

TIRUCHELVAM ASSOCIATES  
COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DIVISION UPDATE IN THE CONTEXT  
OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS

Whilst the impact of COVID 19 (“C-19”) has affected all business sectors around the world, the number of queries our clients have raised regarding how to manage Intellectual Property related work including trademark/patent applications, written submissions etc has spiked in the last few weeks.

Thus, our Intellectual Property Division has prepared this note which briefly outlines the status of operations of the National Intellectual Property Office of Sri Lanka (“NIPO”) and how to manage filings and payments to meet deadlines.

## **1. OPERATIONS OF THE NATIONAL INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE OF SRI LANKA (NIPO)**

The Director General of the NIPO has informed us that the counters at NIPO are currently closed and that the submission of physical applications have been suspended until further notice.

However we have been instructed that the payments in respect of any Trademark Renewal, Filing a new Trademark application & Filing of a new PCT application (involving a statutory deadline) will need to be made to the Bank on time and before the expiration of the applicable deadline via online Bank transfers.

## **2. KEY CONCERNS/ FAQs**

### **1. What is the process for making payments to NIPO?**

Separate payments will need to be made for each application. The online Bank slip will need to contain the relevant Trademark number and the name of the law firm making such payment. This will then need to be produced on a later date at the time of submitting the Physical Application to NIPO once it re-opens to the Public.

If you need assistance to make any payment, we confirm that we are in a position to make the necessary payments on your behalf.

## 2. How are deadlines to be managed?

As stated above, currently no documents can be submitted to NIPO as the counters are currently closed. Thus, the following is how to manage any deadlines approaching:

### TRADEMARKS

Where there is a deadline approaching for the payment of any fees in relation to the Publication, Registration, Assignment, Errata publication of any mark, the Applicant (or its Agent on the applicant's behalf) is required to pay the relevant fee (in the aforementioned manner) and thereafter submit the relevant Physical Application to NIPO once it re-opens.

### WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS/ OBSERVATIONS (CONTENTIOUS MATTERS)

If there is any imminent deadline to file Written Submission / Observations etc., the Applicant (or its Agent on the applicant's behalf) is required to submit the relevant physical documents to NIPO once it re-opens.

### PATENT APPLICATIONS

Where there is any imminent deadline for the submission of any **Amended Claims**, the Applicant (or its Agent on the applicant's behalf) shall be required to pay the relevant fee in the manner stated above and submit the relevant physical documents to NIPO once it re-opens.

### **NOTE:**

1. *Any reference to any laws and regulations are as at the date of the issue of this document.*
2. *The contents of this document should not be considered as legal advice and is provided for information purposes only. If you require legal advice on any specific matter for purposes of decision making, do feel free to contact us.*

### **KEY CONTACT PERSONS FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY MATTERS AT THE FIRM:**

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