

ONLY BY EMAIL

February 18, 2026

Mr. Utkarsh Mishra 19, Gautam Apartments, Gautam Nagar, New Delhi – 110049 Email: utkmishra09@gmail.com	Ms. Annie Compliance Officer NBDSA Zee Media Corporation Ltd. No 19, Film City, Sector 16A, NOIDA – 201301 Email: legal@zeemedia.com
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Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Order of NBDSA in Complaint (No.162) dated 02.11.2024 filed by
Mr. Utkarsh Mishra against a broadcast aired on 19.10.2024 on Zee
News**

Attached please find Order dated February 17, 2026 passed by News Broadcasting
& Digital Standards Authority.

Regards



Shreya Rastogi
For & on behalf of NBDSA

News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority

Order No. 208 (2026)

Complainant: Mr. Utkarsh Mishra

Channel: Zee News

Programme: "DNA: वेज रेस्टोरेंट में नॉन वेज वाला फ्रॉड! | Veg Restaurant Serving Non Veg | Scam | Kanpur News"

Date of Broadcast: 19.10.2024

Complaint dated 02.11.2024

In the impugned broadcast, the following tickers were repeatedly aired: *"Kanpur me Food Jihad"* and *"Kanpur me Pehchan Chipakar Food' Jihad."*

0:00-0:22 खबर की शुरुआत में करता हूँ एक सवाल के साथ सवाल ये कि क्या आप प्योर वेजिटेरियन है और अगर आप प्योर वेजिटेरियन है और किसी वेज रेस्टोरेंट में खाने में जाते हैं तो आपको कैसे पता चलता है कि रेस्टोरेंट केवल वेज खाना देता है आपका सीधा जवाब होगा कि आप रेस्टोरेंट के ऊपर लिखा देखते हैं कि प्योर वेजिटेरियन है तो है यही पैमाना है और यही उस रेस्टोरेंट की पहचान भी है

0:22 -0:55 लेकिन जरा सोच कि आप एक रेस्टोरेंट में जाते हैं जहां लिखा है वेज रेस्टोरेंट और अंदर नॉनवेज खाना दिया जाता है तो बात यही खत्म नहीं होती उसी रेस्टोरेंट का मालिक लोगों को धोखा देने के लिए तिलक लगाता है जिससे कि हिंदू दिखे लेकिन जांच पता चला कि वह मुसलमान है तो फिर ऐसा क्यों अपनी पहचान क्यों छुपाई जाती है और रेस्टोरेंट में झूठ क्यों लिखा जाता है यह कहाँ हो रहा है यह सारा कुछ हो रहा है कानपुर के रेस्टोरेंट में और उसके बाद रेस्टोरेंट पर कारवाई भी हो रही है

1:06 -2:24 रेस्टोरेंट पर चला बुलडोजर सुरक्षा के बीच कारवाई एक रेस्टोरेंट पर बड़ा एक्शन मामा भांजा रेस्टोरेंट हुआ जमीदोज यह है कानपुर का रेस्टोरेंट मामा भांजा फिल्मी स्टाइल में अलग अंदाज में रेस्टोरेंट का नाम फिर नीचे बड़े-बड़े अक्षरों में लिखा वेज कॉर्नर मतलब केवल वेज खाना मिलता है इसी पोस्टर पर रेस्टोरेंट मालिक ने अलग दिखने के लिए एक टैग लाइन या कहिए कि पंचलाइन लिखी कि अच्छा खाओ और अच्छा खिलाओ लेकिन सामान्य से दिखने वाले रेस्टोरेंट पर बड़ी कारवाई करते हुए बुलडोजर से गिरा दिया गया क्योंकि इसके मालिक पर कई गंभीर आरोप है ग्राहकों को भगवान मानने वाले इस देश में जिधर देखो उधर फ्रॉड है और ऐसा ही फ्रॉड इस रेस्टोरेंट के मालिक ने किया इस रेस्टोरेंट पर लिखा है वेज कॉर्नर लेकिन इस पर पहला आरोप यह कि यहां चुपचाप नॉनवेज खाना दिया जाता था

2:24 -2:58 दूसरा बड़ा आरोप यह कि रेस्टोरेंट के मालिक मुबीन अहमद अपनी पहचान छिपाकर हिंदू नाम के इस रेस्टोरेंट को चला रहा था मुबीन अहमद पर आरोप कि व अपनी पहचान छिपाने के लिए तिलक लगाता था इस रेस्टोरेंट में काम करने वाले एक कर्मचारी ने इस धोखाधड़ी का खुलासा किया उसके बाद बजरंग दल और स्थानीय लोगों ने रेस्टोरेंट मालिक के खिलाफ कड़ी कारवाई की मांग की और इसे तुरंत बंद कराने की मांग की उसके बाद प्रशासन ने कारवाही की और बुलडोज करते हुए रेस्टोरेंट को बंद दिया लेकिन सवाल वही पहचान छुपाने की साजिश क्यों

2:58-3:00 क्या यह जिहाद का हिस्सा नहीं है

Promoting such conspiracy theories constitutes a violation of guidelines b, c, d, e, f, g, h, and i of the Specific Guidelines for Anchors conducting Programmes, including

Debates. The coverage also violates guidelines 1, 2, and 3 of the Guidelines to Prevent Communal Colour in Reporting Crime, Riots, Rumors, and Related Incidents. The sensationalization and communalization of this incident amounts to targeted coverage, perpetuating harmful stereotypes historically used to attack, intimidate, or dehumanise members of a particular community and thus effectively violates the entirety of the Guidelines on the Prevention of Hate Speech.

Decision of NBDA at its meeting held on 13.12.2024

NBDSA considered the complaint and after viewing the footage of the broadcast, decided to call the parties for a hearing.

On being served with Notices, the following were present during the hearing on 18.11.2025:

Complainant

Mr. Utkarsh Mishra

Broadcaster

Ms. Annie, Compliance Officer,

Submission of the Parties

The complainant's grievance concerns the use of the term "jihad" in the impugned broadcast. The complainant stated that the phrase "food jihad" was consistently used in the broadcast, including in the tickers aired. In the broadcast, selling non-vegetarian cuisine in a vegetarian-themed restaurant was labelled "food jihad," and the broadcaster evidently advanced a one-dimensional conspiracy theory, implying that this constitutes a form of jihad. Additionally, the complainant asserted that the channel framed the news as jihad because certain political parties had characterized the incident in that manner. This constitutes a violation because news should be presented neutrally. However, in the impugned broadcast, the incident was framed in a communal manner and as part of a conspiracy.

In response, the broadcaster asserted that the entire programme had been factually verified and was based on credible information. The term 'jihad,' in the context of a vegetarian restaurant selling non-vegetarian food, was used by certain political parties, which claimed that such actions constituted jihad. As a result, the channel broadcast this content. It reiterated that this incident was characterized as a form of 'jihad' by political parties, not by the broadcaster. In fact, the food stall was subsequently demolished.

Decision

NBDSA considered the complaint, the submissions of the parties and reviewed the footage of the broadcast.

NBDSA noted that in the impugned broadcast, the broadcaster had reported an incident in Kanpur in which a restaurateur was alleged to have been selling non-vegetarian food in a vegetarian restaurant while concealing his identity, which led to a protest by a certain political party and the subsequent demolition of the restaurant.

NBDSA was of the view that had the broadcaster merely reported the incident, no objection could have been raised to the broadcast. However, instead of confining itself to the factual reportage of the incident, the impugned broadcast raised leading questions about whether the alleged act of the individual was a type of “jihad” and part of a larger conspiracy to force vegetarians to consume non-vegetarian food. This narrative was also reinforced through the tickers, which were aired during the broadcast. NBDSA was of the opinion that the aforesaid act of an individual should not have been generalised and treated as “jihad” without any credible evidence or material to support the same.

While it was submitted by the broadcaster during the hearing that the term “food jihad” was used by a certain political party, no such attribution was made during the broadcast. NBDSA observed that it was not proper to frame the solitary and stray incident as a form of jihad without any supporting material. Had it been a case of a series of such incidents, forming a connected chain, the broadcaster would have been justified in giving such a narrative, however, no such material is produced. No doubt the incident was bizarre and the broadcaster had every right to broadcast the same. At the same time, the broadcaster should exercise some restraint in giving such incidents a broader communal flavour and should not jump to conclusions in the absence of any supporting material, as these may cause communal disharmony, keeping in mind the Specific Guidelines covering Reportage and the Code of Ethics & Broadcasting Standards.

NBDSA, thus, cautions the broadcaster in this behalf, and directs the broadcaster to edit/remove the offending portion of the broadcast, which appears at the fag end of the broadcast within 7 days of the Order.

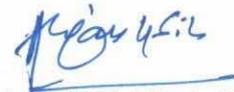
NBDSA decided to close the complaint with the above observations and inform the complainant and the broadcaster accordingly.

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.



Justice A.K Sikri (Retd.)
Chairperson

Place: New Delhi
Date : 17.02.2026