

BBC to axe 450 jobs to 'modernize' newsroom

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BBC said the number of people who present the news also will be scrutinized.

London: The BBC said Wednesday that plans to "modernize" the British broadcaster's newsroom will lead to the loss of an estimated 450 jobs.

The cuts represent a substantial blow to the national public service broadcaster, which has a worldwide reputation for high quality news and entertainment programs.

BBC News employs about 6,000 people, including 1,700 outside the U.K., according to an article about the job cuts on its website.

Fran Unsworth, BBC's director of news and current affairs, said the streamlining will be carried out with an eye on digital journalism.

"We need to reshape BBC News for the next decade in a way which saves substantial amounts of money," Unsworth said. "We are spending too much of our resources on traditional linear broadcasting and not enough on digital."

The broadcaster said it wants to "reduce duplication" while saving 80 million pounds (\$105 million) in costs.

Like traditional news outlets throughout the world, the publicly funded BBC faces financial and political pressure in a fast-changing media landscape.

Both supporters and critics of Brexit have criticized BBC's coverage of the U.K.'s impending departure from the European Union. Some officials in Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative government have suggested changing the BBC's funding model.

The broadcaster currently is funded largely through a 154 pound (\$200) annual fee paid by every household with a television. It is not state-controlled, although the government sets the terms of the broadcaster's charter, which is renewed once a decade.

The broadcaster also received negative coverage over the salaries of some in the news division that were regarded as too high and for a gap between what the BBC's women journalists made compared to male counterparts.

The announced news operation cuts were not fully detailed. Some shows, including the current affairs and debate program "Victoria Derbyshire," will be eliminated, while the flagship daily news program "Newsnight" will produce fewer long pieces.

Other cuts target positions at national radio service 5 Live and at the English language morning news "World Update" program of the BBC World Service.

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- AP