

New Straits Times : Online chat, offers too saucy and naughty for TV

Written by Administrator

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KUALA LUMPUR: "Where can we find girls tonight?" the message asks. And Darshan Singh is not pleased.

Saying that online chats on television while music videos were being played contained such messages, the National Consumer Complaints Centre manager asked if anyone was monitoring them.

He said SMS lines offering "friendship" should be monitored.

Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) corporate communications head Adelina Iskandar said the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 required television stations to moderate their chat content.

They could be penalised if indecent, obscene or offensive content was allowed through.

Darshan criticised advertisements in the electronic media that offered services such as "sex tips on arousing your spouse" that could be subscribed to via SMS.

"What about children who have mobile phones? Are we encouraging free sex among our youth?" asked Darshan, who accused the MCMC of protecting content providers and telcos a charge the MCMC denied.

Adelina said the advertisements were meant for an adult audience, and the caution "for viewers 18 and above" should be placed.

The advice and tips should also come from someone qualified, she said, adding: "We are working with the telcos to ensure their content providers have this caution."

Adelina said everything, except live telecasts and the news, had to have the Film Censorship Board's approval before being aired.

Film Censorship Board chairman Mohd Hussain Shafie said the board usually received audio visual films from television stations.

"By right, they cannot insert anything else, even the flashing advertisements, after the film has been censored. They have to send us the ads for censorship too."

Hussain said it was possible that advertisements that were sexual in nature or offensive were added by television stations without the board's knowledge, after the film had been censored.

"Maybe the MCMC also feels that the film with the advertisements had been censored by us," he said, and urged the public to complain.

"If such advertisements are shown, the public can let us know and we will check whether the film had been sent with that footage, and then we will refer the matter to the MCMC."

"In fact, the MCMC has taken action against some television stations."