

**Chapter-II**

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#### Television in India---- a chronology of events

Television came to India on September 15, 1959 with experimental transmission from Delhi. It was a modest beginning with a make shift studio, a low power transmitter and only 21 community television sets. All India Radio provided the engineering and programme professionals. A daily one-hour service with a news bulletin was started in 1965. In 1972 television services were extended to a second city—Mumbai. By 1975 television stations came up in Calcutta, Chennai, Srinagar, Amritsar and Lucknow. In 1975-76 the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment brought television programmes for people in 2400 villages in the most inaccessible of the least developed areas through a satellite lent to India for one year.



Doordarshan is a Public broadcast terrestrial television channel run by Prasar Bharati, a board formed by the Government of India. It is one of the largest broadcasting organizations in the world in terms of the infrastructure of studios and transmitters. Doordarshan had its beginning with the experimental telecast started in Delhi in September, 1959 with a small transmitter and a makeshift studio. The regular daily transmission started in 1965 as a part of All India Radio. The television service was extended to a second city Mumbai in 1972. Till 1975, only seven cities were covered by Doordarshan and it remained

the only television channel in India. Television services were separated from Radio in 1976. Each office of All India Radio and Doordarshan were placed under the management of two separate Director Generals in New Delhi. Finally, its existence came into being when Doordarshan became a National Broadcaster. It is one of the largest broadcasting organizations in the world in terms of the infrastructure of studios and transmitters. Recently it has also started digital Terrestrial Transmitters. Doordarshan is the only network that it is permitted to broadcast television signals domestically. In a communications breakthrough for Indian Television in July 1995, Doordarshan agreed, for a US \$1.5 million annual fee and 50 percent of advertising revenue when it exceeds US\$1.5 million, to allow CNN to broadcast twenty-four hours a day via an Indian satellite. Indian television channel Doordarshan offers national, regional, and local service of Indian television viewers. DD became national when it started to telecast national programmes in the year 1982. In the same year, colour TVs were introduced in the Indian markets. The first colour programmes were the live telecast of the Independence Day parade on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1982, followed by the Asian Games being held in Delhi. The eighties was the era of Doordarshan with soaps like *Hum Log* (1984), *Buniyaad* (1986-87) and mythological dramas like *Ramayana* (1987-88) and *Mahabharata* (1988-89) glued millions to Doordarshan. Other popular programmes included Hindi film songs based programs like *Chitrahaar* and *Rongoli* followed by the crime thrillers like *Karamchand* (starring Pankaj Kapoor), *Byomkesh Bakshi* and *Janki Jasoos*. Now more than 90 percent of the Indian population receives

Doordarshan (DD1) programmes through a network of nearly 1400 terrestrial transmitters.

About 46 Doordarshan studios are presently producing TV programme. Currently, Doordarshan operates 19 channels – two All India channels, 11 Regional Languages Satellite Channels (RLSC), four State Networks , an International channel, a Sports Channel and two channels (DD-RS & DD-LS) for live broadcast of parliamentary proceedings.

On DD-1 national programmes, regional programmes and local programmes are carried on time-sharing basis. DD-News channel was launched on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2003 which replaced the DD-Metro Entertainment channel that provides 24 hour news service. The Regional Languages Satellite channels have two components i.e., the Regional Service for the particular state relayed by all terrestrial transmitters in the state and additional programmes in the regional language in prime time and non-prime time available only through cable operators. Sports channel is exclusively devoted to the broadcasting of sporting events of national and international importance. This is the only sports channel which telecasts rural sports like *Kho-Kho*, *Kabaddi*, etc., something which private broadcasters will not attempt to telecast as it will not attract any revenues.

Doordarshan is often criticized for low quality of programmes and sometimes even poor telecast and presentation in quality. Additionally, since it is not a profit and loss enterprise like private channels Sun Network or Zee TV or Sony TV or Star Plus, it does not have the requisite push for better programming. Despite being heavily funded and protected by the government, many critics have pointed out that it

second priority. However, many contradict this stating that ~~Doordarshan~~ is more interested only in cricket matches and has addicted its so called “responsibilities” in favour of monetary gains and political dealings.

Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) is India’s national public broadcaster. It is a board nominated by the Government of India. It comprises Doordarshan television and All India Radio which was established in November 23, 1997. It was due to the demand that the government owned broadcasters in India should be given autonomy like those in many other countries. The Parliament of India passed an Act to grant this autonomy in 1990. But it was not enacted until September 15, 1997. Doordarsan is one of the largest broadcasting organizations in the world in terms of the infrastructure of studios and transmitters. Recently it has also started Digital Terrestrial transmitters.

Gone are the days of Indian T.V. serials with which the people could relate. The journey from Doordarshan to Zee, Sony and Star plus has been a long one. Indian Soap had its humble beginnings in “*Hum Log*” the first ever T.V. serial to be broadcasted by Doordarshan the sole

T.V. channel in 1984. People were glued to their television sets to watch each episode of Manohar Shyam Joshi's "*Hum Log*".

This was a story of an Indian family that a large section of people could identify with. People could relate to the characters, their happiness and sorrows. Over the years, Doordarshan has presented many popular and engrossing serials. For example "*Waghley Ki Duniya*", "*Yeh Jo Hain Zindagi*", "*Nukkad*", "*Rajni*" and the list goes on. The common theme across all these stories was the background setting ----- which reflected everyday life's struggles, failures and triumphs. These serials had an underlying positive message upholding tradition, moral values and strengthening the fabric of Indian culture. From the mid 1990's, Cable TV brought about a home entertainment revolution. Doordarshan found itself struggling to compete with a network of privately owned quality entertainment channels powered by commercials, and latest technology. Doordarshan made an effort to catch up but like most state owned efforts, soon became lackluster in comparison to the glitz and glamour of Zee, Sony and Star Plus. The following are some major landmarks in the history of Doordarshan---

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- 15.09.1959 Experimental transmission from Delhi
- 24.10.1961 School television for Delhi students.
- 15.08.1965 Regular service with daily news bulletin in Hindi.
- 26.01.1967 Krishi Darshan – programmes for farmers.
- 02.10.1972 Television in a second city—Mumbai
- 01.08.1975 SITE launched.
- 01.01.1976 Commercials introduced.

- 01.04.1976 Doordarshan delinked from AIR.
- 15.08.1982 National programmes, colour transmission and networking through satellite.
- 19.11.1982 Expansion through LPTs launched.
- 15.07.1984 First mass appeal serial *Hum Log*.
- 15.08.1983 Countrywide classroom of UGC launched.
- 09.08.1984 Second channel at Delhi.
- 09.08.1985 First regional satellite network in Maharashtra.
- 23.02.1987 Morning transmissions
- 26.01.1989 Afternoon transmissions
- 01.04.1993 Metro channel with satellite networking
- 01.10.1993 Regional language satellite channels.
- 15.08.1994 Restructuring of channels –DD1 to DD 13.
- 14.03.1995 DD India—International channel.
- 23.11.1997 Prasar Bharati—the autonomous broadcasting corporation of India.
- 18.03.1999 DD Sports channel inaugurated.
- 10.07.1999 News on the hour.
- 15.08.1999 DD News and current affairs channel. (Test transmission).

On the eve of formal launch of Doordarshan's DTH service by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Prasar Bharati said that it has set a target of two million subscribers by end 2005 and increasing channel capacity to 50 by June next. On the occasion of a demonstration of DD Direct Plus, the brand name under which DD would market its free DTH service, Prasar Bharati CEO KS Sarma said, "By December 2005 we

hope to have a subscriber base of two million, which may help the platform net additional private TV channels.” DD Direct Plus is a free to DTH service offering 32 FTA TV channels, including 13 private ones, and 12 customized radio channels. A subscriber would have to make a one-time investment of Rs 3000 – Rs 3500 on the hardware and pay no monthly subscription fee, unlike the country’s first DTH service, marketed by ZEE Telefilms under Dish TV brand name. DD Direct Plus, beaming through NSS 6 satellite, includes all DD channels, apart from the likes of BBC World, Sun TV, Star Utsav, from the Zee stable Kairali TV, Zee Music and Smile TV, Jain TV, Aaj Tak and Headlines Today. The radio channels include All India Radio channels and according to the words given by the Prime Minister, DTH is reaching now to the mass of India in a huge way with all facilities. National broadcaster Doordarshan has launched two new channels in the public interest. Speaker Somnath Chatterjee and Rajya Sabha deputy chairman, Bhairon Singh Shekhawat did the honours by flagging off the two satellite channels. It was his intention that to telecast the proceedings live of both the Houses of Parliament. Chatterjee’s idea of exposing the honourable members in live telecasts of their actions in Parliament with a hope that it will improve their behaviour which will cost the tax payer a reported Rs 12 billion annually for each of the channels. Now Doordarshan and local channel of Doordarshan as Doordarshan North East services are available in Tata Sky too, a satellite tele service.



## **Cable and Satellite Television :**

The decade of 1990s brought a big challenge for Doordarshan. The CNN covered Gulf War through satellite and telecast it in national channels of most of the western and Asian countries. It has created potentiality among the viewers to receive and watch foreign broadcast via satellite particularly in developing countries. In 1992, a Hong Kong based group of companies launched STAR TELEVISION (Satellite Television Asian Region). The programmes of STAR Television are beamed by Asian set Satellite. Its channel Star Plus, Prime Sports, BBC and MTV (now replaced by V Channel) beam their signal round the clock. The Hindi channel Zee TV also showed its programmes by hiring a transponder from Star TV.

The advent of Satellite television was a boon for cable operators. It motivated them to receive the programmes of Star TV, CNN, ATN, CNBC, Aaj Taak, NDTV 24 X 7, Headlines Today, BBC, STAR Movies, ZEE TV, SONY, SAHARA ONE, ZEE CINEMA, Pakistan TV etc. Apart from linking satellite channels, cable operators also show their own programmes in their own local channel (mainly films, popular serials and film based programmes). It provided an alternative of the DD to Indian middle class families. The popularity of satellite television was not confined only to metropolitans but it also became popular in small towns and villages of India. This growing popularity of satellite television first compelled DD to improve the quality of the programs on its metro channel with an assumption that the phenomenon of satellite TV shall be confined to metros. But after receiving reports about its popularity in

small towns the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt of India decided to launch some more channels through Satellite INSAT 2B.

Cable television came to the lower middle class localities in the bigger cities of Gujarat and Maharashtra in 1984. Initially it was considered as a cost-effective alternative to watch borrowed cassettes of feature films. As the investments required were small, the local entrepreneurs took it in a big way.

A privileged few watched CNN programmes during the Gulf War of 1991 in five star hotels and with the launch of ASIASAT-1 later that year, the cable operators could access the star channels. Zee TV was launched in the October 1992 by the pioneer Subhash Chandra, the driver of the expansion of cable television. In 2001, ZEE TV became a pay channel. With a reach of more than 80 countries and access to more than 225 million viewers globally, cable or satellite TV has created strong demand for the growth of the satellite and cable industry in India. The satellite channels logo became synonymous with entertainment of the Indian kind topping TRP ratings. Satellite TV channels programming delivers a variety of choices for all segments of the audience, including primetime comedy, drama series, television movies, miniseries, theatrical films, specials, children's programs, daytime dramas, game shows, and late night shows. Their menu kept expanding and so did the number of channels, keeping pace with the phenomenal growth of an audience spread across Asia, Africa and Europe.

## **CULTURAL ORIENTATION:**

Culture is the most essential component of mankind. Several social scientists have tried to understand it. American anthropologist Herskicits observed that whatever we see in the world is made up of two things i.e., nature and culture. While nature is the god made part of the environment, culture is the man made part.

Culture is the sources of the more-or-less spontaneous actions and reactions of a people and their mode of dealing with objective reality and subjective formations. (Verma, 1994). Indian culture has evolved over a period of about 8000 years. Today it is a living factor in the lives of about one-fifth of the people of the globe spreading over a vast peninsula of two million square miles. Starting with the *Upanishads* of the great ascetics over eight centuries before Christ, Indian culture has contributed immensely to the understanding of spiritual thought and the material world---combining religion and science. *Culture* means the total accumulation of material objects, ideas, symbols, sentiments, values. And social forms which are passed on from one generation to another on any given society. (Ranganathananda, 1963).

Freedom of information through the press, radio and the TV is critical for the well-being of a national culture. Yet, in a country where illiteracy and poverty are rampant, the medium which shape and reshapes cultural values have the potential; to cause distortions and to counter to the nation's culture. As Dua and Manonmani argue," Culture is not the product of our mass media but the mass media in our society has heralded the arrival of mass culture and eventual cultural invasion." Studies reveal that socialization----the primary function of a family is affected by TV to

a great extent. In 56 percent of the dual earner families' children are getting socialized more by the TV than by their mothers.

Culture is an inter-subjectivity produced publicly held phenomenon. It helps to provide a space or identity, means of social exchanger and a sense of community. Edward B Taylor has defined culture as that complex whole, which includes knowledge belief, art, morals, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by men as a member of society. It is the integrated pattern of human knowledge, values and behaviour. A value in this context may be defined as a preference quality in action. Organized round the major themes of culture, values set the parameters of action by ascribing most desirable, neutral, undesirable and most undesirable qualities to possible choices in a given solution. They are series of explicit or implicit culturally sanctioned guides to action that set the direction and limits of behavior in specific situations within the framework of a given culture.

Culture by nature is dynamic. It undergoes change relating to the changing needs and experiences of certain generations. Dreler and Carns defined cultural change as the modification or discontinuance of existing tried and tested procedures transmitted to us from the cultures of the past, as well as introduction of new procedures. Culture is essentially an adaptive mechanism. No culture is static. It has elements of both continuity and change. Cultural values reflect both these kinds of elements. While some emphasize stability and persistence of certain components of the culture, others encourage adaptation, accompanied or followed by value change. It would thus be erroneous to attribute a static quality to cultural values. Changes take place within and among cultures

by diffusion of advantageous cultural traits among societies. These are approximately equivalent stages of cultural development, by acculturation, or the acquisition of a foreign culture by relatively subject people, or by evolution of cultural elements over a period of time.

Culture is closely tied to history, the geographic location of a social block, and the moment in time when the culture is being studied. In India, too, culture has been formulated in a manner specific to India, its history and its specific practices.

India is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious country. Her long history of multi linear cultural processes, ethnic as well as cultural and religious diversity, the differential exposure of the various sections and segments of the population to foreign cultural influences, and the varied paths taken by the renaissance of modern India make the identification of the core elements of its tradition difficult. In a composite culture that is amorphous, it is easier to speak of tradition than a tradition.

Process of fusion and synthesis has been the constant features of Indian culture. Over the centuries even Islam and Christianity have acquired a distinctive Indianness. With the growth of national consciousness it has been observed the slow growth of what may be called the emergent national tradition. Today a mass culture is slowly emerging. It has several common characteristics, although it does not obliterate the uniqueness of some of the folk and regional forms.

The Ethical Values has an important bearing on the cultural aspects of any given society. Ethics is concerned with the norms of human social behaviour. "It is that study of human behaviour which propounds the supreme good of human life and which formulates the judgements of

right and wrong and good and evil." It is also called moral philosophy. The Latin word 'mores' from which is derived the English 'moral' is not much different from the Greek 'ethos' which means habits or customs. Ethics as a science or body of knowledge is not so much concerned with what an individual considers as good for himself as with the ultimate good of the society as a whole. It is a science of values as distinguished from a science of facts such as physics or chemistry. It is by applying these values that judgements of human conduct are formed. According to ethics, good conduct is an intrinsic value. The two great concepts, which have a bearing on Indian ethics, contained in the *Vedas*, are the *Rta*, the law of good or the Eternal Law, and *Satya*, truth. God is *Ritavaan*, the upholder of the Eternal Order, and 'He' is *Satya-dhama*, the 'One' for whom truth is the law of being. Anyone who acts in accordance with the law of truth and the law of 'Eternal Order' is 'good'. *Manu* lists the virtues expected of the student, the house-holder, the renunciand, the priestly class and the ruling class. Respect for elders is considered as one of the cardinal virtues. Women, he says, must be honoured and mutual fidelity between husband and wife must continue till death (of both).

Groups, societies, or cultures have values that are largely shared by their members. The values identify those objects, conditions or characteristics that members of the society consider important and valuable. In the United States, for example, values might include material comfort, wealth, competition, individualism or religiosity. The values of a society can often be identified by noting which people receive honor or respect. In the US, for example, professional athletes are honored (in the form of monetary payment) more than college professors, in part because

the society respects personal values such as physical activity, fitness, and competitiveness more than mental activity and education. This may also be the case because the society takes its education for granted and repays its teachers with non-tangible honors of relatively equal value with that of the athlete. Surveys show that voters in the United States would be reluctant to elect an atheist as a president, suggesting that belief in God is a value. There is a difference between values clarification and cognitive moral education. Values clarification is, "helping people clarify what their lives are for and what is worth working for. Different cultures reflect different values. Members take part in a culture even if each member's personal values do not entirely agree with some of the normative values sanctioned in the culture. This reflects an individual's ability to synthesize and extract aspects valuable to them from the multiple subcultures they belong to.

If a group member expresses a value that is in serious conflict with the group's norms, then the group's authority may carry out various ways of encouraging conformity or stigmatizing the non-conforming behavior of its members. For example, imprisonment can result from conflict with social norms that have been established as law.

Indian people cannot be said to have rendered unquestioning obedience to the dictator of traditional time. And again they questioned the value premises underlying the social order, articulated their doubts and vigorously came forward to offer alternatives. Change has as much been a part of Indian tradition as continuity. There have been powerful currents of dissent and strong movements of protest and reform. Indian society has responded to the imperatives of changing historical contexts

and equations of socio-economic forces. It has continued to emerge and grow. With the development of the communication media, through the spread of education and despite much diversity, today there is the evidence of the development of a common mass culture.