

India's IPR Policy to fully protect patents, GIs and copyrights: Nirmala Sitharaman

Minister felicitates Micromax for acquiring 1.25th Million International Trademark

NEW DELHI, 20 July 2015: Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry (I/C), today sought to allay apprehensions in the minds of foreign investors about the strength of the Indian IPR regime, stating that final draft of the National IPR Policy has been arrived at through a transparent process with inputs from all stakeholders and has been circulated for inter-ministerial consultation before being posed to the Union Cabinet for approval.

Smt. Sitharaman was speaking here while inaugurating a seminar on 'Protecting Brands Abroad with the Madrid System' organized by FICCI, in association with World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and DIPP.

The draft policy, she said, focusses on stronger enforcement of IPR by increasing the manpower strength in IP offices and reducing the pendency of IPR filings. Most of the offices have done away with manual interface as all applications, queries and decisions are made online.

Speaking on the Madrid Protocol on registering and managing Trade Marks worldwide, the Minister said that the system allows an applicant to file one application, in one language and pay one set of fees to protect the Trademark in all WIPO member countries.

For SMEs and start-ups, the Madrid Protocol is a cost-effective and time-saving way of having rights protected worldwide, she said, adding that the system would go a long way in reducing processes and provide ease of doing business.

The Minister presented a certificate of appreciation to Mr. Vineet Taneja, CEO of Micromax, on its acquisition of the 1.25th million international trademark under the Madrid System.

Mr. Amitabh Kant, Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in his address, said that the key challenge before the country was to attain growth rates of 9-10% year after year for 30 years. "We need to be a nation of job creators where innovation and creativity will be the key driving forces," he added.

The thrust of the government is on creating a world-class IPR regime along with bringing down the pendency of IPR filings to global levels, he said and added that there is an imperative need to build Indian brands that can effectively penetrate the global markets.

Mr. Sidharth Birla, Immediate Past President, FICCI, said that given India's thriving economy and growing number of globally recognized brands, the country has the potential to be one of the top users of the Madrid System. Although India is a recent entrant to the Madrid System, both small and large Indian companies are now making the most of the Madrid System, from sectors as diverse as textiles and clothing through to hi-tech product and services. The year 2014, for instance, saw a promising growth of 273% in filing of international trademark applications by Indian companies. This not only reflects their growing awareness on the importance of trademark protection but how this can be leveraged for business strategy. He expressed confidence that with Indian businesses increasingly protecting their trademarks in different geographies, it will not only increase their export orientation but will bring them global branding.

Mr. Rajiv Aggarwal, Joint Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, expressed the hope that the achievement of Micromax would encourage other companies to avail of the

facility under the Madrid System and leapfrog into the league of global brands. He said the proposed national IPR Policy strives to bring clarity in existing laws and safeguard the interests of Indian industry.

Mr. Naresh Prasad, Assistant Director General and Chief of Staff, Office of the Director General, World Intellectual Property Organization (**WIPO**), **said** that the Madrid System provides an excellent opportunity to Indian companies to make the presence felt in the international market. The Madrid System, he said was the most convenient and cost-effective solution for registering of patents in 111 countries simultaneously, and added that the achievement by Micromax was a “milestone” that should encourage more Indian companies to register under the Madrid Protocol.

The felicitation ceremony was followed by a seminar on Protecting Brands Abroad with the Madrid System whereby experts from World Intellectual Property Organization, Indian IP Office and industry discussed the advantages and incentives to business from international trademark registration.

FICCI MEDIA DIVISION