

S&I International Bangkok Office Company Ltd.

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IP News No. 188, November 2023

Editorial

The Economic Crime Suppression Division (ECD police) raided and arrested a significant seller of Panasonic counterfeiting batteries bearing Panasonic's trademark in July of this year. The seizure was the largest to date for the brand in Southeast Asia, with those batteries intended for sales on eCommerce platforms. Since the fake batteries are highly hazardous and can cause serious damage to several household appliances. To protect consumer safety, Panasonic announced a zero-tolerance policy toward counterfeit goods as they undermine the brand and betray its customer trust.

To counter with online IPRs infringement, Thailand's Department of Intellectual Property, Department of Business Development and Department of International Trade Promotion signed the memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the protection of intellectual property rights on the Internet with online platforms and various rights holders' representatives. The MOU was signed since year 2021 and the platforms have closely collaborated with IP rights holders and several authorities in Thailand to support in investigation. For example, Lazada platform provided the right owner with information on the seller's digital footprint, which assisted in indicating the suspect's location and leading to seizures of counterfeit goods and arrest sellers on a wide scale.

Today the selling of counterfeit goods on eCommerce markets has become a serious issue for most businesses. The IP right holders realize that if they do not continuously tackle down the counterfeit goods in the eCommerce platforms, it could undermine customer's trust in the reputable brand and affect customer's safety. Thanks to the successful operations under the MOU during the past years. We wish that this collaboration would be continued and will be extended to others operation in IPRs suppression soon.

Apapan S. Milde

Patent Attorney

1. Asean countries to begin talks on \$2.7 trillion digital economy pact by end-2023

(From www.nationthailand.com, August 21, 2023)

Semarang, Indonesia – Asean is intensifying the economic integration to improve cross-border trade and investment flows, including unlocking a potential US\$2 trillion in its digital economy

by 2030. The 55th Asean Economic Ministers' (AEM) meeting in Indonesia endorsed a study on the Asean Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) to pave the way for the 10 member countries starting negotiations on the pact. According to Boston Consulting Group, Asean's digital economy will triple by the end of the decade through the natural adoption of digital technologies, growing to almost US\$1 trillion by 2030 from US\$300 billion now. Progressive rules in DEFA would double this contribution to US\$2 trillion.

2. Commercial attaches to help expand markets for Thai exports

(From www.nationthailand.com, August 28, 2023)

Bangkok – The Department of International Trade Promotion is introducing a new policy which directors of Thai trade officers in various countries will become key opinion leaders (KOLs). The KOLs should be in different fields, having knowledge and expertise in marketing, social media to expand the market for Thai products internationally. The department plans to establish KPIs to measure the offices' success. It will promote Thailand's digital content industry, focusing on two dimensions: services, such as post-production services like editing and visual effects, and products including films, series, non-moving cartoon characters and animation.

3. Thailand tops Asean in achieving SDGs

(From www.nationthailand.com, August 29, 2023)

Bangkok – Thailand was ranked 43rd among 166 countries working on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the United Nations Global Compact Network Thailand (UNGCNT) said. Thailand's score of 74.7 was higher than the average score for East and South Asia, followed by Vietnam, Singapore and Indonesia. Not only the government's efforts to achieve the SDGs in line with its national development strategies, but Thai business sectors have also played an important role in achieving the goals, especially SDG4 (quality education), SDG6 (clean water and sanitation), SDG7 (affordable and clean energy) and SDG12 (responsible consumption and production).

4. Thai dessert shop apologizes for causing online uproar over patenting of 'Pang Cha'

(From www.nationthailand.com, August 30, 2023)

Thailand – A misunderstanding over a popular Thai-style dessert shop registering its name and logo has led to an uproar over social media. Lukkaithong Thai Royal Restaurant announced on its Facebook page that it has patented the words "Pang Cha" both in Thai and English and reserved the copyright. The announcement used a photo of its popular Thai-style shaved ice or "Bingsu" dessert with pieces of bread soaked in Thai tea topped with cream and mint leaves as an illustration. The IP department and an intellectual property law expert explained about its

misunderstood that the trademark comprised two common Thai words – “pang” for bread and “cha” for tea. The IP office would not allow the registration of general words or phrases as trademarks. The Pang Cha World Class Thai Tea Facebook page then apologized for the misunderstanding caused.

5. Toyota college in Chachoengsao offers students new opportunities in automotive field

(From www.nationthailand.com, September 5, 2023)

Thailand – Toyota Automotive Technological College (TATC), set up in Chachoengsao province in 1995, to promote knowledge with opportunities in the automotive industry to students. “The college shares knowledge with Toyota headquarters in Japan to ensure its curriculum aligns with the international standards” said TATC’s executive vice president. It limits enrolments to just 200 students per academic year and has gained positive feedback due to a growing interest in electric vehicles (EV) and energy security. The college then expanded its curriculum to cover EV technology which pending for approval from the Office of the Vocational Education Commission.

6. Thai delegation heads to Brussels next week for FTA talks with EU

(From www.nationthailand.com, September 11, 2023)

Bangkok – The Ministry of Commerce will lead Thai trade delegates to the first round of the Thai-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations in Brussels, Belgium. This will include meetings of the Trade Negotiating Committee at the head of the delegation level, responsible for overseeing whole negotiations, and meetings of 19 subcommittees at the expert level. The goal is to conclude the negotiations within two years. The delegation includes representatives from various government agencies, such as the Commerce, Finance, Agriculture and Cooperatives, Industry, Natural Resources and Environment, Labor, and Foreign Ministry.

7. Asian Institute of Technology launches Science and Technology Park

(From www.nationthailand.com, September 13, 2023)

Bangkok – The Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) unveiled its prestigious designation as a BOI-approved Science and Technology Park (BOI STP). The park marked a significant milestone for Thailand’s innovation landscape, attracting foreign enterprises, talents, and collaborations. It offers comprehensive support from business incubation to expansion, access to Thailand Science Park, IP licensing support and fully equipped workspaces. Investors applying for BOI STP investment promotion for any qualified project in targeted businesses and situated at AIT will receive special privileges such as Corporate Income Tax exemption.

8. Raid against Counterfeit Batteries Sold on Online Marketplaces

(From Bangkok Post, Thailand, September 21, 2023)

Bangkok – On July 26, Panasonic, the Economic Crime Suppression Division (ECD Police) and Lazada Thailand, arrested a significant seller of counterfeit batteries on online platforms. More than 400,000 fake Panasonic batteries were seized with the total value of the goods exceeding 17 million baht. The sellers faced criminal charges on trademark infringement offenses under the Thai Trademark Act with a maximum penalty of imprisonment for not more than four years or a fine of not more than 400,000, or both. The seizure has the highest number of seized products of counterfeit Panasonic goods ever recorded for Thailand and Southeast Asia. It also resulted of a successful collaboration among the ECD Police, Lazada Thailand and Panasonic.

9. Thailand remains in 43rd place in latest global index

(From Bangkok Post, Thailand, September 29, 2023)

Bangkok – Thailand's ranking in the Global Innovation Index (GII 2023) at 43rd for a third consecutive year because of lack of human capital and an unfavorable institutional and regulatory environment, according to the World Intellectual Property (WIPO). To elevate its ranking to the top 30 by 2030, the National Innovation Agency (NIA) plans to establish a matching fund of 50 million baht to accelerate the creation of more startups and support spinoffs from universities to commercialize their innovations. The Intellectual Property Department also plans to embrace artificial intelligence to accelerate its patent approvals.

10. Jetro Bangkok urges Thai govt to be prudent about wage hike

(From www.nationthailand.com, October 1, 2023)

Bangkok – Mr. Junichiro Kuroda, president of Jetro Bangkok, expressed concern about the government's plan to implement a daily minimum wage of 600 baht nationwide by 2027 and possibly 400 baht at the beginning of next year. Currently, the minimum daily wage varies based on province – from 328 baht to 354 baht – after the last wage increase took place in October last year following a two-year freeze. He also suggested the new government focus its investments in basic infrastructure and innovations as well as the development of skilled labor industries instead. He added that logistics pressures might prompt foreign investors to reduce risks by distributing investments to other Southeast Asian nations.