

# Go slow on new TV ratings: Prasar CEO

TNN | May 1, 2015, 04.05 AM IST

**N**EW DELHI: A day after the Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) rolled out TV viewership measurement ratings, Prasar Bharati cautioned major advertisers that there was a "data blackout" regarding viewing habits of rural India and the present system did not reflect a true picture of the Indian viewership. In his letter Prasar Bharati CEO Jawhar Sircar said that this would continue till July-end.

"We are all going through a data blackout at present and where rural India is concerned, I am afraid the same phenomenon would continue till end-July," Sircar said.

Describing the present data as "urban -centric data" Sircar said that BARC's viewership reports will not present a fully balanced picture till rural data is factored in. The communication also assured advertisers that DD had not "suddenly and drastically" lost its presence where audience viewership is concerned.

"In other words, when you go through the first set of data rolled out by BARC over the next 2-3 months or so, you would have to make allowance for its skewed and incomplete character," it said. The letter has been sent to Dabur India, Godrej Industries, Marico India, Colgate Palmolive and ITC.

BARC, a joint industry body promoted by broadcasters, advertisers and advertising agencies, introduced its TV viewership measurement ratings for the first time on Wednesday.

The viewership will be made accessible to TV channels that subscribe to its data. TV ratings have been a contentious subject with some broadcasters expressing doubts over the accuracy of TAM ratings. BARC has a sample size of 12,000 which will be scaled up to 22,000 in three months. TAM used a sample size of 10,000 households. BARC is also using a different consumer classification than the socio-economic classification (SEC) used by TAM called the New Consumer Classification System (NCCS). Apart from the methodology BARC is also using a new technology to report data: by way of "audio water-marking" of channels which will be monitored by its "bar-o-meters". The technology is already in use in France and US and allows tracking of live as well as "time shift" TV viewing.