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

+ **CS(COMM) 889/2025 & I.A. 20793-20797/2025**

RAVI SHANKAR

.....Plaintiff

Through: Mr. Nikhil Sakhardande, Sr. Adv.,
Ms. Pooja Tidke, Mr. Pranav Sarthi,
Mr. Ashish Venugopal, Ms. Apoorva
Singh, Ms. Prachi Dhingra,
Advocates

versus

JOHN DOE(S) / ASHOK KUMAR(S) & ORS.Defendants

Through: Ms. Chetanya Puri, SPC, Mr. Anand
Awasthi, Ms. Nisha Puri, Advocates
for D-2 and 3.

Mr. Varun Pathak, Mr. Yash
Karunakaran, Mr. Tanuj Sharma,
Advocates for D-4.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MS. JUSTICE MANMEET PRITAM SINGH ARORA

ORDER

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26.08.2025

I.A. (unnumbered application) (Application under Order I Rule 10 CPC for impleadment of defendant nos. 5 and 6)

1. The Court Master is directed to summon the unnumbered application. And the registry is directed to number this application.
2. At the outset, learned senior counsel appearing on behalf of the plaintiff seeks leave to place on record an affidavit dated 26.08.2025 which has been filed vide e-diary no. 6105878/2025.
3. He also seeks leave to mention that an application under Order I Rule



10 of the Code of the Civil Procedure, 1908 ('CPC') for impleading defendant nos. 5 and 6 has been filed vide e-diary no. 6105178/2025. He states that the said defendants are necessary for compliance of the directions sought against two (2) websites enlisted at sr. no. 18 and 21 of paragraph 44 of the plaint. He states that the roles of defendants nos. 5 and 6 are mentioned in this affidavit.

4. In view of the averments set out in the application and the affidavit, the mentioning is allowed, the application and the affidavit is taken on board.

5. For the reasons mentioned in the application and considering the suit is at an initial stage, the application is allowed and proposed domain name registrar no. 1 and domain name registrar no. 2 are respectively impleaded as defendant nos. 5 and 6 in the present suit.

6. The plaintiff is directed to file an amended memo of parties within one (1) week.

I.A. 20797/2025 (seeking exemption from pre-institution mediation)

7. This is an application filed by the plaintiff under Section 12A of the Commercial Courts Act, 2015 seeking exemption from instituting pre-litigation mediation.

8. Having regard to the facts that the present suit contemplates urgent interim relief and in light of the judgement of the Supreme Court in **Yamini Manohar v. T.K.D. Keerthi**¹, exemption from the requirement of pre-institution mediation is granted to the plaintiff.

9. Accordingly, the application stands disposed of.

¹ (2024) 5 SCC 815



I.A. 20796/2025 (seeking exemption from filing original copy of records)

10. This application has been filed by the plaintiff under Section 151 of CPC seeking exemption from filing original copy of records mentioned at paragraph 2 of this application.

11. The application is allowed, subject to plaintiff filing the original copy of the records/documents, mentioned at paragraph 2 of this application, within two (2) weeks.

12. Accordingly, the application stands disposed of.

I.A. 20795/2025 (seeking leave to file additional documents)

13. This is an application seeking leave to file additional documents under Order XI Rule 1(4) of the CPC, 1908 (as amended by the Commercial Courts Act, 2015) read with Section 151 CPC.

14. The plaintiff, if it wishes to file additional documents will file the same within thirty (30) days from today, and it shall do so strictly as per the provisions of the Commercial Courts Act and the Delhi High Court (Original Side) Rules, 2018 ('DHC Rules').

15. For the reasons stated in the application, the same is allowed.

16. Accordingly, the application is disposed of.

I.A. 20794/2025 (seeking discovery and disclosure)

17. This is an application filed under Order XI Rule 1, 3 and 5 (as amended by the Commercial Courts Act, 2015) read with section 151 of the CPC for discovery and disclosure.

18. Issue notice.

19. Learned counsel for defendant no. 4 accepts notice.

20. Upon steps being taken by the plaintiff, issue notice to defendant nos. 5 and 6.



21. Defendant no. 4 is directed to disclose on affidavit before this Court, within a period of three (3) weeks, all available details including Basic Subscriber Information ('BSI'), name, address, email address, contact details, organization and associations, URL, IP logs, etc. associated with the accounts/URLs mentioned at Paragraph no. 44 (sr. no. 1-17, 19 and 20).

22. Similarly, defendant nos. 5 and 6 are directed to provide all relevant registrants details including payment details and IP addresses of the website mentioned at Paragraph no. 44 (sr. no. 18 and 21), within three (3) weeks.

23. Reply be filed within a period of two (2) weeks.

24. Rejoinder, if any, be filed within two (2) weeks thereafter.

CS(COMM) 889/2025

25. The present suit has been filed seeking permanent injunction restraining infringement, passing off, violation of common law rights, misappropriation of personality/publicity rights, damages and other ancillary reliefs.

26. Let the plaint be registered as Suit. Issue summons to defendant nos. 2 to 6.

27. Ms. Chetanya Puri, learned SPC on behalf of defendant nos. 2 & 3 and Mr. Varun Pathak, learned counsel on behalf of defendant no. 4, accept summons. They confirm the receipt of the suit paper-book and waive the right of formal service of summons.

28. Since, defendant Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 have been impleaded for seeking compliance of the interim orders and directions, no direction is being issued to the said defendants for filing written statement.

29. Defendant no. 1 is an unknown entity, and therefore, issuance of summons to defendant no. 1 is deferred at this stage.



30. It is directed that after defendant no. 4, 5 and 6 provide the plaintiff with the details of the persons/entities associated with the accounts/websites/URLs mentioned in paragraph no. 44 of the plaint, the plaintiff shall take steps for bringing those entities on record by filing amended memo of parties. The memo will be filed within one (1) week from receipt of information. Thereafter, summons shall be issued by the learned Joint Registrar (J) to the said parties.

31. List before the learned Joint Registrar (J) on **15.10.2025**.

32. List before Court on **19.02.2026**.

I.A. 20793/2025 (application under Order XXXIX Rule 1 and 2 CPC)

33. The present application has been filed under Order XXXIX Rule 1 and 2 CPC seeking ex-parte ad-interim injunction against the defendant no. 1; and directions against the defendant nos. 2 to 6.

34. Learned senior counsel for the plaintiff sets out the plaintiff's case as follows:

34.1 The plaintiff is a globally revered humanitarian leader, spiritual teacher and ambassador of peace and the founder of 'The Art of Living'² foundation. The plaintiff, through the 'World Culture Festival'³, has achieved an unparalleled cultural impact, creating a platform that unites people across continents in shared celebration of art, heritage and human values. The plaintiff is the recipient of the Padma Vibhushan and over 26 honorary doctorates⁴ for contributions to peace, education and humanitarian service as well as the highest civilian awards in several countries.

34.2 The plaintiff, renowned for developing innovative breathing and

² Details are mentioned at paragraph 9 of the plaint.

³ Details are mentioned at paragraph 10 of the plaint.



meditation techniques (notably ‘Sudarshan Kriya’) and simplifying complex philosophical concepts into practical teachings, has earned immense goodwill through his spiritual guidance, humanitarian service, and unique personal attributes.

34.3 The plaintiff, in July-August 2025, got to know that defendant no. 1 (John Doe) is circulating fake and fabricated videos of the plaintiff on the social media platform ‘Facebook’ (owned and controlled by defendant no. 4) and on other independent websites, utilizing advanced AI technologies, including ‘deepfake’ tools, to digitally impersonate the plaintiff’s voice, facial expressions, persona and likeness, thereby creating a false impression amongst the world at large that the plaintiff is personally speaking, endorsing or promoting the content therein.

34.4 These ‘deepfake’ videos published under different usernames and pages between 12.07.2025 and 08.08.2025 falsely depict the plaintiff as promoting alleged Ayurvedic or natural remedies for serious health conditions such as haemorrhoids, diabetes and chronic knee pain, rife with exaggerated and unfounded claims for instant and immediate cures for serious ailments. The videos falsely claim that the plaintiff has conducted years of research or tested these remedies or that he has discovered these remedies during meditation. A tabular chart of the 12 deepfake videos are set out in the plaint at paragraph 44 and 45. A detailed description of each of the deepfake videos, along with their transcripts and translations are mentioned at paragraph 43 of the plaint.

35. Learned senior counsel for the plaintiff states that the plaintiff is widely recognized by names such as ‘Gurudev’, ‘Guruji’, ‘Sri Sri’, and ‘Sri

⁴ Details of doctorates are at paragraph no. 16 of the plaint



Sri Ravi Shankar'; his personality, reputation, and distinct identity are intrinsically linked to his name, voice, image, likeness, and manner of speech.

35.1 He states that these elements constitute his judicially recognized 'personality rights' and 'publicity rights' under Articles 19(1)(a) and 21 of the Constitution of India.

35.2 He states that with a significant online presence, the plaintiff maintains exclusive control over the commercial and non-commercial use of these attributes, which are of considerable value, and any unauthorized use, including digitally manipulated 'deepfake' content, amounts to a violation of his rights.

36. This Court has heard the learned counsel for the plaintiff and has perused the record.

37. Based on the averments made in the plaint and submissions made on behalf of the plaintiff, it is evident that defendant no. 1 (John Doe) is circulating deep fake contents unauthorizedly using the name, voice, facial expressions, persona and likeness, of the plaintiff.

38. In view of the above, a prima facie case is made out in favour of the plaintiff and against the defendant no. 1. Balance of convenience is also in favour of the plaintiff, and irreparable harm will be cause to the plaintiff, if defendant no. 1's are not restrained to publish/circulate the deepfake contents.

39. Accordingly, till the next date of hearing, the following directions are issued:

39.1 Defendant No. 1, their associates, servants, agents, affiliates, partners, 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 infringing the plaintiff's personality rights and publicity rights by utilizing and/or in any manner directly and/or indirectly using or exploiting or misappropriating the plaintiff's (a) name 'Ravi Shankar' or 'Sri Sri Ravi Shankar' (b) voice; (c) image; (d) likeness; (e) unique style of discourse and delivery; and/or (f) any other attribute which is 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 in all formats and on all mediums, such as but not limited to Artificial Intelligence generated content, deepfake videos, voice-cloned audio, metaverse environments, or any future formats/mediums.

39.2 Defendant No. 4 or any person acting for or on their behalf, during the pendency of the suit, are directed to forthwith remove/ disable access to the specific pages, URLs, profiles, accounts, videos, photos, publishing any such morphed and infringing content, text, social media groups, and channels, as detailed in Paragraph no. 44 (sr. no. 1-17, 19 and 20) of the plaint, published on any platform owned, managed or controlled by them within 36 hours.

39.3 In case the plaintiff, during the pendency of the present suit, discover any more false, fabricated and/ or morphed infringing content not originating from or associated with the plaintiff, the plaintiff shall be at liberty to approach the Defendant no. 4 requesting them to block/ take down, within 36 hours, any such post/ image/ video/ text/ or any other morphed infringing content, which is published on its platforms or utilizing its platforms. In case Defendant no. 4 entertains any doubt it shall communicate



the same to the Plaintiff within 24 Hrs and, the Plaintiff shall be at liberty to approach this Court for appropriate orders.

39.4 Defendant nos. 5 and 6, the Domain Name Registrars are directed to lock and suspend the domains mentioned at Paragraph no. 44 (sr. no. 18 and 21) within 72 hrs of being communicated a copy of this order by the Plaintiff. Defendant nos. 5 and 6 will file an affidavit of compliance within three (3) weeks. In this affidavit, Defendant Nos. 5 and 6 will also disclose all registrants' details with the IP addresses as already directed in I.A. 20794/2025.

39.5 Defendant No. 2 [Department of Telecommunication] and defendant no. 3 [Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology] are directed to issue necessary notifications/directions to all ISPs and TSPs for blocking/removing access to the websites mentioned at Paragraph no. 44 (sr. no. 18 and 21).

39.6 In case, the Plaintiff comes across further websites during the pendency of the suit which are similarly streaming videos, which infringe the personality rights and the publicity rights of the Plaintiff and are fake videos as asserted in the plaint, the Plaintiff will be at liberty to approach the learned Joint Registrar (J) for their impleadment, by filing an application under Order I Rule 10 CPC, along with an affidavit with sufficient supporting evidence for seeking extension of the injunction to such websites. Subject to satisfaction of the Court, the websites will be impleaded and this interim order shall be extended to the said websites.

40. If any website/social media accounts, which is not primarily an infringing website, is blocked/locked in pursuance of the present order, the said website is permitted to approach this Court by giving an undertaking



that it does not intend to infringe the Plaintiff's trademarks and thereafter, the Court would consider modifying the injunction accordingly.

41. Issue notice to the defendant nos. 2-6 through all permissible modes, upon filing of process fees, returnable on the next date of hearing.

42. Defendant no. 1 is an unknown entity, and therefore, issuance of notice to defendant no. 1 is deferred at this stage.

43. Let a compliance affidavit be filed by defendant nos. 2-6 within a period of four (4) weeks, from receipt of notice.

44. Rejoinder thereto, if any, be filed within a period of four (4) weeks thereafter.

45. Compliance of Order XXXIX Rule 3 of CPC be done within a period of two (2) weeks from today.

46. List before the learned Joint Registrar (J) on **15.10.2025**.

47. List before Court on **19.02.2026**.

48. The digitally signed copy of this order, duly uploaded on the official website of the Delhi High Court, www.delhihighcourt.nic.in, shall be treated as a certified copy of the order for the purpose of ensuring compliance. No physical copy of order shall be insisted by any authority/entity or litigant.

MANMEET PRITAM SINGH ARORA, J

AUGUST 26, 2025/mt/AM