[BG] CEM’s report of the monitoring of the television channel PRESS TV

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On 7 April 2015 the Council for Electronic Media (CEM) prepared a report on the results of the monitoring of the television channel "PRESS TV". The monitoring found that the recordings of the flooding of the town Kazanlak were presented correctly.

On 1 February 2015, the town of Kazanlak was flooded and local media showed how the municipality was dealing with the situation. The event was also covered by a journalist from the television channel "PRESSTV". In a personal conversation, the Mayor of the town complained to a prosecutor from Kazanlak. She said that the television channel "caused panic" and did not adequately reflect the work of the municipality.

After the conversation with the mayor, the prosecutor took action. The journalist from PRESS TV was summoned to appear at the police station on 3 April 2015 to be indicted in pre-trial proceedings under Article 326 of the Criminal Code, which states that "whoever transmits on radio, telephone or otherwise, false calls or misleading signs for help, accident or alarm, shall be punished by imprisonment of up to two years.” After a sharp reaction of the guild of journalists on 2 April 2015, the charges against the journalist were dropped.

According to the monitoring of CEM, the recordings broadcast on 2 February 2015 reflected the effects of the flooding in the western part of the town correctly. According to CEM, in the broadcast information, the journalist relied on official information from Kazanlak‘s municipality regarding the situation, as well as on testimonies of victims of the affected factories in the industrial park. With no desire to influence the independent judiciary, the Council expressed a general opinion that the reporter's story was built entirely on the recordings captured by the cameraman. The facts were presented in accordance with professional standards and served the public interest and the right of people to be informed.

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