

Rising patent filings show a sign of faith

Stronger legislation combined with tough response to breaches offers assurance to overseas businesses

BEIJING — China has been fostering strict protection of intellectual property by law, leading to a growing number of foreign patent applications, said an official from the National Intellectual Property Administration.

From January to July, foreign applicants filed 92,000 invention patent applications in China, a year-on-year growth of 8.3 percent.

Also, 149,000 trademark registration applications were filed, up 13.1 percent compared with the same period last year, said Gan Shaoning, deputy head of NIPA.

In conversing with a group of foreign journalists, Gan attributed the rises to the application of measures designed to strengthen IP protection in the country. These measures included amending laws and regulations, accelerating the construction of a national IP credit system and carrying out joint punishment on dishonest behaviors.

Last week, the foreign journalists visited NIPA's Patent Examination Cooperation (Beijing) Center. After a tour of exhibitions, they learned about the history and development of China's modern patent system. They also watched a demo on the process of a patent application of a robotic arm for surgery.

The event was organized by the



A visitor learns about well-known overseas trademarks at an intellectual property protection section in an exhibition in Chongqing. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Information Office of the State Council to show the country's business- and innovation-friendly climate to foreign journalists.

"China attaches great importance to IP protection, not only for creating a friendly environment for opening-up, but more importantly, for its own development," said Gan in response to a question by a Russian journalist. "The Chinese government has

put forward the idea of innovation-driven development," he said. "Without strict IP protection, there will be no innovation and no economic and social development."

China's advances in IP protection have been widely recognized. The country's global ranking of the business environment rose to 46th place in 2018 from 78th in 2017, according to the Doing Business

2019 report released by the World Bank.

The 2019 Member Survey by the US-China Business Council shows that 58 percent of US enterprises share the view that China has enhanced its IP protection in 2018. This marks a record high since the survey started in 2011.

Data from the Ministry of Commerce show that more than 20,130 new foreign-funded companies

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92,000 applications

for invention patents filed by foreign applicants with the National Intellectual Property Administration in the first seven months of this year

were registered in China in the first half of this year. They collectively involved 478.33 billion yuan (\$67.49 billion) in combined paid-in foreign capital.

Of the amount, which increased by 7.2 percent year-on-year, 28.8 percent went to the high-tech industry.

Pilot free trade zones and regions in western China have become popular investment destinations. Foreign capital flowing into the zones and western regions jumped 20.1 and 21.2 percent year-on-year during the six-month period, respectively.

XINHUA-CHINA DAILY

IP Scene

BEIJING Cultural exhibition promotes exchanges

The China Cultural Intellectual Property and Innovative Design Exhibition, running from Sept 12 to 15 at the National Agricultural Exhibition Center, served as a platform for cultural companies to release their latest products, exchange creative ideas and cooperate in creation, distribution, design, production and commercialization, organizers said.

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SHANXI Regulation rolled out to relieve pressure

The Shanxi government recently rolled out a new regulation on government financial aid for patent-collateralized loans, aimed at helping local tech companies relieve financing pressure. According to the regulation, a special fund established by the provincial government will be used to cover loan interest, as well as other fees for insurance, guarantees and assessment. Applicants for the fund, if they can meet the requirements, will be funded up to 200,000 yuan (\$28,210).

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SHANGHAI Punitive damages ordered in legal case

The Shanghai Pudong New District People's Court ruled in a trademark case in early September, ordering the defendant, a fitness equipment manufacturer headquartered in neighboring Zhejiang province, to pay punitive damages, or three times the US plaintiff's losses worth 1 million yuan (\$141,070). It is the first court ruling adopting punitive damage in Shanghai, since the prevention mechanism was introduced to the revised Trademark Law in 2013. Considering the defendant's repeated infringements, diverse distribution channels and refusal to submit sales records to the court, the judges found its infringement "malicious" and "serious" and thus granted the damages ruling.

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HUNAN Computer congress reveals innovations

The World Computer Congress held in Changsha, capital of Hunan province, earlier this month showcased the latest innovations in the industry. Experts from China and abroad shared their insights into a variety of topics, including the future and computers, 5G and cybersecurity, at a main forum as well as nine themed forums. China's computer sector generated 1.95 trillion yuan (\$275.11 billion) in business revenue in 2018, an increase of 8.7 percent from a year earlier, ranking the country first globally, according to the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology.

PEOPLE'S DAILY

SHAANXI GI to be highlighted at agricultural expo

An agricultural expo is scheduled for October at the Yangling Agricultural High-tech Industrial Demonstration Zone in Shaanxi province. As a co-host of the event, the National Intellectual Property Administration said it will bring a group of influential farm products carrying registered geographical indications to the expo, hoping to increase GI awareness and spur growth of local economy.

CHINA INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY NEWS

GUANGDONG Invention event to bring tech to table

A national invention expo is slated to open in November in Foshan, aimed at advancing a national innovation-driven development strategy, organizers said. Highlights of the event will include a competition focusing on technological innovations from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, a contest focusing on the civil use of original military inventions and roadshows for tech projects.

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Ancient handicrafts given 21st century makeover at New York Fashion Week

NEW YORK — Shanghai-based Orient International (Holding) aims to connect the cultures of China's 56 ethnic groups with the world's leading fashion designers through an initiative to aid the development of China's fashion industry and cultural heritage, said a senior company executive.

The initiative, known as Top 100 Global Designers Alliance, aims to inspire the world's leading fashion designers with China's traditional culture from 56 ethnic groups, Tong Jisheng, chairman of the company, said in an interview with Xinhua on the sidelines of the New York Fashion Week earlier this month.

"The alliance will work as a platform for international designers who have excellent design skills but limited commercial access to the Chinese market," Tong said.

As a trial, the alliance cooperated with Wang Tao, a noted Chinese designer as well as a regular at the NYFW, to transform China's intangible cultural heritage Yi embroidery into urban fashion for the catwalk.

In the spring/summer 2020 collection of Taoray Taoray, the youth line of designer Taoray Wang, Yi embroidery and bright colors were incorporated in daily wear such as camisoles, T-shirts, hoodies and denim jackets.

"Most of the people buy Yi embroidery as souvenirs. We want to break the stereotype that traditional embroidery cannot be fashionable," said Wang on the sidelines of her runway show. "I think fashion is the best way to introduce culture."

Tong said he believes that a com-

70,000+ women

involved in embroidery in the Chuxiong Yi autonomous prefecture in Yunnan province

bination of ethnic heritage and fashion design would have huge market potential.

"The trends of fashion will have to integrate the East and the West and be extracted from the culture. These are the pursuit of modern consumers," he said.

The cooperation was also part of the efforts to improve life standards of residents in the Chuxiong Yi autonomous prefecture in Southwest China's Yunnan province. In Chuxiong, more than 70,000 women are involved in embroidery. The industry is worth more than 100 million yuan (\$14.11 million), according to Xu Xiaomei, head of the prefecture's publicity department.

Xu said Yi embroidery's appearance at the NYFW successfully promoted intangible cultural heritage on the world stage.

As more people learn to appreciate the aesthetic of the technique, the industry will grow at a faster pace and Chuxiong's female embroiders can live a more decent life, she said.

"How do we help the female embroiders in Chuxiong to live a more decent life? We should transform their embroidery works into merchandise and put them on the market," Tong said.

XINHUA



A model displays a new fashion design incorporating Yi ethnic embroideries during the New York Fashion Week earlier this month. QIN LANG / XINHUA



A farmer picks tea leaves in a field in Meitan, Guizhou province. LIU XU / XINHUA

Geographical indications help to lift rural residents' incomes

By ZHANG DANDAN zhangdandan@chinadaily.com.cn

Geographical indication, an important element of some intellectual properties, is closely bound with issues relating to agriculture, rural areas and rural people, and is playing an increasingly important role in targeted poverty alleviation.

GI identifies a product's origin, quality and reputation. It is determined by the natural and human factors of the place of production, with the product's quality having a close connection with the geographical environment such as water, soil and climate.

In terms of promoting the image of local specialties and increasing the added value of agricultural products, GI plays an irreplaceable role, which has been proven in Guizhou province in Southwest China.

Guizhou has had an array of successful examples of using GI to develop its agricultural economy.

Weining county of Bijie city in the province has been able to industrialize its potato plantations since it received approval for the registration of the GI trademark of "Weining potato" in 2009.

Scaled-up plantations, standardized production, refined processing and branded marketing have helped to develop the county into one of the main potato producing areas in southern China.

Weining has more than 1.27 billion square meters of potato plantations. The per capita net income of local

“By taking advantage of GI ... we can promote the healthy development of local industries and help impoverished areas...”

Wang Dongfeng, an official from the IP utilization promotion department at the National Intellectual Property Administration

farmers from the potato industry exceeds 1,600 yuan (\$230), accounting for more than 22 percent of the per capita net income of all the farmers in the county.

Meitan county in Zunyi, Guizhou province has tea plantations covering 400 million square meters.

The county has received two GI trademarks for its tea brands — "Meitan Cuiya" and "Zunyi Hong" — in the past 10 years.

After years of protection and publicity of the two GIs, the county has been able to grow its tea industry, and has helped lift local tea farmers out of poverty.

Meitan is a key county for poverty alleviation, with 43,689 people in 12,961 households living below the poverty line.

However, as of September 2018, Meitan has been removed from the list of poverty-stricken counties, with 35,777 people in 9,913

households shrugging off poverty.

A similar story happened in Guizhou's Xiuwen county, where farmers have been planting kiwi fruit for more than 30 years. But due to the lack of brands and quality control, the county's kiwis were priced low.

The county successfully registered a GI trademark for its kiwi fruit in 2009. To date, 64 farmers, companies and cooperatives have been approved to use the GI trademark.

"We had to walk 1 kilometer, carrying the kiwi, and then take a bus to the county to sell before. The price was just 1 to 2 yuan per 500 grams. But now, the price has increased to more than 6 yuan per 500 grams," local villager Li Xuemei said.

As of the end of 2018, there were 111.33 million sq m of kiwi fruit orchards in Xiuwen county, which had created 52,000 jobs for local people and increased per capita annual income by more than 8,000 yuan.

Through scientific management, ecological cultivation and order-based sales, the county's kiwis are in line with the export standards of the European Union, and have been exported to Russia, Japan and Southeast Asia, local officials said.

"By taking advantage of GI and telling the stories of Guizhou, we can promote the healthy development of local industries and help impoverished areas in the province get rid of poverty as soon as possible," said Wang Dongfeng, an official from the IP utilization promotion department at the National Intellectual Property Administration.