



## **GREEN KERALA EXPRESS**

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**JAI CHANDIRAM**

The selected 'green development story' is covered in detail by Doordarshan anchors who travel by bicycle, exemplifying a reduction in carbon footprint! JAI CHANDIRAM profiles a social reality show by the much maligned public broadcaster.

Doordarshan is the favourite 'hit' in media forums . The news that Doordarshan has invited a PR agency is also smirked at with, " PR for what"? DD bashing is consistent and embarrassing as it has so few viewers in the cities according to TAM. If TAM ratings were true how come my sabjiwallah and shopkeepers quickly identify me when they have seen me on Doordarshan Delhi in non primetime? I wonder what is with TAM ratings that invites smirks from media experts ? Contrary to TAM, according to reports from my media students Doordarshan is much appreciated in small towns and villages for its 'real and relevant' news and serials. Unreported , Doordarshan is also making a breakthrough in it's development programmes.

A programme making a big wave in Kerala is Doordarshan's developmental programme 'Green Kerala Express' telecast at prime time 8:30 pm on weekdays . The Green Kerala Express is a 30 minute programme that is energizing the grassroots with innovative ideas in sustainable development. It is billed as a social reality show. Sajjan (ASD) and K Mohan Kumar Doordarshan Thiruvananthapuram has conceived the program in partnership with the Kerala Local Self Government Department, Kerala Institute of Local Administration, State Sanitation Mission and Center for Imaging Technology.

Building on Kerala's experiences in grass root planning and democracy, 999 gram panchayats , 57 municipalities mapped their experiences and resources to showcase success in sustainable development providing vibrant positive stories covering agriculture, water conservation, food security ,health , education , employment ,energy conservation and housing. Women's empowerment, the girl child and the elderly are also focused upon in the programme. A hundred episodes are planned to cover the developments in the regions.

Each district was invited to respond to a questionnaire and submit a 8-10 minute documentary on the work being done in the village . The submission was evaluated and

selection made by a jury comprising experts in various fields. One hundred and fifty ideas have been selected for detailed coverage , The selected ‘ green development story’ is covered in detail by Doordarshan anchors who travel by bicycle, exemplifying a reduction in carbon footprint! The development story is presented to a studio jury, who give their views and ideas for further refinement.

For example, in the story about education for tribal girls, the jury suggested that besides providing transport, school bags, books , uniform, breakfast and lunch to enable the children through the ‘bridge schooling’ the tribal girls should be given education relevant to their expectations and environment. In an area where no girl has passed senior school , this little input has resulted in 33% enrollment and zero dropout . The recognition of the first graduate is a shining example in development.

In another segment, 370 terminally ill elderly are provided health support at home with the organization of health workers and volunteer doctors attached to the PHC. The jury rates through marks the “development idea” for its value to the community . Green ideas on watershed, renewing fallow land , organic villages , energy conservation with recycling waste and building ‘urjha senas’ have caught the imagination and motivated the people to implement and become direct beneficiaries . During the live show there is an opportunity for viewers to participate who can SMS and call in their marks on what is being presented.

Awards are given at end of the program to green heroes , green ideas and technologies. The program attempts to capture the best idea and build on the excitement through recognition to the “unknown green heroes ”who are making a difference in the field .The beneficiaries go beyond just the ‘winners’ as the program generates ideas for easy adoption in all areas of development . Details of the ideas and processes are placed on the website for replicability.

There is much excitement for at the end of the series fifteen projects will be visited by the jury for the ‘big green idea’ and a prize of one crore!

Hoot link:

<http://www.thehoot.org/web/home/story.php?storyid=4415&mod=1&pg=1&sectionId=20&valid=true>

Green Kerala Express

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