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Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

The Union minister said that the support of the judiciary has encouraged more innovations and copyrights coming into India and there is now a systematic approach to deal with IPR issues.

"The (IPR) bench has been set up (at the Delhi High Court). You are going to face the challenge of increasing numbers but this kind of support, the knowledge being shared, rules being set, the framework being provided, I think it will be far easier for the courts to take up this challenge," she said.

Sitharaman also said that the scheme for intellectual property protection, which started as a pilot scheme in 2016, has been extended until 2023.

The scheme provides that the cost of facilitators or the payments that they have to make for challenges in the court were all borne by the government through the Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trademark, she stated.

"I guess that is going to be one of the important ways in which we can support technology and innovation but that support is only for ensuring that people don't hesitate from the cost point of view. Because it is going to be prohibitive costs, people are going to hesitate. We need all the innovations, we need all the patents because the economy stands to benefit from a multiplier kind of scale. It is far more than general routine activity," she stated.

The minister added that since 2014, the central government has been taking steps to recognise and support services that are infused with innovation, as such drone services, research and development in defence, energy, artificial intelligence etc.

"Economic activities are moving towards these areas which are so dependent on their patent being registered, copyright being registered.. these are going to be things across borders, she said.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said India is at a stage where growth and the focus on development have got to be strengthened from every side and intellectual property rights (IPRs) have an important role in it. The minister mentioned that 28,000 patents were granted last year as opposed to 4,000 in 2013-2014 and the last year also witnessed registration of 2.5 lakh trademarks and over 16,000 copyrights, which will have a very strong ripple effect on the economy.

"So, these are not small numbers. This is the strength of the economy, in supporting such innovations and copyrights, all of which when scaled up are going to have a very strong ripple effect into the economy itself and that would generate its own ecosystem and revenues," Sitharaman said.

Sitharaman was speaking at the 'National Seminar on Adjudication of IPR Disputes in India' here which was organised by the Delhi High Court and attended by Chief Justice of India NV Ramana and other judges.

The minister stated that the central government encouraged start-ups while protecting their IPRs as the boost would not have been possible with only "giving up restrictions".

She also highlighted the importance of innovation for the economy and said that "if general manufacturing and general production give you a level of 3 (on a scale of 10), innovative activities bring in about 7 to 8."

"As we were removing restrictive rules and regulations, we were also making sure that we give a framework within which they can work. Not just start-ups, but we were also supporting R&D in this country," Sitharaman said.

"India is at a stage where growth and the focus on development have got to be strengthened from every side. IPR plays a very important role in it," she stated.