

1. GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION TAG FOR RASAGULLA

The battle between West Bengal and Odisha for the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for the rasgulla has finally reached a conclusion, and it's West Bengal that has emerged victorious.



What is a Geographical Indication (GI) tag?

A name or sign used on certain products which coincides to a specific geographical location or origin is a **geographical indication (GI)**. The purpose of a geographical indication may act as admittance that the product possesses certain attributes, is made according to traditional methods, or enjoys a certain prominence due to its geographical origin.

Who accords and regulates GI tags?

Geographical Indications are covered as a component of intellectual property rights (IPRs) under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property. At the International level, GI is governed by World Trade Organisation's (WTO's) Agreement on *Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)*. In India, Geographical Indications registration is administered by the Geographical Indications of goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 which came into force with effect from September 2003. The first product in India to be accorded with GI tag was **Darjeeling tea**.

For what type of products can geographical indications be used?

Geographical indications are typically used for agricultural products, foodstuffs, wine and spirit drinks, handicrafts, and industrial products.

Significance of GI Tag

A geographical indication right facilitates those who have the right to use the indication to prohibit its usage by a third party whose product does not conform to the applicable standards. For example, in the purview in which the Darjeeling geographical indication is protected, producers of Darjeeling tea can omit the term "Darjeeling" for tea not grown in their tea gardens or not produced according to the norms set out in the code of practice for the geographical indication. However, a protected geographical indication does not permit the holder to forbid someone from making a product using the same approaches as those set out in the standards for that indication. Protection for a geographical indication is usually procured by acquiring a right over the sign that constitutes the indication.

2. US APPROVES FIRST PILL WITH DIGITAL TRACKING DEVICE



- ✚ US regulators have approved the first pill that contains a digital tracking sensor to alert doctors and caregivers as to whether a patient is taking the medication as scheduled.
- ✚ The pill, called **Abilify MyCite (aripiprazole tablets with sensor)**, is designed for patients with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and depression, according to the US Food and Drug Administration.
- ✚ A patient ingests the pill, and a sensor inside the pill activates when it reaches the stomach fluids, sending a message to a wearable patch.
- ✚ This patch then transmits the information to a mobile app, so that a doctor and up to four caregivers, friends or family members can see the information through a web-based portal.

3. POST-DOKLAM, INDIA ASSERTS ITSELF IN CHINA'S BACKYARD

- ✚ Displaying convergence of interests with the new quadrilateral grouping with U.S., Japan and Australia, India reached out to China's backyard, addressing an array of issues ranging from the tension in the Korean peninsula to freedom of navigation and sought a crackdown on chemical weapons during the ASEAN and the East Asia summits.
- ✚ New Delhi has emerged as a more dependable partner for South-East Asia following the Doklam faceoff with China, and the South-East Asian countries expect New Delhi to be assertive.
- ✚ The North Korean nuclear missiles are not just problematic for the U.S., but for the entire world, as Pyongyang's missiles are capable of hitting targets in different parts of the world.
- ✚ India remains concerned about China's manmade structures in the South China Sea that are likely to create navigational problems and international friction .
- ✚ India also pushed for a total ban on chemical weapons in the region and for an end to terrorist financing. The agreements on terror financing, chemical weapons and de-radicalisation adopted at the East Asia Summit will help the region cope with the threat of terrorism effectively in future.

EAST ASIA SUMMIT



It is a forum of East Asian, South East Asian and South Asian nations.

The aims and purposes of ASEAN are:

1. To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavours in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian Nations;
2. To promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter;
3. To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative fields;
4. To provide assistance to each other in the form of training and research facilities in the educational, professional, technical and administrative spheres;
5. To collaborate more effectively for the greater utilisation of their agriculture and industries, the expansion of their trade, including the study of the problems of international commodity trade, the improvement of their transportation and communications facilities and the raising of the living standards of their peoples;
6. To promote Southeast Asian studies; and
7. To maintain close and beneficial cooperation with existing international and regional organisations with similar aims and purposes, and explore all avenues for even closer cooperation among themselves.

18 members :

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| A)10 ASEAN nations | B) China |
| C) Japan | D)South Korea |
| E)Australia | F) New Zealand |
| G)India | H) Russia |
| I) USA | |

4. CANADA URGES WTO DEAL ON E-COM, SMES

Canada will pitch for a global deal to boost trade involving e-commerce and Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) besides norms that will help eliminate gender barriers to trade, at the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) Ministerial Conference to be held at Buenos Aires, Argentina The Ministerial Conference is the WTO's highest decision-making body.

Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIPPA)

- ✚ The agreement is aimed at accelerating investment flow between the two countries (INDIA and CANADA) and provide a "new impetus" to bilateral economic ties.
- ✚ The agreement will protect investors by defining their legally binding rights and obligations
- ✚ It would give a new impetus to Indo-Canada economic relations
- ✚ The agreement once implemented will fulfill a key demand of businesses in the two countries.

5. TAJ TRAPEZIUM ZONE (TTZ)

Taj Trapezium Zone (TTZ) is a defined area of 10,400 sq km around the Taj Mahal to protect the monument from pollution. The Supreme Court of India delivered a ruling on December 30, 1996 regarding industries covered under the TTZ, in response to a PIL seeking to protect the Taj Mahal from environmental pollution. It banned the use of coal/ coke in industries located in the TTZ with a mandate for switching over from coal/ coke to natural gas, and relocating them outside the TTZ or shutting down. The TTZ comprises over 40 protected monuments including three World Heritage Sites - the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort and Fatehpur Sikri. TTZ is so named since it is located around the Taj Mahal and is shaped like a trapezoid.



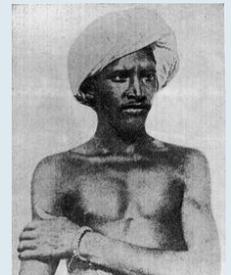
6. NCR STATES MUST GO ODD-EVEN: DELHI

Govt. files fresh application after NGT asked it for 'one scientific reason' for exemption of two-wheelers

- ✚ The Delhi government submitted a fresh application before the National Green Tribunal (NGT) asking it to direct neighbouring States to implement the odd-even scheme as well.
- ✚ The government had withdrawn the review petition that it filed , seeking a modification of the Tribunal's orders of not exempting two-wheelers and women drivers from the car-rationing scheme.
- ✚ The green panel rapped the government and asked for "one scientific reason" as to why two-wheelers should be included in the list of exempted vehicles considering both the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) had submitted that two-wheelers are a major pollutant.
- ✚ Further, the Tribunal directed the State government to select one highly polluted area in the Capital and start sprinkling of water.
- ✚ Sprinkling of water
- ✚ "If the pollution levels are still high, how are we supposed to alter our previous order?" asked the Bench.
- ✚ Land unavailable
- ✚ In its plea, Delhi government said it was not able to procure sufficient number of buses due to unavailability of land for construction of depots. The problem of shortage of public transport will be largely addressed within one year, after which the two wheelers and the women drivers can be included in the non-exempted categories.

7. BIRSA MUNDA

- ✚ Birsa Munda was an Indian freedom fighter and a tribal leader who revolted against the British rule. He was a visionary who played a crucial role in liberation of his community(Mundas), the tribal people, who were exposed to persistent dominance by the British exploitative policies and atrocities.



- ✚ His own experiences as a young boy, when he traveled from one place to another in search of work provided him with an understanding of different matters from which the community was suffering due to the British oppression. After realizing the fact that the British company arrived in India to torture the people and carry the wealth abroad, he started spreading awareness to expose the agenda of British and gathered his army of tribals.
- ✚ The army responded with movements and protests against the injustice and treachery of the British Raj. He was an active participant in the revolt and is remembered as a relentless fighter who possessed the courage to fight the British.

8. NATIONAL BIOPHARMA MISSION

The National Biopharma Mission has been launched by the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology. This is an Industry-Academia mission to accelerate biopharmaceutical development in India. This Mission for Accelerating Discovery Research to Early Development for Biopharmaceuticals – “**Innovate in India (i3)**” **Empowering biotech entrepreneurs & accelerating inclusive innovation** will be implemented at a total cost of Rs. 1500 crore for a period of five years and 50% of the grant will be arranged through the **World Bank loan**.

The following are the objectives of the Mission:

- i. Development of products from leads that are at advanced stages in the product development lifecycle and relevant to the public health.
- ii. Strengthening and establishing shared infrastructure facilities for both product discovery validation and manufacturing.
- iii. Developing human capital by providing specific training to address the critical skills gaps in researchers, nascent biotech companies across the product development value chain, including in business plan development and market penetration.
- iv. Creating and enhancing technology transfer and intellectual property management capacities and capabilities in public and private sector.

The Mission Programme of Department of Biotechnology, will be implemented by **Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC)** a Public Sector Undertaking of the Department. BIRAC as an umbrella Product Development Partnership (PDP) would facilitate this program by bringing together partners through existing frameworks for specific program goals and would facilitate this program by involving established organizations with relevant expertise in product development.

- ✚ For instance, life expectancy at birth in the country improved significantly during 1990 to 2016 — from 59.7 years and 58.3 years for females and males respectively in 1990 to 70.3 years for females and 66.9 years for males in 2016.
- ✚ But in a measure of the continuing inequalities, life expectancy for females in Uttar Pradesh was 66.8 years — below the national average and 12 years less than in Kerala, where it was 78.7 years. Again, men in Kerala enjoyed a life expectancy of 73.8 years, but the corresponding figure for men in Assam was 63.6 years. The study found that while under-5 mortality was improving in every State, there was a four-fold difference in the rate of improvement among States, which again indicated health inequalities.
- ✚ The per person burden from many of the leading infectious and non-communicable diseases varies 5-10 times between different States and malnutrition continues to be the single largest risk for health loss in India, which is higher among females and is particularly severe in the empowered action group States [Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand] and Assam.
- ✚ The report was prepared under the India State-level Disease Burden Initiative, and published in the *Lancet*.

10. ANDHRA PRADESH IS HOSTING ITS FIRST EVER HOT-AIR BALLOON FESTIVAL

Araku Valley Festival has a line-up of 16 balloons from 13 countries

- ✚ Araku Valley in Andhra Pradesh will see its first-ever international balloon festival
- ✚ **Araku Valley** is a Hill station in Visakhapatnam district in the state of Andhra Pradesh in India.
- ✚ It is a valley in the Eastern Ghats inhabited by different tribes.
- ✚ It is located 114 kilometres (71 mi) from Visakhapatnam, close to the Odisha state border.
- ✚ **The Anantagiri and Sunkarimetta Reserved Forest** which are part of Araku Valley, are rich in biodiversity and is mined for bauxite.
- ✚ Galikonda hill rising to a height of 5,000 feet (1,500 m) is amongst the highest peaks in Andhra Pradesh. The average rainfall is 1,700 millimetres (67 in), **bulk of which is received during June–October.**

11. 11.BURDEN OF DISEASE SHIFTS TO NON-COMMUNICABLE AILMENTS

- ✚ **Shift from infectious diseases spurred by unhealthy diets, pollution, high blood pressure**
- ✚ The 'India **State Level Disease Burden**' report, prepared as part of the Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2016, and published in Lancet , has found that every State in India has a higher burden from non-communicable diseases and injuries than from infectious diseases.
- ✚ The study used multiple data sources to map State-level disease burden from 333 disease conditions and injuries, and 83 risk factors for each State from 1990 to 2016. The contribution of non-communicable diseases to health loss — fuelled by unhealthy diets, high blood pressure, and blood sugar — has doubled in India over the past two decades. Air pollution and tobacco smoking continue to be major contributors to health loss.

Specific plans needed

- ✚ Many Indian States are bigger than most countries in the world. It is necessary to plan health interventions based on the specific disease burden situation of each State, many of which are no less than nations within a nation, if the existing major health inequalities between the States have to be reduced. This requires availability of the best possible disease burden and risk factors estimates for each state based on all available data using a standardized framework
- ✚ These estimates are now provided in three complementary outputs: the report, the technical paper, and the open-access visualisation tool. Discussion with policy makers suggests that these findings will be useful for planning of State health budgets, prioritisation of interventions relevant to each State, informing the government's Health Assurance Mission, monitoring of health-related Sustainable Development Goals targets in each State, assessing impact of large-scale interventions based on time trends of disease burden, and forecasting population health under various scenarios in each State.
- ✚ The report, which provides the first comprehensive set of State-level disease burden data, risk factors estimates, and trends for each State in India, is expected to inform health planning with a view toward reducing health inequalities among States.