

JAMA Hosts Malaysian Motorcycle Design Rights Training Program in Japan

On July 26 and 27, in an effort to support cooperation with the Motorcycle and Scooter Assemblers and Distributors Association of Malaysia (MASAAM), JAMA conducted a design rights training program for a visiting delegation constituted by an official from the Malaysian Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (MDTCA) and Malaysian lawyers.

The program included visits to the Japan Patent Office, Tokyo Customs and the Japan Design Protection Association, where participants heard explanations on the nature of Japan's design system and the specifics of its operation, intellectual property protection and other subjects, followed by opinion exchanges with JAMA representatives.

Japan Patent Office Visit

The first day was devoted to a training session at the Japan Patent Office, with the goal of having participants come to understand all aspects of Japan's design system to provide a useful reference in advancing Malaysia's own design system from here on. The subject matter addressed ranged from the history of the Japanese system through the details and practical means of implementing that system. Lectures were given by Patent Office managers on "The History of the Japanese Design System," "The Design Registration System," "Design Examination Practice," "Japan's Anti-Counterfeiting Efforts" and other pertinent themes. These talks were followed by a brisk Q&A exchange.

The Malaysian senior government official and lawyers who attended the training at the Patent Office expressed keen interest in the specific methods used for Japan's design examinations, the early inspection systems, design inspection infrastructure and other approaches that are not yet used in Malaysia. Afterwards, they spoke of how the lectures were highly beneficial and would provide excellent references in their own work.



Japan Patent Office session

Tokyo Customs Visit

On Day 2 of the program, the Malaysian group visited Tokyo Customs, where they received information to enhance their grasp of the activities of customs authorities in

combating products that violate intellectual property rights (IPR). The session included explanations from an intellectual property inspector about the results of cracking down on counterfeit goods, followed by the use of a flowchart to outline the specific procedures adopted to control products that violate IPR standards. A Q&A session followed, with questions posed about the documents required for injunction requests, the fees charged for such requests, penalties assessed on violating importers on and other topics. After the training, the group received a tour of the on-site exhibition room, actual inspection areas and other facilities.



Tokyo Customs session

Japan Design Protection Association Visit

After the training at the Tokyo Customs offices, the Malaysian delegation moved to the Japan Design Protection Association for their next learning session. There, an Association managing director offered words of welcome. This was followed by presentations by instructors to outline the work of gathering of design materials both in Japan and overseas, the responsibilities of being entrusted with design catalogs, the implementation of design studies and other aspects of the Association's operations, with examples furnished as useful references in each case.



Japan Design Protection Association session

JAMA Visit

For the group's visit to JAMA, a person involved in the actual work of design protection at companies was invited to discuss the critical importance for companies of developing effective design protection strategies. This briefing was followed up with introductions of the approaches actually adopted at the JAMA level to deal with design-related problems, as well as examples of specific strategies being advanced by JAMA member companies. As the final phase, a summary of the overall training program was held, together with a report on the current state of Malaysia's own intellectual property protection system and the operation of and the issues pertaining to that system. After that, an exchange of views was held with JAMA members on the future prospects for that Malaysian system.

With regard to IPR protection (and design protection in particular), JAMA has teamed up with MASAAM to date to hold highly constructive and meaningful opinion exchanges with the Malaysia Patent Office (MyIPO), the Malaysian Bar Council and other related organizations and groups.

This May, a highly successful IPR symposium was convened in Penang, Malaysia as one phase of the IRP activities of the Federation of Asian Motorcycle Industries (FAMI). This effort appears to have further raised the momentum toward providing effective protection of intellectual property in Malaysia.

(For further details, see: <http://www.jama-english.jp/motor/200606.pdf>)

Malaysia's motorcycle market was tracked at the 400,000-unit level in 2005. Despite the sharp rise in gasoline prices, interest rate hikes and other negative factors, steady long-term growth is projected for this sector from here on as well. Against that backdrop, the protection of IPR has emerged as an extremely critical factor for sustaining the development of the industry over the years to come, and JAMA is confident that the July training program will contribute to furthering the expansion and efficient administration of Malaysia's legal system as regards the IPR challenge.



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