# OUTDOOR BROADCASTING

Many times programs have to be covered away from the cozy, air-conditioned and rather calm studios of a broadcasting station. Making these programs is sometimes very demanding. It is raining outside, or chilly whether posing a threat or conditions are too hot and humid but you cannot escape the assignment. The place you are going to make a piece for broadcast is dusty, ugly, narrow city lanes or vast expanse of countryside where road condition is shabby and recklessly driven tractor-trolleys are moving around frequently, people out there are not very supportive, and the worst, some part of the equipment goes out of order. Help me God, this should not cost me my job, a producer may howl.

Essentially an outdoor broadcast is required:

# VIP Movement

It is common all around the world that dignitaries belonging to the governments or diplomatic circles keep visiting places of public life. A broadcasting station is supposed to cover the functions held in honor of VIPs.

The first hassle they encounter is to get through the security network by obtaining security passes from the relevant departments and display those prominently all through the event. Then, arrange an outdoor broadcast (OB) van to carry the staff and the equipment hours before the arrival of the dignitary.

You have to fix your microphone at a very appropriate position for recording the sound and lay power lines and leads of your equipment. Some time the power point is quite away and your lead is not that long. The security agencies are generally not very friendly. Since they are already doing a very sensitive job, the security personnel do not allow you move at all over the place. The rush of the people is also very confusing for the OB team who is not familiar with the place. Some how things have been managed and now the whole unit is waiting for the VIP to come and speak. Waiting, waiting, waiting…

What may be the worst to happen, and perhaps little common too, it is announced in the eleventh hour that place for the function has been changed! No, don't strike your head against the wall, pack up friends quickly and manage matters at the changed venue.

# Suddenly Assigned Events

Not the VIP movement bothers you to outdoor coverage, at times an unscheduled assignment may come up. This time it is an outbreak of a fire at an important city installation. Or floods have struck the town, an earthquake has caused ruination, you are supposed to rush out rather unexpected. Don't leave your equipment behind, especially the microphone!

# Collecting Reactions

On mega events, you need to collect reactions from people in the streets. Like their views on the annual budget, political developments, some regional changes or seeing people who have witnessed a rail accident. An outdoor broadcast is a must.

# Road Shows

Getting very popular these days, broadcasting houses are inclined to go to the people for talking to them for fun sake, or on serious issues. Special OB teams are arranged to move in

different directions to collect the needful within a time frame. This is an interesting development, though not for the broadcasters, you may guess.

**Regular Public Events**

The outdoor broadcasting is a huge area, perhaps as much spread out as the indoor. One major aspect of outdoor broadcast is covering the regular public events.

# Horse and Cattle Show

This weeklong show is held as part of spring festivals in Lahore. From day one to the concluding day the venue is visited by local and foreign dignitaries with a large number of people coming from all over the country. Not only the day time; have the events continued to take place till midnight.

# The Sibbi Mela in Balochistan

It is a similar event as Horse and cattle show in Lahore. From day one to the concluding day the venue is visited by local and foreign dignitaries with a large number of people coming from all over the country.

# Pakistan Day March Past

It is held in front of the Parliament House on March 23 every year, with a lot of other activities going on at different capital city's spots and which have to be covered by the broadcasting houses.

These are but few examples of events which are held regularly. Some times events take place at far flung areas like the Shandhoor polo matches in northern areas, Thar Mela, or Urs of Hazrat Data Gunj Bukhsh or Shah Abdul Latif. A broadcasting house simply cannot miss these events. They have to send OB teams to cover these events.

# General Elections

The days when general elections are held are the real field days for the broadcasting houses. Since the activity is spread over all around the country, broadcasting houses run short of OB teams to cover the event. Usually, missings are noticed and a notice of negligence is served on some producer.

# Sports

One very major area of outdoor broadcast is the coverage given to sporting events.

Pakistan is a leading nation in cricket, hockey and squash and features very prominently whenever these sports are held in any part of the world.

The OB teams not only manage coverage of these events when they are held within the country, but at times they go abroad to arrange live commentary on these games.

# Floods

Rainy season in Pakistan usually brings floods as rivers overflow and rainfall intensified in the catchment areas in the north. The OB teams are assigned to go and bring first hand information about the damage caused by the downpour and the deluge.

It is a tough task as some of the sophisticated equipment may not turn friendly in the moist conditions. Special care is done to keep the instruments and leads dry and in working order, even in the worst weather conditions.

# Authorities' visits

In the flooded parts, and for that matter, in any other emergency like rail accidents, earthquakes etc., president, prime minister, governors or chief ministers along with senior officials of departments meant to do the rehabilitation work, visit the calamity hit areas. Normally OB teams go along with them to cover these visits.