

ORDER

In the matter of complaint against the programme 'Tujhse Hai Rabta' telecast on Zee TV at 8:30 pm on 03/01/2019 and 04/01/2019 and repeated thereafter

This Council has received a complaint from the Electronic Media Monitoring Centre (EMMC) under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting against the programme '*Tujhse Hai Rabta*' aired on Zee TV at 8:30 pm on 03/01/2019 & 04/01/2019 and repeated thereafter.

- 1) The complaint stated that through this programme, a character called Malhar, who plays the role of a police officer, has been shown to torture his wife Kalyani for her alleged act of stealing money from a hospital. The episode dated 03/01/2019 depicted her hands being tied to a jeep and she was forced to run after the vehicle. All this while, Malhar has been shown to be wearing the police uniform.
- 2) In this episode and part of the episode dated 04/01/2019, Malhar has also been shown to be putting weight on the legs of his wife, torturing her thus, and trying to force her to admit that she stole the money from the hospital at her mother's behest.
- 3) As per the complaint, the female protagonist is not shown to retaliate and accepts the punishment as if she is at fault, but in the very next episode, it comes to light that she is not guilty of the theft, and it was a different woman who had stolen the money from the hospital for her husband's medical treatment.

On examining the depiction, this Council *prima facie* found that the episodes violated:

Theme-1 (SubClause-6) of IBF's Self-Regulatory Guidelines, which deals with 'Crime and Violence', and bars any depiction that may:

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



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CIN : U74899DL1999NPL101705

Moreover, Sections 6 (1) (a) and (k) of the 'Programme Code' state:

"Offends against good taste or decency."

"Denigrates women through the depiction in any manner of the figure of a woman, her form or body or any part thereof in such a way as to have the effect of being indecent or derogatory to women, or is likely to deprave, corrupt or injure the public morality or morals."

The Council, therefore, issued a Notice to the channel on 28/02/2019 in its 80th meeting with a direction to appear before it on 04/04/2019 for a Hearing during its 81st meeting.

In its reply, the channel clarified that the programme '*Tujhse Hai Rabta*' is a family drama, where more drama is created due to a financial crisis in the family. The episode intended to depict that due to a monetary crunch to meet the family's medical expenses, the female protagonist steals from the hospital and is caught red handed. She is presented before the police and coincidentally, she is brought to the same police station where her husband is posted. The husband is shamed before his superior officer and finally, when she is released by her husband's superior, he takes it to be an affront on his personal integrity and honesty and in a fit of anger, punishes her as depicted in the episode.

The channel maintained that its creative team had exercised abundant caution during the development of the scene by not exaggerating the effect of pain by showing such scenes suggestively while all close-up shots were avoided. The pain is expressed more through expressions and loud background music.

During the Hearing, the channel's representatives said they had split the said depiction into two episodes so that the torture meted out to the female protagonist does not seem prolonged and graphic. The channel suggested that watching the female protagonist getting tortured, her mother, too, as part of self-inflicted pain, keeps the weight on her legs so that Malhar could have a guilty conscience and stop torturing his wife.

The channel stated that keeping in mind the viewers' sensibilities, it made a concerted effort to tone down the narrative which is evident in the fact that the channel dedicated two episodes to it with the other story track running in parallel.

The Council advised the channel that such depiction is not acceptable, keeping in mind that the male protagonist is a police officer. The channel's contention that in the later episodes, there is a change of heart of the male protagonist, did not influence BCCC as it believes that



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glorifying the subsequent goodness of a wrongful act cannot be a defence. The Council also wished to know the oversight involved in the process of scripting, shooting and prolonging such scenes and perhaps the scriptwriters coming out with such new modes of torture would require sensitizing.

After examining all aspects of the matter, this Council directs the channel to run an Apology Scroll, Twice Each during the airing of Two Episodes of the programme 'Tujhse Se Rabta' for Two Consecutive Days.

The Apology Scroll shall be run Twice Each in English and in Hindi in legitimate, readable fonts at normal speed, for Two Consecutive Days, between 29/04/2019 (Monday) and 03/05/2019 (Friday), during the telecast of the programme 'Tujhse Hai Rabta'.

The text of the Apology Scroll, in English and Hindi respectively, shall read:

"In compliance with BCCC's Order of 04 April 2019, Zee TV regrets the inadvertent and prolonged depiction of the torture of a woman in the episodes of 'Tujhse Hai Rabta' telecast on 03 and 04 January 2019."

"बी.सी.सी.सी. द्वारा 04 अप्रैल 2019 को पारित आदेशानुसार, Zee TV भूलवश 3 तथा 4 जनवरी 2019 को अपने कार्यक्रम 'तुझसे है राबता' में महिला प्रताड़ना का लंबा दृश्य दिखाने के लिए खेद व्यक्त करता है।"

The channel is also directed to submit a Compliance Report with original clips of the Apology Scroll run by it to the BCCC Secretariat by 10/05/2019.

For & on behalf of:

Broadcasting Content Complaints Council



Justice Vikramajit Sen (Retd.)
Chairperson

22/04/2019
NEW DELHI