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Microsoft to fund intellectual property rights chair at Gujarat National Law University

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AHMEDABAD: The Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) will soon have an intellectual property rights (IPR) chair funded by Microsoft India. Besides a professor, there will be two other members including an assistant professor. This is the first instance of collaboration between Microsoft and a law university in India. A formal announcement in this regard will be made soon, said sources in the university.

"The chair will serve as a nodal point for research and framing of policy in IPR. We need to create an effective IPR ecosystem," said Dr Bimal N Patel, director, GNLU.

"It will also help bridge the gap between university and industry on issues related to intellectual property rights," said Patel on the sidelines of a seminar on the importance of IT compliance in the automobile industry. The seminar was organized by GNLU and industry body, FICCI, at a city hotel on Wednesday.

Experts participating in the seminar stressed on the need to create awareness regarding software piracy and software asset management. "Software piracy in India has dropped to 63% from 73% in seven years but it is still a huge threat in terms of cyber security", said Vipin Aggarwal, chair, India committee, BSA-The software Alliance.

"The possibility of piracy is high in sectors like automobile, aerospace and leather technology which rely heavily on information technology. The biggest issue is raising awareness among the users about genuine software," said Aggarwal.

In 2011, India recorded use of pirated software worth Rs 18,000 crore. BSA-The Sofware Alliance is working with industry

partners to bring down the piracy rate. Because of lack of awareness, small and medium enterprises are the worst affected due to piracy, experts said.

"We are doing a lot of work with the central government and have held anti-piracy campaigns in Rajkot, Ahmedabad, Surat and Gandhinagar in Gujarat," said Gouri Thounaojam, manager, programs-India, BSA-The software Alliance.