The Late Night Story Behind 'John Doe'

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Excerpts from Shamnad Basheer's piece, 'The Pure Joy (Anand) of Creativity: The Story of India's First "John Doe"', on SpicyIP. As I yawningly churned out yet another standard suit late into the night, my then boss, Pravin Anand, arguably one of the finest IP lawyers called to ask: "How many defendants have we arraigned?". "Three", I said. "We've received tip offs for only three cable operators, and I've got all of them in.". "But what of the others?", he asked. "What of the others?", I shot back angrily, rubbing my eyelids hard to stay awake. "These are the only ones our investigators came up with". "But there will be others", he said. As he sensed my gnawing sense of impatience and irritability, he said: "Bete (son).. Come home. Let's discuss." Later, donning his professorial robes, he patiently explained: "This is the world cup after all. Every cable operator will want to screen these matches. Very few of them have taken licenses, is that not so?". I mumbled a faint "yes". "All the others clearly want a free ride", he continued. "But we can't keep tracking each one and taking them to court one by one. The world cup would have long gone by then! We need a clever strategy. And one before we get to the semis and finals, when there is maximum viewership!". "So what do we do?", I asked, now all wide eyed and curious. Read more

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