

August 13, 2020

Editors of NBA

Re: Advisory Regarding Coverage of the Suicide of Actor Sushant Singh Rajput by member broadcasters

There has been extensive coverage by our member news channels of the suicide of actor Sushant Singh Rajput.

In this regard, NBSA has received complaints from viewers, which are under consideration by NBSA.

Regarding reporting of matters relating to suicide, attention of Editors is drawn to the following guidelines:

“Specific Guidelines Covering Reportage” dated 10.2.2020 deals with the manner in which the media should report on cases of suicide.

3. Law & Order, Crime & Violence

3.1 Content should not glamorize or sensationalize crime or condone criminal actions, including suicide.

Further, it may also be noted that intrusive broadcasts in relation to the death of a person, even if a celebrity, are a violation of the guidelines relating to privacy, apart from being in breach of the dignity of an individual.

5. Privacy

5.1 Broadcasters should exercise discretion and sensitivity when reporting on distressing situations, on grief and bereavement.

5.3 Content that would cause unwarranted distress to surviving family members, including by showing archival footage, should be avoided.

5.4 No information relating to the location of a person’s home or family should be disclosed without permission from the concerned person.

5.6 Interviews of the injured, victims or grieving persons should be conducted only with prior consent of the persons or where applicable their guardian.

Similarly, the *“Guidelines for Telecast of News Affecting Public Order” dated 18.12.2008* deals with the manner in which a deceased person’s body should be shown by the media:

6. *The dead should be treated with dignity and their visuals should not be shown. Special care should be taken in the broadcast of any distressing visuals and graphics showing grief and emotional scenes of victims and relatives which could cause distress to children and families.*

Editors are accordingly advised to bring the aforementioned Guidelines to the specific attention of all editorial personnel, anchors, journalists, producers and any other persons who are involved with news reportage.

Editors are cautioned that any violation of the above principles/Guidelines will be viewed seriously by NBSA and appropriate action may be initiated, including suo motu action.

Editors are also advised to preserve the footage and scripts of all news/programmes broadcast in relation to the suicide of actor Sushant Singh Rajput for consideration of NBSA, should it become necessary.

Kindly circulate to all concerned for compliance.



Annie Joseph
For & on behalf of the
News Broadcasting Standards Authority

CC: Members & Legal Heads of NBA