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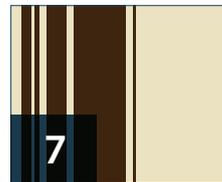
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INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Saudi Arabia Tops Arab Countries in Registered Patents

GENEVA-Saudi Arabia has topped the list of Arab countries making registered patents in 2011, according to the World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) annual report. Saudi Arabia tops the list with 147 patents and the United Arab Emirates comes in second with 39, followed by Egypt with 33. Morocco filed 17 patent applications, moving above Tunisia with 8 patents and Syria (5), while Kuwait and Algeria registered 4 each. Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen each filed one.

Despite difficult economic conditions, international patent filings administered by the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) set a new record in 2011 with 181,900 applications – a growth of 10.7% compared to 2010 and the fastest growth since 2005.

Source: Middle East Confidential



WIPO Approves Seven World Patents by Emirati Inventor

ABU DHABI - The international search and examining authorities of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has approved seven out of 12 world patents submitted by Emirati woman Mrs. Eida Butti Almuhairbi. Mrs. Almuhairbi is the financial account team leader for ZADCO CO in Abu Dhabi and works in cooperation with her Jordanian partner the Eng. Wasfi Amin Alshdaifat. They applied for three patents in 2010, and four in 2011.

The approved patents include a design for a semi-pneumatic tire (Intire) which the inventors believe could be the safest solution when suffering a blow-out at high speeds. In a statement to the Emirates News Agency, the inventors explained that through a mutual partnership of ideas and a review of international inventions, they have also invented a tire which allows driving without air for long distances after a puncture.

They have also created a retractable audio earpiece to replace the need for distributing headsets on planes, as well as a built-in self storing retractable vehicle cover to protect it from sun, dust and rain. They added that they have also invented a retractable vehicle cover that can be installed and removed from the vehicle easily.

Four further patents have been applied for, and will be examined theoretically and technically by the international search authority. These included three models of electric washing machines with either multi-rotatable basins, multi-removable basins, or multi-fixed basins, where its operation is controlled by one electronic control unit.

The company explained that the washing machines, with their multi-basins, are run by one motor and served by one central water feed pipe installed inside it with an assembly of electromagnetic valves to distribute water to the three basins to complete the washing process within the same period, saving in time, water, and energy consumption.

They also described their 12th invention as a motorized sweeper disc iron, wherein a motor moves a disc iron around the fabric to be ironed, which is fixed smoothly around a compressible and storable ironing cylinder.

The inventors pointed to the UAE's leadership as encouraging scientific creativity and highlighted the fact that they have applied for the more patents than any other company in the country.

Mrs. Almuhairbi is the recognized as a world leading independent inventor while, over time, the UAE has submitted more patent requests than any other Arab country.



Morocco Seeks to Regulate, Develop Online Media

CASABLANCA-With the number of Internet users in Morocco now numbering 16 million, officials are looking at ways to regulate the information highway.

The Moroccan Ministry of Communication organized a study day on the electronic press in Rabat in order to modernize the sector and to build a legal framework.

Legal and regulatory issues were examined along with professional ethics and Intellectual Property protection, as well as how to develop skills and techniques among online media operators.

"It is a historic day on which we met with most Moroccan websites to examine how to organize the sector, which represents one of the pillars of the media in our country," Communication Minister Mustapha El Khalfi said.

He added that "the number of Internet subscribers has reached 3.2 million, while the total number of those using the Internet is at 16 million, and under that mode Morocco became an industry leader at the Arab, African and Mediterranean level".

"Morocco is suffering in this field from a legal vacuum and the absence of clear public policy allowing this rising and promising sector to flourish," El Khalfi

went on to say. "We have a paradox--on the one hand there is digital progress, and on the other there are political, legal and managerial shortcomings.

"The government is looking to launch a new era for this field on the basis of freedom and responsibility and is convinced of the fact that this sector, in which young people are active, is an opportunity to enhance the competitiveness of Morocco in this aspect," he concluded.

Younes Moujahid, President of the National Moroccan Press Syndicate (SNPM), said the study day was "the beginning of a serious discussion on the field of electronic media, which evolved with the growing margin of freedom and with technological advances".

"It has become imperative to study this field as it raises problematic legal and technical, professional and economic issues," he said.

According to the President of the Moroccan Association for Electronic Journalism, Adil Klei, electronic media regulation has three key areas: intellectual property and journalistic ethics, specialized training for electronic journalism and the maintenance of a professional environment through legal institutions.



Dubai Customs Visits Japan

DUBAI-His Excellency Ahmed Butti Ahmed, Executive Chairman of Ports, Customs and Free Zone, the Director General of Dubai Customs, has called for enforcing tighter punishments on the trademark violators, especially the violations that can affect human life and health.

Speaking at a seminar organized by the Japan External Trade Organization (JERTO), about means and tools of combating counterfeiting and piracy, His Excellency said that Dubai Customs intensified its efforts in raising awareness about Intellectual Property to different society segments including judiciary and police members.

During the seminar which was attended by a number of senior officials and major company CEO's, His Excellency talked about the instruments adopted by Dubai Customs in combating the spurious products and protection of trademarks and the community as a whole from the danger of counterfeiting. He explained that Dubai Customs, in the Fourth Global Congress on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy which came out with "Dubai Declaration", has underscored, in one of its recommendations, the importance of ruling out severe penalties against the violators at all levels.

He stated that Dubai Customs has also recommended the proposal of establishing specialized courts in the UAE to hear cases of IPR. In response, the Declaration's outcomes gave the green light to the Ministry of Justice to proclaim the establishment of the court

The Dubai Customs delegation, which included Mr. Abbas Makki, (acting) Executive Director of Dubai World and Director of External Relations, Mr. Yousef Ozair Mubarak, Director of IPR Department, and Mr. Abdulla Al. Shaer, Director of Customs Intelligence Department was briefed about the role of The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry in Tokyo in combating counterfeiting.

The delegation also attended the International Intellectual Property Protection Forum and replied to questions raised by representatives of leading companies. The participants in the forum discussed matters related to IPM, the system which has been introduced by WCO to enable inspectors use data and images of genuine products when suspecting counterfeits. The WCO is expected to train Dubai Customs' employees on using the system.

His Excellency said: "Piracy has become a growing concern threatening security of nations and their economy; therefore, severe enforcement must be ruled out against the violators of IPR, especially, against the violators whose activities compromise people's health and life."

In the days that followed the seminar and forum, the delegation visited Nissan Motors, Hitachi, Toyota Motors and Panasonic. His Excellency reassured these companies that Dubai Customs does its best to protect these leading brands from counterfeiting in the UAE. The delegation visited Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, and Kyoto during their tour.

Source: Dubai Customs

HUNGARIAN

Judicial Reforms

Slammed as Breach of Rights



BUDAPEST—Legislation enacted in Hungary by Viktor Orban's ruling Fidesz party threatens the independence of the judiciary and breaches European Convention rights to a fair trial, an independent legal body ruled.

The legislation, unique to Hungary, allows former judge Mrs. Tunde Handó, now President of the new National Judicial Office (NJO), to appoint, transfer and discipline judges. Handó, who will be in post for nine years, can also unilaterally select court presidents and decide the retirement age of judges. The legislation also removes the power of veto from the National Judicial Council, which it relegates to giving opinions.

The Venice Commission, the Council of Europe's advisory body on promoting 'democracy through law', said this afternoon that the previous system of administering the judiciary required improvement,

but the new law goes too far. A spokesman said: 'The NJO president is elected without consulting members of the judiciary and is not accountable in a meaningful way unless in cases of violation of the law.'

The legislation must be revised if it is not to contradict 'European standards' for the independence of the judiciary and the right to a fair trial under article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights, the spokesman said.

Dr. József Szajer, MEP, a founding member of the Fidesz party and the lawyer credited with much of Hungary's new constitution, said that Handó's 'judicial independence' has never been questioned. He said: 'She is not a politician, but a judge and has impartially heard thousands of cases. Her appointment will remove inefficiencies from the judiciary and cut costs.'



Constitutional Court Bill Goes to Committee in Jordan

AMMAN -An overwhelming majority of MPs have voted for referring the draft law governing the projected constitutional court to the Lower House Legal Committee for examination, voting down a proposal to give the reform-oriented legislation urgent status.

During the Lower House session conducted on March 4, Deputy Mamdouh Abbadi suggested that the draft law, which he described as “an inseparable component of the reform process” be referred to the Legal Committee but given urgent status.

Several MPs, including Bassam Haddadin and Khalil Atiyyeh, championed Abbadi’s cause, calling on the speaker’s first deputy, Atef Tarawneh, to reconsider the issue.

However, other deputies opposed rushing the bill through the legislative process, including MP Mustafa Shneikat, who argued that “the legislation is an essential ingredient of the political reform endeavor and thus has to be given enough time and patience”.

The debate ended when a majority of deputies voted for referring the law to the Legal Committee without giving it urgent status.

The Cabinet endorsed the draft law on the constitutional court, which is stipulated in Article 58 of the newly amended Constitution.

The court has a mandate to rule on the constitutionality of laws and bylaws and interpret the Constitution.

According to the draft law, the financially and administratively independent Amman-based court will consist of nine judges appointed by Royal Decree who will serve nonrenewable six-year terms, including the president.

The draft law also stipulates the appointment of three more judges after two years.

The Lower House, the Senate and the Council of Ministers are the only entities allowed to contest the constitutionality of laws in the projected court, which will issue its verdicts in the name of the King, as stipulated in the bill.

The law sets criteria for selecting judges, who should not be public officials or private sector employees. They should not be practicing any commercial activity, or be members of any company’s board of directors or trustees. They also cannot be members of political parties.

Where We Operate

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