

Middle East Intellectual Property Newsletter Vol. 89

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1. Important topics

Jordan: Significant Drop in Patent Registrations Raises Concerns¹

Jordan has witnessed a 40 percent decrease in local and international patent registrations in the first eight months of 2024 compared to the same period in 2023. According to the Intellectual Property Protection Directorate under the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Supply, only 58 patents were registered by August, down from 97 the previous year.

This decline could indicate challenges in the country's innovation landscape and patenting process. Despite the drop, the directorate received 169 new patent applications during this period, showing ongoing interest in securing intellectual property rights.

The Ministry has attributed the decrease to the intricate and lengthy patent verification process, which requires thorough local and international reviews. Alongside patents, Jordan saw notable activity in trademark renewals and ownership transfers, with over 4,000 trademarks renewed in 2024.

Qatar: Ministry of Commerce and Industry's Intellectual Property Office Resumes Annuity Payments²

The Qatari Ministry of Commerce and Industry's Intellectual Property Office (Qatar IPO) has announced that it will now resume accepting annuity payments for patents, in line with Circular No. 2/2024. This update applies to both pending applications and granted patents, reversing the previous allowance for deferring annuity payments after the third year if the application was still under review.

Applicants are now required to ensure that all outstanding annuity fees are paid, regardless of the application status. It is important to note that the Qatar IPO will not issue refunds for any incorrect or duplicate payments.

Saudi Arabia: First Professional Exam for IP Agents Announced³

The Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property (SAIP) has introduced its first professional exam for Intellectual Property (IP) agents. This exam is a key requirement for obtaining a license to provide IP-related services. Candidates who have participated in SAIP's preparatory programs were among the first to take the exam, which covered both practical and theoretical aspects of IP law.

The exam addresses various areas, including trademark registration and protection, copyright and neighboring rights, patents, industrial designs, plant varieties, and integrated circuits. By offering this certification, SAIP aims to enhance the skills of national professionals and develop expertise in the growing field of intellectual property.

SAIP also announced that the second licensing exam will be held on November 14, 2024.

Saudi Arabia: Expanding Gaming Partnership with Japanese Companies to Strengthen IP⁴

Saudi Arabia is expanding its collaboration with Japanese gaming companies as part of a strategic effort to bolster intellectual property (IP) development in the Middle East. The Saudi Public Investment Fund (PIF) will transfer all its gaming-related stocks to Savvy Games Group, focusing on partnerships to enhance IP

¹ <https://menafn.com/1108682376/Jordan-has-witnesses-40-percent-reduction-in-number-of-local-international-patents>

² <https://oneworldip.com/2024/09/15/qatar-intellectual-property-department-resumes-acceptance-of-annuity-payments-for-patent/>

³ <https://www.saip.gov.sa/en/news/2654/>

⁴ <https://zaman.co.at/en/6073/saudi-arabia-expands-partnership-with-japanese-gaming-companies-to-boost-intellectual-property-in-the-middle-east/1069661/>

utilization and innovation. This move aligns with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, aiming to diversify the economy and build a robust gaming ecosystem in the region.

The collaboration targets not just financial growth but also cultural exchange, with Japanese storytelling and gaming expertise being introduced to the Middle Eastern market. Savvy Games Group will play a key role in managing these relationships, exploring joint ventures and knowledge-sharing opportunities. This initiative is set to stimulate the region's gaming industry, fostering technological advancements, job creation, and economic development.

While this partnership offers growth potential, challenges like cultural adaptation and intellectual property protection will need to be carefully managed. Saudi Arabia is also looking to develop local gaming studios and support regional game developers as part of this strategy, enhancing its position in the global gaming market.

This initiative signals a transformative step in the Middle Eastern entertainment sector, particularly in animation, virtual reality, and video game production.

Saudi Arabia: New Laws on Commercial Registration and Trade Names Announced⁵

In a recent Cabinet Session held on September 17, 2024, Saudi Arabia introduced new regulations aimed at simplifying business processes. The approval of the updated commercial registration and trade name systems is a key initiative to foster a more efficient and transparent business environment in line with the country's Vision 2030.

The new laws are expected to reduce administrative burdens on businesses by consolidating multiple registrations into a single, unified commercial register, regardless of the number of activities a company undertakes across the Kingdom. In addition, businesses will now benefit from indefinite registration periods, provided they meet the annual update requirements for their information.

The Ministry of Commerce emphasized that these changes are part of an ongoing effort to align the business landscape with modern technological and economic advancements. By streamlining the process for reserving and registering trade names, the new regulations offer enhanced protection and value for businesses operating in the Kingdom. Furthermore, existing businesses have been granted a five-year grace period to align their sub-registers with the new system.

This development represents a significant step forward for Saudi Arabia's efforts to modernize its commercial frameworks, offering greater security and efficiency for both local and foreign businesses.

Bahrain: Authorities Seize 96 Cans of Counterfeit Motor Oil in Major Operation⁶

In a major enforcement operation, Bahraini authorities confiscated 96 cans of counterfeit motor oil, seizing products that falsely displayed well-known brand trademarks. The Ministry of Industry and Commerce, working alongside the Ministry of Interior, identified the individual involved, who was operating without the necessary licenses. The case has been referred to the Public Prosecutor under Bahrain's Law No. 6 of 2014 on Trademarks⁷, which mandates penalties including up to three years in prison and fines reaching 100,000 dinars.

Authorities have urged the public to report any suspicious activities, emphasizing the importance of safeguarding intellectual property to ensure consumer safety and protect businesses. The Ministry stressed the need for vigilance, especially as counterfeit products pose significant risks to vehicle performance and consumer trust.

⁵ <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2571863/business-economy>

⁶ <https://www.newsofbahrain.com/bahrain/102925.html>

⁷ <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/14730>

This latest operation highlights Bahrain's commitment to combating counterfeit goods and enforcing its stringent intellectual property laws.

2. Additional topics

Egypt:

Egypt's FM Receives Head of Intellectual Property Protection Authority

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GCC:

Brands Collaboration in the Spectrum of IP in the GCC Countries

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The Patent Office of the General Secretariat Participates in the Third Belt and Road Conference on Intellectual Property Affairs in The People's Republic of China

<https://www.gccpo.org/AboutUs/ShowNews?id=1410> (2024.09.15)

The GCC Patent Office Participates in the Roundtable Session Dedicated to the Intellectual Property Offices of the Belt and Road Initiative

<https://www.gccpo.org/AboutUs/ShowNews?id=1411> (2024.09.16)

The General Secretariat of The Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf and the Saudi Intellectual Property Academy Organize a Training Program Entitled (Entrepreneurship in Intellectual Property)

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Oman:

Commercial Establishment Fined for Violating Oman's Intellectual Property Rights

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<https://www.saip.gov.sa/en/news/2657> (2024.09.10)

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<https://www.saip.gov.sa/en/news/2652> (2024.09.04)

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<https://www.moec.gov.ae/en/-/economic-integration-committee-reviews-government-s-efforts-in-developing-legislative-framework-for-anti-money-laundering-and-patent-registrations> (2024.09.18)

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<https://www.moec.gov.ae/en/-/uae-highlights-its-efforts-to-enhance-legislative-framework-for-ip-rights-protection-at-3rd-belt-and-road-high-level-conference-on-intellectual-property-in-beijing-%C2%A0> (2024.09.24)

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<https://mgz.com.tw/2024/09/11/the-state-of-intellectual-property-in-yemen-challenges-and-opportunities> (2024.09.11)

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