

## **News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority**

**Order No. 154 (2023)**

**Complainant: Association for Protection of Civil Right**  
**Programme: Desh Nahi Jhukne Denge ‘Ghazwa-e-Hind’**  
**Broadcaster: News18 India**  
**Date of Broadcast: 5.8.2022**

Since the complainant was not satisfied with the response received from the broadcaster, the complainant vide email dated 22.8.2022 escalated the complaint to the second level of redressal, i.e., NBDSA.

### **Complaint:**

The complaint dated 8.8.2022 was in reference to News18 India’s prime-time debate show *Desh Nahi Jhukne Denge* aired on 5.8.2022 at 7:57 pm titled ‘*Ghazwa-e-Hind*’.

### **Context of Show**

The complainant stated that the show was telecast in the context of sensitive police reports sent by Uttar Pradesh and Assam Police Departments to the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, highlighting the sharp rise in the population of the Muslim communities in seven and four border districts of Uttar Pradesh and Assam adjoining Nepal and Bangladesh respectively. In the show concerns about demographic changes and the rising Muslim population in Uttarakhand, Rajasthan and West Bengal were raised.

### **Contents of Show**

The complainant stated that in the impugned broadcast, a deliberate attempt was made to demonize a certain minority community in order to portray them as intruders and the growth in their population as a national security concern. The anchor fostered a divisive narrative by focusing on the minority population while also insisting that it was not a Hindu-Muslim issue rather, it was a matter of national security. In an effort to support the CAA and NRC, rhetorical attempts were made to show Muslims in bad light and breed hatred towards them.

The title of the show' in the video's thumbnail on YouTube was "*Border par badhe 'bhaijan' Khatarnak he Plan?*" and the hashtag "*#BorderParPanIslam*" was used. The programme included graphics of busy neighbourhoods that were populated exclusively by Muslims. In the impugned broadcast Muslims and Islam were misrepresented as a threat to our national security to instil panic in the minds of viewers.

### **Extracts from the show**

The complainant highlighted various objectionable statements made by the anchor during the impugned show, including:

- 0:06 - 0:18 - “..Ek esi khabar jisme hindustan ki pehchan mitane ki sajjish he, Ek esi khabar jo bataegi ki hindustan ke border par kuch bhut katarnak ho rha he”;
- 0:25 - 0:41 - “..kese border par katarpanth ka barood bicha diya gya he...aur ham ek Ghazwa-viyuh me puri tarah ghir chuke hen.”;
- 0:50 - 1:08- “..Border par Islamikaran ka lakshya pura hogya he..Border par Ghazwa-e-Hind ka mission Islam safal hochuka he”;
- 1:13 - 1:23 - “Border par Muslim abaadi itni tezi se badhi he...jise ‘jansankhya jihad’... kaha ja rha he.”;
- 5:17 - 5:25 - “Border par Bharat ko barbad karne ka nya plan he, Wese kehne ko Hindu Rashtra he lekin border Muslim ho gye hen”;
- 6:37 - 6:45 - “Jese chicken neck he... ese hi muslim galiyara bna diya jaega jo sidha pakistan me ghusega”;
- 17:28 - 18:33- “...You support NRC Shoaib? nhi mujhe pta nhi tha apki ghar wapsi hyui he...Ap NRC ke khalaf hen, ap ghuspathiyon ke sath hen”;
- 22:56 - 22:59- “Kagaz nhi dikhaenge, bhagae jaenge”;
- 23:55 - 24:01 - “...Entry points par agar apne dharm ke log hongee to phir asani bhi hogi... wahin sharan bhi mil jaegi”;
- 32:32 - 32:40- “Hindustan me Hindu kabhi ghuspathiya nhin ho sakta”;
- 35:00 - 35:05- “Puri duniya ke musalman Hindustan me hi ayenge, aur kehete hen Hindustan me musalman khatre me hen”;
- 39:04 - 39:13 - “Shoaib ke rbe hen ki ghuspathiyon ka koi dharam n hin hota to phir ek hi dharm ke logon ki jansankhya borders par kese badh rhi he?,” and
- 41:51 - 41:56 - “Ye (Muslim Protestors) videshi musalmano ke liye desh me aag lga dete hen, shabeen bagh (protest) karte hen..”.

Further, it stated that various objectionable questions such as “Border pa kyun badhi muslim abaadi?”; “Kya ye Bharat me ghuspait ka nya model he?”; “Kya ghuspathiyon ko surakshit rasta dene ke liye jansankhya badlav?”; “Kya Muslim corridor banane ke liye jansankhya me badlav?”; “Kya Border par jansankhya badlav ke piche Pakistan aur China?”; “Border pa kyun tezi se badhai ja rhi he Muslim abaadi?” and “Border par tezi se badhte Masjid-Madarson ko kiski funding?” were also raised in the show.

The programme, which lasted close to 55 minutes, also featured numerous misleading and offensive taglines, such as “#BorderParPanIslam”; “Border par Islamikaran pura?”; “Border par badhe ‘bhajan’, Khatarnak he Plan?”; “Border par Ghazwa-e-Barood bichh gya he”; “Bharat ke border ka Islamikaran pura” and “Border par mission Ghazwa-e-Hind pura?”.

The complainant stated that within 10 kilometres of the Bangladesh border, demographic changes had shown a decadal growth in the population of 31.45 per cent between 2011 and 2021. However, it was purposefully concealed during the broadcast that in four Assamese districts—Dhubri, Karimganj, Cachar, and South Salmara—the Hindu population had also increased at a rate of 32.9 per cent, while

the Muslim population did so at a rate of 29.6 per cent only. Data on the population growth of other communities in a similar border area was not intentionally shared in order to create false allegation of Muslim population explosion in border areas.

The complainant stated that with about 14.5 million YouTube subscribers and 2.9 million Twitter followers, it was likely that the broadcast would have a significant impact on a sizeable portion of the Indian population. Further, it stated that even the host of the show had a huge following on Twitter with around 323,500 followers, who made objectionable statements prejudicial to the particular minority community throughout the show.

The complainant stated that the impugned program/report violated the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards, including Principles of Self-Regulation, as well as the Specific Guidelines Covering Reportage.

In view of the above, the complainant requested the broadcaster to delete the aforementioned content from all of its channel's social media profiles and from its own website. Further, the complainant stated that the channel should publicly apologize for airing the misleading content of communal nature.

**Reply from the Broadcaster:**

The broadcaster in its reply dated 14.8.2022, denied the allegations made in the complaint and clarified that its programme was entirely consistent with the applicable NBDSA's guidelines/advisories and applicable laws, including adherence to the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards.

The broadcaster stated that the debate was based on recent reports from security agencies, which flagged unprecedented and unusual change in the demography of a few border states due to a sudden and unprecedented rise in the Muslim population. Through the debate, a question was raised whether this sudden and unprecedented change in the demographics and rise in Muslim population was due to illegal infiltration done purposely by the vested interests, including the neighbouring states, to affect the security of border areas and, in effect, our country, or if this was a new model being undertaken by infiltrators to affect the borders of our country. Since the change in demographic on the border areas was so sudden that it evoked concern from the security agencies, the issue was raised in the impugned program to highlight the concerns of the security agencies as this matter involved the security of the country and naturally had public interest involved.

Further, the use of the term '*Ghazwa-e-Hind*' in the programme was with regard to the border, as some time ago, a conspiracy was revealed in the PFI document found in Patna, which talked about making India a Muslim nation by 2047. The said conspiracy was named as '*Mission Islam*' in the document of PFI. Therefore, any reference to '*Ghazwa-e-Hind*' had been in light of the documents and conspiracy of

PFI. Based on this it had asked if the recent reports of security agencies on the rise in Muslim population on the borders had any link to the conspiracy of PFI.

It reiterated that the impugned program was not meant against any particular religion. Rather the impugned programme raised serious questions about national security and whether it was normal for such sudden, unprecedented and rapid increase in the population of Muslims in the border districts. In fact, the broadcaster stated that even the police of Uttar Pradesh and Assam had expressed apprehension that the likely cause of this sudden rise was due to illegal infiltration and that the illegal infiltrators were camping in the areas adjoining the border. As such, the purpose of the programme was to present the concern raised by the security agencies in front of the country. For this very reason, the former Special Director General in BSF was called during the programme, so that he could explain the subject better and express his views on the same. The purpose of the programme was not to offend anyone or against any religion but to bring to the fore serious questions regarding national security raised by the security agencies.

It stated that contrary to what was being claimed in the complaint, the anchor had specifically stated on numerous occasions during the broadcast that the debate was not about the issue of religion but about the infiltrators and hence it was referred to as '*Ghuspaitbiya Barood*'. The anchor had also expressed his concern about the possible ramifications of this infiltration on the country's borders, which would make them insecure and affect the overall security of the country.

The impugned programme was aired in the public interest as it highlighted concerns regarding the interest, safety and well-being of the public as well as the country, as safety and security of borders are essential for any country and any perceived threat to the borders had ramifications for the entire country and citizens. The programme actually sought to make the public aware of the security threat as raised by the police and security agencies and questioned whether steps need to be taken to secure our borders from infiltration.

#### **Complaint filed with NBDSA:**

The complainant stated that in its response, the broadcaster had merely refuted all the claims made in its complaint as false. The channel was violating the rules and had failed to offer any justification for airing a debate programme that was extremely Islamophobic, provocative, and inflammatory. The broadcast's overarching aim, which should have been to inform the public of all sides of a controversy and condemn the failures of the Government, was noticeably absent. It stated that national security and peace are at risk when the suspicions indicated in security agency reports are presented as facts and supported by divisive and prejudicial statements. Promoting divisive agenda while giving the important issue of illegal immigration a communal flavour defeated the very purpose of handling this national security risk and instead fostered resentment against the members of a particular community, putting them vulnerable to violence. The language used in the

programme was intended to construct a false narrative that targeted a specific community in order to induce fear and anxiety in public, exposing the broadcaster's bias in not acting fairly. That it is the responsibility of the channels to present the key points of view of all parties, and simply giving equal space to people from various walks of life and religious beliefs does ensure neutrality. The unrestricted dissemination of these telecasts via electronic media had the negative effect of misinforming and prejudicing public discourse. Further, since the channel frequently violated the NBDSA Code of Ethics/Guidelines, as a result, an exemplary punishment must be imposed to hold it accountable for its acts, which have significant social repercussions. The complainant reiterated the contents of its complaint and stated that the impugned programme violated the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards, particularly Section 1 - Fundamental Principles (1,4,6), the Principles of Self Regulations pertaining to ensuring impartiality, objectivity and neutrality in reporting. Further, it also violated the principles of Accuracy (1.3 , 1.6), Impartiality, Neutrality & Fairness (2.1 , 2.2) and Racial & Religious Harmony (9.1, 9.2) under the Specific Guidelines covering Reportage. In view of the above violations, the complainant prayed for NBDSA to take appropriate action against the broadcaster under the News Broadcasting Standards Regulations.

### **Decision of NBDSA taken at its meeting held on 28.10.2022**

NBDSA considered the complaint regarding the programme dated 5.8.2022, response from the broadcaster and viewed the footage of the broadcast. NBDSA decided to call the broadcaster and the complainant for a hearing.

### **Hearing**

On being served with notices the following persons were present at the hearing on 11.11.2022:

#### **Complainant:**

Ms. Tamanna Pankaj, Advocate

Mr. M. Huzaifa, Complainant

#### **Broadcaster:**

Mr. Puneesh Kochar, Counsel

Mr. Praveen Shrivastava, Associate Executive Producer – Editorial

#### **Submission of the Complainant:**

The complainant submitted that its complaint was against the broadcast titled “*Desh Nahi Jhukne Denge Ghazwa e Hind*” which allegedly was based on the reports of the security forces in Assam and Uttar Pradesh regarding the demographic changes near the borders.

During the broadcast, following taglines *Border par Ghazwa-e-Hind Pura*”, “*Border ka Islamikaran Pura*” “*Border par Badhe-Bhaijaan, Khatarnaak hai Plan*” were aired and terms such as *Muslim Corridor*, *Muslim Borders*, *Jansankhya Jihad*’ etc. were used by the

anchor. Further, the videos of Muslims offering namaaz broadcast during the impugned programme and the opinions expressed by the panel and the audience that most of the people rendering services in Hindu areas were Muslims clearly displayed that the anchor and the programme intended to give a communal colour to an issue of national security. In this regard, the complainant submitted that it was relevant to note that the reports of the security forces relied upon by the broadcaster did not support the allegations raised by the broadcaster in the impugned broadcast, including through its tickers.

The complainant submitted that during the broadcast, the anchor claimed that India is a '*Hindu Rashtra*' which clearly implied that the anchor did not believe in the secular and democratic fabric of the country and was furthering a communal agenda in the name of national security. While the anchor consistently claimed that he was only debating on the issue of "*Infiltrators*" and "*National Security*" however during the programme, he exclaimed that "*Hindu Kabhi Hindustan Mein Ghuspethiyaa Nahii Hoskta*", which establishes that the aim behind airing of the impugned programme was to create a communal rift by appealing to a particular community and demonizing the other.

During the impugned programme, the panel also discussed PFI's alleged agenda of creating an Islamic nation by 2047, which not only lacked any basis but the panellists also failed to substantiate the claim.

The complainant reiterated that crucial reports by the investigation agencies were misrepresented and presented in a bad light as the reports nowhere raised concerns about the agenda of "*Ghazwa-e-Hind*" or "*Islamikaran of borders*" or anything related to "*PFI module of 2047*", and the reference to the same was misleading. The complainant submitted that instead of ethically reporting an issue of such national importance, the anchor chose to sensationalize and communalize the issue in the impugned programme.

The panellists in the programme also commented on the protests by a particular community against NRC and CAA which is an issue of pending adjudication in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, to reflect that a particular community was in support of "*infiltrators*" in the country.

The complainant submitted that since the video of the impugned programme was in the public realm, a large number of persons had responded to the said programme with comments which bordered on hate towards the Muslim community making its members vulnerable to violence.

The complainant submitted that the broadcaster purposefully concealed information in the show which contradicted its communal narrative about Assam's demographic data.

The complainant asserted that the impugned show clearly violated the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards, particularly the principles of Self-Regulation and Specific Guidelines Covering Reportage. It stated that since the channel frequently violated the Code of Ethics/Guidelines, it must be exemplarily punished and held accountable for its acts, which have significant social repercussions.

### **Submissions of the Broadcaster**

The broadcaster submitted that the impugned broadcast was based on the report of the Border Security Agencies, which highlighted an unprecedented change in the demographic of certain bordering areas in the state of Uttar Pradesh and Assam, where the Muslim Population was rapidly increasing. NBDSA asked the broadcaster to explain on what basis it concluded that there was a conspiracy to create *Ghazwa-e-Hind* in the impugned programme.

In response, the broadcaster submitted that even the Chief Minister of Assam had commented on the drastic changes in the demography of the districts bordering Bangladesh in the past decade. Since changes in the demography was a sensitive national security concern, it had decided to conduct a broadcast on the subject. In the programme, it had also raised the question whether such change in the demography were a result of infiltration by foreign forces. Further, in the beginning of the impugned programme itself the anchor clarified that the issue raised in the debate was not a Hindu-Muslim issue rather, it concerned the national security of the country.

The broadcaster reiterated that in the debate, it had raised the question whether the sudden and unprecedented change in demography and rise in Muslim population was due to illegal infiltration done purposely by the vested interests including the neighbouring states to affect the security of border areas and in effect, our country, or if this was a new model being undertaken by infiltrators to affect the borders of our country.

NBDSA asked the broadcaster whether it had in the impugned broadcast also questioned the Government about the actions taken by it to defend its border. The broadcaster responded that in the impugned programme, it had also sought accountability from the Government. However, the complainant, in rebuttal submitted that during the broadcast, no accountability was sought from the Government as claimed, which was also clear from the statements “*Puri duniya ke musalman Hindustan me hi ayenge, aur kehte hen Hindustan me musalman khatre me hen*”; “*Shoaib ke rhe hen ki ghuspathiyon ka koi dharam n hin hota to phir ek hi dharm ke logon ki jansankhya borders par kese badh rhi he?*,” and “*Ye (Muslim Protestors) videshi musulmano ke liye desh me aag lga dete hen, shaheen bagh (protest) karte hen..*” made by the anchor during the impugned broadcast. That if the broadcaster intended to cover national security concerns, the debate could have been conducted in a better tone and manner, however, in the impugned programme, the communal bias of the broadcaster was apparent.

In response, the broadcaster denied giving communal colour to the broadcast and submitted that there had been an unprecedented increase in the Muslim population in the last ten years. It reiterated that in the impugned broadcast, it had only raised national security concerns that pertained to illegal infiltration in the country. In this regard, it submitted that even the Hon'ble Uttarakhand High Court had ordered the removal of Mazars and encroachments by Rohingyas, who had illegally settled in Uttarakhand. NBDSA asked the broadcaster whether it had in the impugned broadcast also addressed the change in the demographic of the Hindu population, which was also cited in the report of the Border Security Forces. The broadcaster, in response, stated that it had only raised the issue in respect of the Muslim population which was growing at an unprecedented pace.

### **Decision**

NBDSA considered the complaint, response of the broadcaster and also gave due consideration to the arguments of the complainant and the broadcaster and reviewed the footage of the broadcast.

NBDSA noted that the impugned broadcast emanated from the report of Security Forces in Assam and Uttar Pradesh, which flagged the unprecedented and unusual change in demographics of few bordering states due to sudden and unprecedented rise in Muslim population.

NBDSA observed that there would have been no problem with the broadcast, if the broadcaster in the impugned broadcast had raised only national security concerns in respect of demographic changes around the border areas of the country due to infiltration and had sought answers from the Government as to what actions it had taken in respect of the same. However, in the instant case, no accountability was sought from the Government rather the broadcast attempted to communalize the issue.

During the programme, the anchor made statements such as “*Puri duniya ke musalman Hindustan me hi ayenge, aur kehte hen Hindustan me musalman khatre me hen*”; “*Shoaib ke rbe hen ki ghushpathiyon ka koi dharam n hin hota to phir ek hi dharm ke logon ki jansankhya borders par kese badh rhi he?*” “*Ye (Muslim Protestors) videshi musalmano ke liye desh me aag lga dete hen, shaheen bagh (protest) karte hen..*” “*Border par Muslim abaadi itni tezi se badhi he...jise ‘jansankhya jibad’... kaha ja rha he..*”; “*Border par Bharat ko barbad karne ka nya plan he, Wese kehne ko Hindu Rashtra he lekin border Muslim ho gye hen*”; “*Kagaz nhi dikhaenge, bhagae jaenge*”; “*...Entry points par agar apne dharm ke log hongee to phir asani bhi hogi... wabin sharan bhi mil jaeg?*” and “*Hindustan me Hindu kabhi ghushpathiya nhin ho sakti*”.



In view of the above, it is clear that the broadcaster attempted to create a communal narrative by giving the impression that a particular minority community were intruders and were attempting to change the demographic of the country by supporting illegal infiltrators.

The Authority also took serious objection to the offensive and inflammatory tickers such as “#BorderParPanIslam”; “Border par Islamikaran pura?”; “Border par badhe ‘bhaijan’, Khatarnak he Plan?” and “Border par Ghazwa-e-Barood bichh gya he” aired during the programme.

NBDSA is of the view that while the issue raised by the broadcaster is of serious concern and should certainly be debated, however, the communal tilt given by the statements and the taglines/tickers run during the programme certainly crossed the Lakshman Rekha and had violated the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards and Specific Guidelines Covering Reportage No. 9 relating to Racial & Religious Harmony.

NBDSA strongly disapproves of the impugned broadcast in view of the fact that while covering issues of national importance, the broadcast must be objective and not give a communal tilt, which dilutes the seriousness of the issue raised in the programme.

In view of the above, NBDSA decides to warn the broadcaster not to repeat such violations in the future and to ensure that the anchor make statements that does not give a communal tilt to the programme.

Accordingly, after keeping in mind the nature of the above violations, NBDSA decided to impose a fine of Rs 20,000 on the broadcaster.

NBDSA further also directed the broadcaster to remove the video of the said broadcast, if still available on the website of the channel, or YouTube, and remove all hyperlinks including access which should be confirmed to NBDSA in writing within 7 days of the Order.

NBDSA decided to close the complaint with the above observations and inform the complainant and the broadcaster accordingly.

NBDSA directs NBDA to send:

- (a) A copy of this Order to the complainant and the broadcaster;
- (b) Circulate this Order to all Members, Editors & Legal Heads of NBDA;
- (c) Host this Order on its website and include it in its next Annual Report and
- (d) Release the Order to media.

It is clarified that any statement made by the parties in the proceedings before NBDSA while responding to the complaint and putting forth their view points, and any finding or observation by NBDSA in regard to the broadcasts, in its proceedings or in this Order, are only in the context of an examination as to whether there are any violations of any broadcasting standards and guidelines. They are not intended to be 'admissions' by the broadcaster, nor intended to be 'findings' by NBDSA in regard to any civil/criminal liability.

**Sd/-**

**Justice A.K Sikri (Retd.)  
Chairperson**

**Place: New Delhi  
Date : 27.02.2023**