

#### INDIA NON JUDICIAL



#### e-Stamp

Certificate No.

IN-DL53520318907451T

Certificate Issued Date

23-Nov-2021 10:09 AM

Account Reference

IMPACC (SH)/ dlshimp17/ TIS HAZARI/ DL-DLH

Unique Doc. Reference

SUBIN-DLDLSHIMP1799994549699735T

Purchased by

ADV R K KASHYAP

Description of Document

Article 12 Award

Property Description

Not Applicable

Consideration Price (Rs.)

0

First Party

(Zero)

Second Party

ADV R K KASHYAP

Stamp Duty Paid By

ADV R K KASHYAP

Stamp Duty Amount(Rs.)

100

(One Hundred only)



Please write or type below this line

NATIONAL INTERNET EXCHANGE OF INDIA B Wing, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Statesman House Building 148, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi-110001

GIANNI VERSACE S.r.l

V/s

DOUBLEFIST LIMITED

Orne 23/11/11

Statutory Alert.

The authoriticity of this Stamp certificate should be verified at www.shollestamp.com or using e-Stamp Mobile App of Stock Holding Any discrepancy in the details on this Certificate and as available on the website / Mobile App randers it invalid.

TI Case of any dispresency please inform the Comperent Author

#### AWARD

### 1. THE PARTIES

The Complainant is Gianni Versace S.r.l, at Piazza Luigi Einaudi 4, 20124 Milano, Italia, by authorized representative Mr. Luca Barbero, c/o Studio Barbero S.p.A. having its office at, Corso Massimo d'Azeglio 57, 10126 Torino, Italy, vide phone No. +39 011 381 0600 and E-mail: info@studiobarbero.com

The Respondent is Doublefist Limited, Wisconsin, USA, E-mail ymgroup@msn.com

# 2. THE DOMAIN NAME AND REGISTRAR:

This Arbitration pertains to a dispute regarding the Domain name versace.in.

The disputed Domain name is versace.in.

The abovesaid domain registered particulars in detail is provided and available in **Annexure-1** and from page No. 85 to 91.

Registrar Name: Dynadot LLC

Registrar Address: 210 S Ellsworth Ave #345 San Mateo, CA 94401

US

**IANA ID: 472** 

**Date of creation: 19-07-2013 Date of Expiry: 19-07-2025** 

Registrant Client ID: <a href="http://www.dynadot.com">http://www.dynadot.com</a>
Email: <a href="mailto:abuse@dynadot.com">abuse@dynadot.com</a> : <a href="mailto:info@dynadot.com">info@dynadot.com</a>
For detail information please refer page No. 85 to 91

# 3. PROCEDURAL HISTORY

(a) The Complainant has filed a complaint on 27/09/2021 with the NATIONAL INTERNET EXCHANGE OF INDIA. The Complainant made the registrar verification in connection with the Domain name at issue. The annexures received with the complaint are Annexure-1 to 8. The exchange verified the complaint, satisfied the formal

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requirements of the Indian Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (INDRP) (the 'Policy') and the Rules framed thereunder.

- (b) The NIXI has appointed Sh. R.K. Kashyap, Advocate as the Sole Arbitrator in this matter vide letter dated 14-10-2021. The Arbitrator finds that he has been properly appointed. The Arbitrator has submitted his Statement of acceptance and Declaration of Impartiality and Independence on 16-10-2021, as required by the Exchange.
- (c) The Arbitrator, as per the INDRP Policy and the Rules, has duly issued the notice on 18-10-2021 and directed the complainant to serve the Respondent with a copy of the Complaint alongwith annexures on the given e-mail as well as on physical address. In the Notice, it has also been mentioned that the respondent to file the reply/response within 15 days from the receipt of notice. The direction of the arbitrator to serve the respondent has duly been complied with and the complainant sent the notice through mail as well as through courier dated 22-10-2021, the tracking details has also been sent, AWB Number- 562372907, wherein shown, "Shipment delivered in good condition on 26-10-2021". The respondent is duly served through electronic mode and having complete knowledge about the proceedings before the arbitrator, as a same is clearly reflected from the tracking report, as such the respondent is deemed served. The arbitrator further granted another five days time to the respondent for filing reply, through mail dated 18-11-2021. Despite knowledge, the respondent has not filed any response till date. Hence, the respondent proceeded ex-parte.

# 4. <u>Factual Background</u>:

The following information has been derived from the Complaint and the various supporting annexure to it, the Arbitrator has found the following facts:

# Complainant's Activities

a) The Complainant Gianni Versace S.r.l, is the registered trademark of VERSACE in various countries and using it in connection with its

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ongoing business. The detail of complainant registration are available at page no.5. The registration of the complainant company in other countries are available in **Annexure-2.2** to **2.8**. The additional domain name registration detail are available in **Annexure-3.1** to **3.3**.

- b) The complainant company is one of the leading international design houses as well as a symbol of Italian Luxury world vide. It designs, manufacturers, distributes and retails fashion and life style products including haute couture, pret-a-porter, accessories, jewellery, watches, eyewear, fragrances and home furnishings characterized by VERSACE trade mark.
- c) The complainants fashion house founded in 1978 and is one of the most talented fashion designers of past decades, and controlling its brand. In 1994 the brand gained widespread international coverage due to the black Versace dress of Elizabeth Hurley. On 15-07-1997 Gianni Versace was tragically shot and killed by Andrew Cunnan. Thereafter the brand was taken over by his siblings.
- **d)** In the year 2000 Versace group opened Palazzo Versace in Australia. The second was built in Dubai and opened in the year 2015. The third was built in China.
- e) Nowadays, the Versace group distributes its products through a worldwide D.O.S network including over 200 boutiques in the principal cities and over 1500 whole sellers worldwide
- f) In the year 2017 the complainant had a turnover of 668 million Euro, reaching a net profit of 15 million Euro. The complainant markets its products worldwide in many countries, including United States, where respondent is allegedly based, where complainant its products can be purchased in 22 official boutiques. Evidence of respondent's presence and of its promotion of the VERSACE brand in the United States, proving widely known in such countries well before the registration of the disputed domain name, the details are provided in **Annexure-4.2**



- g) With regard to India, Complainant has an iconic design service that supports customers and developers in creating interiors with the distinctive VERSACE style. In 2018 the Indian Abil group (Avinash Bhosale group) announced a partnership with Complainant for the building of new VERSACE apartments located in South Mumbai in Hughes road. The project offers luxurious amenities such as a state-ofthe-art double height VERSACE designed lobby, an infinity edge swimming pool, a state-of-the-art gymnasium, steam room, hot tub, rooftop garden, juice bar and massage/spa rooms situated on the 32nd floor, 366 feet above sea level. The all-duplex skyscraper, ABIL Mansion with interiors designed by VERSACE, gives Mumbai an immersive living experience that is absolutely unique (refer Annex 4.3). The VERSACE trademark has been also promoted on Indian websites and newspapers (see for instance. https://www.thecollective.in/category/men/offers1279?page=1&order way=asc&orderby=popular&fp[]=Subbrand\_\_fq:Versace%20Collecti on&fp[]= Gender fq:Men, also enclosed in Annex 4.3).
- h) In addition to the above, Complainant is also the named registrant of the domain name <versace.co.in>, registered in 2006, *i.e.* earlier than the disputed Domain Name. Furthermore, the trademark VERSACE was and presently is strongly supported by global advertising campaigns through television and other media such as with international magazines (refer Annexure-4.4). Besides the traditional advertising channels, VERSACE company and products has been also widely promoted via Internet, in particular with a strong presence online through the most popular social media, i.a. on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, WeChat, Weibo.
- i) In light of Complainant's significant investments in R&D, marketing and sales, the regular use of the sign VERSACE for over 40 years, as well as the existence of the impressive client base for all products worldwide, VERSACE is undisputedly a well-known trademark worldwide, including India. In order to further support the protection of the "VERSACE" trademark on the Internet, Complainant registered the word "VERSACE" and variations thereof as domain name in

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- numerous gTLDs and ccTLDs. The list of many of the domain names secured in the name of the Complainant is provided in **Annexure-4.5**.
- j) Respondent registered without authorization the Domain Name on June 29, 2011, well after Complainant's registration of the VERSACE trademarks cited above. As mentioned, Respondent initially identified itself in the Whois records as "Zhaxia, Pfister Hotel" and then changed its name into "Doublefist Limited" (refer Annexure-1). The Domain Name has been pointed by Respondent to a web page displaying several sponsored links, including a link named "Versace", which redirect users to third parties' commercial websites and also to Complainant's official website. (refer Annexure-5).
- k) In view of the above-described use of the Domain Name, identical to the trademark VERSACE, Complainant instructed a software agency to contact Respondent in order to ascertain its real intention as to the Domain Name and acquire information on any possible legitimate interest related to it. On January 20, 2017, the software agency sent a message to the email address indicated in the WhoIs database of <Versace.in>, i.e. ymgroup@msn.com, requesting to Respondent, which that day was indicated as "Zhaxia" as per enclosed Whois, which were his projects related to the Domain Name and the possible availability and conditions to assign it (refer Annexure-6.1 and the full correspondence in Annexures-6.1-6.3). Respondent replied to that communication the same day, requesting 2.890 USD for transferring the Domain Name (refer Annexure-6.2).
- I) The software agency therefore indicated that the requested sum was not affordable (refer Annexure-6.3) and received a final acknowledgement from Respondent (refer Annexure-6.4). The software agency thus reported the communications received to Complainant which, in view of the amount well over the out-of-pocket costs requested for transferring the Domain Name, identical to the trademark VERSACE, instructed its representatives to draft and send to Respondent a Cease and Desist letter. Such letter was sent on December 18, 2017 via email to the address indicated in the WhoIs database (ymgroup@msn.com), requesting Respondent to cease any

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use of the disputed Domain Name and transfer it to Complainant free of charge (refer Annexures-6.5 and 6.6).

- m) The following day, Respondent replied, acknowledging Complainant's prior rights ("Sorry we violated your company's trademark rights, and I understand that you said") but anyway requesting 3890 EURO for transferring the Domain Name to the legitimate trademark's owner (refer Annexure-6.7). Nevertheless, in an attempt to amicably settle the matter, Complainant offered to Respondent, through its representatives, the reimbursement of the out-of-pocket costs related to the registration and maintenance of the Disputed Domain Name, but Respondent refused such offer (refer Annexure-6.8). On September 7, 2018, Respondent whose name, according to the Whois enclosed in Annex 1, was in the meantime changed in Doublefist Limited directly contacted Complainant offering the domain name <versace.in> for sale without specifying the requested consideration (refere Annexure-6.9).
- n) In light of the above, Complainant forwarded said message to its representatives which, in replying to such communication, reiterated to Respondent the requests set forth in the previous Cease and Desist letter and even offered again the reimbursement of the documented out-of-pocket expenses. However, on September 14, 2018, Respondent, again, requested an amount well exceeding the out of pocket costs (1890 EURO) for transferring the Domain Name to Complainant (refer Annexure-6.9).
- Complainant's representatives sent a final reminder of the previous Cease and Desist letter to all known Respondent's email addresses, including the one indicated in the official WhoIs database, *i.e.* ymgroup@msn.com (Annexure-7.1). Respondent replied from such email address requesting, again, the amount of 1.890 USD for the Domain Name, thereby confirming that Zhaxia of Pfister Hotel and Doublefist Limited are indeed aliases used by the same individual or entity who is willing to derive profits from the sale of the Domain Name to Complainant (Annexure-7.2).

### 5. <u>DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS:</u>

The Rules instructs this Arbitrator as to the Principles to be used in rendering its decision. It says that, "a panel shall decide a Complaint on the basis of the statements and documents submitted by the parties in accordance with the Policy, the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996, the Rules and any Rules and Principles of Law that it deems applicable". According to the Policy, the Complainant must prove that:-

- a) The Registrant's Domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a name, Trademark or Service mark in which the Complainant has rights;
- b) The Registrant's has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Domain name that is the subject of Complaint; and
- c) The Registrant's Domain name has been Registered or is being used in bad faith.

# (A). Identical or Confusingly Similar:

- i) The disputed Domain name "Versace.in" was Registered by the Respondent on 29-06-2011.
- ii) The Domain Name <versace.in> entirely reproduces Complainant's trademark VERSACE, which has been registered by Complainant in India and several other Countries, as highlighted above and in Annexes 2.
- iii) The Domain Name is visually and phonetically identical to Complainant's trademark, since, as stated in a number of prior cases, the mere addition of the ccTLD in is not a distinguishing feature.
- iv) The complainant relied upon the decision in [INDRP/956],involving the domain name <puma.in>: "the disputed domain name incorporates the mark PUMA in entirety. Save for the .IN generic country code top level domain, it is identical to the Complainant's PUMA mark. The ccTLDis not to be considered for purposes of determining similarity between domain name and trademark". See also FMTM Distribution Ltd. v. Bel Arbor [INDRP/681], involving the domain name <franckmuller.in>.
- v) Moreover, as found in Perfetti Van Melle Benelux BV v. Jing Zi Xin [INDRP/665], numerous courts and UDRP panels have recognized

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that "if a well-known trademark is incorporated in its entirety, it may be sufficient to establish that a domain name is identical or confusingly similar to Complainant's registered mark. (...) Further, it has been held in the matter of *Disney Enterprises, Inc. v. John Zuccarini, Cupcake City and Cupcake Patrol* [WIPO Case No. D2001-0489] that "domain names that incorporate well-known trademarks can be readily confused with those marks".

- vi) Contention of Complainant is also squarely covered in Case of Walmart Stores, Inc. v. Richard MacLead, (WIPO Case No. D2000-0662) wherein it has been held that "When the Domain name includes the Trademark, or a confusingly similar approximation, regardless of the other terms in the Domain name" it is identical or confusingly similar for purposes of the Policy. The reliance can be placed on the following cases of NIXI in this regards:-
  - NIXI case number INDRP/956,
  - NIXI case number INDRP/997,
  - NIXI case number INDRP/1038,
  - NIXI case number INDRP/992,

Therefore, I hold that the Domain name "versace.in" is phonetically, visually and conceptually identical or confusingly/deceptively similar to the Trademark of the Complainant "VERSACE".

# (B). Rights or Legitimate Interests:

- The Complainant submits that it has legitimate interest in the "VERSACE" trademark in India as it registered the said mark since 1998, and has been openly, continuously and extensively using it in said Country for several years. Moreover, by virtue of long and extensive use and advertising, the "VERSACE" trademark has become well-known mark.
- ii) The Complainant submits that it has registered the domain name <versace.com> on 25/03/1997 and <versace.co.in> on 21/12/2006 whereas the disputed Domain Name <versace.in> was registered by Respondent on 29/06/2011. Hence, Respondent's subsequent adoption and registration of the disputed Domain Name shows that Respondent has no right or legitimate interest in the domain name <versace.in>.

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iii) Respondent is not a licensee, an authorized agent of Complainant, or in any other way authorized to use Complainant's trademark VERSACE. As stated in, *inter alia*, *Pharmacia & Upjohn Company v. Moreonline*, Case No. D2000-0134, "the mere registration, or earlier registration, does not establish rights or legitimate interests in the Domain Name." See also along these lines **Perfetti Van Melle Benelux BV v. Jing Zi Xin** (supra) where, in a case similar to the present one, the Arbitrator held that"(..) It has been held that merely registering the domain name is not sufficient to establish right or legitimate interests. [Vestel Elecktronik Sanayi ve Ticaret AS v. Mehmet Kahveci, WIPO Case No. D2000-1244]."

Further, Respondent is neither commonly / popularly known in the public nor has applied for any registration of the mark "VERSACE" or any similar mark or has registered his business under the said name with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, India. On the contrary, Respondent's name, according to the official WhoIs database, is "Doublefist Limited".

iv) Respondent has not provided Complainant with any evidence of its use of, or demonstrable preparations to use, the Domain Name in connection with a *bona fide* offering of goods or services or a non-commercial or fair use of the Domain Name, without intent for commercial gain to misleadingly divert consumers or to tarnish the Complainant's trademark. The Complainant submits that the disputed Domain Name was in fact intentionally created by Respondent for commercial gain to misleadingly divert the consumers or traders of the Complainant to the disputed Domain Name, which has been and currently is redirected to a web page featuring several sponsored links to other commercial web sites, and where there is a link redirecting to a website where the Domain Name itself is offered for sale.

The complainant relied upon Panel decision *Paris Hilton v. Deepak Kumar*, WIPO Case No. D2010–1364, if the owner of the domain name is using it in order "...to unfairly capitalise upon or otherwise take advantage of a similarity with another's mark then such use would not provide the registrant with a right or a legitimate interest in the domain name. Respondent's choice of the Domain Name here seems to be a clear attempt to unfairly capitalise on or otherwise take

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advantage of the Complainants' trademarks and resulting goodwill." See, along these lines, Fiskars Corporation v. Lina / Doublefist Limited [INDRP/1067]: "The respondent's use of the disputed domain name is merely intended to divert costumers to respondent's website, which provides multiple pay-per-click links. Hence, it cannot be considered a bona fide offering of goods and services nor a legitimate non-commercial or fair use." Amongst the decisions addressing similar situations where respondent used a domain name corresponding to a trademark to attract users to its website for its own commercial gain, and, at the same time, advertised also the sales of products of competitors, see, *inter alia*, *Luigi Lavazza S.p.A. v. Flying Stingrays Ltd*, WIPO Case No. D2012-1391 and also *Lancôme Parfums et Beaute & Compagnie v. D Nigam, Privacy Protection Services / Pluto Domains Services Private Limited*, WIPO Case No. D2009-0728.

Furthermore, even after having been formally notified of the Complainant's rights in the trademark VERSACE, Respondent requested a consideration well in excess of the out-of-pocket costs (see Annexes 6.7 and 7.2), further demonstrating that it is not making a legitimate non-commercial or fair use of the domain name, without intent for commercial gain to misleadingly divert consumers or to tarnish the trademark or service mark at issue.

v) Accordingly, it is sufficient that Complainant shows a prima facie evidence in order to shift the burden of production on Respondent(see i.a., Bulgari S.p.A. v DomainBook [INDRP/1002], Croatia Airlines d.d. v. Modern Empire Internet Ltd. WIPO Case No. D2003-0455, Belupo d.d. v. WACHEM d.o.o. WIPO Case No. D2004-0110, Sampo plc v. Tom Staver WIPO Case No. D2006-1135, Audi AG v. Dr. Alireza FahimipourWIPOCase No. DIR2006-0003).

Therefore, concludes that Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the Domain Name "Versace.in" as per INDRP policy.

# (C). Registered and Used in Bad Faith:

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- Respondent was aware of the Complainant's exclusive trademark rights at the time of registration and that it has been using the Domain Name in bad faith, as it was put on notice of the infringement of the Complainant's rights via Complainant's Cease and Desist letter sent on December 18, 2017 and subsequent correspondence but failed to comply with the Complainant's demands and continued its use of the Domain Name in an infringing manner.
- ii) The trademark VERSACE has been extensively used since as early as 1978 in connection with Complainant's advertising and sales of VERSACE products worldwide, including in Respondent's Country, has been widely publicized globally and constantly featured throughout the Internet.

The well-known character of the trademark VERSACE has been recognized, amongst others, in the following prior UDRP decisions:

- Gianni Versace S.P.A. v. Nicolino Colonnelli - Europel SRL, WIPO Case No. D2008-0570, issued on June 5, 2008 ("The Complaint's trademark VERSACE is undoubtedly well known in Italy and worldwide"); - Gianni Versace S.r.l. v. Xiulin Wang aka Wangxiulin, WIPO Case No. D2020-0539, issued on May 13, 2020 ("The Trade Mark is a distinctive and well-known trade mark and has been recognized by other UDRP panels as such");

Therefore, Respondent could not have possibly ignored the existence of Complainant's well-known trademark when it registered the identical Domain Name < versace.in>. Several INDRP and UDRP decisions confirmed that the well-known character of a trademark incorporated in a disputed domain name is a relevant circumstance in the assessment of bad faith registration. See *i.a. Accor v. Jiangdeyun*, WIPO Case No. D2011-2277. See also, along the same lines Perfetti Van Melle Benelux BV v. Jing Zi Xin [INDRP/665]; Bulgari S.p.A. v DomainBook [INDRP/1002] (supra) and Amazon Technologies Inc. v. Surya Pratap [INDRP/835].

iii) Complainant submits that, by using the Domain Name, Respondent has intentionally attempted to attract Internet users to its website, by creating a likelihood of confusion with Complainant's trademark as to the source, sponsorship, affiliation or endorsement of Respondent's

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website or the products or services promoted through the Respondent's website, according to Rule 7 (c) of INDRP Policy.

The complainant further relied upon Sparkol Limited v. Mr. Shripal [INDRP/1069] where it was held that "In light of the respondent's presumed knowledge of the complainant's rights, it is reasonable to infer that the respondent registered the disputed domain name without any intention of using it for genuine business or commercial activities. Along these lines see also Bulgari S.p.A. v DomainBook [INDRP/1002] (supra), where the Panel held that, "On perusal of the disputed domain name the panel found that the Respondent has used the disputed domain name to intentionally attract internet website users to its website or the on-line location by creating a likelihood of confusion with the complainants BULGARI/BVLGARI TradeMarks as to source, sponsorship or affiliation or endorsement of the website 'www.bulgari.co.in'".

Name primarily for the purpose of selling it to Complainant, who bears the name and is the owner of the VERSACE trademark, for valuable consideration in excess of the Registrant's documented out-of-pocket costs directly related to the Domain Name, according to Paragraph 7 (a) of the INDRP Policy.

The complainant relied upon the decision rendered in the prior case INDRP/115 related to <armaniexchange.in>, finding that "The Respondent's bad faith is further exemplified by them asking for compensation to transfer the domain name". Along these lines, see Corporation v. Lina / Doublefist Fiskars [INDRP/1067](supra) where a request of 2.500 Euro for the transfer of the disputed domain name was considered in excess of the expenses incurred by the respondent and thus proving without any reasonable doubt its bad faith. Similarly, in Piaggio & C. S.p.A. v. Xu Xiantao [INDRP /1134], it was held: "The Respondent's intention to sell the domain name is evident from the email conversation produced by Complainant is abundantly clear that the Respondent has purposely demanded an amount far from than its out-of-pocket costs for registration. Registering a domain name for the purpose of selling or transferring the domain name for excessive consideration is evidence

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of bad faith and use". See also FMTM Distribution Ltd. v. Bel Arbor [INDRP/681] (supra).

v) Furthermore, Respondent registered the Domain Name in order to prevent Complainant from reflecting its trademark in a corresponding domain name, and Respondent has clearly engaged in a pattern of such conduct, according to Paragraph 7 (b) of INDRP.

In addition, Respondent was involved in several previous INDRP proceedings, where it was found to have registered the disputed domain names, identical to well-known trademarks, in bad faith, such as <deloitte.in> (INDRP/1032), <colgate.in> (INDRP/887), <mozilla.co.in> (INDRP/934), <goldmansachs.in> (INDRP/936), <lesaffre.in> (INDRP/914). vi. As an additional circumstance evidencing bad faith, as found in the cited case INDRP/936 (paragraph 7.17) concerning <goldmansachs.in>, Respondent appears to have used several alias company names and fake addresses to register domain names with the email address ymgroup@msn.com,

In view of the above, it is clear that the Domain Name was registered and is being used by Respondent in bad faith according to Paragraph 4(c) of the INDRP.

### 6. DECISION

In light of the foregoing findings, namely, that the Domain name is confusingly/deceptively similar to Complainant's well-known brand "VERSACE", a mark in which the Complainant has rights, that the Respondent has no claims, rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed Domain name, and that the disputed Domain name was Registered in bad faith and is being used in bad faith, in accordance with the policy and the rules, the Arbitrator orders that the Domain name "versace.in" be transferred to the Complainant.

This award is passed at New Delhi on this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of November, 2021.

R. K. KASHYAP SOLE ARBITRATOR