

Decision dated 18.7.2017 regarding complaint dated 27.2.2017 from Dr. M.K. Bimal, Airport Director, Juhu Airport [Airports Authority of India] against News 18 India for distorting footage of cultural events of children and parents on 27.1.2017.

Complaint:

The complaint was that distorted footage of cultural events of children and parents of Airports Authority of India (AAI) during sports events and prize distribution on the eve of celebration of Republic Day (26th January, 2017) at Juhu Airport had been telecast on 27.1.2017 with negative comments thereby defaming the image of prestigious organization AAI. It was alleged that the footage had been telecasted in a manipulative way without stating that it was a children's program, sports event and prize distribution etc., and that indicated that the footage had been telecasted without confirming its authenticity and with some ulterior motives.

NBSA at the meeting held 24.4.2017 had considered the complaint, response and also viewed the CD. NBSA noted that the telecast was one sided and there was no opportunity to AAI (or its representatives) which was being reported upon to give its version. Hence it was not a balanced reporting. The broadcaster had violated the principles relating to impartiality/ objectivity and neutrality while reporting the event of the AAI. NBSA was therefore of the view that the broadcaster should contact the complainant, take the version of the complainant and air it on their channel. It was decided that if the version of the complainant was not carried by the channel within 10 days of receipt of the letter, both parties should be called for a hearing at the next meeting of NBSA. The above decision was conveyed to both the broadcaster and the complainant on 30.5.2017.

NBSA noted that the complainant on receipt of the letter vide letter dated 1.6.2017 stated that they desired to know how the video was taken as no person is allowed to enter the airport premises without a pass as it is a high security area and media was not invited to cover the function of the cultural events of children and parents on 27.1.2017. In view of the above stand taken by the complainant, the broadcaster could not proceed to record the complainant's version and broadcast the same within the ten days given by NBSA. Therefore, both parties were called for a hearing on 18.7.2017. The following persons appeared for the hearing:

Complainant:

1. Ms. Chetna Rai, Advocate
2. Mr. Sachin Yadav, Manager (Law)
3. Mr. Sneh Tiwari, Junior Executive (Law)

TV18 Broadcast Ltd. [News18 India]:

1. Mr. Radhakrishnan Nair, Managing Editor
2. Mr. Gautam Dubey, AVP – Legal
3. Mr. Anurag Singh, Executive Editor, News18 India
4. Mr. Apurv Narula, Manager – Legal

During the hearing, it was agreed that the clip of the programme would be given by the NBSA to the complainant. The broadcaster would contact the complainant, take the version of the complainant and air it on their channel for two minutes at 10 pm. The date of the broadcast would be given by NBSA. Prior to airing the version of the complainant, the broadcaster must mention by giving a brief background as to why it necessitated carrying the version of the AAI on the channel. Recording the said arrangement, the matter was closed.
