

Registration and Selection process

Law students and students of other disciplines interested in this area (undergraduate, post graduate and research scholars) willing to prepare a paper on any of the sub-themes could apply. The sessions of the workshop are designed in a manner reflecting the concerns of the access to seeds and farmers' rights in the context of IP. Students are urged to prepare papers accordingly so that each session will comprise of two student presentations representing the conflicting interests.

Step 1: Each student is allowed to register by sending an abstract (maximum 300 words) on one or two sub-themes on or before **15th August 2017**. Based on the title and abstracts submitted by the students as approved by IUCIPRS, the subthemes will be allocated to the students. We encourage original single author papers, though joint submissions with a maximum of two authors are also permissible. Selection will be based on the quality of the paper submitted.

Step 2: Intimation for the selection of abstracts will be given on or before **25th August 2017**.

Step 3: The students are further required to sent the full paper by **31st October 2017**. Students shall be asked to revise their paper after screening.

Students are required to register by paying rupees 500. Total number of participants is limited to 35. All participants are expected to take an active role in the workshop.

Awards/ Certificates

Quality papers will be published in the renowned IP Journals.



Co-ordinator

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For registration, log on to

<https://goo.gl/vM841m>

or visit

ciprs.cusat.ac.in

Inter University Centre for Intellectual Property Rights Studies (IUCIPRS), CUSAT



RETHINKING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS FIFTH ANNUAL WORKSHOP

THEME OF 2018: IPR, ACCESS TO SEEDS AND FARMERS' RIGHTS

Venue: Conference Hall, IUCIPRS, CUSAT

Date: 18th to 20th January 2018

Objectives of the Annual Workshop

Rethinking IPR is an annual National Level Workshop for Law students and students of other disciplines interested in IP research (undergraduate, post graduate and research scholars) organized by the IUCIPRS, CUSAT to initiate critical thinking regarding the role of Intellectual Property Rights in a social context. The pedagogical practice existing among the Law Schools in India predominantly approaches IP from a commercial angle, often ignoring the social implication of IP.

The main objective of Intellectual Property law is to maintain a correct balance between protection of IP and providing access to the public to the modern technology and its benefits. The western approach of looking at IP as a catalyst of development is being followed by our law schools without being interrogated. Our experience with the western approach signifies that it stifles innovation and research and creates barriers in the enjoyment of benefits by the public. The question therefore is, should India imitate the western practices, both statutory and judicial, or whether we should evolve our own jurisprudence of IP reflecting wider questions of national development and the welfare of people.

About the Theme of 2018

Plants constantly evolve and adapt to their environment. This process of evolution and natural selection has been going on from time immemorial. In addition to this process of natural selection, the farmers have been involved in the process of selection and breeding of better varieties also. Seeds are the storehouses of the genetic information resulting from this evolution and selection over a period of time. This process of seed selection and improvement is very important to ensure the development of varieties, which are better adapted to the environment and more productive also. Food security of a nation is dependent upon the seed security of its farmers. This is the major reason why plants and seeds were traditionally kept outside the scope of intellectual property rights. It was understood that there would be great danger in letting it being privatized and monopolized by a few. But after the popularization of modern agriculture the seed industry began to gain prominence in the West. This in turn led to more vocal demands for some sort of property protection for plant breeders. This along with the advancements in biotechnology led to a shift in attitude regarding plant IP protection at the international level which led to the adoption of UPOV in 1961 and ultimately to the inclusion of plant-related inventions within the scope of the TRIPS Agreement.

TRIPS mandated the introduction of minimum standards for IP protection in all member countries. Article 27.3(b) of the TRIPS mandates WTO Members to protect plant varieties using patent law, an effective sui generis system or any combination thereof. During the TRIPS negotiations, the developing countries including India proposed to exclude plants from the purview of patent protection. But this was not accepted. India chose to keep the plants and plant-parts outside the scope of patent protection. As per Section 3(j) of the Patents Act, 1970, plants in whole or any part thereof cannot be patented. Along

with this seeds, varieties and species are specifically excluded from granting patents. We opted for the sui generis system and enacted a separate law namely the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights' Act 2001 (PPV&FR Act).

The plants and seeds, which were once kept outside, is now brought within the scope of IP protection. It will be interesting and highly relevant to examine how this shift impacted the rights of farmers, especially their right to access seeds and also agriculture in general.

The programme includes lectures, invited talks, case studies, corner discussions, students' presentations, exercised, scenario analysis, role play, field exposure etc.

Sub-themes

1. Intellectual Property and Sustainable Agriculture
2. Impact of Patents on Agriculture
3. Sustainable Agriculture and Plant Variety Protection
4. Impact of TRIPS Agreement on Seeds
5. Patents and Protection of Plant Varieties and Sustainable Agriculture- Indian Perspective
6. Geographical Indications and Agriculture

