

## **FICCI to establish IP Facilitation Centres across the country for MSMEs**

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Aiming to assist the micro small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in protecting their intellectual property (IP) assets, which they fail to protect due to a variety of reasons like lack of funds and lack of awareness, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in association with the Union ministry of micro small and medium enterprises will establish a string of IP Facilitation Centres for MSMEs across the country. The first Centre will be established in Delhi.

The IP Facilitation Centres will be well equipped to offer quality services in all areas of intellectual property rights and comprises of technical and legal experts having extensive knowledge in the field of intellectual property rights. The Centre, in addition to providing general advisory about IPRs, such as, patents, trademarks, designs and copyrights, will also provide services related to patent searches, patent drafting, patent prosecution, facilitation in commercialization of Inventions, trademark prosecution matters, etc.

In order to spread awareness about IP and about the need for protecting IP amongst SMEs, FICCI in association with the union ministry of micro small and medium enterprises will organize a series of IPR Sensitization Programmes for MSMEs across India. The first such programme will be held on March 25 at Federation House in New Delhi.

In the first phase, FICCI will be opening the IP Facilitation Centre with head office in Delhi. Later on, as the work progresses, it is proposed that the head office will be linked to FICCI state offices in Kolkata, Jaipur, Mumbai, Ahmadabad, Hyderabad, Chennai and Bangalore, to serve the SMEs all over India.

The MSMEs are accepted as engines of economic growth, worldwide. In India also, the MSMEs have played a pivotal role in the economy development of the country and have provided employment opportunities to many. Intellectual property rights have been a dominant force for economic, social and cultural development of every nation. In a dynamic and competitive business environment, creation, management and protection of IP assets decide the success and failure of a business.

Businesses, small or big, have realized the need for promoting and investing in innovation. However, in India, 80 per cent of the patent applications are filed by foreign firms. Though, various innovations are made by the small industries they fail to protect their IP assets, due to a variety of reasons and the major ones being lack of funds and lack of awareness about IP and about the need for protecting IP.