

NEWS CITY

DD serials score higher in TRPs

Hey you, city boys and girls, tell me, *sachisachi*, when was the last time you switched on Doordarshan? Never, *na*? Well, I did. And am happy to report that I did not slit my wrists.

In fact, I discovered many things. Did you know that while *sabse bada* cable TV show *Bidaai* (Star Plus) *ki* TRP 5.3 hai, DD *ka* top show, *Nanhi si kali meri laddi*, *ki* TRP 20.6 hai? This show is about Guddi, a short, college-going Punjabi girl whose entire family — *dadaji*, *papaji*, *mummyji*, *veerji*, *uncleji*, *auntyji* — dotes on her. They also keep tabs on everything that goes on in her life. Not in a creepy way, but in an *Ek doosre se karte hain pyaar hum* crooning-smiling way.

WHERE'S THE REMOTE?



SUPARNA SHARMA

A still from the serial *Nanhi si kali*... aired on Doordarshan

Family — that is the crux of this show. Strong, warm, cosy. But one college boy Surya is falling in love and looks like Guddiji will soon come of age.

First *khushi*, then *gham*...

I watched other hit serials as well — *SID Faarz*, where men who looked like *purane paapi*, tried to solve a mystery involv-

ing one missing girl, one yellow *nimboo* and one cheating husband. In between the shows I also watched little fat girls doing criminal things to *kuchipudi*, doctors talking about *dast* and *bimari* and messages about girl child, iodine *namak* and AIDS. Here are some of my key findings:

- ▶ DD is yet to discover that man has invented musical instruments other than the *sarangi* and *shehnai*.
- ▶ *Chitrahaar* is better than *MTV*, any day.
- ▶ On *Krishi Darshan* men still wear khadi silk Nehru jackets, talk about *gehoon ka bhoosa*, compost and *kheti*. I watched an episode about button and milky mushrooms and loved it.
- ▶ There are a lot of *babus* and black *bandhgalas* in our coun-

try.

▶ And finally, whoever thought that the Government of India doesn't do any PR to counter Pakistan's propaganda should watch *Pakistan Reporter* (PR, PR... get it?). Here the anchor arrives — girl with a *dupatta* covering her head — says hello, howdy in Urdu and starts talking about *tabahi*, *pyaas* and *sankat*. The story is "Paani Mange Pakistan." All interviews and video clips are picked to impress upon Indians how badly off Pakistanis are, how *khaufnaak* their *hukoomat* is and how *khoon ke pyaase* their generals are. The entire show is, of course, set to a background score by one of the Ramsay Brothers.