

Sunburn feels the heat of songs' copyright owner

Novex Communications Private Limited, holding the copyright of over 5,000 Bollywood songs, has filed an FIR against the Sunburn organizers for playing some popular numbers allegedly without obtaining the necessary licence. FIR was recently filed under the Indian Copyright Act, 1957 after the Sunburn organizers played a couple of Bollywood hits owned by the company. The company had warned them on the necessity of obtaining the licence to play the songs.

A senior official of the Hinjewadi police station confirmed that the FIR was filed on January 2. "The organizers were playing songs owned by Novex without their permission and sans paying any royalty to the company. The authorities of Novex, managing the copyright for Yashraj Films, ZEE Entertainment Enterprise Limited, Shemaroo Entertainment Limited and Eros International Media Limited alleged that Sunburn, Pune, played songs like 'Malhari' from 'Bajirao Mastani' and 'Kajrare Kajrare' from the movie 'Bunty Aur Bubli', owned by the company.

A source in Percept Live, which owns the Sunburn Music Festival, said, "This is an ongoing issue with music societies and those who claim to be the copyright owners. In most cases, such societies do not have the legal authority to seek compensation. Even if they do, they are at the best entitled to get royalty for the tracks played. But most of these societies approach event organizer and demand a hefty fee without substantiating the ownership of the songs."

The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) earlier filed a writ petition before the Bombay high court challenging the demands of Novex, stating that it cannot indulge in the business of issuing or granting such a licence. The issue is currently pending in the high court.