227 applications to copyright ‘Ivanka’ in China

The U.S. department store franchise Nordstrom recently decided to stop selling Ivanka Trump’s clothing and accessory line. The retailer said that it won’t purchase products from the Ivanka Trump line based on the brand’s performance.

Ivanka Trump’s line of shoes on sale at a U.S. store. [Photo/VCG]

This move irritated U.S President Donald Trump. “My daughter Ivanka has been treated so unfairly by @Nordstrom. She is a great person – always pushing me to do the right thing! Terrible!” Trump tweeted on his private Twitter account and the official @POTUS account. The Twitter criticism led to a brief fall in Nordstrom’s stock.

However, the trademark of Ivanka has become a hot commodity in China. Many Chinese firms have applied to use Ivanka Trump’s name as their trademark for

their business. According to data from the Trademark Office of the State Administration for Industry and Commerce, there are 227 current applications to use “Ivanka” as a trademark on products ranging from diapers to cosmetics.

Among them, a Beijing-based company that provides weight loss services filed 55 applications to use the Chinese characters of Ivanka as its trademark for many products. Furthermore, the company also submitted 10 applications to use “IVANKA”, the English name of Ivanka Trump, for its products.

The rush to trademark Ivanka’s name is linked to her rising popularity in China, particularly after the presidential election. Most of the applications are still being processed, and it’s not clear whether any of them will be granted trademark rights.

According to Liu Kai, a lawyer from Hunan Province, foreign names or Chinese translations of such names are permitted as trademarks in business if they are not the names of public figures. However, it is easier to get the applications approved if a public figure is not popular in China.

“But now, the Chinese know Ivanka Trump because she is the first daughter in the U.S.,” said Liu Kai. According to a recent judicial interpretation by China’s Supreme People’s Court on Jan. 11, 2017, it is forbidden to use the names of public figures in trademarks, which the top courts say could “cause negative influence”.

“Therefore, I think it is impossible for these applications to get approved by the authority if the first daughter intervenes,” said Liu Kai.

Cooperation results in significantly improved air quality

Joint cooperation on environmental protection in the past three years between Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei province has resulted in significantly improved air quality in the region.

China has promoted the integrated development of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region in recent years, relocating nonessential functions from Beijing and restructuring the economy in the region, with environmental protection, traffic management and industrial upgrading being prioritized.

In the past three years, the three local governments have expanded cooperation on information sharing, including holding joint emergency meetings, as well as standards drafting, policy-making and joint financing.

Yu Jianhua, chief engineer of the Beijing Environmental Protection Bureau, said the authorities of the three areas formed a mechanism in March 2015 to

jointly cope with violations of environmental laws.

At the beginning of last year, Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei unified emergency response standards for severe air pollution.

In April, the three governments unified petroleum emission standards for vehicles.

“Beijing has invested in Hebei’s environmental protection, helping to cut coal use,” Yu said.

According to the bureau, Beijing has invested 962 million yuan ($139 million) in an air pollution control fund in Hebei in the past two years. Tianjin contributed 800 million yuan to the fund during the same period.

The results have been significant, with the industrial province of Hebei cutting coal use by 3.2 million metric tons in the past two years.

Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei have reduced coal consumption by 40.3 million tons in the past three years and cut iron production capacity by 40 million tons, which has contributed to the improved air quality.

China sees biggest overseas returning wave in recent years

Chinese students celebrate their graduation from Columbia University on May 20, 2015. [photo/Xinhua]

At the National Science and Technology Awards Conference held in Beijing on January, 2017, Ren Xiaobin and his team won the second prize in the 2016 National Natural Science Award.

“It is the best time to do scientific research in China,” said Ren. “China has a larger stage which provides more chances and room for growth. We can expand our ability and achieve greater value of life.”

No one would expect Ren to achieve so much from nothing in only nine years. As one of the second batch of experts enlisted in the national “Recruitment Program of Global Experts”, or Thousand Talents Program, he returned from Japan to establish the Frontier Institute of Science and Technology in Xi’an Jiaotong University and lead a group of young people to conduct research on intelligent material.

Ren is just one of the many outstanding examples of many overseas returnees. Since the program was introduced in 2008, more than 40,000 high-level talents have come back to homeland and have found jobs.

The number of returnees at professor level has been more than 20 times than that of the total number between 1978 and 2008, forming the biggest overseas returning wave since the founding of the People’s Republic of China.

“We are close to realizing the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation than any time in the history and we are eager for talents than any time in the history,” said President Xi Jinping at the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Western Returned Scholars Association.

“Most overseas Chinese want to come back to China,” said Wang Huiyao, vice-president of the Western Returned Scholars Association.

As China is improving its national strength, the ratio of the number of going abroad and returning people has fallen from 3.15:1 in 2006 to 1.28:1 in 2015. Talents are coming back at an unprecedented speed.

According to official statistics, more than 70 percent of project leaders working at key national research projects are overseas returnees. A large number of academicians at Chinese Academy of Sciences and at China Academy of Engineering are overseas returnees.

Experts estimate that China will transform from the biggest brain drain country into one of the main brain reversal countries in the world in five years.

The change of research environment is a major reason why overseas scholars are choosing to do research in China.

Shao Feng is in charge of a laboratory named after his name at the National Institute of Biological Sciences, Beijing. Two months ago, a research paper produced by his laboratory was published by world-known medical magazine

Nature Microbiology, achieving a major breakthrough in the field of bioscience.

Shao said the key to success is that the laboratory is run in a similar mode to international scientific research institutes, breaking the constraints such as budget report, assessment standard, which are usually seen in the traditional management of scientific research.

Favorable policies, exploding high-tech industry, innovative atmosphere and sustainable investment are appealing to more and more overseas students.

Currently, there are more than 300 overseas returnees' pioneer parks and about 24,000 enterprises in the parks across the country, with about 24,000 overseas returnees being employed.

"Many ask me why I came back. My answer is simple: I'm still young and I want to pursue my dream," said Zhu Xiang, 30, who turned down the offer of a research institute in France to start his own business in China.

Zhu with his friends established a mobile medical platform at an incubator in Tsinghua University and now has millions of users. He thinks the fast-growing China now has a very good platform for overseas returnees to realize their aspiration.

Home schooling without permission illegal

The Education Ministry released a notice on its website on Wednesday, stressing that parents or guardians are not allowed to educate children at home without permission from education authorities.

According to the Compulsory Education Law, all school-age children must attend primary and junior middle school.

Schools and local education authorities shoulder the responsibility of finding those children who do not go to school and persuading them to attend, the notice said.

"For children who cannot attend school due to reasons such as poor physical health, their parents or guardians should report to the local education authorities and ask for a delay in enrollment," the notice said.

"They cannot give children home schooling as a substitute for school education if they fail to gain permission from the authorities."

The notice was released against a backdrop of an increasing number of students being educated at home or attending small, private teaching

institutes.

Research conducted by the 21st Century Education Research Institute estimated that the number of children who receive home schooling rather than attending school in China has risen from 2,000 in 2013 to 6,000 today.

Wang Jiajia, who led the research, said the legality of home schooling had long been controversial in China, but that the increasing number of parents and children wanting to do so demonstrated that the unified, standardized education provided in the nation's schools cannot meet everyone's needs.

Infectious diseases kill 18,000 Chinese in 2016

Infectious diseases killed 18,237 people on the Chinese mainland in 2016, according to official data revealed Thursday.

In 2016, there were more than 6.9 million cases of infectious diseases reported on the mainland, according to the National Health and Family Planning Commission.

Of that total, one case of pestilence and 27 of cholera, both Class A infectious diseases, were reported but did not lead to fatalities.

More than 2.9 million cases were classified as Class B infectious diseases, which resulted in 17,968 deaths. HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, rabies, hepatitis, and human infection of H7N9 avian influenza accounted for 98.8 percent of deaths in this category.

Category C diseases were responsible for more than 3.9 million cases and 269 deaths. Foot and mouth disease, infectious diarrhea, and influenza were the most prevalent in this category, accounting for 98.5 percent of deaths.