

News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority

Order No 171 (2023)

Complainant: Mr. Utkarsh Mishra

Programmes: “Delhi HC Rejects Umar Khalid’s Bail Plea / Khalid Still ‘Islamophobia’ Victim?” and “Khalid Still ‘Islamophobia’ Victim? / Umar Khalid’s Bail Plea Rejected / Delhi Riot Case Updates”

Broadcaster: Times Now

Date of Broadcast: 18.10.2022

Since the complainant did not receive a reply from the channel within the time stipulated under the News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Regulation, on 25.11.2022 the complaint was escalated to the second level of redressal i.e. NBDSA

Complaint dated 25.10.2022:

The complaint was filed against two broadcasts for violating the Fundamental Principle Number 4, which states that “broadcasters shall in particular ensure that they do not select news for the purpose of either promoting or hindering either side of any controversial public issue. News shall not be selected or designed to promote any particular belief, opinion or desires of any interest group”, Principles 1 and 2 of Self-Regulation relating to Impartiality and Objectivity in reporting and multiple guidelines on reporting court proceedings.

The initial rants and the context set out by the anchors in both the impugned broadcasts reveal their biases of hindering an opinion made by a certain interest group, which in this case were individuals who were professing Umar Khalid’s innocence.

In the first broadcast, which was a Newshour Debate, the following on-screen titles “‘Process Not Prosecution’, Islamophobia Lobby Silenced, ‘Persecution Alibi Annihilated, But Lobby Sings ‘Injustice’ Raga, Riots Mastermind To Stay In Jail, # khalidriotfiles, the smoking gun:- “whatsapp group created to mobilize protestors”, high court blow:- meetings attended by sharjeel, khalid, one with PFI as well, High Court Reads The Riot Act, Lists Khalids Tuke Conspiracy, Khalids ‘Saviors’ Shield ‘Terror’?” were aired.

Further, the anchor at time stamps 0:00 to 1:27 stated “First up on the show is the anti-CAA fire that singed the national capital. The violence had then put the spotlight on Delhi and Times Now has been saying this for two years and today it was put forth in black and white by the Delhi High Court while hearing the bail plea of one of the masterminds, Umar Khalid. While denying relief to the JNU scholar, the court made it clear that the Northeast Delhi riots were anything but spontaneous. The riots didn’t take place in the spur of the moment but were pre-meditated. The court asserted that a pre-meditated plan would be covered under the definition of a

“terrorist attack”. The High Court has said the allegations against Khalid are prima facie true. When Umar Khalid was arrested, the lobby had then swung into action claiming that he's targeted because of his religion. What will they now say? Times Now had in fact highlighted how the prosecutor in the earlier hearings had cited how Khalid gave time for blood not bhashan call. This charge sheet even mentions the witnesses revealing how Khalid wanted to mobilize immigrants. A WhatsApp group was created to mobilize protesters on the instructions of Khalid. The chargesheet also mentions Khalid reassured Tahir and others that PFI will provide money for riots. The above found mention in the High Court's observations as well. However the ecosystem still cries that Khalid is subjected to injustice. (quotes by Cong and BJP spokespersons on the High Court's decision) That brings me to the legitimate question: Has the “persecution” alibi been annihilated?”

In the second broadcast the following on-screen titles “Khalid's Bail Rejected, “Why Court Denied Khalid Bail”, “Revealed: Khalid-Imam-PFI Meet Admitted. Delhi Riot Was to Break India. Prima Facie an Act Of Terror” and “What Will Islamophobia Lobby Say Now? Process Not Persecution” were aired along with the following text:

- Reason 1: “Enough incriminating material against Khalid, including support to chakka jam.”*
- Reason 2: “No grounds for believing that prima facie charges against Khalid are not proved.”*
- Reason 3: “UAPA is not the intent to strike terror but the likelihood to strike terror.”*
- Reason 4: “Witnesses stated role of Umar in meetings on violence, riots, finance, weapons.”*
- Reason 5: “Meetings attended by Sharjeel Imam, Umar Khalid, one with PFI as well.”*
- Reason 6: “Incriminating materials against Khalid, including Amravati speech.”*
- Reason 7: “Amravati speech done clandestinely despite prohibitory orders.”*
- Reason 8: “Call to revolution might affect many beyond those who were visibly present.”*
- Reason 9: “CCTV footage and flurry of calls between accused merits consideration.”*
- Reason 10: “Pre-meditated conspiracy to cause chakka jam and incitement leading to riots.”*
- Reason 11: “Pre-meditated plan would be covered under definition of terrorist act”*
- Reason 12: “Name of Umar beginning of conspiracy till culmination of the ensuing riots.”*

The complainant highlighted certain statements made by the anchor during the broadcaster, wherein the anchor claimed that *“Very big developments in fact coming straight out of the courts, the High Court. Viewers, the truth is very inconveniencing sometimes. And as you know, for the last few years Times Now has been attacked for its coverage of the Delhi riots. Why? Because we displayed the temerity to debunk the ecosystem's narrative. Viewers, it's as simple as that. The ecosystem has been claiming that Umar Khalid, the controversial activist who was being accused by the police for allegedly orchestrating the Delhi Riots of 2020 was being targeted for his religion, for being a Muslim. In fact, the ecosystem used the term “Rwanda radio” to refer to Times Now in this context. The insinuation was that Times Now through its reporting was trying to fan the fires of majoritarianism by victimizing Muslims, in particular Umar Khalid. In Rwanda apparently, viewers, the government-controlled radio Service became an instrument in the hands of the authorities to demonize one tribe which led to mass ethnic cleansing. But viewers, all Times Now did was to report the evidence and speak to eyewitnesses referenced by the police in its*

chargesheets. Three chargesheets, all of which went on to indict Khalid and other alleged rioters. Today, viewers, the ecosystem's narrative, the narrative that Times Now is Islamophobic, that police is Islamophobic, that the courts somehow have been seduced by Hindutva has been punctured through and through. Times Now stands vindicated. The body blow to the ecosystem has been delivered this time by the Delhi High Court that has made some eye-opening, if not astounding, revelations in its order rejecting a bail plea filed by Umar Khalid. While the court has not passed judgment, it is noted that Umar Khalid's formulated a plan that in its words "prima facie would be covered by definition terrorist act". So viewers, the court in its order, and I have this order in my hand. It's a 52-page order. Here it is, 52 pages of it. And it says the attack on police personnel by women protesters in front only followed by other ordinary People in engulfing the area into a riot is the epitome of such pre-meditated plan and as such the same would prima facie be covered by the definition of terrorist act. I'm not saying these words viewers. It's the court. The court also pointed out certain admitted facts that suggest that Umar Khalid was at the heart of, in the words of the Court, "planning not a typical protest normal in political cultural democracy but one far more destructive and injurious geared towards extremely grave consequences." Now viewers what were these consequences? These consequences were, viewers, the death of dozens in Delhi".

In the impugned broadcasts, the bail order had been more or less promoted as a confirmation of guilt, despite the fact that Umar Khalid is being tried under the UAPA, which has a massive acquittal rate, and where it is virtually impossible to get bail as the basic tent of criminal law of innocent until proven guilty is inverted to put the burden of proof on the accused, to prove their innocence.

Despite the fact that these charges have been made by the Delhi Police, against whom serious accusations have been levelled of taking sides in the mob during the Delhi riots, the broadcasters failed to intimate to its viewers the important developments that would affix accountability upon the Delhi Police and the BJP.

The coverage followed a pattern of only reporting court developments that promoted the opinion of one interest group, which in this case was the Delhi Police and the BJP. A large number of complaints had been filed by him against the coverage of the Delhi riots investigation by the broadcaster after the first charge sheet was filed. NBDSA, too, had heard a complaint against two such broadcasts and had ordered the removal of the same for being biased. As had been pointed out earlier, the broadcaster had at least aired 15 primetime debates on the Delhi riots investigation, including the broadcasts impugned in this complaint, highlighted only specific police charges or Court observations that projected prima facie guilt upon the anti-CAA protestors' role in the riots and had then proceeded to pass judgment on the veracity of the charges. For example, when the charge sheet was initially filed, the anchor and Times Now's Internal Security Editor characterized the investigation and charges of the Delhi police as a "serious indictment", "watertight case" and "a vindication of the centre" during their programmes.

The complainant cited several broadcasts which evidenced the broadcaster's targeted nature of the reporting and judicial observations made by various trial courts, which were critical of the Delhi Police's investigation into the issue. None of which had been reported by the broadcaster during their primetime coverage from July 2020 onwards, when the police filed their first charge sheet in the riots, till date.

The impugned broadcasts followed a pattern of selective primetime coverage by the broadcaster in the Delhi riots investigation, wherein it had used a mosaic of true facts (police accusations and court observations) to create an entirely false perception of the way the investigation had been going in the Court. The reporting failed to inform its viewers that an entirely alternative narrative must be considered to form an informed opinion on the matter. The acts of omission and failure to engage with the said alternative narrative in a fair and unbiased manner amounted to an attempt to influence the viewer's opinion on the issue unduly. The pattern of selectively reporting said charges, that too under a controversial law such as the UAPA and on a polarizing issue of communal riots, amounted to reporting news for the purpose of promoting /hindering one side of a debate.

Reply dated 4.1.2023 from the broadcaster

At the outset, the broadcaster denied all allegations/contentions/averments made in the subject complaint. It stated that no part of the written submissions may be treated as an admission of any such allegation/averment/contention.

In the complaint, frivolous allegations regarding the non-compliance of the Guidelines had been raised. The complaint was filed to prevent the broadcaster from raising relevant issues through its debates. The complainant has blindly questioned the conduct of reputed anchors and journalists on the Respondent channel without reviewing the context and the entirety of the topic being debated and the media's right to raise difficult questions on relevant and current events in the country.

The programmes impugned in the complaint were debate programmes in the nature of a 'live' show wherein guests/speakers and experts are invited to express their comments/views and responses on a specific, pointed and focused issue. In the debate, an equitable platform is provided for the panellists to express their views freely. In a live news debate, the panellists invariably raise connected issues and multiple views and opinions are put forth and dissected, which is essential for a free debate on the chosen topic.

The debate programmes impugned in the complaint did not violate any Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards (Code of Ethics) and/or Guidelines in any manner whatsoever, as alleged or otherwise. The debates in question must be viewed in the context of the questions raised.

In the complaint, selected comments made by the anchor(s) have been highlighted to level the allegations of bias; the complainant appears to be targeting the anchor(s) in their capacity as journalists. The complaint focuses only on one side of the spectrum and does not appreciate that a counter argument is equally relevant, important and critical for viewers to form their opinions, specifically when popular beliefs and criticisms are challenged. Viewers have a right to know an alternative argument to such popular beliefs on significant matters. Raising pertinent, strong, pointed questions cannot be brushed aside with the allegation that they ‘peddle a narrative’.

By no stretch of the imagination, the impugned programmes amounted to any violation of the Code of Ethics and/or Guidelines as alleged or otherwise or at all. The complainant has deliberately targeted the anchors as being selective towards a particular community, party, or religion on frivolous grounds. A perusal of the debate programmes would show that neither any favouritism was done for any political party nor was any political party attacked. The debates did not propagate or attack any particular religion or communal attitudes.

The broadcaster reiterated that a bare perusal of the video footage of the debate/ programme would make it amply clear that there was no violation of Fundamental Principle No. 4 and Principle 2 of self-regulation under the Code of Ethics or of the Specific Guidelines for Reporting Court Proceedings as alleged or otherwise or at all.

The debates were conducted in an open and objective manner and did not cause any incitement of communal bias or influence or mislead the viewers in any manner whatsoever.

The impugned programmes, by no stretch of the imagination, could be deemed to have been made on selective and biased coverage or have outraged religious feelings of any class or community, statement creating or promoting enmity or promoting enmity, hatred or ill-will between classes. Further, the programmes did not propagate any particular political or religious ideology or were against any political belief. Media freedom is an essential pillar of a free democracy, and the plurality of views and opinions, however strong and direct they may be, must be allowed to protect this sanctity.

It is a settled law that the media and press should not be unnecessarily restricted in their speech as the same may amount to curtailment of expression of the ideas and free discussion in public based on which a democratic country functions. In this regard, the broadcaster stated that the Hon’ble Supreme Court has held that the freedom of speech and expression includes freedom of propagation of ideas and

that freedom is ensured by the freedom of circulation, without which the publication would be of little value. The Hon'ble Supreme Court also held that the liberty of the press is an essential part of the right to freedom of speech and expression. This liberty consists of allowing no previous restraint upon publication.

Furthermore, it stated that apart from the broadcaster's right to disseminate to the public at large, the citizens of India also have the right to know about the current affairs of the country, and the right to know is also another aspect of free speech and democracy. Freedom of speech and expression includes the right to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas to any media, regardless of frontiers. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has observed that when freedom of expression is used by the mass media, it requires additional dimension and becomes freedom of information. It has been held that the constitutional guarantee of freedom of speech is not so much for the benefit of the press as it is for the benefit of the public. The freedom of speech includes within its compass the right of all citizens to read and be informed. The impugned programmes were one such criticism and a fair one.

The framers of our Constitution recognized the importance of safeguarding the right under Article 19(1)(a) since the free flow of opinion and ideas is essential for the collective life of the citizenry.

That it is also settled law that the press is entitled to make fair comments on issues that impact the public at large, which is a right guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India, the broadcaster placed its reliance on various judgments of the Hon'ble Supreme Court including on *Arnab Ranjan Goswami v Union of India*-MANU/ SC/ 0448/ 2020, *Shreya Singhal v Union of India* and on *Chief Election Commissioner of India v. M.R. Vijayabhaskar and Others* 2021 SCC OnLine SC 364, *Romesh Thappar v. State of Madras* [1950 SCR 594 : AIR 1950 SC 124 : (1950) 51 Cri LJ 1514], *Sakal Papers (P) Ltd. v. Union of India* [(1962) 3 SCR 842 : AIR 1962 SC 305], concurring judgment of Beg, J. in *Bennett Coleman & Co. v. Union of India* [(1972) 2 SCC 788 : (1973) 2 SCR 757] and on, *S. Khushboo's Judgment*,

That the debate programme should be viewed as a whole, and not based on breaking and dissecting a sentence or a stanza to show any adverse effect, without contextually understanding why that statement or sentence or stanza came about.

A comment, a sentence, stanza, or the programme as a whole may be independent, bold, and even exaggerated. Mere exaggeration, however gross may be, would not make a comment unfair if not founded by malafide. In this regard, the broadcaster referred to the decision in *Mitha Rustomjee Murzban Vs. Nusserwanji Nowroji*

Engineer, MANU/MH/0015/1941.

The choice of a news debate is entirely editorial discretion, the topics chosen here were the recent incidents in the nation. There was no cherry-picking or interest groups being served by such debates. Such allegations are motivated and the complainant has cherry picked statements made in the debate to push an agenda.

The broadcaster did not impose its opinions in the debate. Raising pertinent questions is the media's right to report on issues that are of public interest. Several opinions are made available in a debate like this. To call it an opinionated programme was, therefore, incorrect and baseless.

The Channel's intent has never been to communalize any issue, degrade a particular political party or sensationalize any issue but to depict the correct picture before the public.

Actions or comments made by public figures are often subjected to intensive and invasive dissection by all members of the public. Due care thus must be exercised by such public figures before commenting.

Islamophobia and Hinduphobia both need to be freely and fearlessly discussed and debated, especially when they can influence the views of the public.

In the broadcast held on 18.09.2022, the anchors merely conducted and carried out a free debate and discussion on the rejection of the bail plea of Umar Khalid by the Hon'ble Delhi High Court, which constituted fair reporting, in good faith on a burning issue and was in consonance with the journalistic principles and for public scrutiny.

In the first broadcast, the issue of rejection of the bail plea of Umar Khalid by the Hon'ble Delhi High Court was discussed in light of the Anti-CAA Protest. The anchor highlighted that time and again 'Times Now' had been saying that the anti-CAA protest was pre-meditated and not spontaneous and the same was also affirmed by the Hon'ble Court. The anchor further stated that the Hon'ble Court further observed that a pre-meditated plan would be covered under the definition of a "terrorist attack". The panellists later discussed the observations by the Hon'ble Delhi High Court about how certain actions of Umar Khalid motivated the public to proceed with riots. These observations were not only neutral but also objective in nature.

In the second broadcast, the anchor further discussed that the Court, in its observation, had pointed out that Umar Khalid was at the heart of the protest, in

the words of the Court, planning was not a typical protest normal in political culture democracy but one far more destructive and injurious and geared towards extremely grave consequences. The anchor further highlighted that the Hon'ble Court also observed that Sharjeel Imam, Umar Khalid and others held meetings with PFI. It reiterated that the sole purpose of telecasting was to inform the public of the latest developments in Umar Khalid's case.

The anchors did not make any statements that would create controversy and have always limited themselves to journalistic principles and acted in good faith. Merely an unbiased, free debate was conducted in the impugned broadcasts on the burning issues of the country.

Considering the aforesaid, it was pertinent to state that a news channel is well within its right to present the news event and current affairs of extreme public and national importance in the (i) manner that it deems appropriate, without violating the restrictions contained under Article 19(2) of the Constitution of India, (ii) discuss the same leading to a fruitful discussion amongst the participants, and (iii) present unpopular views for the public to review the same.

In light of various submissions made, both factual and legal and various judgments referred to, the broadcaster most respectfully submitted that the Respondent had, in the exercise of its Fundamental Right envisaged under Art 19(1)(a), telecasted the impugned debate programmes. There was no violation of any Code of Ethics or any other rules and regulations in the impugned broadcasts. Therefore, the complaints are not legally sustainable and need to be rejected outright.

Decision of NBDSA at its meeting held on 28.1.2023

NBDSA considered the application for condonation of delay and the response filed by the broadcaster. Since the delay in filing the complaint was not significant and was satisfactorily explained by the complainant, the Authority decided to condone the delay and hear the complaint on merits. NBDSA accordingly decided to call both parties for a hearing.

On being served with Notices, the following persons were present at the hearing on 16.06.2022:

1. Complainant:

Mr. Utkarsh Mishra
Ms. Suroor Mander

2. Broadcaster

Mr. Kunal Tandon, Advocate

Ms. Niti Jain, Advocate

Ms. Kirtima Maroovar, Compliance Officer NBDSA

Submissions of the Complainant:

The complainant submitted that by airing the impugned broadcasts, the broadcaster had violated Fundamental Principles No. 2 and 4 and the Specific Guidelines for reporting Court Proceedings.

At the outset, the complainant brought to the attention of the Authority Order No. 117 passed by it, wherein the issue of the omission on the part of the broadcaster to discuss relevant observations passed by the Courts was discussed. In the instant broadcasts also, he stated that the broadcaster had placed selective facts and Court observations on record. In the impugned broadcasts, the broadcaster had promoted mala fide intention, suggested guilt in respect of the anti-CAA protestors and passed judgment on the strength of the evidence in the case.

He stated the manner in which the discharge of the accuseds in the Jamia violence case was reported in contrast to the reversal of the discharge by the High Court, bears out the manner in which the broadcaster had selectively reported the developments in the Delhi riots investigation. After the High Court Order, a detailed panel discussion was conducted and titles such as “*Court Jolts Ecosystem of Hate*” were used. The complainant submitted that such generalized vocabulary was only used by the broadcaster to promote the point of view of the Delhi Police.

The complainant brought to the attention of the Authority observations made by Trial Courts, which were critical of the investigation conducted by the Delhi Police. The manner in which the Delhi Riots case was being reported by the broadcaster and the tickers aired during the broadcasts were designed to promote the opinion of specific interest group.

The anchor in the first broadcast expressly admits to reporting the Delhi riots for two years to promote the belief that the riots were pre-planned and premeditated, which amounted to reporting news to promote the specific charge of the Delhi Police, according to whom Delhi riots were pre-planned and premeditated by Umar Khalid to break the country.

He submitted that from the Court observations, the broadcaster drew inferences that were not supported by any evidence. Further, in the broadcasts, charges filed by the Delhi Police were promoted as facts by the broadcaster. While reporting on the Delhi Riots case, the broadcaster called the investigation a “*water tight case*” and claimed that “*charges presented by the evidence completely demolish any allegation of the Delhi Police’s bias*”.

The impugned broadcasts were in respect of an Order passed by the Hon'ble Delhi High Court while rejecting Umar Khalid's application for bail. The complainant submitted that in bail matters, there is very little scope for judging the evidence, however observations made by the High Court while rejecting the bail application were labelled by the broadcaster as the "*truth*" and "*smoking gun*". Further, several times during the broadcast, the anchor claimed that the observations made by the High Court shows Umar Khalid in poor light, prima facie establish him guilty and thereby demolish any allegation against the Delhi Police of being biased.

The complainant submitted that the broadcaster reported only observations that establish the strength of the evidence in the Delhi Riots case. The broadcasts repeatedly used the bail order to pass observations on the strength of the evidence, in a manner that promoted the charges of the Delhi police.". The formal charge of the Delhi police on Umar Khalid was labelled as an indictment by the court, which was an explicit attempt on the part of the broadcaster to misinform the viewers regarding the implications of the bail order. Despite multiple attempts by panellists to explain the scope of the UAPA, the manner in which the anchors encouraged baseless commentary on the strength of the evidence and Umar Khalid's intent was akin to gossip and amounted to media trial, which can severely prejudice the perception of the public against the accused. The complainant reiterated that by selecting or designing the news in a manner that promotes the beliefs of one interest group, i.e.:- Delhi Police, the broadcaster had violated Fundamental Principle Number 4.

Submissions of the Broadcaster

The broadcaster submitted that in the impugned broadcast, a debate was carried out by the anchor in the backdrop of the Hon'ble Delhi High Court's rejection of the bail application of Umar Khalid. In the broadcasts, only observations made by the Hon'ble Delhi High Court while rejecting the bail application of Umar Khalid were highlighted and discussed.

The Hon'ble Court, in its Order, had observed that a pre-meditated plan would be covered under the definition of a "*terrorist attack*" and that Mr. Khalid had formulated a plan which would prima facie be included in the definition of a terrorist act. The Hon'ble Court had also noted that Umar Khalid was at the heart of the protest.. In the words of the Hon'ble Court, planning a typical protest was not normal in political culture democracy but one far more destructive and injurious and geared towards extremely grave consequences. In the programme, the panelists later discussed the observations of the Hon'ble Delhi High Court regarding how certain actions of Umar Khalid motivated the public to proceed with riots.

The anchors did not endorse any ‘personal’ views or beliefs to make a point during the debate. It reiterated that the purpose of the debates was to only discuss and debate the development of the said incident and the observations made by the Hon’ble Delhi High Court. Therefore, the impugned broadcasts amounted to objective reporting on the basis of factual information.

That reporting of public/current issues is not only a right of the press but also the public’s right to know such facts of public importance and national interest. It also results, in debates, public opinions, thereby leading to open governance, counter perspectives/opinions to support or oppose such narratives.

Decision

NBDSA considered the complaint, response of the broadcaster and also gave due consideration to the arguments of the complainant and the broadcaster and reviewed the footage of the broadcasts.

NBDSA noted that the complainant had during the oral submissions in the complaint expressed a general grievance against the manner in which the Courts observations in the Delhi riots case had been selectively reported in the broadcasts, and had relied on several broadcasts aired on the channel prior and subsequent to the impugned broadcasts in support of his assertion. However, the Authority decided to confine its analysis only to the two broadcasts which were the subject matter of the complaint filed before it.

NBDSA observed that although the broadcaster was well within its right to report the contents of the Order dated 18.10.2022 passed by the Hon’ble Delhi High Court in the matter of *Umar Khalid vs State of NCT of Delhi* however, the tickers “*Islamophobia Lobby Silenced, Persecution Alibi Annihilated*”, “*Delhi Riot Was to Break India*” and “*High Court Reads the Riot Act, Lists Khalid’s Tukde Conspiracy*” ” aired during the broadcast, should have been avoided, as the tickers created an impression that the accused was already held guilty whereas the Order passed by the Hon’ble Delhi High Court related to the bail application filed by Umar Khalid.

In view of the above, NBDSA did not appreciate the manner in which some of the tickers were aired during the impugned programmes and advised the broadcaster not to telecast tickers in this manner in future.

NBDSA decided to close the complaint and inform the complainant and the broadcaster.

NBDSA further directs the broadcaster to edit the video of the said broadcasts, if still available on the website of the channel, or YouTube, by removing the aforesaid

tickers. NBDSA directed the broadcaster to submit its confirmation of the same in writing along with the revised, edited version of the impugned broadcast after removing the aforesaid tickers, which should be submitted to NBDSA within 7 days of receipt of the Order.

NBDSA directs NBDA to send:

- (a) A copy of this Order to the complainant and the broadcaster;
- (b) Circulate this Order to all Members, Editors & Legal Heads of NBDA;
- (c) Host this Order on its website and include it in its next Annual Report and
- (d) Release the Order to media.

It is clarified that any statement made by the parties in the proceedings before NBDSA while responding to the complaint and putting forth their view points, and any finding or observation by NBDSA in regard to the broadcasts, in its proceedings or in this Order, are only in the context of an examination as to whether there are any violations of any broadcasting standards and guidelines. They are not intended to be 'admissions' by the broadcaster, nor intended to be 'findings' by NBDSA in regard to any civil/criminal liability.

Sd/-

Justice A.K Sikri (Retd.)
Chairperson

Place: New Delhi

Date : 02.11.2023