

ORDER

In the matter of a Complaint against the Programme 'Qubool Hai' telecast on Zee TV on 28 February 2013 and other similar Complaints

A Complaint has been filed with BCCC against the Programme 'Qubool Hai' which is aired on Zee TV Channel at 9:30 PM. The Complaint states that the Programme depicts violence on women and they are repeatedly assaulted in this show.

A recent instance (episode dated 28 February 2013) given by the Complainant was that of an elderly woman shown being tortured in a sequence by hanging her upside down on a rope. This scene of torture lasted Four (04) minutes. The Council has also received other similar complaints against the Programme 'Qubool Hai', citing instances of violence against women, such as mixing acid in *mehandi* and throwing live electric wire in the bathtub.

The Council watched the episode pertaining to the Complaint. Thereafter, the Council heard the Channel's representatives. The Council is of the considered view that the Programme is clearly in violation of IBF's Self-Regulatory Guidelines. The Programme violates the following Guidelines of 'Theme 1: Crime and Violence':

"Guideline 1: Induce, incite, encourage, justify, reinforce or glorify violence or terror or its perpetrators or contain anything against the maintenance of law and order or promote anti-national attitudes.

"Guideline 2: Present violence as glamorous or an acceptable solution to human conflict.

"Guideline 6: Have a traumatic, desensitizing or dehumanizing effect that could lead to psychological disorders or unsocial attitudes or behaviour, particularly among minors."

The Programme also violates clauses a) and b) of Category 'G', i.e. Programmes for unrestricted viewing and/or under parental guidance. The said clauses pertain to excessively explicit portrayal of crime, violence and abnormal behaviour.

At this stage, it is also apposite to refer to the ADVISORY dated 24 January 2012 issued by this Council on 'Portrayal of Women in TV Programmes':

"The BCCC has noted with concern the tendency of some entertainment serials to use plotlines that focus excessively on mistreatment of women. Often such mistreatment is portrayed in terms of assault, abuse and commodification of

BROADCASTING CONTENT COMPLAINTS COUNCIL

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women. Sometimes such portrayals are sought to be justified on the grounds that the serials actually take a stand against the mistreatment of women even though the scenes are shot in a manner designed to appeal to salacious instincts and to demean women.

“The BCCC has no desire to needlessly curtail artistic freedom or to deny that women face injustice in our society. Nevertheless, the council is concerned that such portrayals reinforce negative stereotypes and is worried about the graphic portrayal of the assaults and abuse shown on TV.

“The BCCC advises IBF member channels to exercise due care while framing such plotlines. If violence against women is to be portrayed then it should be suggested rather than graphically depicted. Channels should think carefully before telecasting shows in which women are portrayed as commodities, subjected to excessive violence and abused on screen.

“The BCCC asks for sensitivity and restraint and hopes that members will take care to use the power and reach of television for constructive rather than salacious purposes.”

The Council finds that the Programme ‘Qubool Hai’ is clearly in violation of this Advisory as well as being in violation of the IBF Guidelines. In fact, the Programme depicts and suggests various ways of torturing women, which also offends good taste and decency.

The Council is informed that this show runs five (05) days a week from Monday to Friday on primetime. The Channel’s representatives agreed that the Programme is violative of the Council’s Advisory as well as IBF’s Guidelines.

The representatives said such violations would not occur in the future and due care would be taken that the Programme strictly adheres to the Council’s Advisory as well as IBF’s Guidelines.

In view of the above, the Council decided that the Channel must run an Apology Scroll, in English and in Hindi, one after the other, in large and legible bold fonts at normal speed, THRICE during the telecast of the Programme ‘Qubool Hai’, over a period of FIVE (05) DAYS, from Monday 29 July 2013 to Friday 2 August 2013.

Subsequently on 7 August 2013, the Channel sought a Review of the ORDER. The Chairperson directed that the matter be placed before the Council for Review at its 27th Meeting.

The Council once again heard the Channel’s Representative at length at its 27th Meeting held on 12 August 2013. The Council rejected the Review application and UPHELD the Complaint.

BROADCASTING CONTENT COMPLAINTS COUNCIL

The Council decided that the Channel must run the following Apology Scroll in English and in Hindi, one after the other, in large and legible bold fonts at normal speed, THRICE during the telecast of the Programme 'Qubool Hai', over a period of FIVE (05) DAYS, from Monday 26 August 2013 to Friday 30 August 2013:

"In compliance with BCCC's Order passed on 14 August 2013, Zee TV apologizes for the telecast of its Programme 'Qubool Hai' on 28 February 2013. This episode was found to be in violation of Indian Broadcasting Foundation's (IBF) Self-Regulatory Guidelines."

(Hindi translation attached)

In the Council's opinion, the breach in question being of a minor nature will not be considered a "Violation" within the meaning of Clauses 8.2 and 10.2 of 'Policy Guidelines for Uplinking of Television Channels from India, 2011' issued by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting on 05/12/2011.

For & on behalf of
Broadcasting Content Complaints Council


Justice (Retd.) A.P. Shah
Chairperson

14 August 2013
New Delhi

"ब्रॉडकास्टिंग कंटेंट कम्प्लेंट्स कॉसिल (BCCC) द्वारा 14 अगस्त 2013 को पारित आदेश के अनुसार, ZEE TV 28 फ़रवरी 2013 को प्रसारित अपने कार्यक्रम 'कुबूल है' के लिए क्षमाप्रार्थी है. यह एपिसोड इंडियन ब्रॉडकास्टिंग फाउंडेशन (IBF) के स्वनियामक मानकों के उल्लंघन में पाया गया है."