

FAITH IN COPTICS

Three companies and the Thai Motion Picture Industry Association file IP complaints through a new anti-piracy agency. **B5**

3 companies file IP violations with novel fast-track centre

KOMSAN TORTERMOVASANA

Three companies and the Thai Motion Picture Industry Association filed complaints yesterday through the newly established government anti-piracy agency, requesting that violating websites be blocked within three days, rather than the current procedure which takes six months.

The three companies are SET-listed Mono Technology Plc, which operates digital TV on Mono 29 Channel, Major Cineplex Group, and Netflix Thailand.

The move came after the official launch of the Center of Operational Policing for Thailand Against Intellectual Property Violations and Crimes on the Internet Suppression (Coptics) yesterday at the office of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC).

NBTC secretary-general Takorn Tantasith said Coptics was established under collaboration with the Royal Thai Police and Intellectual Property (IP) Department, aiming to accelerate the process for blocking illegal websites related to IP violations.

"We have to realise the need to speed up the enforcement procedure and lessen the damage for IP violations in the digital era," he said.

Coptics is part of the NBTC, so cases of online violations can be preliminarily verified by police officers and sent to the NBTC quickly. Then NBTC can notify particular internet service providers (ISPs), which are required to block access to the reported websites immediately.

The NBTC will cooperate with the Royal Thai Police to ensure expediency for the victims of IP violations. Police officers with expertise in these matters are to be stationed at Coptics on a daily basis.

Under the previous procedure, companies with claims of IP rights violations must file a complaint with police for verification, then take their com-

plaint to the Digital Economy and Society (DE) Ministry, which then sends it to a court for an order to block the illegal website.

To obtain the court order could take 7-8 months in some cases.

However, Mr Takorn said the court order procedure may also be conducted in parallel by the DE Ministry.

The opening ceremony for Coptics yesterday included national police chief Pol Gen Chakthip Chaijinda, Pol Maj Gen Surachate Hakparn, chief of the Immigration Bureau, and representatives from the US embassy.

Information on Coptics operations were sent to the embassies of the US, Canada, and Japan to help alleviate their concerns over reporting piracy and in response to questions about IP rights violations.

Mr Takorn said there have been more than 2,000 websites (URLs) reported conducting illegal activities on the internet between August and December this year.

Only 20% of those websites were blocked through the current procedure, he said.

The police sent 744 reported websites to the NBTC last week, asking it to cooperate with ISPs to block the websites.

However, only 47 websites were blocked, while the remaining 697 are encrypted from abroad, meaning local ISPs cannot block them.

Most of those websites are run by Google, YouTube and Facebook, said Mr Takorn.

He said the NBTC asked representatives of the US embassy yesterday for cooperation in inviting management of these US-based companies to talk with the regulator in Thailand.

Mr Takorn said establishment of Coptics is in line with the government's policy to tackle IP rights violations.

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, as chairman of the National Intellectual Property Policy Committee, and Deputy Prime



Takorn: Coptics speeds up process

Minister Prawit Wongsuwan, as chairman of a sub-committee on Law Enforcement of IP Infringement, have ordered the Royal Thai Police, NBTC, and Intellectual Property Department to work closely on readying law enforcement for IP violation cases.

Apart from illegal, pirated products being sold at shops, IP content is also being downloaded via online channels, said Mr Takorn.