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**National Censorship Guidelines and
Advertising Codes for Radio, TV and
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by

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I. Introduction :-

There is an old argument among the broadcasters such as, which one comes first, the programme or the technology. Now a days, Television broadcasting is the most powerful and effective media for communication yet invented by mankind. It has become a part of our every day life. For its wide application we are using the Space technology and the terrestrial transmission system for the dissemination of programmes and information world wide. We should not say that technology would become useless without programming or programmes would not have developed further without the technology. Rather we should say, in broadcasting media programmes and technology are complementary to each other. Both will go hand in hand for our national and transnational communication.

2. An overview of satellite communication :-

Satellite Communication has caused a significant impact on the broadcasting media landscapes of the world, particularly in the South-East Asia and Pacific region. With the continual thrust of Satellites in the orbit, the system of communication got its breakthrough from region to region and continent to continent. This electronic media has democratised both our entertainments and infotainments worldwide and freed the ON AIR Services of the world broadcasters to the individuals of the world.

The Satellite Service has got some significant advantage over the terrestrial networks. For example, the entire country can be covered from the first day of the Satellite Service, whereas the construction of terrestrial transmitters may take many years. Moreover, the dominance of Satellite Service is because, the direct - to - home TV service is more cost-effective due to its universal coverage. Also Satellite is transparent to both analog and digital signals. That is why, from USA to India and from Japan to Indonesia, the Satellite broadcasting is emerging very fast. It presents new options for programming and scheduling; new considerations of editorial policy and a dynamic environment in the commercial competitions. So, with this pivotal role of Satellite in the modern communication world, time has come to make a broad-based review on the impact of Satellite communication in view of infotainments and a flourished commercial environment in the Asia Pacific Region.

3. Programming and Programme contents :

The technicalities for the delivery of TV or Radio programmes to the audience is a common factor all over . For transmission and reception of signals the same technology is being adopted by the broadcasters . But the ethics of programme telecast and programme making are quite different from region to region . cultures to cultures . In the Asia region, the role of satellite services in the domain of programme sales and advertisement has got some specialities . Here, broadcasting services has got some nation building impact and which may be expected from the satellite services too . Generally TV- programming is phased into two steps such as the period of production stage which is involved with the national cultural norms ; while the period of programme sales (advertisement) is involved with market promotion and financial turn over . So, in the case of transnational broadcasting, the term " Program content " must be carefully dealt with . To get an acceptability of program content in the satellite TV broadcasting horizon , the UNESCO general assembly has adopted some declaration of guiding principles in 1992 . The main features of the declaration are :

- a) The satellite broadcasting should be used for Free flow of information .
- b) For the greater cultural exchange and harmony .
- c) For the spread of education world wide .

The objective criteria to govern the programme content is dependent upon the international co-operation and the sovereign right of a state which will administer their domestic media systems . With respect to the commercial advertisement this criteria is very important . In this context we may cite draft point set forth by the space Legal Sub-Committee as follows :

- * Any state or its broadcasting entities that participating in the satellite broadcasting system with other agency should co-operate with one another in respect of programming, programme contents, production and exchange of programmes .
- * The broadcasting of commercial advertising, direct or indirectly to the countries other than the country of origin, should be on the basis of mutual agreements between the countries concerned .
- * Any state that under takes the activities of satellite broadcasting should in all causes avoid or exclude the programmes from any materials which is detrimental to the maintenance of international peace and security, which publicizes idea of war, militarism, national and racial hatred and enmity between people and which is aimed at interfering in the domestic affairs of their states or which undermines the foundations of local culture, way of life, traditions etc.

4. The Asia Ad. market :

If we look at the American and European media markets, we can see that TV Advertising has popular and wide avenue for consumers' approaches. In the race of expansion to their dominions, that is to shore up their programme sales, the western media and entertainment industries are looking to the Asia Pacific Region. Because, to them Asia seems to be promising and fastest growing market in the world.

In Asia, role of satellite in TV-broadcasting has got some mixed impacts on nation building issue. For example, about 8 million Japanese house holds subscribe to NHKs Broadcast Satellite (BS) which is not affecting their terrestrial TV- studios. The main cause behind this is that they have developed strong capability to offer their own programmes to their viewers. On other hand, with the advent of unscrambled signals like pay - TV, cable operator, satellite channels etc. the TV viewing and advertising trends in HongKong has fallen. Because the advertiser don't know who are their viewers. Their Ad'-mony is being siphoned off to some other agencies. So attractive programming will provide a vehicle of advertising and simulation of more economic activities; and thus TV-broadcasting growth will go hand-in-hand with the growth of advertisement.

We know that the Asia market is the mix of cultures, languages, religions, education, politics and the uneven distribution of wealth. These cannot be approached as a single criteria in the Asian advertising territory. Particularly in South East Asia, there is a distinct cultural order which is often considered as a separate and superior to the western variety. Here the advertising which come up with TV shows, to cater to all tastes is almost impossible. Matching the programme sales to the advertisers outlets is another problem to the programmers. So the communication infrastructures that will open up a diverge range of TV-service, should be the representative of the forefront of convergence technology just to bridge the world of entertainment.

5.01 Bangladesh TV - broadcasting`Scenario :

The people of Bangladesh have been experiencing the TV broadcasting since 1964. This is the only TV-service in the country which is ^{managed & funded} ~~controlled~~ by government and is named as Bangladesh Television (BTV). Now " Dhaka Television " as a master station, is feeding varieties of TV programmes to ten regional stations of the countries . This single state-run network (channel) transmits 54 hrs of programming in Bangla and English in each week and has brought 80% of total population area under TV broadcasting.

BTV is funded by a mixture of government subsidies, advertising and receiver license fees. In its 7'7 hours daily transmission, BTV is telecasting 80% domestic programmes including the commercial advertisements, at the rate of 8' - 9' per hour daily, that is nearly 14% of daily transmission hours. Since TV broadcasting is being scaled to its highest popularity in the country, there is a promising and lucrative Ad. revenue market in Bangladesh. Last fiscal year BTV earned about 22 crores Taka from its advertisement revenue and Tk 14 crores from the receiver license fees. On the other hand BTV's annual recurring expenditures was Tk 21 crores. There are about 0.6 millions of TV House holds throughout the country most of which are Urban base. This number is increasing every year.

5.02. BTV Development Projects :

In addition to its 54 Hrs weekly (appxly 7'7 Hrs daily) normal transmission, the govt. has approved BTV to show some selected item from BBC - WSN and CNN daily (in its idle hour). The govt also has allowed to own Dish antenna and receiver individually in the country. To foster the country's media communication for a palatable infotainment, BTV has under taken some expansion projects like :

1. Installation of 4 - more TV relay stations in the pocket areas of the country to cover 95% of the total population area under TV - broadcasting.
2. To establish 4 more regional programme making TV studios.
3. To establish a 2nd channel Transmission as an education channel for national Open University, Gono shikkha karjokrom and will also accommodate the foreign programmes (channels) like BBC Star TV and CNN.

5.03. Realisation of changes :

By monitoring these rapid changes in BTV scenario we may say - " the changes in our communication society does not take place as per calender dates. The 21st century began 15 yrs back and we can prognosticate about the information booming for the 2000 yrs. Although our economy is based upon the agro-economic society, but our possible industrial evolution is gradually merging into an information society. Our people are getting awareness about the process of changes that depending upon the society in which they live in. Because, our media communication is an important input for our socio-economic development. These political, economic, social, technological and physical characteristics of our society will determine what form programming and marketing will prevail or sustain. The boom of information technology is both a symptom and a major contributor to the internationalisation of principles of business (Programme sales).

5.04. Market competition :

Compared to other media communicators, BTVs advertising market was slow paced, But from 1980s it got its inertia and is highly paced with the increasingly competitive market. Like other Asian market our consumers market is mix of cultures, religions language and politics. These can not be approached as a single criteria in our advertising territory. In our society, advertising which come up with TV shows, can not meet almost all tastes. For matching the programme sales to our socio-cultural environment, we have our own codes of advertisements and ethics of programming censorship.

5.05. BTV Ads and censorship highlights :

Here are some salient features on the ethics and codes for BTV Censorship and ad guidelines.

- * In Bangladesh, TV as a mini screen is mostly viewed by members of a family of different age groups. And obviously TV - programme leaves deep impression on the children's to the Youths and juveniles. Keeping in mind these variable impacts of TV-Broadcasting, BTV has formulated and follow some basic rules for the compatibility of our programmes with the social, cultural, religion, geographical and political tradition of Bangladesh.
- * For telecasting foreign Films and programmes BTV also follows some guidelines which are consistent with the programmes policy and the censor codes.
- * All programmes or Films must bear the contents as will help in developing moral conscious of the viewer and encourage them to refrain from violence hatred crime, misdeed or influence them to indulge in moral turpitude.
- * BTVs' advertising codes are based upon the law of the country and beset will the tradition of our country.
- * Because of its greater intimacy with all class and age group of people TV-advertising is based upon sophistication truth moral spirit as well.
- * It is idependant from competitors of other media..

5.06. Reactions and Guidelines :

With the debut multicultural satellite communication in Bangladesh, we are ready to receive this mixed reaction. We are fully aware that they will cause some affect to our programme sales and censorship guidelines to some extent. And we shall have to face this challenge and to learn a lot from them in our own environment. Time has come to think why our locally produced milk power will get a cold reception in the consumer market while the foreign brand will get a hot sip. We shall have to project our consumers economy first and then to recast the codes of our programme sales.

: 6 :

There is an untold story of BTV programmes invading the foreign markets. More over we believe that there are other potential export markets for BTV programme in the middle East, UK, USA where Bangladesh Community are clustered. We know that cable television is a narrowcast medium. BTV is trying to provide its programming in this narrowcast media for the outside Bangladeshis and promote its programming export market.

Most countries of the world have already developed a private channel to complement their Govt. stations. Bangladesh is considering and reviewing this side with a keen interest. To cope with the channel invaders and its local needs BTV is under heavy pressure of competition to push programmes towards higher quality and an emerging creative talent base towards fresh ideas. Because of studio and production constraints, BTV's programmes suffer to achieve the quality of the west. We know that in this south East Asia region, although Singapore, Honkong are on the cutting edge of technology, many countries like Bangladesh are limited by both finances and experiences. We are struggling with 'today' by using yesterday's equipment and facilities.

6. Conclusion :

In conclusion it may be said that some bold decisions from the Govt. like 2nd channel planning, foreign channels telecast in the national channel, deregulation of Dish Antenna etc has altered the broadcasting Landscape in Bangladesh. Our horizon of viewership is expanding day by day with new expectations from the viewers. To cope with these changes time has come to recast the code of our advertisement i. e. Ad. programming sales and to re-align the guidelines of our censorship. Unlike past developments in Bangladesh the current changes are driven by dynamism from the private sectors. To be at the forefront of this technological and creative wave, Bangladesh will exercise a communication policy that will be the regulatory showpiece of South Asia.