

THE INDEPENDENT  
(BOMBAY)

# Lintas to serve notice to DD on Kama Sutra

LINTAS INDIA, the high profile advertising agency, will serve a legal notice on Doordarshan next week in connection with the Kama Sutra condom advertisements, agency sources revealed yesterday.

This will be a rare instance of Doordarshan being put in the dock by an advertising agency for its high-handed behaviour. Lintas is seeking legal counsel at the moment.

The agency decided to approach the court since Doordarshan has rejected three versions of a 16-second spot on Kama Sutra condoms after approving the storyboards without ascribing any reasons.

It may be recalled that Kama Sutra condoms had created quite a stir in the market last by the bold media campaign and the brand name. The issue became so heated that various aspects of the product and its advertisements were discussed in the Rajya Sabha.

Lintas had chalked out a multi-media strategy to promote the product which included advertisements in the press, on Doordarshan and in cinema halls apart from selective promotion in other ways.

Accordingly, the agency drew up storyboards for Doordarshan and cinema advertisements which were distinct

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from one another considering the audiences of the two media, agency sources said. The films were to be of 16 seconds and 66 seconds respectively, both using actress Pooja Bedi as in the press advertisements.

The storyboard was provisionally approved by Doordarshan in September 1991 but the film was rejected after it was conditionally cleared two months later. Doordarshan has not so far communicated to the agency its reasons for rejecting the film, Lintas director Jayant Bakshi told *The Independent* confirming that the agency was moving the court in this regard.

Bakshi said that the film was given a "verbal nod" in November last on the condition that it will be screened only if the agency deleted certain "offensive portions" and, even then, it will be shown only after 10 pm. The portions related to a few frames in between and at the very end where a man and woman embrace each other just before a shot of the product pack comes on.

Bakshi says that his agency agreed to these "conditions" though they were unfair but modified the film after Doordarshan had approved the sto-

ryboard for it. However, this version was also rejected and the agency asked to submit another one.

"We followed the storyboard routine this time around also but we received a letter in January-February this year rejecting the advertisement unconditionally. This is most unfair particularly after we have been decent with them," Bakshi says.

While Doordarshan has a set of guidelines to approve or reject advertisements, several agencies have alleged in the past that the guidelines are vague and open to personal interpretation. Bakshi says that the guidelines are "not at all qualitative". "I cannot believe that any rejection can be unconditional," he says.

Lintas is fuming over Doordarshan's handling of the issue more so because the 66-seconds film made for cinema halls was not only approved by the Central Board for Film Certification but it is currently being shown in cinema halls and on cable television networks.

While Doordarshan officials were not available for comment, it is learnt that Information and Broadcasting Secretary Mahesh Prasad has invited all "rejected material for review and re-consideration" on April 20 in New Delhi.