



Malaika Arora Khan

ruckus

The Balmy Effect

After enjoying the publicity the famous song Munni badnaam hui garnered for their product Zandu balm, Emami Ltd decided to take it up as a copyright issue. They have certainly had their way, with Malaika Arora now all set to be their brand ambassador

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BY KAKOLI PODDAR

The Salman Khan starrer *Dabangg* is a huge hit and Malaika Arora Khan has again hit the jackpot with her gyrations in the raunchy item number *Munni badnaam hui...Main Zandu balm hui*. The 'Zandu balm' effect in the song might have added the extra zing to the chartbuster number, but it had also been a pain in the neck (albeit temporarily) for the producer Arbaaz Khan.

Kolkata-based Emami Ltd had slapped a legal notice against the makers of *Dabangg* for usage of the brand name 'Zandu balm' without permission, alleging Copyright Infringement.

Though the producers were on a song with the number and the film being a huge success, getting into legal tangles was certainly not music to their ears.

Arbaaz Khan



Aditya Agarwal, Director of Emami, speaking to *Society*, shares how this issue was resolved amicably out of court with the intervention of ad personality Prahlad Kakkar, saving both parties the pain of legal hassles. Both Emami and Arbaaz Khan Productions would cross promote each others' products through the song, and it would be a win-win situation for both parties. Emami has withdrawn its case against Arbaaz Khan Productions. What is more, Emami has even got 'Munni' (Malaika Arora Khan) to be the brand ambassador of Zandu balm. Aditya points out, "We have meanwhile roped in 'Billo' (another Bollywood hottie Bipasha Basu) to be a brand ambassador."

Aditya Agarwal further adds, "I do not believe in stoking the flames of any fire. I don't like controversies. When the song was first aired, we were quite zapped. It was a mixed reaction from our end. On the one hand, we felt glad that our brand, which is a household name all over India, has been used in the song. On the other hand, we were taken aback and miffed that the producers had not bothered to seek permission from us. After all, it is a copyright violation."

Zandu is more than a century old household name in India and a leading player in Ayurveda healthcare. Emami Limited acquired Zandu Pharmaceutical Works Ltd for about Rs 730 crores in 2008. Says Aditya Agarwal, "In 2008, Emami acquired all the 300+ Ayurvedic brands of Zandu Pharmaceuticals."

Indeed, Zandu balm sales have been extra brisk, thanks to 'Munni's' seductive gyrations. Retailers have said that many customers specifically ask for the Munni *wala* balm. Aditya Agarwal contends that the *Munni badnaam* song is also called the Zandu Balm song, agreeing that the popularity of Zandu balm has soared, along with the sales.

He however does not attribute the mounting of the sales to just the song. "Around the same time, we had launched a new advertisement where Zandu balm got youth brand ambassadors in the form of Virender Sehwag, Dinesh Karthik and Amit Mishra to promote the brand. As cricketers have the highest reach and influence, and all three are young, that was

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found to be the best fit."

He agrees that the song could have had a multiplier effect to this new advertisement. He candidly admits to swaying to the groove of the song. "I like the number. I think the song and the dance are quite nice and catchy."

Aditya Agarwal is proud about the fact that Zandu balm fitted the song to a T. "In the song, 'Munni' professes to ease the pain of her beloved by becoming Zandu balm, and our Zandu balm is also an effective pain-reliever. None of the other names could have fitted the song so well. Amrutanjan is too complicated a name, Iodex doesn't sound good. Only Zandu balm packed in the perfect punch to this rocking item number, which has the nation in its spell."

Both the filmmaker and the balm maker are laughing their way to the bank after much ado about a balm. "We are not complaining," says Aditya. Why would he, considering that Emami had the cake and ate it too. Not only did they get enough publicity for their brand, after the fracas, they have even got the sexy Malaika to endorse their product. A real win-win situation.<<