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* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

+ **CS(COMM) 395/2026**

DR SANJIV GOENKA

.....Plaintiff

Through: Mr. Sandeep Sethi, Senior Advocate with Mr. Pravin Anand, Mr. Nirupam Lodha, Mr. Madhav Khosla, Mr. Dhananjay Khanna, Ms. Bhavya Verma, Ms. Shreya Sethi and Mr. Krishna Gambhir and Mr. Abhi Uday, Advocates.

versus

GOOGLE LLC & ORS.

....Defendants

Through: Mr. Aditya Gupta, Advocate for D-1. Mr. Varun Pathak, Mr. Vishesh Sharma and Mr. Mrityunjay Roy, Advocates for D-2.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE TUSHAR RAO GEDELA

ORDER

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15.04.2026

I.A. 10231/2026 (Additional Documents)

1. The present application has been filed on behalf of the plaintiff under Order XI Rule 1(4) of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 ('CPC') as applicable to commercial suits under the Commercial Courts Act, 2015 ('CC Act') seeking leave to place on record additional documents.
2. The plaintiff is permitted to file additional documents in accordance with the provisions of the CC Act and the Delhi High Court (Original Side) Rules, 2018 within thirty (30) days.
3. Accordingly, the application stands disposed of.

I.A. 10230/2026 (for seeking discovery, production & inspection of Defendants' documents)

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4. This application has been filed by the plaintiff under Order XI Rules 1, 3 and 5 of the CPC as amended by the CC Act read with Section 151 of CPC, seeking discovery, production and inspection of the defendants' documents.

5. Issue Notice.

6. Let the reply to the application be filed within a period of four weeks from date. Rejoinder thereto, if any, be filed within a period of two weeks thereafter.

I.A. 10232/2026 (Exemption)

7. This is an application filed on behalf of the plaintiff under Section 151 of CPC seeking exemption from filing clearer copies of dim documents along with the captioned suit.

8. Exemption allowed, subject to just exceptions. However, true, typed and clearer copies of dim documents with proper margins be filed within four weeks with an advance copy to the defendants.

9. The application stands disposed of.

I.A. 10233/2026 (Seeking Additional time to file Court fees)

10. The present application has been filed by the plaintiff under Section 149 read with Section 151 of CPC, seeking additional time to file Court Fees.

11. Considering the submissions made in the present application, an extension of two weeks is granted to affix the requisite court fees.

12. The application stands disposed of.

I.A. 10234/2026 (Pre-Institution Mediation)

13. This is an application filed by the plaintiff seeking exemption from instituting pre-litigation Mediation under Section 12A of the CC Act.

14. As the present matter contemplates urgent interim relief, in light of the judgment of the Supreme Court in *Yamini Manohar vs. T.K.D. Keerthi: (2024) 5 SCC 815*, exemption from the requirement of pre-institution Mediation is granted.



15. The application stands disposed of.

I.A. 10235/2026 (Extension of time for filing the Certificate under Section 63(4)(c) of the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023)

16. This is an application filed by the plaintiff under Section 151 of the CPC seeking exemption from filing the requisite Certificate under Section 63(4)(c) of the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023 ('BSA').

17. For the reasons stated therein, the application is allowed. The plaintiff shall file the Certificate under Section 63(4)(c) of the BSA within a period of four weeks.

18. The application stands disposed of.

I.A. 10236/2026 (Exemption)

19. This is an application under Section 80 read with Section 151 of the CPC, filed on behalf of the plaintiff seeking exemption from issuing notice to defendant no.4/the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY), and defendant no.5/Department of Telecommunication (DoT).

20. Having regard to the nature of urgent reliefs sought, the application is allowed. The plaintiff is exempted from issuing notice to the defendant nos.4 and 5 at this stage.

21. The application is disposed of.

I.A. 10229/2026 (Order XXXIX Rules 1 & 2, CPC)

22. Present application has been filed on behalf of the plaintiff under Order XXXIX Rules 1 & 2 of CPC, 1908 seeking *ex-parte ad-interim* injunction against the defendants.

23. Plaintiff claims to be a distinguished and internationally recognized business leader, philanthropist, and a visionary entrepreneur with an outstanding reputation built over decades. Plaintiff is the Founder and the Chairman of the RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group (RPSG) which is stated to be a multi-billion dollar conglomerate, and operates across diverse sectors



including Power and Natural Resources, Carbon Black Manufacturing, Information Technology, Retail, FMCG, Media and Entertainment, Sports, Education and Infrastructure.

24. RPSG Group is stated to be valued at approximately Rs.80,000/- crores and generates an annual consolidated revenue exceeding Rs.42,000/- crores. The group employs around 55,000 persons globally.

25. Plaintiff claims that in view of the valuation, public share holding, and strategic importance, any act which may adversely affect the reputation, commercial interests, or goodwill of the plaintiff, would directly and indirectly cause irreparable harm not only to the plaintiff, but also to the Group, stakeholders, and the public at large. A list of flagship companies under the RPSG Group are enlisted in the para 14 of the plaint.

26. It is stated that in the Forbes 2024 list of India's 100 richest tycoons, the plaintiff is ranked at 65th with a net worth of USD 4.9 billion. In its 2022 report, he was recognized as the 83rd richest person in India and 1238th richest person in the world. The India Today's 50 most Powerful People; ranked the plaintiff at #23 in 2023. Plaintiff is also stated to have served on the Advisory Council on Trade and Industry of the Prime Minister of India for five years sharing the Committee with stalwarts like late Sir Ratan Tata, Mr. Mukesh Ambani, Mr. Nusli Wadia amongst others. Plaintiff has also been a member of the Board of Trade, which is a high level advisory body under India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

27. Para 18 of the plaint enlists the prestigious positions held by the plaintiff in India's premier business and industry organizations. Plaintiff has also been selected as a Member of the Padma Award Committee. Para 19 of the plaint gives details of various prestigious national and international awards and honours. That apart, the plaintiff is stated to be recipient of Doctor of Letters (D.Litt) Degrees – Honoris Causa from at least five universities.



28. The list of ownership of major sport franchises of the plaintiff is enlisted in para 21 of the plaint, which includes Lucknow Super Giants, Mohan Bagan Super Giants, Manchester Super Giants etc.

29. Based on the aforesaid, plaintiff claims that his personality, name, image, and other facets of its personality carry immense goodwill and commercial value. Plaintiff claims that his name, image, and personality are a source indicator for the public at large. The plaintiff's personality rights are powerful tools which have generated immense goodwill and reputation, which the consumers of the product and the services, completely trust and rely on.

30. Plaintiff is extensively visible on social media platforms such as Instagram and 'X' (formerly known as Twitter) where plaintiff has garnered 4,56,000 followers, and 19,100 followers respectively. Plaintiff is also stated to be a philanthropist, and as an example is stated to have contributed approximately Rs.33 crores in the State of West Bengal for various sectors and their development.

31. The persona of the plaintiff, developed over decades of exemplary business leadership, philanthropic work and public engagement, have created in the masses, the following impression of:

- a. Visionary and ethical business leadership;
- b. Innovation and entrepreneurship;
- c. Contribution to Indian industry and economic development;
- d. Philanthropy and social responsibility;
- e. Excellence in sports and entertainment management;
- f. Academic leadership and thought leadership in management.

32. The plaintiff's business operations and commercial deals are done through utilization of attributes of his persona such as his name, likeness, signature, voice, image, and other characteristics that are uniquely identifiable and associated with the plaintiff.



33. Plaintiff claims, therefore, that the different attributes of the plaintiff which are protectable are as under:

- i. The plaintiff's name;
- ii. The plaintiff's voice;
- iii. The plaintiff's image/photograph/likeness;
- iv. The plaintiff's unique persona;
- v. The plaintiff's signature/autograph; etc.

34. Plaintiff asserts that even the personal name is protectable as a trademark and stands on a higher footing than the use of a trademark in relation to goods and services. Thus, the name is peculiar and attains a distinctive identity of its own being exclusively associated with the plaintiff. Similarly, his image, photograph and likeness are also distinctive and exclusively associated with the plaintiff.

35. Plaintiff also asserts that misappropriation of any attribute of the plaintiff's persona without his express permission, that too, for unauthorized commercial purpose or to bring disrepute to the plaintiff would amount to violation of his personality rights.

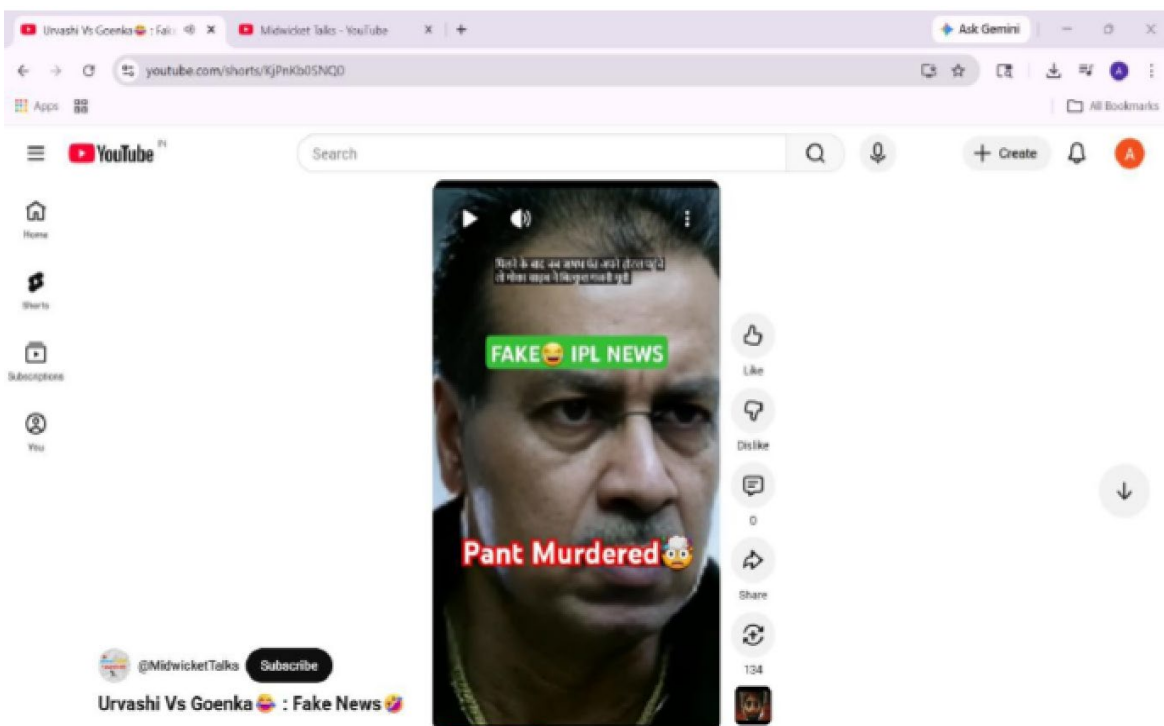
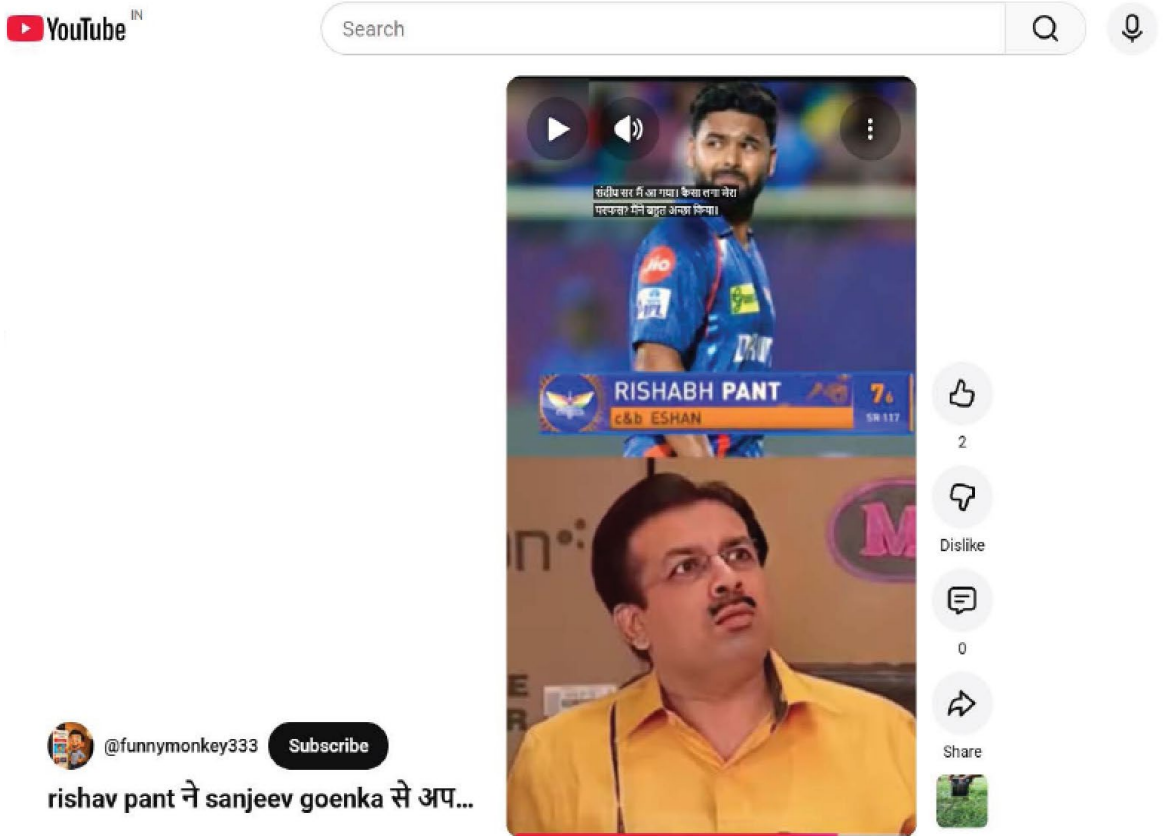
36. Predicated thereon, the plaintiff seeks *ex-parte ad-interim* injunction against the defendants.

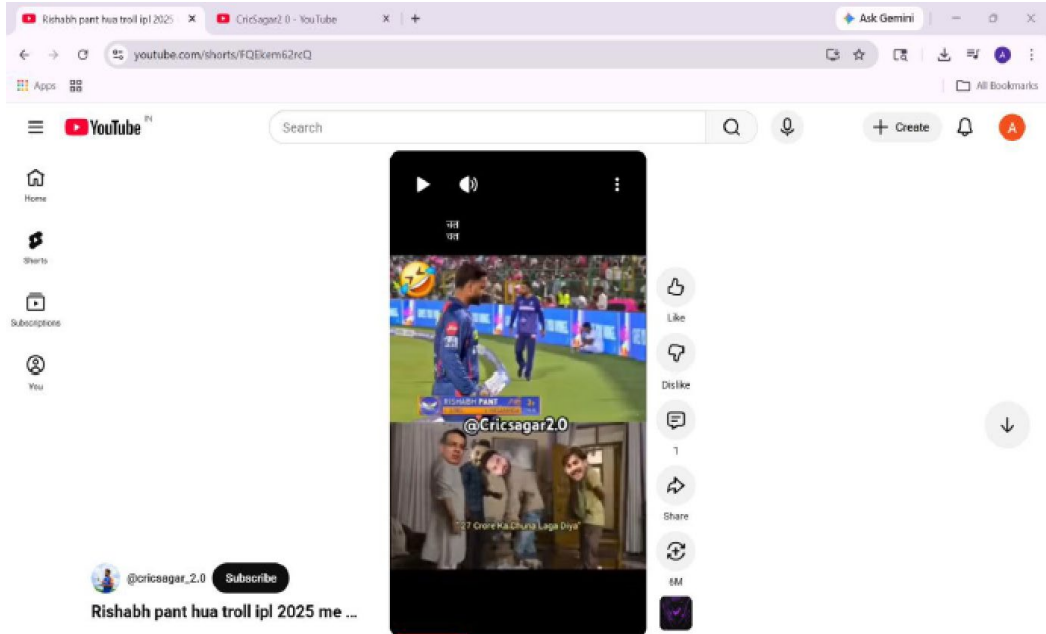
37. This Court has heard Mr. Sandeep Sethi, learned senior counsel, appearing on behalf of the plaintiff, and Mr. Aditya Gupta, learned counsel for the defendant no.1/Google LLC, and Mr. Varun Pathak, learned counsel for the defendant no.2/Meta Platforms Inc, and has also perused the records of the case.

38. Learned senior counsel had drawn attention of this Court to the screenshots annexed to the list of documents accompanying the plaint to demonstrate as to how the personality rights of the plaintiff are being grossly violated. It would be apposite to extract the relevant screenshots to



demonstrate the nature of the vilification, defamatory, disparaging as also complete infringement of the personality rights of the plaintiff. Some of the many screenshots are extracted hereunder:





4. <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/FQEkem62rcQ>

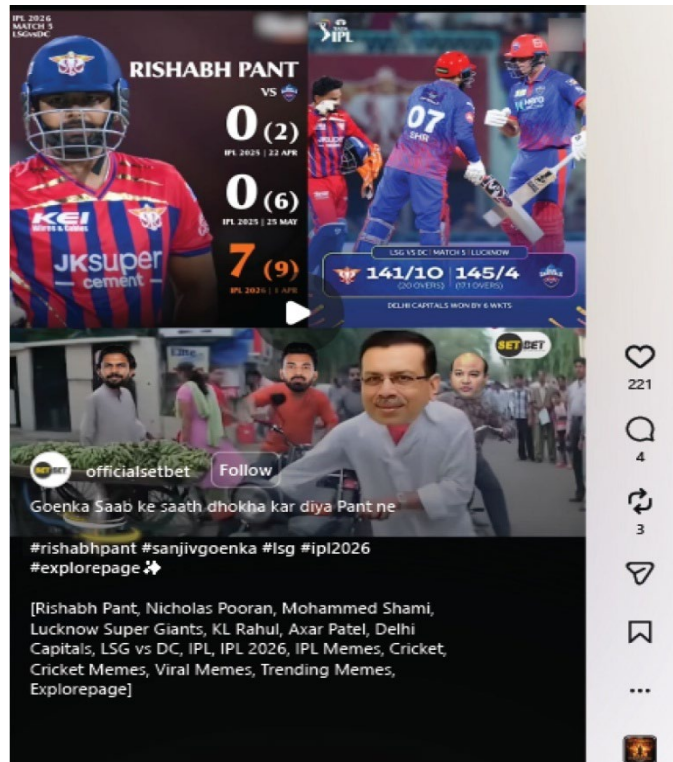
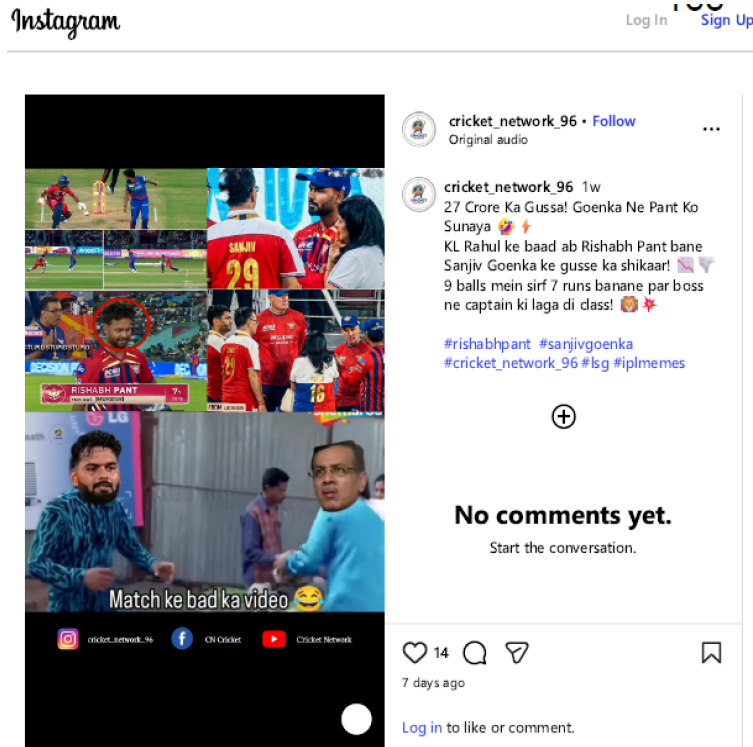
Sanjiv Goenka (AD): Chal

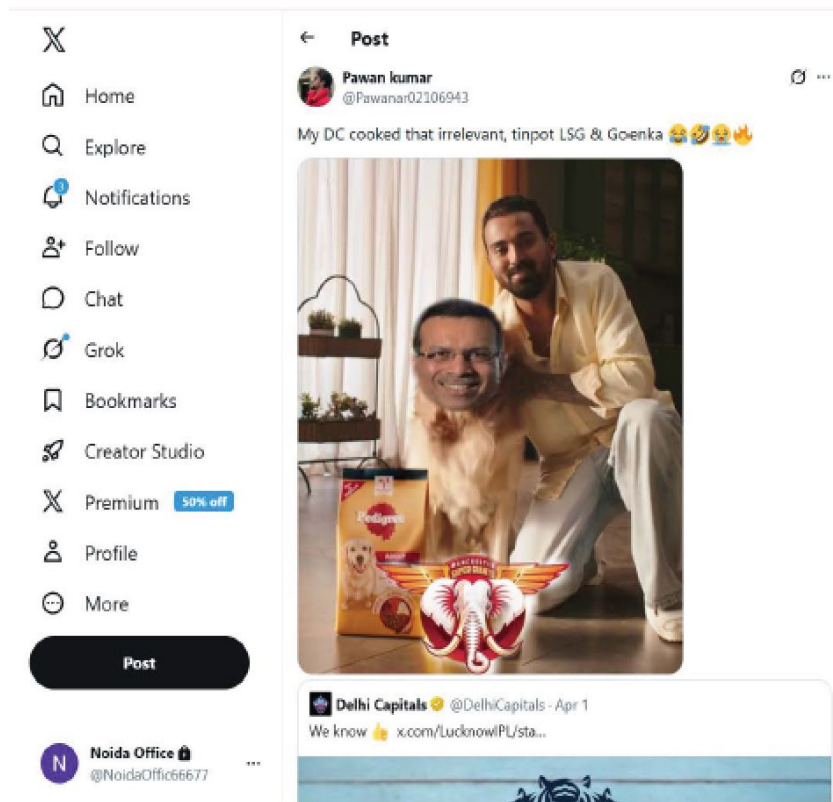
KL Rahul (AD): Chal

Sanjiv Goenka (AD): bhaag Bhos***ke



39. It would also be relevant to extract hereunder, the posts on Instagram and Twitter alongwith some transcripts, which are downright derogatory and use expletives, which are unpalatable in any civil society. Some of such extracts are reproduced hereunder:







Search X

- Home
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- Notifications
- Follow
- Chat
- Grok
- Bookmarks
- Creator Studio
- Premium 50% off
- Profile
- More

Lalit Kumar Modi @LalitKModi · Apr 4
 I am so glad my exposing my brother in law @DrSanjivGoenka abusive high handed behaviour towards his PLAYERS IN THE @IPL - alerted the world and the #bcci to take notice and it swiftly reacted - by issuing a PUBLIC WARNING- to one and ALL Concerned that this will not be

Cricket Samachar (@cric_samachar) · Instagram photo

Post

Ranjeet @behuchod

Sanjiv goenka to players when cameras are not around him :

7:23 PM · Apr 4, 2026 · 2,966 Views

Post

5 @AlreadySad_

Goenka introducing Rishab pant after the match #SRHvsLSG

7:10 PM · Apr 5, 2026 · 3,321 Views

5 24 125 17

Relevant View quotes >

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Technology · Trending
Own Galaxy A57 5G

Politics · Trending
#BhorosharShopothBJP

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3. https://x.com/AlreadySad_/status/2040786764542185519?s=20

Arre mad*****odon, yeh mera beta hai, badha beta.



40. This Court is aware that the Coordinate Bench of this Court in CS(OS) 893/2002 titled “**D.M. Entertainment Pvt. Ltd. vs. Baby Gift House and Ors.**” has held as under:

“12. The plaintiff contended that the character's potential being the artist's popularity to attract customers; on the basis of perceived attributes which is contributed by his reputation is the basis for its trademark and other commercial exploitation. On this aspect, the Bombay High Court, in Star India Private Limited v. Leo Burnett (India) Pvt. Ltd. MANU/MH/1030/2002 : 2003 (27) PTC 81 (Bom) was relied upon; that judgment explained the position thus:

Character merchandising involves the exploitation of fictional characters or the fame of celebrities by licensing such famous fictional characters to others. The fictional characters are generally drawings in which copyright subsists, e.g., cartoon and celebrities are living beings who are otherwise very famous in any particular field, e.g.; film stars, sportsmen. It is necessary for character merchandising that the characters to be merchandised must have gained some public recognition, that is, achieved a form of independent life and public recognition for itself independently of the original product or independently of the milieu/area in which it appears. Only then can such character be moved into the area of character merchandising. This presumes that the character has independently acquired such reputation as to be a commodity in its own right independently of the goods or services to which it is attached or the field/area in which it originally appears.

Similar views were expressed recently, by this Court, in Chorian Rights Limited v. Ishan Apparel and Ors. CS(OS) 1154/2009 in this aspect.

13. To avail the right against the infringement of right to publicity, the plaintiff must be "identifiable" from defendant's unauthorized use. In this instant case, the evidence on record very well establishes the primary requirement. As a secondary consideration, it is necessary to show that the use must be sufficient, adequate or substantial to identify that the defendant is alleged to have appropriated the persona or some of its essential attributes. The right of publicity protects against the unauthorized appropriation of an individual's very persona which would result in unearned commercial gain to another. In the present instance, the commercial use of an individual's identity is intended to increase the sales of product by fusing the celebrity's identity with the product and thereby the defendants were selling those dolls, on the basis of publicity value or goodwill in the artist's persona into the product i.e. doll. In Ali v. Playgirl Inc. 447 F Supp 723, it was observed that;



The distinctive aspect of the common law right of publicity is that it recognizes the commercial value of the picture or representation of a prominent person or performer, and protects his proprietary interest in the profitability of his public reputation or persona.

A similar view is echoed in Onassis v. Christian Dior - New York Inc. 472 NYS 2d 261;

No one is free to trade on another's name or appearance and claim immunity because what he is using is similar to but not identical with the original.

14. The right of publicity can, in a jurisprudential sense, be located with the individual's right and autonomy to permit or not permit the commercial exploitation of his likeness or some attributes of his personality. However, a word of caution has to be expressed here. In a free and democratic society, where every individual's right to free speech is assured, the over emphasis on a famous person's publicity rights can tend to chill the exercise of such invaluable democratic right. Thus, for instance, caricature, lampooning, parodies and the like, which may tend to highlight some aspects of the individual's personality traits, may not constitute infringement of such individual's right to publicity. If it were held otherwise, an entire genre of expression would be unavailable to the general public. Such caricature, lampooning or parody may be expressed in a variety of ways, i.e. cartoons in newspapers, mime, theatre, even films, songs, etc. Such forms of expression cannot be held to amount to commercial exploitation, per se; if the individual is of the view that the form of expression defames or disparages him, the remedy of damages for libel, or slander, as the case may be, would then, is available to him."

(emphasis supplied)

41. However, having considered the ambit and scope of what may constitute personality rights as also what would constitute infringement of such rights as observed in ***D.M. Entertainment (supra)***, this Court is of the *prima facie* opinion that the various screenshots of the video reels and posts on various social media platforms do not fall within the ambit of mere parody, lampooning or caricature. The nature of the contents of many of the posts and video reels are distasteful and show the plaintiff in poor light apart from appearing to be spreading fake news too. Most of the video reels or posts appear to be revolving around the IPL matches involving the team sponsored



by the plaintiff. Though some of them appear to be parody, many of them infringe on the plaintiff's personality rights, particularly those, which are generated by AI.

42. In view of the above, it is evident that the plaintiff has been able to make out a *prima facie* strong case in his favour and against the defendants. Having regard to the voluminous documentary evidence, *prima facie*, establishing the respect and credibility that the plaintiff enjoys as a prudent and highly successful business person having impeccable reputation in India as also globally, coupled with being a successful leader of RPSG Group which is stated to be a multi-billion dollar conglomerate, and keeping in mind the philanthropic activities carried out by the plaintiff, the balance of convenience is tilted in favour of the plaintiff. The plaintiff shall suffer irreparable loss and injury which cannot be compensated in monetary terms having regard to the disrepute which may be brought upon the plaintiff which may result in a permanent dent to his goodwill and reputation in the business circles etc., in case the *ex-parte ad-interim* injunction is not granted in his favour.

43. Accordingly, the following directions are passed:

- a. Defendant no.6/John Doe(s), their associates, servants, agents, affiliates, holding companies, assignees, substitutes, representatives, group entities, their subscribers, employees and/or persons claiming through them or under them and all other persons are restrained from using or exploiting or misappropriating the plaintiff's (a) name 'Sanjeev Goenka' as well as his variants, 'Dr. Sanjeev Goenka' / 'S. Goenka'; (b) image and likeness; and (c) any other attributes of his persona which are exclusively identifiable with him for any commercial and/or personal gain and/or otherwise by exploiting them in any manner whatsoever without the plaintiff's consent and/or authorization



including through the use of any technology including but not limited to Artificial Intelligence, Generative Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Deepfakes, AI Chatbots, Face Morphing, Superimposing and on any mediums and formats;

b. Defendant nos.1 to 3 are directed to take down all links / websites provided by the plaintiff in Documents 1, 2 and 3 attached with the plaint which unlawfully infringe the plaintiff's personality / publicity rights as also defendant no.1 is directed to disclose the Basic Subscriber Information of the YouTube channels which are a part of 'Document-1' annexed to the plaint, defendant no.2 is directed to disclose the Basic Subscriber Information of the Facebook/Instagram accounts which are a part of 'Document-2' annexed to the plaint except for the URL provided at serial no.3, and defendant no.3 is directed to disclose the Basic Subscriber Information of the "X" account which are a part of 'Document-3' annexed to the plaint.

44. If any further infringing websites, URLs, accounts, channels, or content are discovered by the plaintiff, the plaintiff is at liberty to communicate the details of such websites to defendant nos.1 to 3. Upon receiving such intimation from the plaintiff, defendant nos.1 to 3 are directed to immediately block access to the said websites.

45. As and when the BSI details are furnished to the plaintiff, they would be at liberty to file an appropriate application to implead such mirror/redirect/alphanumeric variations of the social media handles / websites identified in the plaint, including those websites associated with the defendants within 48 hours of receipt of such information/details.

46. For any further infringing websites are discovered by the plaintiff, the plaintiff shall be at liberty to approach the learned Joint Registrar (Judicial) by filing an appropriate application under Order I Rule 10 CPC for impleadment



of such infringers.

47. For extension of the present *ex-parte ad-interim* injunction against such newly discovered infringers, the plaintiff shall also be at liberty to approach this Court in accordance with law.

48. If any website which is not primarily an infringing website is locked, suspended or blocked pursuant to the present order, it shall be at liberty to approach this Court seeking modification or clarification upon furnishing an undertaking that it does not intend to illegally disseminate content over which the plaintiff has exclusive rights.

49. Issue notice.

50. Notice is accepted by Mr. Aditya Gupta, learned counsel for the defendant no.1, Mr. Varun Pathak, learned counsel for the defendant no.2, and learned counsel for the defendant no.3, however, state that there may not arise any occasion for these defendants to file reply to this application as they ordinarily would comply with directions which may be passed by this Court.

51. Let the notice be issued to the remaining defendants upon the plaintiff taking necessary steps, through all permissible modes.

52. Let a reply to this application be filed by the defendants within four weeks from service. Rejoinder, thereto, if any, be filed within two weeks thereafter.

53. Compliance of Order XXXIX Rule 3 of CPC shall be done within ten days from date.

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54. Let the plaint be registered as a suit.

55. Issue summons.

56. Mr. Aditya Gupta, learned counsel for the defendant no.1, Mr. Varun Pathak, learned counsel for the defendant no.2, and learned counsel for the defendant no.3 accepts summons, however, state that there may not arise any



occasion for these defendants to file written statements on merits and that they ordinarily would comply with directions which may be passed by this Court.

57. Let the summons be issued to the remaining defendants upon the plaintiff taking necessary steps through all permissible modes. The summons shall state that the Written Statement shall be filed by the defendants within 30 days from the date of the receipt of summons. Alongwith the Written Statement, the defendants shall also file Affidavit of Admission/Denial of the documents of the plaintiff, without which the Written Statement shall not be taken on record.

58. Liberty is granted to the plaintiff to file Replication, if any, within 30 days from the receipt of the Written Statement. Along with the Replication filed by the plaintiff, an Affidavit of Admission/Denial of the documents of defendants be filed by the plaintiff, without which the Replication shall not be taken on record.

59. In case any party is placing reliance on a document, which is not in their power and possession, its details and source shall be mentioned in the list of reliance, which shall also be filed with the pleadings.

60. If any of the parties wish to seek inspection of any documents, the same shall be sought and given within the prescribed timelines.

61. List before the Joint Registrar (Judicial) on 16.07.2026 for completion of service and pleadings.

62. List before the Court on 18.09.2026.

TUSHAR RAO GEDELA, J

APRIL 15, 2026/anj/rl