

Decision dated 20.2.2012 regarding complaint dated 19.9.11 by Mr. Ambati Rambabu on a programme titled “Raasaleelala Rambabu” on 16.9.11, by ABN Andhra Jyoti channel, Hyderabad (Non Member)

The complaint before the MoIB, was forwarded to the NBSA .From the communication dated 30.11.2011 received from the MoI&B, it was understood that they had communicated to the broadcaster to cooperate with NBSA/NBA in disposal of the said complaint. The broadcaster responded to the MIB vide letter dated 4.11.11, which had been forwarded to NBA by MIB for further action in the matter.

Complaint:

The complainant alleged that it was a sting operation to deliberately tarnish his reputation and image. He stated that he has been in politics and public life for the last 30 years. The channel aired a programme wherein they had hired a mimicry artist along with a young woman who claimed to have spoken to him on cell phone. The programme showed that the complainant was talking to a young women using lewd language etc. thus enticing the lady for sexual favour. The programme contained highly objectionable language. His voice was dubbed by the mimicry artist and he spoke like the complainant with the lady. The episode showed the complainant as a person who was luring women to join the political party which he was affiliated to. He alleged that telecasting of this episode has created a lot of embarrassment for his family .He could contact the lady who admitted that Mr. Vemuri Radharishna, MD of Andhra Jyoti has forced her to do sleaze act else she was threatened with dire consequences. He had filed a police complaint against the channel and the MD. He had appealed before the Human Rights Commission in Hyderabad and upon verification of facts they immediately called for an enquiry. He alleges that similar sting operations were conducted by the channel against Mr. N.D. Tiwari, the then Governor, of Andhra Pradesh and the Police Commissioner of Vijayawada and a comedian of the Telugu film industry. The channel has become synonymous to explosive news; often they concentrate on sex scandal and sting operations to increase their TRP ratings. The complainant alleged that they were demanding huge sums of money for stopping the programme from being telecasted further.

NBSA decided that to take a view and to understand the complete details and intricacies of the matter as stated in the respective replies, both parties were advised to be present at the meeting of the Authority for a hearing on 20.2.2012. Accordingly, the following persons appeared on behalf of the broadcaster and the complainant:

ABN Andhra Jyoti:

1. Mr. A. Krishna Rao, Bureau Chief, ABN Andhra Jyothi, New Delhi

Mr. Ambati Rambabu (Complainant):

2. Mr. Sateesh. Galla, Advocate

During the hearing Mr. Sateesh Galla, Advocate representing Mr. Ambati Rambabu, informed the Authority that after making the complaint to the Authority, they had filed a writ petition in the High Court of Andhra Pradesh. Accordingly, the Authority decided that in view of the matter being subjudice as per Regulations 7.2 read with Regulation 8.4.3 of the News Broadcasting Standards Regulations, it was not appropriate for the Authority to proceed with the matter already sub judice. The Authority decided that the matter may be closed. The MIB, complainant and the broadcaster be informed accordingly.
