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

+ CS(COMM) 672/2026

**SONY PICTURES NETWORKS INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED**

.....Plaintiff

Through: Mr. Siddharth Chopra, Mr. Yatinder Garg, Mr. Akshay Maloo, Ms. Ishi Singh, Mr. Manish Singh and Ms. Shudhata, Advocates.

versus

**CRICFREE.CYOU & ORS.**

.....Defendants

Through:

**CORAM:**

**HON'BLE MS. JUSTICE JYOTI SINGH**

**ORDER**

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**01.07.2026**

**I.A.16276/2026 (for pre-institution mediation)**

1. This application is filed on behalf of the Plaintiff under Section 12-A of the Commercial Courts Act, 2015 read with Section 151 CPC seeking exemption from Pre-Institution Mediation.
2. Having regard to the facts of the present case wherein urgent relief is prayed for and in light of the judgment of Supreme Court in *Yamini Manohar v. T.K.D. Keerthi*, (2024) 5 SCC 815, as also Division Bench of this Court in *Chandra Kishore Chaurasia v. RA Perfumery Works Private Ltd.*, 2022 SCC OnLine Del 3529, exemption is granted to the Plaintiff from Pre-Institution Mediation.
3. Application is allowed and disposed of.

**I.A. 16277/2026 (U/s 80 r/w Section 151 CPC)**

4. This application is filed on behalf of the Plaintiff seeking exemption



from issuing notices to the Defendants No. 15(BSNL), 18 (MTNL), 23 (Department of Telecommunication (DoT) and 24 (Ministry of Electronics and Information).

5. For the reasons stated in the application, the same is allowed, exempting the Plaintiff from issuing notices to Defendants No. 15(BSNL), 18 (MTNL), 23 (Department of Telecommunication (DoT) and 24 (Ministry of Electronics and Information).

6. Application stands disposed of.

**I.A. 16278/2026 (u/O XI Rule 1(4) of Commercial Courts Act, 2015 r/w Section 151 CPC)**

7. This application is filed on behalf of the Plaintiff seeking to place on record additional documents within permitted time limit.

8. Plaintiff, if it wishes to file additional documents at a later stage, shall do so strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Commercial Courts Act, 2015.

9. Application is allowed and disposed of.

**CS (COMM.) 672/2026**

10. Let plaint be registered as a suit.

11. Upon filing of process fee, issue summons to the Defendants through all permissible modes, returnable before the learned Joint Registrar on 04.08.2026.

12. Summons shall state that the written statements shall be filed by the Defendants within 30 days from the receipt of summons along with affidavits of admission/denial of the documents filed by the Plaintiff.

13. It will be open to the Plaintiff to file replications within 30 days from the date of receipt of written statements along with affidavits of admission/denial of documents filed by the Defendants.



14. If any of the parties wish to seek inspection of any documents, the same be sought and given the timeline prescribed in Delhi High Court (Original Side) Rules, 2018.

15. Learned Joint Registrar will carry out admission/denial of documents and marking of exhibits.

**I.A. 16275/2026 (u/O XXXIX Rules 1 and 2 r/w Section 151 CPC)**

16. This application is filed on behalf of the Plaintiff under Order XXXIX Rules 1 and 2 read with Section 151 of CPC for grant of *ex parte* ad interim injunction.

17. Issue notice to the Defendants through all permissible modes, returnable before Court on 09.10.2026.

18. Case of the Plaintiff as set out in the plaint is that Plaintiff, formerly known as Culver Max Entertainment India Private Limited, is a company incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956 and is one of India's leading media and entertainment companies engaged *inter alia* in the business of television broadcasting, content acquisition, production, aggregation, distribution and exploitation of audio-visual content across television, digital and mobile platforms.

19. It is stated that Plaintiff is a part of the globally renowned Sony Group and has established itself as a premier broadcaster and content provider in India. Plaintiff, either by itself and/or through its affiliates and licensors owns, operates and/or distributes an extensive portfolio of premium television channels spanning multiple genres including sports, general entertainment, movies, children's entertainment, factual entertainment and regional content. Plaintiff, along with its affiliates, is the owner of an extensive portfolio of nearly 29 premium channels across multiple languages and genres including leading channels in both SD and HD formats such as



SONY TEN 1 SD, SONY TEN 1 HD, SONY TEN 2 SD, SONY TEN 2 HD, SONY TEN 3 SD, SONY TEN 3 HD, SONY TEN 4, SONY TEN 4 HD, SONY SIX SD, SONY SIX HD, Sony Entertainment Television (SET), Sony SAB, Sony PAL, Sony MAX, Sony MAX 2, Sony WAH, Sony PIX, Sony BBC Earth, Sony YAY!, Sony Marathi, Sony AATH, to name a few.

20. It is stated that by virtue of requisite uplinking and downlinking permissions granted by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India, Plaintiff possesses sole and exclusive right to broadcast and distribute the Sony Channels within India. The Sony Channels broadcast a wide range of premium sporting content including *inter alia* cricket, football, tennis, golf, mixed martial arts and other sporting events. Plaintiff has acquired and continues to acquire exclusive media rights in respect of several marquee sporting events. Plaintiff also broadcasts and telecasts various international cricket matches and tournaments organized and/or sanctioned by various Sporting Federations/Associations around the world including the England and Wales Cricket Board (“ECB”), New Zealand Cricket (“NZC”), Sri Lanka Cricket (“SLC”), Asian Cricket Council FZ LLC (“ACC”) and Olympic Council of Asia (“OCA”), for events such as New Zealand tour of England (Women) 2026, New Zealand tour of England 2026, India tour of England (Men’s) 2026, India tour of England (Women’s) 2026, Pakistan tour of England (Men’s) 2026, Men’s Under 19 Asia Cup Tournament 2026, illustratively.

21. It is stated that various Sony channels enjoy immense popularity and goodwill amongst viewers across India and internationally. Plaintiff has invested substantial time, effort, expertise and financial resources in acquiring, producing, promoting and broadcasting such content and in developing and maintaining the goodwill associated with its channels. Sony



channels are available in over 150 countries worldwide and can boast of more than 700 million viewers in India alone and the popularity is directly attributable to Plaintiff's continuous investment in high quality content and broadcasting infrastructure.

22. It is stated that Plaintiff owns and operates the online audio-visual streaming platform and website [www.sonyliv.com](http://www.sonyliv.com) and mobile application Sony LIV and viewers can enjoy content on-the-go with seamless streaming on a host of devices such as laptops, tablets, mobile phones, smart TVs etc. Plaintiff's OTT platform, Sony LIV enables viewers to watch television serials and programs, films, sports content including live sports content, trailers of upcoming films and television serials, international content including viewing schedules of content offered etc. and their highly evolved video streaming technology, impeccable quality of video streaming and vast library of content places it amongst the most popular video streaming services in India.

23. It is stated that Plaintiff has filed the present suit seeking permanent injunction to restrain infringement of its exclusive rights and broadcast reproduction rights in relation to the sporting events, including the ongoing New Zealand tour of England (Men's) 2026, which commenced on 04.06.2026 and the India tour of England (Women's) 2026 which commenced on 25.05.2026 ('Ongoing Events'). The events which form the subject matter of the present suit are being organized under the aegis of the England and Wales Cricket Board ("ECB"), New Zealand Cricket ("NZC"), Sri Lanka Cricket ("SLC"), Asian Cricket Council FZ LLC ("ACC"), Olympic Council of Asia ("OCA") and Pitch International LLP which includes New Zealand tour of England (Men's) 2026, India tour of England (Men's) 2026, India tour of England (Women's) 2026, Pakistan tour of



England (Men's) 2026, The Hundred (Men's) 2026, The Hundred (Women's) 2026, Ireland tour of England (Women's) 2026, Sri Lanka tour of England (Men's) 2026, India Tour of Sri Lanka 2026, India's Tour of New Zealand (Men's) 2026, Women's Under 19 Asia Cup 2026, Asia Cup Men's Rising Stars 2026, Men's Under 19 Asia Cup Tournament 2026, ACC Women's Asia Cup Tournament 2026, Sri Lanka Tour of New Zealand (Men's) 2027, South Africa Tour of Sri Lanka 2027, Asian Games 2026 and India Tour of Ireland 2026 (the aforesaid events are collectively referred to as **"Sporting Events"**).

24. It is stated that Plaintiff has acquired exclusive media rights in respect of various international cricket tournaments, bilateral cricket series and multi-sport events pursuant to Media Rights Agreements executed with and/or rights granted by the respective sports governing bodies and tournament organizers, details of which are as follows:-

S.No.	MEDIA RIGHTS AGREEMENT	RIGHT CONFIRMATION LETTER	EVENTS
1.	Media Rights Agreement between Olympic Council of Asia and the Plaintiff dated 26 <sup>th</sup> February 2026	4 <sup>th</sup> May 2026	a. Asian Games 2026
2.	Media Rights Agreement between New Zealand Cricket and the Plaintiff dated 26 <sup>th</sup> February 2024	7 <sup>th</sup> May 2026	a. India Tour of New Zealand (Men's) b. Sri Lanka Tour of New Zealand (Men's)
3.	Media Rights Agreement between England and Wales Cricket Board Limited and the Plaintiff dated 20 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	11 <sup>th</sup> May 2026	a. New Zealand tour of England (Men's) b. India tour of England (Men's) c. India tour of England (Women's) d. Pakistan tour of England (Men's) e. The Hundred (Men's) f. The Hundred (Women's)



			g. Ireland tour of England (Women's) h. Sri Lanka tour of England (Men's)
4.	Media Rights Agreement between Asian Cricket Council and the Plaintiff dated 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2026	a. ACC Women's Asia Cup Tournament 2026 b. Men's Under 19 Asia Cup Tournament 2026 c. Asia Cup Men's Rising Stars 2026 d. Women's Under 19 Asia Cup 2026
5.	Media Rights Agreement between Sri Lanka Cricket and the Plaintiff dated 24 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	27 <sup>th</sup> May 2026	a. India Tour of Sri Lanka b. South Africa Tour of Sri Lanka
6.	Media Rights Agreement between Pitch International LLP and the Plaintiff dated 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2026	10 <sup>th</sup> June 2026	a. India Tour of Ireland

25. It is stated that by virtue of the aforesaid agreements, Plaintiff possesses the exclusive right to broadcast, communicate to the public, transmit, stream, make available, reproduce, distribute and otherwise commercially exploit the live and deferred coverage, match footage, event footage, highlights, clips and all related audio-visual content pertaining to the Sporting Events. Plaintiff has acquired the said rights for valuable consideration and has invested substantial resources towards the acquisition, protection, promotion, distribution and commercial exploitation thereof and any unauthorized hosting, streaming, retransmission, rebroadcasting, communication to the public, dissemination or making available of the broadcasts and related content pertaining to the Sporting Events would



constitute infringement of Plaintiff's exclusive rights under Section 37 of the Copyright Act, 1957 and cause grave and irreparable loss and injury to the Plaintiff.

26. It is stated that Defendants No.1 to 8, collectively referred to as 'Defendants Websites', are various websites engaged in making available to the public unauthorized and/or unlicensed third-party content and information through the internet and mobile transmission platforms and are infringing Plaintiff's exclusive copyright by unlawfully broadcasting Plaintiff's ongoing Events. Defendants No. 9 to 13 are Domain Name Registrars ('DNRs') and have been impleaded to ensure the effective implementation of any relief that this Court may grant in favour of Plaintiff, including locking/suspension of the domain names/accounts of such rogue websites and for disclosure of contact and account details of the registrants. Defendants No. 14 to 22 are Internet Service Providers ('ISPs') and have been impleaded to ensure the effective implementation of orders passed by this Court. Defendant No. 23/Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and Defendant No. 24/Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) have also been impleaded to ensure effective implementation of Court orders. Defendant No. 25 are other infringing websites and have been impleaded as John Doe as their identity, constitution etc. are unknown.

27. It is stated that Defendants' websites routinely upload, stream and make available Plaintiff's copyrighted broadcasts including matches and are *ex facie* infringing. These are evidently 'rogue' in nature inasmuch as: (i) their primary purpose is to transmit, stream, download, host, communicate and provide access to copyrighted broadcasts of the Plaintiff without any authorisation; (ii) they intentionally and systematically upload and disseminate vast volumes of infringing content, including, *inter alia*,



unauthorised broadcasts of Plaintiff's events; (iii) no verifiable contact information, identification details or ownership particulars are made available on their platforms and their domain names and interfaces are pseudonymous; and (iv) their functioning demonstrates a complete disregard for copyright, as they routinely facilitate access to content and/or broadcasts owned by the Plaintiff without obtaining any authorisation.

28. It is stated that Defendants' websites operate well-structured homepages that are systematically organised with clear categorization of content. Further, Defendants' websites have openly advertised and announced the availability of upcoming matches of the Event, thereby driving traffic to their infringing platforms. These actions are neither isolated nor inadvertent, but reflect a sustained pattern of unauthorised streaming, indexing and dissemination of copyrighted content, carried out with the clear objective of exploiting, *inter alia*, Plaintiff's copyrights. Conduct of these Defendants' websites squarely satisfies the indicia of 'rogue websites' as recognized by this Court in ***UTV Software Communication Ltd. and Others v. 1337X.To and Others, 2019 SCC OnLine Del 8002***. Accordingly, it is imperative that Defendants' websites are restrained by an *ex parte* ad interim order.

29. Learned counsel for the Plaintiff submits that Defendants' websites are habitual in hosting illegal and pirated content. Plaintiff holds broadcasting rights *inter alia* to reproduce, distribute and/or communicate to the public content under the Sporting Events. Plaintiff apprehends that looking at the past conduct of Defendants' websites, they will illegally and unlawfully communicate the upcoming matches of the Sporting Events also, amounting to infringement of Plaintiff's copyright, which it is entitled to protect. Additionally, broadcast content, including footage, commentary etc.,



is also required to be protected. Reliance is placed on the judgment of this Court in *Universal City Studios LLC. and Others v. Dotmovies Baby and Others, 2023 SCC OnLine Del 4955*, where Court granted injunction restraining the rogue websites from in any manner, streaming, reproducing, distributing and/or communicating to the public any copyrighted content of Plaintiffs therein, including future works. Relevant passages from the judgment are as follows:-

*“17. Any injunction granted by a Court of law ought to be effective in nature. The injunction ought to also not merely extend to content which is past content created prior to the filing of the suit but also to content which may be generated on a day-to-day basis by the Plaintiffs. In a usual case for copyright infringement, the Court firstly identifies the work, determines the Copyright of the Plaintiff in the said work, and thereafter grants an injunction. However, owing to the nature of the illegalities that rogue websites indulge in, there is a need to pass injunctions which are also dynamic qua the Plaintiffs as well, as it is seen that upon any film or series being released, they may be immediately uploaded on the rogue websites, causing severe and instant monetary loss. Copyright in future works comes into existence immediately upon the work being created, and Plaintiffs may not be able to approach the Court for each and every film or series that is produced in the future, to secure an injunction against piracy.*

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*19. As innovation in technology continues, remedies to be granted also ought to be calibrated by Courts. This is not to say that in every case, an injunction qua future works can be granted. Such grant of an injunction would depend on the fact situation that arises and is placed before the Court.*

*20. In the facts and circumstances as set out above, an ex parte ad interim injunction is granted restraining the Defendants, who are all rogue websites, from in any manner streaming, reproducing, distributing, making available to the public and/or communicating to the public any copyrighted content of the Plaintiffs including future works of the Plaintiffs, in which ownership of copyright is undisputed, through their websites identified in the suit or any mirror/redirect websites or alphanumeric variations thereof including those websites which are associated with the Defendants' websites either based on the name, branding, identity or even source of content. To keep pace with the dynamic nature of the infringement that is undertaken by hydra-headed websites, this Court has deemed it appropriate to issue this '**Dynamic+ injunction**' to protect copyrighted works as soon as they are created, to ensure that no irreparable loss is caused to the authors and owners of*



*copyrighted works, as there is an imminent possibility of works being uploaded on rogue websites or their newer versions immediately upon the films/shows/series etc. The Plaintiffs are permitted to implead any mirror/redirect/alphanumeric variations of the websites identified in the suit as Defendants Nos. 1 to 16 including those websites which are associated with the Defendants Nos. 1 to 16, either based on the name, branding, identity or even source of content, by filing an application for impleadment under Order I Rule 10 CPC in the event such websites merely provide new means of accessing the same primary infringing websites that have been enjoined. The Plaintiffs are at liberty to also file an appropriate application seeking protection qua their copyrighted works, including future works, if the need so arises. Upon filing such applications before the Registrar along with an affidavit with sufficient supporting evidence seeking extension of the injunction to such websites, to protect the content of the Plaintiffs, including future works, the injunction shall become operational against the said websites and qua such works. If there is any work in respect of which there is any dispute as to ownership of copyright, an application may be moved by the affected party before the Court, to seek clarification.”*

30. It is also urged that the websites in question are vehicles of infringement whose business model is designed to provide members of the public with access to copyrighted content without authorization and there is vast volume of content available on these websites and the infringing activities are systematic, organized and intentional. These Defendants’ Websites hide behind domain privacy services offered by various DNRs which enable a website owner to hide behind a veil and not disclose any contact details publicly. Consequently, it is extremely difficult if not impossible to contact the owners of these websites for ceasing the infringing activities.

31. Having heard learned counsel for the Plaintiff, I am of the view that Plaintiff has made out a *prima facie* case for grant of *ex parte* ad interim injunction. Balance of convenience lies in favour of the Plaintiff and against Defendants No. 1 to 8. The issue of rogue websites engaged in piracy of copyrighted content is posing a recurring threat and there is no gain saying that piracy must be curbed and needs to be dealt with a heavy hand. This



position is acknowledged and reaffirmed in several decisions of this Court, one of which is referred to above. There is a need for immediate relief in the present case considering that the India Tour of England (Women's) 2026 which commenced on 25<sup>th</sup> May and India Tour of England (Men's) 2026 which commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2026 are ongoing and will conclude in July, 2026. Delay in blocking access to Defendants' websites and/or any other rogue websites indulging in illegal and unlawful activities, would lead to an irreparable breach of Plaintiff's copyrights, as aforementioned, apart from revenue loss and cause irreparable damage and injury.

32. Accordingly, till the next date of hearing, Defendants No. 1 to 8 and/or any other person/entity acting on their behalf are restrained from communicating, hosting, streaming, screening, disseminating or making available for viewing/downloading without authorization, any part of Sporting Events, on any electronic or digital platform, in any manner whatsoever.

33. Defendants No. 9 to 13 i.e., DNRs are directed to block and suspend the following Domain Names of Defendants No. 1 to 8 forthwith, upon service of copy of this order by Plaintiff's counsel, as under:-

<b>Defendant No.</b>	<b>Rogue Websites</b>	<b>Defendant No.</b>	<b>Domain Name Registrars</b>
1.	cricfree.cyou	9.	Spaceship, Inc.
3.	topstream.pro		
2.	thegamesurf.com	11.	Internet Domain Service BS Corp
4.	crichd.top	10.	Name.com, Inc.
5.	cracksports.me	12.	Immaterialism Limited
7.	qatarstreams.me		
8.	vipstand.cc		



6.	mainstreams.io	13.	TLD Registrar Solutions Ltd.
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34. Defendants No. 9 to 13 shall file an affidavit in a sealed cover/password protected document disclosing the complete details of Defendants No. 1 to 8 as available with them, including e-mail addresses, mobile numbers, contact details and KYC details, within four weeks from today.

35. Defendants No. 14 to 22 i.e., ISPs/TSPs are directed to block Defendants No. 1 to 8's websites immediately upon service of copy of this order by Plaintiff's counsel.

36. Defendants No. 23 and 24 are directed to issue necessary directions to all ISPs for blocking/removing access to websites as specified in paragraph 33 above.

37. During the currency of Sporting Events, if any further websites are discovered by the Plaintiff, which are found to be unauthorizedly streaming and communicating contents over which Plaintiff has copyrights, Plaintiff will be at liberty to communicate the details of such websites to Defendants No.9 to 22 and on receiving intimation from the Plaintiff, Defendants No.9 to 22 shall take steps to immediately block the said websites and Defendants No. 23 and 24 shall issue necessary blocking orders immediately on receipt of details of these websites from the Plaintiff.

38. Plaintiff shall file affidavits from time to time furnishing details of newly discovered websites, their Domain Names, the DNRs and the URLs, in respect of which communication has been sent to the concerned entities and for which blocking orders are sought. Plaintiff shall also file appropriate applications for impleadment of the said websites.



39. If any website, which is not primarily an infringing website, is blocked/suspended pursuant to this order, it is at liberty to approach the Court for modification of the order, provided it gives an undertaking that it does not intend to illegally disseminate content over which Plaintiff has exclusive rights.

40. All Defendants in respect of whom directions have been issued above, shall file their respective compliance affidavits within six weeks from today.

41. Plaintiff shall comply with Order XXXIX Rule 3 of CPC within a period of one week from today.

**JYOTI SINGH, J**

**JULY 1, 2026/YA**