

February 10, 2012

All Members of NBA

Re: Advisory Regarding Coverage of Illness of Yuvraj Singh

Lately there has been extensive coverage by our member news channels of the recent illness of Yuvraj Singh, a leading cricketer of our country. In this connection it has been brought to the notice of the News Broadcasting Standards Authority that some of the coverage so made has been unacceptably intrusive.

Attention of our members is drawn to the Principles of Self-Regulation and Specific Guidelines relating to **Privacy**, which are reproduced below:

Principles of Self-Regulation:

6. Privacy:

As a rule channels must not intrude on private lives, or personal affairs of individuals, unless there is a clearly established larger and identifiable public interest for such a broadcast. The underlying principle that news channels abide by is that the intrusion of the private spaces, records, transcripts, telephone conversations and any other material will not be for salacious interest, but only when warranted in the public interest. However, it is also understood that the pursuit of the truth and the news is not possible through the predetermined principle of prior permission; hence door stepping individuals or authorities for the purpose of newsgathering may be used only in the larger purpose of public interest. Further, in the case of minors, in any broadcast that intrudes on their privacy, the channel should attempt, where possible, to seek the consent of the parent or legal guardian. However, the defense of the premise of privacy cannot be misconstrued as the denial of access, and this applies to all individuals, including those in the public eye and public personalities. It does however apply in its entirety, as per the provisions mentioned above, to their children and kin who are minors.

Specific Guidelines Covering Reportage:

5. Privacy

5.1 Broadcasters should exercise discretion and sensitivity when reporting on distressing situations, on grief and bereavement.

5.2 Persons should not be featured in content in a manner that denigrates or discriminates against sections of the community on account of race, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, occupation, religion, cultural or political beliefs.

5.3 Content that would cause unwarranted distress to surviving family members, including by showing archival footage, should be avoided.

5.4 No information relating to the location of a person's home or family should be disclosed without permission from the concerned person.

5.5 Surreptitious recording of any person or event should only be made without committing any illegality and if editorially justified.

5.6 Interviews of the injured, victims or grieving persons should be conducted only with prior consent of the persons or where applicable their guardian.

In the recent past the channels showed maturity in reporting the illness of a national figure, but the same restraint is denied to Yuvraj Singh and others. This is unacceptable.

Members may note that intrusive broadcasts in relation to the illness of a person, even if a celebrity, are in clear violation of the NBA norms against invasion of privacy, apart from being in breach of the dignity of an individual.

All Members are accordingly advised to bring this matter to the specific attention of their chief editorial personnel. Members are cautioned that any violation of the above principles/guidelines will be viewed very seriously by the NBSA and appropriate action may be initiated, even suo motu.

All members are also advised to preserve the footage of all news/programmes telecast in relation to the illness of Yuvraj Singh, including broadcasts and scripts for consideration of the NBSA, should it become necessary.

Kindly circulate to all concerned.

Issued Under Orders
Of the News Broadcasting Standards Authority



Annie Joseph
For & on behalf of the
News Broadcasting Standards Authority

CC: Editors & Legal Heads of NBA