

GI – The tag of identity

Why do scores of manufacturers of indigenous products across the country vie for a GI tag? The example of how it has catapulted the humble Kovilpatti Kadalai Mittai to instant fame says it all

The town of Kovilpatti in Tamil Nadu's Thoothukudi district, known as a matchstick-making hub, enjoyed its moment of fame in April, this year, for a different reason. Its traditional speciality, Kovilpatti Kadalai Mittai (peanut candy), was awarded a Geographical Indication tag, commonly referred to as GI tag. The recognition brought double delight to the manufacturers and retailers of the sweet treat.

And that's because it not only marked the end of a five-year wait to their claim to fame, but also was an acknowledgement of a century of existence of the cottage industry in Kovilpatti and its surrounding villages.

What's a GI tag?

Approved by the Geneva-based World Trade Organisation, a GI tag recognises the place of origin of a product and the specific qualities or means of production associated with it. Acting as a certification, it is a way of ensuring that similar products from elsewhere cannot be sold under the same name. It is renewable after 10 years. Some examples of GI tagged products from around the world are Parmesan Reggiano cheese and Napolitan pizza from Italy, Swiss watches, Ceylon tea and Pinggu peaches from China.

In India, the GI tag is governed by the Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act which was passed by Parliament in 1999. This paved the way for the establishment of the Chennai-based GI registry to classify products under a GI tag after carefully reviewing applications. Darjeeling tea became the country's first product to bag a GI tag in 2004-2005. Since then, many more products have received the tag.



Why is the tag important?

- A GI tag essentially works like a trademark or intellectual property right. It helps producers ensure that their products are distinct from competing products in the market.
- It enables producers to earn goodwill and a reputation for indigenously manufactured products. It ensures that their products enjoy not just good sales but also favourable prices.
- Many communities depend entirely on the market success of their indigenous products and a GI tag provides recognition and protection of their livelihoods. The products also become synonymous with the cultural and geographical identity of the region they come from over time, and embody a history of craftsmanship, tradition and community.
- A tag of authenticity is important to ensure that the interests and efforts of generations of farmers, cooks, and other skilled persons are safeguarded from competitive prices and factory processes.
- GI tags boost sales and exports, as the geographical distinctiveness of products and official recognition of their historical and cultural significance increase demand.



CHANNAPATNA TOYS: These distinctive wooden toys are made in Channapatna, aka Toy Town, in Ramanagara district of Karnataka.

BANGANAPALLE MANGO: Grown in Kurmool district of Andhra Pradesh, especially in Banganapalle, Paanyam and Nandyal mandals, the fruit is hugely popular among mango fans for its thin skin, abundant pulp and distinct flavour



Pride of place

Some GI tagged products at a glance

DARJEELING TEA: Grown in West Bengal's Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts, the tea has a delightful floral aroma



RASGULLA: Two states – West Bengal and Odisha – claimed the juicy sweet as theirs, but both versions – Banglar rosogolla and Odisha rasagola – bagged GI tags eventually.



ARANMULA KANNADI: This mirror, handmade from a metal alloy, is unique to Aranmula in Pathanamthitta district of Kerala and is known for reflecting flawless images

KANGRA PAINTING: This unique style of painting is done using 19 natural colours obtained from plants and stones of the region. At times, gold is used to lend the paintings a special lustre



WARLI PAINTING: Practised mostly by the tribal people of Palghar district, Maharashtra, elements of nature usually feature in these paintings

RAJASTHAN BLUE POTTERY: Widely recognised as a traditional craft of Jaipur, the name comes from the beautiful Persian blue used to colour the pottery.



Did you know?

Besides Kovilpatti Kadalai Mittai, Kashmir saffron, Gorakhpur terracotta, black rice of Manipur, Thanjavur Netti Works, Arumbavur wood carvings and Telia rumal of Telangana have also bagged GI tags this year.

QUEST

Everyday Science

Here are the answers to a couple of often-asked questions



Freezing the action

Why do moving vehicles appear as blurred images in photographs?

The shutter speed is important while a moving object is being photographed. If the period for which the shutter is open is short enough to freeze the movement of the vehicle on the film then the image will be sharp but if the duration for which the camera shutter is open is not short enough to freeze the movement, the image captured on the film will be blurred.

To capture clear images of a racing car, shutter speeds of the order of one thousandth of a second are used.

A blurring of the image can also occur if the camera shakes while the picture is being taken.

Cooking with salt

When you're making soup you add salt to the water and then start boiling the vegetable or meat; but when you're cooking meat as a dish you start with plain water and add salt only when the meat has boiled for some time.

What's the reason?

When two solutions are separated by a thin membrane, the solvent moves from the more dilute solution to the more concentrated one. This is the process of osmosis.

When you add salt to the cooking water the solution becomes more concentrated than the juice in the tissues of the vegetable or meat that is being cooked. So the juice from the vegetable or meat flows out into the water outside, giving it flavour.

When you're cooking meat as a dish you want the meat to retain its flavour.

So it is only when the tissues of the meat are hardened by heat and osmosis cannot take place that you put the salt in the cooking pot. (Content provided by Amrita Bharati)



LEISURE CORNER

Write with flair and flourish

Feeling bored at home? Try your hand at calligraphy art...

What is calligraphy?

Considered an aesthetic expression of handwriting, calligraphy is a beautiful art form of rendering letters and symbols using ink and paper. The term originates from the Greek word kallos meaning beautiful and graphein (to write). It is perhaps one of the oldest art forms, having existed for centuries across different cultures such as Arabic, Persian, Chinese, and English.

What you need:

To master calligraphy, you will need a bunch of supplies such as calligraphy nibs, stencils, calligraphy paper and calligraphy ink. All of these can be purchased online. Some websites also teach calligraphy using simple sketch pens and ink pens.



PIXABAY

Learn online:

- ** thepostmanknock.com: A website with a tutorial filled blog, catalogue of courses, and a supply store all in one. The site has a mix of paid for and free printable worksheets.
- ** calligrascope.com: Offers free calligraphy tutorial videos

for beginners with practice sheets.

** Youtube: You can subscribe to Youtube channels for calligraphy lessons. Calligraphy masters, Paul Antonio, Julie Turie are some of the popular ones.



ARTIVITY

Artwork by Sai Kruthi, Class 2, SRM Public School, Chennai

If you have original artwork related to current, trending issues, share them at school@thehindu.co.in with the subject - Artivity. Select entries will be published. Please mention your name, class, school and city.

Will The Hundred get on the score sheet?

Scheduled to start in the summer of 2020, this cricket tournament has been postponed to 2021 due to the ongoing pandemic. Haven't even heard about it? Here's your chance to find out more...



England Test captain Joe Root.

WHAT IS THE HUNDRED?

The brainchild of the England and Wales Cricket Board, The Hundred, as the name suggests, is a new 100 ball cricket tournament. With eight city-based women's and men's teams competing over five weeks during the English summer, the tournament is set to feature world-class players from across the world. Each innings in a match comprises 100 deliveries (as opposed to 120 legal deliveries in a T20 innings). With bowlers bowling either five or 10 consecutive balls, the fielding sides change ends after 10 balls (as opposed to a traditional 6-ball over). With 65 minutes per innings and a 15 minute break in between, each match is set to last less than 2.5 hours.

WHEN IS IT TAKING PLACE?

The first season of The Hundred was scheduled to take place in 2020. But like everything else in the sporting calendar, The Hundred too has been postponed. The launch of this tournament is now expected in 2021. The eight teams that are to compete in this tournament have been created and the squads are to be made up of upto 15 players. The men's teams were selected using a Draft system in October 2019, while the women's teams had their own selection process. The ongoing pandemic, however, has led to players' contracts being cancelled.

IS THERE AN INDIAN CONNECT?

Not directly, but there are a few indirect ones.

Former South African cricketer Gary Kirsten (right), who was India's coach when the side won the 2011 ODI World Cup, was named as the men's coach of the Welsh Fire team.



Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan-owned Indian Premier League side Kolkata Knight Riders have been linked with the tournament. "I know this story is going around. All I said was 'if we are approached to consider investing in 'The Hundred', we will evaluate it,'" KKR CEO Venky Mysore (left) said. KKR owns Caribbean Premier League side Trinbago Knight Riders and also acquired the Cape Town franchise in Cricket South Africa's Global T20 League, which didn't take off. "We are the biggest brand in IPL and perhaps the only global brand in cricket. So we can understand why leagues around the world would be interested in getting Knight Riders on board," Mysore added.

