

A New Year party minus bollywood hits?¹

An organisation that owns the rights over about 2 mn songs has dragged some 150 top 5-star hotels and New Year party organisers to court over alleged copyright violations.



Phonographic Performance (PPL) wants them to either pay a royalty or not play the songs owned by it.

Chances are that your favourite Punjabi, Bollywood, Tamil or English dance number may not play at the New Year party that you plan to attend.

An organisation that owns the rights over about 2 million songs has dragged some 150 top 5-star hotels and New Year party organisers to court over alleged copyright violations. Phonographic Performance (PPL) wants them to either pay a royalty or not play the songs owned by it.

In most cases, organisers may just choose to skip the songs, as they don't wish to pay the royalty, said hotel industry insiders. "In some cases, the party organisers may just go ahead with playing the songs and fight it out in courts," said one of them.

PPL filed its petition in the Bombay High Court. In a legal notice sent to hotels and party organisers, it said: "In order to ensure that the use of its repertoire is not made unauthorisedly... addressed a notice to the defendants... to apply for public performance licences and pay the requisite licence fee for the legitimate use of the sound recordings belonging to the plaintiff in the year-end events."

ET has seen a copy of the notice. PPL and its lawyers didn't respond to an email seeking comment.

"This matter of music licences by entities such as PPL to third parties is a complex, yet significant, one and it needs to be suitably addressed with finality. We are hopeful that the court shall provide clear guidelines and directions to pave a clear way forward for this issue," said **Abhishek Pandurangi, partner at Khurana & Khurana, a law firm specialising in intellectual property rights**. It represents some of the hotels, including Hotel Ramada, in the case.

As per court documents, other hotels that PPL has named in the petition include properties associated with Leela, Courtyard Marriot, JW Marriott, ITC and Lemon Tree.

Courts are shut for winter vacation. A vacation bench will consider the case due to the urgency of the matter as the New Year is less than 10 days away, said people close to the development.

PPL, with some 300 music labels who created several famous rocks, jazz, pop, and dance songs as members, is one of the biggest players in the world. Its members include Saregama India, Tips Industries, Universal Music India, Super Cassettes Industries and Sony Music Entertainment India.

¹ [Source](#)