ASIA-PACIFIC

CHINA

Amendments to Trademark Law

The China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA) has released amendments to China's Trademark Law for public comment.

The amendments to the Trademark Law focus in large part on improving the use of trademarks, which includes tackling issues, such as "bad faith" trademark registration, trademark squatting, and trademark hoarding. The ultimate aim of the changes is to improve the consumer experience by strengthening the legitimacy of registered trademarks and improving the business environment by stamping out anti-competitive trademark practices.

The draft amendment has slightly adjusted the scope of the types of elements that can be legally registered as a trademark. Article 4 of the draft amendment maintains the basic definition of a trademark that is in the current Trademark Law, stating that a trademark refers to "symbols that can be used to identify and distinguish the source of goods or services".

Article 14 of the new draft amendment stipulates that, unless otherwise specified, the same applicant can only register one identical trademark for the same commodity or service. It also further clarifies (in Article 21) the specific circumstances under which repeat registration is prohibited.

Specifically, a person cannot apply to register a trademark (for the same commodity or service) that is the same as one that they have previously applied for or registered, or if it has been canceled, revoked, or declared invalid within one year of the date of the registration.

Related to the regulations on repeat applications mentioned above, the new draft amendment also defines the concept of "malicious" or "bad faith" applications for the first time and stipulates penalties for such behavior.

The new draft amendments also outline the penalties for violation of the provisions of Article 22. Under Article 67 of the draft amendments, engaging in any of the above behavior can result in a warning and a fine of up to RMB 50,000 (US$7,280). In serious cases, a fine of RMB 50,000 to RMB 250,000 (US$36,402) may be imposed. Any illegally gained income will also be confiscated.

Meanwhile, Article 83 allows for people or businesses that have been impacted by one of the "bad faith" registration behavior described above to file a lawsuit in a people's court, if the illegal behavior causes a loss. The compensation must cover at least the reasonable expenses paid by the other party to stop the bad faith application for trademark registration.

Moreover, if the illegal behavior damages national or public interest or causes major adverse effects, then the procuratorate can file a lawsuit in the people's court.

As per the current Trademark Law, a prior trademark rights holder or interested party is permitted to raise objections to a trademark registration within a given period, if they believe the registration violates certain provisions of the law. The new draft amendment shortens this objection period from three months to just two (Article 36).

In both the draft amendment and the current Trademark Law, in the event that an objection is raised within the permitted objection period, the relevant authorities are required to listen to the evidence brought forward by the complainant and the applicant and make a decision on whether or not to grant the trademark registration within 12 months of the expiration of the objection period.

In order to strengthen the "use" principle for trademarks, the new draft amendments propose three new scenarios in which the authorities have the right to revoke the registration of the trademark. The current trademark law already outlines a few scenarios in which a trademark can be revoked, and the new draft amendment adds a few more.

The draft amendments require trademark owners to prove the need to use a certain trademark more frequently in order to maintain ownership over it.

Article 5 of the draft amendments states that if an individual or entity wants to obtain the exclusive right to use a trademark for use or promised use on its goods or services, then they must apply for trademark registration with the Intellectual Property (IP) Administration of the State Council.

The draft amendments provide more clarification on the scenarios in which a trademark holder does or does not have the right to prohibit or restrict another entity from using their trademark.

A significant change in the draft amendments is the addition of regulations on the use of trademarks for e-commerce and the internet for the first time.

Article 57 of the current trademark law lists seven actions that are considered an infringement of the exclusive rights of the trademark holder.

The draft amendments to the Trademark Law make concerted attempts to improve China's business environment and improve the strength of trademarks to make the system more trustworthy for consumers. This includes tackling anti-competitive and monopolistic practices, such as repeat registrations, trademark hoarding, and other bad-faith registration activities.

https://www.china-briefing.com

R&D Investment by companies

Companies have become the main driving force behind scientific and technological innovation in China and account for more than 70 percent of research and development investment.

Corporate spending on R&D soared to CNY1.9 trillion (USD274 billion) in 2020 from CNY30 billion (USD4.3 billion) in 1995, accounting for 77 percent of total R&D investment, according to the findings of the study published today by Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Industrial Transit at Dalian University of Technology.

Government spending on R&D has fallen to account for less than 20 percent in 2020, the report said.

Telecoms equipment giant Huawei Technologies is the biggest investor in R&D in China, with its spending second only to Google worldwide. Huawei accounts for 7 percent of all Chinese corporate investment in R&D, the report said, adding that e-commerce titan Alibaba Group Holdings and internet giant Tencent Holding ranked second and third, respectively, in China.

China's R&D spending ranked second globally in 2020, coming in at half that of the United States and twice that of Japan, which ranked third. But China's R&D intensity -- R&D expenditure as a percentage of gross domestic product -- remained middle-ranking compared with G7 countries, falling behind the US, Japan, and Germany, according to the report.

In 2020, enterprises contributed only 6.5 percent of the basic research funds in China, while the proportions in the US and Japan were 32 percent and 47 percent respectively, Sun added.

Many companies have not yet realized the importance of basic research, as they can learn about existing advanced technologies before they become leading firms, but companies like Huawei need to conduct cutting-edge research on their own, he said.

China's R&D investment reached CNY3.1 trillion last year, up 10.4 percent from a year earlier, with R&D intensity hitting 2.6 percent. Investment in basic research was CNY195.1 billion, accounting for 6.3 percent of total R&D expenditure, according to data from the Ministry of Science and Technology.

https://www.yicaiglobal.com

Deduction of R&D Expenses

China's tax authorities recently announced that the preferential policy of pre-tax super deduction of R&D expenses ("super deduction") would become a permanent policy for all eligible companies. In order to assist companies with applying for this policy, China's State Tax Administration (STA) has released a series of explainers for its implementation in 2023 in the months since the announcement.

The preferential tax policy aims to encourage companies to increase their R&D investments and support scientific and technological innovation and form part of China's wider efforts to foster sci-tech development through various support policies and tax incentives. Note that the super deduction policy is not available to companies operating in industries on the negative list.

Companies can apply the super deduction for R&D expenses as soon as September and October 2023 for the expenses incurred in the first three quarters of the year.

The pre-tax super deduction of R&D expenses is a preferential tax policy that allows certain eligible companies to double their pre-tax deduction of R&D expenses as well as pre-tax amortization of R&D expenses, depending on whether they have led to the formation of tangible or intangible assets. The aim of this is to reduce the CIT burden of companies and save companies' cash flows to encourage more investment in R&D.

https://www.china-briefing.com

R&D spending on the rise

Dalian University of Technology, a key university based in Dalian, Liaoning province, recently released a report on China's R&D spending for 2022.

China's R&D spending in 2022 exceeded 3 trillion yuan ($439 billion) for the first time, according to a report released by the Dalian University of Technology.

The report said R&D spending reached 3.08 trillion yuan, an increase of 10.4 percent over the previous year. The growth rate has exceeded 10 percent for seven consecutive years.

China's R&D spending in 2020 was 2.44 trillion yuan, the report said, ranking second in the world, behind the United States. Its R&D intensity — total national R&D outlay as a percent of GDP — was 2.4 percent, ranking fourth in the world, behind the US, Japan, and Germany.

The report added a topic, saying that basic research spending in China topped 195 billion yuan. China's basic research was more than 6 percent of the total national R&D outlay in 2019, still far behind that of major developed countries.

According to the report, the crucial task of China's R&D spending is not an increase in scale but the optimization of the structure. There are large differences in allocation across various regions.

It said that the eastern region accounted for more than 60 percent of the country's total R&D spending. The central and western regions accounted for about 15 percent, while the northeastern region accounted for 4 percent in recent years.

https://www.chinadaily.com.cn

INDIA

Plan to simplify patent laws to spur R&D

The Centre said it was mulling over making the Indian Patent Act, of 1970 more simplified and research-friendly for product-oriented results. Addressing the CII Global Science, Research, and Innovation Summit, Akhilesh Gupta, senior adviser at the Department of Science and Technology, said while India grants an average of 23,000 patents per annum, it lacks the culture of patent filing.

Gupta said the time duration for filing of patents and the same being granted is three years in India against the global average of two years.

He said the central government is looking to simplify the patent laws to encourage research, development, and innovation in the country

According to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, all funding agencies of research in the country will merge into a single entity -- National Research Foundation (NRF) -- with an objective to catalyze quality research in the country. It will have twin objectives of basic research and high-quality innovation.

Referring to around 0.69 percent of the budget being spent on R&D (research and development) in India, Gupta urged the private sector to pitch in with higher research allocation to match and support the government for a win-win proposition.

The senior official said the Department of Science and Technology (DST) was working in collaboration with state governments to completely re-orient and transform the R&D infrastructure of 350 state universities, which are in very poor condition.

Earlier, Parvinder Maini, scientific secretary in the office of Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, urged the industry, academia, and start-ups to join hands to co-produce and co-develop world-class products and solutions as the era of working in silos is over now.

She underlined that the huge gap in the low research and development budget of India was almost due to the non-participation of the private sector to take big risks in emerging and cutting-edge technologies.

Maini said that out of 90,000 start-ups in India, only 12,000 are technology-based and about 3,000 of them are deep tech start-ups.

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com

Semiconductor manufacturing industry

India is emerging as a major player in the semiconductor manufacturing industry. On the demand side, the growth of the semiconductor industry in India is expected to be driven by the increasing semiconductor content across consumer electronics and automobiles including EVs, and also by the increasing demand for smartphones as the number of smartphones in India is projected to reach a billion by 2026. Further, the rollout of 5G and the increasing adoption of IoT devices would accelerate the adoption of smart devices.

The Indian semiconductor industry in 2022 was US USD 27 Billion, with over 90% being imported, and therefore a significant external dependence for Indian chip consumers. This is very similar to other key markets like the USA and the EU which have high dependence on imports primarily from Taiwan and China where there is a major concentration of semiconductor manufacturing.

With supply-side concentration, the semiconductor crisis over the past two years severely disrupted the manufacturing of smartphones, personal computers, automobiles, and consumer electronics – products and segments impacting the economic well-being of individuals as well as the GDPs of nations.

With this in perspective, the Government of India announced a US USD 10 billion program for the development of the semiconductors and display manufacturing ecosystem in India covering both manufacturing and design with an objective of attracting investments in semiconductor manufacturing and design to position India as a major hub for semiconductors. The package incentivizes by providing fiscal support of 50% of project costs through a pari-pasu arrangement, thereby enabling a significantly de-risked model for semiconductor companies.

On the demand side, the growth of the semiconductor industry in India is expected to be driven by the increasing semiconductor content across consumer electronics and automobiles including EVs, and also by the increasing demand for smartphones as the number of smartphones in India is projected to reach a billion by 2026. Further, the rollout of 5G and the increasing adoption of IoT devices would accelerate the adoption of smart devices.

With these, the Indian semiconductor market is expected to reach USD 55 Billion by 2026, growing a CAGR of 20% CAGR during the period 2022-2026. In addition, the global demand for semiconductors is envisaged to grow exponentially with advancements in technology. The establishment of a strong manufacturing and design base for semiconductors with enable India to address not only the growing domestic market with a very resilient model but also support global requirements competing with the traditional supply sources on a level playing field.

While the manufacturing ecosystem for India is new and emerging, the R&D landscape is one where over the years many major semiconductor enterprises have set up large R&D bases in India to leverage the talent of India's engineers and researchers. Currently, India employs a total of 55,000 design engineers primarily involved in engineering support functions. With the Design Linked Incentive scheme, the government intends to encourage a transition into value-added research in chip designing in the country.

This is expected to generate 250,000 new jobs in the semiconductor industry across R&D, manufacturing, and other enabling sectors.

https://auto.economictimes.indiatimes.com

Scheme for circular economy in Smart Cities

The Union Cabinet has approved the City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain (CITIIS) 2.0 to promote a circular economy in 18 smart cities to be selected through a competition.

The total funding for the scheme — Rs 1,760 crore — will come from loans from French Development Agency (AFD) and Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW), a German development bank; and a grant of Rs 106 crore from the European Union.

The program starts this year and will run until 2027, with the support of the National Institute of Urban Affairs.

"The program envisages supporting competitively selected projects promoting circular economy with a focus on integrated waste management at the city level, climate-oriented reform actions at the state

level, and institutional strengthening and knowledge dissemination at the National level,"

The first iteration of the program, CITIIS, was launched in 2018 by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), AFD, the EU, and the NIUA with a total outlay of Rs 933 crore. Twelve cities out of the 100 smart cities were selected for this.

CITIIS 2.0 will include financial and technical support for 18 cities to develop projects on climate resilience, with a focus on integrated waste management. In the second component, all states and UTs will be eligible for support to set up climate centres, creating state- and city-level climate data observatories, and capacity-building for municipal staff.

According to a source in MoHUA, the projects likely to be funded through the scheme would be the collection and transportation of waste, including transfer stations; automated recovery facilities; biomethanation plants; construction and demolition waste processing plants; and sanitary landfills.

https://indianexpress.com

Shipping Innovation and Startup Policy draft

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) issued a draft 'Sagarmala Innovation and Start-up Policy' with an aim to nurture startups and other entities to co-create the future of India's growing maritime sector.

According to an official statement, the draft 'Sagarmala Innovation and Start-up Policy' pitches for digital portal-based selection of startups to ensure a transparent process.

It also emphasized on developing a centralized repository containing all pertinent information to assist emerging entrepreneurs.

The draft policy called for creation of launch pads at ports for carrying out trials, facilitating pilot projects, establishing working space, and adopting products and solutions, the statement said.

It also noted that there is a need to provide legal and accountancy backup to startups for IP-patent filing, company registration, annual filings, and closures.

There is also a need to collaborate with national and international stakeholders for mentorship, and knowledge sharing and facilitate access to global subject matter experts, serial entrepreneurs, business leaders, and investors with the potential to get their entry and scaling in India.

This will surely promote innovation and entrepreneurship. Through this policy, MoPSW wants to enable startups to grow and prosper through innovations.

The draft policy identified several key areas for the startups to flourish, including decarbonization, optimizing processes through data, maritime education, multi-modal transportation, manufacturing, alternate/advance materials, maritime cybersecurity, smart communication, and marine electronics.

The Sagarmala program is the flagship initiative of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways to promote port-led development in the country through harnessing India's 7,500 kilometer-long coastline, 14,500 km of potentially navigable waterways, and strategic location on key international maritime trade routes.

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com

INDONESIA

Health innovation ecosystem

The Indonesian Health Ministry is seeking to support the ecosystem of innovators in the health sector by holding the 2023 Health Innovation Day (HID).

"To support the ecosystem of innovators in the health sector, the ministry is holding a Health Innovation Day this year," Chief of the Ministry's Digital Transformation Office (DTO) Setiaji said.

According to him, the activity was a form of the Ministry of Health's efforts to transform digital health in Indonesia.

This activity was also the peak of a series of events held by the Ministry of Health as part of efforts to transform digital health in Indonesia, he added.

Earlier, the ministry held the 2023 Health Innovation Sprint Accelerator program, an incubation program for start-ups and innovators in the health sector.

In addition, it also held the Fight for Access Accelerator Program, a program to enable female start-up activists to work and innovate in the health sector, he pointed out.

"The Ministry of Health is collaborating with East Ventures and Reckitt in this program, which works as an incubation program to support the development of health technology and biotechnology," he said.

On the occasion, the Ministry of Health announced the ten winners of the 2023 Health Innovation Sprint Accelerator competition, who will receive a prize of Rp250 million each as initial investment capital.

In addition, the Ministry of Health also announced seven winners of the Fight for Access Accelerator competition, who will receive US$25 thousand each as initial investment capital.

https://en.antaranews.com

Development Of Science And Technology Parks

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a loan equivalent to $138.52 million to support a Government of Indonesia strategy to commercialize research and development (R&D) and improve start-up success at four science and technology parks (STPs) in Indonesia.

The Promoting Research and Innovation through Modern and Efficient Science and Technology Parks Project will support STPs at the public higher education institutions of Bandung Institute of Technology in Bandung, Gadjah Mada University, IPB University, and the University of Indonesia. The project will help upgrade R&D and start-up incubation facilities, provide grants to conduct applied research and incubate start-ups, and upgrade the expertise of STP

researchers and the capability of research administration staff.

"Limited technological sophistication by industries and a lack of absorptive capacity for new technology can reduce productivity and constrain economic growth," said ADB Senior Social Sector Specialist for Southeast Asia Fook Yen Chong. "With this project, Indonesian industries working with universities' STPs will gain the know-how needed to better use resources, create new products, and expand into new markets. We expect that the adoption of new technologies in Indonesia could add 0.55 percentage points to annual average gross domestic product growth over the next 2 decades, pushing Indonesia's economy into the high-income group."

The project will help the STPs focus on various disciplinary fields aligned with Indonesia's priority economic sectors such as energy (renewable energy and storage technology), transport (electric and autonomous vehicles), information and communication technology (smart technology), agro-processing and food (functional food and halal food products), and pharmacy and medicine. It will also strengthen public–private R&D collaboration; increase workforce competitiveness and productivity, particularly as new technologies are developed and adopted; and promote youth entrepreneurship and job creation.

ADB has incorporated international best practices in designing the project. It will deliver demand-driven R&D in tandem with private enterprises and communities to create a sustainable start-up ecosystem. To align research areas with national priorities and improve the R&D ecosystem, the project will create synergies with several ADB projects in Indonesia.

ADB brings substantial experience and knowledge in human capital development, R&D, and innovation from Indonesia and across the region to add value to this project. It will also explore nurturing start-up incubation through its Open Innovation Platform and ADB Ventures.

The project is in line with the government's National Medium-Term Development Plan, 2020–2024, which emphasizes human development and mastery of science and technology, and ADB's country partnership strategy, 2020–2024 with Indonesia.

https://indiaeducationdiary.in/

JAPAN

AI Copyright policy

Amid global governmental regulations, Japan has concluded already about AI copyright - it does not apply to AI training at all.

The policy grants AI unrestricted access to all data, regardless of its purpose (non-profit or commercial), the nature of the act (other than reproduction), or the source (including illegal sites). Keiko Nagaoka, the Japanese Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology, reaffirmed this position during a local meeting, stating that Japan's laws do not offer protection to copyrighted materials incorporated into AI datasets.

This is perfectly in line with the Japanese government's push towards generative AI, and more specifically, building something similar to OpenAI's ChatGPT.

In recent news, Japan's privacy watchdog has issued a warning to OpenAI, cautioning them against collecting sensitive data without individuals' consent. The Personal Information Protection Commission has advised OpenAI to limit the amount of sensitive data it gathers for machine learning purposes. In their statement, they also mentioned the possibility of taking additional measures if further concerns arise.

https://analyticsindiamag.com

MALAYSIA

Personal Data Protection

The General Code of Practice of Personal Data Protection ("General CoP") introduces new legal requirements to be complied with by data users caught within its ambit. It also seeks to provide best practice recommendations with respect to the implementation of principles under the Personal Data Protection Act 2010 and its subsidiary legislation (PDPA).

Some of the new legal requirements include providing additional mandatory information in a personal data protection notice, complying with data subjects' written request not to process their personal data for direct marketing within a reasonable time, maintaining a personal data system, and establishing a PDPA compliance framework.

The General CoP was issued by the Personal Data Protection Commissioner ("Commissioner") and became effective from 15 December 2022.

Non-compliance with the provisions of the General CoP is an offense under the PDPA, which may attract a fine not exceeding MYR 100,000 (~ USD 24,000) and/or imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year ("Penalties"). Where the offense is committed by a body corporate, its directors and other officers in the management could be personally liable.

The General CoP appears to apply to classes of data users who are not presently, subject to a specific code of practice under the PDPA. Some of the new legal requirements introduced by the General CoP are briefly discussed below.

- Additional Mandatory Information For Personal Data Protection Notices

On top of those specified in the PDPA, the General CoP requires a personal data protection notice issued by Affected Data Users to, among others, also address the following:

1. If any sensitive personal data (i.e., relating to mental/physical health, political opinions, religious beliefs, or commission of offense) will be processed
2. If the personal data of children below the age of 18 years will be processed
3. If there is any regulatory requirement to collect certain personal data
4. What practical and security measures are taken to ensure personal data and its disclosure is safe and secured

5. The name of third parties to whom personal data is disclosed and for what purpose

https://www.globalcompliancenews.com

Malaysian Government Launches Mystartup Nxt To Create Sustainable Startup Ecosystem 10, 2023

Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (MOSTI) in Malaysia, through Cradle Fund Sdn. Bhd. (Cradle), has launched a series of micro-conferences, MYStartup NXT, as part of the efforts to create an inclusive, impactful, and sustainable startup ecosystem in Malaysia.

Starting with Cyberjaya, MYStartup NXT will be held across the country and proceed with Sarawak, Penang, and finally conclude in Sabah.

According to the statement, the micro-conferences aim to engage local startups across Malaysia, enabling access to the startup ecosystem support and benefits that will empower them to scale up to the next level.

It is noted that MYStartup is on a mission to create over 5,000 quality startups by 2030, and with Kuala Lumpur already being one of the top 25 emerging ecosystems globally, there is huge potential for other parts of Malaysia that must be actioned on.

MYStartup NXT is part of the government's effort to cultivate accessible innovation and support long-term startup development, in line with Malaysia MADANI's aspirations, one of which is to build an innovative and high-tech nation

According to Ahmad Kashfi Alwi, Cradle Senior Vice President of Ecosystem Development, MYStartup NXT series will enable and grow the country's startup ecosystem equally and ensure that every local startup community.

MYStartup has also introduced MYStartup Dev, a data-centric, community-driven platform exclusively designed to connect tech talents with talent development partners and upskilling programs.

MYStartup Dev will guide and teach new skills for career advancement, nurture networking with industry experts, and stay current with the latest skills and technologies, ultimately unlocking the full potential of young local tech talents in Malaysia.

Throughout the NXT tour, states and federal entities are encouraged to communicate continuously with each other to achieve the goal of cultivating and nurturing more startups throughout the country.

MYStartup Strategy is a national initiative by the MOSTI and Cradle.

It consists of several programs which aim to strengthen the startup ecosystem and community in Malaysia.

Among them are; MYStartup Roadshow, MYHackathon, MYStartup Pre-Accelerator, MYStartup Accelerator, MYStartup Internship, and MYStartup Mentorship.

The programs aim to ensure startups are thoroughly guided starting from the ideation stage, trained, supported, and opportunity to highlight their company profile to attract foreign investors.

The MYStartup Program is part of the Malaysian Startup Ecosystem Roadmap (SUPER), while Cradle as the focal point agency for the startup ecosystem which has been mandated to ensure that this strategy benefits the startup ecosystem as a whole.

This effort is also in tandem with MOSTI's target of creating 5,000 start-ups and producing five unicorn-status companies by 2025.

https://technode.global

NEPAL

Budget for Science, Technology, Innovation, and R&D

Addressing the joint session of the federal parliament, Finance Minister Mahat stated that the government will allocate 1 percent of the national budget in Science, Technology, Innovation, and Research.

This is the first time, the government has decided to allocate 1% of the total Budget in Science, Technology, Innovation, and Research and Development. The government has also allocated Rs. 1 billion for Science, Technology, Innovation and Research.

https://thehimalayantimes.com/

PAKISTAN

New AI Policy draft

The Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication has drafted the "National Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy" aimed at embracing AI by appreciating human intelligence and stimulating a hybrid intelligence ecosystem for equitable, responsible, and transparent use of AI.

The policy framework envisaged providing a complete AI-enabling ecosystem in Pakistan, covering all aspects of awareness, skill development, standardization, and ethical use.

According to a State of AI Report, Pakistan ranks 117 out of 172 countries and has an index score of 34.03 in terms of AI readiness at a global scale.

The National AI Policy is crafted to focus on the equitable distribution of opportunity and its responsible use, having the defining attributes including evidence-based and target oriented, user-centric, forward-looking, objective, and overarching.

The AI policy further aims to augment AI and allied technologies through balanced demand and supply-side interventions, inducing the establishment of research & innovation centers in AI for developing, test-bedding, deploying, and scaling AI solutions.

This includes learning how to improve governance and manage the impact of AI, Responsible use of AI to generate economic gains and improve lives. In addition, AI will raise the Government's capability to deliver anticipatory and personalized services.

The draft policy noted that the main challenge for the successful implementation of

IoT Cloud-based services is the availability of data in digital form and the standardization of the data.

The Ministry stated that the need for National AI Policy is to create a broad-based awareness of the use of AI-based platforms while keeping privacy at the forefront, upskilling human capital on AI and allied technologies, guiding investment in AI research and development, ensuring ethical and responsible use of AI, and provide a framework for addressing the challenges and risks associated with the socio-economic outfit of the country.

https://propakistani.pk

PHILIPPINES

IP protection

The Philippines House of Representatives has approved on the third and final reading a bill that will strengthen the powers and functions of the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL), and amend the Intellectual Property Code (IP Code) to adapt to recent advancements in technology and further address piracy and counterfeiting.

Voting 267 against zero and one abstention, the chamber approved House Bill (HB) No. 7600 which would give IPOPHL additional powers to prevent counterfeit or pirated goods or contents.

The bill defines counterfeit and pirated goods and authorizes the IPOPHL to gather intelligence information, investigate violations of the IP Code and develop countermeasures to deter counterfeit or pirated goods or content.

If passed into law, the measure will also allow IPOPHL to visit establishments and businesses suspected to be in violation of RA 8293.

HB 7600 also adds a new Section 216-A on Preventive Action on Online Infringement which empowers the IPOPHL, after due notice and hearing, to disable access to an online location or website and prevent further access to an online location whose primary purpose or primary effect is to infringe the copyright or facilitate copyright infringement.

It would also allow copyright owners or the exclusive licensee of copyright to submit an application to the IPOPHL to order the disabling of access to any infringing online location identified in the application.

https://advanced-television.com

IP rules protect non-traditional visual trademarks

Non-traditional visual trademarks are now protected under revised rules and regulations introduced by the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHIL).

The rules institutionalize the protection of non-traditional visual trademarks such as three-dimensional marks, colour marks, positional marks, motion marks, and hologram marks. IPOPHIL's director general, Rowel Barba, says such marks are now explicitly considered registrable by IPOPHIL's Bureau of Trademarks. This article outlines specific guidelines for the representation of such marks.

Aside from the protection of non-traditional trademarks, the revised rules also formally implement fully automated and paperless transactions. This means that all trademark applications and related communications must be submitted through eTMFile, IPOPHIL's online submission system. Any other communications, such as responses to office actions and subsequent requests, should likewise be submitted online through eDocFile, the IPOPHIL's electronic document filing system.

However, under exceptional circumstances, the director general may allow communications to be filed via email, personal delivery, private courier, or registered mail. Any correspondence from the Bureau of Trademarks will be sent to the applicant's email address on record. All applicants are now required to provide their email and physical addresses, as well as those of their representatives, if any. Consequently, communications are deemed filed and received on the date they are sent online, whether via email or through eTMFile or eDocFile. But if payment of fees is required, then the date of receipt is when the communication together with full payment is transmitted.

https://law.asia

THAILAND

Big firms' R&D spending rises 14%

Korean firms' spending on research and development (R&D) swelled 14 percent in 2022 from a year earlier despite sharply decreased operating income amid an economic slowdown, a market tracker said.

Combined R&D expenditures by 231 out of the country's top 500 companies came to 68.4 trillion won ($51 billion) last year, up 8.4 trillion won from a year earlier, according to CEO Score.

The tally covers businesses that have disclosed their R&D expenditures over the past three years. Financial companies were excluded.

Last year's solid increase was seen as part of their efforts to secure future growth engines, though their earnings shrank due to a global economic slowdown and falling exports.

The companies' combined operating income tumbled 25.4 percent on year to 123.7 trillion won last year, with their net income sinking 27.1 percent to 106.2 trillion won.

Of the total firms, 74.9 percent, or 173, boosted their R&D spending from a year earlier.

Chip and smartphone maker Samsung Electronics was the top R&D spender with 24.9 trillion won last year, which was up 10.3 percent from 2021 and accounted for 36.4 percent of the total.

Samsung was followed by SK hynix with 4.9 trillion won, LG Electronics with slightly over 4 trillion won and Hyundai Motor with 3.3 trillion won.

Mobile game developer Netmarble ranked first in terms of the R&D-to-sales

ratio with 32.1 percent, followed by Naver, with 22 percent and Krafton with 21.8 percent.

By industrial sector, spending by IT, electric, and electronics firms was the largest at 40.8 trillion won, trailed by automakers and auto parts manufacturers with 8.9 trillion won and service firms with 5.3 trillion won, according to the data.

https://unctad.org

Rise in startup ecosystem index

After dropping three places last year, Thailand has shown positive momentum this year rising one spot to 52nd globally, according to StartupBlink's Global Startup Ecosystem Index 2023.

StartupBlink is a global startup map and research centre offering insights into trends affecting the global startup ecosystem. Its research covers more than 1,000 cities and 100 countries, across 11 industries and dozens of sub-industries.

For three consecutive years, Thailand was ranked the 11th best ecosystem in Asia-Pacific and the fourth best in Southeast Asia, according to the report.

Bangkok represents the country's main startup ecosystem as it is the only city in the country to make the global top 100. This year, Bangkok gained 25 spots globally to rank 74th. It is also the third-best ecosystem in Southeast Asia.

There are three other Thai provinces within the top 1,000 -- Chiang Mai (ranked 591st), Phuket (640th), and Pattaya (849th).

Phuket is no longer among the top 600 cities as it fell 93 places in 2023, while Chiang Mai regained its position as the second-best startup ecosystem in Thailand, replacing Phuket.

According to StartupBlink, over the last 40 years, Thailand has leaped forward into a more economically developed country through multiple reforms and social innovations.

Mainly seen as a tourist destination, the Covid-19 pandemic caused the public sector to prioritize startup ecosystem development as an important step in securing future economic growth.

Those efforts are not yet focused or determined enough compared to Singapore or Malaysia, but they are a good start towards ensuring the Thai ecosystem can fulfill its potential, the report says.

According to the report, the value of funding and the number of venture capital deals in Thailand in 2022 was over UScopy.25 billion, totaling 38 deals, compared to over $548 million with 41 deals in 2021, and over $437 million with 26 deals in 2020.

As in other Asian countries, Thailand would benefit from a cultural shift towards making the young population less risk-averse and more entrepreneurial.

The country has had several unicorns in previous years, such as Line Man Wongnai, Flash Express, and Ascend Money, all passing the copy billion valuation mark. Considering Thailand's robust economy, the country could produce more unicorns in the coming years, says the report.

According to Pun-Arj Chiratana, executive director of the National Innovation Agency, Thailand is Asean's second-largest economy and the friendliest business location. Since 2016, startup development has been a significant strategic policy for economic reform in Thailand.

He added that the vibrant business climate has been strengthened alongside a series of new incentives for startups. The focus is not only on Bangkok but also on other innovation districts across the country to make Thailand an attractive market for startups, innovative entrepreneurs, and investors.

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UZBEKISTAN

President Tech Award" to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship

In a move to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship, Uzbekistan has launched the President Tech Award, an annual contest that recognizes and rewards the best startups in digital technology projects. The award is worth $1,000,000 in total, with each category winner receiving cash prizes of up to $100,000, and second and third place getting $50,000 and $30,000 respectively.

The competition will be divided into two main areas, each with its own categories. The first area will include technologies based on artificial intelligence, digital technologies in the social sphere, ICT and cybersecurity, entrepreneurship and fintech, and computer and mobile games. The second area will be a Hackathon Grand Prix, which requires teams to create a digital solution within 72 hours.

To be eligible for the award, participants must be under 30 and either Uzbekistan citizens or foreign citizens who are employees of IT Park residents. Teams formed should consist of 3-8 people for the main area and 3-5 people for the special area. Participants can only participate in one selected category for both areas. Attendance is free, and registration will be open soon.

The judging process will be handled by an independent organization with extensive international experience in startup development, ensuring transparency and fairness throughout the contest. Winners in the main categories will be determined by public voting, while the Hackathon Grand Prix winner will be selected by an independent organization.

The President Tech Award is an excellent opportunity for young entrepreneurs in Uzbekistan to showcase their talents and receive recognition for their innovative ideas. With its generous prize pool and expert judging process, the contest promises to inspire a new generation of digital innovators in the country. Uzbekistan has made great progress in its IT sphere in recent years, with the World Bank claiming that the country is going through "unprecedented economic and social transformation."

The launch of the President Tech Award in Uzbekistan feeds into the country's major IT development drive and its young and growing population, where over 60% of

the people are under 30. As one of the fastest-growing countries in Central Asia, Uzbekistan has made significant investments in its technology sector to foster innovation and entrepreneurship, such as its "one million Uzbek coders" drive. With its large and youthful population, Uzbekistan has a vast pool of tech-savvy talent that is driving the country›s digital transformation, with over 30,000 students graduating from IT-related courses at tech-dedicated universities throughout the country.

The President Tech Award provides a platform for these young entrepreneurs to showcase their skills, promote their startups, and receive recognition for their innovative ideas, ultimately contributing to the country's ongoing IT development drive. The President Tech Award aims to further attract Uzbek youth into the sphere of IT and motivate them to succeed.

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