

US flags fresh concerns over copyrights law

Seeks To Curb Multiple Access To Legally Downloaded Books

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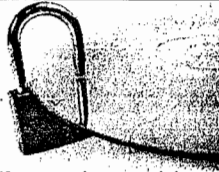
New Delhi: Just when the tussle over patents for medicines seems to be coming to an end, the US has flagged concerns over India's new copyrights law ahead of President Barack Obama's visit. The US is seeking restrictions on the number of times you will be able to read or watch legally downloaded e-books or the latest Hollywood flick.

Sources said the US authorities have flagged three major concerns over the recently amended Copyrights Act, which relate to technological protection and voluntary measures. If the US move is implemented, it may impact even universities, which legally access e-books but will not be able to print a few pages for circulation among students. The Indian government has rejected the demand.

Similarly, the US wants the law to explicitly provide for restrictions on the number of clicks on a downloaded book or the number of times a song can be played, even if downloaded legally. Further, it wants India to adopt measures to prevent illegal copying of, say, DVDs. For instance, while you will be able to watch the movie on the disc after entering a password, you won't be allowed to copy it onto your computer for future views. The move is meant to curb illegal circulation by copying it onto other discs.

Further, the US wants the government to ban manufacture and sale of de-encryption software devices to prevent what it believes is "illegal copying". The American authorities also want re-

LOCKING OUT?



- > US wants the Copyrights Act to restrict the number of times a legally downloaded e-book can be opened or a song can be played
- > It also wants limited number of views of legally purchased movies, and prevent their copying (like from DVDs onto PCs) to counter piracy
- > US has sought a tougher regime for ISPs too, but govt has rejected the demands & pointed out that Indian law conforms to global standards

strictions on internet service providers enhanced.

The issue, sources confirmed, has been discussed but is unacceptable to the Indian government. They pointed out that the Indian law is in line with India's international commitments.

The concerns come after the American pharma lobby got the US government to raise the issue of patent flexibilities, which allows Indian authorities to reject applications which they believe are not "genuine innovation". The biggest concern was over the patent waiver or compulsory licence that the Patents Office granted to a cancer medicine, which allowed an Indian company to manufacture the same drug on payment of royalty.

Patents