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Suppression of Intellectual Property Infringement Subcommittee

Thailand 4.0 is the next step in Thailand's evolution, according to Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-o-cha. Thailand 4.0, an economic model that aims to develop Thailand into a valued-based economy, would bring about a number of changes. For example, traditional methods of farming would gradually be replaced by "precision agriculture," also known as "smart farming;" SMEs would develop into "smart enterprises" with capabilities to process and analyze big data; and services would advance to offer "high-value services." To facilitate this, the government embarked on a sortie of economic reform, and set up a 20-year national strategy which includes strategy related to intellectual property.

In order to comply with the government's national strategy, the Department of Intellectual Property (DIP) has drafted an IP Roadmap that sets out its long-term operations, from 2016 to 2036. The IP Roadmap covers the following main issues: (1) creation of IP; (2) utilization of IP in business; (3) protection of IP; (4) enforcement of IP; and (5) promotion of protection for geographical indications.

Earlier this year, the Prime Minister set up the Suppression of Intellectual Property Infringement Subcommittee to solve issues on preventing IP infringement, reduce problems for IP rights holders, increase IP protection in accordance with international standards, and build Thailand's image as an IP-friendly country.

As a result of this new subcommittee being established, the National Intellectual Property Center for Enforcement, established by the DIP in 2013, was disbanded. During its operation, it promoted cooperation among the 25 government agencies responsible for enforcing IP rights in significant cases, such as cases involving organized and transnational criminals.

The new subcommittee is tasked with promoting cooperation among 16 government agencies and individuals, as follows:

- ▶ Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwan
- ▶ Minister of Commerce or Assigned Deputy Minister of Commerce
- ▶ Permanent Secretary Ministry of Commerce
- ▶ Permanent Secretary Ministry of Information and Communication Technology
- ▶ Commander in Chief, Royal Thai Army
- ▶ Secretary of Internal Security Operations Command
- ▶ Secretary of Food and Drug Committee
- ▶ Attorney General of the DIP and International Trade
- ▶ Director General of the Customs Department
- ▶ Director General of the Department of Special Investigation
- ▶ Secretary of the Prevention and Suppression of Money Laundering Committee
- ▶ Secretary of the National Broadcasting, Television, and Telecommunications Committee
- ▶ Commissioner-General, Royal Thai Police
- ▶ Assigned Deputy Commissioner-General, Royal Thai Police
- ▶ Director General of the DIP
- ▶ Deputy Commissioner-General of the Police Strategy Division Office

In addition, the subcommittee has responsibilities to frame the structure and timelines of the National IP Suppression operational plan, and ensure that it complies with the plan; direct, control, accelerate, examine, follow up, and evaluate governmental operational parts, as well as other organizations involved in IP suppression; appoint a working group to be responsible for certain matters or assign government sectors, officers, employees, or officials to proceed as instructed; invite experts, government officers or employees, or involved persons to declare or give information, facts and opinions, and documents or evidence; distribute news and promote IP suppression operations; periodically report performance results to the President of the subcommittee and Cabinet; and proceed with assignments as instructed by the National IP Policy Committee.

These efforts to strengthen the suppression of IP infringement and improve the overall environment for IP rights represent an important step as Thailand develops into a valued-based economy. With proper planning and execution, Thailand 4.0 may not be far off. 🇹🇭