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Hear the voice of the MARGINALIZED

Garima Prasher | 764

If you have not tuned into 90.4 MHz, then do so. In today's life, when the voices of marginalized communities are lost in the hustle-bustle of the city, this radio station provides an opportunity for these secluded communities to express themselves. Imparting the real meaning of broadcast media, the channel brings forth the voices that are heard the least. Sex workers, transgenders, rag-pickers, auto drivers, physically challenged, slum-dwellers and HIV-positive persons, all are part of this community radio station called Radio Active.

Licensed to the Jain University, the radio station is one of its kind in Bangalore that is

providing unmatched opportunities to the marginalized. "Radio Active is a Government of India initiative that came into being on June 25, 2007 in the city. The station acts as a wonderful platform for those who are excluded from the society," says Pinky Chandra, director, Radio Active.

Priyanka R, a pansexual, is one of the radio jockeys. She joined the station a year ago and says that her life has got better after getting this plat-

form. "I was a sex worker and a beggar before coming here. It's a wonderful platform. I host two programmes. I want to make my listeners aware about various issues we face," says Priyanka.

She enjoys the full-time job. "I have a different and re-

“The station acts as a wonderful platform for those who are excluded from the society. It's a station by these communities, for these communities and of these communities.”

- Pinky Chandra | DIRECTOR, RADIO ACTIVE

spectable life now. People who looked down upon me, respect me today," says Priyanka.

For 32-year-old HIV positive Poornima (name changed), life was a living hell after she was detected with it. She was isolated till she spotted Radio Active. "It's a different world. I am no more an untouchable. I got an opportunity to talk my mind after years of silence. I work as an RJ for a programme that listens to the unheard voices. And

This Community Radio Station Gives Them An Apt Platform To Connect To The World



RIGHTFUL PLACE: Transgenders, rag-pickers, auto drivers, physically challenged, all are part of the community radio station Radio Active

being one of them, I connect to them easily and try to pull them out of the darkness. I want to reinforce the fact that even HIV positive people should be treated like human beings," says Poornima.

Round-the-clock Radio Active covers a 15-km radius. The station with as many as 10 pro-

grammes on daily basis, airs folk songs or community songs as well, very much on the lines of commercial radio stations.

Radio Active has yet another special RJ, rag-picker Sujata. She does secondary waste segregation for the Jain University campus at Palace Road and feels that waste picking is

a noble job. Sujata, airing a programme called 'Active Women', believes in women empowerment and desires to impart the message through her new profession. "Rag-pickers have an important contribution to make. It should not be looked down upon. It has the potential to provide employment to women like me, who are sitting idle at home," says Sujata.

There are special RJs like Jaydeva M (visually impaired), Marjula S (slum-dweller) and Nagina (sex worker).

The station has brought them into action after providing them RJ training. "They are taught to develop content, handle computers, edit the text, handle camera, write reports and make videos. The only area that is left unedited is their language. They are free to talk in any language. And the transformation in their personalities becomes unbelievable after some time. Some of them have also shared national platform representing their communities," says Pinky.

CITY & the CITIZEN