

Media Council furious at morning show

The Media Council of Kenya (MCK) has initiated disciplinary action against one of the country's top radio show for airing offensive material to an inappropriate audience.

MCK chairman, Levi Obonyo on Wednesday, 8 February 2012, told reporters that the Council, the statutory regulator of media outlets in the country, would forward Classic 105 to its Complaints Commission for possible reprimand.

Prof Obonyo said members of the public had complained about the content of a call-in programme on Tuesday morning. The programme's hosts had engaged their audience in a discussion on the use sex for material gain by women and probed the difference between commercial sex workers and married women.

"The Media Council registers its strong objection to the broadcast carried by Classic FM on Tuesday and is forwarding the matter to the Complaints Commission for a hearing," said Obonyo.

The MCK chairman said the station had gone against the code of ethics outlined in the Media Act in which offensive, vulgar or obscene language is prohibited. Obonyo told the news conference that Classic FM erred by allowing callers to talk obscenities on air.

According to MCK, the topic went against the "core of human moral values" and was abusive to the Kenyan public. The Council added that the station allowed callers to discuss a sensitive topic, "during a time when families, most of who use public means, are taking their children to school." One of the callers, MCK charged, requested the presenters to extend the topic to another day so that the discussion could go on.

The Council argues that the station was abusing public resources because it is a free-to-air station.

"We are warning the station that if it insists on these topics, it should go into the exclusive pay content, where those who choose to listen are adults who know what they want," the Council said.

The Council, created in 2008 as a mechanism for self regulation of the media, charged that the station had violated articles 4, 9 and 23 of the Media Act by allowing obscenities on air, and abusing the frequencies allocated to them.

This is the second time the Council is reprimanding the station.

Last year, the station was also forwarded to the Council's complaints commission after it allegedly aired a call of people discussing sexual matters. The commission is yet to issue its verdict on the matter.

Should the complaints commission take up the matter, it would then write to the station for a response within 14 days after which it would decide on whether a case should be heard.

Source: allAfrica.com.

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