

'IPR Policy increased awareness among entrepreneurs'

India's performance on the US Chamber of Commerce's annual International Intellectual Property (IP) Index has been a source of discord between the two countries. In all the six editions of the report, brought out by the US Chamber's Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC), India has featured among the bottom 10 of 50 economies surveyed. **PATRICK KILBRIDE**, senior vice president, GIPC, tells **Sudipto Dey** how the Chamber is trying to change the narrative by helping businesses — both from India and the US — leverage IP mechanisms to improve their competitiveness. Edited excerpts:

To date India has fared poorly on the GIPC's IP Index. Do you see any rub-off effect of India's improved showing in World Bank's Ease of Doing Business ranking on the next edition of the IP Index?

India's performance on the US Chamber's International IP Index, which has a relatively exclusive sample size of 50 economically significant markets, appears generally consistent with its rankings in other indices such as Ease of Doing Business and the Global Innovation Index. I would be surprised if we don't see upward movement on the IP Index as well. The seventh edition will be released on February 7, 2019.

How is the recent round of US-India IP Dialogue different from earlier

such interactions?

The US-India IP Dialogue has created a forum for a practical, technical, and non-political conversation among experts from each country about leveraging intellectual property mechanisms to support investments in innovation and creativity. The Dialogue is co-hosted by FICCI and the US Chamber of Commerce, in coordination with the Indian and the US governments — a mechanism known as a Track 1.5 dialogue. The experts will guide future conversations into areas of mutual interest that lend to the increase of the innovative and creative output of the private sectors in India and the US, as well as improve access to the world's creative arts, inventions, and technologies.

What was the key takeaway from the first event in Delhi?

It was clear from the inaugural session of the Dialogue that India is taking meaningful steps to grow into its potential role as the next engine of global economic growth. Implementation of the National Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy has led to an increased emphasis on IP education in school curricula and IP awareness among entrepreneurs. Lengthy backlogs in patent examination and trademark registration have been all but erased. India recently acce-

ded to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Internet Treaties.

The benefit to India is that domestic entrepreneurs are beginning to trust and use the system. Just three years ago, only about 10 per cent of the patents filed in India were registered to Indian entrepreneurs. Today that number has risen to 33 per cent. When Indians begin to fully trust the patent system to act as a store of value, you will see private sector capital invested in innovative and creative sectors at a much higher rate.

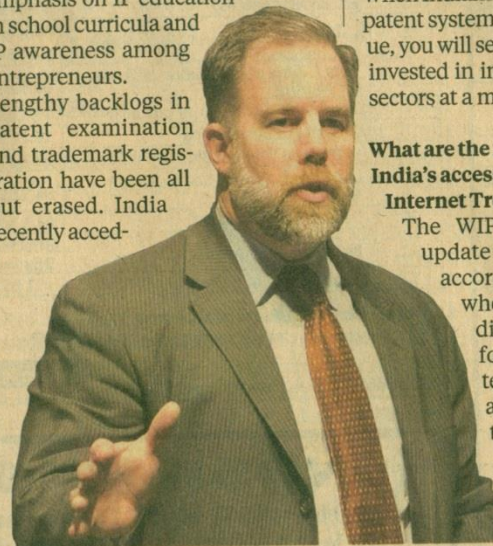
What are the implications of India's accession to WIPO's Internet Treaties for businesses?

The WIPO Internet Treaties update earlier copyright accords to reflect the overwhelming shift to digital distribution of most forms of creative content. Ratification sends an important signal to the world that India expects its artists and authors to be protected at the highest international stan-

dard and that it will provide the same protections to creators from around the world. With one of the most vibrant creative content sectors in the world, it's appropriate that India has set itself among the leaders in protection of copyright online.

Could you give a sense of GIPC's focus for 2019 while engaging with the Indian government and businesses?

Working closely with partners, such as FICCI and the US-India Business Council, GIPC is enjoying the opportunity to play a collaborative role with Indian business and the government. The US-India IP Dialogue is a case in point. Assuming India maintains course and continues to accrue the benefits of the National IPR Policy, we expect this relationship to become increasingly cordial and productive. If India is going to fulfil its potential as the next engine of global economic growth, it will be as an innovator. GIPC convenes some of the most innovative and creative companies in the world and our experience will contribute to the speed and certainty of India's success.



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