



China at Top in Global Patent Race

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Why in News

Recently, the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)** has highlighted that **China** has become the **biggest source of applications for international patents** in the world.

Key Points

- **China has pushed the United States from the top position** which it has held since the global system was set up more than 40 years ago.
 - The U.S. had filed the most applications in the world every year since the **Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT)** system was set up in **1978**.
- **China filed 58,990 applications** beating the **57,840 applications** filed by the **U.S.**
 - China's figure was a **200-fold increase in just 20 years**.
 - China's **success can be attributed** to the **deliberate strategy of advancing innovations** and to make the country's economy operate at a higher level of value.
- In the current times, more than half of patent applications, **almost 52.4%**, come from **Asia**.
- **Japan** is on the **third** rank followed by **Germany** and **South Korea**.

World Intellectual Property Organization

- It is the **global forum for intellectual property (IP) services, policy, information and cooperation**.
- It is a **self-funding** agency of the **United Nations**, with **193 member states**.
- **Mission:** To lead the development of a balanced and effective international IP system that enables innovation and creativity for the benefit of all.
- Its mandate, governing bodies and procedures are set out in the **WIPO Convention**, which **established WIPO in 1967**.
- It is **headquartered at Geneva, Switzerland**.

Patent Cooperation Treaty

- It is an **international treaty** with more than **150 Contracting States**.
- It makes it possible to **seek patent protection** for an invention simultaneously in each of a large number of countries by filing an **international patent application**.
 - Such an application may be filed by anyone who is a national or resident of a PCT Contracting State.
 - It may generally be filed with the national patent office of the Contracting State or at the applicant's option, with the International Bureau of WIPO in Geneva.
 - The granting of patents remains under the control of the national or regional patent Offices in what is called the **national phase**.
- **PCT is used by:**
 - **World's major corporations, research institutions and universities** when they seek international patent protection.
 - **Small and medium sized enterprises** (SMEs) and **individual inventors**.