

## Karan Johar sued in US, to respond with another lawsuit

Bollywood filmmaker Karan Johar is reportedly angry with the \$150,000 lawsuit slapped against his production house in the US for non-payment to local workers. He has now decided to sue Swish Films, which he had hired to supervise the production of the Saif Ali Khan-Kareena Kapoor starrer.

'Dharma Production is suing Swish Films. Karan's legal department is on the job. Meanwhile, Dharma has decided to clear all the payments of the Philadelphia crew, although the money had already been passed on to Swish for payment. But Karan would rather deal with the default allegation first and then take on Swish to get back his money,' a Dharma Production source told IANS.

According to the Philadelphia Daily News, the lawsuit by the film crew cites breach of contract by Dharma Productions and its partner Swish Films of Melbourne for the production of its thriller 'Jihaad' or 'KP-15'. It is seeking in excess of \$150,000 for unpaid services and expenses for 25 of the vendors hired for the film.

The lawsuit also requests a restraining order that would prevent representatives of Dharma - which changed its name to Karma Films while it continued to shoot the film in New York last month - from leaving the US with its assets, primarily the footage already shot.

The dispute began when a Swish producer sent out cheques in late December, warning actors, vendors and crew members to wait until after Jan 9 to cash them. The cheques bounced anyway, leaving more than \$500,000 in unpaid bills.

Dharma has since offered certain workers half the amount they are owed in return for signing a waiver that nullifies any legal action against the company, the report said.

In other cases, Dharma paid the full amount owed, including to the City of Philadelphia and Teamsters Local 107. Dharma and Swish will be hit with more litigation this week, the newspaper reported, citing Center City lawyer Michael H. Rosenthal, who said he will file a suit on behalf of 60 actors and independent contractors.

Blaming Swish Films for the problem, the source said: 'It's not Dharma but their online producers Swish who have goofed up with the payments. Do you know of Dharma ever defaulting on their payments? Karan's father Yash Johar worked all his life to preserve his company's reputation. Do you know how hurtful it is for Karan to be suddenly accused of such unbecoming conduct?'

*Subhash K. Jha* ( © IANS / India eNews)