

## CHAPTER X: MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES

### 10 Unfruitful expenditure due to negligence

**The Ministry spent Rs 1.24 crore during 1994-95 to 1998-99 on production of 45 films for telecast to create awareness among the masses without cost analysis and at higher rates. None of the films was telecast as of June 1999, rendering the entire expenditure unfruitful.**

With a view to creating awareness for food processing among the masses through short films telecast during Krishi Darashan and other similar slots, the Ministry paid Rs 1.24 crore to private producers during March 1995 to February 1999 for making 45 video films of 10 - 15 minutes duration.

Examination of the project disclosed negligence in planning and extra expenditure due to higher rates paid to the private producers. Besides, the entire expenditure has been rendered wasteful due to failure of the Ministry to utilise the video films.

The preparation of the video films consisted entirely of the indoor shooting without the need for preparation of special sets or costumes. For a commissioned programme of duration of about 30 minutes with considerable outstation location shooting and/or special sets and costumes, Doordarshan paid about Rs 2.50 lakh to the producers. The Deputy Controller of Programmes, Doordarshan, who was on the Committee constituted by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, advised the Ministry in February, 1995 that Doordarshan paid about Rs 1.20 lakh for a film of 10 - 15 minutes duration with two locations shooting. He intimated that the cost of dubbing in 10 regional languages was Rs 2.10 lakh.

Based on these considerations, he advised that the producers be paid at Rs 3.30 lakh per film of 10 - 15 minutes' duration with dubbing in ten regional languages.

The advice of the Deputy Controller of Programmes provided unintended benefit to the private producers in as much as the programme duration was left to the choice of the producers in a range of 10 to 15 minutes and the rate recommended did not take into account that no location shooting and payment to actors were involved.

#### *Delay and failure to complete the films*

Ministry allotted the work for 45 films to 16 producers between the period March 1995 to February 1999 and made total payment of Rs 1.24 crore to them during this period. The payments were regulated as under:

**Suggested cost resulted in higher rates paid to the private producers.**

- 40 per cent of the cost on approval of the script and signing of contract;
- 30 per cent of the cost on approval of rough cuts;
- 20 per cent of the cost on approval and delivery of final prints;
- 10 per cent on completion of all formalities.

**Advance payment on dubbing provided unintended interest free capital to the private producers**

Since dubbing in regional language is at the end of the sequence of events, making advance payment of the total cost including the dubbing cost provided unintended benefit of interest free capital to the producers.

The agreement with the producers did not provide any time frame for completion of the various stages of the film.

**The production agreement did not provide time frame for completion.**

Of the 45 films entrusted to the producers, only 27 had been completed and recorded cassettes handed over to the Ministry between January 1997 and March 1999. Time taken for completion of the completed films was about seven to 38 months.

**18 films were incomplete as of March 1999.**

18 films entrusted to nine private producers between March 1995 and July 1997 for which stage payments aggregating Rs 36.63 lakh were made during 1994-1997, were incomplete as of March 1999.

#### ***Non utilisation of the completed films***

None of the 27 completed films had been telecast as of June 1999. Doordarshan had expressed inability in their telecast due to the following reasons:

**27 completed films have not been telecast as of June 1999.**

- The duration of the films longer than 10 minutes would not sustain viewers interest;
- Commercial banners in the films render them unfit for telecast as commissioned programme;
- The commentary in the films did not have smooth flow and the films required re-editing with no repeat shots.

**The Ministry failed to object to unauthorised commercial banners in the films before releasing payments.**

The above position establishes that the Deputy Controller of programmes, Doordarshan did not give proper advice in relation to the duration of the programmes. This also calls into question the 'due care' expected by the officers of the Ministry, who were responsible for preview and clearance of the final print. They failed to object to the unauthorised commercial banners, set them right and to insist on proper quality of editing before releasing the last two instalments of 20 per cent and 10 per cent of the cost and to take corrective measures.

Doordarshan intimated the reasons for their inability as early as in April 1996. Yet, the Ministry did not take measures to ensure that the producers did not put commercial banners in the films, the prints of which were handed over for approval or for which the works were entrusted after April 1996. 36 films approved or in which payments were made after April 1996 contained commercial banners. For the other 18 incomplete films also, the Ministry has not taken any steps to stop insertion of commercial banners in them.

**The Ministry did not take measures to get the suggested by Doordarshan in April 1996 for 36 films.**

Thus, due to negligence in planning and quality control by the Ministry, the objective of creating awareness for food processing through telecast remained elusive, besides rendering the entire expenditure of Rs 1.24 crore as wasteful. Incorrect advice by the representative of Doordarshan resulted in payment at higher rates to the producers. The officers of the Ministry were also responsible for payment of advance to the producers and for their failure to take penal action on the delay by the producers and more importantly, for unauthorised insertion of commercial banners.

The matter was referred to the Ministry in July 1999; their reply was awaited as of December 1999.