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Editorial

The Department of Intellectual Property (DIP) hosted the online IP Fair 2021 (<https://www.thailandipfair.com/>) between September 15-19, 2021 to create business opportunities amid COVID-19 crisis. The event featured IP products on sale, IP awards, seminars and business matching opportunities. The main objective was to raise awareness on the importance of intellectual property (IP) and transform Thailand toward innovative-based economy in line with the 20 years national strategy of 2018-2037.

One week before the IP Fair, Thailand's Ministry of Commerce also organized the real-time video stream of a counterfeit goods destruction ceremony for raising awareness of IP infringement. This event aims to educate the public to stop buying or selling counterfeit goods and deters the infringers from violating IP law.

On September 9, 2021, 240 participants witness this public destruction ceremony via zoom meeting instead of actual event that is open to the general public at the sites. The infringing products were delivered for destruction using industrial crusher in Saraburi province while other combustible items were incinerated in Chonburi province. Counterfeit goods of 572,076 items including bags, cloths, cosmetics, vehicle parts, electronic devices worth 503,169,500 baht were destroyed in the environmental-friendly method.

Due to measures against the risk of COVID-19, this new format of real-time streaming broadcast from two destruction sites together with a press conference and English subtitles allowed people around the globe to witness the ceremony in person. This destruction ceremony has ensured about our IP policy to the IP owners and the foreign investors in Thailand especially the enforcement measures continually run by the Royal Thai Police, Department of Special Investigation (DSI) and the Custom department. Those authorities have worked consistently with the Department of Intellectual property to protect the IP rights after registration. Apart from the destruction ceremony, we hope that others effective measures related to IP education and IP awareness would be carried out to stimulate and enhance IPR protection in the country.

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Patent Attorney

1. BoI approves new R&D, HR privileges

(From Bangkok Post, Thailand, July 1, 2021)

Bangkok – The Board of Investment (BoI) approved enhanced incentives to research & development and human resource development, to attract semiconductor manufacturing, digital activities and smart packaging businesses. Companies that provide training and apprenticeship programs or spend on advanced technology training can also enjoy greater tax perks. To attract more semiconductor manufacturing, the BoI has agreed to offer 10-year tax holidays to front-end capital and technology-intensive manufacturing. Companies applying for BoI privileges called “Development of Software, Digital Services Platform or Digital Content” will be eligible for eight-year tax holidays.

2. Chemistry boffin wins award

(From Bangkok Post, Thailand, August 25, 2021)

Bangkok – Professor Supawan Tantayanon, chairwoman of the Council of Science and Technology Professionals, was awarded the 2021 Distinguished Woman in Chemistry or Chemical Engineering from the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC). She was recognized for her “Dow Chemistry Classroom” program, which promotes the education of chemistry of small-scale laboratory techniques. It helps students and teachers utilize small amounts of both chemicals and time. Students participating in the program can experiment themselves. Some 1,000 schools with more than 150,000 students have participated in the program, which has spread to neighboring countries.

3. ALRO to push farmers to grow herbs with export potential in the EEC

(From www.nationthailand.com August 26, 2021)

Bangkok – The Agricultural Land Reform Office (ALRO) has urged Thai farmers to grow hemp, cannabis and green chiretta using high technology to boost their incomes. The study of kratom would be conducted with the aim of achieving sales of TH8 billion from exporting these herbs. The MoU by the ARLO and the Eastern Economic Corridor Office (EEC) on cooperation in the development of integrated herbs was signed with aims to increase incomes of farmers. More than THB100 billion worth of Thai herbs were exported in 2020, according to Department of Agriculture data. They also establish a suitable business model to make profit domestically and internationally.

4. Manufacture of products using kratom require FDA permission

(From www.nationthailand.com September 3, 2021)

Bangkok – The Thai Food and Drug Administration (FDA) warned the processing of kratom leaves (*Mitragyna speciosa*) into food and drugs requires approval from the FDA before selling. It has established an institution to provide advice on the products and details on how to obtain permission efficiently. The legally licensed products will display the effectiveness and benefits of the product and will be safe for consumption. Kratom was removed from the country's narcotics list on August 24. The plants are found mostly in the South and popularly chewed fresh or boiled into tea to stimulate energy and reduce fatigue.

5. Don suggests synergizing Thai-Japanese growth strategies

(From www.nationthailand.com September 3, 2021)

Bangkok – Don Pramudwinai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, proposed ways for cooperation with Japan to strengthen the strategic economic partnership during a webinar on “Envisioning the Future: Thailand-Japan Strategic Economic Partnership”. Japan's Ambassador to Thailand Nashida Kazuya underscored the everlasting friendship between Thailand and Japan and stressed the importance of Thailand as a long-term key production base for Japanese companies. Japan is Thailand's second biggest trade partner with total trade valued at US\$50.556 billion in 2020 and being the biggest investor with around 15,000 companies registered in the country.

6. Firm fights drug patent rejection

(From Bangkok Post, Thailand, September 6, 2021)

Bangkok – A Japanese pharmaceutical company has appealed against the Department of Intellectual Property (DIP)'s rejection of its request to patent the anti-Covid drug Favipiravir which is widely used in Thailand. The DIP's committee will consider whether to allow its patent registration. Meanwhile, the Government Pharmaceutical Organization (GPO) and other medicine producers in Thailand can carry on with their production of the anti-viral medicine. The department earlier ruled the request to patent the drug in its tablet form did not constitute an advanced invention under the 1979 Patent Act. After the applicant appealed against the department's decision, if it fails, the ruling will legally stand as final.

7. FTI urges more govt contracts for 'Made in Thailand' SMEs

(From www.nationthailand.com, September 7, 2021)

Bangkok – The Federation of Thai Industries (FTI) has urged the government to favor Thai manufacturers in purchases with the national budget. The FTI has registered over 2,000

manufacturing Made in Thailand (MiT), more than 52 per cent of MiT producers are expected to contract with the government to deliver products worth over 68 billion baht this year. The top five registered products are construction equipment, followed by electrical and electronic products, air conditioners, medical products and equipment, and textiles. The FTI also work with the Office of Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion (OSMEP) to create foreign business opportunities for Thai SMEs in Bahrain, India and China.

8. RCEP to boost China-ASEAN ties, economy recovery

(From www.nationthailand.com, September 13, 2021)

Bangkok – The worlds largest free-trade deal, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) will boost China-ASEAN cooperation and facilitate the regions economic recovery from the pandemic. The RCEP signed by 15 Asia-Pacific countries, including China and ASEAN’s ten member states. Ren Hongbin, China’s vice minister of commerce said at the 18th China-ASEAN Expo, “the agreement integrates and optimizes the region’s economic and trade rules in fields of goods, services, investment, intellectual property rights, e-commerce and competition policy, which will promote the development of industrial chain, supply chain and value chain in the region.” At the forum, officials, business leaders, scholars and entrepreneurs from China and ASEAN called on the RCEP participating countries to work for the agreement’s early entry into force and implementation.

9. NIA opens office in Chiang Mai

(From Bangkok Post, Thailand, September 14, 2021)

Chiang Mai – The National Innovation Agency (NIA) has established its northern office in Chiang Mai to foster connections between innovators, academics and private firms in the region and draw innovation to the country. The NIA expects to see R&D investment in the north reach 263 million baht in the next five years, which could contribute to 0.04% of the gross regional and provincial product (GPP) and 0.0011% of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP). Its office is in the Northern Science Park in Muang district, which covers 11 provinces with 7.8 million population. Chiang Mai has around 26,737 entrepreneurs, 149 startups, 2,639 community enterprises and 21,429 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

10. B500m of fake goods destroyed

(From Bangkok Post, Thailand, September 14, 2021)

Bangkok – Counterfeit goods worth over 500 million baht were destroyed at an event hosted by the Ministry of Commerce, which was held to boost Thailand’s trading partners’

confidence in the efforts to enforce intellectual property rights. 572,076 items, including clothing, electronics and cosmetics, were destroyed. Some 56,501 items were seized by the Royal Thai Police, while 435,049 and 80,526 items were those seized by the Customs Department and the Department of Special Investigation. The government urged the public to be a part of the “Stop Piracy, Buy Original Now” campaign.