

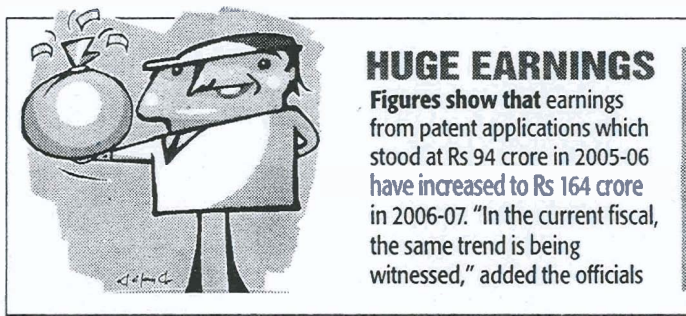
Patent applications on the rise

Chemicals & Pharma, Electronics & Telecom, Mechanical Engg & BT Contribute Most

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WITH the Centre's bid to strengthen the country's patent system, the number of patent applications in India is on the rise. In the first eight months of this fiscal, the country has received 22,805 patent applications — both from Indian and overseas firms — against 28,882 applications in the whole of 2006-07. This has made the Union commerce ministry set an ambitious target of receiving 72,000 patent applications by 2011-12, that is by the end of 11th Five Year Plan.

Four sectors which have contributed largely to the growth are chemicals and pharmaceuticals, electronics and telecommunications, mechanical engineering and biotechnology. Senior patent officials told ET: "In the last three years, the number of patent applications have shot up three-fold and more importantly, patents granted four-fold. Similarly, there's been a steady rise in the number of trademarks applications filed.



HUGE EARNINGS

Figures show that earnings from patent applications which stood at Rs 94 crore in 2005-06 have increased to Rs 164 crore in 2006-07. "In the current fiscal, the same trend is being witnessed," added the officials

Revenues generated by the intellectual property offices has gone up eight-fold in the last 3 years. This is 10 times more than the expenditure on these offices."

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The commerce ministry has undertaken an ambitious Rs 300 crore second phase modernisation

which is proposed to be implemented during the 11th Plan. Under the proposal, the ministry wishes to further augment existing infrastructure, establish a state-of-the-art of trademarks office at Ahmedabad, procure international databases, establish online processing of IP (intellectual property) applications usher in manifold increase in human resources, particularly of patent and trademark examiners, launch a massive awareness campaign and

sensitisation programme which would cover all major stakeholders including industry, academia, judiciary, enforcement agencies, policy makers and state governments.

Incidentally, in the first phase, the government spent Rs 153 crore for augmenting infrastructure and human resources in intellectual office, creation of awareness regarding IPRs and introducing IT enabled efficient systems.

Ministry officials pointed out that there is also a rising trend in the area of industrial designs where a record number of over 5000 applications were received in 2006-07.

"The ministry is mulling to establish a design council as well as undertake efforts to brand Indian designs. It also plans to establish three more design institutes in the southern, eastern and northern regions of the country on the pattern of the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad," senior officials in the commerce & industry ministry added.

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