

Editorial

Department of Intellectual Property (DIP) in Thailand awarded geographical indication (GI) certification to the province of Nakhon Ratchasima (“Korat”), Pak Chong District, for its new strain of durian (*‘Non-stinky’ durian strain from Korat a big hit with connoisseurs*, www.nationthailand.com, July 16, 2022). The Durian usually has distinctive odor that sometime was banned by public area but the farmers of Korat have succeeded in transforming the smell of durian to be odorless variety that is more desirable with no sacrifice of its creamy texture and delicious taste. As each farmer of 40 farms is well maintained with an organic system and wrap with the bag to prevent insects, the durian is big, fluffy, appealing colors, firm, crispy texture, not too sweet and non-stinky. This quality helps increase the value of durian by more than 30 percent.

Thailand is the world’s largest durian exporter. In 2022, the country expected to harvest 720,000 tons of durian and shipping about 10 percent of its production to all over the world. Last year, durian export earnings even exceeded the export of rice as Thailand has about 75 percent of the global durian market and it earned over 2 billion USD. in durian exports.

However, Thailand’s pride of being largest exporter have been competed by its neighbors, such as Malaysia and Vietnam, especially when it comes to exporting durian to China. The certificate of Geographical Indication (GI) is one of the best tools to increase competitiveness and product value of Thai fruits. Its logo on Thai products and services will ensure quality, unique and distinctiveness of local taste. This strategy will support our local communities to be able to compete in international market by developing their originated products. Most importantly, it will help to improve the life quality of our farmers and their communities in sustainable way.

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1. ‘Non-stinky’ durian strain from Korat a big hit with connoisseurs

(From www.nationthailand.com, July 16, 2022)

Thailand – The Northeast’s Nakhon Ratchasima province is celebrating after its special “non-stinky” variety of durian was granted geographical indication (GI) certification. The Pak Chong-

Khao Yai durian is a variety of the famous Mon Thong strain with sweetness, dry, soft flesh and no strong smell. The GI certificates were presented to 39 durian farms in the Pak Chong and Khao Yai areas. The Department of Intellectual Property registered the Pak Chong-Khao Yai variety as a GI product last year. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) also invited visitors to enter the Amazing Durian Metaverse (www.amazingthailandmetaverse.com) for a virtual tour of durian orchards.

2. Department ramps up piracy inspections as tourists return

(From Bangkok Post, Thailand, July 18, 2022)

Bangkok – The Intellectual Property Department vows to tighten its inspection of pirated products in tourist destinations after the country's reopening. According to deputy director-general Jittima Srithaporn, the department had discussions with the Royal Thai Police, the Department of Special Investigation, the Customs Department, owners of trading areas and IP owners to set guidelines for protection and suppression of IP violations. The inspection will be more stringent, especially in red zones such as Patong beach in Phuket, Koh Samui in Surat Thani, Silom road in Bangkok, etc. The department and its partners are also committed to prevent infringement of online IP rights. It has resulted in the dramatic reduction of sales of products that infringe on IP via the three major online platforms.

3. RMUTI flags innovative silk products

(From Bangkok Post, Thailand, August 1, 2022)

Surin, Thailand – Rajamangala University of Technology Isan (RMUTI) has introduced new products created by the mixture of silk cocoons and rice straw fibre. The cloth can add value to waste and reduce the need among farmers to burn dry rice straws after harvesting their grain. Rattanarekha Atchariyapitak from Industrial Textiles and Fashion Design Department said her team wanted to add value to community products which are woven silk fabrics and jasmine rice. The team spent about three years on the new innovation and was funded by the Program Management Unit on Area Based Development of the Office of National Higher Education Science Research and Innovation Policy Council.

4. Science minister talks up Thai researchers at expo

(From Bangkok Post, Thailand, August 2, 2022)

Bangkok – Thailand Research Expo 2022 was held in Bangkok which showcased more than 500 research and innovation projects. Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (HESI) Minister Anek Laothamatas urged Thai business operators to tap into a pool of local

highly qualified researchers. The ministry also recently signed an MoU with CP Group on BCG research in four areas. They include lab-grown meats from animal cells; EV batteries and vehicles; “functional food” to preemptively prevent health problems and associated costs; and smart farms. The company had used researchers from the US, Brazil, Japan and China, and recently begun employing Thai researchers who carried out excellent work at affordable prices.

5. ‘Thailand’ logo designer demands THB1m compensation for ‘unauthorised’ use

(From www.nationthailand.com, August 3, 2022)

Bangkok – The designer of the “Thailand” logo, Suchal Chaweewan, filed charges against the Pencak Silat Association, demanding 1 million baht in compensation for copyright infringement. The charges against the association over the “unauthorized” use of his artwork for the 31st Southeast Asian Games held in Vietnam in May. He had negotiated with the association three times, with mediators from the Department of Intellectual Property, but could not reach a mutual agreement as the association insisted a compensation of 50,000 to 100,000 baht despite his demand of 1 million baht. The association issued a statement apologizing and claiming use of the logo was based on misunderstanding among the team responsible for athletes’ outfits.

6. Cabinet approves major push for agriculture in EEC provinces

(From www.nationthailand.com, August 9, 2022)

Bangkok – The Cabinet approved a five-year agricultural development plan for provinces inside the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC). It involves 101 projects to be carried out from next year to 2027. The development plan will have 1.535 billion baht from the state and 1.31 billion baht from the private sector. The plan’s overall goal is to increase the income of farmers and farmers’ GDP in the EEC by 2027. It also intends to turn Chachoengsao province into a hub for raising fishes and shrimps for industrial purpose, making Chonburi province a major source of energy plants to make energy and making Rayong province a hub for fruits and fresh seafoods.

7. Thailand’s national digital trade platform to launch next month

(From www.nationthailand.com, August 9, 2022)

Bangkok – Thailand’s National Digital Trade Platform (NDTP) will be launched to serve as a single platform for import and export procedures, integrating with counterparts in other countries. The platform will offer Thai businesses the flexibility required to compete in the digital era of international business. Rather than submitting the same document to several different government departments, businesses can make a single submission to the NDTP – which is already connected to the relevant parties. The platform will run in September and

linked with counterparts in Singapore (NTP) and Japan (TradeWaltz). It also serves as a model for other countries to establish a unified platform of digital trade.

8. B173m in fake goods destroyed

(From Bangkok Post, Thailand, August 27, 2022)

Bangkok – The Commerce Ministry has destroyed more than 400,000 counterfeit goods worth about 173 million baht seized in raids. The destruction of 404,985 fake items included clothes, bag, bells, shoes, wristwatches, mobile phones, CDs/VCDs, eyeglasses, cosmetics, car parts and food products. They were destroyed at the base of the 7th Anti-aircraft Artillery Battalion. Deputy Commerce Minister Sinit Lertkrai said the government's efforts to crack down on intellectual piracy was paying off as Thailand was not included on the list of countries in the US's 2021 Review of Notorious Markets for Counterfeiting and Piracy.

9. DSI cracks down on piracy

(From Bangkok Post, Thailand, August 31, 2022)

Bangkok – The Department of Special Investigation (DSI) has seized 360,000 counterfeit goods in Nakhon Nayok province and Bang Bon district of Bangkok. Crackdown operations took place at 12 locations in markets in Nakhon Nayok and a Bang Bon district warehouse. The counterfeit goods believed to have a street value of about 120 million baht. The DSI found 300,000 fake items from the Rong Kluea Market and the coin markets in Nakhon Nayok bearing expensive brand names such as Louis Vuitton, Chanel and Coach. Those counterfeit goods are also sold and distributed online. They goods are imported from a neighboring country and also illegally imported and avoided paying 25% import fees.

10. Toyota Thailand Loses Court Case Over Import Tax on Parts for Prius

(From www.nationthailand.com, September 15, 2022)

Bangkok – The Supreme Court's Tax Litigation Division ruled against Toyota Motor Thailand (TMT) in its legal battle against Thailand's Customs and Revenue Department. The verdict stated that TMT was not eligible for exemption or reduction of taxes and duties for its import of parts for the local production of its Prius hybrid model. TMT was convinced that the imports were eligible for reduction and exemption of import taxes under the Japan-Thailand Economic Partnership Agreement (JTEPA). The court ruled in favour of TMT in September 2017, but the verdict was overturned after an appeal. The Supreme Court ruled that TMT had imported all the parts for the reassembly of complete Prius cars, so it was not eligible for reduction or exemption of Customs tax and import tariff under the JTEPA.