

India to get tough on traditional knowledge piracy

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The government on Thursday said that it would not adopt a policy of selective fast-tracking as far as harmonisation of patent systems is concerned. Speaking at a symposium on "The new patent regime- Advantage India," Ajay Dua, secretary, department of industrial policy and promotion, indicated that the possibility of India making commitments on such harmonisation, being carried out under the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), would be contingent on the success of its

efforts to avoid unauthorised use of India's traditional knowledge in the global patent system.

Pointing out that as India's vast traditional knowledge is not well documented, the country needed to protect such knowledge and not further expose it to knowledge piracy. A UN estimate is that royalty worth \$5 billion is annually denied to developing countries by unauthorised use of traditional knowledge.

India's Patent Act provides for payment of reasonable royalty to the patent holder. The government is likely to quantify the royalty in the patent rules. ◆