IPR Protection Action Plan Unveiled

Policy

By LI Linxu

In its latest move to stimulate innovation, China launched this year's administrative action plan for the protection of intellectual property rights (IPR) recently.

A series of measures will be rolled out, such as fully leveraging the role of law enforcement protection standards and guidelines, advancing the improvement and implementation of IPR protection systems, and cracking down on abnormal patent applications and bad faith registration of trademarks.

The protection of foreign- related IPR will be strengthened, according to the plan recently released by the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA), vowing to further improve its response and guidance work mechanisms and to boost its capabilities in handling foreign-related IPR disputes.

The building of China National Intellectual Property Administration. (PHOTO: VCG)

The protection of IPR concerning people's livelihoods, will also be enhanced, particularly in the key areas of food and medicine, seeds, public health, and green and low-carbon technologies, according to the plan.

A new batch of national standardized markets for IPR protection will be accredited, said CNIPA, noting that the protection of new- type markets will be one of the focus points.

Meanwhile, the construction of the first batch of national IPR protection demonstration zones will be carried forward, and the selection of the second batch of such zones will be launched.

To meet the new situations under the new technologies, new industries, and new business modes, a new mode of digital protection of IPR will be actively explored, said CNIPA. The application of new technologies, such as Internet, big data, cloud computing, AI and block chains, in IPR protection, will be trialed.

The high- quality construction of national IPR protection centers and fast IPR service centers is also high on the agenda, according to the plan. Statistics show that to date, a total of 97 national IPR protection centers and fast IPR service centers have been set up across the country.

The measures are a follow up to the 20th CPC National Congress report, which vowed to strengthen legal protection of intellectual property rights, in order to establish a foundational system for all-around innovation.

Digital Village Construction Gains Momentum

By LI Linxu

As an important initiative toward China's rural revitalization goals, digital village construction is transforming all aspects of country life.

The development level of the country's digital village reached 39.1 percent in 2021, according to the *Report on the Development of Digital Villages in China (2022)*, recently released by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

The report presents a full review of the progress and achievements of the country's digital village development in eight areas of, rural digital infrastructure, smart agriculture, new types of agribusinesses, rural digital governance, rural cyberculture, digital public services, smart green villages, and digital village development environment.

In recent years, the construction of digital infrastructure in rural areas has witnessed rapid growth. By the end of 2022, all urban areas at county level had 5G coverage, and every village enjoyed broadband access, according to the report.

Driven by increasingly convenient digital infrastructure, new types of agribusinesses continue to emerge, and rural e-commerce maintains its leading position in the rural digital economy. Latest statistics show that national rural online retail sales reached 2.17 trillion RMB in 2022.

With the help of digital technologies, the development of smart agriculture is accelerating in rural areas, according to the report, noting that the informatization rate of agricultural production increased to 25.4 percent in 2021.

The efficiency of digital governance in rural areas is also making big headway, as 68.2 percent of the six types of agriculture- related government service items, including social security, healthcare, and land circulation, were handled online nationwide in 2021, said the report.

Meanwhile, digital public services are gaining traction in rural areas. The number of village- level comprehensive service offices that utilize digital technologies increased to 483,000 in 2021, covering around 86 percent of the country's administrative villages.

Virtuous Cycle Spurs Growth: Sci-tech, Industry, Finance

By Staff Reporters

Promoting the virtuous cycle of science and technology, industry, and finance, is an important means to achieve sci- tech self- reliance and strength at higher levels, and it was also the concern of deputies at the recently concluded Two Sessions.

This virtuous cycle, in essence, means the timely commercialization of research results by reinforcing the deep integration of industries, academic research and finance, said Song Dexiong, director-general of Jiangxi Provincial Department of Science and Technology.

During this process, finance plays an active role in supporting sci-tech innovation and industrial revitalization, and it can also enjoy development from the real economy, said Song, stressing that the first step to promote this cycle is to promote the commercialization of research results.

The process of realizing this commercialization is coupled with high investment and risks. To help spread the overall risks, finance can play a role, said Yang Shuming, professor of The Institute of State Governance, at the Huazhong University of Science and Technology.

Over the past two years, China has advanced the application of e-CNY, and developed new business models, such as digital financial inclusion, supply chain finance and green finance. Yang Weikun, vice mayor of the Baoding Municipal Government, said this not only boosts enterprises' development, but also promotes financial digital technology innovation, as well accelerating the digital transformation and upgrading of the Chinese financial industry.

Financing has always been a major difficulty faced by technology enterprises. To solve the financing problems of small and medium- sized enterprises, many regions have established special loans and increased targeted support.

Wang Yeqiang, vice president of the CCB Trust, said that helping make breakthroughs in core technologies and helping enterprises grow stronger, can bring sustainable rewards for researchers and social investors. This is a win-win situation.

The fact is that, to avoid risks, social funds often flow to research results with high certainty, rather than research in the preclinical trial stage, said Sun Taolei, dean of the School of Chemistry, Chemical Engineering and Life Sciences, Wuhan University of Technology. He added that if research is highly dependent on external investment, it is likely to face the risk of capital chain rupture anytime before the results enter the market.

Sun suggested setting up a transformation fund for the original technology enterprises in the incubation stage, to eliminate their financial worries and boost industrialized development.

It is necessary to build an ecosystem in which scientists and enterprises dare to act and take risks, social capital likes to invest, and governments are willing to support, added Yang, noting that this new model will help form a community of interests between the capital market and technological innovation, to cope with various risks and challenges.

Computing Power Uplifts Economic Development

Case Study

By Staff Reporters

Dubbed as China's Data Valley, Gui'an New Area in Guiyang and Anshun cities in southwest China's Guizhou province is pioneering development of the digital economy.

Statistics show that in 2022, the contribution rate of big data to the economic growth of Guiyang and Gui'an rose to 44.5 percent, reaching a record high.

The "City Brain" is displayed in Guizhou National Big Data Exhibition Center. (PHOTO: VCG)

By promoting integration of the digital economy with the real economy, Guiyang has got a new engine to drive its economic development.

A number of tech giants have settled here, and developed into major big data enterprises. In 2022, the revenue of software and information technology services in Guiyang and Gui'an grew by 87.6 percent.

In its 2023 government work report, Guiyang government proposed that the city will seize the opportunity to build a base for gathering computing resources nationwide.

With the implementation of the national project of "channeling computing resources from the east to west," the area has more prominent advantages to develop itself into one of the eight hubs of the national integrated computing network.

Boasting abundant clean electricity resources, stable geological structure, and cool climate, the area is conducive to building energy- saving data centers. Huawei Cloud is located here and expected to save 1.01 billion kilowatt hours of electricity when operating at full capacity, which is equivalent to planting 35.67 million trees annually.

At present, the supercomputing center in Gui'an New Area has a computing power of more than one trillion times per second. It has provided strong computing support for digital cultural content production, medicine, imaging, astronomical science, and other fields.

To realize more efficient circulation of data, Guiyang operated the country's first big data exchange center. After reorganization in 2022, the center is exploring new ways to manage data as resources, assets or capitals.

Now Guiyang is stepping up its efforts to build an improved ecosystem for the digital economy. It welcomes more entrepreneurs from around the world to set up businesses so as to achieve revolutionary development of the big data industry.

Local villagers manage vegetable seedling in a smart seedling center, Weining county, Guizhou province. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

Mapping the Way for Automatic Driving

By CHEN Chunyou

A high-precision map is a key component in perfecting automatic driving and ensuring its safety.

With the accelerated development of China's self-driving system and intelligent automobile industry, there is an urgent need for standardization of the basic map of intelligent vehicles.

So much so, that this March, the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) released a plan, vowing to build a standard map system supporting automatic driving by 2025, featuring more precise navigation, positioning, and real- time updates, to safeguard a smarter and more efficient driving experience.

The plan calls for coordinated development between the map and geographic information with other sectors, such as automobile, information and communication, electronics, transportation, and information security, while establishing a standard system that meets the needs of the country's technological and industrial development.

A total of 17 key sub-standards are proposed to be developed in advance, covering technical requirements and specifications for basic generalization, data collection, updates, distribution, and security protection of related data at various intelligent terminals, to solve the urgent need for in-depth application of the map in operation.

In addition, more than 20 standards are to be formulated, covering technical requirements, such as data production, application services, and quality monitoring, to secure compliance across the system.

Research institutes, universities, and related enterprises and organizations will be involved in formulating this standard. Meanwhile, China will strengthen exchanges and cooperation with international standardization organizations, and draw on international experiences, according to an official from the MNR.

In recent years, great changes have taken place in the automotive sector. In 2022, tech company Baidu got permission from Shenzhen and Guangzhou governments to provide automakers with its high- definition mapping technology, which enables advanced driver assistance systems on production vehicles.

Moreover, Baidu expanded the commercial operation area of its driverless taxi service in Wuhan, marking a new stage of the commercial operation of autonomous driving in China.

Sci-tech Drives Next Level Transport Sector

Application of smart tools

On February 1, five 17- meter- long heavy trucks were seen traveling at a speed of nearly 80 km/h on the Donghai Bridge near Shanghai's Yangshan Port. This is a common scene on the bridge, but a careful look will see that the five heavy trucks are only about 20 meters apart from each other, and the three trucks in the middle are driverless.

This is part of Yangshan Port's promotion of its intelligent operation of heavy trucks, and the test has entered the "real unmanned" stage, said Zhang Xianhong, engineer for the intelligent heavy truck project at the port.

The 72-km distance between Donghai Bridge and Yangshan Port consists of highway, tunnels and wharves, making it the longest commercial operation scenario of autonomous driving in the world. By the end of 2023, it is planned to launch no less than 60 self- driving heavy trucks, with a cumulative container collection and distribution capacity of 300,000 TEUs.

Apart from unmanned trunks, Yangshan Port has launched a series of technologies to build an intelligent green transport system at the large container port.

The intelligent heavy truck project was among the first 18 pilot projects for intelligent transportation approved in September 2022 by the Ministry of Transport. So far, the pilot projects are making progress and strongly promote research and development of key technologies and the innovation of operational modes.

In the next phase, pilot projects will strengthen communication, and form a comprehensive scenario-oriented solution for future transportation, according to the Ministry of Transport.