

Google urges court to restore YouTube anti-Islam film

SAN FRANCISCO, USA: Google has urged a US appeals court to let it repost an anti-Islamic movie on YouTube pending a re-hearing of the copyright case that got it removed.



YouTube removed this movie over violent protests and copyright action. Image: [Ray4Movie](#)

The 2012 appearance of "Innocence of Muslims" on Google's video-sharing site provoked deadly violence, but the current legal case against it relates only to the concerns of one of its stars.

US actress Cindy Lee Garcia brought a lawsuit claiming she was tricked into appearing in the film, without realising its provocative anti-Muslim slant. She says she has received death threats as a result of it.

Google said it has complied with the "unprecedented sweeping injunction" but argued that irreparable harm is being done to the Constitutional rights of YouTube, Google, and the public.

"Under the panel's rule, minor players in everything from Hollywood films to home videos can wrest control of those works from their creators. Service providers like YouTube will lack the ability to determine who has valid copyright," Google argued in its request for an emergency stay of the order.

A lower court had refused to order Google to remove the film while Garcia's case goes forward, but last week the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals overturned that decision.

Amateurish movie

The amateurish movie, which depicted the Prophet Mohammed as a thuggish deviant, triggered a wave of violent protests that left dozens dead in September 2012.

During the period of the protests, militants attacked the US consulate in Benghazi, Libya and US ambassador Chris Stevens and three more Americans were killed, although the extent to which popular local anger over the film played a role in the assault is a matter of fierce debate in the US.

Garcia was paid about US\$500 for three-and-a-half days of filming on the movie, which had the working title "Desert Warrior," after being cast by producer Mark Basseley Youssef, who had a variety of pseudonyms.

"Desert Warrior" never materialised and Garcia only realised what had become of the footage when she saw "Innocence of Muslims" on YouTube. She appears in the film for about five seconds.

Garcia asked eight times for the film be taken down, but Google refused to comply, so she applied for a restraining order seeking removal of the film from YouTube, claiming that it infringed her copyright in her own performance.

The US Centre for Democracy and Technology (CDT) condemned the court order as a threat to free expression and reasoned that giving actors independent copyrights for performances in films is "absurd."

"In addition to the flaws in the court's analysis of who could claim copyright interests in a film, the court also failed to give adequate weight to the free expression interests at stake," CDT senior policy analyst Andrew McDiarmid said in a blog post.

Source: AFP via I-net Bridge

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