



Ha Long Bay slips from 7 wonders list

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HA NOI — The nation's dream of having Ha Long Bay become one of the new seven natural wonders of the world has met with a stumbling-block.

After a number of domestic copyright violations, with several local websites stealing logos and images from the event co-ordinators, the natural beauty spot was removed from the website on Monday by the NewOpenWorld group, organisers of the contest.

Fan Xi Pang Mountain and Phong Nha-Ke Bang had also been removed from the list due to their slow establishment of promotion committees.

The copyright violations in question are from domestic websites taking and using the logo and images from <http://www.new7wonders.com> without permission and for commercial purposes.

Only the Ha Long Bay Managing Board has been cleared as the supporting committee to use the event's logo and images for their campaign.

The board's director, Ngo Van Hung, was warned by the organisers last Monday to halt all illegal domestic usage or have the bay removed from the website; however, violators failed to acquiesce to the request, and as a result the bay was temporarily suspended from the competition.

Hung said that the supporting committee had pledged to solve the problem as soon as possible. They were also working with the Ministry of Information and Communications to prevent further violations.

The managing board has worked with all the violators and the illegal usage will be stopped so that the bay does not lose anymore votes.

Hung said that the proper documents would be delivered to the event organisers over the next few days so that Ha Long Bay could make its way back to the top of the list.

Cox's Bazaar in Pakistan is currently number one on the list.

Nominal descent

Ha Long Bay, whose name means "Descending Dragon", has twice been recognised by UNESCO as a World Natural Heritage site.

Covering over 430sq km, the bay is dotted with thousands of limestone islands that rise spectacularly from the sea, and is renowned for its diverse geographical features, such as a unique system of island caves and karst topography.

Geographical attractions aside, Ha Long Bay is home to a diverse ecological system that includes mangrove forests, tropical forests and coral reefs that are inhabited by more than 1,000 species of fish and marine life.

The islands are also home to many species of birds, bantams, antelopes, monkeys and iguanas.

Until the removal, Ha Long Bay was leading the voting for the seven new world wonders on the Website: www.new7wonders.com, launched by NewOpenWorld.

The first phase will close on August 8, 2008 to pick the 77 favourites. — VNS