



18th ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25



Board of Directors

News Broadcasters & Digital Association



Rajat Sharma
President



M.V. Shreyams Kumar
Vice President



Anuradha Prasad Shukla
Honorary Treasurer



Rahul Joshi



Kalli Purie Bhandal



Anil Kumar Malhotra



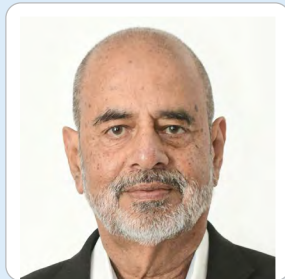
Dhruva Mukherjee



Rahul Kanwal



Varun Kohli



I. Venkat



Mahesh Kumar



News Broadcasters & Digital Association

Board of Directors

Mr. Rajat Sharma

President
Independent News Service Pvt. Ltd.

Mr. M. V. Shreyams Kumar

Vice President
Mathrubhumi Printing & Publishing Co. Ltd

Ms. Anuradha Prasad Shukla

Honorary Treasurer
News24 Broadcast India Ltd.

Mr. Rahul Joshi

Network18 Media & Investments Limited.

Ms. Kalli Purie Bhandal

TV Today Network Ltd.

Mr. Anil Kumar Malhotra

Zee Media Corporation Ltd.

Mr. Sanjay Pugalía (upto 13.6.2025)

New Delhi Television Ltd.

Mr. Dhruba Mukherjee

ABP Network Pvt. Ltd.

Mr. Varun Kohli

Bennett, Coleman and Company Ltd.

Mr. Rahul Kanwal (from 1.8.2025)

New Delhi Television Ltd.

Mr. I. Venkat

Eenadu Television Pvt. Ltd.

Mr. Mahesh Kumar

Sun TV Network Pvt. Ltd.

Secretary General

Ms. Annie Joseph

Auditors

S.S. Kothari Mehta & Co. LLP

Chartered Accountants

Bankers

Bank of India

Bank of Baroda

Registered Office

B-39, Okhla, Industrial Area Phase-1, New Delhi 110020

Corporate Office

Mantec House, 2nd Floor, C-56/5 Sector 62, Noida 201301

CIN: U22211DL2007NPL165480



Message from President, NBDA



Dear Members,

It is my privilege to present the Eighteenth Annual Report of the News Broadcasters & Digital Association (NBDA). Our journey has been marked by significant milestones, which are a testament to NBDA's successful fulfilment of its role since its inception. Together, NBDA has emerged as the collective voice for the news genre and has been instrumental in advocating for innovation, growth, and self-regulation.

The news industry is presently facing considerable financial challenges due to factors such as the growth of alternative media, declining subscriber numbers, carriage fees, and employee costs. The situation is further compounded by overreliance on advertising revenues, which are dwindling as a result of low advertising rates and decreased advertiser spending.

Technological advances such as Generative AI also present new challenges and opportunities for the news industry. In a world increasingly shaped by AI, deepfakes are becoming a growing threat to journalism, undermining the credibility and public trust in the news media. In this era of rapid technological advancements, a strong, unified voice for the news media is more crucial than ever. We recognize the challenges and opportunities presented by the evolving technology, and are committed to harnessing them responsibly.

Our perspectives on various issues have consistently received consideration from relevant Ministries and statutory bodies during policy formulation. As the unified voice for the news genre, NBDA's inputs are valued at the highest levels of government. We have consistently received unwavering support from the government in finding solutions to critical industry issues, and these dialogues have been both invaluable and productive.

In pursuit of our objectives, NBDA has actively engaged with key government authorities and regulatory bodies. During the year under review, we have made submissions to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MoI&B), the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeiTY) and the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). These submissions addressed issues concerning the news media, particularly those related to freedom of speech and expression.

While the Management Report details the initiatives undertaken this past year, I want to address some of the key issues taken up by NBDA.

NBDA submitted its views and concerns regarding the draft Digital Personal Data Protection Rules 2025, emphasizing the importance and necessity to grant absolute exemption for "journalistic purposes" under the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 and the above Rules. These concerns were also expressed to the Minister for Information Technology, whose intervention has been requested. Additionally, his attention has also been drawn to the dilution of the Right to Information Act, 2005 as a result of the abovementioned draft Rules and the Act.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee invited NBDA to express its views on the subject 'Review of mechanism to curb Fake News'. NBDA has deposed before the Committee and the Report of the Committee is awaited.

NBDA commends the Mol&B for its engagement with the stakeholders and for proactively taking up issues that significantly impact the news media, such as amendments to the TRP Guidelines, the rate structure for government advertisements, and the consultation on DD Free Dish e-auction methodology.

We appreciate Mol&B's forward-looking approach in reviewing and modernizing the regulatory framework for television rating agencies. To ensure a fair, transparent, credible, and future-ready TRP measurement regime, we have urged the Mol&B to conduct a detailed consultation with all stakeholders. This will allow for a thorough examination of existing policy guidelines, an assessment of the proposed amendments and their implications, and the implementation of necessary checks and balances before introducing any modifications.

As far as rates for government advertisements are concerned, NBDA has emphasized that the current rates are exceptionally low. We are confident that our submissions will be taken into consideration by the Rate Structure Committee, and a fair and economically viable rate for news broadcasters will be established.

NBDA welcomes the opportunity for constructive dialogue and collaboration to assist Prasar Bharati in developing a transparent, equitable, and robust e-auction framework. This will strengthen the DD Free Dish platform and help fulfill Prasar Bharati's public service mission.

We appeal to the government to engage in detailed constructive dialogue with the stakeholders and avoid rushing the rollout of recommendations on issues related to DDFD, Government ad rates, and TRP methodology.

Above all, I must underscore our members commitment to self-regulation. This commitment makes the self-regulatory approach an excellent model, enabling NBDSA to consistently, effectively, and exclusively address all content-related issues within an entirely voluntary system. On behalf of the NBDA Board and myself, I would like to sincerely thank the Chairperson and Eminent Members of NBDSA for their wholehearted support, time, and guidance.

I also want to express my sincere gratitude to the Board and Members of NBDA for their unwavering support. This year, Mr. Rahul Kanwal of NDTV joined our Board. Mr. Sanjay Pugalia has stepped down . His contributions have been of immense value to the Association.

On behalf of the NBDA Board, I extend our profound gratitude to all our members for their continuous support. The dedication of our employees is invaluable. I express my deepest gratitude and look forward to your continued trust, confidence, and support.

It is with regret that I must inform the members that Mrs. Annie Joseph, our Secretary General, has requested the Board to relieve her of the responsibilities in NBDA by the end of the year. The Board has regretfully accepted her request. Mrs. Joseph's contributions to building NBDA since its formation has been truly remarkable. Her tireless efforts in ensuring the implementation of NBDA's objectives and its achievements are highly commendable. The Board and members of NBDA extend their best wishes to Mrs. Annie Joseph for the years ahead.

My thanks also go to the staff of NBDA Secretariat, Legal Counsel, Financial and Corporate Consultants, as well as the Auditors of NBDA and Bankers for their valuable time and cooperation.

Best wishes



Rajat Sharma
President

Date: August 25, 2025



Notice is hereby given that the 18th Annual General Meeting of the Members of News Broadcasters & Digital Association will be held on Friday, the 19th September 2025, at 12.00 noon at Multipurpose Hall, Kamaladevi Complex, India International Centre, 40, Max Mueller Marg, New Delhi 110003, to transact the following business:

Ordinary Business

1. To receive, consider and adopt the Audited Financial Statement of the Company for the financial year ended March 31, 2025, together with Auditor's Report and Director's Report thereon and for the purpose, to pass with or without modification(s) the following resolution as an Ordinary Resolution:

"RESOLVED THAT the Audited Financial Statement of the Company for the financial year ended March 31, 2025, together with Auditor's Report and Director's Report thereon, be and are hereby considered and adopted."

2. To elect a representative of any member eligible for appointment to the office of Director in General Body Meeting on five posts under Article 24 of the Articles of Association. Election of a representative of any member eligible for appointment to the office of Director in General Body Meeting on five posts under Article 24 of the Articles of Association shall be held in the following manner:

A nomination under Article 24 of Articles of Association from a representative of any member eligible for appointment to the office of Director, who is willing to contest the Election on the five posts of the Board of Directors will be invited and after receiving the nomination, members of the association will be duly informed by issuing a Supplementary Notice, about the persons who have filed the nomination and eligible for contesting the election on the said post of Directors and such election shall be held by the method of voting as prescribed under Article 38 of the Article of Association.

Special Business

3. To consider and if thought fit, to pass with or without modification(s) the following resolution as an Ordinary Resolution:

"RESOLVED THAT when required, all Members and Associate Members of NBDA will contribute towards meeting the legal expenses for engaging Senior Counsel(s) which includes fees for appearance on behalf of NBDA before the Courts, related conference charges, settling petitions, legal advice rendered and clerkage as raised by the Senior Counsel."

"FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Secretary General, NBDA be and is hereby authorised to sign and to do all or any of the acts, deeds, matters, and things as may be considered expedient and necessary for implementing the said resolution on behalf of the Association."

**By Order of the Board of Directors of
News Broadcasters & Digital Association**

Annie Joseph
Secretary General

Place: New Delhi
Date: July 25, 2025

Explanatory Statement Pursuant to Section 102 of the Companies Act, 2013

Item No. 2

Election of a representative of any member eligible for appointment to the office of Director in General Body Meeting on five posts under Article 24 of the Articles of Association shall be held in the following manner:

A nomination under Article 24 of Articles of Association from a representative of any member eligible for appointment to the office of Director, who is willing to contest the Election on the five posts of the Board of Directors will be invited and after receiving the nomination, members of the association will be duly informed by issuing the Supplementary Notice along with other documents, about the persons who have filed the nomination and eligible for contesting the election on the said post of Directors and such election shall be held by the method of voting as prescribed under Article 38 of the Article of Association.

Note No. 10 to 14 of the Notice disclose the procedure for contesting the Election on the five posts of the Board of Directors after being nominated by a candidate, under Article 24 of the Articles of Association.

Item No. 3

The issue for consideration before the Board relates to meeting the expenses for engaging Senior Counsel(s) and other Counsels and the related expenses for legal matters pending or matters that may arise in future in the Courts. With the limited financial resources, NBDA will not be able to meet the said expenses. Since the issues are related to the industry and affect all members, these expenses should be borne/ honoured by the Members/ Associate Members of NBDA and should be equitably shared pursuant to Sub clause 15 and 16 of Clause III (B) of the Memorandum of Association. There are matters presently pending before the Supreme Court, High Courts, CCI etc, in which NBDA has intervened or filed petitions/writ petitions. There is a possibility that in the future critical industry matters may arise in the courts, which would need intervention of NBDA. The Board of Directors, therefore, recommends the Resolution to be passed by the Members as an Ordinary Resolution.

Relevant documents relating to said item are available for inspection by members at the Registered Office of the Company. None of the Directors, in respect of whom the Resolution is being moved, is concerned, or interested, financially or otherwise, in the Resolution set out at Item No. 3 of this Notice.

**By Order of the Board of Directors of
News Broadcasters & Digital Association**



Annie Joseph
Secretary General

Place: New Delhi
Date: July 25, 2025



1. Member entities should provide Board Resolution under Section 113 of the Companies Act, 2013 authorizing person(s) who will represent them at the Annual General Meeting. Such person(s) shall be deemed to be Member present in person.
2. Use of proxy in relation to any matter concerning the affairs of the Association is expressly forbidden.
3. A statement pursuant to Section 102 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013 relating to Special Business to be transacted at the meeting is annexed hereto.
4. Members are requested to bring their copy of the Annual Report to the meeting.
5. No person other than the authorized representative of the Member entity shall be entitled to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Association.
6. Members desirous of having any information on accounts are requested to send their queries to NBDA at its Registered Office, B-39 Okhla Industrial Area Phase 1, New Delhi 110020 at least seven days before the date of the AGM, to make the requisite information available at the meeting.
7. Members attending the meeting are requested to bring the attendance slip, as appended to this Notice, duly filled in and present the same at the venue of the Annual General Meeting. No photocopies of the attendance slip will be accepted.
8. Relevant documents referred to in the accompanying Notice and the Statement are open for inspection by Members at the Registered Office of the Company, B-39 Okhla Industrial Area Phase 1, New Delhi 110020 on all working days during business hours up to the date of the meeting.
9. Members who have not registered their e-mail addresses so far are requested to register their e-mail address for receiving all communication, including Annual Report, Notices etc. from the Company electronically.
10. Election of a representative of any member eligible for appointment to the office of Director in General Body Meeting of the Association on the five posts under Article 24 of the Articles of Association shall be held in the following manner:

A representative of any member eligible for appointment to the office of Director in General Body Meeting willing to contest the election on the five posts of the Board of Directors may submit a nomination under Article 24 of Articles of Association before 14 days of the AGM, which is on 19.9.2025 (on or before 5th September 2025).

After receiving the nomination, members will be duly informed by issuing the Supplementary Notice, about the persons who have filed the Nomination and contesting the election on the post of Director under Article 24.

The Director(s), so elected shall be liable to retire at every Ordinary General Body Meeting in terms of Article 22 of the Articles of Association.

Extract of the Article 24 of the Articles of Association of NBDA, is reproduced below:

24. Nomination for Directorship

"A representative of any member (other than a retiring Director) shall be eligible for appointment to the office of Director at any General Body Meeting, if some member intending to propose him has not less than Fourteen days before the meeting, left at the office of the Association a notice in writing signifying his candidature for the office of Director or the intention of such member to propose him as a candidate for that office, as the case may be. In order for such nomination to be effective, the same shall be proposed by one

Member and seconded by another. The Association shall thereupon inform its members of the candidature of such person for the office of directorship by serving individual notices to all the members not less than 48 hours before the meeting.

However, there shall be no requirement for such nomination in case of a retiring Director offering himself for re-election.

The Association shall not be responsible for considering or remedying any defective, incomplete or delayed notice of candidature."

11. NBDA has already intimated on 23.6.2025 to its full members through a General Intimation about the election of a representative of any member eligible for appointment to the office of Director in General Body Meeting of the Association on the five posts under Article 24 of the Articles of Association.
12. Under Article 3 of the Articles of Association, Associate Member shall neither be entitled to voting rights nor shall be eligible for election to the Board of Directors.
13. In terms of Article 38 of the Articles of Association, at any general meeting a resolution put to vote at the meeting shall be decided on a show of hands unless a poll is ordered by the Chairman on his own (before or on the declaration of the result of the show of hands).
14. The representative of any member eligible for appointment to the office of Director in General Body Meeting must be an employee or a Director of the Member entity and a Board resolution is submitted authorizing the person to represent the Member entity on the Association.

**By Order of the Board of Directors of
News Broadcasters & Digital Association**



Annie Joseph
Secretary General

Place: New Delhi
Date: July 25, 2025



Directors' Report to the Members

The Directors have pleasure in presenting the 18th Annual Report of your Association together with Audited Accounts for the period from April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025.

Financial Review

	31.03.2025 (Amount in Rs.'00)	31.03.2024 (Amount in Rs.'00)
Income from Subscription	2,27,800	2,98,950
Other Income	32,170	34,464
Depreciation and Amortization Expense	336	346
Total Expenditure	2,31,053	3,00,170
Surplus/(Deficit) after depreciation and tax carried to General Reserve	28,917	33,244

Of the Income and Expenditure account a sum of Rs.73,245 (previous year Rs 75,514) has been transferred to special reserve.

Change in Nature of Services

There is no change in nature of services provided by the Association.

Directors

Mrs. Anuradha Prasad Shukla, Mr. M. V. Shreyams Kumar, Mr. I. Venkat and Mr R. Mahesh Kumar were appointed as Additional Directors on February 1, 2012, March 29, 2014, February 17, 2017 and June 3, 2024 by the Board of Directors in terms of Articles 16 and 22 of the Articles of Association liable to retire at every Ordinary General Body Meeting. Members again approved their appointment in the last Annual General Meeting.

Mr. Rahul Kanwal to be appointed as a Permanent Director from the date of issuance of the Director Identification Number (DIN) in place of Mr. Sanjay Pugalia who resigned from the Directorship of the Association w.e.f 13.6.2025.

Membership of Association

The number of Members/Associate Members of the Association are 29 broadcasters and digital news publishers representing channels and digital news platforms.

News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority [NBDSA]

News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority [NBDSA] is an independent self-regulatory adjudicatory body. The composition of NBDSA is as under:

Chairperson

Justice A. K. Sikri (Retd.)

Independent Members

1. Dr. Nasim Zaidi, former Chief Election Commissioner of India
2. Mr. Navtej Sarna, former Ambassador to the United States of America
3. Dr. Mohan Kumar, former Ambassador to France
4. Ms. Vrinda Sarup, former Secretary to the Govt. of India

Editor Members

1. Mr. Vishal Pant, Senior Executive Editor, India Today TV (upto 17.8.2024)
2. Mr. Rajeev Devraj, Executive Editor, Mathrubhumi News
3. Mr. M. Gunasekaran, Editor-in-Chief, Sun News
4. Ms. Vaishali Sood, Editor and Creative Director, NDTV
5. Mr. Ranjit Kumar, Managing Editor, Times Now Navbharat (from 24.3.2025)

Auditors & Auditors' Report

M/s S.S. Kothari Mehta & Co. LLP, Chartered Accountants, were appointed as the Statutory Auditors of the Association to hold office for a period of five years from the conclusion of 14th Annual General Meeting until the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting in the year 2026.

The Statutory Auditors' Report on the Financial Statement of the Association for the financial year ended 31st March 2025 is self-explanatory and do not require further comments in the Directors' Report. The Audit Report does not contain any qualification, reservation or adverse remark.

Report on Conservation of Energy, Technology Absorption, Foreign Exchange Earnings and Outgo etc.

Information in accordance with the provisions of Section 134 (m) of the Companies Act, 2013 read with the Companies (Accounts) Rules, 2014 is given hereunder:

Energy conservation measures taken by the Association include: (1) use of LED/CFL lighting in the entire office area; (2) improved insulation using ceramic fibre in the heat treatment furnaces; (3) installation of heat reflecting film on windows of air-conditioned areas etc. At present, Association has not taken any steps for utilisation of alternate source of energy and no capital investment has been made on energy conservation equipment.

And other information in accordance with the provisions of Section 134 (m) of the Companies Act, 2013 read with the Companies (Accounting) Rules, 2013 regarding technology absorption is not applicable to the Association being involved in welfare services to its members.

Association has no foreign exchange earnings and outgo during the period.

Directors' Responsibility Statement

Pursuant to Section 134 (5) of the Companies Act, 2013, it is hereby confirmed:

- i. that in the preparation of the annual accounts, the applicable accounting standards had been followed along with proper explanation relating to material departures, if any;

- ii. that the Directors had selected such accounting policies and applied them consistently and made judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association at the end of the accounting year and of the surplus of the Association for that year;
- iii. that the Directors had taken proper and sufficient care for the maintenance of adequate accounting records in accordance with the provisions of this Act for safeguarding the assets of the Association and for preventing and detecting fraud and other irregularities;
- iv. that the Directors had prepared the annual accounts on a going concern basis;
- v. the Directors had devised proper systems to ensure compliance with the provisions of all applicable laws and that such systems were adequate and operating effectively.

Extract of Annual Return

Pursuant to Section 92(3) and Section 134(3)(a) of the Companies Act, 2013 the Annual Return is available on the website of the Company at www.nbdanewdelhi.com and may be accessed through the web link <https://www.nbdanewdelhi.com/annual-return> as compliance under amended Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014 vide MCA Notification No. GSR 538(E) dated 28th August, 2020.

Meetings of the Board

Six meetings of the Board of Directors were held on 15.4.2024, 9.7.2024, 20.9.2024, 20.9.2024, 3.12.2024 and 19.3.2025 during the financial year.

Particulars of Loans, Guarantees or Investments under Section 186 of Companies Act, 2013

Company has not given any loan or provided any guarantees or made investment to any person under Section 186 of Companies Act, 2013.

Particulars of Contracts or Arrangements with Related Parties Referred to in Sub-Section (1) of Section 188 in the Prescribed Form

Company does not have any related party transaction with any person in any form as asked in Form AOC_2 under Rule 8 of the Companies (Account) Rules, 2014.

Management Report

Management Report containing a brief review of the activities of the Association and the state of the Company's affairs during the year under review is attached with this Report.

Material changes and commitments, if any, affecting the financial position of the Company which have occurred between the end of the financial year of the Company to which the financial statements relate and the date of the report:

Material changes occurred subsequent to the close of the financial year of the Company to which the balance sheet relates are: **None**.

A statement indicating development and implementation of a risk management policy for the Company including identification therein of elements of risk, if any, which in the opinion of the Board may threaten the existence of the Company:

Association is generating receipts through subscription from members and provide them welfare services. At present, Company has not developed and implemented any such policy and system which nullify any type of risk on its existence.

Details of material and significant orders passed by the Regulators or Courts or Tribunal impacting the going concern status and Company's operations in future:

No such order is passed by any such Regulators or Courts or Tribunal which impacts the going concern status and Company's operations in future.

Compliance with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition & Redressal) Act, 2013:

The Company has only three employees which includes two women employees. Under the provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, the Policy of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace, along with enclosure approved by the Board have been circulated to the Internal Complaints Committee Members, employees of NBDA and the Members of NBDA and also uploaded on the NBDA website. The Internal Complaints Committee has the following persons as its members:

1. Presiding Officer – NBDA Representative: Mrs. Anuradha Prasad Shukla
2. Member-NBDA Representative: Ms. Kshipra Jatana
3. Member-NBDA Representative: Mr. M. N. Nasser Kabir
4. External Member: Ms. Nisha Bhambhani

NBDA has not received any complaints under the provisions of this Act.

Details in respect of adequacy of internal financial controls with reference to financial statements:

The Company has in place adequate internal financial controls with reference to financial statements.

Details of Application made or any proceeding pending under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 during the year along with their status as at the end of the financial year:

Neither any application was made, nor any proceeding(s) are pending under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (31 of 2016) during the financial year.

Details of difference between amount of the valuation done at the time of onetime settlement and the valuation done while taking loan from the banks or financial institutions along with the reasons thereof:

As the Company has not done any onetime settlement during the year under review hence no disclosure is required.

Fraud Reported by Auditor, if any

No fraud was reported by Auditors during the year.

Acknowledgements

The Board of Directors wish to place on record their appreciation for the support and cooperation extended by every Member of the Association, the Secretariat, its Bankers, and valuable contribution made by the Consultants, Counsels and Officials of the Member Companies.

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors

	Sd/-	Sd/-	Sd/-
	Rajat Sharma	M.V. Shreyams Kumar	Anuradha Prasad Shukla
Place: New Delhi	President	Vice President	Honorary Treasurer
Dated: July 25, 2025	[DIN: 00005373]	[DIN: 00877099]	[DIN: 00010716]



Independent Auditor's Report

To the Members of News Broadcasters & Digital Association

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of News Broadcasters & Digital Association ("the Association"), which comprise the Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2025, and the statement of Income and Expenditure and cash flow for the year then ended and notes to the financial statements comprising of a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information (hereinafter referred to as "the financial statements").

In our opinion and to the best of our information and according to the explanations given to us, the aforesaid financial statements give the information required by the Companies Act 2013 ("The Act") in the manner so required and give a true and fair view in conformity with the accounting principles generally accepted in India, of the state of affairs of the Company as at March 31, 2025, and the Surplus and its cash flows for the year ended on that date.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit of the financial statements in accordance with the Standards on Auditing (SAs) specified under Section 143(10) of the Companies Act, 2013. Our responsibilities under those Standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the Code of Ethics issued by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India together with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements under the provisions of the Act and the Rules thereunder, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements and the Code of Ethics. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion on the financial statement.

Information Other than the Financial Statements and Auditor's Report Thereon

The Company's Board of Directors is responsible for the other information. Other information comprises the information included in the Director's report, does not include the financial statements and our Auditor's Report thereon. The Director's Report is expected to be made available to us after signing of this Auditor's Report.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

When we read the other information identified above if, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report the matter to those charged with governance.

Responsibility of Management for Financial Statements

The Company's Board of Directors is responsible for the matters stated in Section 134(5) of the Companies Act, 2013 ("the Act") with respect to the preparation of these financial statements that give a true and fair view of the financial position, financial performance and cash flow of the Company in accordance with the accounting principles generally accepted in India, including the Accounting Standards specified under Section 133 of the Act. This responsibility also includes maintenance of adequate accounting records in accordance with the provisions of the Act for safeguarding of the assets of the Company and for preventing and detecting frauds and other irregularities; selection and application of appropriate accounting policies; making judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and design, implementation and maintenance of adequate internal financial controls, that were operating effectively for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of the accounting records, relevant to the preparation and presentation of the financial statement that give a true and fair view and are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so. Those Board of Directors are also responsible for overseeing the Company's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditor's Report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with SAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with SAs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances. However the provisions of Section 143(3)(i) of the Companies Act, 2013 are not applicable on the Company as per MCA Notification No. G.S.R. 583(E) dated June 13, 2017, read with corrigendum dated July 13, 2017 on reporting on internal financial controls over financial reporting, accordingly, we are not responsible for expressing our opinion on whether the company has adequate internal financial controls system in place and the operating effectiveness of such controls.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our Auditor's

Report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our Auditor's Report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Company to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

Materiality is the magnitude of misstatements in the financial statements that, individually or in aggregate, makes it probable that the economic decisions of a reasonably knowledgeable user of the financial statements may be influenced. We consider quantitative materiality and qualitative factors in (i) planning the scope of our audit work and in evaluating the results of our work; and (ii) to evaluate the effect of any identified misstatements in the financial statements.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

We also provide those charged with governance with a statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence, and where applicable, related safeguards.

Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

1. This Report does not include a statement on the matters specified in paragraph 3 & 4 of the Companies (Auditor's Report) Order, 2016 issued by the Central Government in terms of Section 143(11) of the Companies Act, 2013, since in our opinion and according to the information and explanations given to us, the said Order is not applicable to the Company.
2. As required by Section 143(3) of the Act, we report that:
 - a. We have sought and obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purposes of our audit. In our opinion proper books of account as required by law have been kept by the Company so far as it appears from our examination of those books;
 - b. The Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Account and the cash flow dealt with by this Report are in agreement with the books of account;
 - c. In our opinion, the aforesaid financial statements comply with the Accounting Standards specified under Section 133 of the Act, read with relevant Rules issued thereunder;
 - d. On the basis of written representations received from the Directors as on March 31, 2025, and taken on record by the Board of Directors, none of the Directors is disqualified as on March 31, 2025, from being appointed as a Director in terms of Section 164(2) of the Companies Act, 2013;
 - e. This Report does not include Report on the internal financial controls under clause (i) of Sub-section 3 of Section 143 of the Companies Act, 2013 (the 'Report on internal financial controls'), since in our opinion and according to the information and explanation given to us, the said Report on internal financial controls is not applicable to the Company in the current year basis the exemption available to the Company under MCA Notification No. G.S.R. 583(E) dated June 13, 2017, read with corrigendum dated July 13, 2017 on reporting on internal financial controls over financial reporting;
 - f. The Provision of Section 197 read with Schedule V of the Act are not applicable to the Company, since the Company is not a public company as defined under Section 2(71) of the Act. Accordingly, reporting under 197(16) is not applicable.

- g. With respect to the other matters to be included in the Auditors Report in accordance with the Rule 11 of the Companies (Audit and Auditors) Rules, 2014, in our opinion and best to our information and according to the explanation given to us:
- 1) There are no pending litigations impacting financial position of the Company as on 31st March, 2025.
 - 2) The Company did not have any long-term contracts including derivative contracts for which there were any material foreseeable losses.
 - 3) There were no amounts which were required to be transferred to the Investor Education and Protection Fund by the Company.
 - 4) a. The Management has represented that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, no funds (which are material either individually or in the aggregate) have been advanced or loaned or invested (either from borrowed funds or share premium or any other sources or kind of funds) by the Company to or in any other person or entity, including foreign entity ("Intermediaries"), with the understanding, whether recorded in writing or otherwise, that the Intermediary shall, whether, directly or indirectly lend or invest in other persons or entities identified in any manner whatsoever by or on behalf of the Company ("Ultimate Beneficiaries") or provide any guarantee, security or the like on behalf of the Ultimate Beneficiaries;
 - b. The Management has represented, that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, no funds (which are material either individually or in the aggregate) have been received by the Company from any person or entity, including foreign entity ("Funding Parties"), with the understanding, whether recorded in writing or otherwise, that the Company shall, whether, directly or indirectly, lend or invest in other persons or entities identified in any manner whatsoever by or on behalf of the Funding Party ("Ultimate Beneficiaries") or provide any guarantee, security or the like on behalf of the Ultimate Beneficiaries;
 - c. Based on the audit procedures that have been considered reasonable and appropriate in the circumstances, nothing has come to our notice that has caused us to believe that the representations under sub-clause (i) and (ii) of Rule 11(e), as provided under (a) and (b) above, contain any material misstatement.
 - 5) The Company is registered as limited by Guarantee; hence it has neither declared nor paid any dividend during the year and until the date of this report in compliance with Section 123 of the Act.
 - 6) Based on our examination, which included test checks, the Company has used accounting softwares (i.e. Tally ERP) for maintaining its books of account for the financial year ended March 31, 2025, which has a feature of recording audit trail (edit log) facility and the same has operated throughout the year for all relevant transactions recorded in the softwares. Further, during the course of our audit we did not come across any instance of the audit trail feature being tempered and the audit trail has been preserved by the Company as per the statutory requirements for records retention.

For S. S. Kothari Mehta & Co. LLP
Chartered Accountants

Firm Regn. No. 000756N / N500441

Sd/-

Naveen Aggarwal

Partner

Membership No. 094380

UDIN: 25094380BMKXIQ1089

Place: New Delhi

Date: July 25, 2025

NEWS BROADCASTERS & DIGITAL ASSOCIATION

Balance Sheet as at 31st March, 2025

(All amount stated in '00 unless otherwise stated)

	Particulars	Note No.	As at 31 st March, 2025	As at 31 st March, 2024
I.	EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
(1)	Members' Funds			
	(a) Entrance Fees	1	16,500	16,000
	(b) Reserves and Surplus	2	4,30,317	3,99,900
(2)	Non- Current Liabilities			
	(a) Long Term Provisions	3	42,723	36,654
(3)	Current Liabilities			
	(a) Short Term Provisions	4	838	851
	(b) Other Current Liabilities	5	400	15
	TOTAL		4,90,778	4,53,420
II.	ASSETS			
(1)	Non-Current Assets			
	(a) Property, Plant and Equipment and Intangible assets			
	(i) Property, Plant and Equipment	6	1,533	1,586
	(b) Other Non-Current Assets	7	3,98,370	3,98,370
(2)	Current Assets			
	(a) Cash and Cash Equivalentents	8	71,403	8,076
	(b) Short-Term Loans and Advance	9	5,583	11,576
	(c) Other Current Assets	10	13,889	33,812
	TOTAL		4,90,778	4,53,420

Significant accounting policies and other Notes to Accounts 15-26

The accompanying notes are the integral part of the Financial Statements

As per our Report of even date attached

For S S Kothari Mehta & Co. LLP
Chartered Accountants
Firm Regn. No. 000756N/ N500441

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors of
News Broadcasters & Digital Association

Sd/-
Naveen Aggarwal
Partner
M No. – 094380

Sd/-
Rajat Sharma
President
DIN: 00005373

Sd/-
M.V. Shreyams Kumar
Vice President
DIN: 00877099

Place : New Delhi
Date : July 25, 2025

Sd/-
Anuradha Prasad Shukla
Honorary Treasurer
DIN: 00010716

Sd/-
Annie Joseph
Secretary General
PAN: ADTPJ0257E

NEWS BROADCASTERS & DIGITAL ASSOCIATION

Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended March 31st, 2025

(All amount stated in '00 unless otherwise stated)

	Particulars	Note No.	For the Year Ended 31 st March, 2025	For the Year Ended 31 st March, 2024
	Income			
I.	Subscription	11	2,27,800	2,98,950
II.	Other Income	12	32,170	34,464
III.	Total Income (I + II)		2,59,970	3,33,414
IV.	Expenditure			
	Employee Benefit Expenses	13	1,18,372	1,25,562
	Depreciation and Amortization Expense	6	336	346
	Administrative & Other Expenses	14	1,12,345	1,74,262
	Total Expenditure		2,31,053	3,00,170
V.	Surplus/(Deficit) before Tax (III - IV)		28,917	33,244
VI.	Tax Expense:			
	(1) Current Tax		-	-
	(2) Deferred Tax		-	-
VII.	Surplus/ (Deficit) for the Year (V - VI)		28,917	33,244

Significant accounting policies and other Notes to Accounts 15-26

The accompanying Notes are the integral part of the Financial Statements

As per our Report of even date attached

For S. S. Kothari Mehta & Co. LLP
Chartered Accountants
Firm Regn. No. 000756N / N500441

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors of
News Broadcasters & Digital Association

Sd/-
Naveen Aggarwal
Partner
M. No.: 094380

Sd/-
Rajat Sharma
President
DIN: 00005373

Sd/-
M.V. Shreyams Kumar
Vice President
DIN: 00877099

Place : New Delhi
Date : July 25, 2025

Sd/-
Anuradha Prasad Shukla
Honorary Treasurer
DIN: 00010716

Sd/-
Annie Joseph
Secretary General
PAN: ADTPJ0257E

NEWS BROADCASTERS & DIGITAL ASSOCIATION

Cash Flow Statement for the year ended March 31st, 2025

(All amount stated in '00 unless otherwise stated)

Particulars	For the Year ended March 31, 2025	For the Year ended March 31, 2024
A. CASH FLOW OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Net Operating Surplus before Tax & Extraordinary Items	28,917	33,244
Adjustments for:		
Net Operating Surplus before Tax		
Depreciation	336	346
Interest Income	(32,170)	(32,205)
Interest Expense	-	42
Operating Surplus before working capital changes	(2,917)	1,427
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase) / Decrease in Other Current Assets	19,925	(20,794)
(Increase) / Decrease in Short Term Loans and Advances	5,993	3,605
Increase / (Decrease) in Long Term Provisions	6,068	(2,602)
Increase / (Decrease) in Short Term Borrowings	-	(19,226)
Increase / (Decrease) in Short Term Provisions	(13)	141
Increase / (Decrease) in Other Current Liabilities	385	15
Cash generated from Operations Before Tax	29,441	(37,434)
Net Direct Taxes Paid	-	-
Net Cash from Operating Activities	29,441	(37,434)
B. CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of Fixed Assets	(284)	(180)
Interest received	32,170	32,205
Proceeds from maturity of fixed deposits	-	5,230
Net Cash from Investing Activities	31,886	37,255

Particulars	For the Year ended March 31, 2025	For the Year ended March 31, 2024
C. CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Entrance fees received	2,000	500
Interest paid (Net)	-	(42)
Net cash from financing activities	2,000	458
Net Increase in Cash & Cash equivalent	63,327	279
Cash & Cash equivalent at the beginning of the year	8,076	7,797
Cash & Cash equivalent at the end of the year	71,403	8,076

Notes :

Note 1. The above cash flow statement has been prepared under the 'Indirect Method' as set out in Accounting Standard - 3 on "Cash Flow Statement" issued by the ICAI.

Note 2. Previous year figures have been regrouped and recasted wherever necessary to conform to the current year's classification.

Note 3. Figures in brackets denotes cash outflow.

Significant accounting policies and other Notes to Accounts

The accompanying notes form an integral part of the financial statements.

As per our report of even date attached

For S. S. Kothari Mehta & Co. LLP
Chartered Accountants

Firm Regn. No. 000756N / N500441

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors of
News Broadcasters & Digital Association

Sd/-
Naveen Aggarwal
Partner
M No. – 094380

Sd/-
Rajat Sharma
President
DIN: 00005373

Sd/-
M.V. Shreyams Kumar
Vice President
DIN: 00877099

Sd/-
Anuradha Prasad Shukla
Honorary Treasurer
DIN: 00010716

Sd/-
Annie Joseph
Secretary General
PAN: ADTPJ0257E

Place : New Delhi
Date : July 25, 2025

NEWS BROADCASTERS & DIGITAL ASSOCIATION

Notes Forming Part of Balance Sheet

Note # 1

Members Funds

(All amount stated in '00 unless otherwise stated)

Particulars	As at 31 st March, 2025	As at 31 st March, 2024
Entrance Fees		
Entrance fees as per last Balance Sheet	16,000	15,500
Addition during the year	2,000	500
Transferred to Capital reserve	(1,500)	-
	16,500	16,000

Note # 2

Reserve & Surplus

Particulars	As at 31 st March, 2025	As at 31 st March, 2024
Reserve and Surplus		
(a) Capital Reserve		
As per last Balance Sheet	10,000	10,000
Addition during the year	1,500	-
	11,500	10,000
(b) Special Reserve		
As per last Balance Sheet	75,514	94,138
Addition/(Transfer) during the year (Refer Note 21)	(2,269)	(18,624)
	73,245	75,514
(c) Surplus i.e. Balance in the Statement of Income & Expenditure		
As per last Balance Sheet	29,386	2,518
Addition during the year	28,917	33,244
Amount transferred to Corpus Fund	(25,000)	(25,000)
(Appropriations)/transfer from special reserve	2,269	18,624
	35,572	29,386
(d) Corpus Fund (Refer Note 24)		
As per last Balance Sheet	2,85,000	2,60,000
Addition Amount transferred from Income & Expenditure A/c	25,000	25,000
	3,10,000	2,85,000
	4,30,317	3,99,900

Note # 3

Long Term Provisions

(All amount stated in '00 unless otherwise stated)

Particulars	As at 31 st March, 2025	As at 31 st March, 2024
Provision for Gratuity (Refer Note 23)	42,723	36,654
	42,723	36,654

Note # 4

Short Term Provisions

Particulars	As at 31 st March, 2025	As at 31 st March, 2024
Provision for expenses	838	851
	838	851

Note # 5

Other Current Liabilities

Particulars	As at 31 st March, 2025	As at 31 st March, 2024
Advance received from Members	400	-
Statutory Dues payable	-	15
	400	15

Note # 6

Property, Plant & Equipment

Particulars	Gross Block				Depreciation				Net Block	
	April 1, 2024	Addition	Disposal/ Adjustments	March 31, 2025	April 1, 2024	Addition during the year	Sale/Adjustment	March 31, 2025	March 31, 2025	March 31, 2024
Computer	9,724	-	-	9,724	8,992	208	-	9,200	523	732
Office Equipment	9,435	-	-	9,435	8,592	121	-	8,713	722	844
Furniture & Fixtures	237	284	-	521	226	7	-	232	288	11
Leasehold Improvement	43,014	-	-	43,014	43,014	-	-	43,014	-	-
Total	62,410	284	-	62,694	60,824	336	-	61,160	1,533	1,586
Previous Year	62,230	180	-	62,410	60,478	346	-	60,824	1,586	1,752

Note # 7

Other Non-Current Assets

(All amount stated in '00 unless otherwise stated)

Particulars	As at 31 st March, 2025	As at 31 st March, 2024
Security Deposit	1,890	1,890
Fixed Deposit with Bank:*		
Deposits with original maturity more than 12 months	3,96,480	3,96,480
	3,98,370	3,98,370

* Including amount under lien with Banks for Credit facilities Rs. 87,48,944 (Amount availed Rs. Nil in Current Year & Previous Year)

Note # 8

Cash and Cash Equivalents

(All amount stated in '00 unless otherwise stated)

Particulars	As at 31 st March, 2025	As at 31 st March, 2024
Balance with Banks		
In Current account	31,346	7,989
Deposits with original maturity less than 3 months	40,000	-
Cash on Hand	57	87
	71,403	8,076

Note # 9

Short Term Loans and Advances

Particulars	As at 31 st March, 2025	As at 31 st March, 2024
Unsecured considered good		
Balance with Revenue Authorities	5,583	11,576
	5,583	11,576

Note # 10

Other Current Assets

Particulars	As at 31 st March, 2025	As at 31 st March, 2024
Interest accrued on Fixed deposits	13,889	33,812
	13,889	33,812

Notes Forming Part of Income & Expenditure Account

Note # 11

Revenue From Operations

(All amount stated in '00 unless otherwise stated)

Particulars	Year Ended 31 st March, 2025	Year Ended 31 st March, 2024
Subscription	2,27,800	2,98,950
	2,27,800	2,98,950

Note # 12

Other Income

Particulars	Year Ended 31 st March, 2025	Year Ended 31 st March, 2024
Interest Income	32,170	32,205
Miscellaneous Income	-	2,259
	32,170	34,464

Note # 13

Employee Benefit Expenses

Particulars	Year Ended 31 st March, 2025	Year Ended 31 st March, 2024
Salaries and Wages	1,05,056	1,11,485
Contribution to Provident Fund	7,225	7,872
Gratuity Expense	6,070	6,112
Staff Welfare Expenses	21	93
	1,18,372	1,25,562

Note # 14

Administrative & Other Expenses

(All amount stated in '00 unless otherwise stated)

Particulars	Year Ended 31st March, 2025	Year Ended 31st March, 2024
Printing & Stationary	432	623
Legal & Professional Charges	83,299	1,47,782
Meeting Expenses	4,855	4,668
Communication Expenses	518	308
Travelling & Conveyance Expenses	142	465
Rent & Electricity	17,881	16,979
Website Maintenance Expenses	678	1,167
Repairs & Maintenance-Computer	364	520
Repairs & Maintenance- Building	680	756
Office Insurance-Noida	65	65
Miscellaneous Expenses	172	70
Advertisement	220	-
Rates & Taxes	2,256	76
Auditor Remuneration:		
Audit Fee	750	750
Tax Matters	-	-
Out of pocket expenses	33	33
	1,12,345	1,74,262

Special Reserve

(All amount stated in '00 unless otherwise stated)

Financial Year	Income				% of	Utilisation				Special Reserve						
	Income	Entrance Fees	Total Income			Income As per I.T.Act.	Revenue Expenditure	Capital Expense	Total Utilisation *	Reqd. If G<D	Amount to be transfd.	Amount Actually transfd.	Utilisation in 2019-2020 Previous Year	Amount Utilised in 2023-24	Balance in Spl Reserve	Last Date of Utilisation
	A	B	C=A+B	%	D=% of C	E	F	G=E+F	H=D-G							
2015-16	1,35,615	-	1,35,615	85	1,15,273	1,05,670	1,009	1,06,678	Yes	8,595	22,008	22,008	-	-	-	31.03.2021
2016-17	1,38,028	-	1,38,028	85	1,17,324	93,740	-	93,740	Yes	23,583	23,583	23,583	-	-	-	31.03.2022
2017-18	1,40,657	1,000	1,41,657	85	1,20,408	68,782	424	69,206	Yes	51,203	51,203	51,203	-	0	0	31.03.2023
2018-19	1,53,867	2,000	1,55,867	85	1,32,487	40,297	308	40,605		91,882	91,882	91,882	-	(0)	(0)	31.03.2024
2019-20	1,83,145	1,000	1,84,145	85	1,56,524	74,494	582	75,076	Yes	81,449	81,449	81,448	-	(0)	(0)	31.03.2025
2020-21	1,63,229	500	1,63,729	85	1,39,169	84,731	629	85,360	Yes	53,811	53,811	53,810	-	(0)	(0)	31.03.2026
2021-22	1,96,124	1,500	1,97,624	85	1,67,980	99,478	458	99,936	Yes	68,044	68,044	68,044	-	(0)	(0)	31.03.2027
2022-23	1,75,225	500	1,75,725	85	1,49,366	56,503	-	56,503	Yes	92,863	94,138	94,138	-	-	-	31.03.2028
2023-24	3,33,414	500	3,33,914	85	2,83,827	2,08,132	180	2,08,312	Yes	75,515	75,515	-	75,514	0	0	31.03.2029
2024-25	2,59,970	2,000	2,61,970	85	2,22,675	1,49,146	284	1,49,430	Yes	73,245	73,245	-	0	73,245	73,245	31.03.2030
	18,79,274	9,000	18,88,274		16,05,033	9,80,973	3,873	9,84,846		6,20,189	6,34,878	4,86,115	75,514	73,245	73,245	

NEWS BROADCASTERS & DIGITAL ASSOCIATION

Notes Forming Part of Balance Sheet

15. Brief information of the Company

News Broadcasters & Digital Association is a Private Company Limited by Guarantee not having a Share Capital, not for Profit having CIN – U22211DL2007NPL165480 registered under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013 (Section 25 of the erstwhile Companies Act, 1956) with the main objectives inter alia, to promote, aid, help, encourage, develop, protect and secure the interests of the news broadcasters in the Indian Television Industry and other related entities and to promote awareness about the latest developments in the Television industry relating to news broadcasting and to disseminate knowledge amongst its members and the general public regarding such developments.

16. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

- a. The Company follows the mercantile system of accounting and recognizes income and expenditure on accrual basis. The accounts are prepared on historical cost basis in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles in India, accounting standard specified under Section 133 of Companies Act 2013, read with Rule 7 of Companies (Accounts) Rules 2014, the Companies Act 2013 (to the extent applicable) as a going concern.

b. Revenue Recognition

Subscription from the members is recognized on an accrual basis considering the reasonable certainty for the ultimate collection.

c. Property Plant Equipment and Depreciation

- i. Property plant equipment are stated at cost inclusive of all related and other incidental expenses less accumulated depreciation.
- ii. Depreciation on Property plant equipment is provided in accordance with Schedule II of the Companies Act, 2013 based on Straight Line Method pro-rata over the remaining useful life of the assets. The useful life of asset taken for the aforesaid depreciation is as under :-

Assets	Useful Life
Computers Hardware	3 Years
Office Equipment	5 Years
Furniture & Fixture	10 & 8 Years

d. Taxation

The Company is exempt from tax on income under Section 11 & 12 of the Income Tax Act, 1961; hence no provision has been made for the same.

e. Entrance Fee

Entrance fees are treated as Capital Receipts and hence been shown separately.

Forfeited entrance fee is transferred to Capital Reserve in the case of removal or resignation of any Member.

f. Employee Benefits

Gratuity Liability is provided on actual basis pro-rata to the number of years served based on the calculation principles stated under the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972.

g. Provisions, Contingent Liability & Contingent Assets

- i. Provisions involving substantial degree of estimation in measurement are recognized when the present obligation resulting from past events give rise to probability of outflow of resources embodying economic benefits on settlement.
- ii. Contingent liabilities are not recognized and are disclosed in Notes.
- iii. Contingent assets are neither recognized nor disclosed in financial statements.
- iv. Provisions are reviewed at each Balance sheet date and adjusted to reflect the current best estimates.

h. Use of Estimates:

The presentation of financial statements in conformity with the generally accepted accounting principles requires estimates and assumptions to be made that affect reportable amount of assets and liabilities on the date of financial statements and the reported amount of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Difference between the actual results and estimates are recognized in the year in which the results are known / materialized.

OTHER NOTES TO ACCOUNTS

17. In the opinion of the management, the value on realization of current assets, loans and advances in the ordinary course of activities would not be less than the amount at which they are stated in the Balance Sheet and provisions for all known liabilities has been made.
18. The Company is a Small & Medium sized Company (SMC) as defined in the general instructions in respect of Accounting Standards specified under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rule 7 of Companies (Account) Rules 2014 notified under the Companies Act, 2013. Accordingly, the Company has complied with the Accounting Standards applicable to a Small & Medium sized Company.
19. Based on the information available with the Company, no balance is due to Micro & Small Enterprises as defined under the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Act, 2006 as on 31st March 2025. Further during the year no interest has been paid, accrued or payable under the terms of the said Act.
20. The Company is registered under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013 (Section 25 of the erstwhile Companies Act, 1956) and further it has got the registration under Section 12AA of the Income Tax Act, 1961. Accordingly, income is also exempted from Tax u/s 11 & 12 of the said Act. Therefore, the provisions of the Accounting Standard, AS-22 on Accounting for Taxes on Income, are not applicable on the Company.
21. Special reserve has been created under Section 11 of the Income Tax Act, 1961, by transferring the unutilized amount in excess of 15% of the total income, for the purpose of building the infrastructure of the Association with a view to achieve the objects stated in the Memorandum of Association.

However, during the year, Company has incurred expenditure of Rs.75,514 hundred (Previous Year Rs. 94,138 hundred /-) from special reserve created under Section 11 of the Income Tax Act, 1961, towards the objectives as stated above.
22. The lease rental charge during the period & obligation on long term non-cancelable operating lease payable as per the rental status the respective agreement as follows:

(Amount in Rs. 00)

	2024-25	2023-24
Lease Payment for the year	14557	14397
Lease obligation payable*		
Within 1 year	3683	3508
In a period between one year and five year	-	-
In a period after five year	-	-

*The Company has entered into an operating lease arrangement for office premises for a period of 5 years, with a lock-in period of 1 year (i.e. non-cancellable period). However, either party can issue two months' notice after expiry of lock in period of one year to vacate the said premises (i.e. remaining period is cancellable period).

The lease arrangement includes an escalation clause, whereby the monthly rent and maintenance charges will be increased by 5% after the completion of the lock-in period.

23. Gratuity provision has been provided pro-rata based on the current salary drawn and number of years of services. Management is of the opinion that this provision will not be materially different from actuarial calculations as provided in Accounting Standard-15.
24. During the year Board of Directors decided to set aside Rs. 25,000 hundred/- of the surplus of the Association as corpus fund for the purpose of long-term Association requirement. Accordingly, disclosure has been made in Note 2 relating to reserves and surplus.

25. Additional Regulatory Information - Ratios

Particulars	Numerator	Denominator	F.Y. 2024-2025	F.Y. 2023-2024	Variance	Remarks
Current ratio (in times)	Current Assets	Current Liability	73	62	-24%	
Debt-Equity ratio (in times)	Total Debt	Shareholders' Equity	N/A	N/A	N/A	Due to Entity don't have any share capital
Debt service coverage ratio (in times)	Earnings available for debt service	Debt Service	N/A	N/A	N/A	Due to Entity don't have any debt
Return on equity ratio (in %)	Net profit after tax	Average total Equity	N/A	N/A	N/A	Due to Entity don't have any share capital
Inventory turnover Ratio	Cost of goods sold	Average Inventory	N/A	N/A	N/A	Due to Entity don't have any inventory of goods
Trade receivables turnover ratio (in times)	Revenue from operation	Average Trade receivable	N/A	N/A	N/A	Due to Entity does not have trade receivables

Trade payables turnover ratio (in times)	Net Credit Purchase	Average Trade payable	N/A	N/A	N/A	Due to Entity does not have trade payables
Net capital turnover ratio (in times)	Net Sales	Average Working Capital	3.20	1.18	-29%	Due to additional subscription charged Rs. 7.50 Lakhs each from 11 members for legal expenses as last year charged Rs. 15 Lakhs each from 10 members
Net profit ratio (in %)	Net Profit	Net Subscription	13	11	14%	Due to surplus in Income and Expenditure Statement in Current Year as compared to Previous Year
Return on capital employed (in %)	Earnings Before interest & Taxes	Capital Employed	7	8	-422%	Due to additional subscription charged Rs. 15 Lakhs each from 10 members (i.e. Rs. 1.50 Crore) for legal expenses
Return on investment (in %)	Income generated from invested fund	Average Invested funds in treasury investment	N/A	N/A	N/A	The entity has no investment

26. Figures of the previous year have been rearranged/ regrouped/reclassified wherever necessary.

As per our report of even date attached

For S. S. Kothari Mehta & Co. LLP
Chartered Accountants
Firm Regn. No. 000756N/ N500441

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors of
News Broadcasters & Digital Association

Sd/-
Naveen Aggarwal
Partner
M No.: 094380

Sd/-
Rajat Sharma
President
DIN: 00005373

Sd/-
M.V. Shreyams Kumar
Vice President
DIN: 00877099

Place : New Delhi
Date : July 25, 2025

Sd/-
Anuradha Prasad Shukla
Honorary Treasurer
DIN: 00010716

Sd/-
Annie Joseph
Secretary General
PAN: ADTPJ0257E



Management Report for the Year 2024-2025

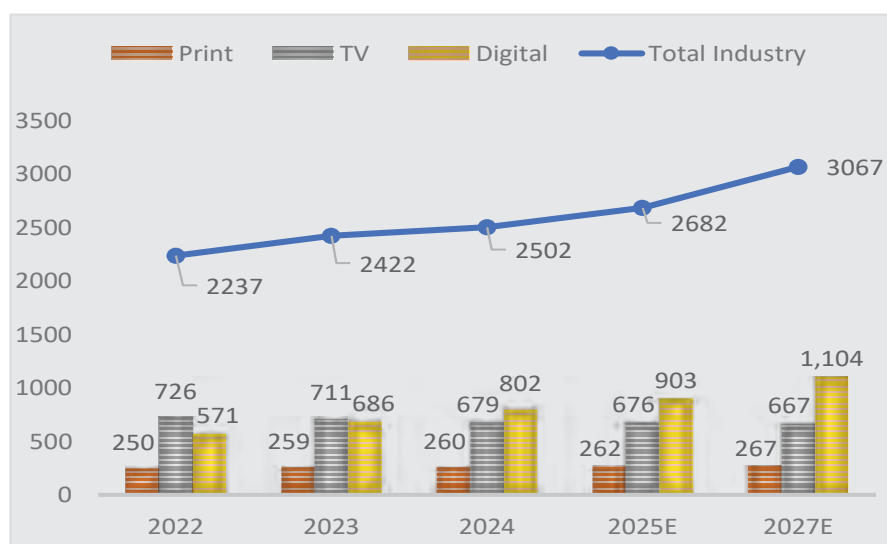
Data in Review

2024 was a transformative year for the Indian Media and Entertainment (M&E) industry, with Digital Media surpassing Television to become the largest segment within the industry. As per the EY-FICCI Media & Entertainment Report for the year 2024, the M&E industry reached INR 2.5 trillion in 2024¹. A growth of INR 81 billion, i.e., a 3.3% increase compared to the previous year. [Figure 1 and 2]

Key Highlights in Graphs

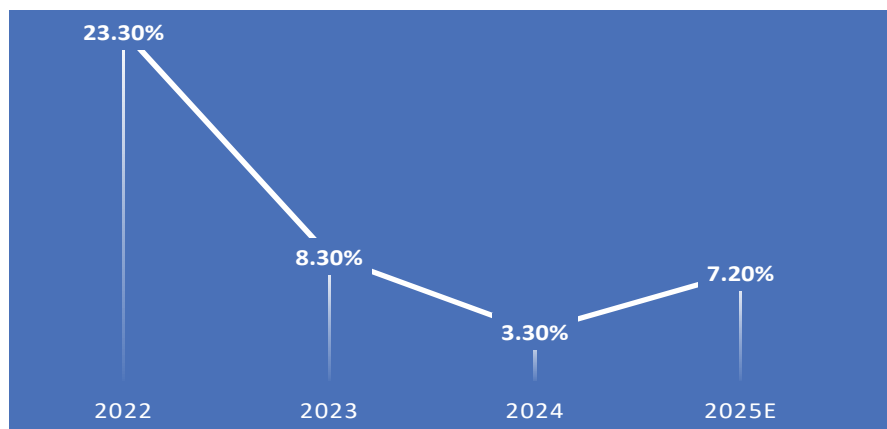
Figure 1: Segment-wise Growth in Print, TV and Digital Media

All figures are gross of taxes (INR in billion) for calendar years – EY Estimates



Source: EY-FICCI M&E Report, 2025

Figure 2: Year-On-Year Growth [2022-2025E]



Source: EY-FICCI M&E Report, 2025

Insights

- Compared to 2023, there was a slowdown in absolute growth.
- The industry reached a level that was 30% above its pre-pandemic figures
- Traditional media, comprising television, print, and radio, however, continued to fall behind their 2019 revenue levels.
- Revenues of the Digital Media, on the other hand, grew by approximately 160.4% between 2019 and 2024.

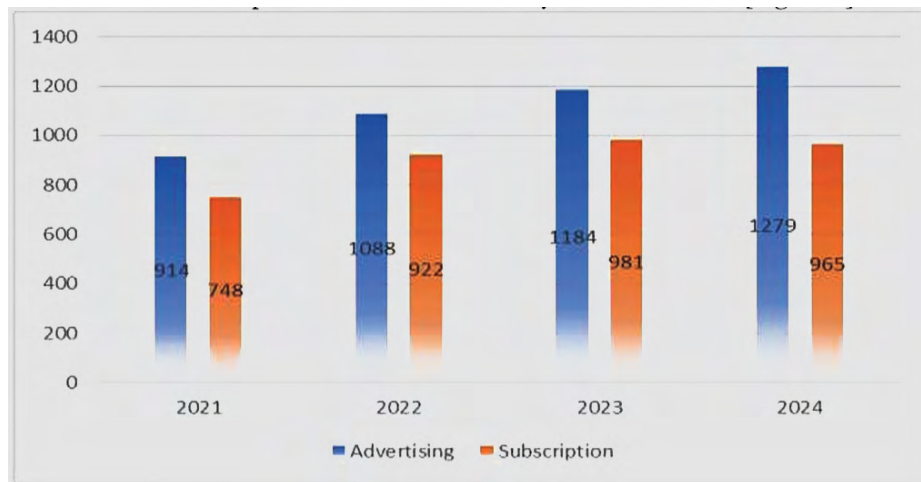
¹EY-FICCI Media & Entertainment Report titled "Shape the Future: Indian media and entertainment is scripting a new story" [March 2025], page 10

According to the EY-FICCI Report, the decline in growth could be attributed, inter alia, to a fall in revenues generated from animation and VFX, in addition to a decline in subscription revenues. The subscription revenues were largely impacted due to a reduction of six million Pay TV homes, diminishing theatrical admissions, unsatisfactory box office performance and decline in gaming revenues due to the implementation of a higher GST on real money games.²

In terms of revenues, while advertising revenues reached INR 1.28 trillion, the highest ever level in 2024, subscription revenues reduced by INR 16 billion. [Figure 3]

Figure 3: Advertising and Subscription Revenues [2021 to 2024]

All figures are gross of taxes (INR in billion) – EY Estimates

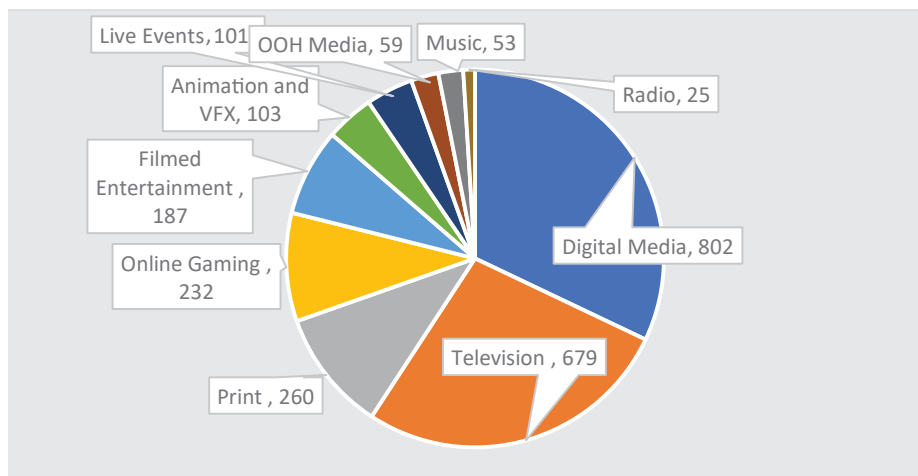


Source: EY-FICCI M&E Report, 2025

As stated above, Digital Media overtook Television to become the largest segment of the M&E Industry, contributing to approximately 32% of the total revenues of the industry.³ On the other hand, despite suffering a 4% decline in revenues, Television contributed 27% of the total revenues of the industry, and became the second largest segment of the M&E industry. [Figure 4]

Figure 4: Segment-wise growth in 2024

All figures are gross of taxes (INR in billion) for calendar years – EY Estimates



Source: EY-FICCI M&E Report, 2025

² EY-FICCI Report, Page 10

³ ibid

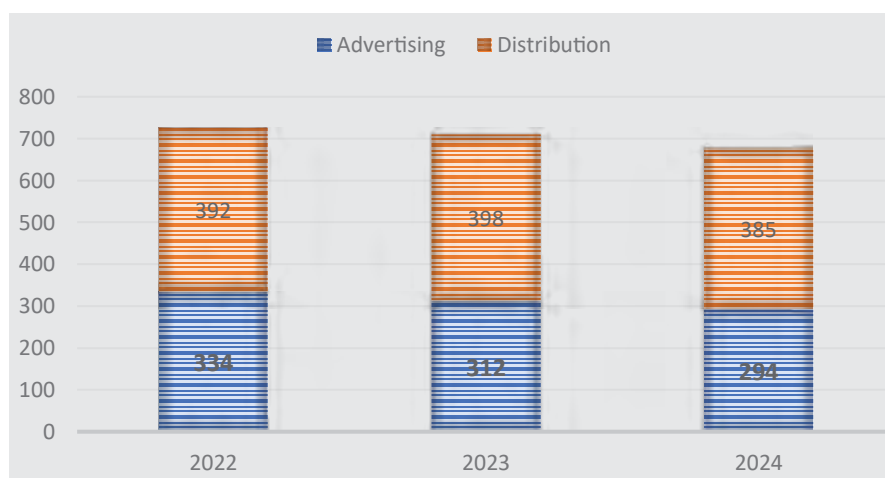
New media, comprising digital media and online gaming, accounted for 41% of the total revenues, traditional media, comprising television, print, music, and radio, also contributed 41% of the total revenues, however this was a decline of 3% compared to previous year. Further, new media also dominated advertising revenues, accounting for more than half of the total advertising revenue.⁴

Television

Revenues in the Television segment continued to decline for a second year in a row. In the year 2024, the Television segment generated INR 294 billion (gross of taxes) in advertising revenues and INR 385 billion (gross of taxes) in distribution revenues. [Figure 5]⁵

Figure 5: Television Revenues [2022-2024]

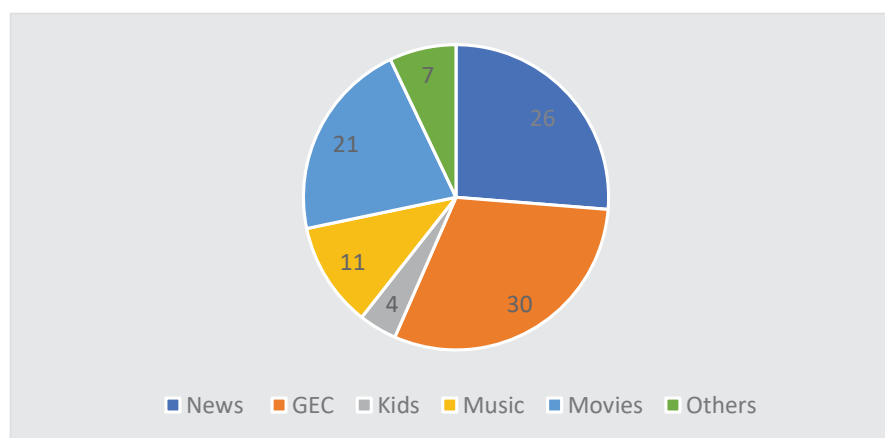
All figures are gross of taxes (INR in billion) for calendar years – EY Estimates



Source: EY-FICCI M&E Report, 2025

There was a 6% decline in not only advertising revenues but also in advertising volumes in linear television, despite a stable viewership.⁶ However, as per data available in the TAM Ad Ex Report, together, GEC and News Channels generated 56% of the ad volumes.⁷ [Figure 6]

Figure 6: Ad Volumes for the year 2024



Source: TAM AdEx Report titled "2024 Television Advertising Recap: Unraveling the Year"

⁴ FICCI-EY Report, Page 11

⁵ EY-FICCI Report, Page 79

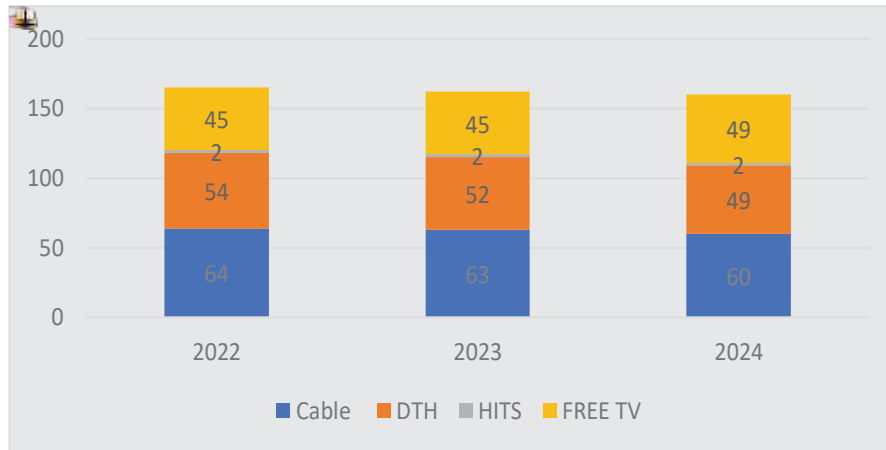
⁶ ibid

⁷ EY-FICCI Report, Page 84

Despite a 2.5% increase in the Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) for TV subscriptions, television subscription revenues fell by 3% in 2024, largely due to a reduction of 6.4 million in PayTV households. Pay television homes have declined due to people switching to connected TVs at the higher end of the market, the rise of alternative entertainment options and digital platforms, and the availability of a wide range of content for Hindi-speaking markets on free TV, which increased in 2024. Additionally, Free TV grew by 3.45 million to an estimated 49 million subscribers in 2024, inter alia due to cheaper TVs, internet issues in rural areas, better content quality, rising data fees, and was opted as an additional connection to Pay TV.⁸ [Figure 7]

Figure 7: Television Subscriptions

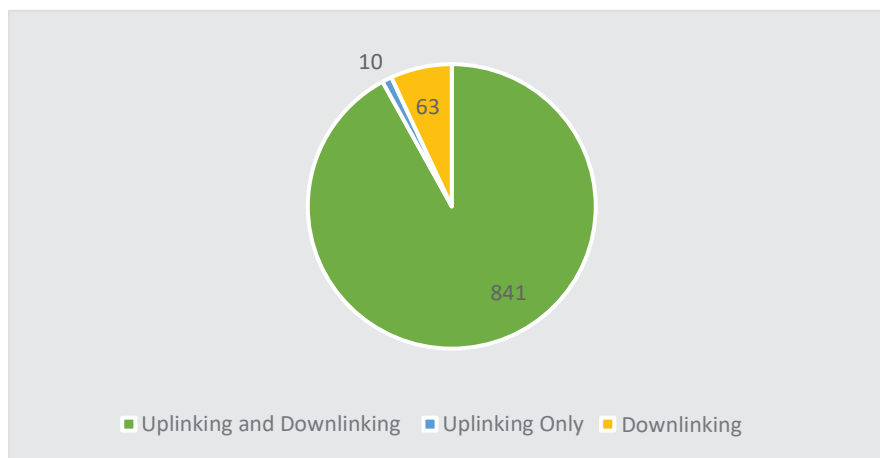
All figures are expressed in millions



Source: EY-FICCI Report

As far as the reach of TV channels is concerned, as per the TRAI Report, there are 914 permitted satellite channels, out of which 904 channels are available for downlinking in India.⁹ [Figure 8] Out of these 904 satellite TV channels available in India, 542 channels are Free-To-Air channels while 362 channels are Pay channels. Furthermore, a genre-wise analysis of the Pay channels has revealed that only 18% of the total number of Pay channels are News and Current Affairs Channels.¹⁰ [Figure 9] It appears that the availability of a significant portion of Pay TV programming on platforms such as YouTube and OTT represents a threat to the growth of linear television.

Figure 8: Number of Permitted Satellite Television Channels in India



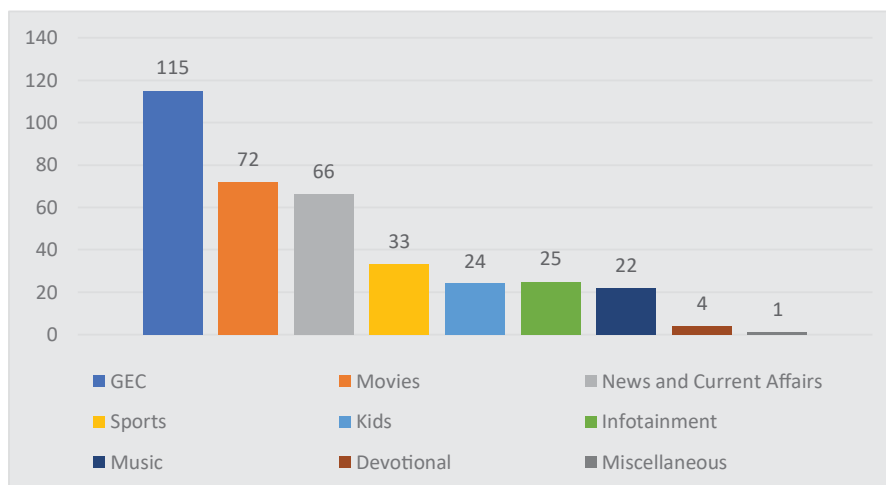
Source: TRAI Report titled "The Indian Telecom Service Performance Indicator" October – December 2024

⁸ EY-FICCI Report, Page 85

⁹ TRAI Report titled "The Indian Telecom Service Performance Indicator" October – December 2024 dated 24th April 2025, Page 86 - 89

¹⁰ Ibid

Figure 9: Genre-wise Analysis of Pay Channels

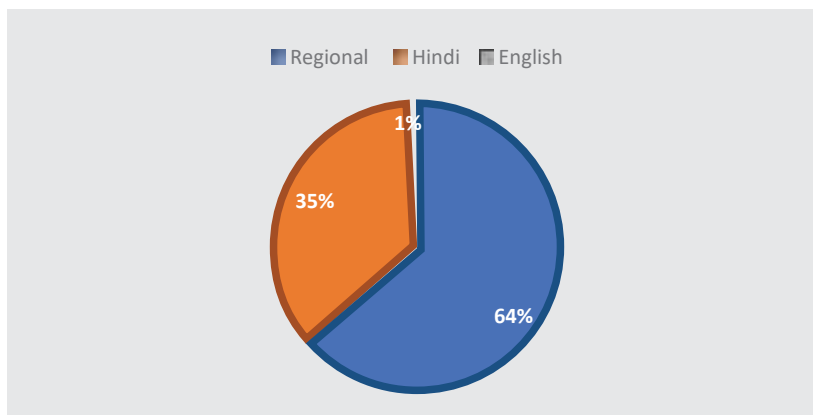


Source: TRAI Report titled "The Indian Telecom Service Performance Indicator" October – December 2024

It is estimated that the reach of DD Free Dish increased in 2024 to approximately 49 million homes. As per a survey conducted by the EY-FICCI, it is believed that most responders attributed this growth to inter alia, the increase in the number of channels available on DD Free Dish, the availability of News Channels and Channels like Dangal TV and Goldmines.¹¹

Further, according to the data available in the EY-FICCI Report, while 75% of the total viewership was attributed to GEC and Movies, there was a 13% increase in the viewership of News Channels, driven by general and state elections. Amongst News Channels, Regional Channels drove more than half of the total TV viewership, while Hindi News Channels contributed 35%. [Figure 10]

Figure 10: Language-wise share of viewership of News Channels



Source: EY-FICCI Report

Digital Media

The year 2024 signified a noteworthy milestone for Digital Media, as the segment not only surpassed the traditional Television segment to emerge as the largest segment within the M&E industry but also positioned itself as the fastest growing segment of the industry. With Digital Media comprising 32% of the M&E industry, it is evident that the industry has reached a pivotal inflection point.¹²

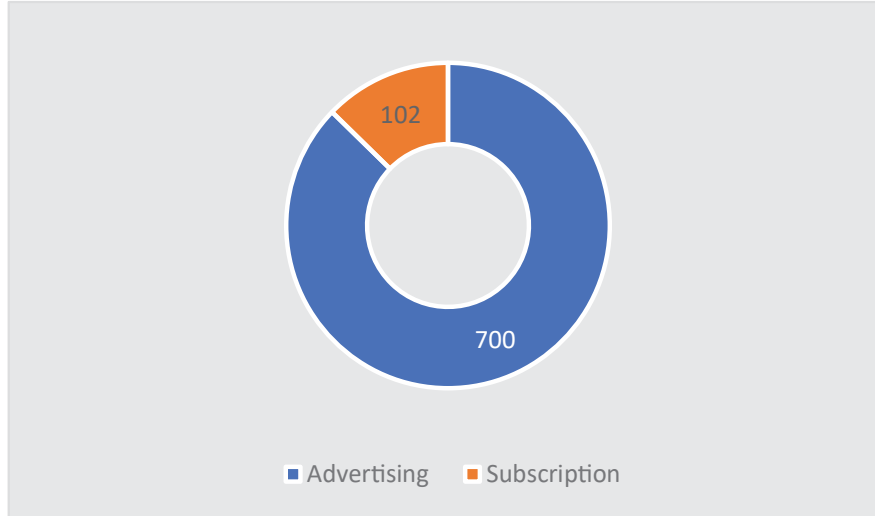
¹¹ EY-FICCI Report, Page 80

¹² EY-FICCI Report, Page 49

Advertising continued to remain the primary source of revenue in the segment, accounting for INR 700 billion, while Subscription revenues accounted for INR 102 billion, a mere 13% of the total revenues of the segment.¹³ [Figure 11]

Figure 11: Revenues of Digital Media

All figures expressed are in INR billions (gross of taxes) and include SME ad spends



Source: EY-FICCI Report

Search and social media accounted for 61% of total Digital Media revenues (including YouTube premium subscriptions). Ad revenues generated by e-commerce platforms now account for 18% of total Digital Media segment revenues, surpassing revenues earned by sports and entertainment platforms in 2024, which generated 17% of total revenues. Online news and music, on the other hand, generated only 4% of total Digital Media revenues, with online news still seeking a profitable business model.¹⁴ [Figure 12]

Figure 12: Category wise Revenues in Digital Media

Category	Revenues (%)
Search and Social Media	61
E-Commerce	18
Entertainment and Sports	17
News	3
Music	1

Source: EY-FICCI Report

As stated above, Digital Advertising constituted over half of the total advertising revenues of the M&E Industry at INR 700 billion. On the other hand, Digital Subscription revenues grew by almost 14%, i.e., INR 13 billion, to reach INR 102 billion, an increase of 82% from 2021.¹⁵ [Figure 13]

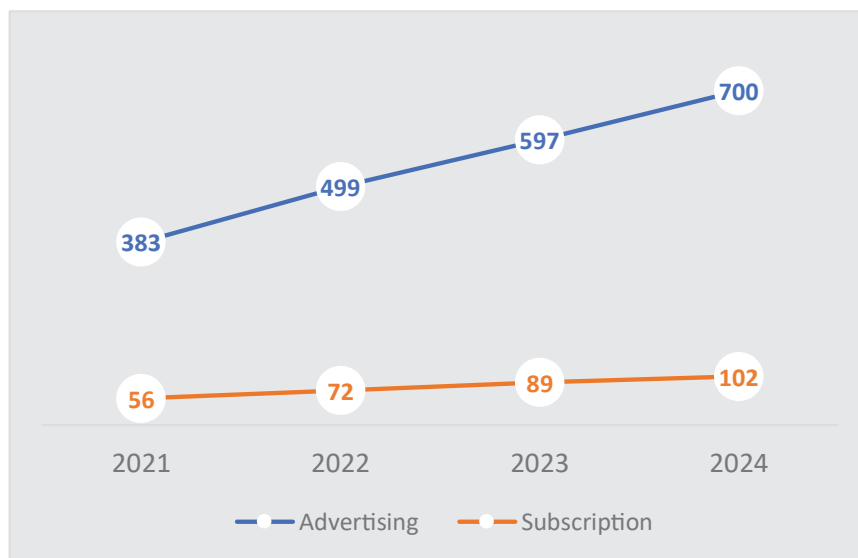
¹³ EY-FICCI Report, Page 12

¹⁴ EY-FICCI Report, Page 49

¹⁵ ibid

Figure 13: Advertising and Subscription Revenues of Digital Media [2022-2024]

All figures expressed are in INR billions (gross of taxes) and include SME ad spends

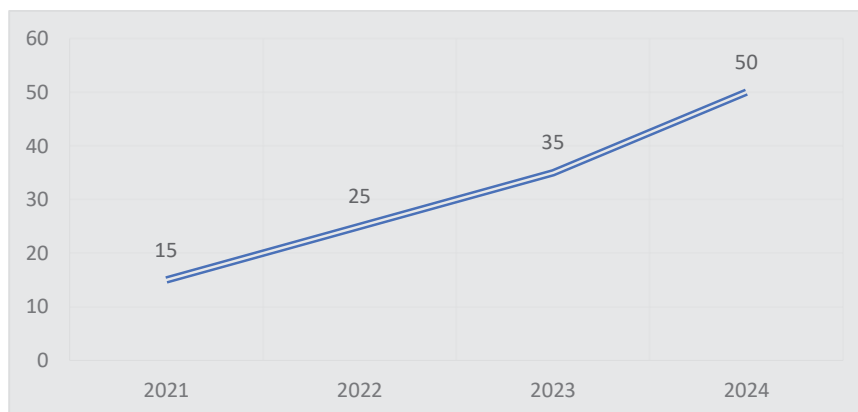


Source: EY-FICCI Report

As per the EY-FICCI Report, there were nearly 50 million monthly active Connected TV sets in 2024, a jump of nearly 15 million compared to 2023. Furthermore, with the widespread availability of TV sets that can connect to the internet and are available for less than 10,000 rupees, Connected TVs are expected to further grow.¹⁶ [Figure 14]

Figure 14: Monthly active Connected TV sets

Figures expressed in Millions



Source: EY-FICCI Report

In terms of online news consumption, the reach has attained 463 million individuals, representing nearly 32% of the population of India. However, in comparison to December 2022, this reach has diminished, as a significant number of individuals have shifted to social media and communication platforms for their news consumption.

According to the Reuters Institute Digital News Report, 2025, a survey of mainly English-speaking, online news users in India reveals that online and social media are the predominant source of news, for many online news users.

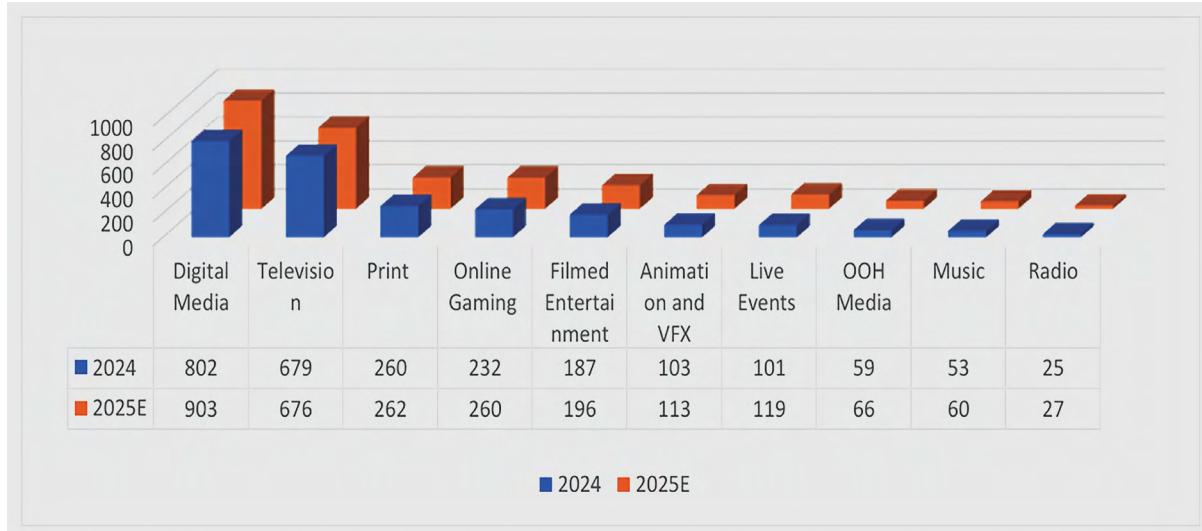
¹⁶ EY-FICCI Report, Page 51

News subscription revenue remained low at INR 3.25 billion, due to the availability of free news platforms and AI-generated news summaries on search platforms. The revenues were essentially driven by premium content and e-papers for users who have ceased physical newspaper consumption.¹⁷

Growth Forecast

As per the EY-FICCI Report, the M&E industry is expected to continue on its growth trajectory to reach INR 3.07 trillion by 2027. [Figure 15]

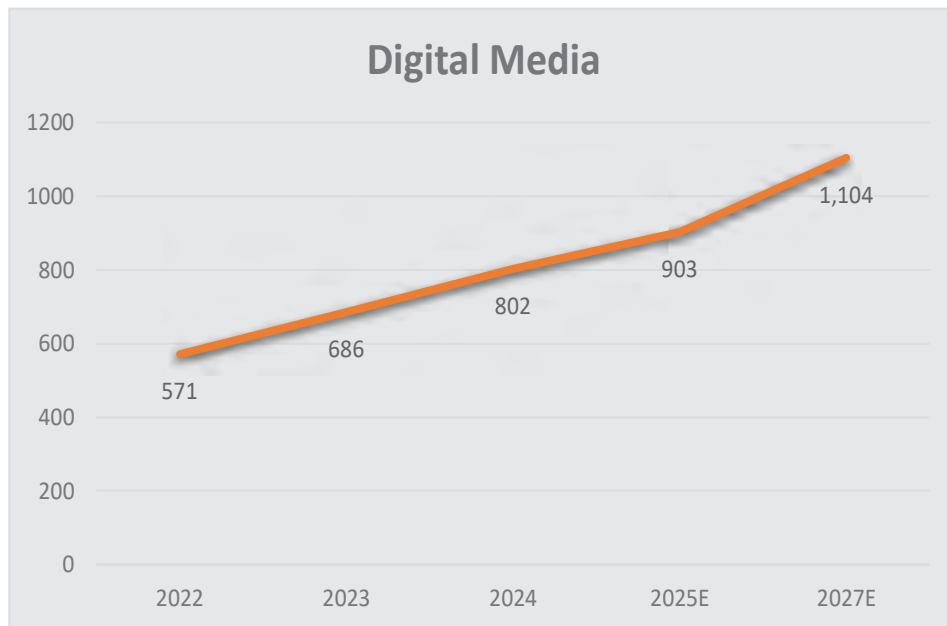
Figure 15: Projected Outlook of the Media and Entertainment Industry
All figures are gross of taxes (INR in billion) for calendar years – EY Estimates



Source: EY-FICCI M&E Report, 2025

Figure 16: Forecasting the growth of Digital Media

All figures are gross of taxes (INR in billion) for calendar years – EY Estimates



Source: EY-FICCI M&E Report, 2025

¹⁷ EY-FICCI Report, Page 61

Digital Media

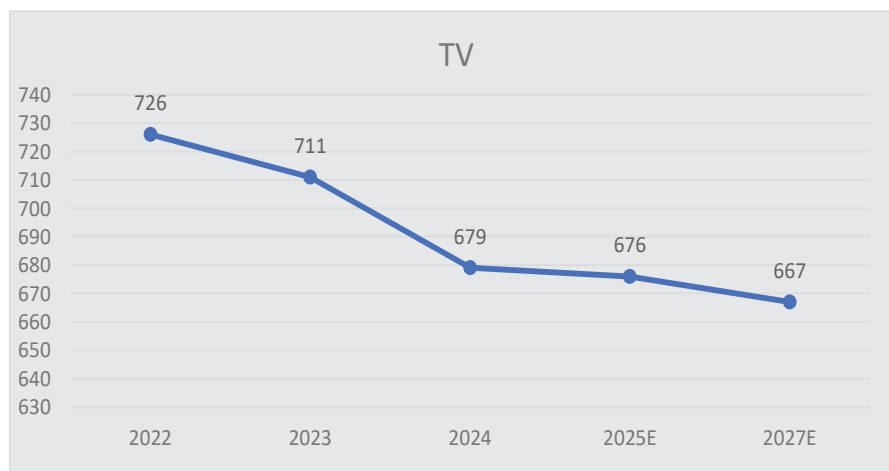
- Amongst the various segments in the Industry, Digital Media is forecasted to continue to grow and reach INR 903 billion by 2025 and INR 1104 billion by 2027. [Figure 16]
- The digital segment is anticipated to be the segment in the industry to surpass INR 1 trillion by the year 2026.
- The growth is largely driven by the increased utilization of Connected TVs, Mobile Devices, and affordable broadband services.
- By 2027, Digital Media is expected to represent 36% of the M&E industry, an increase from 32% in 2024.
- Digital advertising is projected to grow from INR 700 billion in 2024 to INR 957 billion by 2027, maintaining an 11% CAGR, propelled by innovation and performance-based advertising.
- Digital subscription revenue is forecasted to grow at a CAGR of 13%, reaching INR 147 billion by 2027, underpinned by a greater number of households subscribing to SVOD (subscription Video-on-Demand) services.

Television

- Television households in India are expected to reach 196 million by 2027.
- Pay TV homes are projected to decline to 95 million due to a shift toward Connected TVs.
- Free TV homes are expected to increase to 53 million by 2027.
- Connected TV households are expected to grow to 48 million by 2027, driven by increased broadband access.
- Continued GDP growth of 5% to 7% until 2027 is expected to support healthy advertising trends.
- As affluent Pay TV viewers move to Connected TV, Linear TV ad revenues are projected to grow at a 1.2% CAGR over the next three years.
- Television distribution revenues are projected to decline at a 2% CAGR due to falling Pay TV subscriptions.
- Total TV subscriptions are expected to rise to 214 million by 2030, supported by population growth and rising incomes.
- By 2030, the TV market will consist of three major segments: Pay TV, Free TV, and Connected TV, all of which broadcasters will need to serve.

Figure 17: Forecasting the growth of Television

All figures are gross of taxes (INR in billion) for calendar years – EY Estimates



Source: EY-FICCI M&E Report, 2025



Representations to the Government

In the process of managing its policy environment, the Association draws constantly on the goodwill of the Government. During the year under review, the Association took up issues that concern news broadcasters and digital news publishers with the Government from time to time.

Ministry of Information & Broadcasting

The Board of NBDA met Mr. Ashwani Vaishnav, Minister for Information and Broadcasting, on 27.8.2024, to discuss industry issues which required the intervention of Mol&B for its economic survival. One of the issues discussed in the meeting was the imbalance in bargaining power between big tech companies/social media intermediaries and individual news publishers/broadcasters necessitating the formulation of legislation for fair revenue-sharing between news companies and big tech platforms. The Minister suggested that a Task Force be constituted along with other Industry associations to discuss this issue and decide the way forward. NBDA was also requested to submit a detailed representation on laws or governmental measures taken by other countries to address the disparity.

The following names were sent to Mol&B to represent NBDA in the said Task Force.

1. Mr. Rajat Sharma
2. Ms. Anuradha Prasad Shukla
3. Ms. Kalli Purie Bhandal
4. Mr. Anil Kumar Malhotra
5. Mr. Varun Kohli

Revenue-sharing between news companies and big technology companies: A Compelling Case for an Indian Model

NBDA addressed a representation dated 13.9.2024 to the Minister for Information & Broadcasting, highlighting the imbalance in bargaining power between big tech companies/social media intermediaries and individual news publishers/broadcasters and measures, legislative or governmental, taken by other countries to address this disparity and to recognise the news companies' right to receive a fair share of revenue.

NBDA submitted that while it had filed a complaint with the Competition Commission of India ("CCI") regarding Google's abuse of its dominant position, which is under investigation, it believes that legislative intervention would be more effective in addressing the issue.

The basis for protecting news companies' interests, given the dominance of big tech companies, is increasingly recognised as follows:

- i. Gathering and producing news is an onerous and specialised task. News broadcasters and publishers invest significant resources to gather and broadcast news and hold the copyright on such news content.
- ii. Therefore, when big tech companies share such news content, the news companies deserve a fair share of the revenue. These copyright concerns are also reflected in the lawsuits being initiated by news publishers against AI platforms for the unlicensed use of their data/content.
- iii. The changed market should, thus, be guided in a manner that aids the survival of news companies by granting them adequate rights to bargain fair deals with intermediaries who use their news content.

International Trends

- A. News publishers around the world and big tech companies, have been locked in a tug-of-war over revenue sharing. The tech giants aggregate and distribute news content created by others, directly or indirectly monetizing the resulting traffic while, the original news publisher receives small or inadequate share of the revenue.
- B. News companies depend on intermediaries for outreach and driving website traffic. Intermediaries gather valuable data from every user click enabling them to further refine their advertising strategies and realise massive gains therefrom.
- C. Both parties need each other, yet big tech companies like Google and Meta possess a greater bargaining power due to their near monopoly in the market and algorithms, which can profoundly impact news companies' success. Big tech companies frequently update algorithms without any fixed schedules, which has an impact on the revenue of news publishers. Recovering lost audience and revenue due to changes in the algorithm can take considerable time.
- D. A proactive grievance redressal mechanism should be established. Currently, big tech companies only have a mechanism for raising tickets, without specific time for resolution, which impacts the audience and revenue of news publishers.
- E. Many countries have enacted laws or taken governmental measures to (i) recognise the news companies 'right to fair share of revenue for their content being shared by big tech companies; (ii) remove the disparity in bargaining power; and (iii) establish self-regulation for dispute resolution between news companies and big tech companies.
- F. NBDA presented an overview of the laws, regulations, and legal cases in Canada, Australia, the EU, France, and the USA concerning revenue-sharing agreements and compensation for news publishers.

What is Required in India

Meta and Google are negotiating agreements for payment for news articles by collectively/individually bargaining with news companies to pre-empt restrictive laws. However, without legislative sanction behind such bargaining, this model won't address the bargaining power disparity between news companies and big tech. Thus, India urgently needs similar laws to be enacted and enforced.

To protect news publishers' businesses, NBDA recommended the following:

- i. A legislatively sanctioned bargaining model that compels big tech companies to enter into revenue-sharing arrangements with news companies; and
- ii. A self-regulatory dispute resolution mechanism should be established based on the best practices adopted by various countries worldwide.

Interim Measures proposed by NBDA

Big tech companies connect news publishers with their audiences, so they must operate fairly, reasonably, and in a non-discriminatory manner. Equitable treatment is essential for news publishers competing with big tech's own services. Biased algorithms or unfair terms significantly impact their reach and revenue. While a comprehensive regulatory framework is needed, the following two urgent interim measures are proposed:

- i. **Standard Agreement:** Big tech companies must issue a standard agreement outlining all commercial (including revenue-sharing) and technical terms with news publishers. This agreement should include fair, reasonable, and non-discriminatory terms, covering all necessary aspects. It should be publicly accessible and filed with the Government and the CCI, instilling certainty in news publishers and empowering them to confidently plan and invest.

- ii. **Platform Neutrality Obligations:** Big tech companies should adhere to platform neutrality rules and principles, including the mandate that big tech companies:
- **Cannot prioritize their own services:** This rule would prevent big tech companies from exploiting their control over their platforms to gain an unfair advantage for themselves or their affiliated services. Prohibited practices should include the manipulation of search results to favour their interests.
 - **Ensure algorithmic fairness:** Algorithms should be free from biases or discriminatory practices that could unfairly disadvantage news publishers compared to competing services offered by big tech companies or other news publishers.
 - **Provide equal treatment:** Big tech companies must not favour their services or any news publisher. This prevents manipulation of search results, rankings, or recommendations, ensuring healthy competition and consumer choice.

National Broadcasting Policy 2024

Secretary, MoI&B chaired a meeting on 19.7.2024 to discuss the TRAI's recommendations dated 20.6.2024 on "*Inputs for formulation of National Broadcasting Policy-2024*". The stakeholders were requested to furnish their comments on the goals of the National Broadcasting Policy ("NBP"), i.e., (i) Propelling Growth, (ii) Promoting Content, and (iii) Protecting Interest.

In its response dated 18.11.2024, NBDA submitted that the NBP must be driven by the following vision:

1. Position the Indian broadcasting industry as a global hub for media and entertainment.
2. Foster innovation and creativity by making the broadcasting industry robust, resilient, accessible, affordable, and diverse.
3. Promote India as a broadcasting and uplinking hub by creating a regulatory environment that encourages innovation, creativity, and ease of doing business.
4. Establish a roadmap for existing stakeholders that clearly defines the process for the allocation of natural resources and all potential modes and mediums of broadcast for the future.
5. Clearly outline milestones in a pragmatic and planned manner to ensure that existing permission holders are not displaced due to any sudden changes in plans, methodologies, or spectrum bands regarding their allocation.

To accomplish the vision set out, the NBP must focus on:

1. Facilitate and promote the growth of the broadcasting industry.
2. Grant "Infrastructure Status" to the broadcasting industry.
3. Embrace the digital technological changes within the broadcasting industry.
4. Adopt light-touch regulation with an emphasis on self-regulation.
5. Follow the principle of ease of doing business by conducting a comprehensive review of regulatory processes, policies, practices, and procedures in the broadcasting industry.
6. Ensure certainty, predictability, and sustainability for existing stakeholders.
7. Establish a level playing field between big tech companies and traditional television broadcasters/news publishers by ensuring that they receive a fair share of revenue for their content.
8. Adopt an open sky policy and position India as a broadcasting and teleport hub for uplinking by minimizing the compliance framework.

9. Augment and encourage the development of state-of-the-art technology in the broadcasting industry.
10. Promote and adopt sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.
11. Provide content security and protect the intellectual property rights of stakeholders.
12. Streamline and ensure a fair allocation of natural resources.

A. Propelling Growth

- **Review and streamline existing regulatory frameworks related to the broadcasting sector**

All aspects of broadcasters' business are currently regulated, making the entire TV viewing experience unattractive and unaffordable for consumers. Additionally, frequent and numerous changes in key regulatory provisions disrupt the industry's working.

Deregulation and forbearance have benefited the telecom sector, leading India to have some of the world's cheapest telecom tariffs. Thus, similar reforms in the policy framework are essential to propel the broadcasting industry's growth.

- **Support Indigenised Production of Consumer Premises Equipment**

A constant indigenisation impetus can help localise Consumer Premises Equipment manufacturing, save on foreign exchange outflow, and improve industry and device standards.

- **Incorporate Ease of Doing Business for healthy competition**

Ease of Doing Business is crucial as it streamlines operations and fosters an environment conducive to creativity and efficiency. Incentives must be provided to global manufacturers to establish units in India, boosting competition and generating employment in the broadcasting sector.

B. Promoting Content

- **Protection of Journalistic Freedom is important to educate the masses**

Legislation and policies that confer overbroad and sweeping powers to censor content impede the free flow of ideas and information, creating a chilling effect on freedom of speech and expression. Further, imposing certain mandatory obligations, such as requiring public service broadcasting, can also endanger the media's free speech rights. To promote quality content, the Policy should encourage journalistic freedom. A formal recognition of the self-regulatory grievance redressal mechanism in the NBP would strengthen the existing grievance redressal mechanisms established by various self-regulatory bodies and increase its effectiveness.

- **Address malevolent use of technology**

NBDA does not encourage conflating the Policy with content-related issues, however the policy must address the threat posed by the malevolent use of new technology to perpetuate deepfakes across the broadcast medium, which can potentially create societal discord.

- **Provide Quality and Choice of Reliable Technology**

Enhancing consumer choice involves leveraging content and technology preferences. Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) efficiently uses the TV spectrum to deliver high-quality services. MoI&B must also explore assessing D2M technology, to improve its reach and effectiveness, ensuring that information is accessible to a broader audience.

- **Make India the preferred destination for foreign investment.**

India's M&E sector ranks among the largest globally, supported by extensive broadcasting services. From 2000 to 2019, FDI in this sector was about 4% of total service FDI. Improving the ease of doing business

could attract additional foreign investment, enabling technology transfer and expertise from international producers. It can further extend the global reach of Indian content through established distribution networks and a deeper understanding of global audiences.

- **Public service broadcaster**

Prasar Bharati should adopt technology and diversify platforms to enhance its presence. It must invest in quality content, standardize processes, and adapt to market needs. Transitioning from a broadcasting to an engagement model involves understanding consumer needs and competing, where possible, with private broadcasters.

C. Protecting Interests

The NBP must be environmentally friendly and aim for goals like making the broadcasting industry carbon neutral, and providing clear timelines. It should encourage dialogue and discussion to achieve these goals.

- **Accessibility of Content**

Existing provisions in the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, require government agencies to ensure access to television programs for persons with disabilities. The MoI&B has issued Accessibility Standards to support this. It allows MoI&B to mandate accessibility measures through regulations, accessibility targets, code of good practices, and other relevant measures.

- **Promote Industry led Self-Regulation**

To protect freedom of speech and expression and avoid censorship, the Policy should endorse the industry-led self-regulation mechanism for redressing any media broadcasting-related complaints.

- **Catalyse Skill upgradation and development**

Skill development is essential in the broadcasting industry because it ensures professionals remain adaptable and effective in a rapidly changing field. As technology advances and audience preferences shift, broadcasters must update their technical and creative skills to remain competitive.

Goals and Strategies

A. Propelling Growth

- **Establishing a robust broadcasting ecosystem**

NBDA recommended the following goals for propelling growth, promoting content and protecting interests:

- i. **Digitalisation** - Broadcasting infrastructure is ideally suited to help bridge the digital divide between connected and unconnected citizens.
- ii. **Skill Development** - Broadcasting is the bedrock of the creative ecosystem, which can help foster a range of skills that are automation-resilient.
- iii. **Local production of Goods and Services** - India's broadcasting industries are engines of local design and innovation and are ready for global markets.
- iv. **Ease of Doing Business** - Broadcasting is the most popular medium for branding, marketing, and news, the combination of which is increasingly important for forming positive consumer sentiments.
- v. **Self-Governance** - A largely self-regulated broadcasting ecosystem represents diverse and plural creative expression, accelerating India's march towards self-reliance.

- **Data Driven Policy Decisions**

Market forces and stakeholders should determine the parameters, targets, and institutional framework for measuring contributions to the economy, revenue, employment generation, and subscriptions. The "forbearance model" must be adopted for channel pricing and packaging, with NBP providing a framework to keep broadcasters competitive and offer diverse options.

- **Reach and Access of Television Broadcasting Services to Uncovered Household**

The broadcasting Industry can be empowered by granting the industry “Infrastructure Status,” a longstanding demand.

- **Conducive Policies and Regulatory Practices for Economic Growth**

Growth of the broadcasting industry must be promoted by creating a conducive ecosystem, and reviewing onerous and prescriptive regulations that have curtailed growth.

- **Making India an ‘Uplinking Hub’**

Deregulation is key to positioning India as an uplinking hub and for ease of doing business. In 2022, the MoI&B revised the Guidelines for Uplinking and Downlinking of Satellite TV Channels in India, noting that deregulation of Uplinking would allow broadcasters in other countries to uplink from India.

Similar efforts should be made to remove other onerous requirements for ease of doing business. The NBP should inter alia simplify and set time limits for approval and permission processes, applications, and documentation, while adopting a light-touch approach to pricing and use of ad inventory, and avoid content regulation. Additionally, incentives like liberal FDI limits for uplinking news channels and streaming news and current affairs from India could promote India as an uplinking hub.

- **Digital Terrestrial Broadcasting as a Complementary Technology**

Terrestrial broadcasting has remained the exclusive domain of Prasar Bharati. Acknowledging the limitations, the public service broadcaster opted to migrate to the digital terrestrial transmission system (“DTT”). Implementation of DTT should involve participation from private players, which would significantly contribute to the growth and development of the broadcasting sector. This could also be achieved through collaboration between private players and the government in the initial phases. The NBP should aim for a phased implementation of DTT, providing a clear date for ceasing analog transmission and migrating to DTT.

The DTT platforms should be built on robust technology that enables encryption and tracking of viewership patterns to understand evolving consumer needs and make suitable adjustments to provide better services.

- **Review the regulatory framework governing the cable and satellite broadcasting industry**

The best solution for the industry is to adopt a policy of forbearance regarding tariffs and advertisements, allowing market forces to govern the industry.

Furthermore, TRAI’s regulations have a history of legal challenges. Additionally, prescriptive pricing and bundling regulations, which are not conducive to the industry and impact consumer choice should be reviewed. Furthermore, advertisement regulations must move towards forbearance and ad cap regulations must be reviewed. Apart from the above, there should be mandatory carriage of news channels, especially the Free-To-Air (FTA) news channel and mandatory obligations on DPOs to include FTA news channels in all packages.

- **Transparent and Credible Audience Measurement and Rating System**

To ensure an effective and credible audience measurement and rating system, the following reforms must be undertaken: (i) anonymization of data, (ii) avoiding data smoothening, (iii) providing a transparent outlier policy, (iv) undertaking structural changes at BARC and (v) other measures—including ensuring equal participation of all stakeholders, providing real-time data measurement and analysis, and subjecting rating agencies to independent audits.

Increasing the sample size for measuring viewership details and understanding patterns is crucial. Additional BAR-o-Meters must be deployed, particularly for genres with low viewership, such as news. In addition to BARC, it’s time to establish a new, reliable standard for media ratings to bridge the gaps in the existing system.

Multiple rating agencies foster competition and innovation. Relying on a single system can lead to stagnation. Global precedents from countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Australia, and the Philippines show the advantages of at least two concurrent rating systems.

The audience measurement mechanism has shifted from measurements through diary entries to people meters being installed at the customers'/subscribers' premises by rating agencies. Now, audience measurement can also be gathered through the return path, which can also be used to gain insight into content viewership patterns and details, provided that the customers'/subscribers' consent has been sought, and such data is transferred electronically and in an anonymised manner.

The Policy must not cover aspects of OTT services, as these are not broadcasting services. Drawing false equivalences between distinct services can dilute the issues of the broadcasting industry.

B. Promoting Content

- **Exempting News from Public Service Broadcasting**

Mol&B should clarify that news broadcasters are exempt from the mandatory public service broadcasting obligation under Clause 35 of the Uplinking and Downlinking Guidelines 2022. Imposing such obligations goes beyond the restrictions under Article 19(2), is onerous, and violates Article 19(1)(g). It also fails to satisfy the test of intelligible differentia and is violative of Article 14. The requirement is unnecessary for news channels whose primary purpose is to convey news and views of public interest.

- **Ensure interference-free and efficient use of C Band satellite spectrum**

The entire broadcast industry relies heavily on C-Band for uplinking and downlinking signals. This resource is shared among multiple stakeholders. Any proposal to allocate frequencies within the C-Band for IMT services would pose an existential threat to the cable & satellite broadcasting industry. The Mol&B should oppose any proposal to reallocate 100 MHz (3700 – 3800 MHz) C-Band spectrum for 5G IMT services. It must ensure the seamless continuity of the broadcasters' operations and the uninterrupted availability of their services.

- **Review the Programme and Advertisement Code**

The Programme Code and Advertisement Code under the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994 are fraught with vague and arbitrary terms, which allow for subjective interpretation and potentially impinge upon the freedom of speech and expression. The Policy should ensure that no restrictions are prescribed that go beyond the reasonable restrictions enumerated under Article 19 (2).

- **Review the Central Media Accreditation Guidelines, 2022 and streamline the process for granting accreditation**

The Central Media Accreditation Guidelines confer a wide range of powers upon the Government, to inter alia withdraw or suspend accreditation on vague and arbitrary grounds, which tantamount to restriction on the freedom of speech and expression of the journalists and their right to practice their profession under Article 19(1)(g). The Central Media Accreditation Committee is largely composed of government officials, raising concerns about the independence of the Committee. Since accreditation is critical for journalists, the process should be streamlined to avoid any unnecessary delays in granting accreditation.

- **Notify the Codes of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards of NBDA under the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994 (CTN Rules)**

Incorporating the principles laid down in the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards in the CTN Rules would place it at par with the Code of Self-Regulation of the Advertising Standards Council of India, which has been recognized under the CTN Rules. This would aid in improving India's position in the World Press Freedom Index.

- **Involve news industry in consultations relating to regulation of deepfakes or AI generated synthetic content**

The Digital India Bill was previously positioned as the primary legislation to address harms caused by AI. Reports also suggest that MeitY is considering an amendment to the IT Rules, 2021, to regulate deepfakes and misinformation. Mol&B must coordinate with MeitY and ensure the involvement of all relevant stakeholders for consultations on any regulation of deepfakes and misinformation. India must learn from international practices on deepfake regulation.

- **Scope of the Policy must be limited to broadcasting to protect the industry's interests**

The Policy must not cover aspects of OTT services, as these are not broadcasting services. Drawing false equivalences between distinct services can dilute the issues of the broadcasting industry.

- **DD Free Dish**

The role of public and private broadcasters needs to be closely defined and delineated, particularly where the public service broadcaster departs from its mandated role. Where the public service broadcaster acts akin to a private broadcaster in terms of commercial or business objectives, it must be treated no differently (in terms of regulations/restrictions etc.) than a private broadcaster. Prasar Bharati should enhance its capacity to carry all channels for which the Mol&B has granted permission. Establishing a transparent, accountable auction system will maintain trust in the public service broadcaster.

C. Protecting Interests

- **Recognize the role of news broadcaster during disasters**

The news broadcasting sector plays a pivotal role in providing information about and during disasters and emergencies, which news is broadcast live or is deferred live. NPB should endeavour to mandate the carriage of news channels on the network of the distributors without any additional cost, whether in terms of carriage or otherwise, being imposed upon the news broadcasters.

- In addition, NBDA also suggested enforcing content security through copyright protection, by inter alia forming a Task Force for formulating effective measures and engaging with International bodies to combat Piracy, ensuring the manufacturing of Digital Rights Management-equipped STBs, and maintaining infringing website lists.

NBDA submitted that for the broadcasting industry to realize its potential as the sunrise sector and become a more attractive proposition, regulatory obstacles and procedural bottlenecks must be reviewed. The policy should embody the principle of '*Minimum Government, Maximum Governance*,' advocating for minimal regulatory intervention.

Notice Dated 2.7.2025 issued by Mol&B --- Policy Guidelines for Television Rating Agencies in India

The notice outlining the proposed amendments to the Policy Guidelines for Television Rating Agencies in India was circulated by the Mol&B for comments from the public and stakeholders.

NBDA welcomed the initiative undertaken by Mol&B, as articulated in the Notice and commends the Mol&B for its forward-looking outlook by reviewing and modernizing the regulatory framework that governs television rating agencies in the country. The stated objectives for these reforms were detailed in the accompanying Press Information Bureau release, such as fostering healthy competition, encouraging the adoption of new technologies, and establishing a more representative and modern Television Rating Points ("TRP") system.

NBDA in its submissions dated 29.7.2025 to the Mol&B stated that before offering comments on the amendments to the Policy Guidelines, Mol&B needs to undertake a holistic review of the framework to ensure structural neutrality, inclusive governance, data transparency, cross-platform metrics, and algorithmic oversight.

NBDA submitted that there is a need for modernizing the present framework which has been marred by several shortcomings. The existing system, as the MoI&B rightly identifies, requires significant modernization to give credible, accurate and truthful data backed by modern technologies which is free from human intervention and bias. Hence, it is important that issues such as minimum sample size, systematic and technologically driven methodologies be considered prior to the proposed relaxation in the TRP system. Consequently, the issues prevalent in the existing system transcend far beyond the scope of the proposed amendments. It is equally important to highlight a critical regulatory void that the proposed amendments may create. Potential conflict of interest may arise due to the relaxation of entry barriers to liberalize the market and to facilitate entry of private players.

NBDA submitted that since the proposed relaxation, while beneficial for entry of new players and for competition, allows interested parties to enter the business with potential conflict of interest, it necessitates robust checks and balances, which should be introduced to ensure market integrity and prevent potential conflicts of interest in a more open and diverse marketplace. NBDA therefore submitted that the MoI&B should conduct a detailed consultation with all stakeholders, to examine the existing policy guidelines in their entirety, to assess the implications of the proposed amendment and the specific checks and balances that need to be implemented before introducing the proposed amendments. It also suggested that such rating agencies should have a mechanism for industry body participation.

NBDA urged the MoI& B to conduct a comprehensive and inclusive consultation process rather than adopting a piecemeal approach and stated that it looks forward to the consultation process with regard to the checks and balances, prior to the introduction of the proposed amendments.

A meeting was also chaired by the Additional Secretary, MoI&B on 15.7.2025 to discuss the issues related to the TRP Policy Guidelines, wherein the issues concerning the amendments were brought to his attention.

Final submissions are yet to be made by NBDA.

Draft Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill, 2024

NBDA had participated in the discussions and had also given detailed submissions on the Draft Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill, 2024 to the MoI&B. The MoI&B has recalled the Bill.

Prasar Bharati

Consultation on the e-Auction methodology of DD Free Dish

Prasar Bharati vide email dated 1.8.2025, invited the views, suggestions, and inputs from broadcasters on the following points for consideration by Prasar Bharati whenever the next review of the e-Auction methodology is undertaken in the future.

- i. Rationalization of Bucket, Genre, language of TV channels for wider representation and diverse bouquet.
- ii. Rationalization of auction rounds and slots for various rounds.
- iii. Inputs/suggestions for expanding the reach of DD Free Dish in new/uncovered areas.
- iv. Any other issue, you feel relevant, about DD Free Dish e-auction Methodology.

NBDA appreciated this timely initiative and welcomed the opportunity for constructive dialogue to assist Prasar Bharati in developing a new e-auction framework that is transparent, equitable, and robust, thereby strengthening the DD Free Dish platform and fulfilling Prasar Bharati's public service mission. The response is yet to be submitted to Prasar Bharati.

Central Bureau of Communication

Advisory dated 24.3.2025 on Revised rates of Pvt. C&S TV Channels for Government Advertisements as per extant Policy Guidelines clause 4 (ii)

Director (AV), Central Bureau of Communication, Mol&B had issued an Advisory dated 24.3.2025 on the above subject which were to become effective from 1.4.2025. The aforesaid Advisory was issued without consultation with the broadcasters. With the intervention of President NBDA the advisory has been kept in abeyance.

Interaction with News & Business Channels on 25.6.2025

Mol&B constituted a Committee to review the rates of Pvt C&S TV channels. As part of its deliberations with the industry stakeholders, NBDA was requested to present its suggestions before the Committee regarding news channel rate structure aspects such as base rates, CPRP, time slots, prime-time pricing, issues specific to regional channels and any other relevant concerns.

NBDA met the Additional Secretary and Joint Secretary, Mol&B and officials of CBO (Rate Structure Committee) and presented all facts along with a PPT to ensure fair rates are given for government advertisements. Following the meeting, NBDA submitted representations dated 8.7.2025 and 11.7.2025 regarding the proposed rate structure including L Band rates.

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)

Consultation Paper on Regulatory framework for Ground-Based Broadcasters

NBDA, in its response dated 25.11.2024 to the Consultation Paper dated 18.10.2024, stated that the emergence of technology enabling innovative forms of broadcast transmission and retransmission is undoubtedly a positive development that should be encouraged. However, to ensure fairness and cohesion, it is essential to address key regulatory and level playing field concerns that arise with the entry of Ground-Based Broadcasters (GBBs) into the landscape. The mandate for regulating the broadcasting sector and formulating the proposed regulations lies with the Mol&B. Therefore, anything stemming from this Consultation Paper must not lead to regulation by TRAI. Even the letter from Mol&B to TRAI cannot be interpreted as an invitation for regulation.

Submissions of NBDA are as follows:

1. Insofar as definitions of “broadcasters” and “programmes” are concerned, these terms are defined by the CTN Act and Rules 1994, and therefore, the definitions as mentioned in the Act/Rules should not be modified.
2. As far as the definition of “ground-based broadcasting” is concerned, the word “terrestrial” has been incorrectly used in the proposed definition of “ground-based broadcasters” in the CP. Therefore using “terrestrial” would exclude transmission to distributors by other means, defeating the objective of defining ground-based broadcasters.
3. The distinction between GBBs and SBBs is limited to the means of transmission of television channels to distributors. There should be parity between SBBs and GBBs, which can be achieved by maintaining a light-touch regulatory approach, i.e., reducing regulations for SBBs while moving toward deregulation across the sector.
4. GBBs should be permitted to transmit television channels to the distributor by way of any medium (excluding satellite communication) as per their business model and technology being deployed.
5. GBB should not be restricted based on geography. All permissions should enable GBBs to operate at the national or state level according to their business and technical capabilities. This would eliminate the need for multiple permissions, making it easier to do business.

6. Requirements for Processing Fee, Annual Fee, Net Worth Requirement, Performance Bank Guarantee, and other regulatory provisions should be the same for all broadcasters, whether SBB or GBB.
7. No prescriptive provisions should be mandated regarding any technical requirements. It should be left to the discretion of the broadcaster including both GBB and SBB to decide according to their business model and availability of the best technology which is suited to the broadcaster according to the business model. Even otherwise, there is no concept of a hub/gateway which is required to be established for distribution of TV channels by GBB.
8. GBBs should be subject only to a light-touch regulatory framework. To maintain parity, there should be levelling down regulations for SBBs while moving towards deregulation across the sector. Until such time as deregulation is achieved at all levels, the extant Tariff Order, Interconnection Regulation and Quality of Service Regulation should be made applicable to GBBs.
9. In case, a SBB wishes to switch to a non-satellite-based communication medium to deliver its television channels to DPOs, the process for operating a channel applicable to GBBs should apply to such SBBs as well. Similarly, a GBB switching to a satellite-based communication medium should be subject to the regulatory framework applicable to SBBs.
10. MoI&B should establish distinct guidelines for GBBs, as their process of transmitting TV channels to DPOs doesn't involve uplinking/downlinking. Existing Uplinking and Downlinking Guidelines already cover permissions, content regulation, approvals, disclosure norms, and revenue controls. These should be made applicable to GBBs by amending the guidelines, excluding satellite-specific provisions. The Guidelines for Uplinking and Downlinking should be amended to bring the Ground-Based TV channels under its ambit. The nomenclature of the Guidelines could be suitably modified to include GB channels under a separate section dealing with GBBs.
11. Ground Based (GB) channels are different from Platform Service channels of the DPOs and are akin to the Satellite channels. For at least the first few years, say three years, GB channels should be clearly identified so viewers recognize the new type of channel offering. Additionally, until GB channels are at par with the satellite-based channels in all respects (except transmission mode), they should not be included in the DPO pack.
12. DPOs should be prohibited from operating their own GB channels, as this would weaken the broadcasters' channels and also reduce the variety of the Platform Service channel offerings. In fact, DPOs could run Platform Service channels while naming them GB channels, since the various restrictions of Platform Service would not apply. SBB should be permitted to offer their channel variant in GB. An SD channel of SBB should be allowed to be broadcast as an HD channel in GBB, or vice versa, with minimal requirements after meeting the specified criteria for SBB or GBB, as applicable.
13. Temporary live up linking for both SBB and GBB should be allowed with prior intimation to MoI&B without any requirement for payment of fees.
14. The self-regulation principles should also be made applicable to GBBs.

Post the submission of NBDA comments, TRAI has on 15.1.2025 released its recommendations.

Consultation Paper on Framework for Service Authorisations for provision of Broadcasting Services under the Telecommunications Act, 2023

NBDA, in its response dated 26.11.2024, sought the withdrawal of the Consultation Paper dated 30.10.2024, urging TRAI to instead assist in developing broadcasting-specific legislation that would better address the unique needs of the sector without the unnecessary convergence with telecommunication regulation. The inclusion of broadcasting services under the Telecommunication Act, 2023, is based on a flawed premise, and the questions posed in the Consultation Paper incorrectly assume that broadcasting services are inherently part of telecommunication services. A summary of the reasons outlined by NBDA are given below:

Broadcasting Services cannot be clubbed under the umbrella of Telecommunication Services:

1. Historically, broadcasting services were included under the definition of telecommunication services to expand TRAI's jurisdiction on TV distribution services.
2. Since no decision was made on the establishment of an independent regulatory authority for broadcasting services, government decided to include broadcasting distribution services under TRAI.
3. Vide notification dated 9.1.2004, broadcasting and cable services were notified to be telecommunication services, which resulted in extending the jurisdiction of TRAI to broadcasting services. This was a stop-gap arrangement until an independent regulatory authority for broadcasting services was established. However, this did not imply that the broadcasting services are the same or akin to telecommunication services. Even at present, TRAI has separate divisions for the telecom and broadcasting sectors, which suggests that these two fields are entirely different and independent.
4. There is no merit in migrating existing permissions to the new authorization regime.
5. The broadcasters of television channels are required to obtain permission from the MoI&B under the Uplinking and Downlinking Guidelines. They are not required to obtain any license under Section 4 of the Indian Telegraph Act as noted in the CP, nor can such permission be construed as grant of license under Section 4 of the Telegraph Act.
6. MoI&B has been granting permissions for uplinking and downlinking TV channels for over two decades, requiring applications to be referred to various ministries. The Broadcast Seva Portal has streamlined this process at MoI&B, though further fine-tuning is possible.
7. The present regime under the Telecommunication Act, 2023, is unsettled, with provisions under challenge. Without procedural or legislative clarity, bringing broadcasting services within the ambit of the authorization regime under the Telecommunication Act could complicate the process without benefits.

Legislative Revision and Exclusion of Broadcasting Services

1. The draft Telecommunications Bill circulated in September 2022 was broad and all-encompassing and included an array of services such as broadcasting, email, voice, and video communications, and even OTT services within its ambit. However, after opposition from various stakeholders, including NBDA, it became evident that this inclusion was erroneous. The revised draft Telecommunications Bill (December 2023) excluded broadcasting and OTT services from the definitions of "telecommunication" and "telecommunication services", preserving their distinct regulatory frameworks.
2. The present consultation disregards these developments and risks reintroducing similar requirements under the Telecommunications Act, in a more restrictive form. This appears to be an attempt to impose telecommunication-style authorizations on broadcasting, an incongruity that suggests the need for TRAI to collaborate with MoI&B on a coherent, unified broadcast regulation strategy.

Convergence is a technological construct

1. The convergence between telecommunications and broadcasting services is incorrectly assumed in the CP. Convergence, if any, is only at the delivery mode in *some* distribution mediums and not all.
2. “*Convergence*” is a technological construct and does not in any manner convey that the underlying functions have also merged. There is a dramatic difference in the types of services offered, and that does not call for any form of convergence of laws, regulations, etc. The mere possibility of offering telecommunication services using a broadcast infrastructure or vice versa cannot be the cause and reason to converge the ministries and laws.
3. The DTH services are one-way communication services that disseminate TV and Radio signals. Hence, the convergence of broadcasting service, which is one-way and used for the dissemination of information, and telecommunication service, which is a two-way communication service, will not be appropriate. Broadcasting services cannot just be seen as a technological service. Content is the mainstay of the broadcasting services; it requires soft skills and cannot be solely made dependent on technologies, as is possible in the telecommunication service.
4. One of the key goals in moving to a converged regulatory framework is to achieve technology neutrality. This term is intended to convey the meaning that a licensee retains the ability to choose the technology and equipment it will use to provide the licensed service. The main objective is to promote ease of doing business and sustain competition. An integrated framework for the regulation of carriage of broadcasting services will lead to monopolies in the sector.
5. Merely because the M&E sector uses certain common services such as internet bandwidth for making the content available on mobile phones, it cannot be the only reason for combining the regulations of two different business sectors, such as “broadcasting” and “telecommunication” into one. Merging broadcasting with telecommunication could result in effectuating and administering regulatory euthanasia to the broadcast and cable sector, making it an unaffordable business to continue.
6. Some of the ‘Open *Internet*’ principles as proposed to be enshrined in the Digital India Act may also be contrary to the ideas of convergence. Convergence may result in the creation/concentration of market power by wiping out most of the competing smaller broadcasters or distribution platforms, and may facilitate and promote gatekeeping practices, whereas the ‘Open Internet ideas’ attempt to prevent them. If convergence of “*telecommunication*” and “*broadcasting*” is to take place, with a mandate that broadcasters need telecom licence to operate or need to pay for the spectrum or buy it in an auction directly or indirectly, it would mean most of the broadcasters out of around 900 players would not be in a position to either buy spectrum in auction or even afford to make licence fee/spectrum charges payments, and that would mean broadcasting would become an exclusive privilege in the hands of a chosen few rich who have deep pockets to afford provision of broadcast services. This would be promoting concentration of market power in the name of convergence and eliminating other forms of distribution and technologies by creating a non-level playing field.

Broadcasting is an exercise of freedom of speech and expression

1. Broadcasting is an exercise of freedom of speech and expression; thus, it is important to question whether bringing “broadcast” within the ambit of “telecommunication” would result in Government control and influence on media, which would result in redefining the very philosophy of “free speech” and make it subject to licensing terms. Broadcast of free speech cannot be construed as an act that requires licensing from the Government.

2. Section 3(1) of the Telecommunications Act, 2023 may at best be applied to entities like the teleport operators, DTH service providers, etc and cannot be applied to broadcasting.
3. TRAI should move towards light-touch regulation wherein it promotes healthy growth of the industry and the consumers benefit from the state-of-the-art technological offerings, innovations at affordable costs.

Pending Judicial Review

The Uplinking and Downlinking Guidelines 2022 have been challenged by the NBDA before the Hon'ble Kerala High Court, which has granted an interim order vide its Order dated 16.10.2023. This judicial intervention indicates that many aspects of these Guidelines remain legally contentious and under challenge, specifically in relation to Public Service Broadcasting obligations, penalties, and ambiguous language used in the Programme and Advertising Codes. Considering these legal proceedings, it is surprising that TRAI would seek to realign broadcasting services under the Telecommunications Act without awaiting judicial resolution of the issue.

Spectrum Allocation

Broadcasting relies on satellite spectrum, which is not typically auctioned but is administratively allocated, a principle reaffirmed in TRAI's recent recommendations. This approach supports the co-existence of stakeholders by preserving broadcasting spectrum for public and commercial broadcasting.

Unwarranted alterations in the existing definitions

The proposed definitions can lead to ambiguity and confusion. For instance, Digital Satellite News Gathering is now defined as Digital Satellite Content Gathering. However, the word content in relation to broadcasting is not clearly defined, nor under any other legislation. By making such alterations, it attempts to provide new meaning to the term "content," without any legal or logical basis.

Issues in the proposed approaches to migration

The CP recommends two approaches to migrate from the existing regime to the proposed terms and conditions under the Telecommunications Act. Such an arrangement would definitely lead to the existence of two parallel regimes.

Unclear breach terms

The existing penal provisions for breach of permission terms by broadcasters are sufficient for regulating the sector and do not require a shift to align with the Telecommunications Act. Such a move would only cause confusion and chaos, which could adversely impact the overall regulation of the broadcasting sector.

Developments Post OHD

NBDA participated in the Open House Discussion on 18.12.2024, and addressed a letter dated 24.12.2024 post the discussion, reiterating its concerns with the CP and asserting that broadcasting services should remain distinct from telecommunication services. It was stated that content regulation falls under Mol&B, while TRAI handles carriage. However, the proposed framework oversteps TRAI's jurisdiction by trying to regulate content through licensing conditions. NBDA urged TRAI to suspend the consultation process and help create broadcasting-specific legislation that addresses the sector's unique needs without unnecessary convergence with telecom regulation.

Letter to Secretary, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting

Despite the request made to withdraw or suspend the consultation, TRAI released its recommendations on 21.2.2025. NBDA addressed a letter dated 11.4.2025 to the Secretary, Mol&B, raising its concerns about TRAI's Recommendations. NBDA drew his attention to the fact that it had, during the consultation process before the Telecom Act was promulgated, raised strong objections against the inclusion of *Broadcasting* under the

definition of “Telecommunication.” These objections were well-recognized and accepted during the drafting of the Telecommunication Bill (December 2023), leading to the deliberate exclusion of “broadcasting” from the scope of the final Act. The definitions of “telecommunication” and “telecommunication services” explicitly exclude broadcasting, reaffirming their distinct regulatory identities.

NBDA requested the MoI&B to:

- a. Reject the extant TRAI Recommendations outright, as their implementation would not only violate the Interim Order passed by the Hon’ble Kerala High Court and amount to an indirect circumvention of judicial scrutiny but would also result in incorrect inclusion of broadcasting services under the telecommunication services, thereby violating the constitutional rights of the broadcasters.
- b. Explicitly recognize that broadcasting services were intentionally excluded from the Telecommunication Act, 2023, and that the existing regulatory framework should continue to govern broadcasting independently. If these Recommendations are accepted, it would result in un-equals being treated equally.
- c. Conduct a comprehensive consultation with the stakeholders, in order to obviate the incorrect premise adopted by different authorities with regard to broadcasting services thereby, ensuring that the identity of the broadcasting sector, which is homegrown and which has made its presence felt globally is maintained and the interests of the broadcasters are adequately protected.
- d. Grant assurance that no arbitrary authorization or licensing conditions will be imposed on broadcasters under the guise of telecommunication service regulations, as this will be detrimental not only to the broadcasters but will also impact the free speech rights of the viewers and the broadcasters.

There have been no further developments in the matter.

Holistic Review of Regulatory Framework for Broadcasting Sector

TRAI in a meeting with stakeholders on 18.3.2025, discussed the proposal for a holistic review of the regulatory framework of the broadcasting sector. The meeting aimed at gathering inputs from stakeholders regarding the aspects of the TRAI Regulations that may be outdated and need to be revisited. TRAI expressed its intention to adopt a light-touch regulatory approach.

NBDA vide letter dated 7.4.2025 made detailed submissions on the issues to be considered, while reviewing the regulatory framework for the broadcasting sector, and made the following suggestions:

1. A principle-based approach rooted in self-regulation should be adopted to replace the current prescriptive framework. A regulatory sandbox can test this approach, allowing TRAI to assess the effectiveness of the principle-based approach and refine the foundational principles, industry-led guidelines / best practices. These insights could then form the basis for the broader transition for the entire broadcasting sector.
2. Principles of “*must carry and must provide*,” “*non-discrimination*,” “*transparency*,” “*EPG Regulations*” and “*maintenance of a level playing field*,” which are the cornerstone of the regulatory framework cannot be diluted.
3. The proposed regulatory framework should aim at establishing a dynamic broadcasting ecosystem founded upon the following core principles: mutually negotiated agreements driven by market forces, non-discrimination, clarity and transparency. This framework should envision a transition from a prescriptive approach towards a more market-driven approach to governance, with the ultimate goal of fostering a more efficient and robust broadcasting sector.
4. NBDA also highlighted the issues with current regulatory framework, which inter alia include (a) restriction on pricing, (b) lack of transparency in subscriber reporting by DPOs, (c) carriage fee

regulation and its adverse impact on FTA Broadcasters, (d) lack of differential treatment of commercial subscribers, (e) necessity of a comprehensive review of framework for DD FreeDish and inclusion of channels available on DD FreeDish in bouquets of broadcasters and private DPOs, (f) restriction on bundling of SD and HD variants of a channel in the same bouquet and restriction on bundling of FTA channels and Pay channels together in Broadcasters' / DPOs' bouquets, (g) restriction on the number of bouquets that can be issued by a broadcaster, (h) stipulation of treating 1 HD channel equal to 2 SD channels, (i) capping of duration of advertisements of news channels under the Standards of Quality of Service (Duration of Advertisements in Television Channels) (Amendment) Regulations, 2013 and (j) Dual LCN and remote locking of channels.

5. A more flexible regulatory approach is necessary to foster innovation, enhance consumer choice, and unlock the full potential of the broadcasting sector.
6. A light-touch approach should be adopted and TRAI should consider implementing forbearance in relation to the pricing and bundling of channels.
7. There should be mandatory disclosure of the exact number of STBs, which will lead to transparency in subscriber reporting by the DPOs.
8. Clause 15(1) of the Interconnect Regulations should be removed, thereby allowing broadcasters the unfettered right to conduct audits annually, which would ensure transparency, accurate subscriber reporting, and fair revenue sharing within the industry. This would also help maintain a level playing field.
9. Regulations concerning 'carriage fees' should be revisited and removed as far as the FTA channels are concerned.
10. TRAI should permit differential tariffs for commercial subscribers, who should be defined depending upon the 'place and type of usage' of television signals by commercial establishments.
11. TRAI should conduct a fresh, comprehensive review of its regulatory position on DD Free Dish since the current framework is unfair and inconsistent. TRAI should clarify that broadcasters and DPOs have the flexibility to include channels that have been declared FTA on account of the availability of such channels on DD FreeDish, in their bouquets. This clarification would enhance consumer choice and streamline channel offerings.
12. Broadcasters should be permitted to bundle SD variants of channels with their HD variants. Further, the inclusion of FTA Channels and Pay Channels together in Broadcasters' / DPOs' Bouquets should be permitted.
13. Regulations relating to the capping of the duration of advertisements should be left to market forces.
14. TRAI should monitor and strengthen the enforcement of its regulations to prevent violations such as dual LCN and remote locking of channels etc.
15. There should be mandatory carriage of FTA news channels on the platform of DPOs to all the subscribers.
16. TRAI must go beyond 2017 Interconnection Regulations to ensure FTA channels remain affordable, accessible, and competitive in the evolving broadcasting landscape. Measures which can safeguard consumer interests and strengthen the free television ecosystem, include:-
 - i. Encouraging DPOs to offer dedicated FTA packs at minimal cost, particularly for low-income households.

- ii. Introducing stricter regulations to prevent hidden costs, such as the Placement Fee.
 - iii. Prohibiting preferential treatment of Pay channels by ensuring fair allocation of bandwidth and transmission quality for FTA channels.
 - iv. Introducing government and industry support, such as subsidies or tax benefits for FTA broadcasters to support content production and operational sustainability.
17. DPOs should be mandated to upgrade their systems to increase their channel carrying capacity to 100% of the number of channels that have received downlink permission. Till such time, the carriage fee regulations should be strictly enforced.
 18. To ensure complete content security and prevent revenue leakage, DPOs must be mandated to encrypt all frequencies, leaving no frequency unencrypted. A minimum net worth requirement for DPOs, which is crucial for ensuring the financial stability and integrity of the distribution ecosystem should be introduced. Further, the corporatization of DPOs is essential for promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance within the distribution sector.
 19. DPOs should be mandated to achieve a basic subscriber threshold before being able to invoke the “must provide” obligation under Interconnection Regulations.
 20. Infrastructure sharing should be done voluntarily by broadcasters and ought not be mandated. Infrastructure sharing should be confined to the sharing of hardware and not software, such as CAS and SMS.
 21. TV ratings impact advertisement revenue, as campaigns are planned based on the ratings of a program or channel. Rating agencies must ensure that the ratings are credible, trustworthy, and primarily carried through automated technologies, with an adequate sample size relative to the total number of TV homes. Raw data should be accessible to subscribers, and agencies must maintain full transparency and accountability, ensuring honest representation of TV ratings.
 22. TRAI should consider strengthening compliance norms and ensure uniform enforcement of broadcasting standards and initiate a comprehensive survey to identify non-compliant local news channels and take appropriate corrective measures.
 23. The Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable Services) Interconnection (Digital Addressable Cable Television Systems) (Third Amendment) Regulation, 2014, have lost their relevance and should be scrapped and multi broadcaster bouquets should be permitted, as the terms imposed under 2014 Regulations were restrictive, this would further the forbearance and free market regime.

NBDA suggested that TRAI should consider these concerns in its upcoming consultation process and adopt a pragmatic and fair approach toward regulation and should adopt a principle-based approach for the entire broadcasting sector.

TRAI is yet to release the Consultation Paper.

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology

Submission on the Report on AI Governance Guidelines Development

NBDA in its response date 27.2.2025 submitted that the rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (“AI”) presents both opportunities and significant challenges for the news publishers. The primary concerns centered around:

(a) Copyright Infringement and the Unauthorized Use of News Content.

1. The unauthorized use of news content raises issues concerning copyright infringement, revenue loss, brand erosion, and misinformation, if unregulated. Training AI on copyrighted material without the consent presents ethical and legal concerns, potentially infringing on creators' rights and undermining copyright law.
2. AI models generating news summaries threaten user traffic, impacting publishers' revenue and brand visibility. While some AI tools offer selective links to original articles, readers may not visit the original works due to the availability of quick summaries.
3. Traditional copyright enforcement methods are ill-equipped to handle the complexities of AI training and outputs. Further, determining liability for infringement becomes complicated when multiple parties are involved. This is compounded by a lack of transparency on the part of AI developers/models as well as the lack of clear guidelines and regulations, which complicates enforcement.
4. To mitigate these challenges, several proactive steps are necessary at the level of AI developers and the government. While the Report touches upon these issues, it does not offer solutions and lacks clarity on the lacunae in the current legal regime.
5. AI companies claim that there is no copyright in news and current events, and therefore, there is no copyright infringement if news content is used to train their tools or is replicated/stored/summarized/transformed. There is a need to expressly recognize the expression of news as work in which copyright subsists.
6. NBDA endorsed the subcommittee's finding that the *"Indian Copyright Act provides protection to the copyright holder and does not allow AI systems to train on copyrighted content without the approval of the copyright holder."* However, tracing and enforcing copyright compliance for AI poses challenges that must be addressed through policy and legislative intervention.
7. NBDA submitted that AI systems should not be allowed to train on bulk datasets that include copyrighted data without prior approvals and appropriate licensing arrangements from each copyright holder, i.e., voluntary arrangements.
8. Using copyrighted works in AI training datasets without permission causes the rights holders to lose control over their works. Further, it is difficult for the original creator to enforce their rights or take remedial action. Fair use principles do not support the storage of copyrighted works for commercial purposes. In large-scale AI training, the commercial intent of using copyrighted materials necessitates explicit voluntary licensing agreements, ensuring transparency, respecting the rights of copyright holders, and minimizing potential disputes.
9. To ensure that the rights of copyright holders are protected, the following measures were recommended:
 - (a) **Voluntary Licensing for Copyrighted Content in AI Training:** Any AI training on copyrighted content should only proceed with a valid license from the copyright owner, obtained through explicit consent and involving mutually acceptable consideration. For this purpose, a legal framework should be introduced. The voluntary arrangements would specify clear terms regarding the extent of use, duration, and compensation.

Entities training AI models should conduct thorough and verifiable due diligence to identify copyright holders and obtain necessary voluntary licenses before using copyrighted data. Utilizing open-source datasets and obtaining explicit permissions from copyright holders can minimize copyright infringement risks. Further, maintaining detailed records of data sources, voluntary licensing agreements, and data usage is crucial to demonstrate compliance. AI technology and application providers should establish clear policies and procedures for copyright compliance.

- (b) **Transparency in Training Data:** AI developers should be encouraged to maintain and, where appropriate, disclose verifiable information about the datasets used to train their models and provide a mechanism for copyright holders to opt in or out of such usage.
- (c) **Exploring Technological Solutions:** The feasibility and development of technological solutions (such as digital watermarking) that can help in identifying copyrighted material within training datasets should be investigated.
- (d) **Consequences for Infringement:** Clear and proportionate consequences for the unauthorized use of copyrighted material in AI training should be established. When determining liability, the focus should be on the party exercising control over the infringing activity. Developers who use copyrighted material without authorization should bear primary responsibility. Similarly, clear and proportionate consequences should be established for the unauthorized use of copyrighted material in AI training. The government should mandate disclosure of training material or provide a mechanism for the detection of infringement.
- (e) **Affixing Liability on AI Companies located in other jurisdiction:** AI companies with offices or servers outside India evade liability by claiming jurisdiction. This issue requires express provisions to fix liability even when companies or servers are abroad, or tools are trained in foreign countries.
- (f) **Training:** Judicial personnel, police and relevant government authorities should be trained about AI, its use and the controversies.
- (g) **Revenue Sharing Agreements:** When AI-generated outputs lead to commercial gains or losses for copyright holders, they should receive a share of the revenue or compensation.
- (h) Provisions of the Copyright Act, 1957, should be adapted to address the nuances of AI and machine learning technologies. These include provisions defining AI-specific infringement, imposing an obligation on AI developers to obtain voluntary licenses or assignments, including stipulations concerning compensation mechanisms and expansion of moral rights. Such clarifications will strengthen the existing legal framework to address disputes and safeguard the interests of copyright holders in the AI era.
- (i) In addition, the following additional guardrails should be implemented:
 - (i) **Voluntary Licensing:** Laws should explicitly prohibit the use of copyrighted content in AI training without obtaining licenses or assignments on a voluntary basis. The agreements should be structured to foster a fair and competitive marketplace, precluding any abuse of dominance. They must ensure equitable bargaining power for news publishers, regardless of their size or market share, preventing any dilution of their negotiating position. The goal should be mutually beneficial partnerships, not new imbalances or the exploitation of journalistic resources.
 - (ii) **Diverse News Sources for Unbiased AI:** Training AI models on varied news sources is crucial, as relying on a few news sources introduces bias, skewing the AI's understanding towards limited viewpoints, hindering AI's ability to provide comprehensive, balanced, and nuanced outputs. Including numerous publishers with varied audiences, reporting styles, and expertise ensures a richer, more representative, and ultimately more accurate reflection of the complex global information landscape, thus contributing to a more robust and unbiased AI.
 - (iii) **Mandatory Disclaimers for Unattributed AI-Generated News:** In the absence of direct hyperlinks to the original sources, any AI-generated content pertaining to news and current affairs should carry a prominent disclaimer stating that the information presented is produced by AI and, as such, may contain inaccuracies, biases, or outright falsehoods.

- (iv) **Compensation Structures:** AI platforms should be mandated to compensate copyright holders for the use of their material.
- (v) **Transparency and Accountability:** AI platforms should be required to maintain detailed records of the datasets used for training and this information should be made accessible to copyright holders.
- (vi) **Global Collaboration:** Promote harmonization of copyright laws across jurisdictions to address cross-border disputes effectively.
- (vii) **Ethical Use Policies:** Enforce ethical guidelines for AI development, emphasizing respect for intellectual property and the avoidance of exploitation of copyrighted works.
- (viii) **Legal Recourse:** Simplify legal procedures for copyright holders to file claims in case of unauthorized use of their work by AI developers.

Copyrightability of work generated by using foundation models

10. News content generated by publishers, involving significant training, investment in AI tools, and editorial oversight, should be deemed copyrightable *inter-alia* since an overly narrow interpretation of 'human authorship', would create a dangerous precedent. Copyright, in these cases, should subsist with news publishers, as their role extends beyond merely providing an initial prompt. They invest resources, create/curate and settle the editorial direction, provide training to their staff, and ultimately take responsibility for the content made available to their subscribers, even if generated with the assistance of AI tools. Thus, demonstrating a significant level of human involvement that warrants protection.
11. Section 2(d)(vi) of the Copyright Act defines "*author*" of computer generated work as "*the person who causes the work to be created*". This definition offers crucial legislative guidance that extends to encompass AI-generated content particularly with respect to the news industry. Therefore, a nuanced understanding of '*authorship*', one that acknowledges the indispensable human role in directing and refining AI-generated output within the news publishing context, is essential.
12. **Recommendations:** There is an urgent need to clarify that news publishers are 'authors' of AI-assisted news content in line with the legislative principle envisaged in Section 2(d)(vi) of the Copyright Act.

Deepfakes and Misinformation:

13. AI is also responsible for amplifying fake news in the form of deepfakes, which can be visual or textual in nature. While visual deepfakes use deep learning to replace existing images/videos with those of others, textual deepfakes use algorithms to generate fake news. The Report recognizes that while the existing legal safeguards/instruments in respect of deepfakes and synthetic content are sufficient, they need effective implementation.
14. **Recommendations:** To address deepfakes and mitigate the spread of misinformation, watermarking protocols for AI-generated content should be mandatorily implemented to ensure traceability and accountability and should be complemented by the adoption of advanced detection technologies capable of identifying manipulated media.

Submissions to Specific Recommendations:

Setting-up of Committee/Group, headed by MeitY and the Principal Scientific Advisor.

That such Committee / Group should include all relevant stakeholders in the category of '*Non-Official Members*' to necessarily include copyright owners as well as news publishers and NBDA.

AI Incident Database

16. That while the database will collect reports on AI-related incidents to focus on harm mitigation strategies (and not fault finding) however, there should be a mechanism for reporting of IPR infringement related issues.
17. A clear framework should be put in place for addressing grievances relating to AI incident including the need for urgent redressal in cases of infringement by AI tools.

Voluntary commitments on transparency

18. A clear mechanism for determining compliance with such standardized protocols should also be established since verification, compliance, and enforcement of voluntary commitments regarding transparency are anticipated to be challenging.

Technical Secretariat proposed in the report

19. The Report fails to define how the Technical Secretariat will engage with stakeholders or ensure transparency in decision-making. Its role and powers must be clearly defined and limited. Mechanisms for public consultation and stakeholder engagement should be integrated. Additionally, a mechanism to resolve conflicts between the Governance Group and Technical Secretariat should be established.

Whole-of-Government approach proposed in the report

20. The emphasis on a '*whole-of-government*' approach risks creating a complex regulatory landscape, which could lead to bureaucratic delays, overlapping mandates, and regulatory uncertainty. The government should consider adopting a more targeted and streamlined approach to inter-agency coordination, focusing on specific areas where collaboration is essential.
21. A sector-specific approach would allow for the development of tailored regulations, standards, and best practices that would be effective in fostering responsible innovation within each field. Self-regulatory industry bodies will collaborate with the government in this effort and will be well-equipped to handle the sector-specific issues, enabling deeper engagement and fostering a more collaborative and informed approach to problem-solving. Insights from these sector-specific solutions can then be analyzed and adapted by the Committee/Group, headed by MeitY and the Principal Scientific Advisor, for assessment and possible adoption by other sectors/regulators.
22. In addition it was suggested that:
 - (i) At the policy level, there is an urgent need to develop robust mechanisms for compensating copyright holders and ensuring transparency. The government should clarify that using copyrighted content to train AI without compensation does not constitute fair use. There should be a roadmap for proper legislative intervention to enable news publishers to negotiate with tech companies on equal footing and impose data transparency requirements.
 - (ii) Amending the Copyright Act to explicitly prohibit the use of copyrighted data for AI training without a voluntary license is a necessary step. Additionally, mandating AI developers to disclose the sources of their training data and training methods will enhance transparency and accountability.
 - (iii) Policymakers, copyright holders, and AI developers must work together to create a legal and regulatory environment that fosters responsible AI development while protecting the IPR of news publishers.
 - (iv) Addressing these challenges will be essential for maintaining a healthy information ecosystem and ensuring that the AI revolution benefits society.

Suggestions on the Report

The Report could consider being more specific regarding practical implementation and give concrete guidance on challenges like deepfakes, cybersecurity, and IPR. The Report briefly touches upon critical issues like AI-led bias and discrimination, but does not delve into the nuances or provide robust solutions. It also overlooks the potential for AI to exacerbate existing societal inequalities and fails to offer concrete measures for mitigating these risks.

It should consider how diverse voices, including those from marginalized communities, will be meaningfully included in the AI governance process. It should define what constitutes AI for the purpose of the guidelines and provide clarity on the definitions of 'AI' and 'AI systems.'

A Risk-based approach should be adopted, and guidelines should be tailored to address sector-specific challenges and opportunities. AI development and deployment through voluntary commitments, self-regulation, and the adoption of best practices should be encouraged. Guidelines should ensure flexibility and adaptability, establish enforcement mechanisms, promote International harmonization, transparency and collaboration, sandboxes and regulatory flexibility.

Draft Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025 (DPDP Rules)

NBDA in its response dated 27.2.2025 expressed its deep concern regarding the absence of an exemption for "*journalistic purposes*" under the DPDP Act and the DPDP Rules.

NBDA outlined the problems that would arise, if "*journalistic purposes*" are not exempted from the DPDP Act and consequently the DPDP Rules.

It submitted that while the DPDP Act allowed for the processing of personal data for lawful purposes, which should ostensibly include "*journalistic purposes*," it was notable that no explicit exemption had been made in the Act for "*journalistic purposes*." The absence of such an exemption raised concerns about potential restrictions on the ability of journalists to gather and collect personal data in the public interest, which may have a detrimental impact on the freedom of speech and expression of the media and citizens.

The blanket application of the DPDP Act and the DPDP Rules to "*journalistic purposes*" would adversely affect the free speech rights of the media/press, especially investigative journalism, if the Data Principal is a member of the executive, political leader, public servant/official/figure or deceased. Journalists/news publishers and media organisations would not be able to telecast any "*live news*" if they were treated as Data Fiduciaries under the DPDP Act and the DPDP Rules.

Without an explicit exemption for "*journalistic purposes*," it is possible that data protection laws may be weaponized to intimidate, silence, or hinder journalists/news publishers from reporting stories that include digital personal data. It may create a situation where journalists/news publishers may be hesitant to report stories out of fear of legal consequences, resulting in self-censorship.

Applying strict data consent and processing restrictions would hinder investigative journalism, whistleblowing and holding power to account. Many landmark investigation eg:- Panama Papers, Pegasus projects would not have been possible under a strict and restrictive data protection regime.

Any data protection framework must follow principles of proportionality. Blanket application of DPDP laws on journalism is excessive and an unreasonable restriction. In addition, there must be express safeguards built in for the 'protection of anonymous sources. Journalists/news publishers often rely on confidential sources to expose wrongdoing and thus, there should be adequate protection to whistle-blowers and investigative leads.

Treating journalism under the same umbrella framework as businesses collecting personal data for targeted ads is misguided. There should not be blanket application of DPDP Rules on journalists/ news publishers and media organizations.

Privacy is not a reasonable restriction under Article 19(2), therefore, 'privacy' cannot become an indirect restriction on the right to freedom of speech and expression.

Since "research, archival and statistical purposes" under Section 17 (2)(b) having been granted exemption under the DPDP Act, there was no reason why "journalistic purposes" was not exempted under the DPDP Act.

The necessity of excluding journalistic activities from the purview of the data protection framework was also underscored in the Justice B.N. Srikrishna Report. Furthermore, removal of an exemption for "journalistic purposes" from the DPDP Act and DPDP Rules is a departure from the earlier iterations of the Act, wherein specific exemptions for "journalistic purposes" were crafted.

The DPDP Act and the DPDP Rules may result in a conflict between various legislations and their objectives, particularly the Right to Information Act, 2005, which is a point of serious concern for journalists/ news publishers. A balance should be struck between privacy and the right to receive information and the expectation that the functioning of the public authorities/public figures should be transparent.

The penalties envisaged under the DPDP Act are extremely harsh, onerous and should be substantially reduced. Attention was also drawn to the data protection laws/frameworks in other countries, where some form of exemption is granted to journalists.

Without prejudice to NBDA's submission stating that "journalistic purposes" must be exempted from the application of the DPDP Act and consequently, the DPDP Rules, NBDA submitted its comments to the DPDP Rules from the perspective of media organisation who may collect personal data in respect of their digital platforms, such as websites, apps.

President NBDA, in his letter dated 28.7.2025 to the Minister of Electronics and Information Technology, drew his attention to NBDA's submission dated 27.2.2025 on the DPDP Rules. To prevent any scope or opportunity to interfere with the freedom of speech and expression of the media, NBDA sought the Minister's intervention for a complete and absolute exemption for "journalistic purposes" under the DPDP Act and expressed apprehension regarding the dilution of the Right to Information Act, 2001.

Department of Space

Provisioning of Satellite capacity on Non- Indian Satellites- Advisory issued by Mol&B

Mol&B vide Advisory dated 10.7.2024 had stated that all broadcasters are required to enter into agreements with only the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) approved Indian entities of foreign satellites post 31.3.2025. In view of the delay in the approval of Indian entities of foreign satellites, vide communication dated 24.2.2025, extension was given by IN-SPACe till 30.9.2025. With effect from 1.10.2025, only IN-SPACe authorized non-Indian satellites/constellations in any of the frequency bands shall be permitted to enable provisioning of their capacity in India.

In view of the various issues being confronted by broadcasters, NBDA represented to the Secretary, Mol&B vide letter dated 28.2.2025 to consider extending the implementation by one year from 30.9.2025 to 31.3.2026, which would allow broadcasters adequate time for transition and ensure uninterrupted service. To discuss the concerns arising from the Advisory dated 10.7.2024, NBDA requested for a joint meeting to be convened with the Mol&B and IN-SPACe.

To discuss the concerns, Mol&B convened a joint meeting on 3.4.2025 with IN-SPACe, and the broadcasters. During the meeting, it was agreed that all the issues raised would be considered and within the timeline prescribed, the migration would happen with uninterrupted service.

Since much progress had not happened, President NBDA vide letter dated 17.6.2025 informed Chairman IN-SPACe that post the last meeting held on 3.4.2025, other than Intelsat, which was approved on 21.1.2025, no other operator has been approved for its Indian entity during the past three months. Hence, members of

NBDA found themselves in the same position as they were in March 2025. With all satellite contracts expiring on 30.9.2025, there was an urgent need to make plans to hire fresh capacity and arrange for the migration of all decoders, satellites and teleports. This process would also require urgent action not only by IN-SPACE but also by the Mol&B, which will need to approve hundreds of applications for Satellite and Teleport migrations.

Further it was stated that despite the clarification given on 3.4.2025, applications were still being forwarded by Mol&B.

A meeting was held on 2.7.2025, which was chaired by Chairman IN-SPACE. Broadcasters expressed their apprehensions about being able to adhere to the timeline of 30.9.2025, unless decisions were taken jointly by all the organisations. Chairman IN-SPACE agreed to look into the concerns.

The broadcasters mentioned that migration involves change of STBs, change of teleport and multiple approvals/clearances such as WPC each of which under current processes is taking a lot of time and the processes need to be expediated.

All broadcasters also expressed the need to also modify the Broadcast Seva Portal and other internal processes within the Government organizations including Mol&B and WPC to be more proactive.

Post the meeting, INSPCA-e issued notification dated 15.7.2025 whereby all Satellite Operators and users that presently used capacity or the additional capacity authorized by IN-SPACE, shall remain valid till 31.3.2026.

Mol&B issued an Advisory dated 4.8.2025 stating that limited period permission of AsiaSat 5 and 7 satellites (till 31.3.2026) have been issued, thus facilitating the broadcasters to initiate the process of termination of long-term contracts with AsiaSat, sign up with alternate authorized service provider and migration of operations on ground.

Dept for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade (IPR - Copyrights, Design and CIPAM Section), Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Stakeholder Consultation on Copyright and AI

The stakeholder consultation chaired by the Additional Secretary, DPIIT, was held on 20.6.2025. It centred around striking a balance between leveraging technologies and ensuring royalties/compensation for the creators. Amongst the issues discussed were licensing frameworks and text and data mining exceptions.

Copyright and Artificial Intelligence – Balancing Innovation with Creators’ Rights

NBDA in its submissions dated 4.7.2025 stated that it is committed to fostering a robust AI ecosystem that drives innovation while safeguarding the fundamental principles of copyright law and the livelihoods of creators. In its response to the questions NBDA submitted as follows :

1. Do you see the use of copyrighted materials in the AI training, as infringement? If yes, how?

The unauthorized use of copyrighted materials, including paywalled or subscription-based journalistic content, in AI training datasets constitutes a clear infringement under the Copyright Act, 1957. Section 14 of the Copyright Act grants exclusive rights to the original author to reproduce the work in any material form. Training AI involves copying of works to ensure that LLMs learn from the created dataset. The violation *inter alia* occurs in the following ways:

- **Infringement by Reproduction:** AI training involves the mass copying of copyrighted works into datasets, stored and processed on servers. This act of reproduction, without explicit consent, violates the exclusive rights of copyright owners.
- **Infringement by Adaptation:** The transformation of copyrighted works into machine-readable formats for AI training constitutes an unauthorized adaptation or creation of derivative works, another exclusive right

reserved for copyright owners. For journalistic content, this includes the ingestion of articles, broadcasts, or multimedia to train models that replicate styles, patterns, or factual reporting.

- **Harm to Market Value:** AI systems that scrape and repurpose news content often generate real-time summaries or responses, directly competing with news broadcasters and publishers' revenue streams, and causing irreparable financial harm.

AI models learn the expression, style, and substance of copyrighted works, and their outputs often replicate or substitute the original content. Further, when AI outputs are similar to copyrighted works, then such outputs directly harm creators, copyright owners and content producers.

If it is infringement, how should the policy strike the right balance between protecting copyrighted content and enabling its use for AI training? - In your view, where does this balance lie?

Sustainable innovation does not come from undermining the legal frameworks that foster human creativity. The balance lies in consent, credit, and compensation. The line must be drawn at mandatory, voluntary, opt-in licensing coupled with transparency, credit, and revenue sharing/ license fees. Right-holders should continue to have a meaningful say in how their works are used by enabling a framework that imposes strict limitation. News broadcasters and publishers, should they so desire, have the ability to negotiate and monetize their work in the best possible manner. Given the substitutive nature of AI-generated news summaries, the policy must require for commercial terms to be negotiated and suitable rights be granted through voluntary licensing agreements. Policy should mandate Transparency, Audit Mechanisms, Punitive Penalties, and Attribution Requirements.

Why should a blanket TDM exception for AI training (for commercial purposes) not be introduced in India, in order to help India take a lead in AI innovation? Would it hurt the content industry? If yes, how?

A blanket Text and Data Mining (TDM) exception for commercial AI training would be catastrophic for India's content and news industry, and should be unequivocally rejected, as it would legalize the mass appropriation of intellectual property.

- AI ingests vast arrays of creative work to replicate human creativity. This is not mere data mining but an active, often unauthorized, use of copyrighted material to build AI systems.
- **Disproportionate Harm to Content Industry:**
 - **Economic Devastation:** A TDM exception would obliterate revenue streams for news broadcasters/publishers. Unauthorized use of their content for AI training or real-time outputs (e.g., news summaries) directly competes with their monetization window, rendering investment in quality journalism unsustainable.
 - The availability of protected/copyrighted news content on the internet cannot be construed as permission to exploit such works without the consent or authorization of the rights holders.
 - Further, LLMs/AI tools may use retrieval techniques to extract copyrighted works, harming the news industry by reducing the incentive for users to visit the news broadcasters' /publishers' websites. Using copyrighted works without consent or a license devalues creators' skills, livelihoods, and intellectual property. While news websites suffer, these AI models benefit by 'training' on these sites without taking a license or paying the owners.
 - **Devaluation of News Content:** News broadcasters/publishers, operating in diverse markets, face unique challenges. Their content, often underrepresented globally, is at risk of being exploited without revenue, eroding the economic viability of news media and cultural diversity.

- **Endangers the News Industry:** A TDM exception overlooks the fact that a media organisation invests significant resources—financial, intellectual, and human—in producing high-quality and fact-based journalism. The resulting content is a product of extensive research, fact-checking, and editorial oversight. However, TDM, without authorization, directly undermines copyright protections and endangers the news industry.
- **Unfair Competition:** Tech companies would profit from uncompensated creative labor, creating a parasitic relationship that advantages AI developers over content creators.
- **Impact on Innovation:** If AI and data-mining companies freely extract value from media companies' content without permission and payment, as well as credit, the incentive to produce high-quality journalism diminishes. Such use of TDM could reasonably lead, in the long term, to a decline in original reporting as media organisations would struggle to sustain operations.
- **National Interest:** A TDM exception risks creating AI-generated content loops devoid of human editorial oversight, threatening media integrity and public trust.

How do you view a text and data mining (TDM) model with an opt-out mechanism? Does this model adequately address the concerns of content owners' rights? If not, why?

An opt-out TDM model is fundamentally inadequate and unjust for content owners, particularly news broadcasters/publishers. It inverts the core principle of copyright law, which grants creators exclusive control over their works, and is a system designed to fail the creators and copyright owners.

Why Opt-Out Fails:

- **Impossible Burden on Creators:** An opt-out system forces millions of creators to police the digital ecosystem and file technical notices to prevent unauthorized use, which is impractical, resource-intensive, and infeasible, and it entails costs, especially for news organizations.
- **Lack of Transparency:** In the absence of transparency, AI entities may or may not respect the opt-out mechanism, and there would be no way of ensuring that the content is not being used. Another challenge would be to continually determine which AI entities are operating globally, and then to visit each such entity to opt out and verify whether they have an opt-out mechanism.
- **Ineffective Mechanisms:** Current opt-out tools (e.g., robots.txt) are easily bypassed by AI crawlers, increasing server loads and distorting analytics.
- **Default Infringement:** Opt-out presumes consent as default, undermining the voluntary consent inherent in copyright law.

Suggestions

- **Required Safeguards:** The policy must require explicit, prior consent for the use of copyrighted works in AI training, ensuring creators retain control.
- **Transparency and Audits:** AI developers must disclose training datasets and undergo regular audits to verify compliance with licensing agreements.
- **Punitive Measures:** Strong legal penalties for bypassing opt-in requirements or using unauthorized content should be put in place.
- **Technical Standards:** Develop machine-readable licensing protocols to streamline consent processes and prevent unauthorized scraping.

Hence, only a mandatory opt-in framework appears to be an adequate and comparatively more robust mechanism that can be implemented to protect the rights of copyright owners.

Given the scale, direct licensing has some challenges. What alternative licensing framework would be most appropriate for India's AI ecosystem? - Are there global models India could adapt effectively?

Direct licensing remains the most equitable and rights-respecting model for India's AI ecosystem, as it upholds creators' autonomy and allows content owners/creators to negotiate and monetize their works. Collective Licensing or Extended Collective Licensing (ECL) models, as used in the EU, are not suitable for India's news sector due to their coercive nature and misalignment with the unique needs of time-sensitive content.

Why Direct Licensing is Optimal:

- **Creator Control:** Direct licensing allows news broadcasters/publishers to negotiate terms that reflect the value of their content.
- **Market-Based Solutions:** Innovations like digital licensing platforms, machine-readable licenses, and blockchain-based rights management can streamline direct licensing at scale, ensuring accessibility for both large AI companies and startups.
- **Precedents in India:** The news industry already operates under commercial syndication models (e.g., with ANI, PTI, Factiva), demonstrating that direct licensing is viable and scalable.

Global Models for Adaptation:

- **Marketplace Platforms:** India can encourage digital licensing marketplaces as an additional licensing model. Such model provide for licensing of content directly from creators or rights holders.
- **Syndication Models:** Existing syndication frameworks in India's news industry can be adapted to create AI-specific licensing agreements, ensuring revenue share/license fees for both foundational training and real-time use.
- **Technology-Driven Solutions:** Machine-readable licenses and metadata standards (e.g., Creative Commons with clear opt-in protocols) can streamline direct licensing, making it accessible to startups while protecting creators. India should prioritize investment in scalable, technology-driven direct licensing platforms over coercive collective models, ensuring that news broadcasters/publishers remain partners in AI innovation.

What are the concerns with introducing a statutory licensing model for AI training in India? How might these be mitigated through technical standards or legal safeguards?

Statutory licensing model should not be implemented for training AI, as it is fundamentally flawed and undermines the core principles of copyright law and threatens the livelihoods of news broadcasters/publishers.

NBDA's concerns with Statutory Licensing are as follows:

- **Erosion of Creator Autonomy:** Statutory licensing forcibly strips creators of their right to control their works, including the ability to refuse licenses for ethical, competitive, or brand-related reasons. A statutory license replaces this freedom with a mandatory transaction, thereby turning private intellectual property into a public utility service, fundamentally to solely benefit tech companies under the garb of public interest/utility.
- **Undervaluation of Content:** Mandated fees under statutory licensing rarely reflect the true market value of diverse content, especially premium journalistic works. Statutory license risks flattening a highly differentiated content economy into a one-size-fits-all scheme, disproportionately benefiting large AI companies at the expense of media creators.

- **Parasitic Relationship:** Statutory licensing creates an unfair dynamic where news broadcasters/publishers bear the cost of content creation while AI developers reap the rewards.
- **Legal and Technical challenges:** Implementing statutory licensing at scale presents serious legal and technical challenges.

Mitigation through Legal and Technical Safeguards:

India should adopt a voluntary, opt-in licensing framework *inter-alia* with the following safeguards:

- o Enact clear regulations defining the ingestion of copyrighted works for AI use, including AI training as a licensable act requiring prior consent.
- o Impose punitive penalties for unauthorized use, particularly of news content.
- o Provide an enabling regulatory framework premised on market-based licensing for AI use cases with special focus on the news industry.
- o Mandate transparency in training datasets, requiring AI developers to disclose and verify the sources of their data. Develop machine-readable licensing protocols to streamline consent and prevent unauthorized scraping.
- o Implement blockchain-based rights management systems to track usage and ensure revenue share/license fees.

What is your view on the copyrightability of AI-generated works?

Works generated autonomously by AI, without meaningful human involvement, should not be eligible for copyright protection under Indian law. Copyright is rooted in human creativity, as reflected in the Copyright Act, which defines an “author” as a human exercising skill, labor, and judgment. Granting copyright to autonomous AI outputs would undermine Human Authorship, harm News Broadcasters/Publishers as Autonomous AI-generated news summaries or articles can compete directly with human-curated journalism, devaluing investment in editorial oversight and fact-checking, critical to media integrity and result in legal void as recognizing copyright in AI-generated works without clear human authorship would create ambiguity in ownership and liability, complicating enforcement. However, works created with significant human involvement—where AI is a tool guided by human creativity—should be copyrightable.

What is your view on authorship of AI generated works? Who should be copyright owner of AI generated works? What should be the liability structure?

The authorship and ownership of AI-generated works should vest in the human or entity that causes the work to be created, provided there is substantial human involvement, and the output does not infringe existing copyrights. This aligns with Section 2(d)(vi) of the Copyright Act, which defines the author of a computer-generated work as “*the person who causes the work to be created.*”

Works generated by AI with minimal or no human input should not be copyrightable, as they lack the human creativity required under Indian law.

Liability Structure:

- (a) AI developers shall be held strictly liable for copyright infringement occurring during the training phase of their models. This liability stems from two distinct acts: (i) infringement by reproduction, involving the mass, unauthorized copying of copyrighted works like news articles, images, and videos into training datasets; and (ii) infringement by adaptation, where these works are transformed into machine-readable formats without permission.
- (b) For copyright infringements found in the output of an AI system, the liability can be on the following lines:
 - o Users: The person or entity using the AI to generate/use infringing content is primarily liable, as they initiate/use the output and benefit from it.

- o Developers: AI developers who train models on unauthorized copyrighted data are also liable, as they enable creating/use of the infringing tool.
- o Joint Liability: In cases where infringement results from both unauthorized training data and user prompts, liability should be shared proportionately based on control and benefit.
- **Industry Precedent:** Google's indemnity for its Gemini models appears to set a positive example, where developers assume responsibility for potential infringements, protecting users and reinforcing accountability. This structure ensures clarity in ownership and liability while protecting the rights of news broadcasters/publishers using AI as a creative tool.

Office Memorandum No. 14-35/2015-CRB/LU-IPR-VII] Issued by Dept for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade (IPR - Copyrights, Design and CIPAM Section)

DPIIT withdrew an earlier Office Memorandum dated 5.9.2016, by which it had expanded the Scope of Section 31D (statutory licensing) to include Internet Transmissions. The decision to withdraw the earlier Office Memorandum has been taken in light of the Hon'ble Bombay High Court's decision in *Tips Industries v. Wynk Music Ltd. Anr. (Commercial Appeal No. 424 and 425 of 2019)*.

Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology, Lok Sabha

The Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology, Lok Sabha (2024-25) desired to hear the views of the representatives of News Broadcasters and Digital Association (NBDA) on the subject '*Review of mechanism to curb Fake News*' at their sitting on November 21, 2024. The hearing was attended by Mr. Rajat Sharma, President NBDA, Mrs. Anuradha Prasad Shukla, Board Member and Secretary General NBDA. Prior to the hearing, NBDA also submitted a Note on the subject to the Director, Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology, Lok Sabha on 14.11.2024.

Post the hearing, the Standing Committee sought written reply from NBDA on "*List of Points in connection with the examination of the subject "Review of mechanism to curb Fake News" relating to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting*," which has been submitted on 15.1.2025.

The Report of the Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology, Lok Sabha (2024-25) is awaited.

Competition Commission of India

NBDA responded to Notices dated 24.9.2024 and 22.5.2025 under Section 41(2) read with Section 36(2) of the Competition Act, 2002 in connection with Case No. 41/2021, Case No. 10/2022 and Case No. 36/2022 from the Joint Director General, CCI.

Corporate Matters

Office Bearers of NBDA 2024-2025

In terms of Article 26 of the Articles of Association, the following Directors were elected Office Bearers of the Association for the year 2024-2025:

President – Mr. Rajat Sharma, Independent News Service Pvt. Ltd.

Vice President – Mr. M. V. Shreyams Kumar, Mathrubhumi Printing & Publishing Co. Ltd.

Honorary Treasurer – Ms. Anuradha Prasad Shukla, News24 Broadcast India Ltd.

Membership

During the year under report, the following digital media entities have become Associate Members of NBDA:

Printline Media Private Ltd (The Print English, Hindi, Marathi and Tamil) w.e.f. 25.3.2025

Prudent Media (Goa) Private Ltd (Prudent Media and Konkansad Live) w.e.f. 25.3.2025

The details of Members/Associate Members of the Association are annexed as **Annexure-1**.

Formation of Drafting Committee

NBDA has to regularly make submissions to the Government/ regulatory authorities on issues concerning the news broadcasters and digital news publishers. To enable NBDA to effectively draw up its responses, which reflect the views of the Members of NBDA, a Drafting Committee was constituted by the Board, comprising of the following representatives:

1. Mr. Sanjay Agarwal, Times Network - Convenor
2. Mr. Raj Varier, ABP News
3. Mr. Gagan Sareen, Network18/Jio Star
4. Mr. Aiman Hassaney, TV Today
5. Ms. Ritika Talwar, India TV
6. Mr. Nikhil Guliani, NDTV

Shifting of Registered Office of NBDA from one place to another within the same city

The Board approved the change of the Registered Office of the Association from present address FF-42, Omaxe Square, Commercial Center, Jasola, New Delhi, 110025 to B-39 Okhla Industrial Area Phase 1, New Delhi 110020 with effect from April 1, 2025. The change of Registered Office address has been approved by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs on 25.4.2025. Further, change in the Registered Office address have been processed and approved by the Income Tax Department in respect of PAN and TAN and the GST authorities. All Members and Banks have been informed of the change of Registered Office address.

Lease Agreement of NBDA Office in Noida

The Board approved the renewal of the lease agreement of NBDA Office in Noida. Accordingly, the agreement has been signed for a period of 5 years w.e.f 1.7.2024 to 30.6.2029 and has also been registered with the Noida Authorities.

Appointment of Corporate Consultant

The Board appointed Balika Sharma and Associates, Company Secretaries as Corporate Consultant on retainership basis for all Secretarial work of NBDA w.e.f. 1.4.2025 for a period of three years in place of J. P Saini & Associates, Company Secretaries.

Trademark Registration

The Trade Marks Authority vide its Registration Certificate No. 3403530 dated 16.10.2024 and Registration Certificate No. 3408968 dated 19.2.2024 had registered NBDA's Trade Mark Application for its Logo in Class 35 and Class 41 respectively. NBDA has also been granted registration of its Logo ("Mark") in Class 45. The registration is valid for a period of 10 years and would be required to be renewed on 9.2.2033.

News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority (NBDSA)

Appointment of Editor Member

Mr. Ranjit Kumar, Managing Editor, Times Now Navbharat, Bennett Coleman & Company Ltd, has been appointed as an Editor member in NBDSA for a period of two years from 24.3.2025, in place of Mr. Vishal Pant, representing TV Today Network Ltd whose term had concluded.

Legal Matters pending in various Courts

Supreme Court

S.No	Title	Details
1.	People's Union for Civil Liberties and Anr. v The State of Maharashtra & Ors. [Criminal Appeal No. 1255 of 1999]	The appeal arises from an Order passed by the Hon'ble Bombay High Court in Criminal Writ Petition No. 1146 of 1997 in relation to alleged fake encounter killings. The matter came up on 13.9.2023, on which date the Hon'ble Supreme Court directed the Union Ministry of Home Affairs to prepare a comprehensive manual on media briefings by police personnel. On 24.7.2025, the Hon'ble Supreme Court directed the matters to be listed after six weeks to enable the amicus, to furnish a report in the form of suggestions to be considered by the States.
	Dr. Surat Singh v Union of India and Ors. [W.P. (C) No. 316 of 2008]	A writ petition was filed under Article 32 of the Constitution for ensuring effective enforcement of fundamental rights of citizens (in this case Dr. Rajesh Talwar) in relation to police handling and media coverage of the Aarushi murder case. NBA had filed an intervention in the matter. The matter is to be heard with People's Union for Civil Liberties and Anr. v The State of Maharashtra & Ors. [Criminal Appeal No. 1255 of 1999].
	Act Now for Harmony and Democracy (ANHAD) and Anr. v Union of India and Ors. [T.C. (C) No. 27 of 2011]	The case arises from a Writ Petition filed before the Hon'ble Delhi High Court seeking a judicial inquiry into the encounter killings at Batla House, New Delhi and for laying down guidelines for the police and the media regarding the publication of information obtained/claimed to be obtained during investigation. The Supreme Court vide Order dated 25.2.2011 allowed NBA's application seeking transfer of Writ Petition (Civil) No. 7368 of 2008 titled " <i>Act Now for Harmony & Democracy (ANHAD) & Anr. Vs Union of India & Ors</i> " which was pending before the Delhi High Court to the Supreme Court, since the said petition involved similar issues. The matter is to be heard with People's Union for Civil Liberties and Anr. v The State of Maharashtra & Ors. [Criminal Appeal No. 1255 of 1999].
2.	Firoz Iqbal Khan v Union of India (NBA) [W.P.(C) No. 956 of 2020]	A PIL was filed seeking the issuance of directions to the Central Government and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to issue necessary guidelines/instructions to restrain the media, both print and electronic, social media networks as well as Respondent No. 5, Sudarshan News from broadcasting or reporting any news relating to religion which creates any communal disharmony. The matter last came up substantively on 29.11.2023. The matter was subsequently listed for disposal on several dates including on 7.5.2025.

S.No	Title	Details
3.	News Broadcasters Association v Union of India & Ors. [SLP (C) No.17959 of 2023]	A Special Leave Petition was filed against the Judgment dated 18.1.2021 in PIL (ST) No.92252 of 2020 and Criminal PIL (ST) No.1774 of 2020, challenging inter alia certain observations made by the Hon'ble Bombay High Court on self-regulation. The matter came up for hearing on 18.9.2023, on which date the Hon'ble Court granted an opportunity to the petitioner (NBA) and to NBF to place their schemes of self-regulation before the Court. NBDA has filed its rejoinder and the amended News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Regulations in the matter on 16.10.2023. Subsequently, vide affidavit dated 8.7.2024, the News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Regulations amended in entirety, including the amendments to the Powers of the Authority were placed on record. Thereafter on 5.12.2024, NBDA placed on record the amendments made to Clause 7 of the News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Regulations.
4.	Hema Rajaraman v Union of India [W.P.(C) No. 509 of 2023]	A writ petition has been filed inter alia praying that the Hon'ble Court issue an appropriate writ, order or direction directing NBDSA and all news & media entities and agencies to desist from reporting on the criminal proceedings involving Criminal Case No. 2081/2023 registered before Patiala House Court, New Delhi and arising from FIR No. 06/2023 dated 4.1.2023. NBDA has been made Respondent in the matter. The matter was listed on 23.4.2025, however it was not taken up.
5.	M/s Cure SMA Foundation v Union of India & Ors. [W.P. (C) No. 460 of 2025]	A writ petition has been filed inter alia seeking to bring to the notice of the Hon'ble Court the broadcast of certain online content, media and programmes that are derogatory, offensive, denigrating, or belittling to persons with disability or their disease or treatment options. The Petitioner is aggrieved by the lack of any explicit statutory guidelines to regulate the broadcast of such online content and desires for positive obligation to be put on both the government and private actors to adopt a unique standard of representation of persons with disability in the online domain. NBDA has been Respondent in the matter. The matter was listed on 15.7.2025 on which date the Hon'ble Court has granted the Respondents two weeks' time to file counter affidavit in the matter. The matter was listed on 25.8.2025, on which date the Hon'ble Court directed the Union of India to frame Guidelines in consultation with NBDA.

High Courts

A. Allahabad High Court – Lucknow Bench

S.No	Title	Details
1.	Dr. Nutan Thakur v Union of India [WRIC No. 9976 of 2013 (M/B)]	Aggrieved by the impugned order dated 16.10.2013, passed by the NBSA, Dr. Nutan Thakur filed the said writ petition. The matter has not come up for hearing.

B. Bombay High Court

S.No	Title	Details
1.	Lahu Chandu Chavan v State of Maharashtra & Ors. [W.P. (CRL.) No. 1119 of 2021]	After hearing the submissions of the Petitioner on 4.3.2021, the Bombay High Court directed media organizations to scrupulously follow the guidelines issued in Nilesh Navlakha Vs. Union of India (2021 SCC Online Bom 56) and further to refrain from publishing or giving any unnecessary publicity to the incident of the death of the daughter X of the Petitioner and her alleged illicit relationship with Y. The matter has not come up for hearing thereafter.

C. Bombay High Court – Aurangabad Bench

S.No	Title	Details
1.	Akhil Bhartiya Shree Swami Samarth Gurupeeth Trimbakeshwar v State of Maharashtra [W.P. (CrI) No. 170 of 2025]	The petitioner has sought the issuance of directions restraining Respondents from publishing any news articles/photos / video clips / audio clips relating to the petitioner in relation to FIR dated 9.12.2024 bearing CR. No.637/2024 and FIR bearing CR.No. 638/2024 dated 11.12.2024 in connection with the death of Mr. Santosh Deshmukh, Sarpanch of Massajog village. NBDA and NBDSA have been made respondents in the matter. The Hon'ble Court vide Order dated 25.2.2025 directed "the respondents to scrupulously follow the guidelines issued in Nilesh Navalakha (Supra) especially paragraph Nos.348 and 349 of the said judgment, when they are covering the news in connection with the petitioner in relation to the First Information Report bearing Crime No.637 of 2024 dated 9.12.2024 and the First Information Report bearing Crime No.668 of 2024 dated 11.12.2024". The matter is posted for 3.10.2025.

D. Calcutta High Court -Appellate Side

Sr. No	Title	Details
1.	Sri. Charles Nandi v Union of India & Ors. [WPA No. 5705 of 2020 with CAN 3633 of 2020]	The petition has been filed by an employee praying for the Respondent authorities to frame a scheme for providing financial assistance to all media personnel in the State of West Bengal facing financial crisis during the pandemic. State Govt. of West Bengal, INS, NBA, Bennett Coleman, ABP, Aajkaal and Trade Union Organizations of the print media have been made Respondents in the matter. The matter has not come up.

2.	Soumayasankar Mukherjee v Union of India & Ors. [WPA(P) 268 of 2025]	A public interest litigation was filed seeking to protect the right to privacy and dignity of a victim of a heinous crime which took place in premises of a South Calcutta Law College and prevent further irreparable harm and secondary harm by the continued broadcast and circulation of the footage by media channels. The Hon'ble Court vide Order dated 29.7.2025 dismissed the petition.
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E. Delhi High Court

Sr. No	Title	Details
1.	M/s. News Broadcasters Association and Ors. v Telecom Regulatory Authority of India [W.P.(C) No.7989 of 2013] News Broadcasters Association & Ors. v Union of India [W.P. (C) No.4307 of 2021]	A writ petition has been filed by the NBDA and its other members for quashing and setting aside the Standards of Quality of Service (Duration of Advertisements in Television Channels) (Amendment) Regulations, 2013 issued by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India vide Notification dated 22.3.2013. Subsequently, another writ petition was filed by NBA challenging Rule 7(11) of the Cable Television Network Rules, 1994 on the ground that it violates Article 19(1)(a) read with Article 19(2) of the Constitution. Notice was issued on the writ petition in April 2021. The Interim Orders granted in favour of the Petitioners in the year 2013 in W.P. 7989/2013 continue. One of the judges hearing the matter, has been elevated as Chief Justice of the Karnataka High Court. The matter was listed before a new Bench on 1.8.2025, however it was not taken up. The matter is now posted on 26.8.2025.
2.	Sadhan Haldar v The State of NCT of Delhi and Ors. [W.P.(CRL) No. 1560 of 2017]	On 22.1.2019 a detailed order was passed by the Hon'ble Court issuing directions to various agencies involved in the recovery and restoration of missing children in Delhi. NBA has entered its appearance and no directions have been passed in respect of NBA. The matter is listed for 22.8.2025.
3.	Disha Ravi v NCT of Delhi & Ors. [W.P. (C) 2297 of 2021]	A writ petition was filed seeking inter alia the issuance of a writ of mandamus and/or writ of like nature directing NBDSA (Respondent No. 3) to take appropriate action against Respondent No. 4-6 (News18, Times Now and India Today) and other member private news broadcasting channels under its Guidelines for reporting on Disha Ravi in a manner that is violative of fair trial rights and right to privacy. The matter is listed for 15.12.2025.
4.	Shehla Rashid Shora v NBDA & Ors. [W.P. (C) No. 13361 of 2022]	The writ petition arises from the Order No. 129(2022) dt.31.3.2022 passed by the NBDSA (Respondent No.2) in respect of a complaint filed by the Petitioner against Zee News (Respondent No.3). In the writ, the Petitioner has prayed inter alia, for the issuance of an appropriate writ, order or direction directing the Respondent No.2 to suitably modify its Order and pass directions to the Respondent No. 3-4 to air, an apology to the Petitioner. The matter is posted for 23.12.2025.

Sr. No	Title	Details
5.	Vijay Nair v Central Bureau of Investigation & Anr. [W.P. (C) No. 15617 of 2022]	The Petitioner, an accused in the Delhi Liquor Excise Policy Scam has filed a writ petition inter alia seeking the issuance of a writ of mandamus thereby directing the Respondents to ensure that no leakages of court proceedings are made so as to prejudice the fundamental right of the Petitioner to have a free and fair trial. NBDSA along with India Today, Times Now and Zee News have been made Respondents in the matter. NBDA was also subsequently impleaded as Respondent. The matter is listed for 13.10.2025.
6.	CRL MA (No). 5041 of 2023 in Asif Iqbal Tanha (Through Pairokar) v State of NCT of Delhi & Ors. [WP (CRL.) 1292 of 2020]	A writ petition was filed before the Hon'ble Delhi High Court by Asif Iqbal Tanha, an accused in the Delhi riots against publication and broadcast by various news outlets, of highly sensitive / confidential information in connection with ongoing criminal investigations into inter alia Case FIR No. 59/2020. The Petitioner inter alia, prayed for the Hon'ble Court to (i) Direct Respondent Nos.3, 4, 5 & 6 and various other media agencies to take down the sensitive/confidential information leaked to them by the officials of Respondent No.2; (ii) Direct an inquiry into misconduct of official or officials of Respondent No.2 responsible for leaking information to Respondent Nos.3-6 and other such media agencies; and (iii) Issue guidelines on media reporting of ongoing criminal investigations. In view of the prayers made in the petition and the averments contained therein, an intervention application was filed on behalf of NBDA in the matter. The matter was listed on 21.8.2025, on which date NBDA withdrew its Intervention Application.
7.	Azmat Ali Khan v Union of India [W.P.(C)No 6332 of 2023]	In the writ petition, the Petitioner has inter alia, prayed that the Hon'ble Court issue a writ of Mandamus or any other appropriate Writ/Order/Direction to the Respondents to take action as per law to take down/restrain the publication of articles/videos, circulation of fake news and internal details of the FIR 295/2023 dt. 19.4.2023 registered under Sections 323, 376, 506 and 509 of the Indian Penal Code pending the investigation. NBDSA is Respondent No.3 in the matter. The matter is listed for 2.9.2025.
8.	News Broadcasters Association and Ors. v Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and Anr. [W.P.(C) 6390 of 2024]	The Hon'ble Supreme Court, vide Order dated 22.3.2024, transferred all Writ Petitions challenging the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) 2021, including News Broadcasters Association & Ors. Vs. Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology W.P.(C) No. 13675/2021 filed before the Hon'ble Kerala High Court to the Hon'ble Delhi High Court. Subsequently, the matter, along with other related matters, were listed before the Hon'ble Delhi High Court on 14.8.2024, on which date, the Hon'ble Court appointed one Coordinator for the petitioners and one for the respondents so that the matters can be segregated issue-wise. The Hon'ble Court also directed the parties to complete the pleadings within four weeks. Vide Order dated 25.4.2025, liberty was granted to the parties to submit their written submissions. The matter is now posted for 22.9.2025.

Sr. No	Title	Details
9.	News Broadcasters Association and Ors. v Ministry of Information and Broadcasting [W.P.(C) No. 9936 of 2025]	The Hon'ble Supreme Court, vide Order dated 23.7.2024 had transferred NBDA's writ petition challenging the Cable Television Networks Amendment Rules, 2021 to the Hon'ble Delhi High Court. The matter was listed before the Hon'ble Court on 17.7.2025, on which date the Union of India was directed to file its Counter Affidavit in the matter. The Interim Order dated 16.7.2021 granted by the Hon'ble Kerala High Court continues. The matter is now posted for 22.9.2025.
10.	X v. Union of India & Ors. [W.P. (C) 10534 of 2025]	The writ petition sought the issuance of a Writ of Mandamus or any other appropriate Writ, Order or Direction in the nature thereof, seeking the removal of news articles, media broadcasts & digital publications mentioning the names and details of the petitioner and his family members, which have been disseminated by various media platforms in violation of the applicable guidelines and norms regarding reporting on suicide cases, issued by the Press Council of India, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, which violate the Right to Dignity and Privacy of the Petitioner. Vide Order dated 23.7.2025, NBDA was deleted from the array of the parties by the Hon'ble Delhi High Court

F. Karnataka High Court

Sr. No	Title	Details
1.	Peoples Movement Against Sexual Assault (PMASA) v Department Of Women and Child Department, State of Karnataka & Ors. [W.P. No.6301 of 2017]	A writ petition has been filed which seeks for that the Hon'ble Court to issue a Writ of Mandamus inter alia to Respondent No. 11, NBSA, (i) to strictly enforce the laws and self-regulatory norms formulated to preserve the confidentiality of the identity of the victims of sexual assault; (ii) to strictly enforce the laws and self-regulatory norms formulated for sensitive and non-sensational reportage of incidents of sexual assault; (iii) to formulate effective and accessible grievance redressal mechanisms against objectionable or offensive content in local languages. The matter last came up for hearing on 8.7.2022.

G. Kerala High Court

Sr. No	Title	Details
1.	K. Biju v Union of India and Others. [W.P.(C) No. 21336 of 2013]	A writ petition has been filed seeking that the Hon'ble Court issue a Writ of Mandamus, from the Court directing Respondent Nos 1 and 2 i.e., Union of India and the State of Kerala respectively to take effective steps to prevent violation of the Programme Code of the Cable Television Networks Act, 1995 and Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994 by private news channels and to frame stringent statutory provisions for effectively preventing violation of the above Codes.

Sr. No	Title	Details
2.	News Broadcasters & Digital Association and Ors. v Union of India [WP (C) 27623 of 2023]	A writ petition has been filed challenging Clauses 35, 4(4), 7(4), 11(4), 8(1)(c), 11(3)(e), 11(3)(i), 10(1)(vii), 9(2), 12(2), 24, 25, 26 and 36 of the Guidelines for Uplinking and Downlinking of Satellite Television Channels in India, 2022 and the Advisory dated 30.1.2023 as being ultra vires Article 19(1)(a), 19(1)(g) and 14 of the Constitution. The matter was listed on 16.10.2023, on which date the Hon'ble Judge passed an Interim Order directing for status quo to be maintained. The matter came up on several dates on which dates the Interim Order dated 16.10.2023 were extended. The matter is now posted for 17.10.2025.
3.	George John v State of Kerala W.P. (C) No. 9058 of 2019	<p>The Petition is a Public Interest Litigation wherein the Petitioner has alleged that the political parties, trade unions and others are calling hartals and strikes in violation of various judgments, including <i>George Kurian v State of Kerala 2004 (2) KLT 758</i>.</p> <p>The Petitioner seeks a specific direction to Respondents to clearly announce through radio, print and visual media that nobody will be compelled to participate in hartals or strikes, traffic will remain unobstructed, and those who are willing can go for work and that fundamental rights of others to move about will not be affected.</p> <p>The matter was listed on 26.5.2025, on which date the Respondents submitted that the issue had already been addressed by the Full Bench in <i>George Kurian</i> and that related contempt petitions were being heard by another Bench. The Court then directed the Registry to place the petition before that Bench. The matter is posted for 24.9.2025.</p>

H. Madhya Pradesh High Court -Indore Bench

Sr. NO	Title	Details
1.	Nyaaayi Through its Founder & Editor & Anr. v Arnab Goswami & Ors. [W.P. (P.L.) 14379 of 2020]	The case has been filed for taking action against Republic TV for violating the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994. An amendment application was moved by the Petitioner, because of which NBA and NBSA have been made Respondents in the matter.

I. Madras High Court - Madurai Bench

S. No	Title	Details
1.	WMP (MD) No. 2365 of 2020 titled News Broadcasters Association In Mohammed Razvi v Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) & Ors. [W.P. (MD) NO. 4357 of 2019]	The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court issued notices to TRAI and Secretary of Ministry of Communication on a plea seeking a ban on advertisements by private channels violating the TRAI's advertisement rules. NBA has moved an application before the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court seeking impleadment/intervention in the matter to bring to the Court's notice the fact that a matter with similar questions of law is pending before the Delhi High Court. The matter was disposed of on 26.6.2025.

S. No	Title	Details
2.	J. Kirubha Priyadarshini v Union of India & Ors. [W.P. (MD) No. 21429 of 2021]	In the writ petition, the Petitioner inter alia prayed, that the Hon'ble Court direct the Respondents to scrupulously execute the provisions of the POCSO Act, 2012, the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, The Press Council Act, 1978, India Penal Code, 1860 and the Information Technology Act, 2000 apart from adhering to the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

J. Punjab and Haryana High Court

S. No	Title	Details
1.	Manish Goel v Securities & Exchange Board of India & Ors. [CWP PIL No. 1 of 2023]	A PIL was filed seeking inter alia, the issuance of a writ of mandamus/certiorari, or any other appropriate writ (i) to the Respondents with a direction for compliance to the provisions of SEBI Research Analyst Regulations, 2014; (ii) to the Respondents No. 2 to 4 that they should allow only SEBI Registered Research Analyst on their platforms/channels for providing opinion/tips on listed stocks and (iii) impose exemplary cost on Respondents No 2 to 4 for not complying with SEBI Research Analyst Regulations, 2014 and on Respondent No.1 for not enforcing Regulations, 2014 on TV Channels and social media intermediaries and on analysts giving stock tips/opinion on TV Channels and social media intermediaries. The matter is listed for 29.9.2025.

K. Chhattisgarh High Court

S. No	Title	Details
1.	Natwarlal Agrawal v Union of India & Others. [WP(C) 4783 of 2024]	The Petitioner is aggrieved by the usage of the name "Natwarlal", with acts of cheating and fraud in reporting and coverage. The Petitioner has inter alia sought the issuance of a writ of mandamus or any other appropriate writ, order or direction directing the Respondents to ensure that all print and electronic media refrain from associating the name "Natwarlal". He has also sought directions to be issued to MoI&B, PCI and MEITY to issue guidelines and regulatory measures to prevent the misuses of common names in media reports in a manner that causes defamation, stigma or emotional distress to law abiding citizens.

District Court - Saket

S. NO	Title	Details
1.	Manzoor Ul-Haq Khan vs National Khabar 9 TV Civil Suit No. 348/2025	The Plaintiff has filed a civil suit for damages on account of defamation and mandatory injunction praying inter alia that a decree of damages to the tune of Rs. 30,00,000/- be passed against Defendants Nos. 5 to 10 on account of defamation, loss of respect, mental pain, shock, trauma and harassment, loss of respect, goodwill and a decree of mandatory injunction be passed against Defendant Nos. 1-4 directing them to remove such fake news/report from the YouTube channel of Defendant No. 1 The next date of hearing in the matter is 25.9.2025.

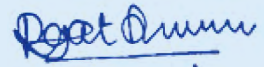
Competition Commission of India

S. NO	Title	Details
1.	News Broadcasters & Digital Association v Alphabet Inc. & Ors.	NBDA had in September 2022, filed an Information with the Competition Commission of India under Section 19 of the Competition Act, 2002 alleging that Google and its subsidiary/ affiliate companies have abused their dominant position under Section 4 of the Competition Act, 2002. CCI vide its order dated 6.10.2022, clubbed the matter with the ongoing investigations in similar complaints filed by DNPA and INS. CCI also directed the Director General to investigate the present matter and submit a consolidated investigation report in all matters.

News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority

The actions taken by the News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority during the year under report have been shown separately in the Annual Report.

**By Order of the Board of Directors of
News Broadcasters & Digital Association**



Rajat Sharma
President
DIN: 00005373

Place: New Delhi
Date: July 25, 2025



Annexure - 1

Members of News Broadcasters & Digital Association

S. No.	Name of the Member	Channel(s)/Digital Platforms
	Members:	
1.	ABP Network Pvt. Ltd.	ABP News, ABP Majha, ABP Anando, ABP Asmita
2.	Asianet News Network Pvt. Ltd.	Asianet News, Asianet Suvarna News
3.	BBC Global News India Pvt. Ltd.	BBC World
4.	Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd.	Times Now, ET Now, Times Now World, Times Now Navbharat HD, ET Now Swadesh, Times Now Navbharat
5.	Eenadu Television Pvt. Ltd.	ETV-Andhra Pradesh, ETV-Telangana
6.	Independent News Services Pvt. Ltd.	India TV
7.	Mathrubhumi Printing & Publishing Co. Ltd.	Mathrubhumi News
8.	MMTV Ltd.	Manorama News Central
9.	New Delhi Television Ltd.	NDTV24x7, NDTV India
10.	New Generation Media Corporation Pvt. Ltd.	Puthiya Thalaimurai
11.	New24 Broadcast India Ltd.	News24 Think First, News 24 Madhya Pradesh – Chhattisgarh
12.	SUN TV Network Ltd.	Sun News
13.	TV Today Network Ltd.	Aajtak, India Today, Good News Today, Aajtak HD
14.	Network18 Media & Investments Limited	CNN NEWS18, News18 India, CNBC Bazaar, CNBC TV18, CNBC Awaaz, News18 Assam/North East, News18 Tamil Nadu, News18 Kerala, News18 Uttar Pradesh/Uttarakhand, News18 Rajasthan, News18 Madhya Pradesh/Chhattisgarh, News18 Bihar/ Jharkhand, News18 Jammu/Kashmir/Ladakh/ Himachal, News18 Bangla, News18 Kannada, News 18 Punjab/Haryana, News18 Gujarati, News18 Odia, https://www.cnbctv18.com
15.	Writemen Media Pvt. Ltd.	Public TV
16.	Zee Media Corporation Ltd.	Zee News, Zee Business, Zee 24 Taas, Zee Hindustan, Zee Delhi NCR Haryana, Zee Madhya Pradesh Chhattisgarh, Zee Punjab Haryana Himachal, Zee Rajasthan, WION, Zee Salaam, Zee 24 Kalak, Zee Uttar Pradesh Uttarakhand, Zee Bihar Jharkhand, Zee Kannada News, Zee Telugu News



Associate Members		
A.	Broadcasters	
17.	IBN Lokmat News Pvt. Ltd.	News18 Lokmat
18.	Indira Television Ltd.	Sakshi
19.	Malayalam Communications Ltd.	Kairali News
20.	Total Telefilms Pvt. Ltd.	Total TV, Total Haryana
21.	Bloomberg Television Production Services India Private Ltd	Bloomberg Television Asia Pacific Feed
22.	BBC World Service India Prvt Ltd	
23.	Collective Newsroom Pvt Ltd	
B.	Digital	
24.	Asianxt Digital Technologies Prvt Ltd	Asianet News, Asianet Suvarna News, Asianet News Tamil, Asianet News Telugu, Asianet News Bangla, Asianet News Hindi, Asianet News English, Asianet News English [my nation], Asianet News Hindi [my nation]
25.	Indiadotcom Digital Pvt. Ltd.	India.com [English], India.com [Hindi] Zee News [English], Zee News [Hindi], Zee Business [English], Zee Business [Hindi], Zee Bharat, Salaam TV, Zee Punjab Haryana Himachal, Zee Madhya Pradesh Chhattisgarh, Zee Rajasthan, Zee Odisha, Zee Delhi NCR Haryana, Zee Bihar Jharkhand, Zee Uttar Pradesh Uttarakhand, Zee 24 Taas, Zee 24 Ghanta, Zee 24 Kalak, Zee Tamil News, Zee Telugu News, Zee Kannada News, Zee Malayalam News, Kesar TV, WION, Bollywood Life (English), Bollywood Life (Hindi), Techlusive (English), Techlusive (Hindi), TheHealthsite (English), TheHealthsite (Hindi), Cricketcountry (English), Cricketcountry (Hindi), Screenbox, Mylord (English), Mylord (Hindi), Wion Drive, Petuz.india.com (English/Hindi), Travel.india.com (English/Hindi)
26.	NDTV Convergence Ltd.	NDTV.IN, NDTV.COM
27.	Editorji Technologies Pvt. Ltd.	Editorji, Hook, MensXP, IDiva
28.	Printline Media Private Ltd	The Print English, The Print Hindi, The Print Marathi, The Print Tamil
29.	Prudent Media (Goa) Private Ltd	Kokansaad Live, Prudent Media



News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority

During the year under report, NBDSA met under the Chairmanship of Justice, A. K. Sikri, former Judge of the Supreme Court of India. NBDSA had four meetings during the year under report, which were convened virtually. NBDSA in these meetings considered, reviewed and decided 164 complaints (123rd -126th meetings), which included complaints directly received by the broadcasters/digital publishers and settled at the first level and complaints received at the second level i.e., NBDSA. The Election Commission of India (ECI) also has been sending complaints/ petitions of Members to the NBDSA for its consideration. All complaints received by NBDSA were assessed and dispensed in accordance with the News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Regulations for violation of the Code of Conduct.

Given below are the edited text of the Decisions / Orders passed by NBDSA

The full text of the decisions are available on the website of NBDA and can be viewed on <http://www.nbdanewdelhi.com/decisions>

S.No	Channel(s)	Details of Complaint	Decision
1.	Aaj Tak	In the impugned show, statistics related to train derailment were wrongly associated with the UPA government. In 2000-2001, it was the NDA government, not the UPA, that was in power. This error violated the Code of Ethics, particularly principles relating to accuracy, and raised questions about neutrality and bias.	NBDSA upon perusing the contents of the complaint, found that while the anchor had not mentioned the names of the Governments in the years mentioned, however the graphic inaccurately mentioned UPA in 2000-2001. In view of the same, NBDSA directed the broadcaster to edit the graphics in the broadcast.
2.	Various Channels	The complaint concerned articles related to Elon Musk's commentary on gender-affirming care and his estranged transgender daughter. By publishing Elon Musk's quotes as it is, the articles had misgendered and deadnamed Elon Musk's transgender daughter. Furthermore, they had not only "merely quoted" Musk but had also stated that gender-affirming care amounted to child abuse, as per "critics". The article repeatedly used words like 'woke mind virus' in the context of gender-affirming care.	NBDSA noted that the articles and the broadcasts on the channels were essentially a report of the statement made by Mr. Elon Musk. To provide a more comprehensive understanding of the issue, it would have been beneficial if the articles and the broadcast had also reported on the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community and borne in mind the Specific Guidelines for Reportage on issues concerning the LGBTQIA+ Community while reporting on any subject.
3.	CNBC TV18	The complaint concerned an article that falsely stated that the Algerian boxer Imane Khelif is a man. The article also linked several tweets from known transphobic people and organisations falsely stating that she is a man.	NBDSA was unable to access the link to the article impugned in the complaint, which seems to have been removed. In view of the same, NBDSA decided to direct the Member to bear in mind the Specific Guidelines for Reportage on Issues concerning the LGBTQIA+ Community while reporting on any subject concerning the LGBTQIA+ community.



S.No	Channel(s)	Details of Complaint	Decision
4.	News18 Rajasthan	The complainant questioned the broadcaster as to why it was spreading fake news that animal fat in Tirupati Balaji temple Prasadam Laddu is a Congress Party conspiracy. This was alleged to violate the principles of accuracy, objectivity, neutrality and fairness.	NBDSA decided to advise the broadcaster to bear in mind the Specific Guidelines for Anchor conducting Programmes, including Debates, while inviting any person as an interviewee in its broadcast. It also observed that the broadcaster should adhere to the Specific Guidelines covering Reportage, under which "Facts should be clearly distinguishable from, and not be mixed-up with opinion, analysis and comment.," while reporting/discussing any subject.
5.	Aaj Tak	The complainant stated that on 16.10.2024, a prime-time episode was organized on an unfortunate and sad incident in Bahraich. The anchor made a gore description which was later proved to be fake. The complainant questioned on what basis such news was organized, and whether the news channel and the anchor should have refrained from making such comments and proceeded with caution, and that too when it is fake news, as confirmed by Bahraich police and post-mortem.	NBDSA decided to direct the broadcaster to remove the impugned broadcast, if available from all social media platforms within 3 days from the receipt of the decision and inform NBDSA accordingly, or else NBDSA may levy penalties on the broadcaster in view of the statement made above.
6.	News18 India	Two complaints were in respect of a broadcast titled " <i>Bengaluru में Shradha Walkar जैसा Murder! 'हैवानियत और बर्बरता की इतेहा'</i> ". A 31-year-old man, Mukti Rajan Pratap Roy's brother had told Odisha Police that Mukti Rajan had confessed to killing Mahalakshmi. Mukti Rajan allegedly died by suicide and the Police recovered a suicide note in which he allegedly confessed to the crime. However, the broadcaster declared Ashraf as the murderer. While the anchor, mentioned that these were accusations by Mahalakshmi's family (which is incorrect, as these were suspicion by her estranged husband only), the headlines, tickers and thumbnails projected Ashraf as guilty. Further, not only were images of Shradha Walkar and her killer Aftab Poonawala's repeatedly shown in violation of her right to dignity but the tickers and anchor repeatedly got her name wrong.	NBDSA noted that the accompanying tickers and headlines running alongside the programme such as, " <i>Ashraf ne Mahalakshmi ke 50 tukde kiye?</i> " and " <i>Mahalakshmi ke 50 tukde kiye .. Aur kitne Aftab?</i> ", conveyed a different impression to the viewers contrary to the factual nature of the broadcast and these should have been avoided while reporting the aforesaid murder case. NBDSA decided to advise the broadcaster to be more careful in using such kind of tickers, while broadcasting the programmes, as the use of these tickers tend to create distortion to the otherwise unobjectionable programmes. NBDSA directed the broadcaster to take down the tickers from the broadcast.

S.No	Channel(s)	Details of Complaint	Decision
7.	Times Now Navbharat	According to the Odisha Police, Mahalaxmi was murdered by Mukti Rajan Pratap Roy. However, Times Now Navbharat declared Ashraf as the criminal. This violated NBDSA's Code of Ethics and Guidelines related to Accuracy and Defamatory Content, Law & Order, Crime & Violence.	Keeping in mind the factual nature of the report, NBDSA found no violation of the Code of Conduct in the broadcast. However, it was of the view that the broadcaster could have exercised greater discretion while selecting the title of the broadcast, which was "Bengaluru में हुए Mahalaxmi Murder में Ashraf की Fridge फ्रिज वाली हैवानियत डराने वाली है!". Though it comes within the journalistic freedom to choose the title and it can also be understood that keeping in view the gory nature of murder, the title was selected, however mentioning the name of Ashraf in the title who was, at that time, only one of the accused persons was objectionable as it gave the impression as if Ashraf was held guilty by the Court of law. Inclusion of his name in the title, therefore, was inconsistent with the factual nature of the broadcast. NBDSA decided to direct the broadcaster to remove/edit the title of the impugned broadcast.
8.	India Today	The complaint pertained to an alleged fake and misleading news broadcast in relation to the Kolkata RG Kar rape and murder incident. The autopsy report of the victim is confidential and not a public document. The reporter referred to a non-public document as the source of her claim, which was found to be fake and debunked by the Kolkata Police. On 22.8.2024, even the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, during a proceeding in the said case, rebuked a counsel who made such claim and categorically stated that it was untrue.	In the absence of the complainant, NBDSA consigned the matter to records, with liberty to re-agitate the issue in future, should the complainant so desire.
9.	News18 Rajasthan	The Election Commission of India (ECI) had forwarded a detailed report of confirmed cases of paid news and supporting documents related to electronic media [India News Rajasthan, First India TV and News18 Rajasthan] w.r.t. to General Election to Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan, 2023 (of Jaipur City and Nagaur) as received from the CEO, Rajasthan for further necessary action.	On examination of the report of ECI, NBDSA found that the findings of the Media Certification and Monitoring Committee were given without giving the broadcaster an opportunity to be heard, nor was the broadcaster given an opportunity to give any response. In view of this, NBDSA decided to consider independently whether there were any violations of its Guidelines relating to election broadcasts and paid news. In the absence of any direct evidence of any payment of consideration to the broadcaster and the specific denials by the broadcaster that the telecasts were not for consideration, NBDSA was of the view that it was not possible to hold that there was any violation of its Norms and Guidelines on Paid News.

Orders Passed by NBDSA

The full text of the Orders are available on the website of NBDA at <https://www.nbdanewdelhi.com/decisions/orders>

S.No	Channel	Details of Complaint	Order
1.	News 18 India	The complainant's grievance was regarding a show titled " <i>Baba Bageshwar Exclusive Interview</i> ," which allegedly violated the Principles of Self-Regulation, which enjoins the broadcasters to refrain from advocating or encouraging superstition and occultism.	Order No. 183 (2024) dt. 4.11. 2024 NBDSA found a violation of the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards, the Specific Guidelines covering Reportage relating to Racial and Religious Harmony, Supernatural, Occultism and Paranormal and the Advisory on reportage spreading superstition, occultism & blind belief in the impugned broadcast.
2.	Times Now Navbharat	<p>The complaint concerned a broadcast titled "धामी सरकार का 'ऑपरेशन मजार', 'गजवा-ए-हिंद' की साजिश के किससे जुड़े तार?". Throughout the show, the reporter visited places in Haridwar and Jim Corbett where the (now) demolished mazars once existed and relied on "<i>Government data</i>" and "<i>sources</i>" to formulate a link between the dargahs/mazars and the increase in Muslim population across Uttarakhand and, specifically, in "Dev Bhoomi Haridwar".</p> <p>The main grievance with the show was the repeated usage and display of the terms "<i>Mazar jihad</i>" and "<i>land jihad</i>." Further, the complainant, extracted some objectionable portions of the broadcast which allegedly were intended to spread stigma, even hatred against the Muslim community' to add fuel to the existing, perpetuated animosity against a minority Indian community. Instead of presenting a fact-based report, the show resorted to name-calling. By airing the impugned show, the channel has acted in complete violation of the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards and a few other guidelines pertaining to the maintenance of religious harmony.</p>	Order No. 184 (2024) dt. 4.11. 2024 NBDSA found a violation of the Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards and the Specific Guidelines covering Reportage relating to Racial and Religious Harmony in the broadcast.

S.No	Channel	Details of Complaint	Order
3.	Times Now Navbharat	<p>The complaint concerned a show titled “बाबा की सनातन सपथ...भड़काऊ पथ पर जमीयत!” In the impugned show, a debate was conducted over the speech given by Hasan Madni, who had said that whoever talks about a Hindu nation is a traitor, which soon enough took a communal turn. Not only were there divisive themes in the debate, but the debate itself started with the anchor raising polarizing questions.</p> <p>The show started with a provocative speech made by Swami Prasad Maurya, who said that people under the guise of saints have now become “terrorists.” Thereafter a video was played of a Hindu Dharma guru, Swami Chakrapaani, who had called the statement shameful and against “Hindu interests.”</p> <p>The content and tenor of an albeit questionable speech made by Swami Maurya offline at a political event was used by the channel to bash the entire Muslim community and stigmatise the Islamic faith. During the debate, participants representing their version of the “Hindu cause,” along with the host, drifted away from the subject and collectively attacked Maajid Haidari, another panellist. Further, no attempts were made by the host to stop the Hindu monk, who demanded Maajid Haidari prove his secularism by saying ‘Jai Shree Ram’.</p>	<p>Order No.185 (2024) dt.4.11.2024</p> <p>NBDSA found violation of Specific Guidelines for Anchors conducting Programmes including Debates in the impugned broadcast.</p>
4.	Times Now Navbharat	<p>The complainant stated that the impugned show titled “Rashtravad: मदरसों पर नकेल, नही चलेगा विदेशी फंडिंग का खेल?” was based on a survey carried out by the UP government of Madrassas in the state, which allegedly found that 8,841 Madrassas were illegal and the government planned to take action against 4,000 of them.</p> <p>There was absence of neutrality as the host’s conduct was clearly designed to push a pre-decided, one-sided discourse, while suppressing clarifications or responsible inputs. By airing data linking terrorist from the Muslim Community to Madrassas, the channel was attempting to create the perception that terrorist’s study in the Madrassas and were at the center of illegalities. While the debate was branded to discuss the issue of illegal Madrassas, the screen displayed arguments in favor of and against the Madrassas. Further throughout the show, tickers were aired that suggested that the channel intended to spread stigma, even hatred against the Muslim community.</p> <p>By using provocative headlines and by making the debates one-sided, the channel had spread communal tension and hatred, which was in violation of the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards.</p>	<p>Order No. 186 (2024) dt. 4.11.2024</p> <p>NBDSA found violation of the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards and Specific Guidelines covering Reportage relating to Impartiality, Objectivity, Neutrality and Racial and Religious Harmony in the broadcast.</p>

S.No	Channel	Details of Complaint	Order
5.	Times Now Navbharat	<p>The complainant stated that the impugned show "Rashtravad Gyanvapi Survey के बाद "ज्ञानवापी आंदोलन" होगा?" was based on the recent Order delivered by the Hon'ble Supreme Court, where interim protection was granted against the ASI Survey being conducted at Gyanvapi Mosque.</p> <p>In the impugned show, the host picked up a matter that was sub-judice and selectively presented one-sided facts. The show was flagged off with communally polarizing questions and attempted to depict the Muslim community in a suspicious light by specifically questioning their intention behind seeking a stay of the survey.</p> <p>While the anchor referred to the Supreme Court's decision, he failed to engage with the legal issues in an unbiased manner. The debate progressed into a media trial, with the host acting as a biased adjudicator rather than a neutral moderator. Rather than framing the debate in a sober manner, the host used the debate to advance his own version of the Hindu cause, which amounted to partisan coverage and constituted a clear departure from democratic and constitutional principles of independent journalism. Throughout the segment, the host not only made several problematic statements but also kept reiterating that the Muslim community's recourse to the Supreme Court was an attempt to suppress the truth. Furthermore, in the show attempts were made by the channel to pit representatives of two communities against one another during a sensitive, ongoing legal matter.</p>	<p>Order No. 187 (2024) dt. 4.11.2024</p> <p>NBDSA found violation of the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards, Specific Guidelines on Reporting Court Proceedings and the Specific Guidelines covering Reportage relating to Racial and Religious Harmony in the impugned broadcast.</p>
6.	Aaj Tak	<p>The complaint concerned a broadcast titled "Black and White: Soren परिवार का विश्लेषण" aired on 31.1.2024 surrounding the former Chief Minister of Jharkhand Hemant Soren and his family. The former tribal CM had been arrested by ED on alleged charges of money laundering. While reporting on these events, the anchor attacked the opposition leader for his tribal identity, made accusatory and stigmatizing comments including questioning whether a tribal leader could retain his identity after having enjoyed wealth.</p> <p>The show targeted the tribal minister for his purported wealth, cars and lifestyle, showing little concern for the actual money laundering charge against him. Justifying its title, the host projected a distorted image of a tribal family misusing the votes given to him based on his identity. There was no attempt to impartially</p>	<p>Order No.188 (2024) dt. 4.11.2024</p> <p>NBDSA noted that under Regulations 7.2 read with Regulation 8.4.3 of the News Broadcasting Standards Regulations, it is not permissible or appropriate to take up matters in respect of which any proceeding is pending in a Court of law or other Tribunal or Statutory Authority. Therefore, NBDSA decided to close the decision in the complaint until the matter is decided</p>

S.No	Channel	Details of Complaint	Order
		<p>examine the charges rather the show concentrated on “<i>examining</i>” the wealth of the Soren family, with the anchor using casteist language based on Soren’s tribal (Adivasi) identity. Such portrayal not only violated every standard of neutrality but, worked to degrade further and stigmatize a leader from India’s indigenous (Adivasi/Tribal) communities.</p>	.
7.	Aaj Tak and India Today	<p>Complaints in respect of broadcast titled “<i>Black and White</i> सबसे बड़ी अदालत में समलैंगिकता पर नई बहस <i>Same-Sex Marriage</i>” aired on 19.4.2023</p> <p>The anchor in the impugned programme expressly sought to promote the belief that same sex marriage is a big city, upper class, and first world problem. Through his commentary, the anchor spread fear in the minds of the viewers and there was an attempt to project queer identity as a lifestyle choice.</p> <p>An obnoxious image was created to represent LGBTQIA+ people, which was not only distasteful but also ridiculed LGBTQIA+ people, contributing towards spreading false notions and stigma against the community. During the broadcast, it was also falsely claimed that same-sex relationships were a crime prior to 2019.</p> <p>There was absence of neutrality as the news was designed to promote the views of Union of India on same sex marriage.</p> <p>The rest of the broadcast, wherein an update on the ongoing Supreme Court case was provided, was thus framed as an interesting anecdotal exercise rather than an issue of the right to life and dignity of the queer community as guaranteed under Article 21.</p> <p>Complaint in respect of Show titled “<i>Seedhi Baat</i>” aired on 22.4.2023</p> <p>The broadcaster attempted to paint the Chief Justice as an unreasonable person behaving like a dictator and the Solicitor General as a helpless figure with no voice or importance in the Supreme Court, which was not the case. Further, it was baselessly claimed that the Supreme Court seemed to have already made up its decision, even though the hearing had just begun, which violated the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards.</p>	<p>Order No.189 (2025) dt.24.1.2025</p> <p>NBDSA noted that the said broadcast did not keep in mind the Guidelines for Prevention of Hate Speech and the principles of Neutrality and Impartiality as enshrined in the Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards, by not giving the views of any person belonging to the LGBTQIA+ Community.</p> <p>NBDSA found that the utterances by an experienced and well knowledgeable anchor of the programme was not in good taste and the Specific Guidelines for Reporting Court Proceedings, in particular Guidelines 4(i) and (ii), 5 and 7 and the Guideline 5 of the Guidelines on Broadcast of Potentially Defamatory Content were not kept in mind.</p>

S.No	Channel	Details of Complaint	Order
		<p>Complaint in respect of show titled “India Today Roundtable Karnataka”; aired on 22.4.2023</p> <p>The anchor inaccurately, baselessly and maliciously stated that Supreme Court had brought new logics to justify LGBTQIA+ Marriage Rights. The anchor acted as the mouthpiece of the government by giving them a platform to amplify their ill-informed, insensitive anti-LGBTQIA+, anti-equality mindset and approach.</p>	<p>NBDSA noted that since the irregularities in the broadcast are substantially the same as those in broadcast 2, for the reasons given in its decision in the complaint against Show No. 2, NBDSA decided to close the complaint in respect of Show No. 3 by issuing an Advisory to the anchor to show more maturity in future programmes.</p>
8.	ABP Majha	<p>The complainant’s grievance was against a broadcast, where visuals of a murder and audio of the deceased person screaming in horror were shown multiple times between 9:30 PM to 10:30 PM on 8.2.2024. The channel had previously also aired video of a politician firing at other politicians inside a police station in Maharashtra multiple times on its channel.</p>	<p>Order No.190 (2025) dt. 24.1.2025</p> <p>NBDSA found a violation of Guideline 3.8 of the Specific Guidelines Covering Reportage in the impugned broadcast.</p>
9.	Times Now Navbharat	<p>The complaint was in respect of broadcasts titled “Modi के खिलाफ... क्यों खड़े ‘हमास’ के साथ?” and “Rashtravad: हिन्दुस्तान में Hamas Think tank’ कौन बना रहा है?” aired on 16.10.2024.</p> <p>In both shows, the narrative was framed in such a skewed manner to show the Indian Muslims advocating for Palestine as being sympathizers of the militant group Hamas due to their “religious connection.” Both shows targeted the same Muslim leaders of the opposition political parties and presented their views in a partisan manner. By airing the impugned debate, the broadcaster was alleged to have failed to adhere to the principle of neutrality and impartiality and had given the issue of Israel–Palestine a biased and communal colour.</p>	<p>Order No.191 (2025) dt. 24.1.2025</p> <p>NBDSA found violation of the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards and the Guidelines including Specific Guidelines for Anchors conducting Programmes, including Debates in the impugned broadcast.</p>
10.	Zee News	<p>The complaint concerned a live news segment titled “Debate on Budaun encounter LIVE: Encounter पर क्यों उठा रहे सबाल?”, aired 20.3.2024, on the Budaun double murder case.</p> <p>While neither the police nor the deceased children’s family had pointed to the religion of the accused or victims as an issue. However, the anchor repeatedly communalised the murders, portraying the Muslim community as sympathisers of the accused. In the broadcast, a one-sided communal view was given to an issue that did not warrant any such sectarian narrative.</p> <p>From using derogatory and stigmatizing phrases such as “Talibani style of murder,” the anchor indulged in Muslim bashing throughout the half-hour-long show and tried to fan religion-based communal tensions.</p>	<p>Order No.192 (2025) dt. 24.1.2025</p> <p>NBDSA found a violation of the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards, the Specific Guidelines covering Reportage relating to Racial and Religious Harmony and the Guidelines to prevent communal color in reporting crime, riots, rumours and such related incident in the impugned broadcast.</p>

S.No	Channel	Details of Complaint	Order
11.	News18 India	<p>The ECI forwarded a complaint dated 18.4.2024 received from Communist Party of India (Marxist) and requested NBDSA to examine the matter under extant guidelines of NBDSA, for suitable action, as deemed fit.</p> <p>The complaint concerned an Aar Paar broadcast aired on 18.4.2024, wherein the anchor in the course of the entire programme had resorted to polarizing the voters and appealing them to vote on communal lines.</p>	<p>Order No. 193 (2025) dt. 24.1.2025</p> <p>NBDSA found a violation of Guidelines for Election Broadcasts and the Specific Guidelines for Anchors Conducting Debates including Programmes in the impugned broadcast.</p>
12.	News18 India	<p>The complaint concerned a broadcast titled "Goonj: Arvind Kejriwal Arrested" aired on 28.03.2025.</p> <p>While the anchor and the panellists were discussing the arrest of the Chief Minister, one of the panellists, a BJP spokesperson, alleged that the Chief Minister had actually committed a scam. This accusation was subsequently repeated by the anchor throughout the broadcast, implying guilt and conviction, in a matter which is under trial. Further, a more concerning aspect of the broadcast was the anchor's attack on the freedom of speech and expression and freedom of criticism. By airing the impugned broadcast, the broadcaster had violated the principles concerning Impartiality and Objectivity in reporting and Ensuring Neutrality under the Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards.</p>	<p>Order No. 194 (2025) dt. 24.1.2025</p> <p>NBDSA found a violation of the Specific Guidelines for Reporting Court Proceedings, principles of neutrality under the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards and the judgment of Hon'ble Bombay High Court in Nilesh Navlakha & Anr. v UOI & Ors. (2021) SCC Online BOM56 in the impugned broadcast.</p>
13.	CNN-News18	<p>The complaint was in respect of a broadcast titled "Pujya Puri Shankaracharya Ji on Origin of the Caste System" aired on 3.1.2024. Through the show, the broadcaster had promoted: (1) the caste system, a social evil, (2) the Hindu-Rashtra theory that attacks the secular fabric of India and, (3) several superstitious, unscientific beliefs.</p>	<p>Order No. 195 (2025) dt. 8.5.2025</p> <p>NBDSA found that the anchor does provoke the matter of the rigidity or flexibility of the caste system. At the same time, he could have exercised restraint in driving the discussion towards that end, having regard to the Constitutional mandate which discards casteism and promotes secularism. Thus, the questions put to Puri Shankaracharya should have been carefully chosen, keeping in mind the aforesaid ethos.</p>

S.No	Channel	Details of Complaint	Order
14.	Zee News, News18 India and Times Now Navbharat	<p>The complaint concerned three broadcasts titled "TaalThok Ke - "toh Hinduon se chheena jhapti"" aired on Zee News, "News18 India - Desh Nahin Jhukne Denge with Rubika Liyaquat: Congress आई तो महिलाओं का मंगलसूत्र छिनेगा?" and "Election Yatra : 'Manmohan Singh-Rahul Gandhi' के बयान पर Congress सच में घिर गई" aired on 22.4.2024.</p> <p>In all three broadcasts, the rhetoric being espoused by one political party that the wealth survey and redistribution plan in Congress's manifesto would be based on religious identity and sentiment to disenfranchise Hindus and in pursuance of a disastrous Marxist-Islamist conspiracy was promoted.</p>	<p>Order No. 196 (2025) dt. 8.5.2025</p> <p>NBDSA noted that no doubt, there appears to be a little tilt in favour of one version by the anchors of these programmes, at the same time, it was noticed that all sides were given due opportunity to express their point of view. Therefore, looking into the matter in a holistic manner, NBDSA was of the opinion that these complaints should now be closed without any further action thereupon.</p>
15.	News18 India	<p>The complaint concerned two programmes titled "Desh Nahi Jhukne Denge धर्म छिपाकर धंदा, सही या गंदा?" and "Desh Nahi Jhukne Denge श्याम हो या कामरान, सब बताओ नाम !" aired on 18th and 19th July, 2024.</p> <p>In the broadcasts, it was implied that Muslims are unclean, unhygienic, and impure based on fake viral videos accusing Muslim men of spitting and urinating in food. It was also suggested that Muslim food vendors intentionally conceal their religious identity to deceive Hindu pilgrims. The broadcasts further promoted the Uttar Pradesh government's order requiring vendors and eateries to display the name of the staff and the owners', claiming it was secular and necessary. Additionally, it was falsely claimed that Hindus never discriminate based on religion, portraying them as the most tolerant group, while labelling opposition to the order as "fake secularism".</p>	<p>Order No. 197 (2025) dt. 8.5.2025</p> <p>NBDSA held that on an issue like this, where both views may be possible, it is not for NBDSA to judge the validity of any of the views. Therefore, NBDSA decided to give a quietus to this complaint.</p>
16.	Times Now Navbharat	<p>The complaint concerned two shows "Sankalp Rashtra Nirman Ka: कराची का लिटरेचर...भारत के मदरसों में क्या कर रहा है?" and "Rashtravad: भारत का मदरसा...पालकस्तान का लसिबस?" aired on 19.8.2024, which were on the issue of "Teaching in Madrasas in Bihar". Both shows were based on the statement made by the Chairperson of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, who had alleged that the government-funded Madrasas in Bihar were teaching from a so-called "Radical curriculum" titled "Talimul Islam" and using "Pakistan-Published books". In both shows, the narrative was framed in a skewed manner, painting Madrasas across the country as suspicious places, which were attempting to brainwash children, thereby creating the image of the Madrasas and their respective teachers as enemies of this country.</p>	<p>Order No.198 (2025) dt.9.6.2025</p> <p>NBDSA was of the opinion that the anchor should be more cautious in broadcasting such programmes which have, otherwise, tendency to create the feeling of hatred towards a particular community and broadcasting of these programmes should not be without proper verification of the content.</p>

S.No	Channel	Details of Complaint	Order
17.	Times Now Navbharat	<p>The complaint concerned a news report titled “अवैध मस्जिद’ पर महिलाओं ने मुसलमानों पर खुलकर सब बला दिया” aired on 5/6.9.2024, which related to the Shimla Mosque.</p> <p>In the broadcast, an attempt was made to paint the entire Muslim community and particularly Muslim men in a negative light. While women’s safety is undoubtedly a matter of grave concern and not an issue that must be downplayed, the reporter, in an attempt to highlight local concerns asked leading and prejudiced questions to portray that the Muslim must be feared and that women’s safety, particularly, was at a risk due to the presence and rise of Muslim people in a particular area.</p>	<p>Order No. 199 (2025) dt. 6.6.2025</p> <p>NBDSA observed that the inclusion of thumbnails did not project the correct version of the statements of the women interviewed, and it held that the broadcaster had violated the Guidelines.</p>
18.	ABP News	<p>The complaint concerned a broadcast titled “Brij Bhushan Singh Exclusive: हरियाणा चुनाव और विनेश फोगाट पर बृजभूषण सिंह का विस्फोटक इंटरव्यू” aired on 7.9.2024.</p> <p>In the broadcast, which was an interview with former BJP MP and former WFI President, Mr. Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, the anchor engaged and encouraged the character assassination/defamation of Olympic wrestler and Congress party member, Ms. Vinesh Phogat. In the interview, Mr. Singh and the anchor were seen laughing at the accusations and mocking Ms. Vinesh Phogat.</p>	<p>Order No. 200 (2025) dt. 6.6.2025</p> <p>NBDSA found violation of the Specific Guidelines for Anchors conducting Programmes including Debates in the impugned broadcast.</p>
19.	Zee News	<p>The complaint concerned news reports titled “ जिहादियों को डर क्यों नहीं लगता?”, “Thook Jihad Law Update: थूक जिहाद कानून के तहत क्या क्या होगा?”, “DNA: थूक जिहादियों का इलाज मिल गया?” and “Thook Jihad Law: थूक जिहाद पर कानून की स्ट्राइक?” aired on 15th and 16th October, 2024.</p> <p>In the impugned broadcast concerned videos of certain individuals spitting or urinating in food, which were dubbed by the broadcaster as ‘thook’ and ‘urine’ jihad. In the broadcasts, a UP law requiring CCTV cameras to be installed in eateries, given the recent spate of spitting in food, was also promoted as an action against thook jihad, despite the State not having made any such claim.</p>	<p>Order No. 201 (2025) dt. 6.6.2025</p> <p>NBDSA held that the broadcaster had not adhered to the Code of Conduct, in particular the Specific Guidelines covering Reportage concerning Racial and Religious Harmony and the Specific Guidelines for Anchors conducting Programmes including Debates.</p>

Attendance Slip

News Broadcasters & Digital Association
Regd. Off: B-39, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase 1,
New Delhi 110020

Name and Address of the Member Entity: _____

Name of the Authorised Representative of Member Entity: _____

I hereby record my presence at the 18th Annual General Meeting of the News Broadcasters & Digital Association held on Friday, the 19th September, 2025 at 12 noon at Multipurpose Hall, Kamladevi Complex, India International Centre, 40 Max Mueller Marg, New Delhi 110003.

Signature of Member/ Authorised Representative

(To be signed at the time of handling over this slip)

(Please fill Attendance Slip and hand it over at the entrance of the Meeting)



News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority

Chairperson



Justice A. K. Sikri
[Former Judge of Supreme Court of India]

Independent Members



Nasim Zaidi



Navtej Sarna



Mohan Kumar



Vrinda Sarup

Editor Members



Rajeev Devraj



M. Gunasekaran



Vaishali Sood



Ranjit Kumar



News Broadcasters & Digital Association

Registered Office

B-39, Okhla, Industrial Area,
Phase -1, New Delhi 110 020

Corporate Office

Mantec House, 2nd Floor,
C-56/5 Sector 62, Noida 201 301
Phone: 0120-4129712
Email : nbda@nbdanewdelhi.com
Website: www.nbdanewdelhi.com