

# Rights for intellectual property

MOHAMMAD ATIQUE RAHMAN

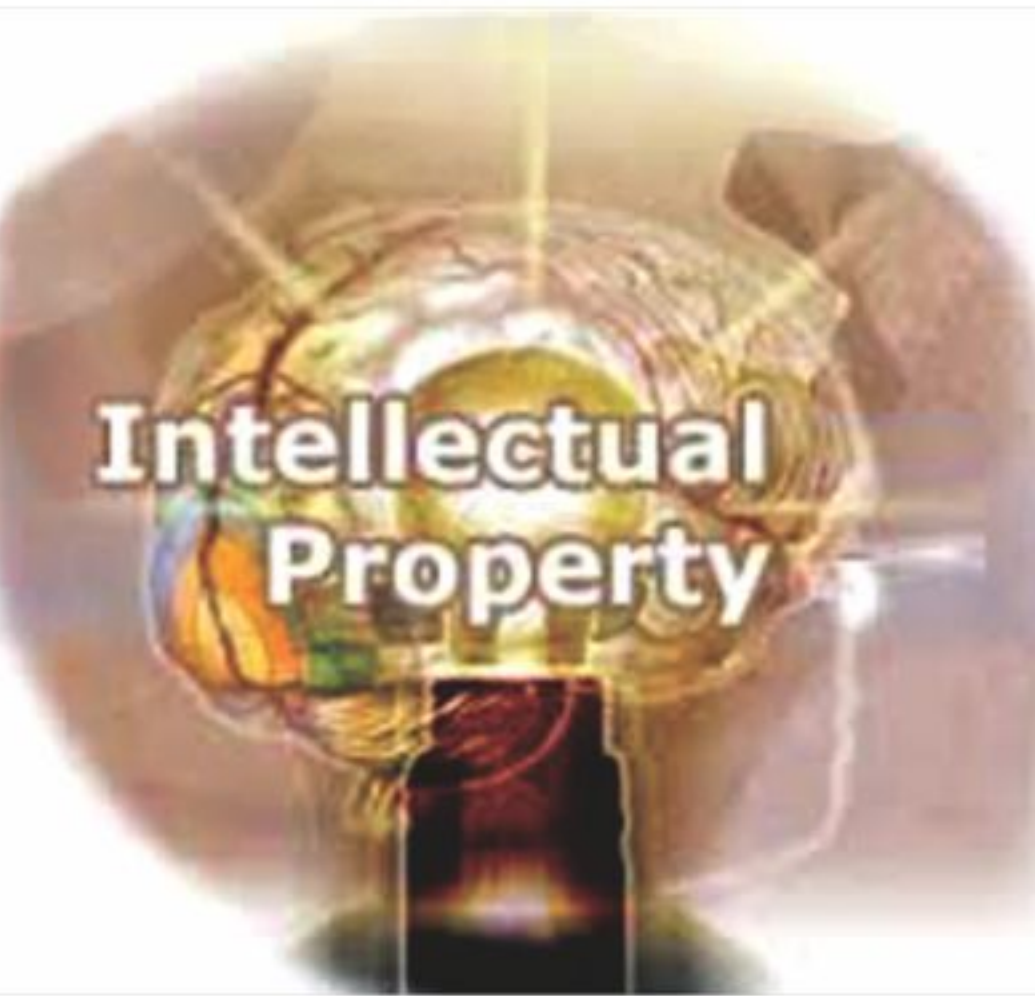
IN this age of technology and economic globalisation, perhaps most of the discussions are now centered on the notion of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). This is quite expected as intangible assets have become the foundation on which the business sector now functions globally. These assets lead to innovation, which is a driving force behind the global economy. Innovation opens up new areas where much better goods and services can be produced and provided at low cost. Therefore, the consumers can be benefited from the better products at competitive prices and have access to new products as well.

These intangible assets are products of human creative activities but unlike real or personal property, which is protected by physical security measures like fences and boundaries, intellectual property protection is difficult. Because they are typically easy to copy, imitate and reproduce, it is difficult for the experts, innovators and investors to reap full value of investment as their competitors can easily appropriate the ideas. What are the solutions available for them?

Without property rights, innovators and investors may try to keep their innovations secret in order to profit from them for indefinite period of time! Imagine that our famous writer Humayun Ahmed guarded his plays so that only his company could perform them. Biotechnologists, pharmacists and scientists are keen to keep their innovations secret, though they can make significant contributions in agriculture, health and sciences all over the world.

Conceivably, with effective property rights innovators can disseminate their inventions and charge fees for their use. IP rights ensure statutory protection to the moral and economic rights of creators to their creations and the rights of the public to access those creations. Intellectual property rights also promote creativity and encourage fair trading. Rights on intellectual property are the legal rights on the intellectual activities in the industrial, scientific, literary and artistic fields. These rights are territorial, i.e. the owner of the invention can seek property rights in certain country/s according to the law/s of that country.

Intellectual property rights are of two kinds; industrial property and authors' or artists' rights. As for example, patent is a set of legal rights granted to an inventor and copyright is related to the author's rights. In brief, intellectual property rights include rights relating to literary, artistic and scientific creations, performances of performing artists, phonograms and broadcasts, inventions in all fields of human endeavour, scientific discoveries, industrial designs, trade-



marks services, and protection against unfair competition.

Critics can argue that intellectual property rights confer monopoly power to the creators. But these rights are temporary and can vary in duration according to the context of the country. International intellectual property related conventions and treaties propose only for minimum duration of protection, after which economic right will not be valid. Critics may also argue that intellectual property protection only serves the interests of the foreign companies of developed countries. Therefore, governments of developing countries should not provide this protection to them.

In this context, the counter argument is that such policies are disincentives to the investors. It is evident that a state can attract foreign investments with IPRs policies which augment technology transfers and technology-diffusions with local industries. Nowadays, inventors, individual researchers and research communities, including universities and government institutions, in the developing countries are looking increasingly to IP rights as sources of revenue and funding for their works. The interest of research communities in maximising revenues from innovation are universal and are not only confined to the developed nations.

Recent trends show that research institutions in developing countries such as India, Brazil, China and Thailand are increasingly active in seeking intellectual property protection for their innovations in many countries. According to World Intellectual Property Indicators (WIPO, 2012), in 2011, China overtook the United States by receiving more than half million patent applications. On the other hand, US received 503,582 and Japan got 342,610 (WIPO, 2012). In recent years, patent filings on energy related technologies are increasing, mainly in four sectors i.e. fuel cells, geothermal, solar and wind (WIPO, 2012).

Bangladesh, as an energy deficient country, can benefit from patent protection in energy related technology which enables technology transfer to the local companies for innovation of efficient solar and wind energy sources. Residents of middle income/developing countries are also increasingly filing for utility model application, which is an inventive idea to provide technical solutions for day-to-day activities. Utility model adds efficiency to the machines or parts of machines, instruments and tools for efficient use.

In Bangladesh, discussions on intellectual property rights are also in the forefront. Recently, local scientists achieved great success in decoding the genome sequence of a local variety of jute (golden fiber of Bangladesh). They have also successfully decoded the genome sequence of 'tossa' (high-yielding variety) jute and devastating crop-killer fungal. Our scientists have now complete information about the genome sequence of jute. The country now needs a robust intellectual property rights mechanism to establish its ownership on a variety of crops, local discoveries and inventions.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also expressed her concern about establishing intellectual property rights on all scientific researches on jute, including its genome sequence. Therefore, Bangladesh should enable all the existing IP mechanisms. At present, the government of Bangladesh has given more importance to upgrading and modernising the IP laws for ensuring conformity with Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).

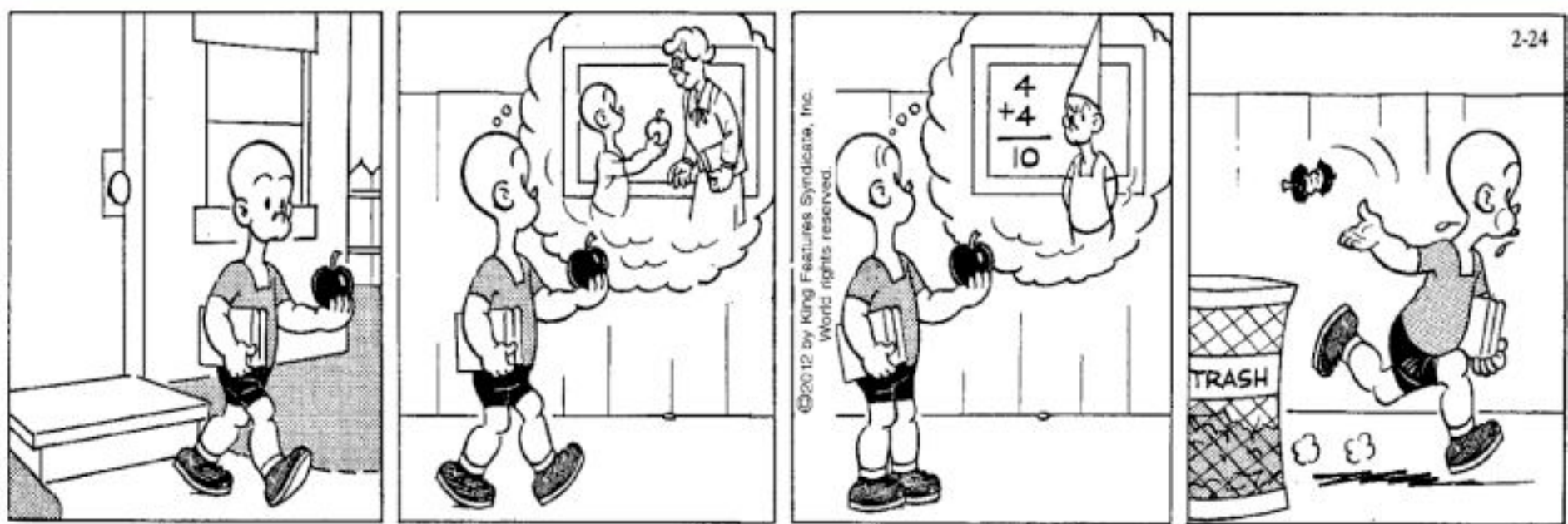
Several initiatives are underway to update patent design law, enact a new geographical indications law, and law on layout design of Integrated Circuits (IC). Bangladesh needs to initiate norm-setting activities by organising seminars, workshops, and educational and training programmes to create mass awareness. Bangladesh should also develop an IP office with logistics and seek international cooperation and support. And, most importantly, develop local IP experts, academics, professionals and negotiators.

To implement all these measures Bangladesh does not require ad-hoc measures, but systematic and continuous support for sustainable long-term development programmes. Only rights can ensure the value of intellectual property by extracting a price for its use by others. The price rewards the creators and encourages more innovations and faster growth, which ultimately benefits the society and country.

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HENRY

by Don Tranchese



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# Tribute to Shaheed Moyezuddin

SUBRATA DAS

SEPTEMBER 27, 2013, marked the 29th anniversary of Shaheed Moyezuddin's martyrdom. He was one of the most influential political leaders in the history of Bangladesh. Moyezuddin's death gnaws at our conscience and dampens our hopes and dreams. Our future seems dark and desolate because we have closed the doors and windows through which light could enter. This very light, which is the soul of a nation, will only enter when we as a people honour heroes like him, remembering their contributions and sacrifices; by being transformed their ideals, values and principles which serve as a guiding light for a truly free and prosperous nation.

Hailing from Barahara village under Kaligonj upazilla of Gazipur district, Moyezuddin got B.A. (Honours) degree in Political Science from Dhaka University in 1953 and M. A. degree from the same institution in 1955. He declined to join in governmental job though he passed in the CSS examination of 1956. Later, he began law business after passing L.L.B. from Dhaka University in 1960 and established himself as a reputed lawyer within a short time.

Moyezuddin's wife Bilkuis Begum was an inspiring force and a close aide. The couple had five children, in whom they instilled the importance education, hard work and social and cultural values. His daughter, Meher Afroze Chumki, is

a very popular member of parliament of Kaligonj constituency. He had a great passion for music, especially Rabindra Sangeet and Lalon Geeti, and would always find time to listen them in spite of his busy schedule.

He played an active role during the 'Agartala Conspiracy Case' as the convener of 'Mujib Tahabil,' and as a leading organiser of our great Liberation War.

Moyezuddin boldly protested the brutal killing of Sheikh Mujib in the first meeting of parliament members at Bangabhaban called by Moshtaq after August 15. The meeting was actually a plot to certify the Bangabandhu killing.

He was a member of parliament and close aide of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. He played a very important role in reorganising, reviving and bolstering Awami League in that crucial period after the tragic assassination of Sheikh Mujib. Moyezuddin sacrificed his life on September 22, 1984 in the democracy reestablishment movement against military ruler H.M. Ershad. Ershad was finally forced to resign on December 4, 1990 and democracy ultimately won.

Moyezuddin was known for his farsightedness, uncompromising ideology, justice and honesty, and close connection with common people. Nepotism, greed and corruption could never touch him. My heart bleeds for him.

The writer is a reporter of The Daily Star. E-mail: subrata.sust@gmail.com

By THOMAS JOSEPH

#### ACROSS

- 1 Extreme diets
- 6 "The Planets" composer
- 11 Mis-behave
- 12 Hawaiian hello
- 13 Move on a PC, in a way
- 15 Filming site
- 16 Rock's — Leppard
- 17 Buck's mate
- 18 Costume
- 20 Pop's — Brothers
- 23 Sherpa's home
- 27 Has debts
- 28 Refer to
- 29 Censor's sound
- 31 Like liquor and cigarettes
- 32 Squad car sound
- 34 TV plugs
- 37 Objective
- 38 Inquire
- 41 Move on a PC, in a way
- 44 Boise's state
- 45 Like bar beer
- 46 "The Rehearsal" painter
- 47 Derivative sound

#### DOWN

- 1 Passing crazes
- 2 Land unit
- 3 RBI or ERA
- 4 Gentle pull
- 5 Black suit
- 6 Enjoyed oneself
- 7 Ancient
- 8 Manor head
- 9 "Scram!"
- 10 Gift-wrapping need
- 14 Volleyball need
- 18 Neon and helium
- 19 Praline nut
- 20 Occupation
- 21 Night flier
- 22 Maiden name label
- 24 Films, slangily
- 25 Had dinner
- 26 Went ahead
- 30 Baby grands, e.g.
- 31 Musical speeds
- 33 Free (of)
- 34 Corrosive stuff
- 35 Slacker address
- 36 Without a date
- 38 Regarding
- 39 Flag feature
- 40 Retained
- 42 Cry of insight
- 43 — Arbor



Yesterday's answer

#### BEETLE BAILY

by Mort Walker



## QUOTABLE

### Quotes

"All life is an experiment. The more experiments you make the better."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

#### 9-10 CRYPTOQUOTE

Q A N M G T Z Q K P T P M R P P H

O P M Q J S F N K O Q P W S Y N Q A N

Z P W I D N U S I N S F Q P E N

O K W I D N . — R F S H X E P P Z A

Yesterday's Cryptquote: EVERYONE THINKS OF CHANGING THE WORLD, BUT NO ONE THINKS OF CHANGING HIMSELF. — LEO TOLSTOY

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