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

+ **CS(COMM) 1094/2024 & I.A. 47492/2024**

STAR INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED

.....Plaintiff

Through: Mr. Priyansh Kohli, Ms. Ishi Singh,
Mr. Manish Singh and Mr. Yatinder
Garg, Advs.

versus

CRICHD-LIVE.TOP & ORS.

.....Defendants

Through: Mr. Mukul Singh, CGSC with Mr.
Aryan Dhaka, Mr. Adhiraj Singh and
Ms. Ira Singh, Advs. for D-22 and D-
23

CORAM:

HON'BLE MS. JUSTICE MANMEET PRITAM SINGH ARORA

ORDER

% 03.12.2025

1. The present suit has been filed seeking permanent injunction restraining Defendant Nos. 1 to 6 and Defendant Nos. 25 to 72 from infringing the Plaintiff's exclusive broadcasting and reproduction rights in the 'India Tour of Australia 2024-2025' and the 'Big Bash league 2024-2025' ['Events'], along with other ancillary reliefs.

Factual matrix

2. The relevant facts, as stated in the pleadings are as under: -

2.1 The Plaintiff, a leading Indian broadcaster, exclusively licenses and broadcasts major sporting events and operates a vast network of about 70 popular TV channels across multiple languages ['Star Channels'], having high viewership. With the requisite uplink and downlink permission issued



by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India ('MIB'), it holds exclusive rights to broadcast and distribute these channels in India, including major cricket and other sports events.

2.2 In addition, the Plaintiff owns and operates the online streaming platform/website 'www.hotstar.com' and the mobile application, 'Disney+Hotstar', offering over 100,000 hours of multilingual entertainment and extensive live and recorded sports content. It is stated that 'Disney+Hotstar' has become one of India's leading and most widely used video streaming services.

2.3 The Events ['India Tour of Australia 2024-2025' and the 'Big Bash league 2024-2025'] are major cricket events organized by Cricket Australia, with matches running from November 2024 to January 2025. The Plaintiff has acquired exclusive media rights for several South Asian territories including India until June 2030, covering all public exhibition rights across television and digital platforms. Exercising these rights, the Plaintiff is broadcasting and streaming the live telecast, delayed telecast, highlights, clips and repeat telecast of the Events through its channels, and any unauthorized transmission in the Indian territory would infringe its statutory broadcast reproduction right conferred by Section 37 of the Indian Copyright Act, 1957.

About the Defendants

2.4 Defendant Nos. 1 to 6 ['original infringing Defendants'] are various websites engaged in the business of unauthorizedly making available to public, copyrighted third-party content and information through the medium of internet and mobile applications.

2.5 Vide order dated 06.03.2025 Defendant Nos. 25-72 ['additional



infringing Defendants’] were also impleaded on the same cause of action as pleaded against the original infringing Defendants. The websites of Defendant Nos. 1 to 6 and 25 to 72 are collectively referred to as ‘rogue websites’. It is stated that the content which is hosted and disseminated by these infringing Defendants (rogue websites) are pirated and illegal, infringing the rights of legitimate licensees in their copyrighted works.

2.6 The Plaintiff, through a third-party investigation, learnt that the Defendants/rogue websites are anonymous, hydra-headed rogue platforms, often mirror sites of previously blocked domains which are created by the same owners to evade court orders. The Plaintiff believes these websites share common sources of infringing content and possibly operate in coordination.

2.7 Defendant Nos. 7 to 12 are various Domain Name Registrar(s) (‘DNR’) of the rogue websites, arrayed for locking and suspending the access of the rogue websites. Defendant Nos. 13 to 21 are various internet service providers [‘ISPs’], arrayed for disabling access to the rogue websites. Defendant No. 22/Department of Telecommunications (‘DOT’) and Defendant No. 23/Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (‘MeitY’) are arrayed to assist in enforcing and ensuring compliance with the orders of injunction. These Defendants are ‘proforma Defendants’ impleaded only for implementation of the Court’s orders.

Submissions on behalf of the Plaintiff

3. Learned counsel for the Plaintiff submits that the suit was filed due to the apprehension that the Defendants/rogue websites, which had previously streamed the Women’s Big Bash League 2024, the Pakistan Tour of Australia 2024, and the then ongoing India Tour of Australia 2024-25,



would again illegally broadcast 'Events' over which the Plaintiff holds exclusive rights.

4. He further submits that the Defendants/rogue websites operate with the sole intention of generating illicit profits by unlawfully hosting and making available live sporting events without permission from the rightful owners, and thus are ought to be blocked in the entirety.

5. He states that this Court has already granted an ex-parte ad-interim injunction vide order dated 09.12.2024 in favour of the Plaintiff and against the original infringing Defendant (nos. 1 to 6), which order was also extended against the additional infringing Defendants (nos. 25 to 72) vide order dated 06.03.2025. He prays that since the said Defendant Nos. 1 to 6 and 25 to 72 have been proceeded ex-parte vide Order dated 06.10.2025, this is a fit case to be decreed in terms of Order VIII Rule 10 of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 ['CPC']. He submits that the Plaintiff is only pressing for the relief of permanent injunction against the Defendant Nos. 1 to 6 and 25 to 72, in terms of the prayer clause at paragraph 55 (i) of the plaint and are not pressing for any other reliefs.

Finding and Analysis

6. The Court has heard the counsel for the Plaintiff and perused the record of the present matter.

7. The predecessor bench of this Court vide Order dated 09.12.2024 issued summons in the present suit and granted an ex-parte ad interim injunction in favour of the Plaintiff restraining the original infringing Defendant Nos. 1 to 6 from communicating, hosting, streaming, screening, disseminating or making available for viewing/downloading, without authorization, any part of the Events on any electronic or digital platform, in



any manner whatsoever, and also giving directions to the proforma Defendants to lock/block/suspend the access to the rogue websites of the said infringing Defendants.

8. Thereafter, vide order dated 06.03.2025; additional rogue websites were impleaded as Defendant Nos. 25 to 72 and the injunction order dated 09.12.2024 was also extended to the said additional rogue websites.

9. The learned Joint Registrar vide order dated 08.09.2025 has recorded that despite service, no written statement has been filed on behalf of Defendant Nos. 1 to 72 and eventually their right to file written statement was closed. Further, vide order dated 06.10.2025, this Court proceeded Defendant Nos. 1 to 7 and 9 to 72, ex-parte.

10. None appears for the Defendant Nos. 1 to 7, 9 to 21 and 25 to 72, even today.

11. Defendant No. 8 has been appearing through its counsel and have also complied with the injunction order dated 09.12.2024 and therefore was exempted from further appearances vide order dated 06.10.2025.

12. Learned counsel for Defendant Nos. 22 and 23 has appeared today and states that he has no objection to the suit being decreed.

13. At this stage, it would be apposite to refer to Order VIII Rule 10 of CPC. The said rule reads as under: -

“10. Procedure when party fails to present written statement called for by Court.—Where any party from whom a written statement is required under rule 1 or rule 9 fails to present the same within the time permitted or fixed by the Court, as the case may be, the Court shall pronounce judgment against him, or make such order in relation to the suit as it thinks fit and on the pronouncement of such judgment a decree shall be drawn up.”

14. It would be relevant to refer to the dicta of **Satya Infrastructure Ltd.**



& Ors. v. Satya Infra & Estates Pvt. Ltd.¹, wherein the Co-ordinate Bench of this Court held as under: -

“4. The next question which arises is whether this Court should consider the application for interim relief and direct the plaintiffs to lead ex parte evidence. The counsel for the plaintiffs’ states that the plaintiffs are willing to give up the reliefs of delivery, of rendition of accounts and of recovery of damages, if the suit for the relief of injunction alone were to be heard today.

5. I am of the opinion that no purpose will be served in such cases by directing the plaintiffs to lead ex parte evidence in the form of affidavit by way of examination-in chief and which invariably is a repetition of the contents of the plaint. The plaint otherwise, as per the amended CPC, besides being verified, is also supported by affidavits of the plaintiffs. I fail to fathom any reason for according any additional sanctity to the affidavit by way of examination-in-chief than to the affidavit in support of the plaint or to any exhibit marks being put on the documents which have been filed by the plaintiffs and are already on record. I have therefore heard the counsel for the plaintiffs on merits qua the relief of injunction.”

[Emphasis Supplied]

15. The averments made in the plaint clearly evidence that Defendant Nos. 1 to 6 and 25 to 72 are violating and infringing the exclusive rights of the Plaintiff by unauthorisedly making available the Plaintiff’s licensed content across their unauthorized websites. It is further evident that the intent of the said Defendants is to exploit the Plaintiff’s exclusive material, thereby infringing upon the Plaintiff’s copyrights and broadcasting rights.

16. Since the said Defendants have failed to take any requisite steps to contest the present suit, despite having suffered an ad-interim injunction order dated 09.12.2024 and 06.03.2025, as well as locking and suspending

¹ 2013 SCC Online Del 508



of their domain names, it is evident that they have no defence to put forth on merits. None of these Defendants have approached the Court for modification or vacation of the said injunction; evidencing their acceptance to the said injunction. In view of the aforesaid, all the averments made in the plaint and documents filed with the plaint are deemed to be admitted.

17. The act(s) and conduct of Defendant Nos. 1 to 6 and 25 to 72 are bound to cause irreparable harm to the Plaintiff, as these rogue websites, by violating and infringing the exclusive rights of the Plaintiff, would cause revenue losses to the Plaintiff.

18. Given the fact that the plaint has been duly verified and is supported by the affidavit(s) of the Plaintiff as well the Statement of Truth and in view of the aforesaid findings, this Court is of the view that this suit for the relief of permanent injunction does not merit trial. This Court deems it fit to opine that the present suit is capable of being decreed in terms of Order VIII Rule 10 of CPC.

19. In view of the aforesaid, the Plaintiff is entitled to relief of permanent injunction as claimed in the plaint against the infringing Defendants/rogue websites. Accordingly, a decree of permanent injunction is passed in favour of the Plaintiff and against Defendant Nos. 1 to 6 and 25 to 72 in terms of prayer clause at paragraph 55 (i) of the plaint. The interim order dated 09.12.2024 shall merge into the decree.

20. Since, Defendant Nos. 7 to 23 are proforma Defendants, no decree is being passed against them; however, they shall ensure that the decree of permanent injunction passed against the infringing Defendants is duly implemented.

21. Learned counsel for the Plaintiff submits that the Plaintiff is not



pressing for reliefs of damages and legal costs. The said statement is taken on record and the prayer for damages and legal costs is disposed of as not pressed.

22. The Registry is directed to draw up a decree sheet in terms of this order.

23. With the aforesaid directions, this suit along with pending applications (if any) stands disposed of.

24. All future dates stand cancelled.

MANMEET PRITAM SINGH ARORA, J

DECEMBER 3, 2025/hp/IB/AM