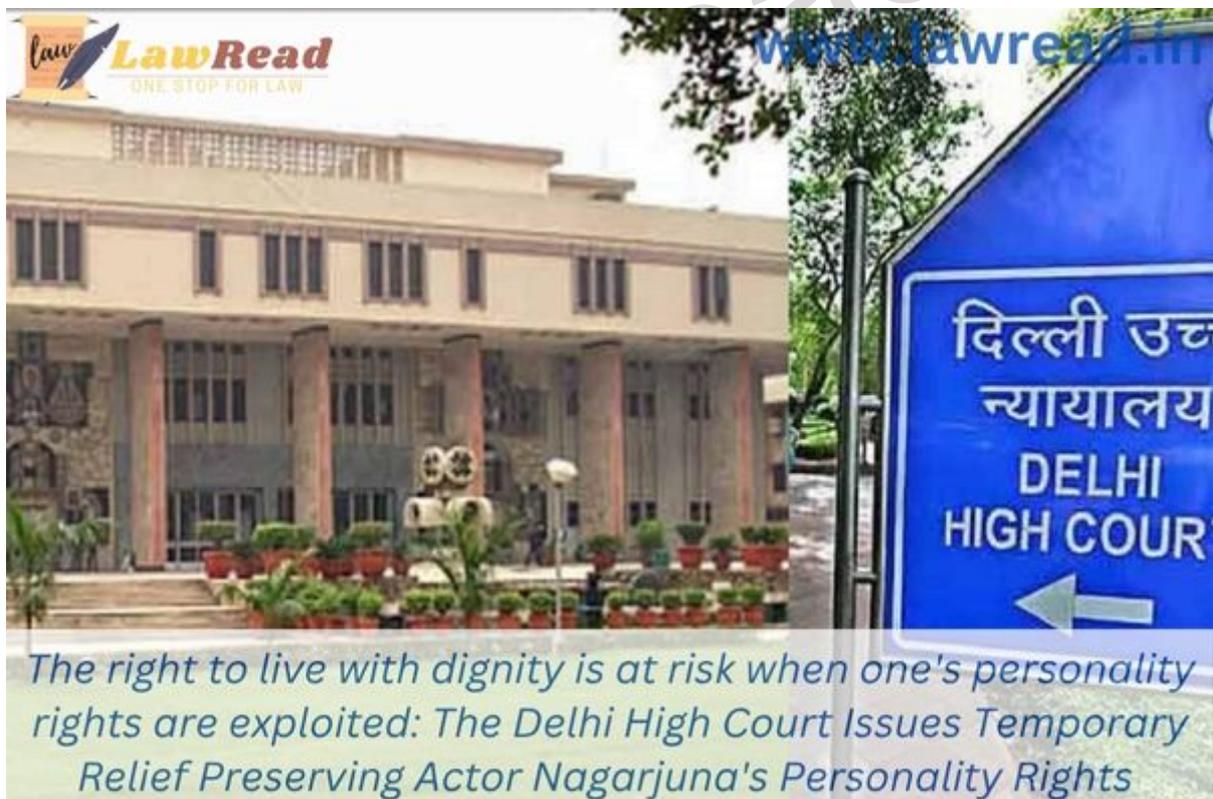


News

The right to live with dignity is at risk when one's personality rights are exploited: The Delhi High Court Issues Temporary Relief Preserving Actor Nagarjuna's Personality Rights



Nagarjuna filed a lawsuit to obtain a permanent injunction prohibiting passing off, violating performers' rights, and misappropriating publicity or personality rights.

The Delhi High Court defended actor Nagarjuna's personality rights, noting that abuse of such rights jeopardizes a person's right to live with dignity as well as their financial interests.

The Bench of Justice Tejas Karia noted that "the exploitation of one's personality rights puts at risk not only their economic interests but also their right to live with dignity, potentially

causing immeasurable harm to their reputation and goodwill as the adoption of the attributes such as name, image, and likeness unauthorized will inevitably cause confusion in the minds of the members of the public regarding association with/ endorsement by the Plaintiff."

Advocate Yash Raj represented the Defendants, and Senior Advocate Vaibhav Gaggar represented the Petitioner.

Nagarjuna filed a lawsuit to obtain a permanent injunction prohibiting passing off, violating performers' rights, and misappropriating publicity or personality rights. Having appeared in more than 95 feature films, it was argued that Nagarjuna is a highly esteemed veteran of the Indian film industry and one of the most renowned, acknowledged, and celebrated actors, producers, and entrepreneurs.

Additionally, it was argued that Nagarjuna's reputation as a well-respected public figure stems from more than 40 years of devoted labor in a variety of sectors, which has greatly increased his legitimacy and awareness among the general public as well as the film industry.

It was argued that Nagarjuna's name, persona, likeness, and image have become distinctively different. Any third party who uses any of the aforementioned aspects of the Plaintiff's character is likely to mislead the public about their association with or sponsorship of Nagarjuna.

The Court's Remark The Delhi High Court emphasized that abusing one's personality rights jeopardizes not only one's financial interests but also one's right to live with dignity. This can result in irreversible damage to one's reputation and goodwill because unapproved use of one's name, image, or likeness will undoubtedly lead to misunderstandings among the general public regarding affiliation with or support for Nagarjuna.

According to the Court, it was evident from the outset that the Defendants were abusing the Nagarjuna persona's characteristics, such as his name and photos, without his consent.

The Court stated that since the Plaintiff is a well-known figure in the entertainment sector, portraying them in unsuitable, disparaging, and deceptive contexts will unavoidably have the impact of weakening the goodwill and reputation attached to them.

As a result, the Court prevented the defendants from infringing upon Nagarjuna's **rights to privacy**. The Court ordered that "Defendants Nos. 1 through 13 and 20, their principal officers, servants, agents, affiliates, subsidiaries, distributors, and all others acting for and on their behalf are restrained from violating the Plaintiff's Personality Rights and/or Plaintiff's Moral Rights and/or passing off their goods and/or services as those emanating from or being endorsed by the Plaintiff by using and / or in any manner directly and / or indirectly using or exploiting or misappropriating the Plaintiff's (i) name Akkineni Nagarjuna and (ii) image and likeness; (iii) other aspects of his persona that are uniquely identifiable with him; and (iv) using any technology, including but not limited to artificial intelligence, generative artificial intelligence, machine learning, deepfakes, and face morphing, on any medium and format that dilutes the Plaintiff's public persona in order to create, share, and disseminate any product (including clothing) and/or content (including audio-visual content, images, videos, etc.) for any commercial and/or personal gain and/or otherwise by exploiting them in any way without the Plaintiff's consent and/or authorization.

Accordingly, the matter will be heard in January, 2026.

Cause Title: Akkineni Nagarjuna V. WWW.BFXX.ORG & Ors.

Appearance:

Petitioners: Senior Advocate Vaibhav Gaggar, Advocates Pravin Anand, Vaishali R Mittal, Vibhav Mithal, Shivang Sharma, Somdev Tiwari, Abhishek Nair and Vansh Shrivastav **Defendant:** Advocate Yash Raj