



30 years on, Doordarshan clears Ramesh Sippy's dues for directing 'Buniyaad'

New Delhi: Doordarshan ruled the idiot box in the 80s and early 90s before cable TV gradually made inroads into the psyche of the Indian audience.

Needless to say, the state broadcaster presented some of the best serials with family dramas like Buniyaad, Humlog, Byomkesh Bakshi and mythological serials Mahbharat, Ramayan, Alif Laila, capturing the imagination of an India that was unaware of the unexpected transition it was to witness in the years to come.

However, in a sign of extreme irony, it took Doordarshan three decades to pay off Ramesh Sippy, a veteran filmmaker and also the director of the immensely popular serial 'Buniyaad' that the state-run channel used to air, for this fine piece of work.

Buniyaad was telecast initially on Doordarshan under the sponsored category during 1984-86. The series comprising of 105 episodes was re-telecast under revenue sharing from July 25, 2013 to August 14, 2014.

Prasar Bharati CEO Jawhar Sircar told ET that he had ordered a probe into the matter.

"There is more to this than meets the eye. We want to know what really happened. It was unfortunate that this happened," he said. Prasar Bharati is the autonomous body that comprises Doordarshan and All India Radio.

It was sad that veteran directors have had to run from pillar to post at Doordarshan for their rightful money, Sircar said.

"As of now, at least the first Rs 46 lakh that we owe him has been approved. We are finding out how much more is owed to him. Also, the probe will find out why these delays happen, who is responsible for them and what should be done to fix them."

In a statement issued to India TV on July 27, Doordarshan said that it does not owe any dues for the telecast of Buniyaad.

"As per the MOU with the producers, the initial payment of Rs 17,50,000 was made on May 6, 2015," Doordarshan said in a statement.

"Finalisation of the remaining payment in consultation with the different wings in Doordarshan including finance, commercial and marketing divisions was delayed due to the various processes involved," it said.

"Thereafter, on receipt of the appropriate bills from the producer M/s R S Enterprises, the remaining payment of Rs 46,77,062 was credited to their account on July 21, 2016," it added.

"As on date, there is no outstanding payment to be made by Doordarshan for the telecast of the programme Buniyaad," the state-run broadcaster clarified.

Directed by Ramesh Sippy and Jyoti Sarup, the Buniyaad series was written by Manohar Joshi who was also the script writer of Hum Log, yet another iconic show on DD.

(Note: This story has been updated with inputs from the statement received by indiatvnews.com from Doordarshan on July 27, 2016.)