

GI tags and its contribution in Indian Agriculture

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Introduction

Geographical indications (GI) refer to a type of intellectual property (IP) protection which identifies goods with a geographical region. The GI tagging is attributed in such a manner that quality, reputation and other salient features of the commodity are linked to the location of origin. The GI tag for a product can be used only by legitimate users and the residents of the territory of origin. GI tags may be obtained for agricultural products, handicrafts, textiles, manufactured goods, foodstuffs etc. The given GI tag may be in the form of a geographical name or a figurative representation or a combination of these two. The tag assigned to a product should convey its geographical origin. GI plays an important role in promoting the conservation of biodiversity among the rural population.

Graphical indications

GI is defined in Article 22.1 of the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement as "indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a member, or a region or locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin". In general, a GI is recognized in the "country of origin" in which the area referred by the GI tag is located. The registered proprietors or authorized users of GI might include associations of persons or statutory authorities. The authorized users can prevent anybody from using the GI tag on products, which are not originating from the designated location. Thus GI helps to ensure comprehensive and effective protection to GI tagged goods. In India, the Geographical Indications (GI) of Goods (Regulation and Protection) Act was passed in the 1999 to facilitate registration and protection of intellectual property in relation to goods. The Act defined GI under Section 1(e) as, "Geographical Indication in relation to goods, means an indication which identifies such goods as agricultural goods, natural goods or manufactured goods as originating or manufactured in the territory of a country or a region or locality in

that territory, where a given quality reputation or other characteristic of such good is essentially attributed to its geographical origin and in case where such goods are manufactured goods, one of the activities of either the production or of processing or preparation of the goods concerned takes place in such territory, region or locality as the case may be.

Agriculture items with GI tags

All GI tagged items are divided into 12 categories—Agriculture, Handicrafts, Manufactured, Foodstuff, Textile, Handmade Carpets, Natural Goods, Clothing, Natural, Spice, Forest Produce and Footwear. Here we are going to look into agricultural items, let's see how many are there and how many we were actually aware of. There are 96 GI tagged agricultural produce in total.

- 1) **Assam:** Assam (Orthodox) Logo, Assam Karbi Anglong Ginger, Tezpur Litchi, Joha Rice
- 2) **Andhra Pradesh:** Guntur Sannam Chilli, Banaganapalle Mangoes and Araku valley Arabica coffee
- 3) **Arunachal Pradesh:** Arunachal Orange
- 4) **Bihar:** Bhagalpuri Zardalu
- 4) **Gujarat:** Gir Kesar Mango and Bhalia Wheat
- 5) **Himachal Pradesh:** Kangra Tea
- 6) **Karnataka:** Coorg Orange, Mysore Betel leaf, Nanjanagud Banana, Mysore Malligae, Udupi Malligae, Hadagali Malligae, Coorg Green Cardamom, Monsooned Malabar Arabica Coffee, Monsooned Malabar Robusta Coffee, Bydagi Chilli, Devanahalli Pomello, Appemidi Mango, Kamalapur Red Banana, Udupi Mattu Gulla Brinjal, Bangalore Blue Grapes, Bangalore Rose Onion, Coorg arabica coffee, Chikmagalur Arabica coffee, Bababudangiri arabica coffee and Sirsi Supari.



ODISHA-RASGULLA



NAGPUR-ORANGES



MADURAI-MALLI



MALGOVA-MANGO



TIRUPATHI-LADDU



MADHYA PRADESH



DARJEELING-TEA



MYSORE-SANDAL



ERODE-TURMERIC

- 7) **Kerala:** Navara Rice, Palakkadan Matta Rice, Malabar Pepper, Alleppey Green Cardamom, Pokkali Rice, Vazhakkulam Pineapple, Central Travancore Jaggery, Wayanad Jeerakasala Rice, Wayanad Gandhakasala Rice, Kaipad Rice, Chengalikodan Nendran Banana, Marayoor jaggery and Wayanad Robusta coffee.



- 8) **Nagaland:** Naga Mircha and Naga Tree Tomato, Black pepper from Malabar region & Strawberries from Mahabaleshwar
- 9) **Manipur:** Kachai Lemon
- 10) **Meghalaya:** Memong Narang and Khasi Mandarin
- 11) **Mizoram:** Mizo Chilli
- 12) **Maharashtra:** Mahabaleshwar Strawberry, Nashik Grapes, Kolhapur Jaggery, Nagpur Orange, Karvath Kati Sarees & Fabrics, Ajara Ghansal Rice, Waigaon Turmeric, Mangalwedha Jowar, Bhiwapur Chilli, Sindhudurg & Ratnagiri Kokum, Waghya Ghevada, Navapur Tur Dal, Ambemohar Rice, Vengurla Cashew, Sangli Raisins, Lasalgaon Onion, Dahanu Gholvad Chikoo, Beed Custard Apple, Jalna Sweet Orange,

Jalgaon Banana, Marathwada Kesar Mango, Purandar Fig, Jalgaon Bharit Brinjal and Solapur Pomegranate.

13) **Odisha:** Ganjam Kewda Rooh and Ganjam Kewda Flower

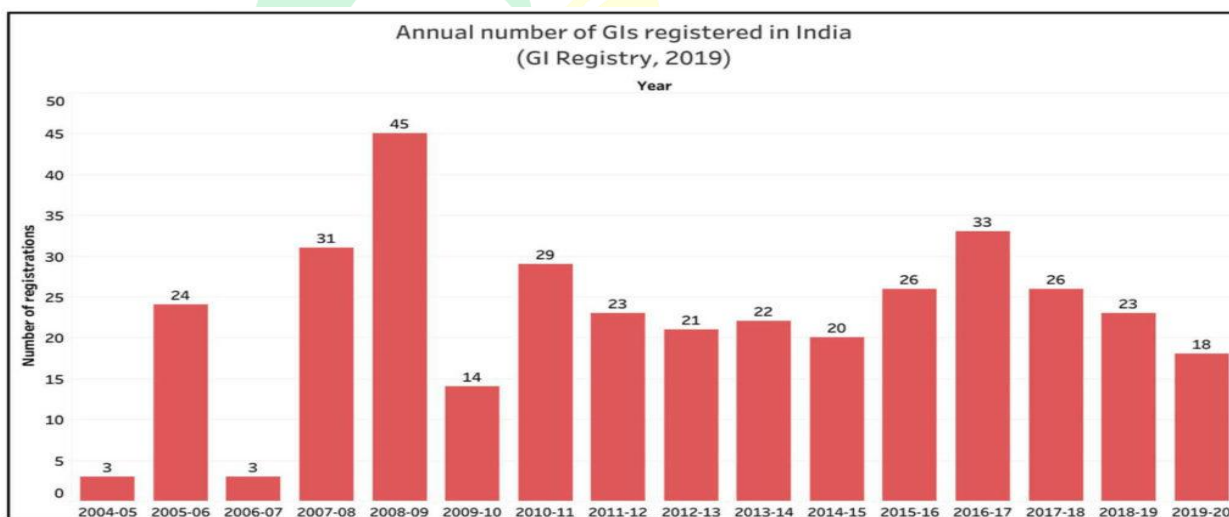
14) **Sikkim:** Sikkim Large Cardamom

15) **Tripura:** Tripura Queen Pineapple

16) **Tamil Nadu:** Eathomozhy Tall Coconut, Nilgiri (Orthodox), Virupakshi Hill Banana, Sirumalai Hill Banana, Madurai Malli and Erode Turmeric

17) **Uttar Pradesh:** Allahabad Surkha Guava, Mango Malihabadi Dusseheri and Kalanamak Rice.

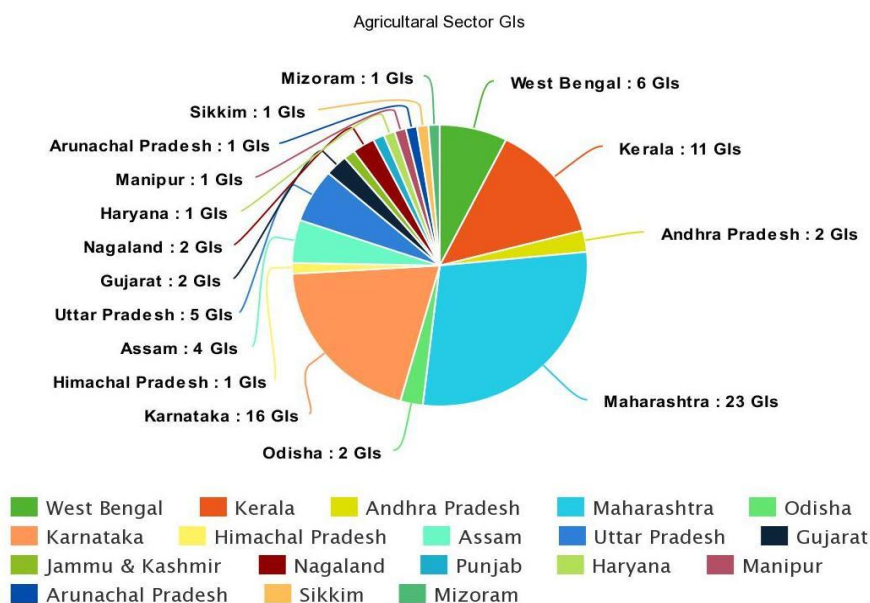
18) **West Bengal:** Darjeeling Tea (Word), Darjeeling Tea (Logo), Laxman Bhog Mango, Khirsapati Himsagar) Mango, Fazli Mango grown in the district of Malda, Tulaipanji



Rice: Gobindabhog and Basmati



Tea garden in Darjeeling, West Bengal



Registered GIs in India (2019)

Agriculture sector GIs

Under Manufactured goods there are very few states having registered GIs. Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka are the two both having 3 registered GIs. Kannauj Perfume, Kanpur Saddlery and Meerut Scissors are the old names in the list. There are also some foreign manufactured items which are registered as GI in India. Among them are mostly alcoholic beverages which include Peruvian Pisco, an alcoholic beverage belonging to a variety of grape aguardiente produced in Peru, Champagne and Cognac of France, Napa Valley of USA, Scotch Whisky of UK, Porto of Portugal , etc.

Geographical indication in agriculture

Seed or planting material is basic to all agricultural production. Seed costs minimum in total cost of crop production but has maximum impact. Having reaped the benefit through the seeds of green revolution varieties, farmers were quick to realize the importance of good seeds of new and better varieties of crops. For such superior seeds, farmers were even more willing to pay a higher price. Seed companies and technology developers saw this as an opportunity to convert plant varieties and important plant genes as profit – making products. Global strategy, pesticides and seed companies merged to consolidate capital and technology

to dominate the market. In various countries the need to conserve biodiversity, farm level variation, giving credit to farmers for their traditional crop varieties, folk varieties, farmers varieties, access to benefit sharing, extending consumer assurance by way of geographic indications, appellation of origin, traditional knowledge etc were attempted to be protected. Global commodity trade is now dominated by several such new issues, which in India are now understood and applied. Other aspect of GI in agriculture is related the plant-based products or by-products. Plant-based products could be raw material for production or its processing or the preparation. After the GI became effective on 15th September 2003, Darjeeling Tea 12 became the first G tagged product in 2004 in India. After that landmark¹⁷, many GI-labelled agricultural products have been added (Table 1) in India.

Benefit of GI tags

The Geographical Indication registration confers the following benefits:

- Legal protection to the products
- Prevents unauthorised use of GI tag products by others
- It helps consumers to get quality products of desired traits and is assured of authenticity
- Promotes the economic prosperity of producers of GI tag goods by enhancing their demand in national and international markets.

Role of the GI in rural development

Some of the observed rural development impacts of GI are:

- The supply chain is structured around a common product reputation
- Increased and stabilised prices for the GI product
- Distributed through all the levels of the supply chain adds value
- Natural resources can be preserved on which the product is based
- Preservation of traditions and traditional expertise
- Tourism can be boosted.

Conclusion:

GI is an important tool for protecting the IP rights associated with agricultural products and foodstuffs originating in specific geographical regions. In recent times, there are considerable efforts made by various institutions and agencies in India for ensuring legal protection for Indian GI. Further, adequate promotional strategies are needed to popularize GI tagged

products and to derive benefits from its commercial potential. The unique cultural aspects of rural communities associated with GI needs to be highlighted. GI tagging of foodstuffs should be restricted to those foodstuffs which are historically produced only in a specific region and are not the same when produced outside the region. Also, generic recipes for food stuffs should not be granted GI tags as they can be replicated anywhere in the world.

