

## **Patent office to recruit 257 new examiners to clear huge backlog of applications**

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Faced with a huge backlog of more than 70,000 patent applications that are in the pipeline for process and examination in the country, the government has decided to recruit another 257 patent examiners to expedite the process of patent scrutiny and its disposal.

Presently, there are only 150 patent examiners to examine the patent applications and various other processes as against about 70,000 patent applications that are in the pipeline for process and examination in the country. The dwindling number of patent examiners has affected the working of the patent office and has resulted in the piling up of huge backlog of patent applications.

Now the government has realised the problem and has decided to increase the number of patent examiners from 150 to 407. Giving further information, P H Kurian, Controller General of Patents, Design and Trade Marks said, "Our office has already started with the procedure of recruiting officers to deal with the problem of increasing patent applications. CSIR Recruitment and Assessment Board (RAB) will do the recruitment of 257 officers across the country."

The office will soon publish the notification for issue of applications for candidates by March, after which they will start with the recruitment of the officers. The selected officers will undergo training in the the National Institute of Intellectual Property Management (NIIPM), at Nagpur, where training programmes will be conducted for the examiners.

The government will be spending Rs 3.5 crore for the whole project, which is slated to commence by March 2010. According to Kurian, the entire recruitment and training procedures are expected to be completed by December this year, if other governmental procedures go smoothly. Anyway, all these new 257 officers will be ready to work by April or May 2011 which may help in reducing the huge burden of pending patent applications.

Under the present capacity, 15,000 applications can be processed per year but with the combined manpower which will total up to 407 examiners, the patent office is expected to do processing of 30,000 patents per year. Kurian also said that in case there is increased filing, then the government may consider further increase in the number of patent examiners.