

NEWSLETTER

April 2019

Director General's Message

Sinhala & Tamil New Year has just dawned. First of all, I would like to wish you a very happy, peaceful and a prosperous New Year!

May good fortunes follow you throughout this day and always!

May you be blessed with good health!

1st of January of every year is celebrated as the New Year by most countries in the world over. Yet there are several calendars around the world including ours which celebrates different days to welcome New Year. In Sri Lanka, Sinhala & Tamil New Year celebrations starts on 13th and ends on 14th of April. The dawn of the Sinhala & Tamil New Year is more unique since it takes place at varying times according to astrological calculations based on the sun's astrological movement from the Meena Rashiya (Zodiac of Pisces) to the Mesha Rashiya (Zodiac of Aries). For thousands of years, Sri Lankans have been building on ancient customs of New Year celebrations. Comes with such a long history, on this festive occasion, we should appreciate the value of these core traditions and rituals which cannot be experienced anywhere else and preserve the same for generations to come.

This is the time to renew our commitments to friendships; to cultivate positive attitudes; and to share happiness and kindness with family, neighbours and friends.

I would like to extend this opportunity to thank the NIPO Staff for their invaluable contributions towards the growth and success of NIPO. It is due to their tireless efforts which made it possible for NIPO to achieve commendable results which can be witnessed in our official website along with statistical data (www.nipos.gov.lk). We strive to engage with our stakeholders specially the Registered IP Agents at the heart of everything we do and I sincerely would like to thank all of you for your trust, your support and excellent cooperation extended to us.

In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to Hon. Sujeewa Senasinghe, MP, Minister of Science, Technology & Research, and Supervisory MP Hon. Ashu Marasinghe, the Secretary and Additional Secretaries and all officials of the line ministry, Ministry of Science, Technology & Research, and Chairman and members of the Intellectual Property Advisory Commission for the continued guidance and support extended to us. It is with a collective approach that we can step towards a more promising future.

G. R. Ranawaka
Director General of Intellectual Property

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Future Events

As Sinhala & Tamil New Year is just dawned and soon after that an event of great significance will be celebrated by NIPO along with our strategic partners in the world over and our IP friends in Sri Lanka.

IP Day

As you are aware, World IP Day falls on 26th April, 2019. To mark this occasion, the National Intellectual Property Office (NIPO) of Sri Lanka, currently functioning under the purview of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Research is organizing a two day awareness raising workshop, scheduled to be held on **April 25-26, 2019** at Hotel Taj Samudra, Colombo in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Colombo, the Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) and the United States Patent Trademark Office (USPTO) of the US Department of Commerce.

In line with the theme of this year's World IP Day – Reach for Gold: IP and Sports – NIPO will be organizing a **seminar on April 26, 2019** with the title **"Role of IP in Sports"**. The seminar will have national and international speakers with expertise in the fields of patent, trademark (Madrid protocol), branding in sports and Sri Lankan perspective on Copyright (broadcasting) issues, way forward on implementing Marrakesh Treaty requirements. **Session on April 25, 2019** will be more technical focusing on patents and will include a series of lectures and hands on training on patentability, patent search, and patent disclosure requirements and claim analysis.



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Our Achievements

A year with a lot of hard work and effort is behind us. Some of our recent productive achievements are mentioned here for your information.

To accommodate the requirements of the Marrakesh Treaty, an international treaty to facilitate access to published printed materials for persons who are blind, visually impaired, or otherwise print disabled (VIP), enabling legislation facilitating access to printed material by VIPs providing exceptions to Copyright laws is now finalized and will soon be submitted to the Parliament for approval. We take this opportunity to thank DAISY Lanka Foundation (a forum of organizations that provide services for/of the blind – web address www.dlf.org.lk) and the President and Secretary of Book Publishers' Association for the support and encouragement extended to NIPO to make this effort a success.

Having considered the demands of stakeholders and exporters of tea, cinnamon etc. the IP Act, No. 36 of 2003 has already been amended to make provisions to facilitate registration of geographical indications in respect of goods or products originating from a geographical location in Sri Lanka (Intellectual Property (Amendment) Act, No.7 of 2018).

Enhancing the protection available under the current laws, new regulations are now being drafted to provide procedural requirements for GI registration in Sri Lanka. Registration of GIs will facilitate exporters of goods originating from Sri Lanka to penetrate into international markets and to prevent misuse of Sri Lankan origin GIs by other competitors. This will also facilitate international applicants to file their GI applications in Sri Lanka.

In line with the accession to the Madrid Protocol, NIPO finalized draft amendments to the IP Act with the support of WIPO, and submitted same to the IP Advisory Commission for approval. Thereafter, the draft amendment will be submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers for approval through the line Ministry, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Research.

To facilitate IP transactions in this digital age, e-NIPO project has already been launched and is in progress. Currently, we are short listing the work steps fulfilling the e-payment procedural requirements. Discussions are currently ongoing along with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), local banks and service providers to identify modalities of e-payment schemes.



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Feedbacks

"We all need people who will give us feedback. That's how we improve." – Bill Gates

"What is the shortest word in the English language that contains the letters: abcdef? Answer: feedback. Don't forget that feedback is one of the essential elements of good communication." – Anonymous

Being the FIRST Registered Agent of NIPO I am impressed to see the emergence of this long felt need through which the stakeholders may voice their valuable ideas towards the promotion of the IP system in the island. I personally see this inter alia as one of the effective developments taken place in the IP regime in Sri Lanka within the last couple of years.

As elaborated in the News Letter we admit the fact that very many advancements have been occurred to facilitate the process of protecting IP Rights in Sri Lanka. The biggest is the clearance of the huge backlog within a least possible period of time and thereby reducing the registration timeline considerably.

It is a very positive step taken by the you madam, to issue a NEWS LETTER sharing all vital information on IPR, with its stake holders and at the same time providing opportunity to return our feedback too. Great.... Congratulations!!!

I take this opportunity to wish you and your staff a VERY HAPPY and a PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

Regards !

Mr. Dissanayake M Sunil

Registered Patents & Trademarks Attorney

(Ref. No. A 10001)

Dear Readers, this is the second issue of our quarterly e-newsletter. Of the feedback we received for the first issue, we randomly selected the above which was interesting and inspiring.

As you are well aware, this newsletter is at its embryonic stage. Based on your feedback we can shape up, grow and mature. We, therefore value your feedback in order to improve our future newsletters.

(Email us on nipos@sltnet.lk / dq.nipos@gmail.com)