

Nations celebrate International IP Day

April 26 2006

Wednesday marks the International Day of Intellectual Property recognized by the World Intellectual Property Organization.

Celebrated on the 26th of April each year since its inception in 2001, this year's motto is "It Starts with An Idea," true to the nature of inventors and creators.

The event marks a significant time as international intellectual property comes to the forefront of the IP argument.

According to WIPO Director General Kamil Idris, World Intellectual Property Day was established to enhance public awareness of IP's role in society and the importance of stimulating and safeguarding innovation and creativity in nations.

"This year we celebrate the starting point of all intellectual property, the seeds from which all innovations and creative works grow -- ideas," Idris said in a statement. "Mankind's inexhaustible capacity for producing ideas makes us unique. Yet this extraordinary ability is often taken for granted. We hardly notice the countless ideas we generate every day, or how much of what we value is the fruit of others' ideas: labor-saving inventions, pleasing designs, life-saving technologies."

Countries are celebrating the day differently by having inter-government seminars, public lectures, film screenings and IP campaigns via online, paper and workshops on piracy inter-world IP communications and laws, competitiveness, legal cases and patent law.

Other issues include manufacturing, licensing and export, and social-economical development.

-- In the United States, the Creative and Innovative Economy Center of George Washington University Law School with WIPO will invite Congress, the Washington Diplomatic Corps and IP personalities for the screening of Nigerian television film "Wetin Dey?" or "What's Happening?", followed by a panel discussion.

-- Australia launched the National Australian Innovation Festival and World IP Day, as well as having an online chat to discuss current IP issues, distribution of show bags at museums to promote IP Day, among other things as well as have IP Australia staff participate in a "great debate" for World IP Day.

-- Bulgaria held an annual ceremony in which the names of the best investors and their inventions in 2005 will be writing in the Golden Book of Bulgarian Inventions.

-- Kyrgyzstan held seminars for its parliament members, a scientific conference, short courses for enforcement officials and secondary-school teachers, and chess and tennis tournaments.

-- Hungary awarded the Millennium Prize of the Hungarian Patent Office to representatives of institutions and organizations with outstanding achievements in IP among its list of events.

-- In the Philippines, a weeklong celebration was held with the theme "Filipino Creativity and Ingenuity: Our Gift to the World," featuring such activities such as a radio program on IP, a flag-raising ceremony and exhibition of WIPO awards, and a National Essay Writing Contest.

-- In the Republic of Korea, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism held a

ceremony awarding persons in the IP field along with having an anti-piracy campaign and a cyber game competition.

"Ideas shape our world," Idris said. "They are the raw materials on which our future prosperity and heritage depend. This is why it is important to provide environments in which innovative ideas are encouraged and rewarded. This is why intellectual property exists. From the words, music and images which move us, to the brands which attract us; from the bicycle to bio-fuel; from the microchip to mobile phone -- it all starts with an idea."

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