

News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority

Order No. 180 (2024)

**Complainant: Mr. Srinivas Bhadravathi Venkata, National President of
Indian Youth Congress**

Programme: Black & White

Channel: Aaj Tak

Date of Broadcast: 24.03.2023

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

Complaint/Legal notice dated 26.3.2023:

1. It is submitted that the Congress Party is one of the oldest political parties in the country. The Congress party has been at the forefront and is instrumental in taking up and fighting for the issues of common citizens of our nation. Our client is a well-known prominent face in Indian politics and holds the position of National President of the Indian Youth Congress.
2. Mr. Rahul Gandhi is a well-known prominent face in Indian Politics, a member of the Indian Parliament and the former President of the Indian National Congress. Amongst other posts, Mr. Rahul Gandhi served as the President of the Indian National Congress from 16 December 2017 to 3 July 2019 and also represented the constituencies of Amethi and Wayanad as a Member of Parliament.
3. For over two decades, Mr. Rahul Gandhi has committed and dedicated himself to providing social services to improve the well-being of individuals, families, and communities. Mr. Rahul Gandhi is fearlessly taking up the issues of the common man and continues to highlight the failure of the incumbent government on various fronts. Further, Mr. Gandhi recently concluded a Bharat Jodo Yatra, which intended to spread the message of peace and brotherhood in the country.
4. Addressee No.1 is working as a consulting editor at a Hindi news channel, Aaj Tak. On 25.03.2023, our Client was appalled to learn about a video tweeted from the official Twitter handle of the Aajtak. It is submitted that the video was first telecast on a show called Black and White on 24.03.2023, anchored by Addressee No. 1.
5. It is submitted that the impugned video deliberately and maliciously compared Mr. Rahul Gandhi with someone accused and caught for the offence of robbery even though Mr. Gandhi has been raising his objections to the offence committed by Nirav Modi and seeking accountability from the Government of

India. It is submitted that while creating and publishing the video, the broadcaster flagrantly violated journalism norms and ethics by callously publishing the video that wrongly depicted Mr Gandhi as someone accused of robbery.

6. The addresses deliberately and maliciously published such a video with a mala-fide intent to harm the reputation of Mr. Rahul Gandhi, thereby directly targeting the prestige of the Indian National Congress (INC) party and the Indian Youth Congress and hurting the sentiments of millions of supporters and workers.
7. The tweets from the handle and its subsequent amplifications appear to be a well-crafted conspiracy initiated at the behest of Mr. Gandhi's political opponents with the sole objective of lowering his reputation in the eyes of the citizens of our country. It appears to be an attempt at the behest of the divisive forces, which Mr. Gandhi continues to expose.
8. The posts are available to the world at large and the aforesaid imputation has immensely harmed the Congress Party and its workers, including the undersigned's reputation amongst the readers of the said post.
9. A serious note of the tweets has been taken which are considered to be highly offensive and defamatory, and as such, the broadcaster is called upon to:
 - I Immediately delete the malicious and defamatory video from all platforms;
 - II Telecast an unconditional apology on the channel and post the same from the Twitter handle;failing which, the complainant would be constrained to initiate appropriate legal remedies, both civil and criminal, at entirely your cost and consequences.

Complaint dated 31.3.2023 to NBDSA:

1. It is submitted that while telecasting the said show, the channel and the anchor have deliberately and mischievously violated the standards of rectitude and journalistic ethics in the discharge of its solemn duty.
2. Briefly stated are the facts of the complaint, which are given here under:
 - That on 24.03.2023, the channel telecasted a show called Black and White, where a video was depicted while explaining the response of the Congress party to the recent conviction of Mr. Rahul Gandhi for the offence of defamation. Thereafter, the channel also tweeted the standalone video on its Twitter handle.
 - That in the impugned video, the anchor deliberately and maliciously compared Mr. Rahul Gandhi with someone accused and caught for the offence of robbery even though he was fully aware that Mr. Gandhi had been objecting to the offence committed by Nirav Modi and was seeking accountability from the Government of India. While creating and publishing the said video, the anchor

flagrantly violated journalism norms and ethics by callously publishing the said video, which wrongly depicted Mr Gandhi as someone accused of an offence of robbery.

- The said video, in addition to being highly defamatory, also brazenly violated the Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards.
- While making and publishing the said video, the channel and the Anchor failed to ensure Impartiality, Objectivity and Neutrality in the reporting. It is submitted that the anchor displayed a video in the backdrop of Mr. Rahul Gandhi's conviction for defamation.
- The anchor in the said show predominantly narrated about the statements made by Mr. Rahul Gandhi, which were the subject matter of the defamation complaint; relevant provisions of the Representation of People Act, the duration of disqualification arising out of the conviction and the possible recourses available to Mr. Rahul Gandhi.
- The Anchor thereafter quoted the tweets made by Mrs Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.
- The complainant reiterated that it is in the public domain that Mr. Rahul Gandhi is seeking accountability from the incumbent on the offences allegedly committed by Mr. Nirav Modi, Mr. Gautam Adani etc.
- Despite being fully aware of the sequence of events, the anchor brazenly and flagrantly ignored the impartiality and objectivity and showed a video where he depicted a video as an example of Congress's response to the conviction of Mr. Gandhi for the offence of defamation: The video maliciously depicts:
 1. Someone commits an offence of looting (dacoity/robbery)
 2. The said person is caught at red handed;
 3. The said person thereafter is arrested with the looted money;
 4. The said person gives his defence as stating " Nirav Modi, Mehul Chowksi are bigger criminal and the police is not arresting those bigger criminals and is arresting a small time criminal" (.....**Translated version**)

The facts narrated hereinabove it is writ-large that the anchor had maliciously distorted the tweets and given an unmistakable impression to the public that Mr. Rahul Gandhi was convicted for a heinous offence under the Indian Penal Code, 1860. The video also gave the impression that Mr. Gandhi was quoting Nirav Modi and others as a justification for evading the process of the law, which is false to the knowledge of the anchor. While doing the said show, the anchor failed to ensure neutrality, impartiality and objectivity in reporting.

A legal notice was also tweeted on 26.03.2023 on the Twitter handle of the anchor however, the anchor seemed to have turned a blind eye to the said notice.

The complainant requested that the malicious and defamatory video be deleted from all platforms and that an unconditional apology be telecast on the channel and posted from the Twitter handle.

Reply dated 17.4.23 from the Broadcaster:

The broadcaster acknowledged the receipt of undated Legal Notice and Legal Notice dated 31.03.2023 referred herein above and issued this reply to the same:

1. The broadcaster stated that the undated legal notice was received by through Twitter on 28.03.2023 and the legal notice dated 31.03.2023 was served upon it through its Grievance Officer email-id at grievanceofficer@aahtak.com on 31.03.2023. Pursuant to the issuance of said legal notices, the complainant had approached the News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority to deal with the subject complaint. Consequently, the said authority had asked the broadcaster to issue a reply to the aforesaid legal notices.
2. It would like to point out that 'Aaj Tak' is not a legal entity. It is a TV channel and a brand name owned and operated by T.V. Today Network Limited and has no legal existence. Since the said legal notice was issued to a 'Brand Name', which has no legal existence, the legal notice was void and had no meaning in law. In these circumstances, the said Legal Notice was requested to be withdrawn forthwith.
3. The broadcaster stated that one Srinivas Bhadravathi Venkata had issued the said Legal Notice for alleged defamation of Shri Rahul Gandhi. At no point in time, was the Indian Youth Congress named in the impugned broadcast, nor had any allegation been made against it. The broadcast was only in relation to Shri Rahul Gandhi. That in order to prosecute a person for allegedly defamatory remarks, the person making the complaint must satisfy the requirements of Section 199 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.
4. The collocation of the expression 'some person aggrieved by the offence' found in Section 199 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 mandates that a Magistrate can take cognizance of the offence only upon receiving a complaint by a 'person who is aggrieved'. This limitation on the power to take cognizance of defamation serves the rational purpose of discouraging the filing of frivolous complaints. Therefore, in the present case, there is no basis for the Client to be aggrieved by the impugned broadcast, or to issue the present Legal Notice.
5. In *P. Karunakaran Vs. Sri C Jayasooryan* (1992 Cri LJ 3540), the Hon'ble Kerala High Court has said that the reputation of the complainant was not affected personally or as a member of a political party and held that taking cognizance of

the offence would be an abuse of the process. In these circumstances, the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala had quashed the complaint. A similar restriction exists in the invocation of civil law remedies. In these circumstances, the broadcaster stated that the Legal Notice was without basis and jurisdiction and called upon the complainant to forthwith withdraw the Legal Notice under response.

6. The broadcaster stated that it had seen and examined the impugned broadcast, which was published and circulated on 24.03.2023 in a news show named and styled 'Black and White'. The show was broadcast on its news channel 'Aaj Tak'. A perusal of the impugned broadcast would reveal that the issues arising from the recent judgment of the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Surat District, Gujarat, was discussed. The various claims and the options available to Shri Rahul Gandhi were examined. At the end, it was pointed out that the defense which has been taken by certain persons is that when serious offenders are not being caught, why should less serious offenders be caught. In this regard, an example was given in the form of a fictional story. It was specifically pointed out that "*this story is imaginary and should not be connected with anyone*". Therefore, there was nothing malicious or deliberate about the statements made by the anchor in the impugned broadcast. Therefore, it is incorrect to state that the anchor had given any impression to the public that Shri Rahul Gandhi was convicted for a heinous offence or that Shri Rahul Gandhi was quoting Nirav Modi and others as an excuse to evade the process of law.
7. It is incorrect to state that the anchor had made deliberate and malicious statements about Shri Rahul Gandhi. It is also incorrect to state that the anchor had maliciously and deliberately compared Shri Rahul Gandhi with someone accused and caught for an offence of robbery. In fact, the anchor had specifically stated that the example was imaginary and should not be connected with anyone. It is incorrect to state that while creating and publishing the impugned broadcast, it flagrantly violated all journalistic norms or ethics and/or the Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards. It is also incorrect to state that the impugned broadcast depicted Shri Rahul Gandhi as someone who is accused of the offence of robbery. It is submitted that the impugned broadcast was in accordance with NBDSA's guidelines as it was balanced, fair and objective.
8. In the Legal notice, it has been alleged that the channel and the anchor had not ensured impartiality, objectivity and neutrality in reporting while publishing the impugned broadcast. It is submitted that these allegations are entirely false. The fictional story depicted in the form of a video in the impugned broadcast was not in reference to anyone including Shri Rahul Gandhi. It was specifically pointed out that "*this story is imaginary and should not be connected with anyone.*" Therefore, the anchor and the channel maintained impartiality, objectivity and neutrality in reporting the impugned broadcast.

9. The Legal Notice further asserted that the anchor in the said show had narrated statements made by Shri Rahul Gandhi, which were the subject matter of the defamation complaint, specific provisions of the Representation of People Act, duration of disqualification in consequence of conviction, possible recourses available to Shri Rahul Gandhi and the tweets made by Mrs. Priyanka Gandhi Vadra as reproduced in the Legal Notice. It is submitted that the contents of aforesaid narrations form a part of the matter of record and, therefore, do not call for any objection. It is incorrect to state that the anchor had maliciously or otherwise distorted the said tweets as falsely alleged herein.
10. The Legal Notice further asserts that the impugned broadcast had deliberately and maliciously published the impugned broadcast to harm the reputation of Shri Rahul Gandhi and/or target the Indian National Congress (INC) Party and the Indian Youth Congress. This is far from the truth. There was no attempt to damage or lower the reputation of any person concerned and the Legal Notice is misconceived and, therefore, requires to be withdrawn immediately.
11. The Legal Notice stated that certain tweets indicated a well-crafted conspiracy with the sole objective of lowering the reputation of Shri Rahul Gandhi in the eyes of the citizens of our country. This is completely incorrect. At no point in time had the reputation of Shri Rahul Gandhi been lowered due to the impugned broadcast. The Legal Notice is completely misconceived and misleading. It is further incorrect to state that the impugned broadcast was highly offensive or defamatory. In fact, the impugned broadcast was balanced and informative about the factual scenario and the courses open for Shri Rahul Gandhi to adopt at this stage.
12. It is further wrong to state that the post (tweets) had harmed the reputation of the Indian National Congress or its workers in the eyes of the readers of the said post.
13. In these circumstances, the broadcaster, requested that the complainant withdraw the Legal Notice issued on his behalf. In the overall factual scenario, it denied that there was any malicious or defamatory broadcast published by it. Therefore, there was no question as to deletion of any malicious or defamatory video as alleged in the Legal Notice. There was also no question of tendering any unconditional apology as demanded in the Legal Notice.

Rejoinder dated 24.4.2023 from the Complainant

1. The complainant stated that the channel had not appraised NBDSA about the correct factual and legal position. Further, the reply was inundated with deliberate factual misrepresentations and calculated distortions. It suffices for the purpose of this correspondence to state that unless, as hereinafter specifically admitted, the contents of the reply are deemed to be denied in their entirety, as though

herein specifically set forth and traversed, without prejudice to the generality of foregoing denial, it is submitted as herein under.

2. It is submitted that the reply raised a frivolous plea that the anchor during the broadcast and before depicting such a video, had mentioned that the story was imaginary. Before adverting to reply, it would be appropriate to reproduce the screenshot from the video that was uploaded to Twitter.
3. It is submitted that during the entire video as uploaded on Twitter, the captioned clearly mentioned “दूसरो के अपराध गिनाने से राहुल गांधी के अपराध कम होंगे ?” . Thus, from the above, it was evident that the anchor deliberately wanted the audience to believe that Mr. Gandhi was accused and was caught for a heinous crime like robbery while being fully aware that Mr. Gandhi had been raising objections and seeking accountability for the offences committed by Nirav Modi. It is submitted that the anchor, while being fully aware of the said factual rhetoric, deliberately chose to depict the said video whereby any average thinking mind could draw an unmissable conclusion that Mr. Gandhi had been convicted for heinous crimes like robbery and was citing other cases as an excuse for the offences committed by him.
4. It is reiterated that from the facts narrated hereinabove, it is writ-large that the anchor had maliciously distorted the tweets and created an unmistakable impression to the public that Mr. Rahul Gandhi was convicted for a heinous offence under the Indian Penal Code, 1860. The video also gave the impression that Mr. Gandhi was quoting Nirav Modi and others as a justification for evading the process of the law, which is false to the knowledge of the anchor. While doing the said show, the anchor failed to ensure neutrality, impartiality, and objectivity in reporting.

In light of the facts and circumstances mentioned above, the complainant requested NBDSA to take stringent measures.

Decision of NBDSA at its meeting held on 6.7.2023

NBDSA considered the captioned complaint regarding the broadcast aired on Aaj Tak on 24.3.2023, response of the broadcaster and after viewing the footage of the broadcast, decided to call both the parties for a hearing.

The hearing on 3.8.2023 was deferred due to paucity of time. Subsequently, both parties were called for a hearing on 31.10.2023, on which date an adjournment was sought by the complainant, which was granted by NBDSA.

On being served with Notices, the following persons were present at the hearing on 02.02.2024:

Complainant

Mr. Kapil Madan, Advocate

Broadcaster

1. Ms. Vrinda Bhandari, Advocate
2. Ms. Dipali Rai, Legal Counsel
3. Mr. Manish, Editor

Mr. Vishal Pant, being an editor member representing TV Today Network Ltd. in NBDSA recused himself from the proceedings.

Submissions on behalf of the Complainant

The complainant submitted that the anchor in the impugned broadcast had failed to ensure the principles of Impartiality, Objectivity and Neutrality in reporting as the contents of the video and the words spoken by the anchor were per se defamatory. In the impugned broadcast, the anchor first gave the statement made by Mr. Rahul Gandhi on his Twitter account thereafter, he quoted the tweets made by Mrs. Priyanka Gandhi to make factually incorrect statement. In this regard, the complainant invited the attention of the NBDSA to the tweets made by Mrs. Priyanka Gandhi, which have been reproduced in the complaint, which make it evident that nowhere in her tweets had she spoken about cases not being registered against Mr. Lalit Modi and Mr. Nirav Modi.

The complainant submitted that the heart of the controversy was the anchor who, while explaining the tweets made by Mrs. Priyanka Gandhi, maliciously played a video, the contents of which were highly and per se defamatory, which the channel itself is aware of. The video depicted a person who had been caught red-handed by the Police while committing an act of looting (robbery/dacoity) and whose defence was that they are bigger criminals whom you have not taken action against and therefore, why are you taking action against small-time criminals? The video gave the impression that Mr. Gandhi was quoting Nirav Modi and others as a justification for evading the process of the law, which was false.

Since the broadcaster was aware that the contents of the video were per se defamatory, it had taken refuge in the disclaimer aired before the video, which stated that the story was only fictional.

The complainant invited the attention of the Authority to a tweet made by the channel on its official Twitter account, which has more than seven lakhs views, wherein just beneath the video is a caption which unequivocally states that “ दूसरों के अपराध गिनाने से राहुल गाँधी के अपराध कम होंगे?”. The complainant submitted that since the channel was aware that the contents of the video were defamatory and the imputation was likely to cause damage, it had, in its defence, stated that before airing the video, it had issued a disclaimer stating that the same was a fictional story and should not be linked to a particular case.

In view of the aforementioned facts and circumstances, the complainant submitted that by relying on the disclaimer aired before the video, the channel was attempting to escape its liability as it was aware that the contents of the impugned broadcast were defamatory. The complainant relied on the judgment of the Hon'ble Delhi High Court in *Smriti Irani vs. Pawan Khera & Ors.* 2022 SCC Online Del 2310, wherein the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in *Ajay Aggarwal vs Vinod Mehta* (2003) 66 DRJ 183 has been reproduced and relied on.

NBDSA questioned the complainant as to how he had concluded that the channel had given its version of the judicial pronouncement. In response, the complainant submitted that in the impugned broadcast, the channel had mentioned what was defence taken by Mr. Gandhi.

NBDSA further asked the complainant how the impugned broadcast could be regarded as being defamatory. The complainant submitted that the anchor tried to portray that Mr. Rahul Gandhi was quoting Nirav Modi and others as a justification for evading the process of the law. The anchor further depicted a thief and then questioned “दूसरों के अपराध गिाने से राहुल गाँधी के अपराध कम होंगे?” which was per se defamatory. In view of the above, the complainant submitted that the anchor had made a factually incorrect statements as this was not the legal defence of Mr. Gandhi and was aware or had reason to believe that the imputation would harm the reputation of Mr. Gandhi.

NBDSA questioned the complainant whether the broadcaster had also mentioned the reason behind Mr. Gandhi's conviction in the broadcast, which the complainant admitted that the broadcaster had. The complainant submitted that the channel had, in its defence, stated that it had aired a disclaimer; however, nowhere did the channel state that its broadcast falls within the ambit of free speech or fair comment.

Submissions of the Broadcaster

The broadcaster submitted that, as acknowledged by the complainant himself, the disclaimer clearly disclaimed that the story of the robber was fictional and stated that the same should be viewed without association with any individual.

NBDSA questioned the broadcaster what purpose it sought to achieve by airing a fictional story. In response, the broadcaster submitted that the whole point of the broadcast was, in some senses, what Mrs. Priyanka Gandhi had tweeted and the question that she had raised that while some people were not getting punished, why was Mr. Rahul Gandhi being targeted.

The broadcaster submitted that while the complainant may have contested the tweets being attributed to Mrs. Priyanka Gandhi during the submissions, he had nowhere in the complaint objected to the factual accuracy of the impugned

broadcast. Since no allegations of falsity were alleged, any allegations of defamation against the host were liable to be dismissed.

In response, the complainant submitted that he had impugned the video in the complainant, that if one were to look at what the anchor stated, the tweets reproduced in the complaint and the video aired in the broadcast subsequently, it is evident that the same is incorrect, what the anchor stated and what was stated by Mrs. Gandhi in her tweets was completely different.

Based on the tweets reproduced in the complaint by the complainant, NBDSA questioned the broadcaster whether, based on these tweets, the anchor had made statements in the impugned broadcast. In response, the broadcaster submitted that it would submit the tweets made by Mrs. Priyanka Gandhi, which formed the basis of the statements made by the anchor in the broadcast.

The broadcaster submitted that the context of the impugned broadcast was the concept of negative equality, which was explained in general parlance in the broadcast by way of a fictional story. It was unlikely that any person would accuse Mr. Gandhi of robbery or theft as a result of the impugned broadcast. Further, the broadcaster denied the complainant's submission that it had not raised the defence of freedom of speech and/or fair comment in its response. It submitted that the anchor merely referred to the tweets in the larger public interest to make a clear distinction between the trial before the court and the media trial. In doing so, he has duly exercised the freedom of speech and expression while being mindful of the reasonable restrictions. In any event, it submitted that it is a well-settled position of Indian jurisprudence that public officials and politicians must not have a 'thin skin' when it comes to defamation and there is public interest in discussing their comments/ critiquing them.

The broadcaster submitted that it was a matter of record that at the time of the impugned broadcast, Mr. Rahul Gandhi was convicted for the offence of defamation. The broadcast discussed the implications of such a judgment on the Lok Sabha membership of Mr. Gandhi under Section 8 of the Representation of the People's Act, 1951. Notably, the anchor had also informed that this decision would finally be decided by the Hon'ble High Court and Hon'ble Supreme Court, thereby including the possibility of his acquittal. In this regard, the broadcaster invited the attention of the Authority to certain statements made by the anchor in the impugned broadcast. The broadcaster submitted that there is a certain value in law which is attached to disclaimers, which cannot be disregarded.

In rejoinder the complainant submitted that the broadcaster had attempted to trivialize the broadcast by stating that it was only explaining the concept of negative equality as the broadcaster was aware that the broadcast was per se defamatory. Furthermore, he submitted that the channel had failed to provide any justification

for the caption “दूसरों के अपराध गिाने से राहुल गाँधी के अपराध कम होंगे?” aired during the broadcast.

Supplementary Written Submissions dated 14.02.2024 of the Broadcaster.

1. During the course of the hearing, *inter alia* the allegation was made by the complainant that the tweets of Ms. Priyanka Gandhi Vadra being shown in the impugned broadcast were fabricated, which allegation warranted our categorical response.
2. It is submitted that the tweets depicted in the impugned broadcast were factually correct and were retrieved from the official and verified Twitter handle of Ms. Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. The said tweets were made by Ms. Gandhi on March 24, 2023 at 04:08 pm and have been viewed by over 3.4 million Twitter users. The said tweets made from the official account of Ms. Gandhi are still available on Twitter.
3. Therefore, it is a matter of public record that these tweets are true and accurate, and the complainant is merely making the allegations of their fabrication to mislead the NBDSA and cause prejudice in order to procure a favourable relief.
4. Thus, from the above facts and circumstances, it is crystal clear that the veracity of the tweets is incontrovertible, and as such, the allegations made by the complainant must hold no ground in the adjudication of the present complaint.

Decision

NBDSA went through the complaint, response of the broadcaster and gave due consideration to the submissions of the complainant and the broadcaster and reviewed the footage of the broadcast.

NBDSA observed that though the anchor gave a different narrative to the tweets, but as admitted by both the parties the tweets made by Mrs. Priyanka Gandhi were broadcast accurately by the broadcaster. In view of the fact that the averments contained in the complaint relating to defamation do not meet the threshold of defamation, NBDSA finds no violation of the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards, Guidelines issued by it.

NBDSA also noted that the fictional video aired during the broadcast including the story of the robber depicted in the broadcast and the imputation it carried with it concerning Mr. Rahul Gandhi's conviction, was not in good taste and should have been avoided. Accordingly, NBDSA advises the broadcaster to be careful while airing such fictional videos in future broadcasts.

NBDSA, therefore, is of the opinion that it would be appropriate for the broadcaster to remove the fictional video in the impugned broadcast, if still available on the

website of the channel, or YouTube, and remove all hyperlinks including access which should be confirmed to NBDSA in writing within 7 days of the Order.

NBDSA decided to close the complaint with the aforesaid observations and inform the complainant the broadcaster.

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 : 28.02.2024