



Press Release

Bangaloreans Say No to Software Patents

Bengaluru, Karnataka, India: On 23rd August, 2008, a group of Bangaloreans is to gather outside Town Hall to protest software Patents under the aegis of Free Software Users Group, Bangalore at 5.30 PM.

This protest comes in the wake of attempts by the Indian Patent Office to push software patents, despite the same having been rejected categorically by the Parliament of India in March, 2005. At that time a particular lobby had tried pushing Patents for Software through a Presidential Ordinance. This having fallen through, software patents are now being pushed through the back door in the form of a manual ostensibly to help people file patents.

While the draft in circulation glosses over the fact that software is not patentable in law, it instructs people that software patents can be filed in combination with hardware. The manual is trying to permit something that is explicitly forbidden by the Indian Patent Act, 2005. Further, it is amusing the way the manual tries to get around the legal obstacle posed by the Patents Act, by positing a category of "software in combination with hardware". It leads one to wonder whether software can exist independent of hardware

In this regard, former Supreme Court Judge, Justice V. R. Krishna Iyer has commented that "neither the controller nor the central government has authority or sanction of law to publish a manual of the kind put on the website".

The Free Software Users Group also would like to point out that software is a form of knowledge and software patents would amount to propertisation of knowledge and would be detrimental to the pace at which software is growing. Software patents further kill innovation and competition and turn software publishing into the privilege of a few. As software today pervades all walks of life, any dent in the pace of its growth would have a cascading effect on the economy in general.

The Free Software Users Group also would like to point out to the lobby that is trying to push for software patents through the back door that;

- Software is already protected under copyright law, and no additional protection either to individuals or industries is required
- Hardware innovations are already patentable under the regular innovations; therefore all innovators are already covered
- The current ICT revolution happened with science and technology under public domain and it is important for the growth of software that this remains so.

For More Details, Please visit

http://fci.wikia.com/wiki/Say_No_To_Software_Patents

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