

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
ORDINARY ORIGINAL CIVIL JURISDICTION
INTERIM APPLICATION (L) NO.20703 OF 2026
IN
COMMERCIAL IP SUIT NO.245 OF 2026

Preity G. Zinta

...Applicant/
Plaintiff

Versus

Google LLC & Ors.

...Defendants

Mr. Venkatesh Dhond, Senior Advocate a/w. Mr. Rohan Kadam i/b. Bachubhai Munim and Co., for the Applicant/Plaintiff.

Ms. Vareesha Irfan (through Video Conferencing) i/b. Ms. Charu Shukla, for Defendant Nos.1 and 9.

Mr. Ameya Gokhale a/w. Ms. Ameer Rana, Mr. Harit Lakhani, Mr. Vishesh Sharma, Ms. Richa Bharti, Mr. Abhishek Mookherjee i/b. Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas and Co., for Defendant No.3.

Mr. Lalan Gupta a/w. Mr. Mahir Amir i/b. Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas, for Defendant No.5.

Mr. Aasif Navodia i/b. Khaitan and Co., for Defendant No.6.

Ms. Binsy Susan a/w. Ms. Sanjana Kattoor i/b. Jshardul Amarchand Mangaldas and Co., for Defendant Nos.13 and 14.

Ms. Shweta Sahu (through Video Conferencing), for Defendants.

CORAM: MADHAV J. JAMDAR, J.

DATED : 8th JULY 2026

P. C.:

1. At the outset, Mr. Dhond, learned Senior Counsel appearing for the Plaintiff tenders a draft amendment to the prayer clauses of the Interim Application.

2. The said draft is taken on record and marked 'X' for identification.

3. The Plaintiff is permitted to amend the prayer clauses. Amendment be carried out forthwith. Re-verification is dispensed with.

4. Heard Mr. Dhond, learned Senior Counsel appearing for the Plaintiff, Ms. Irfan, learned Counsel appearing for Defendant Nos.1 and 9, Mr. Gokhale, learned Counsel appearing for Defendant No.3, Mr. Gupta, learned Counsel appearing for Defendant No.5, Mr. Navodia, learned Counsel appearing for Defendant No.6, Ms. Susan, learned Counsel appearing for Defendant Nos.13 and 14 and Ms. Sahu, learned Counsel appearing for some of the Defendants.

5. The rights which are the subject matter of the present Suit are the Plaintiff's "Personality Rights" and "Publicity Rights" i.e. rights which stem and flow from the right to freedom of speech and expression protected under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India and the right to life and personal liberty

including the right to privacy under Article 21 of the Constitution of India as also the Plaintiff's moral rights under Section 38-B of the Copyright Act, 1957.

6. The Plaintiff in the plaint *inter alia* has raised the following contentions:

i. The Plaintiff is one of India's most celebrated actresses and a prominent public figure, whose career in the Indian Film Industry spans over 25 years and she has acted in 42 films.

ii. The Plaintiff has received numerous awards and accolades for her contributions to Indian cinema and public life, including *inter alia*

(a) The Filmfare Award for Best Female Debut (1999)

(b) The Filmfare Award for Best Actress (2004)

(c) The Silver Hugo Award for Best Actress at Chicago International Film Festival (2008)

(d) The Godfrey Philips National Bravery Award (Mind of Steel) for her courageous testimony in the Bharat Shah extortion trial

(e) The Rajiv Gandhi Award for Excellence in the Field of Entertainment for her outstanding contribution to the entertainment industry.

(f) Multiple additional Filmfare Award nominations.

iii. The Plaintiff has been featured in numerous prestigious lists and publications recognizing her as one of India's most influential personalities.

iv. It is the contention raised in the plaint that *inter alia* the following aspects of her personality are valuable and protectable facets of her personality and publicity rights:

(a) The Plaintiff's name- "Preity Zinta" / "Preity G Zinta";

(b) The Plaintiff's signature and/or autograph;

(c) The Plaintiff's image/photograph and her likeness, including her distinctive dimpled smile;

(d) The Plaintiff's voice and mannerisms associated/identified with her;

(e) The Plaintiff's caricature and any artistic representation of her image and/or likeness; and

(f) The Plaintiff's persona and overall public image as developed through her career in cinema, sports ownership and brand endorsements.

v. The above-referred Plaintiff's "Personality Traits" are an integral and intrinsic part of her personality rights and/or publicity rights, in which the Plaintiff exercises exclusive control.

vi. The Plaintiff's identity has been used in an unwholesome and unsavory manner which maligns her reputation, outrages her modesty and/or exposes her to ridicule, thereby tarnishing and/or diluting her meticulously curated

public image which is unique to her. The misappropriation of any attribute of the Plaintiff's Personality Traits without her express permission for a commercial purpose is liable to be restrained.

vii. As the Plaintiff is a renowned actresses, her mannerisms, image, photograph and likeness constitute essential parts of her artistic identity and represent facets which she uses as part of her career in order to make a living. Any unauthorised use, distortion, mutilation, or other modification, or dissemination of the Plaintiff's performances cause prejudice to her reputation and would amount to a violation of her moral rights under Section 38-B of the Copyright Act, 1957.

viii. The Plaintiff is thus, well and sufficiently entitled to seek an order of this Court restraining the Defendants from causing any kind of damage to her performances, which in turn damages her reputation.

7. Mr. Dhond, learned Senior Counsel, appearing for the Plaintiff in support of the above contentions raised in the plaint pointed out the list of YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and X links wherein the contents uploaded misused Plaintiff's personality rights. List of such YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and X links is set out at Exhibit-K of the plaint. The list is of about 275 such links. Mr. Dhond, learned Senior Counsel further submits that Serial No.12 is wrongly included in this list. In support of the contention raised in the plaint, he pointed out Exhibit-L (Pages 152 to 158), Exhibit-M (Pages 159 to 166), Exhibit-N (Pages 167 to 170), Exhibit-O (Page 180) and Exhibit-P to Exhibit-V (Pages 181 to 192). He submits that all these images, photographs are AI images and creation of morphed, deepfake and/or superimposed content comprising the Plaintiff's morphed image, photograph and/or likeness without authorisation or consent of the Plaintiff. Mr. Dhond, learned Senior Counsel therefore, submitted that the present Suit has been necessitated as the Defendants (except Defendants 12 to 15) have either, themselves commercially exploited, or allowed third parties to create and/or post content which exploits, the Plaintiff's personality traits across various

online platforms without obtaining any licence, permission, consent or authorisation from the Plaintiff.

8. Mr. Dhond, learned Senior Counsel *inter alia* pointed out the following aspects:

- i.** The Defendant Nos. 1 to 3 operate major digital platforms including YouTube and Google (Defendant No. 1), X (formerly Twitter) (Defendant No. 2), Instagram and Facebook (Defendant No. 3), where large volumes of content which infringe the Plaintiff's personality rights, publicity rights, intellectual property rights and/or her fundamental rights (including her right to freedom of speech and expression and right to life and personal liberty (including the right to privacy)), have been uploaded, hosted and disseminated.
- ii.** Defendant Nos. 4 to 11 operate AI chatbot services, AI image generation platforms, merchandising websites and GIF hosting platforms, each of which commercially exploit different facets of the Plaintiff's personality and/or infringe

her moral rights under Section 38-B of the Copyright Act, 1957.

iii. Defendant Nos. 12 to 15 are domain name registrars and have been impleaded as the Plaintiff seeks disclosure of the identity of the owners/operators/registrants of the platforms hosting infringing content where such details are not readily available with the Plaintiff.

iv. Defendant No. 16 represents unknown persons/ entities who are already exploiting, or may in future exploit, the Plaintiff's personality and/or publicity rights, intellectual property rights and/or her fundamental rights, anonymously through digital platforms and websites.

9. Mr. Dhond, learned Senior Counsel submitted that the law casts obligations on intermediaries under Rule 3(1)(b) of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. He submitted that the said Rule has been duly noted by this Hon'ble Court in *Akshay Hari Om*

*Bhatia vs. John Doe & Ors.*¹ This Rule was incorporated by an amendment on 28 October, 2022, which is after the judgment of the Supreme Court in *Shreya Singhal vs. Union of India*². He therefore, submits that the reliefs sought in the Interim Application as amended be granted.

10. At this stage, it is required to be noted that learned Counsel appearing for the Defendants have not opposed the reliefs sought by the Plaintiff but expressed certain difficulties which will be dealt with at later stage.

11. Perusal of the various contentions raised in the plaint as also the exhibits which are annexed to the plaint makes very strong *prima facie* case.

12. The Plaintiff has discovered numerous AI-generated deepfake videos, manipulated photographs, memes, AI-generated voice simulations, chatbot personas, GIFs, merchandise and other digital content using Plaintiff's personality traits that have been created and disseminated without her consent. The infringing

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2 (2015) 5 SCC 1

material falsely depicts or imitates the Plaintiff, frequently suggesting endorsements, associations or interactions which have not been authorised or consented to by her. Certain content is also alleged to be misleading, defamatory, explicit or otherwise objectionable, thereby causing grave prejudice to the Plaintiff's dignity, reputation and goodwill.

13. The Plaintiff has specifically identified AI chatbot platforms which host chatbot personas purporting to be the Plaintiff and permit members of the public to interact with such chatbots as though they were communicating directly with her. These chatbot services utilise the Plaintiff's name, image, identity, likeness and personality without any licence or authorisation and generate responses over which the Plaintiff exercises no control whatsoever. The Plaintiff submits that such unauthorised impersonation poses a serious threat to her reputation and is likely to mislead members of the public into believing that the chatbot represents, or is endorsed by, her.

14. The Plaintiff further alleges that Defendant No. 8 (Kash Collective) is selling merchandise bearing her name, image and

likeness without authorisation, while other Defendants continue to host and commercially exploit GIFs, manipulated images and videos, and other AI-generated content depicting the Plaintiff.

15. The Plaintiff has compiled an extensive list of infringing URLs and has produced representative screenshots demonstrating the nature and extent of the infringements across various online platforms.

16. There is substance in the contentions raised by the Plaintiff that the continuing dissemination of AI-generated deepfakes, manipulated images, chatbots and other infringing content has caused and continues to cause irreparable injury to her goodwill, reputation and commercial interests. Such injury cannot be adequately compensated by monetary damages alone because once deepfake content is disseminated across the internet it is capable of unlimited replication and circulation, resulting in permanent dilution of the Plaintiff's personality rights and public image.

17. In these circumstances, the Plaintiff has sought permanent and interim injunctions restraining some of the Defendants from

using or exploiting any aspect of her personality in any form through any technology, including artificial intelligence, generative artificial intelligence, deepfakes, AI chatbots, voice cloning, face morphing, GIFs and other digital media. The Plaintiff has also sought directions for removal and blocking of all infringing content and URLs, disclosure of the identities of the operators of the infringing platforms and domain names, rendition of accounts and payment of profits earned by the Defendants through the unauthorised exploitation of her personality rights, together with such further reliefs.

18. The material on record clearly shows that the Plaintiff's personality rights, publicity right and moral rights are violated by creation of said morphed, deepfake and/or superimposed contents comprising the morphed Plaintiff's image, photographs and videos. The Plaintiff's "Personality Rights" and "Publicity Rights" are protected by Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India i.e. the right to freedom of speech and expression. The right to life and personal liberty including the right to privacy are protected by Article 21 of the Constitution of India. The right to life as contemplated under Article 21 of the Constitution of India includes

the right to live with dignity. The Plaintiff's right to live with dignity is affected by the impugned actions.

19. Consequently, the Plaintiff's moral rights under the Copyright Act have also been prejudicially affected.

20. Accordingly, the case is made out for grant of ad-interim relief in terms of amended prayer clauses (a) to (e-5). The said amended prayer clauses are reproduced hereinbelow for ready reference:

“(a) pending hearing and final disposal of the present Suit, Defendant Nos. 4, 8 to 11 and 16, their servants, agents, affiliates and/or all persons/entities claiming through them, be restrained by a temporary order of injunction from violating the personality rights and/or publicity rights of the Applicant/Plaintiff by utilising and/or in any manner, directly or indirectly, using or exploiting or misappropriating the Applicant's / Plaintiff's personality rights and/or publicity rights by the use of her: (i) name, "Preity Zinta" and/or "Preity G Zinta"; (ii) nickname, "PZ" and/or "PGZ"; (iii) photograph, image or its likeness including her distinctive dimpled smile; (iv) caricature; (v) voice, (vi) mannerisms; (vii) persona, and/or any other attributes of her personality (collectively, the "Applicant's Plaintiff's Personality Traits") in any form, for any commercial and/or personal gain and/or otherwise by exploiting them in any manner whatsoever, without the Applicant's Plaintiff's

consent and/or authorisation, including but not limited to through the use of any technology including but not limited to: (i) unauthorised use of any of the Applicant's/Plaintiff's Personality Traits in any form or media, including online platforms, publications, advertisements, promotional materials, merchandise, any other commercial endeavour; (ii) creating or using artificial intelligence chat models, videos, digital avatars and/or caricatures that imitate or mimic or represent the Applicant/ Plaintiff or the Applicant's/Plaintiff's. Personality Traits, and (iii) artificial intelligence, generative artificial intelligence, machine learning, deepfakes, face morphing and/or GIFs, or any of them, on any medium or formats including but not limited to the physical medium, the virtual medium such as websites and social media, etc.;

(b) pending hearing and final disposal of the present Suit, Defendant Nos. 4, 8 to 11 and 16, their servants, agents, affiliates and/or all persons/entities claiming through them, be restrained by a temporary order of injunction, from violating the moral rights of the Applicant/Plaintiff by unauthorisedly distorting or mutilating or modifying or utilising and/or in any manner, directly or indirectly, using or exploiting or misappropriating the Applicant's/Plaintiff's performances and/or substantial parts thereof, including but not limited to through the use of any technology including but not limited to (i) creating or using artificial intelligence videos, GIFs and/or images; and (ii) artificial intelligence, generative artificial intelligence, machine learning, deepfakes, face morphing and/or GIFs, or any of them, on any medium or formats including but not limited to the physical medium, the virtual medium such as websites, and social media, etc.;

(c) pending hearing and final disposal of the present Suit, Defendant Nos. 1 to 3 are directed to take down/remove/block access to the content hosted on the URLs identified as infringing content and set out in Exhibit K to the plaint (save and except the URL listed at serial no. 12 in Exhibit K to the plaint) within 72 hours of this Order being uploaded on this Hon'ble Court's website;

(d) pending hearing and final disposal of the present Suit, within 72 hours of being notified by the Applicant/Plaintiff or by her authorised representative in writing, Defendant Nos. 1 to 3 are directed to take down/remove/block access to the content hosted on any further infringing URLs that host content of a similar nature to the infringing content identified at Exhibit K to the plaint appearing on their platforms/websites, which use or exploit or misappropriate the Applicant's/Plaintiff's personality rights and/or publicity rights by the use of Applicant's / Plaintiff's Personality Traits in any form without the Applicant's/Plaintiff's consent and/or authorisation, including but not limited to through the use of any technology including but not limited to: (i) unauthorised use of any of the Applicant's/Plaintiff's Personality Traits in any form or media, including online platforms, publications, advertisements, promotional materials, merchandise, or any other commercial endeavour, (ii) creating or using artificial intelligence chat models, videos, digital avatars and/or caricatures that imitate or mimic or represent the Applicant / Plaintiff or the Applicant's / Plaintiff's Personality Traits, and (iii) artificial intelligence, generative artificial intelligence, machine learning, deepfakes, face morphing and/or GIFs, or any of them, on any medium or formats including but not limited to the physical medium, the virtual medium such as websites and social media, etc. Defendant Nos. 1 to 3 are also granted liberty to apply in the event any

of them believe that any further infringing URLs of a similar nature to the infringing content identified in Exhibit K to the plaint, identified by the Applicant/Plaintiff or her authorised representative, do not contain infringing content;

(e) pending hearing and final disposal of the present Suit, Defendant Nos. 4, 6, 9 and 11 are directed to remove/block access to, within 72 hours of this Order being uploaded on this Hon'ble Court's website, the content identified in Exhibits O, Q, S and V respectively to the plaint that include Applicant's/Plaintiff's name, image and/or likeness. Defendant Nos. 4, 6 and 9 to 11 are also granted the liberty to seek identifier details (URLs) for such content from the Applicant/Plaintiff if any of Defendant Nos. 4, 6 and 9 to 11 are unable to locate them based on the information in the aforesaid Exhibits to the plaint,

(e-1) pending hearing and final disposal of the present Suit, Defendant No. 10 is directed to remove / block access to, within 72 hours of this Order being uploaded on this Hon'ble Court's website, the content identified in Exhibit T to the plaint that include Applicant's/Plaintiff's name, image and/or likeness, excluding the content on the Applicant's/Plaintiff's official verified channel on the website of Defendant No. 10 as set out in Exhibit U to the plaint. Defendant No. 10 is granted the liberty to seek identifier details (URLs) for such content from the Applicant/Plaintiff if Defendant No. 10 is unable to locate them based on the information in the aforesaid Exhibits to the plaint;

(e-2) pending hearing and final disposal of the present Suit, Defendant No. 5 is directed to remove/block access to, within 72 hours of this Order being uploaded on this Hon'ble Court's

website, the Characters identified in Exhibit P to the plaint that include Plaintiff's name and/or image. Defendant No. 5 is also granted the liberty to seek identifier details (URLs) for such Characters from the Applicant/Plaintiff if Defendant No. 5 is unable to locate them based on the information in Exhibit P to the plaint;

(e-3) pending hearing and final disposal of the present Suit, Defendant No. 5 is directed to: (i) add the names "Preity Zinta" and "Preity G Zinta" to its Character creation and search blocklists to prevent the creation of new Characters using these names and to prevent search results from appearing if users search for these names; and (ii) take steps to prevent the creation of new Characters with Applicant's/Plaintiff's image and voice;

(e-4) pending hearing and final disposal of the present Suit, Defendant Nos. 8 and 16, their partners, proprietors, directors, owners, developers, servants, subordinates, representatives, employees, suppliers, affiliates, agents, stockists, distributors, dealers, subsidiaries, franchisees, licensees, assigns, predecessors and/or all persons/entities claiming through them, from passing off their goods. and/or services as those emanating or being endorsed by the Applicant/Plaintiff by utilising and/or in any manner directly and/or indirectly, using the Applicant's/Plaintiff's Personality Traits or any of them for any commercial and/or personal gain and/or otherwise by exploiting them in any manner whatsoever, and on any mediums and formats, including but not limited to the physical medium, the virtual medium such as websites and social media, etc.; and

(e-5) pending hearing and final disposal of the present Suit, Defendant Nos. 12, 13, 15 and 16

shall, upon a written request by or on behalf of the Applicant/ Plaintiff to the respective Defendant accompanied by an affidavit filed on behalf of the Applicant / Plaintiff before this Hon'ble Court specifying (i) such impugned domain name(s) and (ii) the manner of infringement, disclose within 7 days of receipt of such written request the complete particulars of the registrants of the impugned domain name(s) hosting infringing content.”

21. Learned Counsel appearing for various Defendants submitted that Defendants will have no difficulty in implementing the order regarding the YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and X links set out in Exhibit-K (excluding at Serial No.12), and also in complying with other reliefs granted, however, they submit that as far as the links to be communicated by the Plaintiff in future, some difficulty may arise if those links contain genuine photographs and material. They submit that in such a case, detailed objections will be communicated to the Plaintiff's Advocates. If such objections are communicated, the Plaintiff is at liberty to approach the Court to seek appropriate further orders. In such event, liberty is also granted to the Defendants to approach this Court. This liberty is granted to the Defendants as the Rule 3 of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, contemplates due diligence by an intermediary.

In any event, if such objections are raised, the Plaintiff can very well approach the Court and the liberty granted to the Defendants is in addition to the same.

22. Learned Counsel appearing for Defendant Nos.1 and 9 submits that Defendant No.9 -Tenor Inc. is wholly controlled by Defendant No.1-Google LLC and therefore, she submits that the order passed against Defendant No.9 will be complied with by Defendant No.1.

23. The Defendants to file affidavit in reply within a period of six weeks from today. Rejoinder if any, be filed two weeks thereafter.

24. Stand over to **3rd September 2026.**

25. Ad-interim relief granted to continue till further orders.

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[MADHAV J. JAMDAR, J.]