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Research Journal of Agricultural Sciences
An International Journal

P- ISSN: 0976-1675

E- ISSN: 2249-4538

Volume: 13

Issue: 04

Res. Jr. of Agril. Sci. (2022) 13: 1051–1054



CARAS



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Shamim Alam¹, Sandipan Chatterjee² and Anirban Paul*³

Received: 03 Apr 2022 | Revised accepted: 14 Jul 2022 | Published online: 17 July 2022
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ABSTRACT

Geographical indication (GI) is an important type of Intellectual Property Rights. In the last two decades it has emerged as a significant tool that provides the right to use the indication for the product to their manufacturers or producers from any particular region. The GI of any particular product provides them the legal right to ban the use of the name or sign which doesn't have certain qualities and characteristics. There were 417 registered GI products in India including 390 Indian products and 27 foreign products till 31st March, 2022. Darjeeling Tea of West Bengal was the first product that was registered under GI in India in 2004-05. Among 390 Indian GI products 22 are from West Bengal. The present paper analyses the plant-based registered GI products of West Bengal starting from Darjeeling Tea to Dalle Khursani. The raw material of Darjeeling tea is the leaves of *Camellia sinensis* var. *sinensis*. Dalle Khursani is a round shaped chili which is one of the hottest chilies in the world belonging to the plant genus *Capsicum* has recently been given GI tag in 2021-22.

Key words: *Camellia sinensis*, Foodstuff, Geographical indication, Handicrafts, Intellectual property

Geographical Indication (GI) is a sign used on goods that have a particular geographical origin and assured quality [1]. A milestone was reached when World Trade Organization (WTO) through Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) had granted goods to retain its essence of the land by allowing attaching a geographical indication to goods having specialty from the place of origin [2]. In India, the first specific law that provides for the registration and protection of GI came in the form of Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act in 1999. The GI of Goods Act came into force on 15th September 2003 [3]. For the first time the Government of India under this act has established the GI Registry office at Chennai under the Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks. Thus, GI is an IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) which provides the recognition and protection to community for well-known, place specific natural or man-made products as the goods as per sec 2(f) of the GI Act 1999 by GI Registry in India [4]. It acts as an effective tool in protecting and rewarding not only the market potential of elite items but also the traditional knowledge associated with them. It is the exclusive right that producers have to use the indication for their products originating from that particular region. In other words, they have the legal right to prohibit any unauthorized use of the sign on a product that is not from that particular area or which does not have the assured qualities guaranteed by the GI [5].

There were 417 registered GI products in India including 390 Indian products and 27 foreign products till 31st March, 2022. GIs have been tagged in West Bengal for a wide variety of products. Among 390 Indian GI products 22 are from West Bengal [6]. Darjeeling Tea of West Bengal was the first product that was registered under GI in India in 2004-05 [7]. The latest product that has registered GI Tag from West Bengal is the Dalle Khursani. It is one of the hottest red chilies in the World exclusively grown in Darjeeling and Kalimpong district of West Bengal as well as in Sikkim state. Both Sikkim and West Bengal jointly got GI tag on it [6]. The present paper provides an overview of the current scenario of GI products of West Bengal with its plant based raw materials.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study area of the present paper is West Bengal which extends from 27°13'15"N to 21°25'24"N latitude and 85°48'20"E to 89°53'04"E longitude. It is located in Eastern India and is the 4th most populous state in India. The total area is 88,752 km² out of which 11,879 km² (13.38%) is under forest coverage. Its Landforms are very diverse kind having mountains, plateaus, hills, plains as well as sandy coastal area. West Bengal has everything- a state needs to flourish. West Bengal is bound by the Himalayas, Sikkim state and Bhutan in the north; Bay of Bengal in the south; Odisha in the southwest; Jharkhand and Bihar in the West; Nepal in the northwest; Assam in the northeast and Bangladesh in the West. The average normal rainfall for the state is 1830mm [8].

The present paper aims to study the plant-based GI products of West Bengal based on secondary data collected from journals, magazines, newspaper articles, Govt. reports and

* **Anirban Paul**

✉ ourpublications2022@gmail.com

¹⁻³ Department of Botany, Suri Vidyasagar College, Suri, Birbhum - 731 101, West Bengal, India

GI Registry Office, Chennai. The statistical analysis was performed through Microsoft Excel vs. 2013.

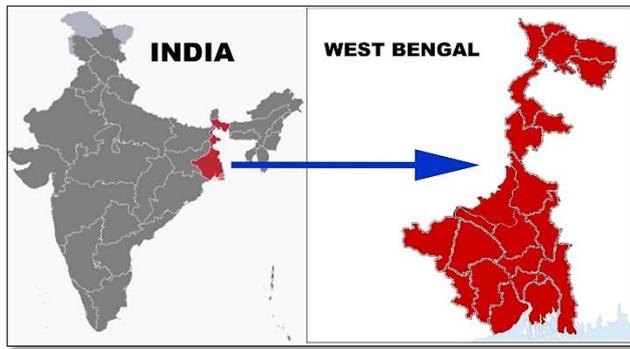


Fig 1 Location map of West Bengal

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are five categories under which 390 Indian products and 27 foreign products were registered under GI till

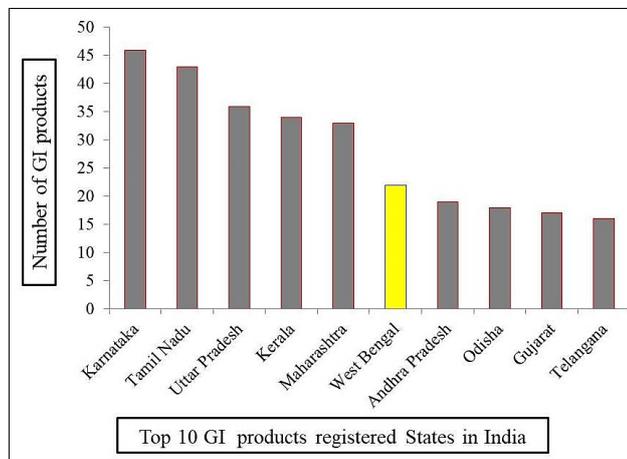


Fig 2 Top 10 GI products registered States in India (<https://.ipindia.gov.in/registered-gis.htm>)

31st March, 2022; namely, handicraft products, agricultural products, foodstuff, manufactured products and natural goods. There were 376 products or goods of which each one was registered under GI by any one single state in India and rest 14 products were registered jointly by two or more states in India [6].

It has been revealed from the histogram (Fig 2) that, in India, maximum 46 GI products were registered by the state Karnataka followed by Tamil Nadu (43), Uttar Pradesh (36), Kerala (34), Maharashtra (33), West Bengal (22), Andhra Pradesh (19), Odisha (18), Gujarat (17) and Telangana (16). Here, West Bengal has the 6th largest. number of GIs [6].

Plant-based GI products of West Bengal

Plants have a dominant role regarding the raw materials of different GI registered goods. It has been revealed that 22 different types of products of West Bengal were registered and received GI tag (Table 1) and majority of the products are from Handicraft goods (50%) such as Nakshi Kantha, Santiniketan Leather Goods, Santipore saree, Baluchari saree, Dhaniakhali saree and so on (Table 1, Fig 3).

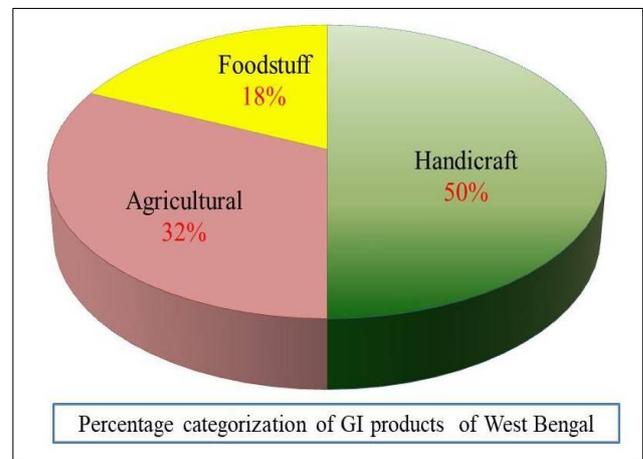


Fig 3 Different categories of GI products of West Bengal (<https://.ipindia.gov.in/registered-gis.htm>)

Table 1 Distribution and raw materials of registered GI products of West Bengal

| Name of GI | Type of goods (As per Sec 2(f) of GI Act 1999) | Region | Plant-based Raw materials |
|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| Darjeeling Tea (word and logo) | Agricultural | Darjeeling and Kalimpong district | It is made from the leaves of the plant <i>Camellia sinensis var. sinensis</i> of the family Theaceae [9]. |
| Nakshi Kantha | Handicraft | Hooghly district | The raw materials are thread and old cloth. |
| Santiniketan Leather Goods | Handicraft | Santiniketan, Birbhum district | Raw materials: Paper board, cotton, velvet or silk for lining, foam rubber, natural dyes etc. |
| Malda Laxman Bhog Mango | Agricultural | Malda district | It is a mango cultivar of the plant <i>Mangifera Indica</i> of the family Anacardiaceae cultivated in orchards along the bank of Kalindi river [10]. |
| Malda Khirsapati (Himsagar) Mango | Agricultural | Malda district | It is the most popular mango cultivar of the plant <i>Mangifera Indica</i> of the family Anacardiaceae [10]. |
| Malda Fazli Mango | Agricultural | Malda district | It is a late maturing, long fruit bearing mango cultivar of the plant <i>Mangifera indica</i> of the family Anacardiaceae [10]. |
| Santipore Saree | Handicraft | Shantipur, Nadia district | Traditional materials used in this Saree are cotton and silk. |

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|---|--|
| Baluchari Saree | Handicraft | Bishnupur, Bankura district | <i>Morus indica</i> plant used for production of raw silk through cocoon of silkworm. |
| Dhaniakhali Saree | Handicraft | Dhaniakhali, Hooghly district | Raw material of this saree is cotton. It is a saree with 100 by 100 cotton thread count. |
| Joynagar Moa | Foodstuff | Jaynagar, South 24 Parganas | Raw materials are jaggery of date palm plant (<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i>), kanakchur khoi (an aromatic cultivar of <i>Oryza sativa</i>), seeds of opium poppy (<i>Papaver somniferum</i>) and Cardamom spice made from seeds of the plant <i>Elettaria cardamomum</i> [11]. |
| Bardhaman Sitabhog | Foodstuff | Burdwan city, Purba Bardhaman district | It is a type of sweet made from cottage cheese (Chhana), rice flour and sugar. |
| Bardhaman Mihidana | Foodstuff | Burdwan city, Purba Bardhaman district | It is a type of sweet made from Powdered Kaminibhog, Gobindobhog and Basmati rice; Saffron, Ghee, sugar etc. |
| Gobindobhog Rice | Agricultural | Purba Bardhaman, Hooghly, Nadia and Birbhum district | It is a short-grained and scented aromatic variety of rice (<i>Oryza sativa</i>) popularly cultivated in various parts of West Bengal [12]. |
| Tulapanji Rice | Agricultural | Raiganj subdivision of North Dinajpur district | It is also an aromatic variety of rice (<i>Oryza sativa</i>). |
| Banglar Rasogolla | Foodstuff | Kolkata and Other districts | The raw materials of rasogolla are chhana made from cow milk and sugar made from the plant <i>Saccharum officinarum</i> . |
| Bankura Panchmura Terracotta Craft | Handicraft | Bankura district | These terracotta crafts are coloured with the clay itself and burnt in kilns with the help of dry <i>Eucalyptus</i> tree leaves. |
| Bengal Dokra | Handicraft | Dariyapur of Ausgram-1 block in Purba Bardhaman district and Bikna in Bankura district | The lost-wax casting technique is used for making Dokra handicraft. The outer structure is prepared by mixing wax, resin (Dhuno) extracted from Sal tree (<i>Shorea robusta</i>) and mustered oil extracted from plant genus <i>Brassica</i> (Brassicaceae) [13]. |
| Bengal Patachitra | Handicraft | Birbhum, Jhargram (Nayagram of Pingla Block), Purba and Paschim Medinipur, Purba Bardhaman, Murshidabad and Kolkata (Kalighat) district | Different Plant sources are used to extract natural colors used in Bengal patachitra: Such as rhizome of turmeric plant (<i>Curcuma longa</i>) for yellow color, petals of <i>Clitoria ternatea</i> or indigo (<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i>) plant for blue; mature leaves and new leaves of teak plant (<i>Tectona grandis</i>) for Brown and Red color respectively [14]. |
| Purulia Chau Mask | Handicraft | Purulia district | The wide eyed chhau masks are made of pulp, painted with indigenous colours and decorated with peacock feathers, gold and silver embroidery and Jute fibre from the plant <i>Corchorus capsularis</i> (Malvaceae) to make knitted eyebrows and thick hairs [15]. |
| Wooden Mask of Kushmandi | Handicraft | Kushmandi block, South Dinajpur district | The Gamhar wood of the plant <i>Gmelina arborea</i> (Lamiaceae) is used for making this wooden mask for Gomira dance festival of Desi and Poli tribes of Rajbanshi community [16]. |
| Madur kathi | Handicraft | Purba Medinipur and Paschim Medinipur district | It is a floor mat made from the mat sedge plant <i>Cyperus tegetum</i> or <i>Cyperus tegetiformis</i> of the family Cyperaceae [17]. |
| Dalle Khursani | Agricultural | Darjeeling district | It is round shaped, one of the hottest chilies in the world belonging to the plant genus <i>Capsicum</i> (<i>Capsicum annuum</i> and <i>Capsicum frutescens</i>) [18]. |

The 2nd most number of GI products registered from West Bengal are from agricultural goods (31.82%) like Darjeeling tea, Malda Fazli mango, Gobindobhog rice, Tulapanji rice, Dalle Khursani etc. Joynagar Moa, Bardhaman Sitabhog, Bardhaman Mihidana, Banglar Rasogolla are the main products that were registered under GI in the Foodstuff (18.18%) category. The detailed analysis of their categories, plant-based raw materials and origin are discussed above (Table 1).

CONCLUSION

A Geographical Indication tag is a matter of pride for the people of any region. The climate of West Bengal has a wide range of weather conditions across a vast geographical area and

varied topography. Thus, being the source of different types of vegetation and varied cultural diversity it encourages to grow different types of agricultural products, various handicrafts and numerous varieties of food products in different parts of the state. Among various different products only 22 products so far have been registered under GI. And the raw materials of each product are based on different plants starting from initially registered product i.e., 'Darjeeling Tea' to Dalle Khursani, the latest and 22nd registered product.

Acknowledgements

The authors are thankful to the Head, Department of Botany and Principal, Suri Vidyasagar College, Suri, Birbhum for sharing valuable information facilities and moral support for the work.

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