

No.N-28011/2/2022-BC.III
Government of India
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting

`A' Wing, Shastri Bhawan
New Delhi – 110 001.

April 23, 2022

To,

All Private Satellite TV channels

Subject: **Advisory for adherence to the provisions of Section 20 of The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 including to the Programme Code laid down thereunder**

This Ministry has time and again issued advisories to the Satellite TV channels granted permission under the Uplinking/Downlinking Guidelines of 2005/2011 for adherence to the Programme Code read with The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995. Sub-section (2) of Section 20, inter alia, provides that the Central Government may, by order, regulate or prohibit the transmission or retransmission of any channel or programme, if it considers it necessary or expedient to do so in the interest of (i) sovereignty or integrity of India; or (ii) security of India; or (iii) friendly relations of India with any foreign State; or (iv) public order, decency or morality. Similarly, sub-section (3) of Section 20 of the aforementioned Act, inter alia, empowers the Central Government to regulate or prohibit transmission/retransmission of a programme where such programme is not found to be in conformity with the prescribed Programme Code laid down thereunder. In particular, attention is invited to the following provisions of the Programme Code:-

“ Section 6: (1) No programme should be carried in the cable service which –

- (a) offends against good taste or decency;*
- (b) contains criticism of friendly countries;*
- (c) contains attack on religions or communities or visuals or words contemptuous of religious groups or which promote communal attitudes;*
- (d) contains anything, obscene, defamatory, deliberate, false and suggestive innuendos and half truths;*

2. It has, however, been found that in the recent past several Satellite TV channels have carried out coverage of events and incidents in a manner which

Vrundagesai

appears to be unauthentic, misleading, sensational and using socially unacceptable language and remarks, offending good taste and decency, and obscene and defamatory and having communal overtones, all of which appear to be violative of the Programme Code and infringement of the provisions of sub-section (2) of Section 20 of the aforementioned Act. In particular, attention is invited to reporting on Russia-Ukraine conflict, certain incidents in North-West Delhi and of certain news debates.

3. In respect of reporting on Russia-Ukraine conflict, it has been observed as under:-

- Channels have been making false claims and frequently misquoting International agencies/actors.
- Use of 'scandalous headlines/taglines' that are completely unrelated to the news item.
- Many of the journalists and news anchors of these channels made fabricated and hyperbolic statements intending to incite the audiences.

Some of the exemplars of the content carried by the television channels are at **Annexure-I.**

4. Similarly, on the recent incident in North-West Delhi, the coverage by the TV channels had the following elements:-

- Provocative headlines and videos of violence that may incite communal hatred among the communities and disrupt peace and law and order
- Disrupting the ongoing investigation process by playing scandalous and unverified CCTV footages
- Showing footages of a specific community thus aggravating the communal tensions
- Fabricated headlines sensationalising and giving communal colours to the actions of authority

Some of the exemplars of the content shown on some of the TV channels is at **Annexure-II.**

5. It was also observed that in the news, some of channels broadcast debates having unparliamentary, provocative and socially unacceptable language, communal remarks and derogatory references which may have a negative psychological impact on viewers and may also incite communal disharmony and disturb the peace at large. Some are also found to be disrespectful, passing on insulting remarks or giving reference to the different religions or faiths or their founders. Some of the exemplars are narrated in **Annexure-III.**

Vrundagesai

6. Having regard to the above, the Government expresses serious concern about the manner in which the television channels have gone about their operations in the matter of transmitting content and are hereby strongly advised to immediately refrain from publishing and transmitting any content which is violative of the aforementioned provisions of The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and the rules thereunder.

The above may be noted for strict compliance.

This issues with the approval of the competent authority.

Yours faithfully,



(Vrunda Manohar Desai)
Director (BC)
T.No.011-23386394

Encl.: As above

Copy to:

1. All Self - regulating bodies of TV Channels registered under Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act,1995.

Note:

Copy of this Advisory can also be downloaded from this Ministry's website viz., www.mib.gov.in and Broadcast Seva Portal of this Ministry.

Reporting on Russia-Ukraine conflict:

- (i) One channel aired a news item '*Ukraine mein Atomi Hadkamp*' on 18th April, 2022 during which it mentioned that Russia is planning a nuclear attack on Ukraine. It further sensationalised the situation and mentioned that the attack will happen in the coming few days. The report mis-quoted International agencies also.
- (ii) Another channel indulged in war mongering continues to air factless speculations to an extent that had the tendency to infuse fear in the minds of viewers as it claimed that Russia has given a 24 hours deadline for the Nuclear attack on Ukraine
- (iii) One channel aired baseless sensational news on 18th April, 2022 titled '*Parmanu Putin se pareshan Zelenski*', '*Parmanu action ki chinta Zelenski ko depression*' and aired several unverified claims misquoting foreign actors/agencies "Official Russian Media clearly states that 3rd World war has started". The channel even showed footage with false claims that the Russian President is carrying a "Nuclear briefcase" with him.
- (iv) Another channel misreported and made unverified claims on 19th April one such claim was - 'US agency CIA believes that Russia will use Nuclear weapons on Ukraine'.
- (v) One of the channels very frequently made sensational claims of Nuclear war, it aired the headline '*Nuclear Nisana! Hairatangej khulasa world war ka*' on 19th April, 2022. The channel made several of these exploitative and scandalous 'war promoting' claims multiple times.
- (vi) A prominent channel misguided viewers through misreporting under sensational headlines such as '*Ukraine se Putin ka parmanu plan taiyar?*', '*Parmanu Hamla hona tay hai?*' which was aired on 19th April, 2022. The channel frequently uses such misleading and unrelated taglines in its reporting.
- (vii) It was found that one channel ran a sensational speculative commentary on the active conflict during prime time. It used fabricated headlines such as '*Atom bomb girega? Teesra viswa yudha suru hoga?*' on 19th April, 2022
- (viii) A channel misguided viewers with unverified and incorrect news on the war. Anchors of many of these channels talk in hyperbole and make factually wrong comments even misquoting other sources. One such news titled '*Mariupol Finished! Full and final*' on 20th April, 2022.
- (ix) One channel aired fabricated pictures claiming to be the proof of the upcoming Nuclear attack on Ukraine. This completely speculative news story seems to be intending to misguide the viewers and arouse psychological upheavals inside them. The show titled '*Ye Raat Kayamat Wali Hai?*' aired on 20th April 2022

- (x) A journalist of one channel while reporting from Mykolaiv made several unfactual comments that seemed to be promoting war with statements such as 'Russia Parmanu Hamla Kab Karega? Kahan karega?' the channel used taglines like ' 'Vishwa Yudha ke Muhane par Duniya' on 20th April, 2022.

Annexure II

North-West Delhi incident coverage

- (i) 'Delhi mein Aman ke dushman kaun?' (Date: 16th April)
- (ii) 'Badi Sajis Dange Wali, Karauli, Khargone vaya Delhi' (Date: 17th April, 2022)
- (iii) A channel repeatedly carried a video clipping of a man belonging to a specific community carrying a sword.
- (iv) Channels claims that this video depicts that it was pre-planned to spread violence in a religious procession. (19th April, 2022)
- (v) Footage under heading: 'Hinsa se ek raat pehle sajis ka video' (Date:19th April, 2022)
- (vi) Vote Bank Vs Majoritarian Politics (Date: 19th April, 2022)

Annexure III

News Debates:

- (i) A news channel broadcast a programme titled 'Hunkar' on 20th April, 2022. During the debate several speakers used unparliamentary and derogatory language towards each other. It was also found that the overall tenor and tonality of the show remains very aggressive and disturbing. Such ambience has a tendency to negatively impact the viewers especially children and may have a long lasting psychological distress and subliminal impact on them.
- (ii) A news channel debate show titled 'अली Vs बली, कहां कहां खलबली?' aired on 15th April, 2022 on the 'Loudspeaker rules' have instances where panellists have used derogatory terms and there were also some communal comments made during the show,
- (iii) A journalist of a channel during a prime time show titled 'अली, बजरंगबली पर खलबली' aired on 15th April, 2022, used instigating statements and derogatory references.

Vrundagesai