

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Delhi: March 7, 2023: Mr. Avinash Pandey, President, News Broadcasters & Digital Association (NBDA), has addressed a letter dated 6.3.2023 to Shri Pinarayi Vijayan, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Kerala to take immediate action against the individuals and officials who attacked and/or searched the premises of the office of Malayalam news channel Asianet in Kochi and Kozhikode, Kerala, a Member of NBDA. Copy of letter attached.



Annie Joseph
Secretary General

As above

ONLY BY EMAIL <chiefminister@kerala.gov.in>

March 6, 2023

Shri Pinarayi Vijayan

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Kerala
3rd Floor, North Block, Secretariat,
Thiruvananthapuram – 695 001

Dear Pinarayi Vijayan ji,

We write on behalf of the News Broadcasters & Digital Association (NBDA), the apex body and the collective voice of news & current affairs broadcasters and digital news media entities.

Asianet News Network Pvt. Ltd (Asianet), a member of the NBDA, has brought to our notice the attack by Student Federation of India (SFI) activists at its premises in Kochi and the subsequent police search conducted at its office in Kozhikode, Kerala.

NBDA maintains that while no individual or institution is above the law, however, it condemns any attempt to muzzle the media and thereby cause any interference with the free functioning of news operations. Such attacks and searches are not only unacceptable, but they also undermine the basic tenets of freedom of speech and expression enshrined in the Constitution of India.

We sincerely urge you and the State administration to take immediate action against the individuals and officials who attacked and/or searched the office premises of Asianet and ensure that journalists and media persons are allowed to perform their duties in a free and fearless manner.

In this regard, NBDA has issued a press release on 6.3.2023, a copy of which is attached for your perusal.

As an Association, we believe in promoting excellence in broadcasting standards and all Members are governed by the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards. As a result, we have constituted an independent Self-Regulatory Adjudicatory Body namely the “News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority” (NBDSA) which is headed by a retired Supreme Court Judge Justice A.K Sikri. NBDSA considers and adjudicates upon complaints with respect to broadcasts/publications including all content which violates the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards and the Guidelines issued by it. All such complaints can be made to :-

“News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority
C/o News Broadcasters & Digital Association
Mantec House, C-56/5, 2nd Floor, Sector 62 – Noida – 201 301”

It would be in the larger interest of freedom of speech and expression of the media, if in future any complaint with regard to any broadcaster/ digital news media entity is decided by NBDSA.

We request your kind intervention in such matters.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,



Avinash Pandey
President

Encl: As above

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Re: NBDA condemns attack by SFI activists and the Police search of the offices of Malayalam news channel Asianet

New Delhi: March 6, 2023: News Broadcasters & Digital Association (NBDA) strongly condemns the attack by Student Federation of India (SFI) activists into the office of Malayalam news channel Asianet in Kochi and the subsequent police *search* of its office in Kozhikode, Kerala, a Member of NBDA.

The attack by SFI activists and the subsequent police search of the broadcaster's office, comes in the backdrop of the reporting by Asianet news channel on the issue of drug and sexual abuse of a young girl in Kerala. These actions are not only unacceptable but are also a direct impingement on the media's freedom of speech and expression as enshrined under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution.

NBDA unequivocally states that there can be no possible justification for attacking and/or searching the broadcaster's premises as such attacks and searches are an obvious attempt to muzzle the media. Media is widely regarded as the fourth pillar of democracy and its function of disseminating news of public interest to the people is indispensable to the functioning of a democracy. Therefore, it is reiterated that any action which prevents the media from performing their duties is violative of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

NBDA urges the Chief Minister of Kerala to take immediate action against the individuals and officials who attacked and/or searched the broadcasters office premises, clearly sending a message that no individuals or officials are beyond the purview of the law.



Annie Joseph
Secretary General