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Chair's Message

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The importance of intellectual property right as a key business tool in the current globalized era continues to gather steam. Companies are increasingly relying on protection of their IPRS notably patents, trademarks, designs and copyrights, while customers depend on IP to ensure that they purchase safe and quality assured goods. As businesses become growingly digitized, IP protection becomes much more relevant as it is relatively simpler to imitate a brand name, logo or creative and artistic works. Strong IP laws and an effective enforcement system are thus crucial to protect intangible assets and help businesses to productively contribute towards nation building.

Encouragingly, the culture of innovation has begun to take centre stage in India. We are now increasingly being recognised as a global innovator, with India figuring among the top 50 innovating nations in WIPO's Global Innovation Index (GII), improving its rank from 81st in 2015 to 46th in 2021. Government of India must be commended for its efforts to strengthen the IP system and the innovation foundation, with the various policies, schemes and incentives. Launch of the National IPR Policy 2016, and the focus on initiatives like 'Make in India', 'Start-up India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' have further helped reinforce the country's IPR system. It was assuring to see Minister of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Piyush Goyal during the recent National IP Awards 2020 underlining IP as one of the most valuable assets in India's ability to compete globally, and how an IP revolution could boost job creation, quality, competitiveness and manufacturing. Indeed, the power of innovation leveraged by IPR was amply demonstrated during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, particularly in the health, technological and digital areas, as well as for countering the resultant economic slowdown.

As India fortifies its status as one of the world's fastest growing markets and moves towards an innovation economy, there are areas that call for particular attention including educating Indian companies on the relevance of IP, encouraging greater private sector contribution to innovation and protection of R&D investment results through IPR, further strengthening of the IP system, ensuring more efficient procedures and enforcement, the CGPDTM and the courts, enhancing IP commercialisation, among other considerations.

In this backdrop, the recommendations made by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce in its report on 'Review of the Intellectual Property Rights Regime in India', released on 23 July 2021, contains several relevant suggestions that deserve close attention. FICCI was one of the organisations invited to present its viewpoints to the Parliamentary Standing Committee, and on 7 April 2021, and a detailed presentation was made to the committee, along with 10 specific policy level suggestions for its consideration. It is gratifying that almost all recommendations made by FICCI have been accepted by the committee and are reflected among its recommendations.

On the policy and legislative front, the committee has recommended a review of the IPR policy in the backdrop of the emerging trends in innovation and research, including concrete mechanisms to protect them as IPRs. This suggestion is timely as almost 5 years have passed since announcement of the National IPR Policy 2016 and a review exercise will help identify gaps in its implementation, areas that require speeding up, identify new challenges and developments like AI, Blockchain, IOT, other emerging technologies, digital economy, e commerce, besides devising progressive measures and strategizing on the way forward.

The committee has also agreed to FICCI's suggestion on keeping IP Laws and rules under periodic review; and updating and simplifying them in compliance with international agreements and norms, while keeping them compatible with global best practices. A separate legislation for protection of trade secrets is proposed along with new legislations in the areas of IP financing and new technologies. Protection of traditional knowledge and strengthening the TKDL as an effective database to prevent their unauthorised exploitation has also been suggested.

To strengthen IP management and enforcement, the committee recommends further strengthening of IP Administration in terms of efficiency, quality, speed, cost effectiveness and service-orientation to users. On the need for stronger enforcement to tackle the rising level of IP crimes like counterfeiting and piracy, an increased focus on building capacities of enforcement agencies on IP laws is suggested, besides strengthening IPR cells in state police forces and implementing stringent IP legislations with stronger inter-departmental collaboration. Importantly, establishing a Central Coordination Body on IP Enforcement is recommended to facilitate coordinative efforts by involving various Ministries and Governmental agencies in enforcement and adjudication of IP laws to check such crimes.

Another notable suggestion is the review of abolition of the IPAB under the Tribunals Reforms Ordinance 2021, on account of its pivotal role in adjudication of IPR appeals and cases. Noting the absence of any Judicial Impact Assessment or consultations with stakeholders prior to the abolishing of the various tribunals, the Committee has recommended that IPAB should be re-established and rather than being abolished, it should be empowered and strengthened with more structural autonomy, infrastructural and administrative reforms, as well as ensuring timely appointment of officials and experienced manpower.

Another two specific suggestions by FICCI find mention in the Committee's Report. One relates to the need for a national IP audit, a comprehensive base-line survey across sectors, to assess the existing potential and to gain crucial insights into the untapped IPs in India's various sectors, and in working out a growth strategy for the country's IP industry. The Committee recommends that an IP audit would subsequently help in formulating targeted IP programmes. On FICCI's suggestion to undertake an economic impact-study for copyright-based and technology-oriented Industries, the Committee recommends undertaking a comprehensive study to analyse the impact of IPR in the creative and innovative sectors and their substantial contribution to India's economy in terms of GDP, employment generation, augmenting forex reserves, and boosting exports.

There are several other significant recommendations that the Committee has made. Bearing in mind India's continued low investment level in R&D (at 0.7% of GDP), it suggests facilitating R&D activities in Govt. and educational institutions through increased funding to each Department/Ministry as well as providing incentives to private sector and to encourage companies to direct a specific turnover under CSR for R&D activities to augment India's research capabilities. Further, to build greater awareness on IPR, especially of MSMEs, small businesses and traders, establishment of IP Facilitation Centers in Tier-I, Tier-II and remote regions, organising trainings programs oriented to inculcate scientific temperament and knowledge on identifying novelty in products & protection of such novelties as IPRs; introducing IP curriculum in schools, colleges and organising IPR conferences for students/faculties and interactive workshops for journalists, as the media has a crucial role in creating awareness, are recommended. Creation of IP funds for initiatives that instil nationwide IP culture, including in remote areas that are storehouse of indigenous/traditional knowledge, is also proposed to help protect natural/cultural assets and to promote the overall IP generation in the country.

Establishment of an exclusive apex level Institution for IPR Development, as suggested by FICCI, is another important suggestion towards enabling a multi-disciplinary approach in analysing and harnessing the full potential of IPRs for socio-economic growth. The Institution, in addition to assisting the developing a pool of IPR professionals and experts in spheres such as policy and law, strategy development, administration and enforcement, would enhance institutional capacities in IPRs areas such as policy development, teaching, training, research, and skill building.

The Committee also underlines the critical need for the commercialization of IPRs. The steps taken in this regard should be in tandem with reforms in banking regulations. Noting that utility of IPRs as intangible assets in the financial sphere is a way forward in improving the country's finances and enhancing financial innovation, easy availability of credit, and increasing capital base, the Committee recommends undertaking measures for better understanding of IP financing, valuation and monetization of intangible assets by inculcating management of IP portfolio of businesses, thereby enhancing its economic worth and making the business community aware of necessary compliances. Further, financial institutions should encourage adaptation to non-traditional forms of collateralization and securitization through workshops on scrutinizing and regulating IP financing and extending necessary support to business community. A mechanism needs to be put in place to recognize and appoint IP evaluators and ways explored to devise a general system of valuation of IP which would ensure a better evaluation of assets by financial institutions. Taking cognizance of the absence of any specific legislation that covers IP financing, security interest in IP financing, statutory protection to financial innovation and intangible assets like IPRs, rights and obligations on IP financial transactions, etc., the Committee recommends promulgation of a specific law on IP Financing in India. The involvement of the Insurance sector is also recommended in protecting against the rise of financial losses faced by an IP to minimize monetary risks, by suitable amendments in Insurance Act.

Globally, intellectual property has proven to be valuable for the growth of economies, competitiveness and market access. With several countries areahead of India in this area, adjusting perspectives and changing India's policies on IPR will certainly improve the situation. The Committee's report may be considered an important development in this regard. It is hoped that the proposals will be appropriately looked at by the concerned Governments departments as well as industry and other stakeholders and elaborated to help pave the way forward in boosting the economics of IPRs in India. The recommendations could be looked at as providing the framework for IPRS Policy 2.0.

Patent outlook: Remodelling Healthcare with Artificial Intelligence

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Artificial Intelligence or 'AI' refers to software-based systems that use data inputs to make its own decisions, thereby substantially reducing or even eliminating human intervention. Since the mid-1950's, when the term was coined by the American cognitive scientist, John McCarthy, this field has come a long way, now bringing a paradigm shift in the healthcare industry.

While on one hand, it is being used to enable virtual health assistants and chatbots, on another hand, it is enabling early disease detection and suggesting treatments to doctors. Figure A provides a snapshot of some of the most promising applications of AI in healthcare. It is reported that "BlueDot", had spotted a cluster of unusual pneumonia in Wuhan much before. Then, there are surgical robots. Since the approval and success of Da Vinci', a medical robot by 'Intuitive Surgical' in early 2000, microbots and nanobots are now being explored to locally deliver a drug to a specific target site within the body.

Figure A: Advances of Artificial intelligence in life and medical sciences[1]

There are numerous medicine areas which are currently leveraging AI. Table A below presents a snapshot of some prominent inventions in some of these medicine areas

Area of medicine	AI-Powered solutions	Company	Application
Cardiology	Caption Guidance*	Caption Health Inc	Cardiac ultrasound software assisting clinicians to diagnose cardiac conditions
	Kardia	AliveCor	Smartphone-based ECG monitoring and detection of atrial fibrillation
	Apple Watch	Apple	ECG and detection of atrial fibrillation
Ophthalmology	IDx-DR*	Digital Diagnostics Inc.	Software for diagnosis of diabetic retinopathy. (covered by US9924867)
Osteology	Osteo Detect*	Imagen	Detection of distal radius fractures
Radiology	Contact application*	Viz.AI	Analyses CT images of the brain and notifies the potential risk of stroke
	GI Genius*	Cosmo Artificial Intelligence, Ltd	Detects lesions during colonoscopy
Neurology	Embrace smart watch*	Empatica	Intelligent seizure detection device

*Products approved by USFDA market authorization

Table A: AI-Powered solutions in various disease areas with AI's immense potential to radically transform the healthcare, research is also rapidly growing in this domain. The present piece provides an overview of the patent landscape and trends of AI in healthcare and medical applications. As patents are one of the key indicators of innovation, these trends may be good markers of how the field is progressing.

Patent metric study:

The approach used in this study is to perform a keyword and Patent Classification based search, using both artificial intelligence and healthcare/medical related terms and classes on Derwent Innovations published in the last 10 years (from 2012-2021). Multiple search strategies were used to optimize and arrive at the result sub-set which is the most relevant set. Further, the study considers only unique patent families to reflect the actual number of innovations.

The results suggests that patenting in Artificial Intelligence in healthcare has grown quickly over the last decade, with peak in 2021. Globally, there were approximately 25,000 AI-Healthcare-related inventions published for the period from 2012 to 2021, with about 8000 applications being published in 2021 alone (See Figure 1). Since the publication in patents usually happens after 18 months from the earliest filing date, this indicates strong surge in filings in the year 2018-2019.

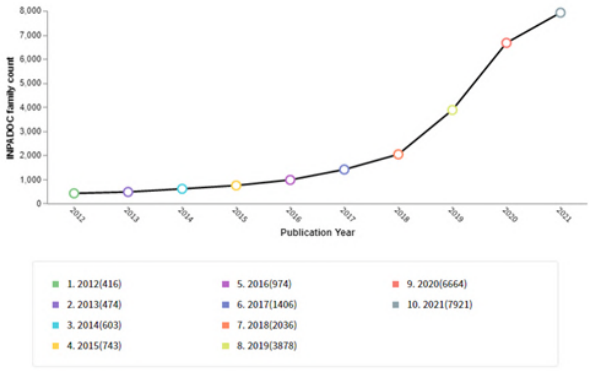

Figure 1: Global publication trend in AI-Healthcare technologies shows sustained growth in 2012-2021.

Geographical distribution of AI-Healthcare patents:

Interestingly, China and US have published a phenomenal number of patent publications in the last decade and are the top two geographies emerging in this field accounting for more than 35% and 24% of the global AI-Healthcare patent families, respectively. China and USA are followed by Japan, Korea, and Europe, thereby showing high activity in IP5 countries (Figure 2).

Some of the earlier reports indicated US to be the top applicant in AI in healthcare.[3] This prompted us to compare the patent publication trends in US and China only and the results show sudden increase in Chinese publications since 2017 as compared to US, with sustained increase till date (See Figure 3). One of the reasons contributing here could be due to the AI policy national initiatives of China from the year 2013 to promote and deploy AI in diverse sectors. Further, in 2017, the State Council of China also released the *'New Generation Artificial Intelligence Development Plan'* to promote AI-related inventions.[4]

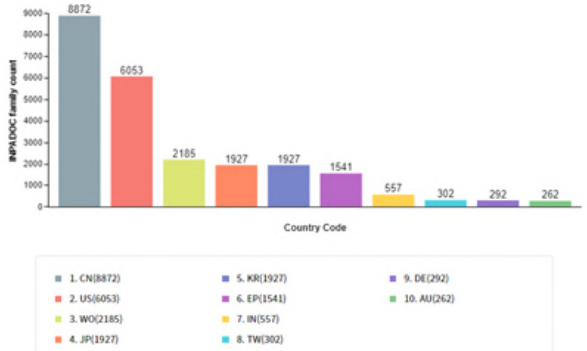

Figure 2: Worldwide distribution of the patent publication in the AI-Healthcare space.

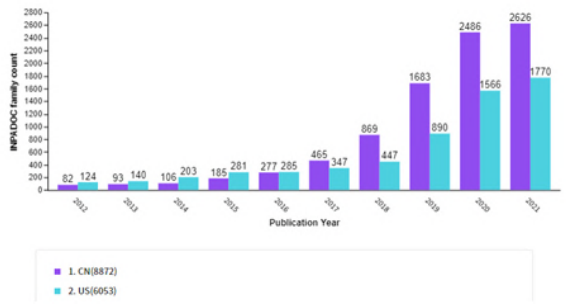

Figure 3: Patent publication trends of U.S.A. and China in the last decade.

Applicant/Assignee trends

Patent data can also be used to identify organizations with extensive AI research interests, particularly in healthcare. It can provide a fair idea of the assignees' R&D and commercialization interests and their market share. The top patent generating organizations and their patent activity plotted in Figure 4, shows large publications originated from tech giants like Philips and Siemens. The third position shows academic institution Chinese Academy of Science with about 300 publications in last 10 years. While patenting activity by the top 3 Applicants looked similar till 2015, Philips seemed to have increased publications in healthcare from 2016 onwards (Figure 5).

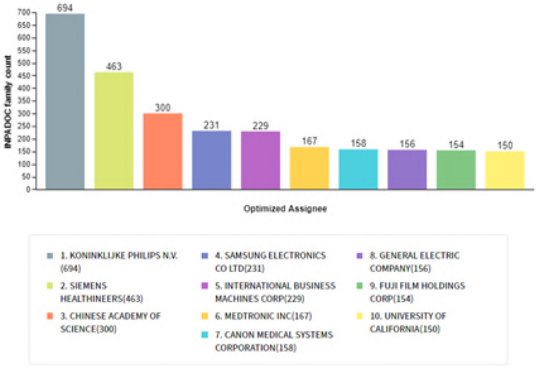

Figure 4: Top Applicants by their patent families on AI-Healthcare technologies.

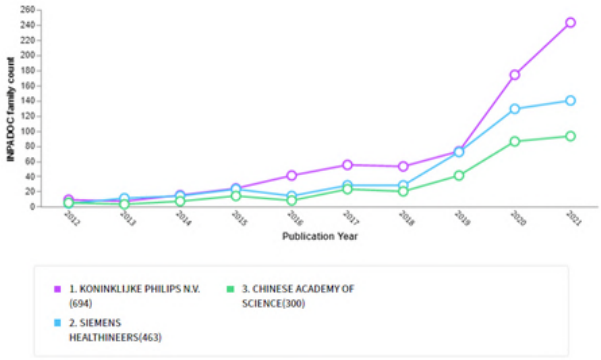

Figure 5: Patent publication activity by top-3 players along with the timelines.

Digging deeper into top assignees from US and China individually further showed some interesting trends. While companies and large corporates ruled research in US (9 out of 10 top Applicants being corporates), in total contrast, the Chinese universities and academia appear to be conducting huge amount of research activities in AI and filing patents too (top 7 out of 10 being universities) (Figures 6 and 7).

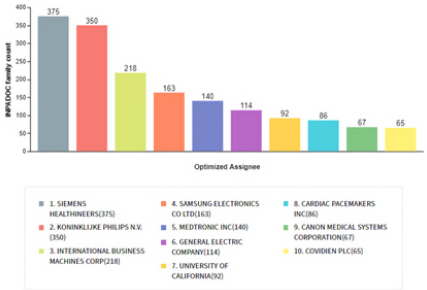

Figure 6: Top applicants by their patent families on AI-Healthcare technologies – U.S.A.

Figure 7: Top applicants by their patent families on AI-Healthcare technologies – China.

It was also noteworthy to find that 78% (8261 families out of 10627 patent families) of Chinese patent publications were filed by its indigenous applicants. Thus, only 22% of the published applications have foreign country priority for Chinese publications of the last decade.

Grant v Application statistics

38% of worldwide filings in AI-healthcare domain are granted, which indicates protection for active (Alive) patents in the relevant markets. 62% of the result set was found to be pending applications (Figure 8). Higher percentages of applications point to a new or growing market, whereas lower application rates can point to already established markets or low growth areas. Overall, 1% of companies are filing in more than 4 countries. A global filing strategy demonstrates increased market potential in this space. It is pertinent to mention here that the above figure excludes the search results of utility models (892 patent families) which are relevant to the field of AI-healthcare technologies.

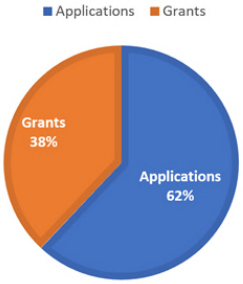

Figure 8: Status of the global publications in the last decade (2012- 2021) (till time of study).

Artificial intelligence-Healthcare-Activity in India

In the last decade, Indian publications accounted for approximately 2% of all global publications in AI in healthcare (Figure 10). Although lower as compared to IP5 countries, there appears to be a constant increase in patenting activity in India. Since 2018, there has been an approximately 200% increase in patent publications in 2020, indicating a strong developing interest in India (Figure 9).

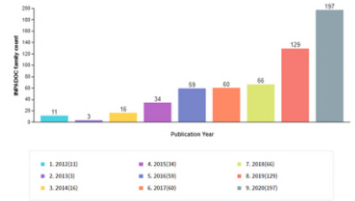

Figure 9: Patent publication trends of India in the last decade in the AI-Healthcare field.

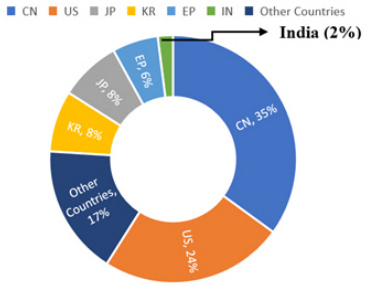

Figure 10: Patent publications in India (2%) compared with global publications in the last decade.

Further, about 65% patent results originated from India (having priority country as India) indicating the domestic researcher's contribution to AI-Healthcare domain. Although giants like Philips and Samsung were prominent here in India too, some domestic applicants seen investing in AI in healthcare were Tata consultancy services, Lovely Professional University and Nirmai Health Analytix Private Limited (Figure 11).

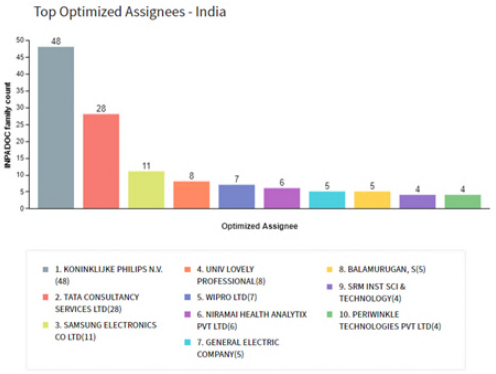

Figure 11: : Top applicants by their patent families on AI-Healthcare technologies – India.

The publishing trend in India shows that 575 families have been published in the last 10 years, of which 314 families have been published between 2019-2020. This signifies that most of the patent applications that were filed in India are under examination stage. While Indian patent Office is continuously working to simplify examination, AI applicants have to be mindful of some of the patenting exclusions [such as section 3(f), section 3(k) and section 3(m)] while prosecuting, as these patents frequently involve innovations in software, mathematical rules etc.

Conclusion:

In the present report, patentometric study is employed to methodically examine and investigate patent trends and to identify the patenting activity across the globe in AI-Healthcare. The global patent publication trends show R&D and patenting activity in AI-healthcare is expanding rapidly, gaining rapid traction from 2016-2017. Along with of course innovations in AI algorithms, a lot of this could also be attributable to better access and handling of data, which primarily drives success of artificial intelligence. China's number of filings and publications have soared in recent years, with dominance also shown by many universities such as Chinese Academy of Science, Tianjin University, Zhejiang University etc.

India is emerging too with an exponential surge seen in last 2-3 years. The Government of India has also established *"The Artificial Intelligence Task Force"* to promote research and development, and to create policies and legal frameworks to expedite the deployment of AI technologies in India[5]. With increase in speed of patent prosecution at Indian Patent Office coupled with a strong enforcement scenario, India can surely be a key innovation destination for global companies. The country has high population and consequently huge and disparate patient data which can further supplement success of AI in healthcare. Perhaps, AI-driven tools could also provide an innovative solution to the complex problem of the country with respect to doctor population ratio 1:1800 against the W.H.O. proposal of 1:1000[6], effect of which were also seen in the COVID-19 pandemic.

While replacement of humans and doctors by machines may be highly unlikely, these intelligent systems will surely supplement professionals tasks in many fields and is all set to make a huge social and economic impact in healthcare in times to come.

Endnotes

- The graphical charts depicted in this article are derived from a combination of keyword and patent classification-based searches on 'Derwent Innovation' database. Time period: 1/1/2012-22/09/2021 [publication date range]. Recently, filed patent applications experience a lag in publication up to 18 months in the publication of patent data, so there could be variations in the patent data from 2019 onwards. Further, only a single member per family is considered for analysis and development of trends.

- The keywords and patent classifications used to identify AI patents are adapted from an earlier study of AI patenting carried out by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and other literatures[7]. In our analysis, we have limited the AI results with a further defined set of classifications and keywords in healthcare and medical technologies, resulting in a relevant and focused final patent set.

The author was assisted by Dr. Yoganjaneyulu Kasetti, Senior Associate, K&S Partners

Disclaimer: *This article contains the views of the authors alone.*

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Geographical Indications and Handicraft of India

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Haath Ka Bana

The artisans and craftsmen of handicraft and handloom sector in India have recently experienced the value and virtues of proprietary asset of their traditional skills and competence, as their art and crafts are getting under the umbrella of Geographical Indication tags. The global apex body of IP, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), identifies handicrafts with traditional cultural expressions (TCEs) in their design, appearance and style and can also embody traditional knowledge (TK) in the form of the skills and know- how used to produce them. The geographical indication reinforces the geographical origin of a product or creation in terms of qualities, characteristics, or reputation.

The geographical indication (GI) ultimately leads to proposals and solutions being identified for the legal protection of TCEs and TKs to prevent their misuse, misappropriation, or any other kind of illicit exploitation. As the last data suggests, 178 Indian handicrafts have been registered under GI Act by July 2021. Intended benefits of the GI tag include global recognition of the geographical origin, ease of marketers to reach the producer in the region and subsequent rise in business from the area and, above all, a kind of protection from unauthorized use of the GI tag. There are many art forms, which are already enjoying the protection of GI tag. However, there are several prominent handicrafts of particular geographic origins that are so far left out from getting the GI Tag. For example, Palm Leaf Engraving (Talpatra Khodai) of Raghurajpur, Orissa, Miniature Paintings on Silk (Udaipur) of Rajasthan, Mata ni Pachedi (Vaghari community) and Mashru Silk (Patan) both of Gujarat, Tikuli Art of Bihar, Kerala Mural art etc., to name a few, which are yet to be registered. The good news is that the applications for new registration under GI is ongoing, and it is hoped that many other handicrafts will be included in times to come. The artisan communities, stakeholders and agencies are involved in getting the handicrafts registered for a number of genres and geographies. In India, the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act 1999 provide for registration of Handicrafts & Handlooms as Geographical indications (GI), covered under Section 2(f) of the Act.

Geographical Indications, in the long run, helps in rural development that augments commercial and economic opportunities in the region, while bolstering its culture and tradition. In the context of Indian handicrafts, noticeable differences will come when people practicing the craft gain understanding and awareness of the role and implications of GI registration of the genre in the geography. For the same, lots of groundwork is required so that the independent artisans and people involved get organized and awareness is created periodically in collaboration and with the support of various Government agencies like DC Handicrafts, Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH), Ministry of Textiles etc. and private players, NGOs, trusts, etc. working in the sector. In this endeavor, Haath Ka Bana, a social enterprise that promotes traditional folk art and craft of India, has been instrumental in working with artisans of GI tagged handicrafts. In the ecosystem of producer and consumers of handicrafts, Haath Ka Bana has consistently campaigned for creating awareness and spreading the information on legal protection, benefits and opportunities associated with GI registration of the art and crafts through market linkages programs.

The legal protection system of GI is still evolving globally, more so of Handicrafts, and it needs concentrated effort to strengthen the same in India. The infringement and imitation in the name of inspiration from the art and craft clusters in the country is still prevalent and can be seen widely in clothing outlets in malls and the purported fashion hubs. Recently, celebrated Indian Designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee joined hands with a global brand H&M to collaborate for collections to be created. There was huge outrage by craft people against the digitally printed Sanganeri and Kalamkari (both are GI registered) look alike collection, which came out with much fanfare. The artisans from these art clusters could not take the legal recourse conveniently against such infringement, even though both art forms are GI registered. The response of the famed designer helped calm down the noise it generated, when he responded by saying that with Indian textile traditions in mass productions, he hoped it would in turn generate demand for the authentic artisanal products as well. However, the much-famed collection did not fulfill any of the objectives of GI registration of the crafts involved. The positives that can be attributed to the buzz created and the awareness that resulted from the controversy in those crafts clusters and others is that it augurs well for the strengthening of GI systems in the locations. At the same time, it also sent signals to the fashion's bourgeois that it is not easy to just take away the beauty of traditional craft for their own commercial interest without visible benefits to the craftsmen practicing GI registered handicraft. It is also hoped that craftsmen, even at the lower rug of the pyramid, got an inkling of the empowerment that GI registrations of their age-old crafts can bring.

So, with GI applications getting approved at brisk pace in handicraft sector in addition to the existing GIs, it does fulfill the first step of the much-needed legal coverage and recognition of the art and craft. There are a number of steps still to be taken to build up the GI legal system and deepening of the awareness, before substantial benefits can reach to the artisans at the ground level. We see lots of ground to be covered in this journey. To paraphrase the words of Emerson, what lies behind us are tiny matters compared to what lies before us.

Disclaimer: *This article contains the views of the author alone.*

Is Technology Your Vaccine During Covid Times?

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Synopsis

The article focuses on the growing need of technology and innovation to grow a business during the Covid times. The pandemic has triggered the demand for innovative technological advancement, and we now see its key role in several industries. While such innovations are being developed rapidly across the world, it is extremely important for the companies to monitor these inventions and protect them at the initial stage without losing the novelty component in them. As these innovations are capable of being commercialised, their timely protection helps the companies to reap the due benefits at a later stage. This could be done in the form of patents, trademarks, copyrights, designs etc. The article delves into the role of intellectual property rights and the need to protect them at this stage.

Technology is advancing at an exponential pace and the need of the hour for every business is to innovate and bring a digital revolution in its ways of functioning. Most companies are now using technology to connect with their customers and employees. With social distancing and lockdowns being imposed across the globe, the ideal way to communicate and run businesses is with the help of technology.

Technology companies are providing an overwhelming response to several industry sectors to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has triggered the demand for innovative technological advancement, and we see its role in several industries, be it healthcare, education, entertainment, virtual meetings etc. It is playing a significant role in providing digital healthcare solutions, tele-medicines, digital epidemiology tools, chatbot support and so on. Not just healthcare solutions, but technology is also playing a critical role in the education sector which has undergone a total digital transformation.

COVID-19 is forcing many businesses to move the in-person events and meetings into a virtual environment by using digital platforms such as Zoom, WebEx, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams and many other digital collaboration tools. Having said this, the use of new age cutting edge technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, Machine Learning, IoT (Internet of Things), Blockchains, is becoming more a necessity than a choice. There are studies which predict that the most important advancements in the next few years would come from innovations in the field of Big Data and Artificial Intelligence.

Not able innovations on the COVID forefront

Several innovations have emerged during the pandemic to help us be prepared to face the unrelenting COVID-19 crisis with the introduction of new-age technologies, Bioinformatics, datasets etc. These inventions are being increasingly leveraged to strengthen the fight against Coronavirus: -

- *Allabout Innovations, a start-up from Kochi, has developed an electronic device known as "The Wolf Airmask" that sanitises indoor air and surfaces.*
- *Team 132 has developed a UV disinfectant robot that can autonomously disinfect surfaces using UV light.*
- *Turtle Shell Technologies has created a device known as Dozee that helps in access to better healthcare by providing accurate diagnosis of conditions.*
- *Team 118 has developed a device that links to a computer to analyse shortness of breath, a symptom of Covid-19 disease.*
- *Asimov Robotics, a Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) protégé, has come up with cost-effective robots to dispense food, medicines, and other consumables inside isolation wards*
- *R-TNT's test management centre is handling supply-chain functions for testing facilities.*
- *Koroonakaart.ee is a map displaying information about the spread of the virus; SUVE, a chatbot answering queries related to the disease; and Vaab.ee, which helps connect volunteers with a medical background to a country's healthcare response teams.*
- *Tamil Nadu has hired Garuda, a Chennai-based start-up, for sanitisation of hospitals etc. through drones.*

It is evident from these that all businesses whether large or small, government bodies, educational institutions and start-ups are coming together to implement these new and innovative solutions to fight the outbreak of coronavirus that has spread globally.

Why even technology may not be resistant to Covid-19

Following the outbreak of COVID-19 and the implementation of exceptional measures such as social distancing and work-from-home systems, most companies across the globe are utilizing "technology" as a tool to run businesses. However, according to a PwC study of the threat landscape to understand the attacks and attack patterns that are affecting companies during the lockdown, it was revealed that 'work from anywhere' is being heavily targeted. There has also been a spike in the number of cybercrime incidents. The UK National Fraud & Cyber Security Centre has reported that Covid-related fraud reports increased by 400% in March 2020. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the UK National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) issued a joint alert on 8 April 2020, citing an increase in phishing cases. Phishing is the fraudulent attempt to obtain sensitive information such as usernames, passwords, and credit card details by disguising oneself as a trustworthy entity in an electronic communication. For instance, many people received an email offer stating that Netflix was offering free subscription during the entire lockdown period and whoever wished to avail the bargain had to fill a survey and forward the same to 10 WhatsApp users. This was nothing but a phishing attack. The National Cyber Security Agency in India had also cautioned against the cyber vulnerability of the Zoom app which is extensively used as a medium to connect in meetings by

professionals working from home.

Role of Intellectual Property: Do you need to protect it?

With innovations being developed rapidly across the world, it is extremely important for the companies to monitor these inventions and protect them at the initial stage without losing the novelty in them. Since the innovations are capable of being commercialised, their protection at the right time would definitely help the companies in reaping the due benefits at a later stage. This could be done in the form of patents (of a process or a product), trademarks, copyrights, designs etc.

In practical terms, in order to have an edge over the competition, businesses need to choose the consequences they will have to face if they postpone the protection of their IP and, in the meantime, enable a third party to get that priority advantage. Therefore, by ensuring timely filing of their IP, the businesses can stop third parties from selling products or rendering services under identical or deceptively similar trademark or any other forms of IP. The corporates need to assess the impact such postponements might have on their IP and whether they can risk losing the priority advantages.

Looking at these trends, it is clear that there are vast prospects to innovate through technology in the fields of health, education, hygiene and sanitation, entertainment, fitness solutions etc. However, companies must look at ways to transform their business in the digital sphere and try to ensure that they have adequate protection for the newer forms of IP. Accordingly, while developing intellectual property, protecting and enforcing these should be budgeted for and the focus should be on maintaining the edge over their competition. It is also crucial for every business to enhance their immunity by resorting to ways that help in monitoring cybercrimes, using trusted websites and by following government laid protocols to engage with customers and employees.

As it is difficult to predict when the Covid situation is likely to normalize, businesses need to keep track of the intellectual assets created during this time, which will ultimately help them reap greater results in the times to come. As companies continue to foster innovations, a stability needs to be built into their system that recognizes the significance of IP rights and take adequate measures to enforce their rights against infringers in the market.

Disclaimer: *This article contains the views of the author alone.*

Combating Patent Assertion Entities

Krishna Nayan Singhania
Senior IP Counsel
A.P. Moller – Maersk

Patent Assertion Entities (PAEs), sometimes referred to as Patent Trolls, are businesses that acquire patents from third parties and seek to generate revenue by asserting them against alleged infringers. PAEs monetize their patents primarily through licensing negotiations with alleged infringers, infringement litigation, or both. In other words, PAEs do not rely on producing, manufacturing, or selling goods.

Patent litigations are expensive and PAEs use this as an advantage to assert patents and then settle for far less amount than the litigation cost. Due to this, patents of dubious quality or frivolous patents are also asserted. In many of the instances even proper evidence of infringement is not provided as demand notices are sent out to large number of companies.

Problem by PAEs has plagued both domestic entities involved in products and services, and Indian entities providing products and services outside India.

Source of Patents for PAEs

The PAEs purchase patents from companies, universities, and individual patent owners. When companies sell their patents, PAEs are the most likely buyer. In fact, PAEs gets most of their patent portfolio from companies. In some cases, PAEs buy patents at the patent application stage even before the grant of the patents by the Patent Office.

Start-ups are easy Targets for PAEs

Start-ups and small companies with limited capital and no in-house patent lawyer are easy targets for PAEs. Patent litigation being an expensive affair, most start-ups and small companies think it as wise to settle with PAEs rather than fight the PAEs. For start-ups, the demand notice acts as a nuisance as it is a distraction and taxing on their limited resources. With limited funds and resources, the start-ups do not even attempt to verify the infringement and decide to get relieved from such nuisance by paying up. But then how long can they keep paying? What if they receive more such demand notices? There are examples in the United States where companies have fought back and successfully invalidated the PAE patents as the claims were dubious. In CEATS, Inc. v. Continental Airlines, Inc., airline, and ticketing companies were successful in invalidating CEATS online seat selection patent as Expedia offered similar option way before the patents were filed. In Versata Software Inc v. Zoho, the Versata patent on a method of presenting information in a space constrained display was invalidated on the basis that the first portable computer did the same. Furthermore, Zoho was successful in recovering $60,000 as litigation costs from Versata.

Indian Scenario

Companies in India have also been targets of such assertions (Samsung Vs. Somasundar Ramkumar and M/s Aditi Manufacturing Co. Vs. M/s Bharat Bhogilal Patel). However, the targeted companies were successful in invalidating the patents at the erstwhile Intellectual Property Appellate Board (IPAB). There may be many other unreported assertions and the targeted companies may have settled at the demand notice stage itself. Based on information available publicly, infringement suits have been filed by PAEs against Indian Companies in the United States (Zoho, Freshworks, Hike Inc, Zee Entertainment, Infosys Limited etc.). As Indian companies are going global, especially in the digital space, becoming targets of such assertions in other jurisdictions cannot be ruled out. From the examples, it is observed that SaaS based companies are the easy targets.

Strategy to combat PAEs

As PAEs take the advantage of high litigation cost, the key strategy should be to lower the litigation cost. Even after a suit is filed, the objective of the PAE will be to settle as that is where they make the money rather than pursuing the litigation. If the defendants are successful in lowering their cost and fighting back, then the means of making the money is hit hard. One way to lower the litigation cost is to collaborate. Companies which have been targeted can collaborate to frame a combined strategy and if required share the litigation cost. This also helps in pooling for the required resources. Companies forming network groups or communities to reduce the risk of assertions from PAEs is another evolving strategy through collaboration. Examples of such groups are License on Transfer (LOT), Open Innovation Network (OIN), Unified Patents etc. Membership to OIN is free for any entity. LOT and Unified Patents does not charge startups and small companies for membership. Being members of such communities brings to the disposal of the member the experience and resources of the entire community. Therefore, start-ups and small companies should explore such network groups and pivot building their defensive strategies to combat PAEs.

The author was assisted by Biju Nair, Partner, LEGALITECH. *The contents and comments of this document do not necessarily reflect the views/position of FICCI or A.P. Moller-Maersk but remain solely of the author(s).*

Disclaimer: *This article contains the views of the author alone.*

Webinar on "Value of Valuation! Estimating Your Patent's worth"

2 July, 2021

India, over the last decade, has made significant progress in the field of intellectual property rights. With patents particularly becoming a key business asset for many Indian companies, the next obvious move for them is to extract value from these assets. This is an important step as patent owners seek to maximize return from them. Importantly, valuation is crucial not only for monetizing of patents, but also in enforcing these legal rights. However, unlike tangible forms of property, estimating the value of patents can be a complex process.

With a view to increasing awareness and skills around patent valuation, FICCI organised a webinar on the theme "Value of Valuation! Estimating your Patent's Worth" on 2 July 2021. Several leading IP professionals and legal experts addressed the participants on the key components of patent valuation e.g., the need for and approaches to valuation, factors that affected valuation and the processes involved, its role in strategic business decisions, best practices in valuation, among other important aspects.

Mr. Arun Chawla, Deputy Secretary General, FICCI, in his opening remarks, observed that patents were seeing an impressive surge in India due to industry's increased focus on technology innovation as also the efforts of the Government in promoting the IP culture in the country. In this backdrop, it was crucial that Indian industry becomes increasingly familiar with the importance of patent valuation and the methods involved in the process. Patent valuation was also becoming crucial in the backdrop of the rise in patent litigation and enforcement issues, besides its relevance in VC funding, joint ventures, and in mergers and acquisitions.

Mr. Ravi Bhola, Head& Patent Chair at K&S Partners, who chaired the Panel Discussion, underlined the need for patent valuation, explaining the way valuation was carried out in different jurisdictions, how it helped companies in regulating their finances and during litigations. Ms. Namrata Chadha, Partner, K&S Partners, in her address, elaborated on the patent valuation process and the fundamental approaches that were generally adopted in valuation, namely, the cost method, income method and market method, in addition to the pros and cons of each of these methods, along with instances of their use by various enterprises. Ms. Pushpa Vijayaraghavan, Director, Sadhguru Management Consultancy, spoke about the contextual complexities in patent valuation, the fundamental principles that were common across asset types, and the kind risks involved in patent valuation, e.g. technology risks, business/ operational risks and macro-economic risks. Mr. John Cabeca, IP counselor for South Asia, USPTO, underlined the significance of patent valuation and their increasing relevance in the Indian context, and highlighted some of the best practices adopted by American enterprises in valuation, while underlining how patents and the other IP forms were driving the values of companies globally. Mr. Faiz Rahman, IP Head & Associate Vice President, Infosys, spoke extensively on valuation of software patents and the way these patents were being utilized in strategic corporate decisions in various sectors.

The Webinar, attended by over 100 participants from various businesses, legal and IP professionals, brand owners, trademark attorneys, law institutes and other key stakeholders from industry, witnessed active interaction and exchange of views by participants with the speakers during interactive session.

Webinar on "Jurisdictional Issues in IP Cases"

16 July, 2021

Intellectual property rights are a complex and technical area of law. Besides, there is always a concern among stakeholders that IP laws are frequently updated and amended, which consequently affects the enforcement system related to intellectual property. The issue of jurisdiction in IP enforcement cases is one such area that has been long debated. With a view to generating a discussion on the emerging complexities in jurisdiction of IP cases, FICCI organised a webinar on "Jurisdictional Issues in Intellectual Property Cases" on 16 July 2021.

Mr. Anay Amin, Advocate, Y. J. Trivedi & Co., moderating the Panel Discussion, said that despite the seemingly clear-cut provision on jurisdiction for IP disputes, the Supreme Court and High Courts have been frequently confronted with problems arising out of the jurisdiction dilemma. Therefore, stakeholders should be familiar with issues like where IP rights ought to be enforced, which court is the right forum to for such cases, how interpretations of jurisdiction in IP cases have evolved with the advent of the Internet; and so on. He invited the panellists to share their understanding and experience on the multi-faceted aspects on the subject, including on territorial and pecuniary jurisdiction of courts in such cases.

Justice K S Jhaveri, Former Chief Justice of Orissa High Court, while addressing the participants, felt that the present IPR framework had led to complications pertaining to jurisdiction in IP cases, and elaborated upon the relevant statutory provisions as well as the differences that were witnessed in the

jurisdictional aspects pertaining to Trademark, Copyrights, Patents and Design Law. He also highlighted some of the important case laws on the issue of jurisdiction that were dealt with by the Supreme Court and the various High Courts.

Mr. Anubhav Kapoor, Director of Legal Affairs, Ford India, spoke on the International IP Conventions that India was a signatory to, while also highlighting recent developments in India's IPR regime, the existing jurisdictional framework, and related judicial precedents. Underling the inter-link between e-commerce, IP and jurisdictional issues, he described how digitisation and globalisation of trade and commerce has enabled inventions, designs, brands and copyright works to overcome the physical or cyberspace borders, which occasionally also resulted in complexities due to the inseparable attributes of territoriality and jurisdiction. The increasing use of the internet and the resultant trans-boundary nature of commerce was giving rise to many of the jurisdictional issues, especially as IP laws were territorial in nature.

Mr. Prateek Choudhary, Partner, YJ Trivedi & Co., elaborated upon some of the inconsistencies in the current legal framework vis-à-vis IP jurisdiction question, like the liability of intermediaries in IP infringement cases, flexibilities in choosing jurisdiction versus mischief, uncertainties in jurisdiction leading to roadblocks for the litigant, differences in approach between various High Courts, among others.

Webinar on "Brand Protection in the Digital World"

27 August, 2021

Digital technology is one of mankind's greatest achievements. Despite its many positives, however, the unregulated nature of this ecosystem has led to a fertile ground for IP infringements in terms of trademarked brand-names, registered designs, copyrighted contents to online counterfeiting, piracy, phishing, and cybersquatting. COVID-19 has further aggravated this problem with consumers increasingly resorting to online transactions. In this backdrop, it is imperative for companies to implement multifaceted online enforcement strategies to maintain strong IP rights, which ultimately reinforces the integrity of a brand.

To deliberate on the magnitude of the problem of online IP infringement activities; understand how the leading brands as well as the e-comm players are looking at the issue and the strategies they are adopting to counter it and to safeguard the interests of both industry and consumers; the Govt. policies being initiated to tackle this challenge etc., FICCI organized a webinar on 'Brand Protection in the Digital World' on 27 August 2021.

Ms. Vijaylakshmi Malkani, Senior IP Counsel, Hindustan Unilever Ltd, spoke on how the Covid-induced transition of consumers to the e-marketplace was aiding the increased online counterfeiting activities, for reasons like the anonymity that infringers enjoyed, lack of a system to eliminate bad actors, the ease of advertising misleading images, etc. Elaborating on the solutions that HUL used to eliminate online counterfeiters, she stressed on the joint responsibility of both brand owners and e-comm players in protecting consumers' interests, and the need to collaborate with law enforcement agencies in dealing with counterfeiters who operated under criminal rackets. A mechanism to keep tabs on blacklisted sellers, geo-tagging of products etc. were some of the other necessary initiatives.

Mr. Prabhakaran Ramalingam, APAC Leader, Global Brand Relations Manager, Amazon, informed that brand protection was a focus area for Amazon and applied various technologies and initiatives like brands registry, Product Zero technology to remove counterfeits and eliminate bad actors. The objective was to lead the united fight against counterfeiting. Mr. Sumit Kapoor, Global Brand Relations Manager, Asia-Pacific, Amazon, added that Amazon pursued a proactive cum reactive approach against counterfeiters through tools like Automated Brand Protection that ensured infringers were eliminated from the platform; a multi-layered process that filtered out bad sellers at the entry point through multiple documentation, codes, cross-verification of data to prevent entry; and collaboration with payment service providers for identity check. Counterfeiters were also held accountable by legal action through the Counterfeit Crime Unit (SCU), besides sharing data on alleged infringer with brands.

Mr. Anurag Kashyap, Partner, Fraud Investigation & Dispute Services, Ernst & Young, who moderated the panel session, outlined the magnitude and growth trends in the online trading space, stressing that the digital revolution was there to stay. While it presented humanity with colossal benefits through connectivity and information exchange at inconceivable velocity, there were people who exploited these to the detriment of others. Therefore, it was imperative that brands and e-commerce players collaborated as a community to adopt a united approach to curb online counterfeiting to safeguard consumer interest.

Webinar on IP Infringement: Shift in Seeking Remedies - Then and Now

9 September, 2021

The ever-changing economic environment has influenced development of business models where intellectual property is a key element that establishes value and potential growth. Consequently, measures to protect these intangible assets have become a core component for commercial success and viability of a modern firm. However, with the use of the Internet and digital technologies, the ways IP rights are being illegally exploited by infringers have also changed. Notably, the remedies pursued earlier to protect IP may not be adequate now as the outreach of goods and services is no longer confined to

conventional boundaries. Judicial pronouncements have meanwhile started taking cognizance of this change; focusing on the effective application of IP laws to ensure a congenial atmosphere for trade and commerce in the digital ecosystem. For businesses too, there is the need to have comprehensive litigation strategies in place to protect their IP.

In order to generate a discussion on the ways IP rights were infringed earlier and the actions taken by right holders vis-à-vis the current situation where there are wide horizons available to infringers to hinder businesses, and the legal provisions available to preempt this problem, FICCI in association with Y. J. Trivedi & Co., organized a webinar on the theme "IP Infringement: Shift in Seeking Remedies - Then and Now" on 9 September 2021.

Ms. Vijaylaskshmi Malkani, Co-Chair, FICCI IPR Committee and Senior IP Counsel, Hindustan Unilever Ltd., providing the industry perspective on the subject, said that detecting cases of infringement was becoming difficult as illicit operators were now taking advantage of new technologies to exploit IP rights. However, the proactive approach adopted by the judiciary, through ex-parte injunctions, John Doe Orders, dynamic injunctions etc. to tackle online IP infringement cases was assuring for industry, helping them to take timely remedial measures. Another encouraging development has been the courts now allowing affected parties to directly implead the relevant ISPs, the Dept. of Telecommunications etc. in such cases. Importantly, while the ultimate remedies like injunctions, damages, destruction of counterfeit goods, remained the same, what had changed for the better were the means and applications being provided with these remedies for the affected parties.

Mr. Pratik Chaudhari, Partner, Y.J. Trivedi & Co., said that due to the shift from the earlier simple landscape to a complex digital space, identification of infringers and subsequent enforcement of IPR were now a challenge. Reassuringly, given that laws tended to follow rather than precede the changes required due to evolving technologies, it was the Courts that had emerged as strong IP enforcers, through judicial activism, to meet the inherent limitations associated with the legislature in amending laws to meet the changing technological dynamics. As regards IP enforcement in the Internet age and associated remedies, the parties must adopt a holistic approach by combining provisions of the other laws like IT Act, Customs Act, IPC, the Code of Criminal Procedure etc. to ensure a comprehensive litigation strategy. He also elaborated on the cyber squatting issue and its resolution through the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy.

Mr. Akshat Shah, Associate, Y. J. Trivedi & Co., who moderated the Panel Discussion, brought out several useful observations from the speakers drawing from their experiences on subjects such as conducting due diligence of IP rights by companies, the remedies available under various IP laws and regulations, among others. Further, the speakers were invited to enunciate on some of the recement judicial trends in allowing the types of remedies prayed for in IP cases as well as the prominent judgments by the Supreme Court and High Courts in this area.

FICCI's New Course

Registration for next batch commences from 15th November 2021.

Limited Seats Only!

For Details Contact

Divyaish Srivastava

Assistant Director

Become a Member !

FICCI IP FORUM

- A Community of IP Professionals -

BACKGROUND

- FICCI Launched its unique initiative - FICCI IP FORUM in May 2020 to provide an interface for businesses to resolve their issues pertaining to intellectual property rights and also develop a pool of IP professionals whose knowledge and expertise will benefit the industry at large.

OBJECTIVE

- To create a consortium of legal professionals who are keen to support IP and encourage innovation, brand protection and creativity among various stakeholders.
- To strengthen the IP ecosystem in India and play an important and more comprehensive role in addressing existing and evolving issues in the area of IP in India.

BENEFITS

- Engagement in IP Policy Advocacy
- Networking through various FICCI national & international seminar/conferences
- Speaking/ participating opportunities in various FICCI Webinars
- Enhanced Visibility for forum members
- FICCI IP Talks
- Several other Benefits

CONTACT

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- Currently offering 3 courses:
  - IPPRO (Basics of Intellectual Property)
  - IPCOMP (IP and Competition Law)
  - IPPROCOMM (IP Protection and Commercialization)
- Courses pursued by students and working professionals from reputed law firms, corporates, and business enterprises.

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Visit our website **www.ficciipcourse.in** or write to us at **ipcourse@ficci.com**

Course Head
Divyaish Srivastava
Assistant Director

Intellectual Property Division established in the Delhi High Court

The extension of the deadline for the least developed countries (LDCs) is to protect intellectual property under the WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). Members reached the consensus on the 13-year extension of the current transition period, at a formal meeting of the TRIPS Council on 29 June. The decision was taken in the backdrop of the earlier extension granted for 8 years, effective from 1 July 2013 to 1 July 2021.

Source:
https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news21_e/trip_30jun21_e.htm

E-commerce major Amazon launches IP Accelerator programme in India to help businesses secure trademark

Amazon announced the launch of its Intellectual Property Accelerator (IP Accelerator) programme in India to provide sellers, who are also brand owners, with access to services from IP experts and law firms.

Source:
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/retail/amazon-launches-ip-accelerator-programme-in-india-to-help-businesses-secure-trademark/articleshow/84113077.cms?from=mdr

Fizzy drink sound not a trademark, EU court rules

Ardagh Metal Beverage Holdings had applied to the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) to register the noise made by its fizzy drinks cans. It was being rejected on the grounds that the sound was not "distinctive" enough.

Source:
https://www.barrons.com/news/fizzy-drink-sound-not-a-trademark-eu-court-rules-01625662507

Amul Dairy wins its first trademark infringement case outside India

The Federal Court of Canada held that the Amul Canada and four others had infringed the copyright of Amul and issued order permanently restraining them from infringing the trademark and copyright of 'Amul' and 'Amul-The Taste of India'. The Plaintiffs were awarded damages in the amount of $10,000 for actions contrary to the Trademarks Act, $5,000 for actions contrary to the Copyright Act and the costs in lump sum of $17,733. [Kaira District Co-Operative Milk Producers' Union Limited (Amul) v. Amul Canada, 2021 Fc 636]

Source:
https://www.scconline.com/blog/post/2021/07/14/amul/

The United Kingdom introduced the right to repair laws effective from 1 July 2021

It will allow consumers to repair products and make complicated parts available in repair shops, with a view to extend the lifecycle of products by up to 10 years. Manufacturers of daily use products like washing machines, TVs, etc. are required to make spare parts available to consumers. It, however, gives a two-year window to the manufacturers to make the necessary changes along the lines of new legislation. Laptops and smartphones are excluded from the legislation.

Source:
https://www.jagranjosh.com/general-knowledge/right-to-repair-movement-and-how-are-tech-giants-reacting-to-it-1628261259-1

GI tags accorded to Manipuri handloom products

Three traditional handloom products of Manipur, namely ShapheeLanphee, WangkheiPhee and MoirangPhee, have been accorded Geographical Index (GI) tag.

Source:
https://theshillongtimes.com/2021/08/07/gi-tags-accorded-to-manipuri-handloom-products/

South Africa grants patent to an AI system

South Africa granted patent related to a "food container based on fractal geometry". The invention in question involves interlocking food containers that are easy for robots to grasp and stack. The inventor is not a human being, but an artificial intelligence (AI) system called DABUS.

Source:
https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/technology/in-a-world-first-south-africa-grants-patent-to-an-artificial-intelligence-system/article35817497.ece

Parliamentary Committee Report Outlines Policy Changes to Improve Indian IP Regime

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce (PSCC) decided to review IPRs in India. The Committee, led by Chairman Shri V. Vijayasai Reddy, was made up of 11 members of the Rajya Sabha and 21 members from the Lok Sabha. On 23 July2021, the PSCC presented a report to the Rajya Sabha titled Review of the *Intellectual Property Rights Regime in India.* In the Report, the Committee pointed out the "challenges in strengthening the country's IPR regime, the related procedural and substantive constraints, legal aspects and other issues, such as low awareness of IPR, counterfeiting and piracy, IP financing, and IPRs in agriculture and pharmaceutical sector, etc."

Source:
https://www.ipwatchdog.com/2021/08/14/indias-parliamentary-committee-report-outlines-policy-changes-to-improve-ip-regime/id=136706/

India records 572% growth in grant of Patents in last 7 years

On 17 August 2021, Mr. Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs & Food & Public Distribution and Textiles conferred the National Intellectual Property Awards 2020 to the winners at an event. The Top Indian Academic Institution for Patents and Commercialization award was conferred to Amity University. On this occasion, Mr. Goyal made following announcements-

- 80% fee reduction filing for IPRs to all Recognized Educational Institution (Govt/Aided/Pvt) irrespective of whether such institute is in India or outside India.
- Total fee (Filing+publication+Renewal fee) for an Institute will be reduced to Rs. 84,900/ -.
- Office of CGPDTM (IP office) will impart training & awareness to 10 Lakh students in this Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav (from 15 August 2021 to 15 Aug, 2022).

Source:
https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1746758

A non-fungible token (NFT) marketplace launched by Alibaba Group facilitating licensing and selling of IP

Alibaba Group of China has launched a non-fungible token (NFT) marketplace. The exclusive platform allows customers to buy and sell NFTs and also facilitates licensing and selling of Intellectual property (IP).

Source:
https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/cryptocurrency/alibaba-opens-nft-market-china-gets-serious-on-crypto/articleshow/85454202.cms

UPL wins two prestigious IP awards, another testament of focus on innovation

UPL Ltd., a global provider of sustainable agriculture products and solutions, announced that it has received the prestigious National Intellectual Property Award for the year 2020 in the category "Top Public/Private Limited Company for Patents & Commercialization in India: Manufacturing Sector". Additionally, the Geneva-based World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) along with Intellectual Property Office, India have also conferred the "WIPO IP Enterprises Trophy" to UPL.

Source:
https://www.equitybulls.com/admin/news2006/news_det.asp?id=297548

Six Tribunals abolished by Tribunals Reforms Act, 2021

Out of the six tribunals abolished herein, four relates to intellectual property rights namely, Intellectual Property Appellate Board constituted under Copyright Act, 1957, Intellectual Property Appellate Board constituted under Patents Act, 1970, Intellectual Appellate Board constituted under Trademarks Act, 1999, and Plant Varieties Protection Appellate Tribunal constituted under Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Act, 2001.

Source:
https://www.scconline.com/blog/post/2021/08/23/6-tribunals-abolished-by-tribunal-reforms-act-2021/

BRICS HIPO Conference hosted by India on 25 August 2021

India hosted the 13thBRICS HIPO Conference (Heads of the Intellectual Property Offices) virtually on 25th August 2021, which was chaired by CGPDTM Shri Rajendra Ratnoo, IAS. India hosted the Chairship of HIPO BRICS conference the second time after the 8thHIPO Conference held in April 2017. It is hosted under the aegis of the XIII BRICS Summit whose theme was **'BRICS@15: Intra-BRICS cooperation for continuity, consolidation and consensus'.**

Source:
https://brics2021.gov.in/brics/public/uploads/docpdf/getdocu-51.pdf