



**September 16, 2010**

**All Editors of NBA**

**Re: The Impending Ayodhya Judgement**

The Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court has fixed 24<sup>th</sup> September 2010, for pronouncement of the judgement in the Ayodhya Case.

The powerful and wide impact of the information disseminated by the electronic media on formation of public opinion makes it incumbent on the broadcasters to take extra care in the telecast of news relating to sensitive matters.

The Ayodhya issue is one such matter in which extra care is necessary to ensure that the telecast of any news relating to it should not be sensational, inflammatory or be provocative. The basic guideline to be adhered to is that all such news should conform strictly to subserving the public interest of maintaining communal harmony & preservation of the secular ethos of our plural society and it should influence the formation of the correct public opinion.

In view of the ultra sensitive nature of the Ayodhya issue, the reporting of the High Court judgement on Ayodhya in this case requires adherence to the Code of ethics and certain specific guidelines issued from time to time in addition to these.

It is, therefore, necessary that all the broadcasters should not only ensure rigid compliance of the earlier guidelines as well as these guidelines but should also ensure that no occasion arises for any speculation about the accuracy of the content.

Some additional specific guidelines to be observed in relation to the telecast of this matter are as follows:

1. All news relating to the High Court judgement in the case should be verbatim reproduction of the relevant part of the said judgement uninfluenced by any opinion or interpretation.
2. No broadcast should be made of any speculation of the judgement before it is pronounced; and of its likely consequence thereafter which may be sensational, inflammatory or provocative.
3. No footage of the demolition of the Babri Masjid is to be shown in any new item relating to the judgement.
4. No visuals need be shown depicting celebration or protest of the judgement.
5. In view of the sensitivity of news reporting on this issue extra care should be taken to ensure accuracy by vetting & clearance at the highest editorial level.

It is expected that strict adherence to these guidelines would be ensured by all the Editors to avoid any violation which may attract strict action.

Sd/-

Annie Joseph

Secretary General, NBA

CC: Members & Legal Heads of NBA