

Middle East Intellectual Property Newsletter Vol. 106

Index

1. Important topics

- Egypt:** Comprehensive Reform of Intellectual Property Framework Launched
- Kuwait:** Retail Outlet Closed Following Seizure of Counterfeit Goods
- Oman:** Domain Registration Rules Updated for Foreign Entities
- Syria:** Trademark Protection Gains Relevance as Trade Restrictions Ease
- UAE:** Updated Laws on Quarantine, Biodiversity Protection, and Plant Variety Rights
- Ras Al Khaimah Intensifies Trademark Enforcement at Retail Level

2. Additional topics:

See end of text

News

1. Important topics

Egypt: Comprehensive Reform of Intellectual Property Framework Launched¹

Egypt has initiated a wide-ranging reform of its intellectual property (IP) system with the establishment of the Egyptian Intellectual Property Authority (EIPA), marking the first concrete outcome of Egypt's National Intellectual Property Strategy launched in September 2022.

According to EIPA Chairman Hesham Azmy, the reform is driven by three main factors: a constitutional obligation under the 2014 Constitution to protect IP and establish a dedicated authority; the need to strengthen protection for creators and innovators amid enforcement challenges; and Egypt's international commitments, including its membership in the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and related treaties.

The National IP Strategy is built on four pillars:

1. governance, through the creation of EIPA (established by law in July 2023);
2. legislative reform to update IP laws in light of technological developments, including artificial intelligence;
3. economic valorization of IP assets; and
4. public awareness, designated as a standalone strategic objective.

¹ <https://sis.gov.eg/en/media-center/news/egypt-launches-sweeping-overhaul-of-intellectual-property-system/>

EIPA has consolidated IP functions previously dispersed across seven ministries, extending its mandate beyond registration to include legislative reform, IP commercialization, and nationwide awareness initiatives. Efforts are underway to catalogue Egypt's IP assets across priority sectors such as industry, scientific research, tourism, culture, and media, with the aim of improving licensing, technology transfer, and monetization.

On enforcement, EIPA coordinates with police, customs, and regulatory authorities, with certain departments holding judicial enforcement powers. Legislative updates are also in progress, including measures to implement the Marrakesh Treaty and modernize laws that predate major technological shifts.

The reforms aim to transform intellectual property into an economic and cultural asset that contributes more effectively to Egypt's innovation ecosystem and national economy.

Kuwait: Retail Outlet Closed Following Seizure of Counterfeit Goods²

Kuwait's Ministry of Commerce and Industry has shut down a retail outlet after inspections revealed the sale of counterfeit branded goods. The action followed a market inspection that uncovered watches, handbags, and related accessories bearing unauthorized trademarks.

Inspection teams from the Ministry's commercial control units seized the infringing items on site and ordered the immediate closure of the establishment. The case has been formally recorded and referred to the Commercial Prosecution authorities for further legal action in accordance with applicable commercial and intellectual property regulations.

The enforcement action forms part of ongoing market surveillance activities carried out by the Ministry to monitor retail compliance and address trademark violations within the local market.

Oman: Domain Registration Rules Updated for Foreign Entities³

Oman's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has revised the rules governing the registration of countrycode domain names, allowing foreign companies to register domains under the .om, .com.om, and .co.om extensions without a prior trademark registration in Oman. Previously, a trademark certificate was among the documentation expected for domain name applications.

Under the updated policy, foreign entities need only demonstrate a corporate registration document or equivalent commercial proof to apply for the relevant domain names, provided the proposed domain does not conflict with existing registered trademarks in the Sultanate. The requirement that the domain name correspond to the applicant's legal name, business identity, or brand remains part of the conditions set by the TRA.

While the trademark registration prerequisite has been removed for domain allocation, applicants typically remain subject to conditions such as having a designated local administrative contact or trustee in Oman for the domain. Domain registrants continue to be responsible for ensuring that their chosen names do not infringe third-party rights or contravene applicable naming guidelines.

Syria: Trademark Protection Gains Relevance as Trade Restrictions Ease⁴

Recent easing of international trade restrictions affecting Syria has renewed commercial interest in the market, bringing increased attention to the status of trademark protection in the country. As trade activity gradually resumes, trademark filings are expected to regain strategic importance for rights holders considering future engagement.

² <https://www.arabtimesonline.com/news/moci-shuts-down-shop-selling-counterfeit-watches-and-bags/>

³ <https://abounaja.com/news/oman-allows-foreign-firms-to-register-domains-without-trademark-registration>

⁴ <https://globallawexperts.com/the-critical-importance-of-securing-trademark-rights-in-syria-following-the-lifting-of-trade-restrictions/>

Syria operates a first-to-file trademark system, under which exclusive rights are granted to the party that secures registration first, regardless of prior use elsewhere. In periods of market transition or reopening, this system can increase exposure to third-party filings for well-known foreign brands that are not yet registered locally.

The Syrian trademark framework has remained in place throughout recent years, although reduced foreign participation and enforcement constraints limited its practical use during periods of restricted trade. With regulatory conditions evolving, trademark registration is increasingly viewed as a foundational step for market presence and enforcement preparedness.

Syria is a member of the Paris Convention, allowing priority claims from earlier foreign filings within the prescribed time limits. As commercial conditions change, trademark registration is again becoming a relevant consideration in assessing future market entry and brand protection strategies.

UAE: Updated Laws on Quarantine, Biodiversity Protection, and Plant Variety Rights⁵

The United Arab Emirates has enacted a new federal law on the protection of new plant varieties, replacing Federal Law No. 17 of 2009 and modernizing the national framework in line with international standards, including the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV).

The new legislation establishes a dedicated register for protected plant varieties and clarifies the conditions for protection based on novelty, distinctness, uniformity, and stability. Protection is granted for a period of 20 years, extended to 25 years for trees and vines. The law also provides clearer rules on plant breeder status, priority rights, assignment, invalidation, and cancellation of rights.

Enforcement provisions have been strengthened. Infringement of protected plant variety rights may result in imprisonment of up to three years and financial penalties of up to AED 250,000 (approximately USD 68,000 or JPY 10.5 million).

These updates enhance legal certainty for plant breeders and rights holders and reinforce the UAE's commitment to intellectual property protection in the agricultural and life sciences sectors.

UAE: Ras Al Khaimah Intensifies Trademark Enforcement at Retail Level⁶

Authorities in Ras Al Khaimah have stepped up retail-level enforcement against trademark infringement, resulting in the removal of a large volume of infringing goods from the market during 2025. Enforcement activity was driven primarily by consumer complaints and targeted inspections conducted by the Ras Al Khaimah Department of Economic Development (RAK DED).

Inspection campaigns focused on commercial outlets suspected of trading in goods bearing unauthorized use of registered trademarks. Actions taken by the Commercial Protection Section led to the confiscation of infringing merchandise across multiple retail locations, reflecting sustained monitoring rather than isolated enforcement.

Official data indicate that RAK DED received 937 consumer complaints in 2025, with an administrative resolution rate of approximately 95 percent. Trademark-related complaints resulted in targeted inspections and enforcement actions against infringing commercial establishments..

RAK DED reiterated that counterfeit goods present both consumer safety concerns and competitive distortions for legitimate businesses. The Department continues to rely on complaint-based intelligence alongside routine inspections to identify violations and maintain market discipline.

⁵ <https://www.wam.ae/a/170e1u1>

⁶ <https://www.khaleejtimes.com/uae/rak-ded-cracks-down-counterfeit-products?refresh=true>

2. Additional topics

Bahrain:

Parliament to review Bahrain's entry into design pact
<https://www.newsofbahrain.com/bahrain/125199.html> (2026-01-16)

Iraq:

Technology & Babylon Universities Obtain Joint Patent
<https://moheer.gov.iq/en/post/technology-amp-babylon-universities-obtain-joint-patent-2026-01-12-20>
(2026-01-12)

Intellectual Property Rights in Iraq

<https://alkabban.com/iraqi-law/iraqi-ip-law/> (2026-01-20)

Kuwait:

Inside Kuwait Customs' fight against smuggling, counterfeits
<https://kuwaittimes.com/article/37992/kuwait/crime/inside-kuwait-customs-fight-against-smuggling-counterfeits/> (2026-01-04)

Kuwait University: New Circuit Cuts Power Usage – Patent Approved

<https://www.memesita.com/kuwait-university-new-circuit-cuts-power-usage-patent-approved/> (2026-01-09)

Lebanon:

Bisat Launches Advanced Digitization of Ministry Services

<https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/en/news/149049/bisat-launches-advanced-digitization-of-ministry-services>
(2026-01-08)

MENA:

Updates on the 13th Edition of Nice Classification (Effective 1 January 2026)

<https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=1c3c6758-f812-4687-b861-b63eaa487e63> (2026-01-20)

Oman:

Oman's new Investment Court to resolve disputes within 90 days

<https://www.omanobserver.om/article/1182939/business/economy/omans-new-investment-court-to-resolve-disputes-within-90-days> (2026-01-19)

Pakistan:

Digital Innovation, Data, and Rights: Reassessing Pakistan's Intellectual Property and Cyber Law Framework

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5990336 (2025-12-31)

Pakistan Customs to Destroy Millions in Fake Goods on International Customs Day

<https://customnews.pk/2026/01/22/pakistan-customs-to-destroy-millions-in-fake-goods-on-international-customs-day/> (2026-01-22)

MCCI hosts IP rights awareness session to promote business innovation

<https://www.app.com.pk/domestic/mcci-hosts-ip-rights-awareness-session-to-promote-business-innovation/> (2026-01-18)

Qatar:

From Cautionary Notices to Enforceable Rights: Qatar Launches Industrial Design Registration

<https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=e68d29dc-305a-4862-8f02-d44200458706> (2026-01-02)

MOCI issues guide on Gulf National Product Certificates for factories

<https://www.gulf-times.com/article/717975/qatar/moci-issues-guide-on-gulf-national-product-certificates-for-factories> (2026-01-03)

Qatar IP Office Commences Publishing Of International Registrations

<https://www.mondaq.com/trademark/1727578/qatar-ip-office-commences-publishing-of-international-registrations> (2026-01-07)

MOCI boosts awareness of consumer rights protection

<https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/25/01/2026/moci-boosts-awareness-of-consumer-rights-protection> (2026-01-25)

Saudi Arabia:

Umm Al-Qura University invents smart road barrier

<https://arab.news/gjum> (2026-01-07)

Saudi Arabia sees strong growth in patent filings as base of innovations expands

<https://saudigazette.com.sa/article/658368/saudi-arabia/saudi-arabia-sees-strong-growth-in-patent-filings-as-base-of-innovations-expands> (2026-01-22)

Business Identity Misuse in Saudi Arabia: The Silent Threat No Company Can Ignore

<https://ahysp.com/identity-misuse-in-saudi-arabia-protect-your-company/> (2026-01-02)

Saudi Arabia & UAE:

Opportunities in the UAE and Saudi Arabia's Technology Markets

<https://www.middleeastbriefing.com/news/opportunities-in-the-uae-and-saudi-arabias-technology-markets/> (2026-01-02)

Türkiye:

Counterfeit and Piracy Laws in Turkey

<https://www.leopatent.com/en/counterfeit-and-piracy-laws-in-turkey/> (2026-01-02)

Trade Secrets Protection in Turkey

<https://www.leopatent.com/en/trade-secrets-protection-in-turkey/> (2026-01-06)

A Landmark Decision at the Crossroads of IP and Competition Law: Turkish Competition Authority's Tetra Pak Decision

<https://www.mondaq.com/turkey/trademark/1727884/a-landmark-decision-at-the-crossroads-of-ip-and-competition-law-turkish-competition-authoritys-tetra-pak-decision> (2026-01-07)

Türkiye's draft law on digital copyrights submitted to national parliament

<https://cms-lawnow.com/en/ealerts/2026/01/turkiye-s-draft-law-on-digital-copyrights-submitted-to-national-parliament> (2026-01-06)

Rebuilding Copyright Protection in the Digital Age: The Digital Copyright Law Proposal

<https://www.mondaq.com/turkey/copyright/1730770/rebuilding-copyright-protection-in-the-digital-age-the-digital-copyright-law-proposal> (2026-01-13)

Turkish study reveals that perception is king in pharmaceutical branding practices

<https://www.worldtrademarkreview.com/article/turkish-study-reveals-perception-king-in-pharmaceutical-branding-practices> (2026-01-15)

UAE:

DEWA develops advanced simulator for substation automation systems

<https://www.wam.ae/en/article/17017n2-dewa-develops-advanced-simulator-for-substation> (2026-01-01)

UAE Government issues Federal Decree-Law establishing, organizing National Media Authority
<https://www.wam.ae/en/article/bn9xsue-uae-government-issues-federal-decree-law> (2025-12-18)

UAE Government issues updated laws on agricultural and veterinary quarantine, protection of new plant varieties, endangered animals and plants
<https://www.wam.ae/a/170e1u1> (2026-01-07)

Ali Al Marzouqi of UAEU receives US National Academy of Inventors Fellowship
<https://www.wam.ae/en/article/by9v276-ali-marzouqi-uae-receives-national-academy> (2026-01-17)

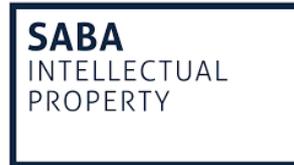
UAE Adopts 13th Edition of Nice Classification for Trademark Registration From 27 January 2026
<https://abounaja.com/news/uae-adopts-13th-edition-of-nice-classification-for-trademark-registration-from-27-january-2026> (2026-01-27)

Yemen:

Scientific Symposium in Sana'a on Intellectual Property & Creative Economy
<https://saba.ye/en/news3632800.htm> (2026-01-22)

[Commissioned by JPO]
Middle East Intellectual Property Newsletter Vol. 106

[Author]
Saba Intellectual Property



[Published by]
Japan External Trade Organization Dubai Office



Published in February 2026
All Rights Reserved

This newsletter was written by Saba Intellectual Property and reviewed by JETRO Dubai. In addition, this newsletter is based on information available at the time of creation and may change due to subsequent revisions to laws. The information and comments posted are at the discretion of the author and our office, but we do not guarantee that the general information is correct. Unauthorized reprinting, redistribution, or posting on other websites of the content of this newsletter is prohibited.

Furthermore, JETRO strives to make the information provided as accurate as possible, but it is the reader's responsibility and judgment to confirm the accuracy of the information provided, etc.

JETRO is not responsible for any disadvantages caused by using the information supplied through this document.