

The News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority (NBDSA)

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In news- NBDSA has recently fined a Hindi TV channel for turning a news debate on hijab into a “communal issue” and not adhering to guidelines.

About NBDSA-

- The NBDSA is an **independent body set up by the News Broadcasters & Digital Association (NBDA)**.
- It **serves as a representative of private television news, current affairs and digital broadcasters.**
- It describes itself as “the collective voice of the news, current affairs and digital broadcasters in India.”
- **Funded entirely by its members**, the NBDA has 26 news and current affairs broadcasters (comprising 119 news and current affairs channels) as its members.
- Various senior members of Indian media organisations serve on its Board of Directors.
- Apart from **presenting a unified front, it carries out activities to promote, protect and secure the interests including the right of freedom of speech and expression of the news broadcasters, digital news media and other related entities.**
- It shares developments in the industry with members, provides a space for achieving common goals and consensus and aims to protect all its members from persons carrying unfair and/or unethical practices or who discredit the

television news broadcasters, digital news media and other related entities.

- Within this structure, the NBDSA has to **“lay-down and foster high standards, ethics and practices in news broadcasting**, including entertaining and deciding complaints against or in respect of broadcasters”.
- These standards mention a focus on objectivity, impartiality, maintaining discretion when reporting on crime against women and children, not endangering national security, etc.
- **The body includes a Chairperson who is to be an eminent jurist**, and other members such as news editors, and those experienced in the field of law, education, literature, public administration, etc. nominated by a majority of the Board.
- **Former Supreme Court judge and jurist AK Sikri is currently serving as the Chairperson.**
- The Authority **may initiate proceedings on its own and issue notice or take action** in respect to any matter which falls within its regulations. **This can also be through complaints referred to the Authority by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting** or any other governmental body, or by anyone else via its website
- A **“two-tier” procedure is in place for redressing grievances**, where any person aggrieved by the content of any broadcast is required to first make a complaint to the concerned broadcaster and if they are not satisfied by the redress, a complaint can be filed before the Authority.
- **Those cases which have already been taken to court cannot be complained against.**
- Within 14 days from the date of receipt of a complaint, the Authority will issue notice to the concerned broadcaster to show cause why action should not be taken

under the regulations.

- An inquiry is held in which proof, documents, and people can be called in by the authority. If the complainant or the respondent does not get back to the Authority, the complaint can be set aside.
- **The NBDSA may, for reasons to be recorded in writing, warn, censure, express disapproval against and/or impose a fine upon the broadcaster.**
- It can also **recommend to the concerned authority for suspension/revocation of the license of such broadcaster.**
- The **fine imposed by the Authority shall not exceed Rs. 1 lakh** and such fine shall be recovered from the concerned broadcaster.