

## PROGRAMME



### 9<sup>TH</sup> ABU MEDIA SUMMIT ON CLIMATE ACTION AND DISASTER PREVENTION

25 - 27 November 2025,  
Colombo, Sri Lanka

**BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH  
MEDIA: FOR A CLEANER, GREENER,  
AND SAFER TOMORROW**



**Asia-Pacific  
Broadcasting  
Union**



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## DAY 1 – 25 NOVEMBER (TUESDAY)

### Focus: Climate Resilience & Sustainable Communication

#### Opening & Plenary

08:30 – 09:00 | Registration

09:00 – 09:30 | Opening Ceremony

- Welcome remarks by **Ahmed Nadeem** – ABU Secretary-General
- Host Broadcaster Address – **Mr. Gihan De Silva** – Chairman, SLRC
- Guest Address: **Hon. Dr. Jagath Wickramaratne** – Speaker of the Parliament of Sri Lanka

09:30 – 09:45 | **Keynote: Prof. Mohan Munasinghe** – Ex-Vice Chair of the IPCC (shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize)

*“The Role of Media in Building Climate Resilience and Emergency Readiness”*

09:45 – 10:15 | **Group Photo & Networking Break**

#### SUMMIT SESSIONS

10:15 – 11:00 | **Media and Climate Action: Global Priorities and Regional Realities**

This session examines how collaboration among media, government, science, and financing institutions can accelerate climate resilience across the region. While climate impacts are felt locally, effective solutions require coordinated global action. The discussion will address how communities facing extreme weather, environmental degradation, and weak early-warning systems can benefit from sustainable financing, international partnerships, and cross-border cooperation. A key focus will be the role of media in connecting these local challenges to global priorities — amplifying community realities, translating complex science into accessible information, shaping national agendas, and contributing to meaningful climate dialogue and action.

**Moderator: Indra Singh** – Director, ABU News Director

#### Panellists:

- **Stephanie Speck** – Head of Special Initiatives, Green Climate Fund
- **Dr Ananda Malawathantri** – UN Expert on Climate Action
- **Leel Randeniya** – Director-General, Climate Secretariat, Ministry of Environment, Sri-Lanka
- **Kavinda De Zoysa** – Chairman, Bank of Ceylon
- **Edwin Salonga** – Programme Lead, Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) & Climate Based Adaptation (CBA), Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) – Bangkok, Thailand

### **11:00 – 11:30 | From National Campaigns to Global Commitments: The Role of Media in Sustainable Community Building**

This session will highlight the national campaigns promoting environmental sustainability through community participation and media engagement. It will showcase how public service media collaborate with government and civil society to drive public awareness, reduce waste, and foster long-term behavioural change.

**Moderator: Dr. W.M.W Weerakoon, Agriculture** – Consultant, FAO

#### **Panellists:**

- **G.M.R.D. Aponsu** – Senior Additional Secretary to the President (Finance & Economic Affairs)
- **Eng. S.P.C. Sugeeshwara** – Additional Secretary to the President (Clean Sri Lanka Programme)
- **Thinley Dorji** – Offtg. Chief Engineer, BBS Bhutan
- **Ryan Lee Chun Hoe** – Content Manager, SMG Sarawak

### **11:30 – 12:30 | High-Level Dialogue: Partnerships for a Cleaner, Greener, and Safer Tomorrow**

This dialogue brings together leaders from media, science, and international organisations to explore how cross-sector partnerships can accelerate progress toward climate resilience, environmental protection, and sustainable development. The session will highlight how collaboration across sectors can generate innovative solutions, promote risk-informed policies, and mobilise communities for long-term environmental stewardship and safety.

The discussion will showcase how diverse sectors can work together to deliver meaningful and lasting impact for a Cleaner, Greener, and Safer Tomorrow.

**Moderator: Elakeyaa Selvaraji** – News Presenter, CNA, MediaCorp Singapore

***Video Message: Kamal Kishore** – Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, and Head of UNDRR*

#### **Panellists:**

- **Wataru Fujishita** – Executive Controller, General Media Administration, NHK Japan
- **Jeanette Elsworth** – Chief, Communications, Advocacy, Knowledge Management and ICT, UNDRR
- **Prof. Devaka Weerakoon** – Head of Department of Zoology and Environmental Sciences Faculty of Science, University of Colombo
- **Michelle Bellino** – Director of MEI and Women Activities, UNI Global Union - Asia & Pacific

**12:30 – 14:00 | Lunch**

### **14:00 – 15:00 | Climate Storytelling: Turning Science into Public Awareness**

Media can transform complex climate science into engaging, human-centered stories that inspire awareness and action. The focus is on storytelling approaches that highlight solutions, resilience, and community-driven responses, shifting the narrative from crisis to empowerment. The goal is to help media professionals strengthen their ability to tell hopeful, solution-oriented climate stories that motivate audiences not only to understand the challenges—but to care, connect, and act for a sustainable future.

**Moderator: Varinder Gambhir** – Country Director, BBC Media Action, India

#### **Panellists:**

- **Dao Son An** – Newscaster, Vietnam Today, VTV International, Vietnam
- **Elakeyaa Selvaraji** – Presenter, CNA TV International, MediaCorp, Singapore
- **Aman Ul Haq** – Deputy Head, International Relations, PTV Pakistan
- **Viswa Dulanjee** – PhD. Student, Sri JAYAWARDANEPURA University

### **15:00 – 15:45 | No One Left Behind: Inclusive Climate and DRR Communication for All**

This session explores how media can ensure that climate information, education, and early-warning messages are accessible to all — including children, youth, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, women, and remote or low-income communities. As climate change deepens existing inequalities, inclusive communication becomes crucial to saving lives and strengthening resilience.

**Moderator: Krishna Karkee** – Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Climate Action (CA), Humanitarian Response (HR), and Development professional

#### **Panellists:**

- **Biena Magbitang** – Climate Tracker.Asia, Philippines – remotely
- **Tyne Logan** – Weather Newscaster, ABC Australia – remotely
- **Senali Wijesooriya** – Communication Specialist, ChildFund Sri Lanka
- **Arush Balalla** – Young Journalist, SLRC Sri-Lanka
- **Michelle Bellino** – Director of MEI and Women Activities, UNI Global Union

**15:45 – 16:15 | Coffee / Networking**

**16:15 – 17:15 | Workshop: Battling Climate Misinformation: The Media's Role in Protecting Truth and Public Trust |** Media and Information Literacy (MIL) principles in work of media organizations

Climate misinformation spreads rapidly across digital and social media, the credibility of science and journalism faces unprecedented pressure. Broadcasters can combat false narratives, politicization of climate issues, and public fatigue, while maintaining trust and accuracy in their reporting. Integrating Media and Information Literacy (MIL) principles into work of media organizations can empower audiences to critically assess information, identify false narratives, and engage responsibly in climate discussions.

**Facilitator: Nargiza Numanova** – Head of SG's Office, ABU

**Panellists:**

**Varinder Gambhir** – Country Director, BBC Media Action, India

**Dilrukshi Handunnetti** – Director, Centre for Investigative Reporting, Mongabay, Sri Lanka

**Ma'aly Hazzaz** - UNESCO's Regional Advisor for South Asia, UNESCO Delhi Cluster Office

**COLOMBO CITY TOUR FOR  
FOREIGN DELEGATES**

Departure Time: 5:30 PM (from the hotel)

Estimated Return: 9:30 PM

Cost: Complimentary

Meals: Refreshments included, dinner not provided

## DAY 2 – 26 NOVEMBER (WEDNESDAY)

### Focus: Disaster Preparedness & Response

**09:00 – 09:15 | Welcome & Opening Remarks – Ahmed Nadeem** – ABU Secretary-General

**09:15 – 09:30 | Keynote Address: Dr. Tawfik Jelassi** – UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information (Video Message)

**09:30 – 09:45 | Launch Ceremony of the UNESCO Model Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan (DPRP) for Media Institutions**

### **09:45 – 10:30 | Case Studies: The status quo: good practices and lessons learned**

These presentations will highlight real-world experiences from media organisations across the region, showcasing effective approaches to disaster preparedness and response. This segment aims to encourage peer learning and reflection, providing valuable input into how the Model DPRP can be locally adapted and implemented by media institutions worldwide.

**Moderator: Xu Jing** – Programme Specialist, UNESCO

#### **Panellists:**

- **Marina Kostova** – Deputy Editor-in-Chief, SDK, North Macedonia
- **Mohamed Boudouri** – Vice-President, National Press and Audiovisual Council, Comoros
- **Alex Fernando Rojas Figueroa** – Data Journalism Editor, Prensa Libre, Guatemala
- **Timoci Driudriu Takalau** – News Digital Content Officer, FBC Fiji
- **Shimakawa Eisuke** – Senior Correspondent, NHK Japan

**10:30 – 11:00 | Coffee Break & Networking**

## **11:00 - 12:00 Panel Discussion: An increasing need for dedicated support for media in the field of disaster management**

Media plays the critical role in disaster risk reduction, preparedness, and recovery, and the growing need for systematic support mechanisms that strengthen media's capacity in crisis communication. Training, coordination, and policy support is important to help media organisations operate effectively under disaster conditions.

**Moderator: Ma'aly Hazzaz** – UNESCO's Regional Advisor for South Asia, UNESCO Delhi Cluster Office

### **Panellists:**

- **Jeanette Elsworth** – Chief, Communications, Advocacy, Knowledge Management and ICT, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)
- **Manish Bhardwaj** – Secretary, NDMA Ministry of Home Affairs
- **Krishna Karkee** – Advisor, Centre for Disaster Management Studies, Nepal
- **Nargiza Numanova** – Head of SG's Office, ABU
- **Pradeep Kodipili** - Director, Disaster Management Center, Sri-Lanka

### **Next Steps: Commitments, Partnerships, and Support Mechanisms**

Follow-up actions, potential cross-sector partnerships, and ways to mobilize resources for continued capacity building, regional cooperation, and implementation of disaster preparedness and response frameworks for media institutions.

## **12:00 – 12:30 Interactive Session 1: Understanding the Model DPRP and Implementation Strategy | *Simulating Disaster Newsroom Scenarios: How the Plan Works During Emergencies***

**Facilitator: Xu Jing** – Programme Specialist, UNESCO

**12:45 – 14:00 | Lunch**

## **14:00 – 15:00 Interactive Session 2: Media in Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems**

**Facilitator: Indra Singh** – ABU News Director

### **Panelists:**

- **Md. Al Mamun** – Country Director, Bangladesh & Regional Director, South-East Asia BBC Media Action
- **Nora Gale** – Assistant Programme Specialist, ICG/IOTWMS Secretariat, Australia
- **Ganga Kariyawasam** – Head of Programmes, Sri Lanka Red Cross Society
- **Prasad Kaushalya Dodangodage** – Assistant Director, English and International News, SLRC
- **Francis Dave Orcio** – Reporter, ABS-CBN Corporation, Philippines

## **15:00 – 15:45 | Strengthening Media's Role in Early Warnings and Emergency Communication | Focus on Radio**

Radio remains one of the most trusted and far-reaching communication channels during crises. This session will explore how broadcasters—especially radio—can enhance their role in early warning dissemination and emergency response to save lives and reduce disaster impacts. Collaboration models between media, meteorological agencies, and disaster management authorities can ensure warnings are reliable, timely, and clearly understood by all audiences.

**Moderator: Ganga Kariyawasam** – Head of Programs, Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS)

### **Panellists:**

- **Mohammad Tofazzal Hossain** – National Coordinator for Pillar 3 of Early Warning for All Initiative in Bangladesh, International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
- **Mathew Phillips** – Steering Board Member, Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM)
- **Rita Noujaim** – Programme Manager, Radio Liban
- **Nguyen Kieu Anh** – Reporter of VOV Online Newspapers, Voice of Vietnam
- **Daulat Pane** – Head of News Team of Directorate of Program and Production, Radio Republik Indonesia

## **15:45 – 16:15 | Coffee / Networking**

### **16:15 – 17:00 | Innovative and People-Centred Approaches to DRR Communication**

Emerging technologies are reshaping disaster risk reduction (DRR) communication, enabling faster, clearer, and more inclusive information sharing. AI tools, mobile platforms, and data-driven storytelling are enhancing early warning systems, strengthening community outreach, and improving real-time communication during crises. By adopting audience-centred and culturally sensitive approaches, broadcasters can design communication that not only informs but also motivates action. Through innovative media practices and technology-driven solutions, the media can empower communities to prepare, respond, and recover more effectively — turning information into resilience.

#### **Presenters:**

- **Kanokporn Prasitphon** – Digital Media Director, ThaiPBS, Thailand
- **Shimakawa Eisuke** – Senior Correspondent, NHK Japan
- **Meysam Mashayekh** – Head of Communication with Media Associations, IRIB Iran
- **Jae-hwan Lee** – Executive Managing Director News & Current Affairs, KBS Korea

### **17:00 – 17:15 | Adaptation of the Summit's Call for Action & Closing**

## **EVENING GALA**

**19:00 – 21:30 | Together for Planet, People, Peace (T4P) Media Awards Gala**

## DAY 3 – 27 NOVEMBER (THURSDAY)

### FULL DAY EXCURSION

Travel Itinerary for the Excursion | 09:00 – 16:00

**Galle Fort** - The story of the Galle Dutch Fort; a UNESCO World Heritage Site reverberates through all traveller's photos and captions. Initially built by the Portuguese in the 16th century during their conquests, the fort was later fortified and conquered by the Dutch in the 17th century, until it later fell to the might of the British. The old town of Galle was once used as a trading port for spices and other goods for over 200 years. However, today, the fort has been transformed into a place of history, romance and beauty where travellers are warmly welcomed to dive headfirst into the exotic stories and be a part of this heritage site.



The **National Maritime Museum** or **National Maritime Archaeology Museum** in Galle, Sri Lanka is situated within Galle Fort. It was first opened to the public on 9 May 1992 and is located in a 1671 Dutch Warehouse above the Old Gate of Galle Fort. Whilst the building housing the museum survived the impact of the 26 December 2004 tsunami, the adjoining UNESCO Maritime Archaeology Unit was completely destroyed and all the exhibitions were flood damaged[1] and the majority of maritime archeological artifacts were lost. Under Sri Lanka – Netherlands Cultural Co-operation Program, the Royal Government of Netherlands provided financial assistance for reconstruction of the Maritime Museum.



**Mask Factory in Ambalangoda** - Sri Lanka's traditional art and culture scene brims with uniqueness. Representing it in all authenticity for decades is Ambalangoda Mask Factory & Museum. Enter this haven of ancient culture and you'll find intriguing masks staring at you. Along with two entire collections belonging to the Sanni Yakuma ritual and Kolam Dance, primitive tools used to carve these marks are also displayed here. The museum has a small library and a mask workshop as well. The mask library is one of its kind in Sri Lanka.



It has anthropological records of mask-making and the history of traditional performances that use masks. Head to the workshop and watch the artisans work their magic on a piece of wood. The carvings and the traditional colours breathe life into them. Take a few masks as souvenirs or an unpainted one for you to unmask your creativity.



Boat safari along the **Madu River** is a relaxing trip with plenty of interesting stops. You pass dozens of islets forested with mangroves and can appreciate the timeless natural rhythms of rural life. You cruise in a canopied, outboard motor-powered boat. You can see prawn farming and traditional fishing techniques in action & abundance of wildlife including water monitors, wild monkeys, lizards and many birds such as Kingfisher, Hawk Eagle and Comorans.

**Kosgoda Turtle Hatchery** Sri Lanka is one of the world's major biodiversity hotspots, and a chief concern for the island is the conservation of its wildlife. The turtle hatcheries that you find dotted along the western coastline tackle the issue by investing in the survival of Sri Lanka's turtles.

Left on their own, turtle eggs are susceptible and defenceless against predators; there is also a danger of the eggs being found by local fishermen and sold to poachers, who in turn sell them on the black market. The hatcheries combat this by buying the eggs from the fishermen at a higher price, encouraging them to keep bringing in the endangered eggs to a safer location.

