

SCIT reiterates Government's firm commitment to combating Internet piracy

The Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology, Mr Joseph W P Wong, today (May 29) reiterated the Government's firm commitment to combatting Internet piracy, reminding the community to stay away from illegal uploading and downloading activities.

These copyright infringing acts were morally wrong, incorrect and illegal under the law (civil and criminal), he said.

At a ceremony this afternoon which marked the launch of a new series of publicity and educational programmes to promote respect for intellectual property rights (IPRs), Mr Wong appealed to the community, in particular young people, to respect IPRs of creative industries to enable Hong Kong to remain a world city where creativity could flourish.

He said the Government was determined to combat Internet piracy and would continue its effort to educate the public to respect creativity and IPRs in the digital environment.

Besides, Customs and Excise Department, with the support from the IPR sector, would continue to take robust enforcement action against criminal infringements on the Internet.

"We also fully support the creative industries' civil action to protect their copyright. I believe that with the educational and publicity programmes that we launched jointly with the industries and the department's enforcement action, coupled with the industries' development of authorised downloading channels and their civil action against copyright infringers, the Internet piracy problem can be successfully tackled," Mr Wong added.

As part of the Government's continuous efforts to combat Internet piracy, the Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau, Intellectual Property Department (IPD) and Customs and Excise Department, in collaboration with the creative industries and a number of youth organisations, launched today a series of educational and publicity programmes to promote respect for IPRs in the digital environment.

These programmes include the Youth Ambassador Against Internet Piracy

Scheme which will be jointly rolled out by Customs and Excise and IPD in July. Under the Scheme, more than 200,000 youngsters from 11 local youth uniformed organisations will participate as Youth Ambassadors. Customs and Excise will set up a purpose-built website for them to report suspected copyright infringement activities and forward the information to the appropriate participating IPR body for follow-up action.

To urge people to stay away from Internet piracy, IPD has produced two new TV and radio Announcements of Public Interest (APIs), featuring famous artists Jacky Cheung and Simon Yam. The APIs, which were released today, aim to remind people that unlawful activities on the Internet could be tracked down and parents should not give up responsibility for their children when the latter were using the Internet.

To further public education efforts in schools, the Education and Manpower Bureau, in consultation with IPD, will prepare a teaching kit aimed at encouraging students to adopt a proper attitude and manner of handling copyright works on the Internet. The teaching kit will consist of a teacher's manual, videos and presentation materials.

In addition, the Government will also join with local radio stations to produce a series of publicity programmes targeted at young people in the coming few months.

Ends/Monday, May 29, 2006