

Music director Ilayaraja holds the baton



Chennai: Legendary playback singer S P Balasubrahmanyam receiving a legal notice from veteran composer Ilayaraja for singing his songs without permission on stage has opened a debate.

While a section welcomes Raja's decision, a few said it was morally wrong to have taken up the issue with SPB. It may be recalled that both SPB and Ilayaraja shared a great rapport for over four decades and the former has sung thousands of songs for the latter. The duo had combined well to produce hundreds of hit songs which still captivate the audience.

Legal notices were served on SPB, his son Charan (playback singer and actor) and singer Chitra and to all organisers of concerts in different cities and managements of all venues, asking them to stop singing Ilayaraja's compositions without his consent.

The notice stated that if they continue to do so, it would be breaking the copyright law and he and his team would have to pay huge financial penalties and face legal action

Speaking to News Today, counsel for Ilayaraja, said, "It is legally correct on the part of a composer to claim his right over his compositions. It has been the norm in the West. We know that in hundreds of concerts in weddings, temple functions and street corners, concerts are organised and songs of Ilayaraja are sung. But when you arrange a show on a massive and price the ticket heavily in dollars, that is where the issue begins."

As far as the legal notice to SPB is concerned, it was for a show in USA, he clarified. SPB, along with singer Chitra and his son Charan are currently on a world tour titled SPB50, to mark his 50th year in the industry.

The tour began on August in Toronto, followed by his concert in Russia, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore, Dubai and the US.

"The show (music concert) should happen. By God's grace, I have sung lots of other (music) composers' songs too which we will present. Hope you will bless our concerts as usual," said SPB.

He requested the fans and audience not to have any harsh opinions and discussions regarding this on Facebook. "If this is the design of God, I obey it with reverence," he remarked.

Says a film academician, "The law is for the creator. As such there is nothing wrong in what Ilayaraja has done. Unfortunately such things were not there until a few days ago. Today the compositions of legendary composers like M S Viswanathan and K V Mahadevan are played everywhere. One wonders what their families are getting."