Chapter 5

Breaking News, Infotainment and Current Affairs
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5.1 Changes in the presentation and production of breaking news

Indian television industry as a whole had a lot of impact of the European and American television industry. In 1992, when the gulf war was going on, the most powerful TV channels in the world were fighting with each other to get the upper hand in media. The term of Breaking News was derived somewhere in this period, and it was completely related to the stories of war. CNN and BBC were making every effort to compete and surpass each other. On Indian television network, until the satellite news channels started using this term in 1992, DD News had never utilized this. It was a clear impact of the Star News and Zee News on DD News, for using these terms. In fact, very few times it was found that DD has broken any story in a true sense, before any other channel broke it. The only exceptions were the official announcements by the Government itself, about the major decisions or the policy matters.

Surprisingly, there are many situations in Indian Television News, where many channels are showing the same news happening as braking News. This mainly happens due to lack of content and different treatment to the same happening, by different channel. Here Agenda Setting Theory is applicable. It explains why most people prioritize the same issues as important. It predicts that if people are exposed to the same media, they will feel the same issues are important.

The Term “breaking” indicate that the news has been exposed or put in front of the viewers for the first time, in comparison with any other electronic media. In terms of the News papers in old days when there were no electronic TV channels
were available, the breaking stories used to appear obviously on the front page as the banner line or the head line. But then after the period of 1992, the total perspective of such a breaking news got changes, and eventually the competition also went up to the extent of the cut throat race between the channels. In the era more than 20 News channels, each and every channel wants to surpass the other within no time. The competition is not only for the content but also for the visual and the treatment as well.

5.1.1 “Unique” Breaking News

‘Breaking News’ is always called the “Unique”, for the following reasons:

1. They have a momentum which has to be caught. For example, Board of Cricket Control in India (BCCI) announced the decision to promote Ajay Shirke as the Executive president of National Cricket Academy. In a way, this was sacking Kapil Dev from his post. If the announcement is not recorded on camera, the breaking news can not be flashed. Another example could be when Sanjay Datt is relieved on bell, the moment Datt coming out of Yerawada Prison in Pune must be captured on camera so that to break the news visually.

2. It needs preparation, courage and anticipation for the proper coverage. For both the above mentioned examples, the reporting team has to have nose of news, and it needs quick reflexes of the crew to cover the event. If required, the OB van has to be kept ready on the spots of the happening, like near the office of BCCI or near the Jail in Pune.

3. It needs a devoted handling of the camera equipment at the exact moment required between the happenings. There is so much of crowd and other people watching the same happening, or even not related to anything, that the real
moment can be missed by the cameraman. It needs ability to anticipate the action on the field and to go ahead of the event. In reacting to the happening, the coverage should continue to capture the moments. It is a reflection of the experience of the cameraman in the past, and his acquired skills.

4. It is always better to sacrifice the shooting for a few seconds than to have few minutes of unusable footage. Even the Ob vans are expected to feed the real happening, atmosphere around and the reactions for the viewers. The viewer is virtually taken to the spot by the crew and makes the happening a real experience for the viewer.

"We have the standard-practice guidebook, which, of course, all news organizations have, which all CNN journalists have to abide by. Obviously, the journalist reporting knows the story best, but that story is vetted by many people. Along the way there are many different people who touch that story and fact-check it before it actually goes on air. We are much more interested in getting a story right rather than getting it 'first'. We are the Breaking News leader, but we would not be that if our objectivity failed".

Rena Golden, VP and G M, CNN

Earlier DD News Room had never given the much importance to the Breaking News, as it never went in the culture of rat race. The term breaking came in to existence only after 1992, when the satellite channels came to India. Meanwhile from 1972 up to 1992, all these twenty years, the DD Mumbai had no competition at all, except the foreign news channels like BBC and CNN, which were hardly visible in India. In a way, there was no threat to DD news, and even no competition to its monopoly.

The news readers of DD never used to call it a “Breaking News”, but they used to say that “the news just received”. The most common factor observed in those bulletins was, no editor
wanted to have any risk, and used to mention categorically, that according to the information received from the sources not confirmed."

But now in 2006, the DD news channel and even the National channels of DD also started showing a tag of BREAKING NEWS on its screen. This must be the policy deliberately adopted to survive in the competition of other satellite channels running for 24 hour news.

5.1.2 Various ways to break the News

There were the same ways in which the breaking news used to be given,

- To announce it verbally
- To announce it with some sketch or visual from the archival visual
- To take the viewer straight way to the spot or location, where the event or happening is taking place, and to create the link between the anchor and the correspondent, through the OB van or V sat or DSNG or through the Optic Fiber Cable. In whatever format available, the communication is established at the earliest, and then the news cast goes on with the latest updates, along with the anchoring.
- To take the correspondent on line of the telephonic conversation and the anchor gets the maximum information from the reporter present on the spot.
- To get the new visuals through satellite or any other line, and show it on the narration of the reporter on the spot or on the narration from the anchor.
- To play the telephonic conversation of the reporter and anchor on the back drop of the recorded visuals and the graphics and animation needed.
• In any of the above mentioned treatment, the breaking news is given Top Priority and maximum use of the technological changes, is done to enrich the news bulletin.

There are other aspects, which are affected due to the breaking news, which are as follows:

• The normal sequence of news stories is changed, if any other main news comes suddenly. The sequence has to be changed last moment due to the breaking news, and priorities and preferences are to be decided again.

• The Headline sequence of the script and the visual excerpts are also required to be re edited properly. The matter and the visuals are to be in proper synch.

• The Editorial team including the visual editors and the anchors are to be instructed accordingly, for the required effects or the graphics. The reading script has to be prepared according to the sequence of the visuals or otherwise they won’t match each other.

• The correspondents are to be taken on line at the earliest and the priority for receiving the visuals from that spot are to be redefined and the required instructions are to be given to the engineering staff. This creates the feel of urgency for the telecast, importance of the news as well as the rare values, and also the exclusivity of the news item.

• The solid graphic support is required to grab the attention of the viewers from the routine coverage. Usually the importance of the news is underlined by using the words “Flash” or “Breaking News”. The content is flashed by scrolling the big colored letters, at the bottom or top side of the frame. This is to draw the attention of the viewers from the item being telecast normally on the TV Screen.
• DD has given secondary importance to the speed, and more stress was given to the controlled accuracy. It has been observed that under the autonomous structure also, no news item criticizing the government or its officers, can be aired so easily. This shows that the attitude of the public broadcaster is more important than the government mouth piece and the free channels.

5.2 Three or four-way communication for TV News

There are always different aspects and sides of any happening. In newspaper, the correspondents from different places give their perception in the stories they file. The Editor of the edition used to gather all the material from different places and make the full story giving a total picture of the happening. In television, now days the viewer is eager to know about the happenings at the same time but at the different places. The channels are also there to provide the same information to them in whatever way it is possible to them. Any professional news Correspondent is supposed to cover most of the sides for giving a complete picture to the viewer, as he is answerable and accountable to the people at large. The duty of the news editor or the output editor is to see that most of the available dimensions are covered in detail, and the required man power along with the technical team is deputed and reached on the spot for the coverage. The most difficult part of the presentation is to bring these all ends together and to communicate the picture in totality to the viewer at the same time while talking to them all.

5.2.1 Time management

This needs a lot of coordination through the satellite, the time management and proper understanding between all the correspondents present on different location but working and reporting on the same subject or the story.
Mainly the hurdles are so many like:

1. The different personalities, agree to appear on the screen and suddenly disappear or turn down the request. In this case it is very difficult to fill up the slot for live discussion.

2. Any atmospheric or weather problem occurred last moment can spoil the whole out door shooting or recording schedule.

3. Any law and order or location permission can be granted on the last moment. If it is a live telecast, the Production crew can not be shifted to another place suddenly.

4. Sometimes the mob around gets agitated or refuses to participate quietly. The chaos is beyond control, and sometimes the unparliamentarily language is used by the mob.

5. Sometimes the problem of the satellite delay makes the sound noisy and create problem in live telecast.

Now in the changing era, any happening can not be covered just by deputing one camera unit on one location. The reason is just by deputing one camera, the unit can not cover so many things happening around, and once anything is missed, the happening moment can not be brought back. The post effects or the impact of that particular happening is covered on more than one location.

For example when a 16 year old son of a businessman was abducted and kidnapped by his friends in Mumbai, on August 17, 2007, the following arrangements were made by the different channels.

1. One camera Unit with the Out Door Broadcast van to Residence of Mr. Patrawala

2. Second camera unit is deputed to Oshiwara Police station investigating this matter.

3. Another Camera Unit is deputed to have reaction from friends and relatives.
Now it is the decision of the output or the News Editor to have all the four correspondents at the same time or one by one. Every team has got some fresh details, which could take the story forward or which could really add to it as far as the investigation development is concerned. In most of the cases, people also give priority to see the coverage live, rather than recorded packages. The reason is people want to keep themselves live, updated and wish to know every thing earlier than anybody else. The correspondents deputed on various spots are giving some latest information, so the viewer gets the feel of being present on all these locations simultaneously and have the updates.

**5.2.2 Interactive Communication on line**

There is one more possibility in this type of two way or four way communication. All the four correspondents can talk, react, correct and communicate with each other via satellite, even when they all are on air simultaneously. This gives ample space for the communication process and even gives better option of the analysis and interpretation of the situation. The reporting process is enriched because of this four window communication. In fact the Anchor in the studio has the advantage of talking to all of them at the same time and gets the overall picture of whatever has happened in reality.

Some times the news bulletin is also presented from the different location to add the credibility of the viewers. NDTV had presented all the bulletins on the day in 2004 Bomb blast in Mumbai, from the sot of the blast near Gate Way of India. This not only gave different feel which added the gravity, but also provided additional identity and authenticity to the news cast of the particular channel.

Production of news bulletin from the spot itself is a very challenging task for the technicians as well as the producers and
presenters of the news bulletins. There is no teleprompter, auto-
que, other production devices like usually are in the studios. The
presenters have to depend on their knowledge and expertise as
well as their memory, and communication skills. The anchor has
to communicate with the other correspondents present on the
different locations. It's an extempore communication which takes
the viewer forward and gives the updates. We did it from Gate
way of India, immediately 4 hours after the bomb blasts took
place in Mumbai. The news shows like “Aap ka Shaher”, “Mumbai
central” and “Mumbai live” were produced and presented from the
same spot live. This was a big challenge to my technical and
engineering crew, which they did absolutely professionally. We
were connected through satellite to all other correspondents
spread on the locations of other places of the bomb blasts like
Zaveri Bazaar, Office of the Commissioner of Police and even
Mantralaya. This was a unique experiment done by the channel,
and later followed by other channels in future. This created a new
trend of presenting the news bulletins from the spot. This shows
the importance of the live communication within the
correspondents on various locations and connected to the main
news centre by satellite communication.

5.2.3 News gathering on DD Marathi News

As far as the Marathi news casts are concerned, DD had
not used two-way or three way communication effectively, until
1999. Even Zee Marathi and ETV Marathi has been successful
using it since their inception. The only effort has been made by
DD Mumbai, was to get to reporter on telephone. This is the
oldest and out dated way of communication in between and the
reporter. This gives the feel of Radio Journalism and not TV
Journalism. The reasons are again typical Government way of
working in the given set up with the rigid working. This affected on the quality of the news cast of DD Marathi badly.

It has been observed that even in the worst conditions at the time of bomb blasts in Mumbai in 1993, and in 2003, only one OB van was utilized and only telephonic interviews were used. In the case of the assembly elections, the two OB vans were used, and in no other case the infrastructure was utilized properly on the professional level. In all the above cases, the private satellite channels had utilized their maximum infrastructure and some times even four inputs from different locations to give updates to the viewers.

The usage of Graphics and animations by the satellite channels has always enriched the visual treatment of the newscasts. This gave an idea of the locations and happening to the viewers until the live coverage is done or the recording is received.

The expert comments from its own editorial staff or head or from the outside experts also added the information to the coverage.

5.3 New Era of Infotainment

"News channels are meant for informing the viewers in the news format. These channels are not supposed to do the business of entertainment. Unfortunately now a day the news business is getting converted in to the infotainment. Conveniently the news channels are interfering in to the personal lives, making more gossips than the factual news and practically playing the events and occasions for the days. This is certainly not the purpose of the news channels."  

Rajdeep Sardesai, Editor in Chief, CNN-IBN

The blend of Information and Entertainment has created a different format in the news making, which is called as
Infotainment. This can not be called as a news cast or bulletin, but it is an extended format of audio visual feature, which gives more information and entertains the viewer at the same time. Still there is no connection of the fiction, because all this has been based on the fact and figures, happened in real life, and treated like a dramatized version.

It is an interesting way of showing the real happenings, either when it is going on, or immediately after something takes place. The real participants or the first hand witnesses and viewers are involved in the same. This increases the credibility, creates dramatic element in it, and also makes the viewers involved in the process.

For example, the program likes ‘Night Out’ by Anisha Beg on NDTV. This program is presented every late night from some theatre or night club or some exciting place, with some renowned personalities like film stars, sportsmen, famous faces appearing always on Page 3.

“In the new global economy, viewers look for titillation in news which is why we show a lot of Cinema, Lots of cricket, and plenty of crime.”

Laxmi Narain Goel, Director, Zee News

5.3.1 Crisis of Content

In any news channel which goes on for 24 hours continuously and consistently, it’s most important that the flow of news should be maintained. This is not possible always and all the time as the input is not anticipated, but the output is inevitable.

“In an average of 500 hours of fresh programming beamed every day on every news channel, the trivial incidents don’t take up even five hours of programming”

Uday Shankar, CEO, Star News
It seems that the 24 hours news channels are getting in to trouble, about getting solid content. The crisis comes when nothing happens around which is newsworthy. In such situations entertainment is given priority, which is not the aim of the channel. For example

- The Astrology program
- Torat cards & discussions based on telephonic questions
- Matrimonial programs
- Night club parties and chats with the celebrities
- Recipes for the women and its demonstrations
- Life styles
- Fashion shows
- Crime Shows
- Sports Shows

All the above programs, in no way can be called as the news or news based or current affairs programs. Still they have been given prime importance in the news programming. In fact the news releases of the films are also covered under the news events, which can not be considered under news.

The new trends are not based on pure criteria of the news, as it has become very difficult to carry on with the hard or soft news. Sports and entertainment can be made as the exception, but other aspects of life can be included in entertainment and not in news. There is a school of thought that nothing can be excluded from the world of news. According to this school, every thing and any thing related to the human being, life, interest and worldly matter, can be and should be included under the category of the news coverage. This can not be a justification, for making the show of a famous astrologer or numerologist, being broadcast on the news channel for more than an hour, along with
the other news. This new trend has not only defeated the basic purpose of the news channel but this has cheated the viewers to the great extent. There is an argument made by the channels is that “There is nothing wrong in informing about various aspects of human life. Who says that the news should only related to the politics, education, crime and developmental journalism in life? There are other aspects like sports, culture, life style, society and even matters related to the personal lives and even sting operations also.”

The interest of the viewers is cultivated by the channels and now when the viewer is so accustomed and used to see the night club programs on the news channels; it becomes the priority of the marketing departments, as it brings a lot of revenue to their channels. “Raat Baki” or “Night Out” programs of NDTV are the most popular and widely seen programs, even better than any news show on these channels, on the prime time slot. In terms of attracting the revenue, no other program can beat these two. The truth is, the principles are defeated by the business part of the programs, and the channels are compelled to produce and present what the viewers want to see.

“TV covers everything, from a funeral to a Friday cricket match, with the same sense of breathless urgency. If everything is important, and nothing is trivial, then what is news?”

Shiv Visvanathan, Sociologist

Most of the channel heads, which practically run the 24 hour news channels think that the trivial TV news is not the routine, but is the exception. They think that all the channels in the electronic media face the same challenges and the criticism along with that.
“There are so many competitive pressures, and we can not be obvious to the market. The main challenge is to avoid getting into the sandpit.”

Rajdeep Sardesai, Editor in Chief, CNN IBN

Under any circumstances, the advertisers would not pay the money to the news show, even if it is the best on the qualitative ground, unless it is seen widely. The channels are run on the revenue earned from the advertisements commercials, as a main source. If the channels get no high rating in TAM or other agency, then no advertiser would prefer to invest on that channel. In such a situation, it is very difficult for that channel to survive.

5.3.2 Motive of the News based programs

The definition of the news is getting changed gradually, and because of that, the ways of covering the news and the current affairs programs are also getting changes. Critics like Mr. Amar K. Deb have said that “The day you become an entertainment, you lose your credibility as a news channels.”

Then what is the motive of real news based program in the changed scenario? Basically when any event or incidence takes place, the importance and implications of the event is well judged, and the discussion or debate on the same issue is planned immediately. The program obviously is expected to give some more background or input for the enrichment purpose. Other aspects and angles or difference of opinions can be floated through these discussion programs. That could be the most important topic of the day, or related to the human lives. In early 80’s, the programs like Parikrama, or World this week, were produced with a view to enrich the viewers and update them about the day to day happenings around them. Today the basic purpose of these programs has been misinterpreted. After the
release of any new film, all the OB vans and located near the cinema theatres and the reactions of the viewers about the film, are treated as the news based program.

To tackle this, the channels deal personal problems of the people and have started interrupting the private lives, which is completely unethical. In no way this can be justified or interpreted as Journalism. The stories based on the facts but portrayed as a fiction had grabbed the viewership never like before. The TAM rating has proved that the percentage of the viewers for such stories was much more than the usual news casts. Here are some examples of these stories presented in 2005 and 2006.

The examples are following:

- **NAGIN KA KHAUF**: the saga of a 12 year old boy, pursued by a snake.
- **PREM TAPASYA**: the tale of a Yogi, living in with his disciple
- **GHARWALI, BAHARWALI**: the story of a man’s extra marital affair
- **MAUT KA DRAMA**: 75 year old Kunjilal, an astrologer from Betul, Madhya Pradesh, claimed the time of his own death on October 20, 2005.
- **MANDIR KA RAHASYA**: Story of the children, went to the Mandir in Faridabad, and never came back. Love story of a Indian Hindu girl and her Muslim Boy friend, both getting married, and their agitated parents on this issue.
- **LOVE STORY**: The Girl won the title of Miss India, is a married girl and the TV reporter disclosing the fact.
- **CASTING COUTCH**: like Shakti Kapoor or other artists and their misbehavior, under the name of the sting operations.
- **PRINCE KO BACHANA HAI**: The most stunning example of the story of the Prince, stuck in a 60 feet deep wall, under
5.1 Mega Talk Show on Doordarshan Mumbai

Palestinian forces deployed in Gaza in full strength ahead of Israeli pull-out

5.2 NDTV Talk Show ‘We the people’

Ghosts of 1984: Will the guilty ever be caught and punished?

World

Palestinian forces deployed in Gaza in full strength ahead of Israeli pull-out

5.3 Current Affairs Program on NDTV
5.4 One to One interview on ZEE News

5.5 Live reporting from Location
ground, created the shockwaves all over the nation. The Bureaucracy and politicians left no chance to have the maximum credit and of course the lime light, as all the channels had deputed the teams in 10 hours shifts, round the clock on the location.

“Sensationalism in place of substance, trivia in place of content, exaggeration instead of moderation, has become the characteristics of contemporary visual media.”

Abhishek Sanghvi, spokesman : Congress

Because of the changing tastes, even the body gestures of the well-known personalities in society; have started getting place of the news casts. The following are some examples of the stories, which otherwise would not have attracted the attention of the media, if happened in the most common cases.

1. Australian Captain of Cricket team Rickie Ponting pushed aside Sharad Pawar, Chairman of BCCI.
3. Greg Chapel, coach of Indian Cricket Team showed middle finger to the supporters of Saurabh Ganguly at Eden Garden.
4. Mika kissed Rakhi Sawant to her lips, after she kissed him on his birth day.

There are so many examples, where one can neither call these stories as a good piece of TV journalism. The stories were made in a bad taste, and have no journalistic values at all. But one thing was sure, that the stories were based on facts and were widely seen because of the sensational provocative values.

The treatment was given on a very sensational level, and the provocation and sensation was created in the society. What exactly is achieved by the channel? The only purpose could be to drag the attention of the viewers from the other channels to their
own channels. The SANSANI is created to get more TRP, and ultimately to make more business, by getting more advertisements and commercials. This trend has affected badly the basic journalist’s purpose or attitude and objective of the TV channels. TV News channels, who would have discarded the princes and the professors doing an affair, now have started chasing and following such conflicts, family dramas. The reason is the usual family serials are now most predictable, and people have started liking the real life dramas. They like the real human stories based on crime, thrill, immorality, sensation and even risks in the life.

5.3.3 Repeat value
Every channel has made its own Fixed point Chart, on which every program and the news cast has been planned earlier. It is not possible for any of the 24 Hour channel to prepare programming for all the 24 hours. Usually the break up is prepared and total package is prepared for 10 to 12 hours. This whole lot is being repeated for second time in the same 24 hours. Out of these 12 hour programming in the case of the news channels, the news cast is produced for 8 to 9 hours, and the remaining 2 hours are allotted for the news based and the current affairs programming.

There is a limit for the repeating of the news or programs. It is an unwritten rule that any news cast should not be repeated for more than two times, and in exceptional cases for three times only. But now a days it is observed that many channels are surpassing this rule and repeating the news cast for more than 4 to 6 times, which is not only unprofessional but unethical also. The reason is that the channels are expected to take the viewer forward, with the new information and update the news cast according to the news information got by the correspondent.
Every time it is not possible to add something in the news cast. In such cases, some items can be repeated.

In the case of the news based and current affairs programs, the repetition could be twice or maximum three times, as the impact of the happening can remain constant for a week or so. In the case of crime stories, the treatment given to the stories is like the fiction, and the stories can be repeated more than three times even. The programs like “Night Out” or “Raat Baaki” has more repetitive value as it is a chat program with the celebrities and on the club or hotels location. There is no binding of the subjects or hard news. But the talk shows based on hard news as the base can not be repeated because of the current relevance of the topic. In the changed format of the Infotainment, only presentation and production of newscast is not important, but the news related discussion, and debates, as well as the public interaction is equally important.

5.4 News and Current Affairs Programs – Changing Patterns

News can take place any time and at any place, and it has to be reported by the electronic media. Satellite channels are interested in covering it before it is covered by any other channel. The Government Channel, as a public broadcaster is not in the race to telecast the news before anybody. They have their own speed, style and stride. The most important thing is that imagination, vision, swiftness, and the reflexes of the production team as well as professional Anchor. All these factors are important for making the news base and current affairs programs successful and popular.

After the news is covered by the channels, the other aspects and the angles can only be covered through a discussion or a debate. Mainly these programs are considered as a talk show. Some times these are the well edited programs like any
other entertainment programs. They can be live or pre-edited. But to achieve the effect, most of the times they are made live.

5.4.1 Features of the News and current affairs programs

- The subject is about the most important happenings on the same day or week
- The participants are the authorities or the spokesmen or leaders of the institutions concerned or political parties.
- Also some government representatives are included, along with the people’s representatives to include all the angles in the program.
- Various opinions are considered, and no opinion of the channel or the anchor is expressed on the show.
- The purpose is to give different sides, dimensions and aspects of the happenings or events or news.

There is a basic difference between the current affairs programs made in early seventies and now. Earlier, the programs were only discussion oriented, and mostly the government side was the major representation on this, being a channel run by the ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Obviously, the views from other sides were not getting sufficient voices on the panel. But now the picture has been changed, since the satellite channels are no more the monopoly of the government. These private channels are free to invite any guests from any party or have any opinions. Most of times even the representatives of the criminals, terrorists and prisoners are even invited on the shows or the shows are presented from the places like prisons or from the spots of the accidents.

The important advantage of including the important personalities in the show of debate is that it certainly gives an impression of the true representation from various parts of the society In addition to this, and it automatically gives the answers
to the frequently asked questions from the people at large. In a way, the Talk show is always considered as the debate in the minds of the people who want the accountability from the authorities concerned, answers from the government, and want to know the reasons for the delay in certain procedures and also the reasons for making the big people exceptions to the rule.

5.4.2 Live and Direct telecast

Locations of this news based and current affairs shows are a matter of study now days. Earlier, from 1972 up to 1992, mostly the discussion oriented or the debate oriented talk shows used to be from the studios or from the conference halls of the government building campus like Vidhan Bhavan or Sansad Bhavan.

Now the major changes have taken place of presenting the newscast or even presenting the news based and current affairs programs. The location of the most important happenings is taken as a background for the news cast and the news are given along with the discussion itself, from the very same location.

Another aspect of the alternatives thought of the idea of presentation from the same spot was, to depute the OB van on the spot, and even on other important power centers like Sansad Bhavan, Police Head Quarters or the residence of the head of the state, and an anchor to coordinate this whole show.

The advantage was to get maximum variety of locations, visuals as well as maximum content, relevant to the recent happening. If an anchor can stay in the studio or at the news centre, he is very much accessible to all these locations at the same time through the OB van or satellite nowadays. Earlier, it was not possible. The units had to depend on the coverage to come physically by hand to the studios, and then they were to be
processed, edited and kept in proper packages and given formats.

5.4.3 Digital effects

Another aspect of putting the viewers in the right perspective with using the digital effects is to use the Chroma Key effects. By using these effects, the news producer can create any background, or put any visual of the selected location on the back drop of the news anchor, sitting in the studio. May be the location of the actual happening of the crisis or accident or the mishap or any political event can be kept in the back, just to connect the relevance of the event to the content and update the viewer to give him the feel of the happening. The advantage is to give the latest facts and figures to the viewers, by using the visuals and graphics and animation on it. Most of the time the simple news or the addition to take the news cast forward, the graphics is useful. It not only makes the newscast attractive but also gives the real effect to the story, where the real shots are not available. Even in the procedure of making a four way combination of live contacts to the correspondents in such a talk show, the digital effects are used on large scale. Some times a new trend is used to invite different guests at different locations and to put them on the same talk show on conferencing. This type of the discussion or debate is more convenient for some reasons as well:

- It is not possible for all the producers of the news show to contact all the required guests to be available on the same location and at the same time.

- From the subject point of view, in some talk shows, the particular spokes person is required to be on the panel, and he or she is far away from the production centre or news centre, even some times away in different part of the country.
In such cases there are some ways to contact the personality. Either you can invite the person to the nearest studio of the channel or you can take him on live phone. But these are the last alternatives. Mainly the person should be taken live on audio as well as video, by sending OB van to his place, wherever he is. Nowadays, if this also is not possible, then the person is requested to go to the nearest Net café of the various corporate groups like Reliance or Tata, and the cameraman reaches the place. The communication is possible by 2 MB line or on ISDN line also with using some technology through V-Sat or DSNG (Digital Satellite News Gathering). The advantage of adopting this way of conferencing is that the Talk show gets the equal representation for the subjects through the parties or institutions concerned. Even the public participation is possible, by taking their reactions on particular subject or happening or the event and news.

Some examples of the live Talk shows on the satellite TV shows are, Hum Log (NDTV), face the Nation (CNN-IBN), X factor (NDTV 24X7).

In some specific subject oriented talk Shows, the expert opinions from the TV journalists concerned or the Senior Editors is also taken live, to enrich the show. This never used to happen in early seventies on DD shows.

5.4.4 One to One talk Shows

In the last few years the one to one talk shows have become more popular for some reasons. Basically the person in focus cannot be escaped from the questions asked straight on his face. This proves the answerability and accountability to the viewers and general public at large. Some examples of these shows are: Devils Advocate (CNN IBN), Seedhi Baat (Aaj tak), Takkar (NDTV India),
In these shows, the anchor plays the important role of advocate of the people. The questions are just in the minds of the people, who vote for their rights. The participant just can not deny the answers or manipulate the answers or escape. If he or she tries to do so, he is exposed in the live telecast and comes in deep trouble, as far as his public image and accountability is concerned. There are some disadvantages of the one to one talk shows also. Like in Seedhi Baat, It is always alleged that the anchor Prabhu Chawla always supersedes the invited guest. The guest is not allowed to complete his statement. It is also observed that on the same show, the questions of the anchors are well edited after the recording, but the answers are cropped irrelevantly and conveniently. This shows the unethical attitude of the producer of the show.

Another type of these talk shows is done with the participation of the people on live telecast of the show. It can be in the studio on a huge set or may be on a big well known location like Asiatic library, Gate Way of India, India Gate etc. Some shows made in the studio like Hum Log (NDTV India) or Aap Ki Adalat (Zee and now on India TV) have been most popular because of its nature and participatory element. Also the veteran anchor like Rajat Sharma made it popular by his own presentation style and straight questions. The show used to put charges on the invited guest, put in place of accused, and the anchor in place of the advocate asks the questions on behalf people at large. The guest has to defend himself, and a veteran impartial personality like an Editor of some news paper, or a retired judge has to pass a judgment at the end of the show after hearing the whole show.

The above mentioned show can not be considered under the category of the perfect news based or current affair show. It is better known as a infotainment show, in which the style of a stage
show is adopted and base of the show is some facts, figures, happenings in case or history related to that particular guest person invited on the show. Using this format was neither possible not happened before in print media in India. Another aspect is the strength of the audio visual media to show the person as it is, while answering the embracing questions and getting in to an awkward position. Sometimes denying the charges, maintaining silence, or refusing to answers, can also have a definite meaning, which can be seen only in this media and certainly not in Print.

The talk shows have done a remarkable job in the last 14 years of satellite television in India, to expose the various personalities on various walks of life and enlightened the people, informing and educating we the basic objects of Indian public broadcasting, but exposing and revealing have become other two major objects of the modern TV journalism through the coverage of the news on bulletins and even through the news based and current affairs talk shows or programs.

5.4.5 New Trends in Current affairs programs

The News based and current affairs programs are changed a lot after the satellite channels started to produce live shows from many places. The line of difference between live, real and reality has been vanishing gradually.

Discussion or debate can be made on any subject, and from any corner of the universe, even from any small village. Any number of participants could take part in it, and any channels can use the OB van satellite set up to make it live on air. The structure of the interactive talk show can be modified or redesigned on the last moment as per the need and availability of the participant guests in the show. The hard news of the day could be the main
subject for the talk’s shows or news base current affairs shows in the evening or even in the afternoon.

Mainly, these shows are utilized to fill up the gap in the Fixed Point charts. Fixed Point Chart is a time table of the News casts and the time slots allotted to the news bulletins and the various talk shows and current affairs shows, round the clock on the 24 hour channel. The design of this FPC is done carefully and while doing it, the Fix Point Charts of other 24 hour competitor channels are also studied carefully, to overcome them with a powerful and more attractive show.

In the case of the subjudice matters also, the electronic media has been allegedly conducting the media trials. The current affairs talk shows are organized on the same day, when the major verdicts are expected to be delivered or already delivered. This directly or indirectly could affect the impression of the society and also the judicial machinery. The right of fair trail is denied in such media interference. The High court and even Supreme Court Justice had criticized such unwarranted attitudes of the electronic media.

It is a fact that just because of some sting operations the exposures could take place about the highly placed personalities. Operation Duryodhana, Operation West End by Tehelka, or the operations exposed the Members of the Parliament, and senior political party leaders in the best interest of the society.

In some cases like Priyadarshani Mattoo or Jesica Lall murder cases, it was an Electronic media, who exposed the facts and the trials were reopened. The credit in such cases goes to media for conducting the strong debates on the national broadcasts. But in some cases, the Media has been accused of crossing the limits of the freedom of expression, and conducting
the parallel trails, and sometimes making contempt of courts by commenting upon.

5.4.6 Planning for the current affairs programs

Until 2001, even on the national network of DD, a very little coordinated effort was being done for the current affairs program. The picture on the regional DD Channels was even worse. The poor news editor was making all the effort alone, from editing the bulletin to reporting, and from translating to inviting and interviewing the guests and every thing. The researcher has worked on both the Government setup like DD regional and national Network. He has personally experience of the plus points as well as the demerits of both the mediums.

After 2002, the picture was changed. DD started feeling the importance to face the challenges created by the private satellite channels. No extra posts were sanctioned, and there was a shortage of the manpower on every regional DD news room. The joint Directors, in their own authorities, started appointing the Coordinators on casual contract basis, for the current affairs programs and discussions. The main reason for this was that the national News room also expected the regional news centers to contribute for the national telecasts, and the live patching from Mumbai to Delhi national hook up. This was the additional burden. The casual coordinators were compelled to find the guests every day, who could speak fluently on camera, and conversant with Marathi, Hindi and even English. Mostly, of the time the guests are already booked by some other channels. This was the reason, why most of the times DD has to record the reactions of the guests, and not getting the senior participants for the live discussions on various relevant subjects. Still in 2006, in the planning and designing of various current affairs programs, the private satellite channels are much ahead as compared to DD
channels. The exception is the DD National Network Program of any discussions or current affair on any given time and date. The reason is that all the guests in any field, from politics to sports, are aware of the tremendous reach and power of the DD, which is bigger than any other private channels put together.

The regional DD Channels are not given that much importance, as the other two Marathi satellite channels are more professional, prompt, and swift in planning, designing, and implementing the news based and current affairs programs.

5.4.7 Liberty and Freedom in current affairs shows

The researcher has also observed that the producer and the anchor of any news based and current affairs program or the talk show have all the liberty to speak and interpret and analyze the subject freely on any live program in the Private satellite channels. But this is not the case in DD shows. Still in 2006, on any talk shows or in any current affair program of DD, there are restrictions on taking anything against the government policy. The main reason is that even after the Broadcasting Corporation of India, (Prasarbharati) has been formed, there is no freedom given to the producers or the news editors, by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The employees and officers are always scared of transfers or punished if the undue freedom of speech and production is taken.

Even the new trend of taking opinion poll from the viewers, live on SMS or telephone while the talk show is going on, has been started by almost all the satellite channels in all the languages, except DD.

DD Mumbai started using the telephonic conversations in the year 1999, but more thrust was given after 2001. In next 4 years, there were 8 programs (out of 24, produced as home productions of DD Mumbai in Marathi), were Phone in Programs.
For example: Hallow Sakhi, Ghatana chakra, Aajche Manyavar, Hallo DD, Bola Bola Tring Tring, Krishi darshan etc. In these programs, the guests from various fields are interviewed, and the viewers can ask the questions on telephone lines. This gives interactive opportunity to the viewers, but also creates the monopoly at the same time. The audio visual medium is treated as a radio or Telephonic vision also. In a week, almost every day two programs are produced on the same format. Even some serious discussions are interrupted by the viewer, who is totally unaware of the subject or the background. This spoils or defeats the whole purpose of the program.

The advantage in making such programs is for the sectors like agricultural and medical subjects, where the expert advice and guidance is mostly required to the people, and they have it. On the other hand the private satellite channels hardly have two or maximum three programs based on the telephone conversations. The reason is that more importance is given to the visual element, instead of only sound.

A significant change can be observed on DD News Channel, after 2002 is about its production and presentation. Now the OB vans are utilized, the Technological changes have been made in the production and presentation, but on National Telecasts, and not on regional level. Considering the changes that took place on the satellite channels running 24 hour news, DD News has changed a lot. It has adopted the technology, but has not changed the philosophy of the coverage, and liberty in making the package of news. The Current affairs and news based programs of DD have changed and have brought more depth in handling, treating and producing them. Some extra ordinary guests are enriching the talk shows and informing the viewers. The Public Broadcaster medium has been proving its highest
credibility on national and international level, but the regional News has not changed up to the expectations.

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