

Report on Visit Sweden

Description

Under an Advanced International Training Programme on “Media Regulation in a Democratic Framework, a two-week visit to Sweden was arranged in May 2022. The Training Programme is organised jointly by NIRAS Sweden AB, FOJO Media Institute, Global Reporting and International Media Support, on behalf of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The visit was a part of a yearlong fellowship which is mainly organized digitally through zoom platform. There were 11 participants in two batches from Bangladesh in this programme, and MRDI is working as the country facilitator for the programme. The first batch has already completed their fellowship and shared their work with the ITP team in Sweden, while the second batch has just finalized their change initiative for the fellowship and shared their idea during the visit. Then the second batch were given feedback and insights from experts on their change initiative.

The visit was thus divided into two parts. The first week’s schedule included introductory meetings, sightseeing and visit to some relevant institutions to the fellowship. The visiting team stayed in Stockholm during the first week, then was taken to another conference hotel in the outskirts of the city.

Some of the institutions the team interacted were The Swedish Ministry of Culture, Division of Media and Democracy, Media council, Department of Media Studies, Stockholm University, The Swedish Press and broadcasting Authority and Sida. Apart from the visit to these institutions, the ITP team also had opportunity to meet Claes Lewenhaupt, the Chancellor of Justice and Casper Opitz, Swedish Media Ombudsman, who is an independent self-disciplinary body handling complaints on the editorial content of media. ITP team also participated in several sessions conducted by experts including Nils Hanson, Lars Tallert and Carlolina Jemsby on relevant topics such as Investigative Journalism, Sustainable Journalism, Constructive journalism, Media and Gender, Online regulations, self-regulation in Swedish Media etc.

Key Lessons learned

- Self-regulation for the media is crucial to have a free and independent media
- Self-regulation is not self-censorship, rather it ensures that the media practices the best policy in doing journalism
- A good media policy is to provide the conditions for the free formation of opinion, free exchange of ideas and real opportunities to scrutinize various phenomena of the society
- Swedish Media enjoys a great deal of freedom and their self-disciplinary system is not based on legislation, however there is two fundamental laws, one is on Freedom of Expression and one is on Press freedom.
- Swedish Government Agencies fully support freedom expression, diversity, mass media independence and accessibility
- Empowering minors and young people as conscious media user and protecting them from harmful media influences is also very important

- Gender Equity in media is needed to be established in order to keep up with the world's changing conversations around gender.
- Sustainable Journalism is a new concept, which can be very useful for Bangladesh to ensure media viability

The program schedule is enclosed.