrestrial broadcaster MediaCorp and Malaysian integrated media investment group Media Prima will be co-producing a 13-episode drama series entitled *Kasih Berbisik* (Whispers of the Heart).

To be produced by the two companies' content creation arms, Primeworks Studios of Media Prima and MediaCorp Eaglevision of MediaCorp, the series will be filmed in HD and aired on TV3, Media Prima's free-to-air channel in Malaysia, and on MediaCorp Suria, Singapore's Malay-language TV channel later this year.

*Kasih Berbisik's* cast includes Keith Foo, Nora Danish and Tasha Shilla from Malaysia, as well as Hisyam Hamid and Nurul Aini from Singapore, and Isti Ayu Pratiwi from Indonesia.

The drama series will also feature an international backdrop as filming will be done in Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia.



TV3, Media Prima's free-to-air channel, will air *Kasih Berbisik*, a co-production between Media Prima and MediaCorp, in the second half of this year.

# Act now to protect spectrum @WRC-15

BY SHAWN LIEW

**KUALA LUMPUR** – Time is running out, and broadcasters are facing the very real prospect of losing even more spectrum to mobile service providers as WRC-15 looms near.

Act now by lobbying governments and national regulators to preserve spectrum for broadcast services, was the urgent call to broadcasters at Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union's Digital Broadcasting Symposium held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, last month.

"What broadcasters need to keep in mind, is the fact that it is governments who will head to Geneva next year for the International Telecommunication Union's (ITU) WRC-15 conference," reminded Philip Laven, chairman of The DVB Project.

Laven told APB: "At the ITU, it is governments that will make the de-



Now is the time to lobby governments and regulators to make a strong case to preserve broadcast spectrum at WRC-15, delegates were told at last month's ABU Digital Broadcasting Symposium.

cision. If your government doesn't understand the issue [of spectrum allocation], they will make the wrong decisions at WRC-15."

At WRC-15, one of the key agendas will be the consideration of additional spectrum allocations

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## Cloud takes centre stage at NAB Show

**LAS VEGAS** – In recognition of the increasing role cloud technology is beginning to play in the broadcast industry, the spotlight falls on cloud-based workflows at this year's NAB Show in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA, which takes place from April 5-10.

Chris Brown, NAB's executive

vice-president of Conventions and Business Operations, explained: "Today's content creation workflows require both the flexibility and security to allow crews to shoot in remote locations while collaborating with editing and visual-effects departments that may be housed halfway around the world.

"Cloud-based production and distribution workflows are critical to this new reality, and NAB Show tackles head on the challenges of such complex work environments, and how to successfully implement them."

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### WORLD IN BRIEF

#### Satellite industry calls for C-band retention

**WASHINGTON** – Eutelsat, Intelsat, Telesat and SES have called for C-band in the satellite spectrum to be retained leading up to WRC-15. Speaking at a plenary session at last month's Satellite 2014 show in Washington, USA, the satellite operators stressed that C-band remains the backbone of satellite broadcasting around the world.

#### DVB-S2X specification approved

**GENEVA** – The DVB Steering Board has approved DVB-S2X, which provides new extensions to the DVB-S2 specification. The enhanced specification is said to offer spectral efficiency gains by up to 20%-30%, and for some scenarios, gains of up to 50% can be achieved, according to DVB.

#### Digitisation provides tangible benefits in India

**NEW DELHI** – The digital transition in India is having a positive impact, delegates at last month's CASBAA India Forum 2014 were told. This included more bandwidths available for more channels and greater incentive to provide better content and to invest in infrastructure.

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# Lobby governments to step up fight for broadcast spectrum

It is almost a human fallacy to take what we have for granted. After all, what has been available since, well, since time immemorial, cannot possibly be gone tomorrow. Or can it?

For the broadcast industry, the sobering thought is that come WRC-15 in Geneva next year, more spectrum would be allocated to telcos, with agenda item 1.1 of WRC-15 stating the move to allocate more spectrum to mobile service operators.

The big question is: Are broadcasters doing enough to ensure enough spectrum is preserved for broadcast services?

NO, was the emphatic answer emanating from last month's ABU Digital Broadcasting Symposium in Kuala Lumpur.

As a matter of fact, it is the mobile service providers who are knocking hardest on the doors of regulators around the world; broadcasters, on the other hand, are perhaps guilty of the assumption that their governments will know what's the right thing to do at WRC-15 — that ITU will somehow leave enough spectrum for public broadcast services.

The disturbing trend, however, is the growing number of spectrum auctions being held around the world. Inevitably, auctions are won by telcos — it is as good as a foregone conclusion — because public service broadcasters simply do not have the financial clout to compete with telcos on an even footing.

Public service broadcasters have a special social role to play in delivering free-to-air (FTA) TV services to mass audiences. According to Philip Laven, chairman of The DVB Project, HD services are the "very minimum" that broadcasters need to

deliver in five years' time. That is even before we discuss the provision of future TV services such as 4K and 8K — there simply isn't sufficient spectrum available for broadcasters to consider providing such services when more and more spectrum are going to mobile operators.

Mobile service providers are primarily profit-driven, and while they have without a doubt the resources to create a compelling viewing experience of their own, do we want a scenario where FTA broadcasters are replaced by pay-per-view operators?

Of course, not all spectrum will be taken away from broadcasters — that will not happen. But will there be enough spectrum after WRC-15 for broadcasters to continue offering the FTA services that audiences want?

Infocomm regulators will have a tough balancing act in deciding how spectrum should be utilised and allocated but the fact of the matter is that it is governments who will be represented at WRC-15, and the onus is on broadcasters to lobby their governments to make them understand the critical importance of preserving enough spectrum for future broadcast services, so they may make a compelling case to the ITU in Geneva.

Time is running out — and the time for broadcasters to step up their lobbying is now.

Shawn Liew

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April 2014 (volume 31 issue 4)

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Asia-Pacific Broadcasting is published by:



**Editec International Pte Ltd**

61 Tai Seng Avenue

#05-01 Crescendas Print Media Hub

Singapore 534167

Tel: 65 6282 8456 Fax: 65 6282 8039

www.apb-news.com

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MICA (P) 016/08/2013 PPS 985/06/2013(022995)

Printed by Markono Print Media Pte Ltd



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# Sony, Panasonic jointly develop Archival Disc

**TOKYO** – Sony Corporation and Panasonic Corporation have jointly created the 'Archival Disc' — a new standard of professional-use, next-generation optical discs.

This latest development is the result of the two companies' agreement last year, wherein they agreed to develop a new generation of optical discs to expand their archive business in the long-term digital data storage arena.

Both companies aim to improve their development efficiency based on the technologies held by each respective company, with plans to develop an optical disc with recording capacity of at least 300GB by the end of next year.

According to Sony and Panasonic, optical discs have excellent properties to protect themselves against the environment, such as being dust- and water-resistant,

and can also withstand changes in temperature and humidity when properly stored.

The Archival Disc also allows inter-generational compatibility between different formats, ensuring that data can continue to be read even as formats evolve, thus making it a robust media for long-term storage of content.



Recognising that optical discs will need to accommodate much larger volumes of data in the digital age, particularly given the anticipated future growth in the archive market, Sony and Panasonic decided to engage one another in developing a new standard for professional-use, next-generation optical discs — their efforts have resulted in the formulation of Archival Disc!

Both the companies say that demand for archival capabilities will increase significantly in the film industry, as well as in cloud-based data centres which handle big data; moreover, advances in network services will cause data volumes to soar.

In the past, both Sony and Panasonic had successfully worked on the development of Blu-ray Disc technology.

Moving forward, the companies plan to actively promote this next-generation high-capacity optical disc standard in the professional field in order to offer an effective solution for protecting valuable data into the future.

## Alliance to create hybrid broadcast platform for MSOs

**LONDON** – ZTE Corporation is teaming up with Oregan Networks to produce a hybrid broadcast platform for the delivery of IP-based video and applications, in conjunction with satellite, cable and terrestrial pay-TV services.

Beyond ZTE's traditional offering of network infrastructure components, the combined platform encompasses CDN, network PVR, OSS/BSS and an advanced user experience client — leveraging the latest Web standards and 3D animations.

Frank Fang, ZTE's vice-president, said: "The new solution allows ZTE to offer a mature technology platform to the rapidly growing pay-TV markets, which are undergoing the next wave of deployments."

Mark Perry, Oregan's CEO, added: "Our new joint platform enables operators to leverage a proven multi-screen solution that comprises a hugely scalable back-office from ZTE with robust hybrid set-top box software technology, conditional access and user experience expertise from Oregan."

## 'Defend spectrum for as long as we can'

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to the mobile service on a primary basis, as stated in the WRC-15 agenda item 1.1.

The survival of the broadcast industry is at stake, is the blunt assessment of Laven. "If you don't take the issue of spectrum seriously, someone will take the spectrum from you, and you will be left with small amounts of spectrum that cannot deliver the HD services that the public wants — in five years' time; that's the very minimum broadcasters need to deliver.

Not enough has been done to lobby governments and regulators of the need to have spectrum availability for future broadcast services, acknowledged Dr Amal Punchihewa, director of technology at ABU.

That was why, for the first time, at this year's Digital Broadcasting Symposium, a conference session had been dedicated to addressing spectrum issues, explained Dr Amal.

"Once the spectrum is gone, it's gone, and we won't be able to get it back," he warned.

"We have almost no time left — we need the regulators in our respective countries to go to ITU to make a very strong case that we need spectrum for future broadcast services.

"Once frequency is freed up [from the digital switchover] and given to other services, how are we going to introduce future TV services such as 4K and 8K?"

"Moreover, broadband can't deliver critical public broadcast messages to large populations."

Mobile broadband cannot deliver services to meet the demands of TV viewers, agreed Simon Fell, director of technology and innovation at the European Broadcasting

Union (EBU). The majority of TV viewing will still be linear viewing, said Fell, adding: "Speak to your regulators, engage them, we need to defend spectrum for as long as we can."

The broadcast industry needs to make itself heard, urged Lindsay Cornell, principal systems architect, BBC-UK, who lamented the "lack of a strong voice".

Cornell said: "The broadcast industry as a whole needs to highlight the importance of broadcasting in the fight for spectrum."

In Asia-Pacific, there is a worryingly lack of a concerted effort to lobby regulators to preserve spectrum for the broadcast industry. Generally, governments in the region are all too happy to go along auctioning spectrum.

"This practice will inevitably result in telcos with deep pockets grabbing the spectrum," said Andrew Yeo, publisher and editorial director of APB. A case in point, Yeo noted, was the last auction in Australia; all three bandwidths auctioned went to telcos.

Agreeing with Yeo's assessment, DVB's Laven pointed out that broadcasters simply do not have large amounts of money to compete with telcos.

Laven said: "Public service providers have a special role to play, and they want to spend their money not on delivery but on making content.

"According to economists, an auction offers the best result because people who are going to make the most money out of it gets the spectrum. But that begs a key question: Is FTA broadcasting about making huge amounts of money?"

As for future TV services such as 4K and 8K, Laven asked delegates if deploying these services would

actually constitute efficient use of their limited spectrum.

He said: "If you want to keep the argument that broadcasters need to preserve spectrum to deliver 4K or 8K services, we have a real problem — because there is not enough spectrum even today to do it.

"If you are going to use terrestrial spectrum, use it very carefully. In my personal opinion, if you are going to deliver 4K or 8K services, it is better to utilise satellite or cable TV/optical fibre that doesn't use up your valuable spectrum."

Whether these future services come to pass, the time to act is now. Broadcasters must stick together and produce a united front in ensuring enough spectrum is reserved for broadcast services, especially at a time when many broadcasters are transiting to digital, Erina Tobing, director engineering, Televisi Republik Indonesia (TVRI), told APB.

Joe Igoe, chief technology officer of Singapore terrestrial broadcaster MediaCorp, said: "Spectrum is a limited and precious resource and it has to be used in a way that provides the greatest public benefit. We must remain aware of the invaluable public services provided by FTA broadcasting, which offers the widest reach."

Igoe urged regulators to be very cautious in reallocating freed-up spectrum to mobile providers who use the spectrum for profit.

Time is running out, reiterated ABU's Dr Amal. "Work with your regulators because we cannot make an impact on our own at WRC-15. Convince the regulators of the value of public broadcasting — FTA broadcasters need to do this immediately," he emphasised.

## NAB examining the future of cloud in media management

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At the NAB Show *Media Management in the Cloud Conference* on Tuesday, April 8, and Wednesday, April 9, Mark Ramberg, general manager, media and entertainment, Amazon Web Services, is presenting a keynote address on how cloud services have enabled media and entertainment companies to tackle the challenges and complexity of offering consumers content anytime, anywhere and on any device.

Amazon Web Services, which celebrated its eighth birthday last month, provides multi-tenanted pay-as-you-use cloud-based services and raw computing power to businesses through its cloud platform.

Two of its main services are Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (EC2), a service that allows cus-

tomers to use cloud-based servers to run their own applications; and Web storage service S3.

Ramberg is also exploring how cloud services can be leveraged to meet ever-increasing infrastructure demands of upstream workflow scenarios, such as film production and broadcast.

In addition, Ramberg is discussing insights and trends that will lead to increased efficiency and collapsing cost structures for the media industry.

The opening of the two-day *Media Management in the Cloud* conference will feature sessions including *Content Creation in the Cloud: Post Production*, in which key executives working across digital landscapes discuss their visions and real-world applications for current and future cloud-based



**Amazon Web Services' Mark Ramberg: Addressing how cloud services have enabled media and entertainment companies to tackle the challenges and complexity of offering consumers content anytime, anywhere and on any device.**

production solutions.

The following day, a panel will take *A Look into the Future of Cloud*, and how executives and creatives can prepare for it.

Away from the conference sessions, a number of exhibitors are offering their latest solutions based on cloud technology, including Aspera, who earlier this year was acquired by tech giant IBM.

Describing the acquisition, Craig Hayman, general manager,

industry cloud solutions, IBM said: "With this acquisition, IBM will help our customers more effectively and efficiently move large files to and from the cloud and within the enterprise to where individuals can extract real business insights from that data."

Other exhibitors highlighting cloud technology include Accenture, Amazon Web Services, Dell, Digital Nirvana, EMC Isilon, EVS, Hitachi Data Systems, Huawei Enterprise USA, Quantel and Verizon.

