

**News Broadcasting Standards Authority
Order No. 39 (2016)**

Order of NBSA on the letter dated 31.12.2015, received from the Under Secretary, MoI&B regarding alleged violation of the content by “ETV MP Chhattisgarh News Channel” on 7.8.2015 at 18:26:34 hrs

MoI&B, vide above mentioned letter, had forwarded the CD containing recordings of the content carried by ETV MP Chhattisgarh TV Channel on 7.8.2015 (at 18:26:34 hrs) and the EMMC Report containing its analysis and comments on the programme aired.

The Report of the EMMC stated that the channel had telecast a special programme namely “Vampire” based on the stories on vampires in an exaggerated manner, purporting to disclose secrets relating to vampires. During the whole programme, the channel had used scary and horrifying clippings from Hollywood films on vampires. During the said programme, comments were made like “लेकिन इतना तो सच है कि अगर धुंआ उठा है तो आग तो जल रही होगी, अगर ये कहानियाँ बनी हैं तो इनके पीछे कुछ न कुछ सच जरूर होगा।” and “अगर विज्ञान इस बात पर मुहर लगा रहा है तो कहीं न कहीं वैम्पायर की दुनिया भी है, जो इस बात को जानती है।” The broadcast also included a clipping of a couple living like vampires in real life by drinking the blood of each other by cutting their hand. In short, it was apparent that the object of the programme was to credibilise the existence of vampires and to promote blind faith in occult, vampirism and superstition. The visuals were also disturbing and revolting.

During the telecast of the programme, following statements were made by the anchor:

“कहते हैं कि दुनिया में अगर भगवान का अस्तित्व है तो दानवों का भी अस्तित्व है। ऐसा भी कहा जाता है कि चंतंदवतउंस बजपअपजल जैसी तमाम चीजों का वजूद पाया गया है। अगर हम जिक्र रिसर्च का करें तो ऐसा नहीं है कि वैम्पायर की बातों को लेकर विज्ञान ने कुछ नहीं किया। विज्ञान जगत ने भी वैम्पायर पर काम किया और जो नतीजे निकले वे चौंकाने वाले थे। चैनल ने वैम्पायर को जवान खून की तलाष करने वाला बताया जिसके सहारे वह अपने आप को जवान बनाए रखते हैं। उनका षिकार उनसे बच न जाए इसलिए वह उस पर पूरी तरह से नज़र रखते हैं और मौका मिलते ही वह उसे किसी सुनसान जगह पर ले जाकर उसके खून से अपनी प्यास बुझा लेते हैं। वैम्पायर को हमेशा जवान खून की तलाष रहती है।”

It was also stated during the broadcast that according to research by scientists, when the blood of a young human is transfused into the body of an old human, then the mind and body of the old human starts functioning as that of young human. Further the channel, with the help of graphics, informed that scientists performed an experiment on rats, in which the blood of young rats was transfused into the body of old rats, and after such transfusion, the body of the old rat transformed into the body of a young rat. The channel stated that on the

experiment performed on the rats that: "अगर विज्ञान इस बात पर मुहर लगा रहा है तो कहीं न कहीं वैम्यायर की दुनिया भी है, जो इस बात को जानती है।". It is informed by the channel that there is a belief that the vampires chew their shroud after their death which results into the spreading of many diseases; and that for this reason, on the death of such persons, they are buried with brick in their mouths (18:34:34 to 18:38:50).

When the EMMC Report and CD were sent to the broadcaster with letter dated 22.12.2015, the broadcaster in its reply dated 18.1.2016 has stated that there "*was no intention to broadcast indecent content or to encourage blind belief through telecast of the program mentioned in the instant complaint. The said program was aired only once on 7th August 2015 at 6:30 PM.*" The broadcaster assured that it will ensure that the said program was not telecast on their channel again.

NBSA at its meeting held on 11.3.2016 considered the complaint, response and also viewed the CD. NBSA was surprised to note that a news channel at a prime hour (18:26:34 hrs), when there would be substantial viewership including young children, was showing a highly exaggerated horrifying programme with false content advocating blind belief in superstition and occult, and trying to pass off Hollywood movie scenes as depictions of vampirism which had truth and scientific research backing. NBSA noted that the programme violated the Principles of Self Regulation relating to "*Refraining from Advocating or Encouraging Superstition and Occultism*" & "*Specific Guidelines Covering Reportage*" relating to "*Accuracy, Good Taste, Supernatural, Occultism & Paranormal & Children's interest*".

NBSA therefore issued a show cause notice to the broadcaster for wilful violation of the above guidelines and directed it to file a response and also to appear before the NBSA. Mr. Asheet Kunal, Editor, ETV and Ms. Aditi Mittal, Authorised Representative appeared before the NBSA on 21.5.2016 on behalf of ETV MP/Chhattisgarh:

The broadcaster's representatives informed NBSA that its intention was to educate the viewers on the subject. He however, conceded that the programme was not made in an appropriate manner to convey the intended object. He stated that a notice was issued to Mr. M. Pandey, producer of the programme for violation of the NBA Guidelines and that he subsequently left the organization. The broadcaster admitted that it was a mistake and it was not an appropriate programme to be run on the news channel, particularly around 6.30 pm when there would be substantial viewership including young children.

After considering the matter, NBSA was of the view that showing a highly exaggerated horrifying programme with false content advocating blind faith in superstition and occult, and trying to pass off Hollywood movie scenes as depictions of vampirism as if there was truth and scientific research backing for vampirism showed lack of editorial checks and inadequate supervision. NBSA held that the broadcaster was in breach of Principles of Self Regulation relating to “Refraining from Advocating or Encouraging Superstition and Occultism” & “Specific Guidelines Covering Reportage” relating to “Accuracy, Good Taste, Supernatural, Occultism & Paranormal & Children’s interest”.

NBSA decided to impose the following sanctions/fine upon the broadcaster:

(a) The broadcaster shall, at 6.30 pm on 25.7.2016 air the following text (static) on full screen in large font size with a clearly audible voice-over (in slow speed) expressing regret for the said telecast on their channel ETV MP/Chhattisgarh by stating the following: **(Text to be translated in Hindi)**

“We regret that in the telecast of a special programme namely “Vampire” telecast on 7.8.2015 at 18:26:34 hrs, we had failed to comply with the Principles of Self Regulation relating to “Refraining from Advocating or Encouraging Superstition and Occultism” & “Specific Guidelines Covering Reportage” relating to “Accuracy, Good Taste, Supernatural, Occultism & Paranormal & Children’s interest”. We admit that it was a mistake to show a highly exaggerated horrifying programme with false content advocating blind faith in superstition and occult and trying to pass off Hollywood movie scenes as depictions of vampirism and trying to imply that vampirism had truth and scientific research backing”.

(b) The broadcaster is imposed a fine of Rs.1,00,000/-.(Rupees one lakh only) payable to NBA (News Broadcasters Association) within 7 (seven) days of receipt of this Order.

(c) The video of the said programme, if hosted, on ETV MP Chhattisgarh or any website or any other links should be removed immediately and confirmed to NBSA.

(d) The broadcaster shall submit a compact disc containing the telecast with particulars of the date and time of the telecast, within one week of telecast, as proof of compliance. After such CD is submitted by the broadcaster, the matter will be closed.

NBSA further directs the NBA:

- a) To send a copy of this order to the MoI&B and the news channel;
- b) To circulate this order to all Members, Editors & Legal Heads of NBA.
- c) NBA to also host this order on its website and to include it in its next Annual Report.
- d) Release the Order to media.

Sd/-
Justice R.V. Raveendran (Retd)
Chairperson

Place: New Delhi
Date: 18.7.2016