

Original Article

Geographical Indication Products in India: Recent Trends with Special Reference to Telangana State

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Abstract: In India, Geographical Indication (GI) has emerged as a major kind of IP rights issue. It gives the product's manufacturers or producers from that specific area the ability to utilize the indication. This implies that they also possess the legal authority to forbid the use of any sign or name that lacks specific attributes guaranteed by the Geographical Indication of that specific product. GI is a useful instrument for creating jobs in rural areas and generating revenue from exports. In order to establish a brand in foreign markets, the regulatory framework must place greater emphasis on quality control criteria. The paper has been focused on the GI product currents trends in India, Telangana and the challenges faced.

Keywords: Intellectual Property, Geographical Indications, India, Telangana, Challenges.

I. INTRODUCTION

These are the days when traditional knowledge is protected and the knowledge economy is growing. Market economies constantly struggle with issues of copying, piracy, and information misuse by imitators seeking ever-greater profits. It becomes vital to preserve intellectual property rights. With the help of IPR legislation and numerous initiatives like "Make in India" and "Atmanirbhar Bharat," India has established a robust IPR framework. The need to preserve traditional knowledge and skills from different geographic areas, along with intellectual property, has grown. The Covid-19 epidemic has raised awareness among all people about the importance of maintaining and safeguarding intellectual property in the digital age, as well as connecting to the origins of traditional knowledge, particularly in the health industry. There will be advantages for economic growth, job creation, and revenue production from the legal protection of intellectual property. Stopping the piracy and exploitation of intellectual property will get simpler in this approach.

A Geographical Indication (GI) is a label applied to products that are distinct from one another due to their production in a specific geographic area and guaranteed quality. These products have a specific geological origin. Given that many agricultural goods are impacted by unique local geographical elements, such as soil and climate, which may be determined from their point of origin, geographical indications can be applied to a broad range of agricultural products. The usage of Geographical Indications (GI) extends beyond agricultural items, as they can also highlight a product's unique characteristics resulting from human elements such as local manufacturing skills and traditions. Prior to the TRIPS agreement, three major international accords addressed the protection of Geographical Indication

A) Comprehending Geographical Indication (GI)

The term "geographic indication" (GI) refers to a label placed on products that are distinctive due to their specific geological origin, limited production area, and guaranteed quality. Because a large range of agricultural products can be determined by their place of origin and are impacted by certain local geographical characteristics like soil and climate, geographical indications can be applied to a wide range of agricultural products. However, the application of GI is not just restricted to agricultural items; it also highlights the unique characteristics of a product that result from human elements such as local manufacturing techniques and traditions. Geographical indications are protected differently from other Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) such as patents, trademarks, and designs. Before the TRIPS agreement, there were primarily three international agreements addressing this issue. Geographical indication protection is given to a collection of producers who are associated with the specific area where the product was first produced. Numerous factors influence geographic indications (GI products), including origin, geography, climate, and human activity in a certain area.

"A geographical indication refers to an indication capable of identifying goods, including natural goods, agricultural goods, or manufactured goods, as manufactured or originating in a country's territory, or a locality or region within that territory, where a specific quality, reputation, or any other attribute of such good is particularly a characteristic to its geographical origin," states Section 2(1)(e) of the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.



When it comes to manufactured goods, one of the operations associated with their production, processing, or preparation ought to occur within the territory, area, or location. The Indian GI Act became operative on September 15, 2003.

Geographical indications (GIs) constitute a noteworthy form of intellectual property. There are currently more GI-tagged products available in India. India is in a favorable position and has a rich cultural legacy because of its many regions, including Kashmir, Punjab, Kerala, and Haryana. As a result, raising public awareness and helping people comprehend the benefits and role of GI are important.

It is imperative to acknowledge that the benefits derived from a product's GI classification must ultimately be distributed to the actual manufacturers and craftspeople. A strong institutional structure and legislative framework are needed for this.

B) Origin

The Madrid Agreement (1891), the Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration (1958), and the Paris 2 Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property (1883). But the issue of a hierarchy of protection levels under the TRIPS Agreement that is predicated on a fictitious and arbitrary classification of products still exists. However, it can be attributed to the European Union's remarkable negotiation skills that GI was eventually included in the TRIPS Agreement. Indian lawmakers passed the Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act in 1999, which is the first specific law dealing to the filing and safeguarding of Geographic Indications (GIs). The Act became operative on September 15, 2003. In accordance with this act, the Controller General of Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks of the Central Government of India established the Geographical Indication Registry in Chennai to register geographical indications.

C) Definition of GI:

Geographical indicators are defined as "Indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a country, or a region or locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation, or other characteristics of the good are essentially attributable to its geographical origin" by the World Trade Organization. (Source: Geographic Indication, no date) (1) "A geographical indication is a label applied to goods that are uniquely their own and have characteristics or a reputation that stem from that origin. For a product to be considered a GI, its location of origin must be indicated by a sign. Moreover, the characteristics, qualities, or status of the product should be predominantly ascribed to the nation in which it was made. Because the qualities rely on the geographic region of production, there is a clear link between the product and its original place of manufacture.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyze state-wise, product-wise, and year-wise distribution of different products under GI registered in India from April 2004 to 30th March 2024.
2. To understand the legal framework and role of GI in the Indian context.
3. To find out the challenges regarding the GI in India.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study is descriptive in nature. Legal considerations, GI concepts, and other associated topics have all been examined. This study, which is qualitative in nature, is based on secondary sources of data, including the Telangana State and Indian IPR laws and the GI Act.

IV. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study makes Geographical Indication in India easier to understand for both researchers and the general public. Additionally, it will assist GI registry officials in taking the appropriate steps to modify their website. Indian citizens would be able to learn how many and what kind of Indian products are registered under the GI.

V. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Only doctrinal research involving books, journal articles, and pertinent resources has been included in the study. Due to temporal constraints, the researcher has examined the GIs' product list as it appears on the official IPR, India website through March 30, 2024.

VI. RECENT TRENDS OF GI PRODUCTS IN INDIA

India's renowned Banaras Thandai is among the more than 60 goods that have been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) designation. A senior official from the Geographical Indications register stated that this is the first time such a significant number of GI tags had been issued at once. Additionally, he mentioned that more States were stepping up and submitting bids to have some of their traditional and historic items granted a GI tag.

The GI title has been earned by six ancient Assamese crafts: the Bihu dhol, the Mishing handloom items, the Jaapi (bamboo headgear worn in rural Assam), the Pani Meteka craft, and the Asharikandi terracotta craft.

Thirteen additional Assamese products have been tagged, such as the Bodo Dokhona, the traditional clothing worn by Bodo women, and the Bodo Eri silk, also known as the fabric of peace or ahimsa (non-violence), which is made from cassava and the silkworm *Samia ricini*, which primarily feeds on the leaves of the castor plant (*Ricinus communis*). Bodo Thorkha, a musical instrument, Bodo Jwmgra, a traditional scarf, Bodo Gamsa, a traditional clothing worn by Bodo men, and Bodo Sifung, a long flute, are all included in the list. Six distinguished GI Tags have been awarded in Assam to traditional crafts, encompassing well-known products such as Sarthebari Metal Craft, Japi, and Assam Bihu Dhol. With a rich history, these items directly assist close to one lakh individuals.

The well-known Banaras Thandai, a milk-based beverage flavored with a wholesome mixture of nuts, seeds, and spices, was also given the designation. According to information in the GI file, traditional Banaras Thandai stores draw sizable crowds on any given evening in the city's central districts, including Gaudaulia Chowk, Lahurabir, and the historic Pakka Mahal lane. Originally served as a sacrifice to the Hindu deity Shri Kashi Vishwanath on the occasions of Mahashivaratri, Rangbhari Ekadasi, and Holi, the beverage was first presented many centuries ago. Among the goods that left this region with GI tags were the Banaras Tabla, Banaras Shehnai, Banaras Lal Bharwamirch, and Banaras Lal Peda.

Two tags were obtained by the Tripura region: one for the Matabari Peda, a sweet concoction, and another for the Pachra-Rignai, a traditional clothing worn on special occasions. Chief Minister Manik Saha of Tripura also praised the self-help organizations on X for bringing attention to the State of Tripura. Additionally granted GI tags are the "Meghalaya Chubitchi" and "Meghalaya Lyrnai Pottery," as well as the "Meghalaya Garo Textile" weaving, which is connected to socio-cultural and religious rites.

Products that possess attributes associated with a certain region and have a defined geographical origin are granted the Geographical Indication. Approximately 635 goods in India have received the GI label as of this writing. Two decades ago, the renowned Darjeeling tea received the nation's first GI tag.

VII. GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS (GI) REGISTERED PRODUCTS IN INDIA

India now has over 600 products with geographical indications (GI) registered, with Uttar Pradesh topping the list with 69 products. The largest number of products with GI tags from a single geographic location has been found in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. Thirty approved products, including Banaras Thandai, Shehnai, Tabla, Lal Peda, and Mural Painting, are available in Varanasi.

The Controller General of Patents, Designs, and Trademarks (CGPDTM) reports that as of March 31, 2024, 635 Indian items had received GI Tags. Sixty-five of the 1,158 applications that were submitted to the patent office in the last 20 years are now GI-registered.

The patent office claims that the well-known Hyderabad Lac bangles have received GI certification. The GI registration process also applies to the renowned Warangal Chapata chile from Telangana, the Balanagar custard apple, the Nizamabad turmeric, the Nalgonda oriental pickled melon (Dosakai), and the Kollapur mangoes from the Nagarkurnool area. A geographical indicator (GI) is a label applied to goods that have a particular geographical origin and are known for certain attributes or characteristics derived from that origin.

A) Record GI Registration in 2023-24

The patent office awarded GI tags to 160 products in 2023–2024—a 300% increase over 2022–2023. On March 30, 2024, 63 GI tags were awarded out of the 160 products that received GI tags.

B) Products granted Maximum GI tag during 2023-24

With respect to the 160 products that received GI tags, the highest number came from the following categories: handicrafts (30 products), agriculture (16 products), textiles (11 products), and manufactured and food items (three products each).

C) State-leading GI tag registration in 2023-24

The largest numbers of items from the following states were among the 160 that received GI tag registration in 2023–2024.

- Uttar Pradesh (69).
- Tamil Nadu (58)
- Tamil Nadu was the state with the highest number of GI tag registrations last year.

D) Record GI registration in March 2024

The Patent Office reports that on March 30, 2024, a record 63 GI tags were issued in a single day. The greatest quantity of goods eligible for GI tags came from

- Assam: Nineteen items
- Gujarat (5), Maharashtra (16), Uttar Pradesh (16), Meghalaya (4), and Tripura (2)

E) Geographical Indication Tag

Products that are manufactured, natural, or derived from a certain area are marked with a Geographical Indication tag. The goods must be created in the designated area and possess the unique qualities, reputation, or other traits unique to the area. Products are legally protected when they have a GI tag. It shields a Registered Geographical Indication from being used without permission. In 1999, the Indian Parliament passed the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act. Geographical indications are registered with the Controller General of Patents, Designs, and TradeMarks. Tamil Nadu's Chennai is home to the Geographical Indications Registry. In 2003, Darjeeling tea became the first product to receive a GI label.

VIII. LIST OF GI TAG PRODUCTS IN INDIA 2024

As an essential component of intellectual property protection, Geographical Indication (GI) tags are used in India to identify products that are native to particular regions and have unique attributes, reputations, or traits that are intrinsic to their origin. These tags, which are regulated by the Geographical Indications of Commodities (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, guard the originality and authenticity of commodities with a local connection by prohibiting the unapproved use of brand names or reputations.

The first product in India to be recognized with GI Tags was the esteemed Darjeeling Tea, which was introduced on September 15, 2003. For a list of GI Tag products in India through 2024. Rupa Cuttack Tarakasi, Muslin Banglar Obtain a GI Tag Geographical Indication (GI) tags have been awarded to Cuttack's Silver Filigree, also known as Tarakasi, and Banglar Muslin, recognizing India's rich artisanal legacy.

With a 500-year history, Silver Filigree is a display of excellent metalwork, while Banglar Muslin is a representation of Bengali cotton fabric. These accolades, like others like Kutch Rogan Craft and Narasapur Crochet Lace, are meant to safeguard traditional crafts from duplication. These programs honor India's rich cultural heritage, underlining the value of keeping traditional methods alive for upcoming generations, encouraging pride among craftspeople, and underscoring their importance on a worldwide scale.

IX. LATEST DEVELOPMENTS ON GI TAGS IN INDIA

There were a number of significant advancements in the field of GI Tags in India in 2024. Notably, Similipal Kai Chutney, which is made with red weaver ants by tribal groups in Odisha's Mayurbhanj region, received its GI Tag on January 2, 2024. This culinary specialty is a perfect representation of the area's distinct heritage. In addition, the Gucci Mushroom from Jammu and Kashmir is currently in the process of obtaining a GI Tag, which will serve to identify its unique provenance and attributes specific to the area.

A) List of GI Tags in India**Table 1: List of GI Tags in India**

Products	Categories	States/UTs
Kashmir Saffron	Agriculture	Jammu & Kashmir
Manipuri Black Rice	Food Stuff	Manipur
Kandhamal Haladi	Agricultural	Odisha
Rasagola	Food Stuff	Odisha
Kodaikanal Malai Poondum	Agricultural	Tamil Nadu
Pawndum	Handicraft	Mizoram
Ngotekhherh	Handicraft	Mizoram
Hmaram	Handicraft	Mizoram
Palani Panchamirtham	Food Stuff	Tamil Nadu
Tawhlhohpuan	Handicraft	Mizoram
Mizo Puanchei	Handicraft	Mizoram
Gulbarga Tur Dal	Agricultural	Karnataka
Tirur Betel Leaf (Tirur Vettila)	Agricultural	Kerala
Khola Chilli	Agricultural	Goa

Idu Mishmi Textiles	Handicraft	Arunachal Pradesh
Dindigul Locks	Manufactured	Tamil Nadu
Kandangi Saree	Handicraft	Tamil Nadu
Srivilliputtur Palkova	Food Stuff	Tamil Nadu
Amroha Dholak	Handicraft	Uttar Pradesh
Mahoba Gaura Patthar Hastashilp	Handicraft	Uttar Pradesh
Mainpuri Tarkashi	Handicraft	Uttar Pradesh
Sambhal Horn Craft	Handicraft	Uttar Pradesh
Baghpat Home Furnishings	Handicraft	Uttar Pradesh
Barabanki Handloom Product	Handicraft	Uttar Pradesh
Kalpi Handmade Paper	Handicraft	Uttar Pradesh
Cuttack Rupa Tarakasi, Banglar Muslin	Handicraft	Odisha

Source: www.ipindia.nic.in

B) List of GI Tags in Telangana

Tandur Red Gram now has a spot on the list of patented commodities after the Geographical Indications Registry awarded it Geographical Indication (GI) designation. Tandur Red Gram is one of eight products or items that have been bestowed with the prestigious title. Products that are distinct and relate to a particular area or origin are assigned a geographic indication. In 2005, Pochampally Ikat became the first product in the state to be awarded a GI tag.

With the GI certificate for Tandur Red Gram in the category of Agriculture commodities, Telangana can now claim 15 products that have been labeled with the GI logo. Additionally, the state has submitted applications for products like Warangal Chepta (Chillies) and Hyderabad Lac Bangles.

In all, 432 items in India, and GI designation has been awarded to 432 goods, the first being Darjeeling tea, which was accorded this classification in 2004–05.

A GI's registration is good for ten years from the date it is issued, and it is renewable every ten years. Based in Chennai, the Geographical Indications Registry is run under the auspices of the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.

C) List of 17 products:

1. Pochampalli Ikat – 2005
2. Silver Filigree of Karimnagar – 2007
3. Cheriya Paintings – 2008
4. Nirmal Toys and Crafts – 2009
5. Nirmal Furniture – 2009
6. Hyderabad Haleem – 2010
7. Pembarthi Metal Craft – 2010
8. Gadwal Sarees – 2012
9. Siddipet Gollabhama – 2012
10. Narayanpet Handloom Sarees – 2013
11. Puttapaka Telia Rumal – 2015
12. Banaganapalle Mangoes – 2017 (Origin State – both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh)
13. Adilabad Dokra – 2018
14. Warangal Durries – 2018
15. Nirmal Paintings – 2019
16. Tandur Red Gram – 2022
17. Hyderabad Lac Bangles

Table 2: Following are the geographical indications in the state of Telangana

S. No	Geographical Indication	Type
1.	Pochampally Ikat	Handicraft
2.	Silver Filigree of Karimnagar	Handicraft
3.	Nirmal toys and craft	Handicraft
4.	Nirmal furniture	Handicraft
5.	Nirmal paintings	Handicraft

6.	Gadwal Sarees	Handicraft
7.	Hyderabadi Haleem	Foodstuff
8.	Cheriyal Paintings	Handicraft
9.	Pembarthi Metal Craft	Handicraft
10.	Siddipet Gollabhama	Handicraft
11.	Narayanpet Handloom Sarees	Handicraft
12.	Banaganapalle Mangoes	Agricultural
13.	Pochampally Ikat Logo	Handicraft
14.	Adilabad Dokra	Handicraft
15.	Warangal Durries	Handicraft

Source: www.ipindia.nic.in

X. CHALLENGES AHEAD

The issues facing India in the future will be successful GI implementation and raising public awareness of the disease. It is imperative that there be a robust legal structure in place to prevent competitors both domestically and internationally from replicating India's GI badges. There are numerous examples of local and international traders copying GI tags, such as those on Banarasi sarees and Darjeeling tea.

Issues with quality: The GI Act gives less attention to problems with quality monitoring. The only regulations under the GI Act for monitoring the quality of goods such as food items and handicrafts are Rules 32(6)g and Form GI-1. Creating strict legislative guidelines to guarantee the quality of goods with GI tags is a formidable task. For example, let's examine the special instance of Muga Silk. To give an example, let's examine the situation of Muga Silk, a special variation of Assamese natural silk fabric with a golden hue. In July 2006, it was granted GI tag approval while disregarding quality control guidelines. However, the state government just began the inspection system that deals with geographical origin issues and other connected issues.

A) Imitation of the Products:

India is also producing low-quality imitations, especially in the Surat area of the Gujarat state. A near alternative to the original pashmina or Kashmiri shawl is the semi-pashmina or silk-pashmina.

B) Enforcing GIs:

Upholding the GI Act effectively presents significant obstacles in and of itself. The availability of several venues for the sale of these goods is the cause. In both the domestic and international markets, monitoring and screening these kinds of outlets is a difficult process.

C) Global Image Creation:

Establishing a brand and shaping consumers' perceptions of it are crucial aspects of commercialization. Promotional marketing techniques that concentrate on the psychology of both domestic and foreign consumers are required for this.

In India, GI is a useful tool for rural development. Let's examine this using the example of handloom weaving, which has historically provided a means of subsistence. When power looms were introduced, handlooms—a classic example of traditional and ancestor-level ability and knowledge—started to suffer. In India, the handloom industry is unique in each of the country's states and regions. With the help of GI tags, the handloom industry can once again become a major source of employment and growth in rural areas. TTD has another intriguing example. In September 2009, Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) received GI tag for Tirupati Laddu to stop the local hawkers from making them and selling them in the local marketplaces.

Because it violated GI Act section 9(d), there was a tremendous deal of debate surrounding it. Furthermore, GI tags are intended to reflect the economic success of a specific geographic area. Critics contended that TTD is a singular organization that does not speak for the entire region and that the GI law has been broken by the sanctioning body. There are instances where GI tags or brand names are misused. Allegations surfaced that organizations based in France, Japan, and Russia were misappropriating the Darjeeling brand, logo, and GI tag.

XI. FINDINGS

GI is a useful instrument for creating jobs in rural areas and generating revenue from exports. In order to establish a brand in foreign markets, the regulatory framework must place greater emphasis on quality control criteria. In India, GI is not very well-liked. As a result, raising awareness among the public is imperative.

XII. SUGGESTIONS

This study offered some recommendations for resolving the problems and difficulties that producers and manufacturers encountered. Since GI was primarily created to prevent counterfeit goods and safeguard producer interests, it should be widely used to: Educate consumers about GI.

The relevant government body is required to guarantee that the laws governing geographical indications (GI) are suitably implemented in order to prevent the production and manufacturing of identical items that are registered under GI.

The makers voiced several key issues, one of which was the product's premium pricing. A premium price determined by the government is required for all commodities classified under GI.

This will support and motivate the manufacturers of these goods to stick to the tried-and-true method. These items must be marketed globally by the government, which should also position them as a GI brand—an exclusive category brand.

The makers of GI products ought to receive tax breaks. It is possible to create a unique tax category for GI products. GI goods can also be advertised under the tourism umbrella and in tourist hotspots like airports. The manufacturers of GI must have access to appropriate legal information and counsel in order to safeguard their product from unlawful.

XIII. CONCLUSION

Since GI is a newer form of intellectual property, it must have sufficient protection in the age of intellectual property. The distance between countries has shrunk due to globalization, which has also enhanced and increased trade links between them. However, there have been instances where this has hurt the sales of local goods and led consumers to choose branded goods instead of locally made ones. It is now necessary to defend local goods on the international market. These products also need to be sufficiently safeguarded. GI therefore plays a crucial role in safeguarding the interests of the local market.

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