

Minister of information and broadcasting C M Ibrahim's move asking Doordarshan to be self-sufficient is an unreasonable one. This has put Doordarshan in an odd situation as it is being asked to check its advertising revenue. No national channel should be put in such an adverse situation given the kind of consumerism that is being promoted by TV in general. The State should feel some obligation to support the national broadcaster without forgetting the public utility aspect if not fully at least partially, says Dr N Bhaskar Rao, Chairman, Centre for Media Studies, in conversation with Sharda Uniyal.

■ How would you rate the acceptance of Doordarshan programmes vis a vis programmes dished out by the other channels.

Doordarshan is as good or as bad as any other foreign channel. It has very good as well as sub-standard programmes. Unfortunately the sub-standard ones are remembered more than the good ones.

■ How can these be improved in terms of content and presentation?

There is an immediate need for decentralisation of the operations particularly news I think private producers should be allowed to take up more news-related and current affairs items so that the news items are more diverse as well as more aspects of the news items are covered.

Also, the concept of scheduling of

INTERVIEW/ DR BHASKAR RAO

## 'State should support national broadcaster'

news sls carry fewer visuals than possible.

The contents of the programmes also need to be reviewed. The contents should be locally relevant what Doordarshan is doing today is that its programmes basically

requirements of the viewers. Do you think it will be advisable to list more private producers for different programmes.

Yes, the more the better. But they should be from far flung corners we have so much talent



cramped with ads more than the programmes produced by the foreign producers. Do you agree?

As compared to the channels in the West, I don't think that Doordarshan is crowded with ads. However, I do agree that there should be a cap on the number of ads per programme. A programme-specific limitation should be made.

Perhaps four to five ads per programme is a fair enough. Also, too frequent repetition of ads causes irritation contrary to the expectation.

■ What should be the mix of priorities for a national broadcasting medium like Doordarshan in terms of entertainment, information and social uplift.

The priority for Doordarshan should be to telecast such programmes which have all three elements viz they are informative, educative, and motivating apart from being entertaining. Good serials like *Udan*, *Rajani*, *Tu Tu Main Main*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharat*, *Panchatantra* should be telecast. Programmes should not be purely entertaining as the national network has some social obligations too.

■ Are there any technological limitations for Doordarshan to achieve its objectives.

No there aren't any technological impediments for Doordarshan. However, I feel in order to ensure better visuals, Doordarshan should



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Also, the concept of scheduling of programmes is outdated. Policy in this regard needs to be reviewed ie depending upon local people's lifestyles, there needs and aspirations.

Regarding the presentation of news in the Doordarshan, although it has come a long way but still retains radio-orientation especially

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focus Delhi and Bombay life and pole. There is a need for the programmes to have a wide canvas and reflect much larger section of people.

■ Considering the wide reach of Doordarshan and the varied

in the country. Also they should be given fair chance to create what they want to create there should be very less interference in there working.

■ There is a feeling that Doordarshan programmes are

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■ Are there any technological limitations for Doordarshan to achieve its objectives.

No there aren't any technological impediments for Doordarshan. However, I feel in order to ensure better visuals, Doordarshan should switch over to digital technology.

■ Will the reported government decision to allow private broadcasters access to Insat uplink, pose a challenge to the Doordarshan.

Though this move will pose a challenge but this challenge will bring out the best in Doordarshan.

Sh Mukund Gajver, 21.9.96