

S. Korean court upholds jail terms for cyber-bullies

October 10 2012



An Internet cafe in Seoul in 2003. A Seoul court on Wednesday upheld jail terms handed down to seven South Koreans for leading an online smear campaign against a hip-hop musician that claimed his US academic degrees were fake.

A Seoul court on Wednesday upheld jail terms handed down to seven South Koreans for leading an online smear campaign against a hip-hop musician that claimed his US academic degrees were fake.

Eight people had appealed after their July conviction for defamation saw three of them sentenced to 10 months imprisonment, while the other five received suspended jail terms.

The court found they had spread false rumours that the rapper Tablo, a 32-year-old Korean-Canadian, had lied about having bachelor's and

master's degrees from Stanford University.

Tablo, whose real name is Daniel Seon Woong Lee, sued in 2010 and a subsequent police investigation confirmed his degrees were authentic.

On Wednesday, the appeals court upheld sentences against seven of the defendants, but reduced and suspended one of the jail terms on medical grounds.

"The defendants had such a malicious motive (to defame Tablo)... We need harsh punishment to prevent such an incident from happening again," the [court](#) said in a ruling.

Educational credentials are a sensitive issue in education-obsessed [South Korea](#), where diplomas from prestigious colleges are considered vital to job and even marriage prospects.

Some South Korean celebrities have been caught or confessed to lying about their [educational background](#) to boost their public image.

The dispute over Tablo also highlighted the issue of cyber bullying of celebrities in the South—one of the world's most wired societies.

Police in 2008 announced a crackdown on malicious Internet rumour-mongers, who they blamed for the suicide of top actress Choi Jin-Sil.

(c) 2012 AFP

Citation: S. Korean court upholds jail terms for cyber-bullies (2012, October 10) retrieved 9 August 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-10-korean-court-terms-cyber-bullies.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is

provided for information purposes only.