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Author: IWPR

News analysis service widely acclaimed as its first phase draws to a close.

During its year of operation, IWPR NBCA news analysis agency received much praise from journalists, politicians and the civil sector throughout the region for its impartial reporting and quick response to events.

Feedback from analysts, politicians, activists and journalists on the project said that the agency provided a great deal of useful, reliable information on a wide variety of topics not covered by other media.

They said NBCA reports contained a good balance of fact and analysis and promoted an awareness of the Central Asian countries in the region and beyond, while the wider project allowed young journalists to hone their skills, and also gave them the opportunity to write freely about their society.

Mars Sariev, a political expert on Turkmenistan, said he found NBCA's objective reporting "very useful" and noted that its analysis promoted more effective decision making among politicians.

Emilbek Juraev, deputy director of OSCE Academy, said that IWPR stood out among other media for its "serious, well-balanced, researched approach to reporting".

"It doesn't join daily sensation news, but reports on issues which are outside of the current attention of the daily news media. It is both more substantial, [its reports] longer than the typical "news-bites" of news agencies, but not overly long like some multi-page articles by others," he said.

"While IWPR writes on any topical issue, it is certainly not sensationalist, and often writes on topics which are important but either forgotten or overlooked by most other media outlets."

Zarona Ismailova, director of the Eurasia Fund of Central Asia in Tajikistan, said that IWPR filled an information vacuum in Tajikistan, where media sources are restricted, and restored the culture of reading news and analysis.

Annadurdy Khadzhiyev, a Turkmen opposition activist, agreed that IWPR helped to fill an information gap.

"Turkmen people need not only alternative sources of information, but also expert opinion concerning the reporting of democratic society issues, internal and external policy, and social and economic policy of the country. IWPR makes its contribution to that," he said.

An opposition party leader in Andijan in eastern Uzbekistan praised NBCA's impartial and objective analysis.

"There is no doubt that NBCA has had a great influence on the journalists, analysts and readers. This

innovation was appreciated by many people,” he said.

“I think the Uzbek authorities were undoubtedly monitoring NBCA publications because the stories had independent specialists’ opinions.”

Kanybek Imanaliev, a Kyrgyz member of parliament, said that IWPR’s efficiency and fairness when reporting on political processes, economy and other issues attracted many readers.

“It is very important since there is a shortage of neutral outlets in Kyrgyzstan that would give objective coverage of events and issues. IWPR is interesting in giving detailed analysis of the issue; the contributors always choose urgent themes,” he said.

Zinaida Savina, a journalist from southern Kazakstan, also singled out NBCA’s efficiency and impartiality.

“The experts are free to give their opinions on events and issues. It is valuable in Kazakstan where all media, one way or another, belong to significant figures or groups,” she said.

Savina said that NBCA training helped to promote tolerance among journalists, as well as a reasonable approach towards covering ethnic issues.

Nigora Bukhari-zade, an independent journalist who cooperates with German media organisation Deutsche Welle, said he thought NBCA stories were “excellent” – a good blend of fact and expert analysis on topical and interesting topics, “It was interesting for me personally to read NBCA stories, because the Tajik media do not have any analysis.”

Kadyr Toktogulov, Central Asia correspondent with Dow Jones Newswires, said that IWPR’s comprehensive and insightful reports on the region’s economic and political issues are very important in a region which lacks genuinely free media.

“Local media are generally serving someone’s political and economic interests, which undermines the credibility of their reports. IWPR sets high standards of reporting for local journalists that contribute their stories,” he said.

He stressed that working for IWPR was “a good learning process” for local journalists, “The current AP reporter in Kyrgyzstan is a former IWPR contributor. That says a lot about the quality of training that IWPR provides for journalists.”

Researcher Baktygul Koubanytschbekova noted that IWPR reports were in great demand and widely used in research on the region - including in monitoring and situational analysis on security issues by international humanitarian organisations and academic institutions.

Ilhom Nazriev, an officer at the OSCE’s resource centre for journalists, said that NBCA was one of the most credible sources of information for people abroad who are interested in life in Tajikistan, and gave an accurate portrayal of the political, economic and social situation in the country.

Journalist Khakimjan Khusanov praised the distinctive NBCA format, "IWPR has its own original style and structure. At the same time, everything is reported [in a compact and clear manner] and helps the reader to go deep into the heart of the matter."

Abdumalik Kadirov, an assistant with the Democracy Commission Small Grants Programme in the US Embassy in Tajikistan, said that IWPR activities, events, and reporting in particular, contributed to the development of civil society - as it is "directed to detection and reporting of the shortcomings that impede our country's development".

This particularly urgent today, as many media organisation have a shortage of competent staff, he said.

He added that by building relationships with IWPR, donors in Tajikistan could get an idea of the media situation in the country and plan their activities to support the sector.

"IWPR does not squander its energies but moves in one direction and does its job professionally," he said.

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Political expert Marat Kazakbaev said a major advantage of IWPR's output is that journalists work side by side with analysts and experts.

"A story with the opinions of professional experts is always interesting for people - they trust it. This is the right...approach. This is one of the most important differences between IWPR and other mass media," he said.

Kazakbaev added that IWPR also helped to raise awareness of Kyrgyzstan - including its investment climate and tourist possibilities - in other Central Asian countries.

Location: Central Asia
Uzbekistan
Turkmenistan
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Topic: Reporting Impact

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