

LIGHTS, CAMERA & LAW

MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT LAWS UPDATES FEBRUARY, 2026



AUTHORS

RITISHA MUKHERJEE, PRINCIPAL ASSOCIATE

SHREYA DIVYANSHIKA KUMAR, ASSOCIATE

ANM GLOBAL

Advocates & Legal Consultants

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KERALA HC FILES PLEA TO HALT FILM ON VENJARAMOODU MASS MURDER, FINDS NO THREAT TO FAIR

The Kerala High Court expressed doubt over a petition filed by the father of an accused seeking to block the release and promotion of the Malayalam film *Kaalam Paranja Katha*, said to be inspired by the Venjaramoodu mass murder, claiming it could influence the ongoing trial. The court questioned how a film's artistic depiction could affect a fair hearing, noting that judicial decisions rely on evidence rather than creative interpretations, and observed there was no concrete proof that the movie's content mirrored the case or would obstruct justice. Stressing the need to balance creative freedom with the conduct of fair trials, the court signaled reluctance to grant interim relief, indicating that artistic expression alone does not warrant restrictions on cinematic releases. The CBFC has said the film has been referred to its Revising Committee, and the court is considering the legal arguments before deciding on any interim relief.

Access Link: [here](#), [here](#)

MUMBAI COURT CLEARS O' ROMEO FOR RELEASE, INTERIM PLEAS REJECTED

A Mumbai civil court has refused to grant interim relief against the release of O' Romeo, allowing the film to hit theatres as scheduled. The plea had been filed by the daughter of late gangster Hussain Ustara, who alleged that the film was based on her father's life and would cause reputational harm and emotional distress to the family. She sought an ad-interim injunction to restrain the producers from releasing or promoting the film. However, the court held that the petitioner had failed to establish a strong prima facie case warranting urgent relief. It observed that mere apprehension of defamation or reputational injury, without clear material demonstrating direct portrayal or identifiable references, was insufficient to justify a pre-release restraint. Emphasising the settled position that prior restraint on films must be granted sparingly, the court rejected the interim pleas and permitted the release to proceed, leaving the parties to contest their claims at a later stage if necessary.

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MADRAS HC ISSUED AN INTERIM ANTI-PIRACY ORDER PROTECTING O' ROMEO

The Madras High Court has granted an interim anti-piracy injunction in favour of the producers of O'Romeo, starring Shahid Kapoor, ahead of its scheduled theatrical release, restraining internet service providers, cable operators, satellite broadcasters, streaming platforms, and other intermediaries from unauthorized broadcasting, streaming, downloading, uploading, sharing, or otherwise disseminating the film in any form.

The court recognized the irreparable commercial harm that pre-release piracy could cause to the film and emphasized that the injunction was necessary to protect the producers' copyright and distribution rights. The order also accommodates safeguards such as indemnity undertakings from affected intermediaries to balance legitimate business interests while preventing unlawful exploitation of the film prior to its release. The decision underscores the judiciary's proactive approach to combating piracy and protecting intellectual property in the film industry.

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INDIA'S MUSIC INDUSTRY LAUNCHED SANGEET DWAR, A ONE-WINDOW PLATFORM FOR PUBLIC PERFORMANCE LICENSING

India's music industry has soft-launched Sangeet Dwar, a unified digital one-window platform aimed at simplifying public performance music licensing across the country. Developed through a joint initiative of key rights and licensing bodies including the Indian Performing Right Society (IPRS), Phonographic Performance Limited India (PPL India), Novex Communications, and Rajasthan Music Performance Limited (RMPL), the platform allows event organisers, venues, wedding planners, corporates, and institutions to obtain licenses for live and recorded music through a single online interface. By replacing the earlier fragmented process of approaching multiple agencies, Sangeet Dwar seeks to improve ease of compliance, enhance transparency in licensing, and strengthen royalty flows to singers, musicians, composers, writers, publishers, and sound recording owners. The initiative addresses long-standing concerns around widespread unlicensed public performances in India and reflects a broader push towards digital governance, ease of doing business, and the creation of a more structured, lawful, and sustainable public performance music ecosystem.

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HERA PHERI 3 FACES COPYRIGHT DISPUTE AMID SOUTH INDIAN PRODUCER'S CLAIM OVER FRANCHISE RIGHTS

Hera Pheri 3, the third instalment of the popular comedy franchise, has run into legal trouble over copyright ownership. A South Indian production company, Seven Arts International, has approached the Madras High Court, claiming that producer Firoz Nadiadwala, who produced the first two films and later sold the rights to Akshay Kumar's production house, Cape of Good Films, did not actually own the full rights to the franchise. Seven Arts alleges that Nadiadwala was authorised only to make the first Hindi remake of the Malayalam film Ramji Rao Speaking (1989), which became the first Hera Pheri (2000), and that he violated the original agreement by producing the sequel Phir Hera

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Pheri (2006) and transferring rights he did not legally hold. Seven Arts says it purchased the entire franchise rights in 2022 from the original Malayalam producers and intended to produce the next Hindi instalment, but discovered that Nadiadwala had already sold the rights to Akshay Kumar's company. The Madras High Court is now examining whether Hera Pheri 3 can proceed while ownership of the franchise is disputed. Meanwhile, Akshay Kumar's production house maintains that it acquired the rights in good faith, believing that Nadiadwala had full legal ownership. As a result, the future of Hera Pheri 3 remains uncertain until the court resolves the copyright dispute.

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ALLU ARJUN CALLS CLAIMS ABOUT '42 RULES' FOR BRAND MANAGER BASELESS, INITIATES LEGAL ACTION

Tollywood star Allu Arjun has rejected allegations that he imposed "42 rules" on his brand manager, calling them baseless and defamatory. The controversy began after social media posts by a former brand manager made various claims about his professional conduct, which sparked widespread public backlash. Arjun has now initiated legal action against the individual, asserting that the statements are false and damaging to his reputation. He has demanded a public apology and appropriate legal consequences, maintaining that his professional relationships have always been based on mutual respect and lawful terms. The matter is expected to proceed through the courts.

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SUPREME COURT WARNS WHATSAPP OF BAN OVER DATA-SHARING, UPHOLDING RIGHT TO PRIVACY

The Supreme Court of India has issued a stern warning to WhatsApp, cautioning that the messaging platform could face a ban if it continues to share users' personal data with Meta and other third parties. The bench stressed that safeguarding citizens' privacy is paramount and made it clear that any violation of data protection rights would attract severe consequences, including potential prohibition of the app's operations in the country. The order underscores the judiciary's commitment to upholding privacy rights amid growing concerns over digital data misuse.

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DELHI HIGH COURT UPHOLDS VIVEK OBEROI'S PERSONALITY RIGHTS, GRANTS INJUNCTION AGAINST UNAUTHORISED USE

The Delhi High Court has provided interim legal protection to Bollywood actor Vivek Oberoi in a case

concerning his personality rights, issuing an ex-parte ad-interim and "John Doe" injunction against both known and unknown defendants. The order prevents anyone from using his name, image, voice, or likeness for commercial purposes, or from publishing, reproducing, adapting, or distributing it on social media, websites, or through AI-generated content. It also allows Oberoi to request the rapid removal of any infringing material, highlighting the court's recognition of personal identity and publicity rights in the digital age.

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ACTOR KUNAL KAMRA AND SENIOR ADVOCATE HARESH JAGTIANI CHALLENGE THE SAHYOG PORTAL IN THE BOMBAY HIGH COURT

Stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra and senior lawyer Hareesh Jagtiani have approached the Bombay High Court to challenge the government's Sahyog portal, a digital platform used to issue orders to block or take down content on platforms like X, YouTube, and Meta. They are also challenging Rule 3(1)(d) of the amended IT Rules, which allows the government to operate the portal. The petitioners argue that the portal lets the government remove content without giving notice or a chance to respond, which they say violates freedom of speech. They claim the portal goes beyond the powers granted under the Information Technology Act, allowing arbitrary takedowns, and therefore undermines democratic and constitutional rights.

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JAMMU & KASHMIR HIGH COURT STAYS DEFAMATION PROCEEDINGS AGAINST 'ARTICLE 370' FILMMAKERS OVER PROCEDURAL LAPSE

The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has stayed further proceedings in a criminal defamation case filed against the makers of the film Article 370. The complaint alleged that certain scenes and portrayals in the film were defamatory and misrepresented facts relating to individuals and events connected with the abrogation of Article 370. While issuing notice and seeking responses from the concerned parties, the High Court granted interim relief by putting the lower court proceedings on hold. The stay means that no coercive steps will be taken against the filmmakers until the High Court examines the legality and merits of the defamation complaint in greater detail.

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SUPREME COURT DISPOSES PLEA AGAINST 'GHOOSKHOR PANDAT' AFTER TITLE WITHDRAWN

The controversy over filmmaker Neeraj Pandey's upcoming Netflix film originally titled Ghoskhor

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Pandat, starring Manoj Bajpayee along with Nushrat Bharuccha, Saqib Saleem, Akshay Oberoi and Divya Dutta, has ended after the Supreme Court of India disposed of a petition challenging the film's title. The title drew objections from sections of the Brahmin community for combining the caste-identifying term "Pandat" with "Ghooskhor" (bribe-taker), allegedly promoting defamatory and caste-based stereotyping; protests, including effigy burning, were reported, an FIR was filed, and industry body FWICE raised objections, with some seeking a title change or a stay on release. A PIL filed by Atul Mishra, National Organisation Secretary of the Brahman Samaj of India, contended that the title and storyline were prima facie offensive, hurt religious sentiments, threatened public order and communal harmony, and undermined constitutional values. On February 12, 2026, a Bench of Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan observed that the title appeared to denigrate a section of society and said the film could not be released unless renamed, directing Pandey to file an affidavit assuring it does not offend any community; notices were issued to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), and the matter was listed for February 19. Pandey maintained the film is a fictional police drama and that "Pandat" was merely a character nickname without intent to insult any caste or religion, while Bajpayee said he respects the sentiments of those hurt and clarified the story does not target any group; the makers also temporarily withdrew promotional material. Subsequently, Pandey informed the Court through an affidavit that the controversial title and all related publicity had been withdrawn and would not be used in any form, and that the new title, yet to be finalised, would not be similar to or evocative of the earlier name; accepting this undertaking, the Court disposed of the plea, bringing the matter to a close.

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RANVEER SINGH REPORTEDLY EXITS DON 3; EXCEL ENTERTAINMENT SEEKS RS 40 CRORE COMPENSATION

After the success of Dhurandhar, reports surfaced that Ranveer Singh has exited Don 3, directed by Farhan Akhtar, allegedly due to creative differences, where the report claims that Akhtar's production house, Excel Entertainment, is seeking Rs 40 crore in compensation from Ranveer, attributing financial losses and recent downsizing within the company to his departure. However, Ranveer has reportedly contested the claim, stating that he is not obligated to pay any compensation. It is also being reported that the Producers Guild of India may step in as the dispute unfolds.

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GOVERNMENT NOTIFIES INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (INTERMEDIARY GUIDELINES AND DIGITAL MEDIA ETHICS CODE) AMENDMENT RULES, 2026, TO REGULATE AI-GENERATED CONTENT

On February 10, 2026, the Central Government notified the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules, 2026, formally bringing AI-generated content under regulation for the first time. Issued as G.S.R. 120(E) and signed by MeitY Joint Secretary Ajit Kumar, the amendments to the 2021 IT Rules were introduced by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), which came into effect from February 20, 2026. The rules define "synthetically generated information" (SGI) as audio, visual, or audio-visual content artificially or algorithmically created, modified, or altered using computer resources that appears real or authentic and could be mistaken as genuine, thereby covering deepfakes, AI-generated voiceovers, and manipulated media; however, routine edits are exempt. The amendments go beyond defining SGI and impose stricter compliance obligations on intermediaries, including mandatory labelling and disclosure of AI-generated content, preservation of metadata, restrictions on tampering with identifiers, adoption of technical measures to prevent unlawful AI content, and a requirement to take down illegal content within three hours of gaining knowledge of it. Significant social media intermediaries and online gaming intermediaries must obtain user declarations, verify them, and ensure AI-generated content is labelled before publication, failing which they may lose due diligence protection under the law.

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MUMBAI COURT RESTRAINS YOUTUBER CARRY MINATI FROM POSTING DEFAMATORY CONTENT AGAINST FILMMAKER KARAN JOHAR

A Mumbai civil court has restrained popular YouTuber Ajey Nagar, known online as Carry Minati, from publishing or circulating any content deemed "defamatory, vulgar, or abusive" against filmmaker Karan Johar. The order was issued by Civil Judge P. G. Bhosale in response to a suit filed by Johar, who argued that certain videos shared on social media were intended to mock him and damage his reputation and professional goodwill built over decades in the film industry. In addition to restraining Nagar from posting such content, the court also directed social media platforms to remove the objectionable material. The case highlights the growing legal scrutiny around online content creation and reinforces that digital creators can face civil action if their content is found to harm an individual's reputation.

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Despite submissions that the material had already been deleted, the Court held that prima facie defamatory statements had been made and granted a temporary injunction. The matter is scheduled for further hearing at a later date.

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SUPREME COURT DIRECTS AR RAHMAN TO ACKNOWLEDGE USTAD DAGAR IN 'VEERA RAJA VEERA' COPYRIGHT CASE

New Delhi, February 13, 2026: The Supreme Court of India has observed that acclaimed music composer AR Rahman should provide due acknowledgment to Ustad Faiyaz Wasifuddin Dagar in relation to the song Veera Raja Veera from the film Ponniyin Selvan II. The top court noted that while Ustad Dagar has made a prima facie case regarding the originality of his composition, the aspect of authorship requires detailed examination. The matter pertains to a copyright dispute filed by Ustad Dagar, who alleged that certain elements of his Dhrupad composition were incorporated into Rahman's song without proper credit. While the Court did not make a final determination on the issue of ownership, it stressed the importance of acknowledging original creators when works inspire or influence new compositions, highlighting the broader principle of respecting intellectual property rights and cultural contributions. A Bench of the Supreme Court has thus directed Rahman to ensure proper acknowledgment is given to Ustad Dagar in the song credits, pending further examination of authorship. This case underscores the growing attention of Indian courts to copyright issues in music, particularly where traditional and classical art forms intersect with contemporary compositions.

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YASH'S 'TOXIC' TEASER SPARKS FRESH CONTROVERSY; CHRISTIAN GROUP DEMANDS REMOVAL OF SCENES

The teaser for actor Yash's upcoming film 'Toxic: A Fairytale For Grown-Ups' has come under renewed scrutiny following a formal complaint by the National Christian Federation. The organization has raised concerns that the teaser depicts Saint Michael the Archangel in a disrespectful manner and contains objectionable and obscene visuals, particularly in scenes featuring angels. The group, led by president Pradeep Kumar, has demanded the removal of these contentious scenes from the film and online platforms, including YouTube. They have also called for a public apology from the film's makers, warning that they may pursue legal action if their demands are not met. This is not the first complaint against the film. In January 2026, a political party's women's wing had lodged a complaint with the Karnataka State Women's Commission, citing

"obscene visuals" in the teaser that could potentially influence minors negatively. 'Toxic' is directed by Geethu Mohandas, a noted Malayalee filmmaker, and the film now faces mounting pressure from multiple groups over its teaser content. The controversy highlights the ongoing tension between creative freedom and community sensitivities in Indian cinema.

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BIG BOSS 19 MAKERS FACE LEGAL ACTION OVER UNAUTHORISED USE OF SONGS

In February 2026, the producers of Bigg Boss 19, backed by Endemol Shine India and Banijay, faced renewed legal action from Phonographic Performance Limited after a criminal complaint was filed with the Santacruz police alleging unauthorised use of copyrighted songs at the show's success party held on 12 December 2025, with PPL seeking registration of an FIR under relevant provisions of the Copyright Act, 1957 for reportedly playing multiple tracks without a performance licence. This follow-up development comes months after PPL in September 2025 issued a legal notice to the makers demanding ₹2 crore in damages and licence fees over alleged unauthorised use of popular Bollywood songs such as "Chikni Chameli" and "Dhat Teri Ki" in an episode of the Salman Khan-hosted reality show, highlighting ongoing concerns over music rights compliance in television programming.

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'PARASAKTHI' MADRAS HIGH COURT REFUSES TO BLOCK OTT RELEASE, FILM STREAMS ONLINE

The Madras High Court refused to stay or block the OTT release of Sivakarthykeyan's much-anticipated political drama Parasakthi, allowing the film to be released digitally despite ongoing legal challenges. Parasakthi, directed by Sudha Kongara, faced a plagiarism allegation from an associate director who claimed that the makers copied his registered story titled Semmozhi without permission and sought an interim stay on the film's streaming. The High Court, however, declined to restrain the film's release and instead demanded a response from the filmmakers and the Film Writers' Association, permitting the OTT rollout to proceed. Following the ruling, the film's OTT release date was confirmed: Parasakthi began streaming on ZEE5 from February 7, 2026, less than a month after its theatrical debut on January 10, 2026. The movie, which has a political and historical theme set around the anti-Hindi agitations of the 1960s, garnered mixed reviews at the box office but continued to draw attention online upon its digital release. The High Court's refusal to block the film underscores the judiciary's reluctance to impose pre-emptive censorship on OTT platforms when the

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merits of copyright or story ownership disputes are yet to be fully determined. The underlying plagiarism suit is still pending, and further hearings on the matter are expected as the legal process continues.

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DELHI HC RESTRAINS ILAIYARAAJA FROM EXPLOITING SAREGAMA COPYRIGHTED WORKS

The Delhi High Court has passed an interim order restraining noted composer Ilaiyaraaja from exploiting copyrighted works claimed by Saregama India Limited in 134 films dating back to 1976. The order was issued by Justice Tushar Rao Gedela while hearing a commercial suit filed by Saregama on February 13, 2026, with the Court observing that a prima facie strong case had been made out in favour of the company. Saregama informed the Court that between 1976 and 2001, it had entered into assignment agreements with film producers, thereby acquiring ownership of the sound recordings as well as the underlying musical and literary works of the songs. The dispute arose after Ilaiyaraaja issued a legal notice on January 13, 2026, claiming rights over the compositions and allegedly uploading the works on platforms such as Amazon Music, iTunes, and JioSaavn. Relying on a previous ruling of the Supreme Court of India that the film producer is the first owner of copyright in the absence of a contract to the contrary, the Court held that failure to grant an injunction could cause irreparable loss to Saregama. Accordingly, Ilaiyaraaja, his agents and representatives have been restrained from exploiting or licensing the works forming part of the 134 films listed in the company's plea.

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DELHI HIGH COURT RESTRAINS DEEPIKA PADUKONE'S BRAND FROM USING THE LOTUS SPLASH MARK FOR ITS FACE CLEANSER

The Delhi High Court has granted an interim injunction in favour of Lotus Herbals Private Limited, restraining Deepika Padukone's company, DPKA Universal Consumer Ventures, from using the mark "Lotus Splash" for its face cleanser sold under her self-care brand 82°E. A Division Bench comprising Justices V. Kameswar Rao and Vinod Kumar held that a prima facie case of trademark infringement was made out, observing that the "Lotus Splash" mark was deceptively similar to Lotus Herbals' registered "Lotus" trademark. The Bench set aside the earlier single-judge order dated January 25, 2024, which had refused to grant an injunction, and allowed the application under Order 39 Rules 1 and 2 of the Civil Procedure Code. The Court further rejected DPKA's contention that its use was protected under Section 30(2)(a) of the Trade Marks Act, which permits descriptive use, and concluded that the defendants are

restrained from using the impugned mark pending final adjudication of the suit.

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KAJOL SECURES INTERIM PROTECTION FROM THE DELHI HIGH COURT IN A PERSONALITY RIGHTS CASE

The Delhi High Court has granted interim protection to actress Kajol in a personality rights case, passing an ad-interim injunction to safeguard her personality and publicity rights by restraining various defendants from unauthorised commercial use of her name, image, voice or likeness, including selling merchandise or exploiting her identity without consent, and directing the removal of obscene, pornographic and objectionable content published online in her name. Justice Jyoti Singh observed that Kajol had made out a prima facie case for protection against misuse of her personal attributes, including the potential misuse of her identity through artificial intelligence and deepfake technology, and indicated that further detailed orders would be passed to curb such exploitation on digital platforms.

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KERALA HC ISSUES NOTICE TO PRODUCERS OF KERALA STORY 2 AMID PETITION CHALLENGING ITS CENSOR CERTIFICATE

The highly controversial film The Kerala Story, which was released on February 27, 2026, had faced legal challenges and attracted political criticism., The Kerala High Court had issued notices to the producers following a writ petition filed by Sreedev Namboodiri, challenging the certification granted by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). The petition alleged that the film's promotional material depicted women from several states being lured into relationships and coerced into religious conversion while repeatedly linking such incidents to Kerala, and argued that the teaser line, "Ab sahenge nahin...ladenge (We will not tolerate it anymore... we will fight)," could incite communal tension. The petitioner also contended that the CBFC had failed to apply statutory safeguards under Section 5B of the Cinematograph Act, 1952, which prohibits certification of films likely to threaten public order, morality, or decency—echoing the controversies surrounding the first instalment, The Kerala Story, in 2023. Notices were sent to the CBFC and the film's producers, Sunshine Pictures, and the matter had been scheduled for hearing on February 24, 2026. The sequel, written by Amarnath Jha and Vipul Amrutlal Shah and directed by Kamakhya Narayan Singh, also drew criticism from politicians, with Pinarayi Vijayan raising concerns over potential communal discord. After facing legal challenges before its release, The Kerala Story 2 was cleared by the Kerala High Court on 28th of February, which lifted a

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temporary stay just before the film was scheduled to hit theatres. Despite the court's clearance, the film opened to very small audiences across Kerala, with advance bookings showing low turnout and some shows being canceled due to lack of ticket sales. The muted opening came amid ongoing protests, including demonstrations by the Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI) outside several theatres, reflecting continued public sensitivity and opposition to the film's content. The subdued response at the box office indicated that the controversy surrounding the film did not translate into strong viewer interest in the state on opening day.

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BOMBAY HIGH COURT GRANTS INTERIM PROTECTION TO SHATRUGHAN SINHA AGAINST UNAUTHORISED EXPLOITATION OF PERSONALITY RIGHTS

The Bombay High Court has granted ad-interim protection to veteran actor and politician Shatrughan Sinha, restraining the unauthorised use of his personality and publicity rights, including his iconic dialogue "Khamosh", across digital platforms, social media, e-commerce sites, and AI-generated content. In the interim order passed on February 16, the Bench led by Justice Sharmila Deshmukh observed that "Khamosh" is exclusively linked to Sinha's persona and that its unauthorised use, along with his name, image, voice, and likeness, in merchandise, GIFs, memes, fake endorsements, and pornographic material prima facie infringes his rights, dilutes his image, and violates his privacy. His counsel, Hiren Kamod, explained that the injunction specifically targets commercial exploitation while allowing comedians or performers to mimic him for non-commercial purposes. The ruling highlights the growing threat of digital and AI-based misuse of celebrity identities and reinforces the legal principle that personality traits can be protected like trademarks, following similar cases Kamod handled for singers Arijit Singh and Sonu Nigam, where courts restrained unauthorised voice replication, online concerts, and misuse of names to prevent commercial gain and public confusion. The matter has been listed for further hearing on March 30.

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INDIA AI SUMMIT: ARCHAIC COPYRIGHT LAWS IN THE AI AGE ARE HURTING CONTENT CREATORS, SAYS AAP MP RAGHAV CHADHA

At the India AI Summit, AAP MP Raghav Chadha highlighted that India's copyright laws are outdated and need urgent reform to support content creators in the AI age. He called for clear, fair-use provisions to balance creator rights with innovation and warned that overly restrictive policies could hinder India's growing digital-creator and AI ecosystem. Chadha also stressed the

need for calibrated AI regulation to address risks such as deepfakes, misinformation, and cybersecurity threats without stifling innovation, and urged India to strengthen compute capacity, semiconductor manufacturing, and AI design ecosystems to convert its talent advantage into technological leadership while ensuring broad access to AI tools.

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AI FOR ALL: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE INDIA AI IMPACT AI SUMMIT 2026

At The India-AI Impact Summit 2026, inaugurated on 16 February 2026 at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi under the theme "Welfare for All, Happiness of All," saw participation from over 20 Heads of State, 60 Ministers, and 500 global AI leaders, highlighting India's commitment to responsible, inclusive and development-oriented artificial intelligence. Anchored on the foundational pillars of People, Planet, and Progress, the summit, the first of its kind hosted by a Global South nation, brought together policymakers, technology innovators, academia, and industry to translate global AI deliberations into actionable outcomes aligned with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. It showcased how AI is powering solutions across healthcare, agriculture, education, finance, governance, and public services, and included flagship programmes such as AI for ALL, AI by HER, and YUVAi aimed at scalable impact, women-led innovation, and youth-focused AI solutions, while positioning India as a global hub for ethical and inclusive AI deployment

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MEITY INTRODUCES BLOCKCHAIN INDIA CHALLENGE TO ACCELERATE DIGITAL GOVERNANCE INNOVATION

The Press Information Bureau release explains the progress and impact of the Government of India's digital consumer grievance redressal mechanisms, particularly the e-Jagriti platform and the upgraded National Consumer Helpline (NCH 2.0). The e-Jagriti platform has strengthened consumer access to justice by offering a multilingual, accessible interface integrated with secure payment gateways such as Bharat Kosh and PayGov, ensuring efficient and user-friendly processes. It highlights a case from West Tripura where a consumer received relief after eight years of grievance regarding a defective refrigerator, with the Commission ordering a full refund with 7.5% annual interest, along with compensation for repair expenses, mental agony, and litigation costs, totalling over ₹1.67 lakh to be paid within 30 days. As of mid-November 2025, the platform facilitated filing of over 1.35 lakh cases and disposal of more than 1.31 lakh cases, with 2.81 lakh registered users including NRIs, and showed improved disposal efficiency in 2025 compared to 2024. The upgraded AI-enabled

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NCH 2.0 provides multilingual and chatbot-supported assistance, has significantly increased call volumes and complaint registrations over the years, resolves over 12 lakh complaints annually many within 21 days and between April 25 and October 31, 2025, secured ₹27.61 crore in refunds across 30 sectors, demonstrating enhanced consumer protection and faster grievance redressal through technology-driven systems.

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DELHI HIGH COURT PROTECTS BABA RAMDEV'S PERSONALITY RIGHTS AGAINST UNAUTHORIZED USE IN AI AND DIGITAL MEDIA

The Delhi High Court has issued an interim order to protect the personality rights of yoga guru Baba Ramdev by restraining the unauthorised use of his name, image, voice, and other identifiable personality attributes across digital platforms, including in AI-generated content and deepfakes, after he filed a suit against unknown persons and entities. Justice Jyoti Singh ruled that until the next hearing, no one including unidentified "John Doe" defendants may use or exploit his name ("Ramdev", "Swami Ramdev", "Baba Ramdev", "Yog Guru Ramdev" and variations), voice, image, likeness, unique style of discourse or other personal attributes for any commercial or personal purpose without his consent, and directed e-commerce and social media intermediaries such as Google, Meta and X to take down specified URLs infringing these rights within 72 hours.

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KARNATAKA HC CRITICISES RANVEER SINGH BUT GRANTS INTERIM RELIEF IN KANTARA REMARK CASE

The Karnataka High Court reprimanded actor Ranveer Singh over his public remarks about a deity featured in the film Kantara, stating that "no superstar is above the law" and warning that such comments could hurt public sentiment. The remarks had sparked objections from petitioners who claimed they were offensive and disrespectful toward religious beliefs connected with the movie's thematic elements. While the court acknowledged the seriousness of the concerns, it granted interim relief to Ranveer Singh by refusing to take immediate coercive action against him, noting that freedom of expression must be balanced with respect for cultural sensitivities. The case will continue for further hearing.

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DELHI HIGH COURT BARS GROUNDLESS COPYRIGHT THREATS AGAINST TV9 OVER YOUTUBE NEWS VIDEOS

The Delhi High Court has held that several news clips

uploaded by TV9 Network on its YouTube channels covering events like Hurricane Laura, heavy snowfall and floods, the Israel-Hamas conflict, and the 2023 Chinese balloon incident do not infringe third-party copyright because they only used brief portions of footage within a larger news narrative, which falls under "fair dealing" for reporting current events under Section 52(1)(a)(iii) of the Copyright Act, 1957. The court, in a February 28, 2026 judgment by Justice Tejas Karia, restrained four foreign entities that had issued multiple copyright strike notices against TV9 including a US media brokering company, an entity linked to videographer Brandon Clement, and an Ankara-based news service from issuing any further groundless copyright threats, declaring that the disputed videos and their use of the footage do not constitute infringement. The order also noted that Google LLC and Google India were not pressed for relief since they acted only as intermediaries, and the suit was accordingly disposed of against them.

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DELHI HIGH COURT RESTRAINS SALE OF COUNTERFEIT LEXISNEXIS TEXTBOOKS

The Delhi High Court had issued an order restraining the sale and distribution of unauthorised counterfeit copies of law textbooks published by LexisNexis after the publisher approached the court alleging that fake editions of key legal commentaries including books on the Contract and Specific Relief Acts, Interpretation of Statutes, and the Code of Civil Procedure were being sold in the market, often with inferior printing and misleading holograms, causing harm to both its reputation and students and professionals who rely on genuine texts; Justice Jyoti Singh granted interim relief against the defendants such as Parth Law House and unnamed others, effectively blocking them from making, distributing or selling these counterfeit textbooks while the suit proceeds, noting that such activities amounted to trademark and copyright infringement and could irreparably damage the publisher's rights and public interest.

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JAMMU COURT ISSUES INJUNCTION AGAINST ILLEGAL BROADCAST OF JIOSTAR CONTENT BY CABLE OPERATORS

A district court in Jammu and Kashmir has restrained 18 cable operators from unauthorized rebroadcasting of television shows and live sports content owned by JioStar India Private Limited after finding prima facie evidence that they were illegally downlinking and retransmitting the company's channels without valid authorization. JioStar informed the court that it holds exclusive distribution and broadcast rights for over 100 channels across languages, including rights to major sporting events, and that certain operators continued to air its content despite the expiry of subscription agreements,

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allegedly violating the Copyright Act, 1957, and the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995. Taking note of video recordings and other material placed on record, the Principal District Judge granted an interim injunction restraining the operators from retransmitting, communicating or distributing JioStar's content until the next date of hearing, which is scheduled for March 12.

Access Link: [here](#)

SUPREME COURT PUTS COPYRIGHT DISPUTE OVER CLASSIC FILM MUSIC ON HOLD

The Supreme Court of India has stayed the Madras High Court order in a long-running copyright dispute involving the music rights of seven South Indian films, including classics like Salangai Oli, Saagara Sangamam, Sankara Bharanam, Seetha Kokila Chiluka, Sithara, Saagara Sangamam (Malayalam), and Thayaramma Bangariah, effectively putting on hold further proceedings on a revived injunction claim against Saregama India Limited brought by Sreedevi Video Corporation. The dispute centres on conflicting claims of ownership over the audio copyrights in the sound recordings of these films, with Sreedevi originally asserting title based on 2008 assignment agreements and seeking to block Saregama from exploiting the recordings, while Saregama contends it acquired rights decades earlier through earlier agreements and has repeatedly asserted its ownership and usage rights. A Bench led by Justices B R Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan stayed the High Court's November 2025 order that had allowed the injunction claim to proceed; the matter is now slated for further hearing in April 2026 as the top court examines the legal issues raised.

Access Link: [here](#)

DELHI HIGH COURT PROTECTS JUBIN NAUTIYAL'S PERSONALITY AND PUBLICITY RIGHTS AGAINST UNAUTHORISED COMMERCIAL USE

The Delhi High Court on February 19, 2026, passed a significant interim order protecting the personality and publicity rights of singer Jubin Nautiyal in a commercial suit titled Jubin Nautiyal v. Jammable Limited & Ors., after he approached the court alleging widespread unauthorised exploitation of his identity. Nautiyal claimed that several artificial intelligence platforms, online intermediaries, e-commerce websites, and unidentified entities were using his name, voice, and vocal style, manner of singing, image, likeness, signature, and other distinctive traits to create AI-generated content, digital avatars, deepfakes, voice-cloning models, chatbots, and merchandise without his consent for commercial gain. The court, recognising his well-known and widely accepted public persona and noting that failure to grant relief could cause irreparable harm to his reputation that could not be adequately compensated in

monetary terms, granted an ex-parte ad-interim injunction in his favour. It restrained the defendants and all persons acting on their behalf from creating, publishing or disseminating any infringing content or exploiting his personality attributes across any medium for commercial or personal benefit, including through AI tools, deepfakes, face-morphing, synthesised voices or merchandise, and directed certain intermediaries and e-commerce platforms to take down or block access to identified infringing material and provide details of responsible entities. The matter has been listed for further proceedings later in the year, and the order builds on a broader trend of Indian courts protecting celebrity personality rights amid the rise of digital misuse and AI-based impersonation.

Access Link: [here](#), [here](#)

INTERNATIONAL

BYTE DANCE PULLS AI VIDEO APP FOLLOWING LEGAL THREAT FROM DISNEY

Major Hollywood studios, led by The Walt Disney Company, have sent cease-and-desist letters to China-based ByteDance over its new AI video generator, Seedance 2.0, alleging that it uses a “pirated library” of copyrighted characters and content without permission to train and power the tool, effectively creating derivative videos featuring iconic figures like *Spider-Man* and *Star Wars* characters and generating viral clips such as an AI-created fight between Brad Pitt and Tom Cruise. In response to the legal threats from Disney and other studios, ByteDance issued a statement saying it respects intellectual property rights and is implementing stronger safeguards on Seedance to prevent the unauthorised use of copyrighted material and likenesses by users, though it has not detailed specific measures, while industry pressure continues to mount amid broader concerns over AI-generated content and copyright infringement.

Access Link: [here](#), [here](#)

NETFLIX WALKS AWAY FROM WARNER BROS DEAL, CLEARING PATH FOR PARAMOUNT VICTORY

Netflix has officially dropped its bid to acquire Warner Bros. Discovery, deciding not to increase its offer after the Warner Bros board determined that a revised bid from Paramount Skydance valued at about \$31 per share was a “superior proposal” under the terms of Netflix’s existing merger agreement. Netflix co-chief executives Ted Sarandos and Greg Peters said that matching Paramount’s latest offer would no longer be financially attractive, and thus the streaming giant chose to withdraw from the deal, ending its pursuit of Warner Bros’ iconic studios and streaming assets. With Netflix out of the race, the path is now clear for Paramount Skydance to potentially acquire Warner Bros Discovery, reshaping the landscape of Hollywood media assets, though regulatory and shareholder approvals are still required.

Access Link: [here](#)

FIRM HIGHLIGHTS



ANM Global is pleased to have advised STARS N STRIPES, the producer of the series, providing comprehensive legal support in relation to the lead artist engagements for the digital series. Our scope of work included drafting, negotiating, and executing the lead artist agreements for the series.

ANM Global is pleased to have advised Kaustav Dreamworks Private Limited, providing comprehensive legal support in relation to the digital licensing of the film. Our scope of work included drafting, negotiating, and executing the agreement for exploitation of the film on the AAO NXT platform.



FIRM HIGHLIGHTS



Advocates & Legal Consultants

QUOTED BY THE MINT - "IS BUDGET PUSH TO DEVELOP ANIMATION, VFX, GAMING TALENT IN AI ERA PRAGMATIC?"



"The rapid integration of AI into these segments is already raising complex copyright and contractual questions. In this context, talent development, backed by the ₹250 crore budget 2026 allocation, cannot be limited to technical upskilling alone. Creators and studios must be trained in IP provenance, licensing awareness, and safeguards against the unauthorized use of copyrighted works."

ANUSHREE RAUTA
EQUITY PARTNER
(HEAD OF MEDIA, ENTERTAINMENT & GAMING PRACTICE)

contact@anmglobal.net Mumbai | New Delhi | Bengaluru | Chennai https://anmglobal.net

Anushree Rauta, Equity Partner and Head – Media, Entertainment & Gaming Practice, shares her perspective with Mint on the evolving copyright and contractual considerations emerging from AI integration.

Anushree Rauta, Equity Partner & Head – Media, Entertainment & Gaming at ANM Global, quoted by The Economic Times on the accelerating M&A activity in India's content ecosystem.



Advocates & Legal Consultants

**QUOTED BY THE ECONOMIC TIMES :
"FILM STUDIOS SEE M&A WAVE AS RELIANCE PICKS UP STAKE IN GUNEET MONGA'S SIKHYA ENTERTAINMENT"**



"Equity participation allows for deeper control over content strategy, rights exploitation and global monetisation. We are likely to see more studio, platform and music label-led strategic equity partnerships as companies move upstream to secure proven creative pipelines

Such transactions require nuanced governance, particularly around multi-layered IP ownership, greenlighting authority, creative control and future exit rights. The acquisition of a majority stake also marks a shift from transaction-led content deals to long-term strategic ownership."

ANUSHREE RAUTA
EQUITY PARTNER
(HEAD OF MEDIA, ENTERTAINMENT & GAMING PRACTICE)

contact@anmglobal.net Mumbai | New Delhi | Bengaluru | Chennai https://anmglobal.net

FIRM HIGHLIGHTS



Advocates & Legal Consultants

More movies in the making, but fewer screens to go around

“ This consolidation is likely to bolster output across segments, including niche, non-mainstream and small-to-mid budget films, particularly for boutique producers such as Sikhya, whose strength lies in story-driven cinema that often struggles to independently crack pre-sale or platform-led deals.

India continues to face a structural deficit in cinema screens, uneven regional distribution infrastructure, and a sharply narrowing theatrical window for films without established star casts.

On the digital side, platforms are becoming more cautious and increasingly tying acquisitions to performance metrics. Large studios, with slate-based deals that bundle smaller films with marquee titles, are better positioned in this environment, pressurising independent producers and acquisition prices.

”

Ms. Anushree Rauta
Equity Partner
(Head of Media, Entertainment & Gaming Practice)

Ms. Anushree Rauta, Equity Partner & Head – Media, Entertainment & Gaming Practice, shares her perspective with Mint.

Ms. Anushree Rauta, Equity Partner & Head – Media, Entertainment & Gaming Practice quoted in The Economic Times in the article, “Streamers Now Shoot for Satellite Rights to Step Up Play.”



Advocates & Legal Consultants

QUOTED BY THE ECONOMIC TIMES - “STREAMERS NOW SHOOT FOR SATELLITE RIGHTS TO STEP UP PLAY”



“For pure-play streaming platforms, acquiring linear rights is a defensive masterstroke. By ‘ring-fencing’ content, these platforms can effectively limit competition with linear television to preserve digital exclusivity and drive subscriber growth.”

ANUSHREE RAUTA
EQUITY PARTNER
(HEAD OF MEDIA, ENTERTAINMENT & GAMING PRACTICE)

contact@anmglobal.net Mumbai | New Delhi | Bengaluru | Chennai <https://anmglobal.net>

FIRM HIGHLIGHTS

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Asian Legal Business

ALB INDIA TOP IP LAWYERS 2026

RAHUL DHOTE
EQUITY PARTNER AND HEAD :
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
PRACTICE



Rahul Dhote, Equity Partner and Head – Intellectual Property Practice at ANM Global, has been recognised in the Asian Legal Business - India Top IP Lawyers 2026 list.

ANM Global advised Clout Pocket Aces on the negotiation and execution of Artist Agreements for Viraj Ghelani and Sandeepa Dhar in connection with the film Do Deewane Seher Mein.



FIRM HIGHLIGHTS



ANM Global hosted the IBC & Banking Forum: Regulation, Resolution & Reform in Mumbai, bringing together senior professionals from the banking, financial services, insolvency, restructuring, and legal ecosystem for a thoughtful exchange of perspectives.



FIRM HIGHLIGHTS



ANM ThinkPod

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contact@anmglobal.net



[ANM Global](#)



[+91 22 2287 3499](tel:+912222873499); [+91 22 4971 1084](tel:+912249711084)

OFFICES

MUMBAI

1. 7, floor 2nd, Nagin Mahal, Plot-82, Veer Nariman Road, Churchgate, Mumbai 400020.
Ph: [022-2287 3499](tel:022-22873499)
2. 411/413, Dilkap Chambers, Off. Veera Desai Road, Fun Republic Lane, Andheri West, Mumbai - 400053
Ph: [022-4971 1084](tel:022-49711084)

NEW DELHI

E-5, 2nd floor
Defence Colony
Delhi -110024
Ph: [011-4054 1860](tel:011-40541860)

BENGALURU

21/2, 1st Main Road, Opp Indian Overseas Bank, Gandhinagar, Bengaluru - 560009
Ph: [080-2350 9909](tel:080-23509909)

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