



GI TAG FOR ALPHONSO FROM KONKAN¹

Alphonso from Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Palghar, Thane and Raigad districts of Maharashtra, is registered as Geographical Indication (GI). A Geographical Indication or a GI is an indication used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. Such a name conveys an assurance of quality and distinctiveness which is essentially attributable to its origin in that defined geographical locality. Darjeeling Tea, Mahabaleshwar Strawberry, Blue Pottery of Jaipur, Banarasi Sarees and Tirupati Laddus are some of the GIs.

GI products can benefit the rural economy in remote areas, by supplementing the incomes of artisans, farmers, weavers and craftsmen. Our rural artisans possess unique skills and knowledge of traditional practices and methods, passed down from generation to generation, which need to be protected and promoted.

Recently, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Suresh Prabhu, launched the logo and tagline for the Geographical Indications (GI) of India and said that the GI will give the rightful share in the intellectual property to the artisan and the place of origin of the product. He emphasised that it's an area of strength and optimism for India, whereby GI tag has given protection to a large number of hand-made and manufactured products, especially in the informal sector.

The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion has taken several initiatives in this regard and is actively involved in promotion and marketing of GIs with a vision to enhance the horizon both socially and economically for GI producers.

The king of mangoes, Alphonso, better known as 'Hapus' in Maharashtra, is in demand in domestic and international markets not only for its taste but also for pleasant fragrance and vibrant colour. It has long been one of the world's most popular fruit and is exported to various countries including Japan, Korea and Europe. New markets such as USA and Australia have recently opened up.

The first product to get a GI tag in India was the Darjeeling tea in 2004. There are a total of 325 products from India that carry this indication.

SEZ POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE HOLDS FINAL MEETING IN NEW DELHI²

The SEZ Policy Review Committee, headed by Baba Kalyani, met in New Delhi. This was the final round of consultations with the committee members under the chairmanship of the Commerce Secretary. The group held its first meeting on 22nd June this year under the chairmanship of Commerce & Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu. Subsequently, the group met again on 9th July and 20th August, 2018.

The objective of the Committee was to evaluate the SEZ policy framed in 2000 and suggest measures to make the policy WTO compatible, give suggestions which will encourage manufacturing and services sector and lead to maximizing utilization of vacant land in SEZs and create seamlessness between SEZ policy and other schemes like Coastal Economic Zone, Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, National Industrial Manufacturing Zone, Food Parks and Textile Parks.

The Committee held extensive discussions with representatives of Government of India and states. The changes in the macro-economic environment in India required a re-look at the SEZ Policy framework so that focus is on enabling generation of 100 million jobs in the manufacturing sector,

¹ Available at: <http://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1548736>

² Available at: <http://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1548736>

manufacturing competitiveness within the framework of WTO rules, bringing in services sectors like health care, financial and legal services, repair and design services under SEZs.

The Committee was of the opinion that SEZ should now transform into “Employment and Economic Enclaves” (3Es) which will be an integrated ecosystem that focuses on ease of doing business, quality and infrastructure in order to reduce costs.

The group will submit its final report soon.

Team ICSI

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