

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Delhi: March 10, 2021.....Letter dated 9.3.2021 addressed to Mr. Sanjay Gupta, Country Manager, Google India, by Mr. Rajat Sharma, President, News Broadcasters Association (NBA), regarding Revenue Sharing by Intermediary Technology Platforms. The text of the letter sent is reproduced below.



**Annie Joseph
Secretary General**

“Digital platforms have fundamentally changed the way media content is produced, distributed and consumed. A changing media landscape with the majority of the public using digital platforms to obtain their news, has resulted in a power imbalance between traditional media/news organizations and big-tech/digital technology platforms.

News organizations make heavy investments in employing anchors, journalists and reporters to gather, verify and deliver credible information but are inadequately compensated - the largest share of advertising revenue flows disproportionately to Intermediary Technology Platforms such as Google, YouTube, Facebook etc.

Google plays a key role in this value chain as an intermediary and plays a part in delivering this news content to its audiences albeit without sufficiently compensating the content owners.

The present situation reflects the unfair distribution of advertising revenues and opaqueness of the advertising system which is causing the digital news businesses to come under tremendous pressure/stress. Advertising revenues form the backbone of the news broadcasters. However, they are seeing their share of the advertising pie shrinking in the digital space since technology giants are taking away the major chunk, leaving news broadcasters with a nominal share.

Countries like Australia, France and other European countries have taken the lead in addressing/rectifying this power imbalance through legislative enactments which ensure that Google, Facebook and other internet tech giants adequately pay news publishers for their highest quality news content. Google has recently agreed to compensate and pay publishers in France, Australia and the European Union.

An independent and robust media landscape is vital for a well-functioning democracy and to sustain/safeguard public interest in journalism. This requires the ecosystem to be made transparent and sustainable by evening out the bargaining power between news publishers/broadcasters and digital platforms/intermediaries.

Evidently, there is an urgent need to create an equitable relationship and level the playing field between global tech monopolies and traditional media/news organizations.

Being a multinational organization following global best practices in all the countries it operates, the expectation is that Google will employ principles of universal parity in dealing with News Content owners and employ similar norms in India.

Consequently, we request you to urgently look into the matter and examine the issues at play to ensure the ecosystem remains sustainable.

We would be happy to have a meeting through VC in this regard. Kindly indicate the date and time for the VC.

Please acknowledge receipt of the communication.”
