



Research Unit
Press Information Bureau
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Government of India



Doordarshan Foundation Day (September 15)

(Ministry of Information & Broadcasting)

September 15, 2023



Doordarshan is an autonomous public service broadcaster founded by the Government of India, which is one of two divisions of Prasar Bharati. It is one of India's largest broadcasting organisations in terms of studio and transmitter infrastructure, having been established on 15 September 1959. DD provides television, online and mobile services throughout metropolitan and regional India, as well as overseas.

History

Doordarshan is the face of India's metamorphosis from a modest experiment in public service telecasting that began on September 15, 1959, to a global leader in digital communications. The experiment became a regular service in 1965 when Doordarshan began beaming signals to homes in and around the country's capital, New Delhi. By 1972 services were extended to Mumbai and Amritsar and by 1975, to seven more cities. All this time it was part of the All India Radio. On April 1, 1976, it transformed to become a separate Department in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and later came under Prasar Bharati.

The then President of India, Shri Rajendra Prasad inaugurated the first broadcast on September 15, 1959. In 1959, a leading European company exhibited its closed-circuit TV equipment at an international exposition. At the end of the expo, the equipment was gifted to the people of India.

A new signature image was designed by the National Institute of Design and a signature tune was created by Pandit Ravi Shankar. The first telecast in colour took place on August 15, 1982, when the national program started.

Digitalisation of Doordarshan

Over the years, Doordarshan has been expanding its presence and visibility among the masses. With modern technological changes, Doordarshan has gone digital and reached the palms of individuals. Doordarshan has forayed into the digital space with a focus on making video available on demand.

Credibility is the USP of Doordarshan. In today's age of breaking news, Doordarshan has been able to maintain its tradition of providing accurate and up-to-date information to its viewers.

Initiatives of Doordarshan during COVID Pandemic

India's public broadcaster helped students with their studies amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown. In collaboration with various State Government institutions, Doordarshan along with All India Radio broadcasted virtual classes and other educational content through their regional channels across the country on TV, Radio, and YouTube.

A number of channels of Doordarshan Network transmitting general entertainment and News throughout the day, repurposed themselves, making it fit for students across the country. In the absence of school classes, these virtual classes helped lakhs of students, especially the 10th and 12th standard students in preparation for their board and competitive examinations.

Also, to keep learning an interesting activity, apart from the curriculum content, virtual classes in a few states included storytelling by eminent personalities and quiz shows.

Transition of Doordarshan Programmes

Over the years, Doordarshan has continued to enthral audiences. From the days of Ramayana, Mahabharat, Hum Log, Buniyaad, Malgudi Days, Udaan, etc to today's high-tech coverages of national and international events and impactful programs on health, education, and empowerment, Doordarshan has been providing content to generations of viewers and continues to contribute towards enriching India's social fabric.

Present Scenario

Doordarshan, currently, has 35 Satellite Channels, 66 Studio Centres across the country, a DD DTH Earth Station at Todapur, Delhi and 55 Transmitters of varying power.

Doordarshan: A Glimpse

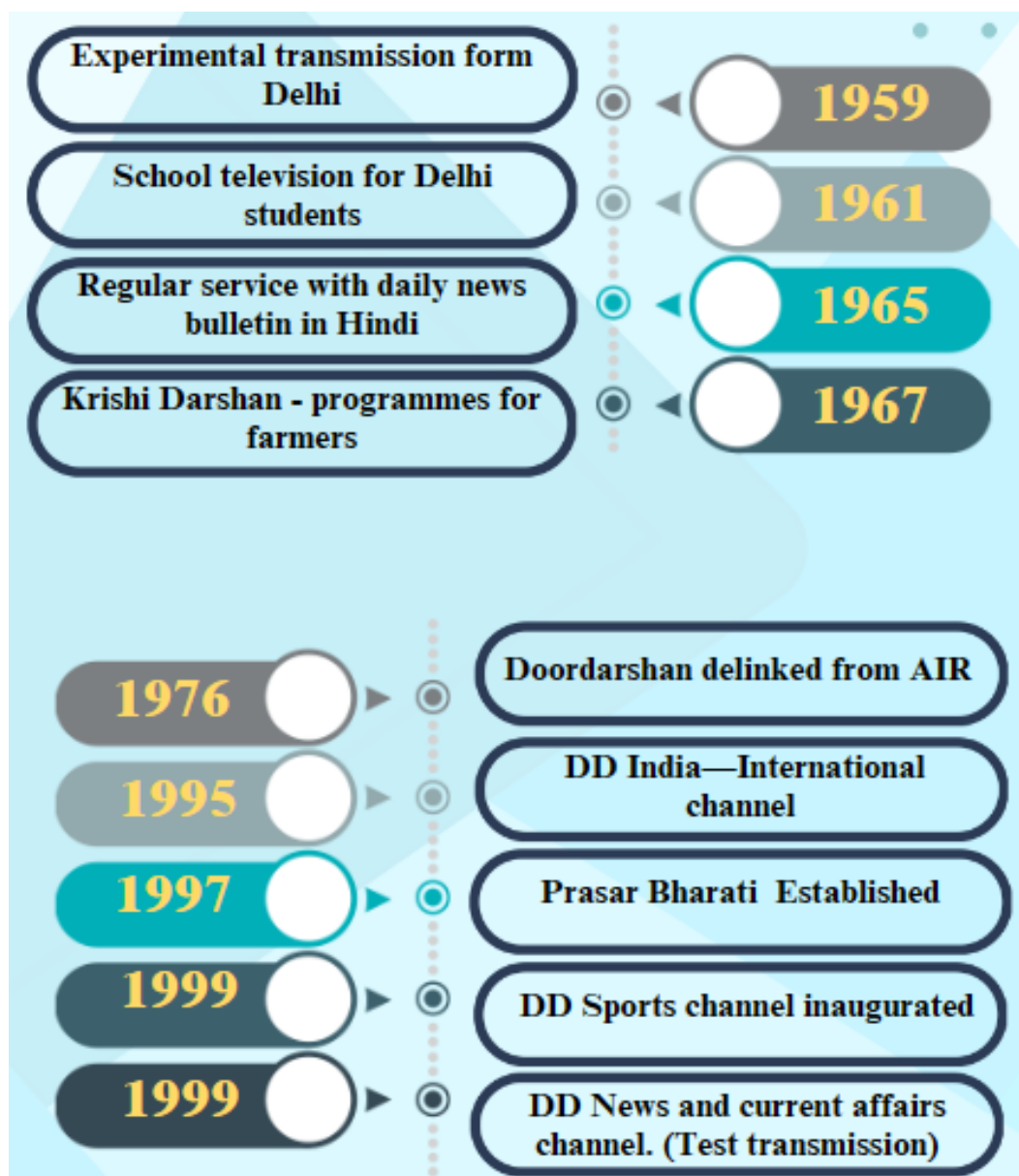


DD Free Dish

DD FreeDish DTH service is owned and operated by Public Service Broadcaster Prasar Bharati. DD FreeDish is the only Free-to-Air (FTA) Direct-To-Home (DTH) service where there is no monthly subscription fee from the viewers. It is very affordable for all as it requires only a small one-time investment of about Rs. 1500/- to 2000/- for purchasing of Set-top-Box (STB) and small-sized Dish Antenna with accessories.

This unique free to air model of DD FreeDish has made it the largest DTH platform and today DD FreeDish reaches to about 45 million households (as per the FICCI E&Y report 2023). Presently DD FreeDish hosts a total of 167 TV channels, including 91 Doordarshan channels (comprising of 51 cobranded educational channels) and 76 private TV channels.

Doordarshan: Major Landmarks in History



Highlights

- The Government has approved continuation of the Central Sector Scheme “Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development” with an outlay of Rs. 2539.61 crore for the period 2021-26 with various components including expansion of reach of public service broadcasting in remote, tribal, Left-Wing Extremism, border areas, aspirational districts and other such areas of strategic/national importance. This scheme also envisages free distribution of over 8 lakh DD FreeDish Set Top Boxes (STBs) to people living in remote, tribal and border areas.
- Doordarshan serves its viewers with 66 Doordarshan Kendra producing 35 DD Channels, disseminating through various delivery platforms such as Cable, DTH, IPTV “NewsOnAIR” mobile app, various YouTube Channels and with its international channel DD India having a global presence in 190+ countries on various platforms.¹

¹ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1889147>

- Based on the theme of *Naye Bharat Ka Naya Doordarshan*, Doordarshan aired a mega historical show titled *Swaraj- Bharat Ke Swatantrata Sangram Ki Samagra Gatha*, a 75 episodes mega show illustrating the glorious history of India's freedom struggle.²
- During the covid lockdown, Doordarshan touched new records in terms of viewership. The old iconic serials were re-broadcast on DD National and DD Bharati.³
- Also, according to BARC, the re-telecast of Ramayan, garnered the highest ever rating for a Hindi GEC show since 2015 when BARC started measuring TV audiences. Similarly, popular shows like Shaktimaan, Chanakya, Dekh Bhai Dekh, Buniyaad, Circus, Byomkesh Bakshi, Mahabharat, Alif Laila, Upanishad Ganga made a return.⁴
- In yet another step to make the entire DD Network relevant to the changing times, DD SPORTS has become DD SPORTS HD. This has enabled the viewers to watch the telecast of the major international sporting events in High-Definition transmission.⁵
- Prasar Bharati, Public Service Broadcaster of India currently has 41 Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with foreign broadcasters for co-operation and collaboration in the field of broadcasting. These MoUs provide for exchange of programmes with foreign broadcasters in the field of culture, education, science, entertainment, sports, news etc.⁶
- For the state of Arunachal Pradesh, DD Arunprabha channel was launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister on 9th February 2019.
- On March 07, 2022, India's public broadcaster Prasar Bharati signed a Memorandum of Understanding with 'Yupp TV', an over-the-top (OTT) platform, which is a gateway for television viewers across the globe. With this, DD India is now available on the OTT platform of Yupp TV in USA, UK, Europe, Middle East, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.⁷
- With the changing times Doordarshan is reinventing itself and has come out with a new look and feel. DD National, the flagship channel of Doordarshan Network has started a number of new programmes. For the first time Bollywood's showman Subhash Ghai has come with a TV series called Jaanki. Other major shows and programmes that are recently introduced includes Yoga and fitness with Shilpa Shetty, Jahan Chand Rehta Hai - a serial on the dream of a girl to reach for the moon, Chhotki Chhotanki - story of three sisters in a middle-class family challenging social issues in an endearing way.
- DD National has taken several new initiatives like starting daily Hindi feature film, a morning magazine show - DD Morning Show, and reinventing Chitrahaar and Rangoli which are regarded as iconic programmes of Doordarshan.

² [Press Information Bureau \(pib.gov.in\)](http://pib.gov.in)

³ [Doordarshan Day: Momentous achievement of carrying the legacy | \(newsonair.com\)](http://newsonair.com)

⁴ [Doordarshan Day: Momentous achievement of carrying the legacy | \(newsonair.com\)](http://newsonair.com)

⁵ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1955078>

⁶ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1893565>

⁷ [Press Information Bureau \(pib.gov.in\)](http://pib.gov.in)

- World Class coverage of G-20 summit at New Delhi by Doordarshan has set a new benchmark in television broadcasting.

References

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- History of Doordarshan | [Documentary](#)

NR/HP/RK/AN/PPD/MK