



Review Article

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION (GI) TAG AND UTTARAKHAND STATE: AN OVERVIEW

Mahendra Singh¹, D.S. Parihar², Sana Rafi^{1*} and Deepak³

¹Department of Geography, HNB Garhwal University, SRT Campus, Tehri, Uttarakhand, India.

²Department of Geography, Kumaun University, DSB Campus, Nainital, Uttarakhand, India.

³Centre of Excellence for NRDMS in Uttarakhand, SSJ University and Campus Almora, Uttarakhand, India.

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ABSTRACT

The Geographical Indication (GI) is a legal framework for protecting indigenous localized goods and products worldwide. In 1999, the government of India enacted the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, which came into force in 2003 to protect and regulate GIs. The present study aims to understand the current scenario of GI products in the state of Uttarakhand. To achieve this, the data of Geographical Indication (GI) registered goods has been obtained from the official website of the Department for Promotion of Industries and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. Additionally, relevant literature and photo plates have been utilized. Uttarakhand Tejpat was the first product from Uttarakhand to be awarded the GI tag in 2016. At present, 26 products from the state have been registered as GIs by the GI Registry of India. These registered commodities belong to four different categories: agriculture (15), handicraft (09), food stuff (01), and manufactured (01) goods. The present study provides a detailed description of GI tag goods of the State that will help the entrepreneur in identifying and naming goods for GIs. The study suggests that the government of Uttarakhand should lead the entrepreneurs of the State to get GI tag of indigenous and unique goods.

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INTRODUCTION

Nature has awarded some special importance or uniqueness to every region of the world in terms of Art, Culture and Craft of human beings living over there, i.e., all the regions of the globe have their own uniqueness and identity attributed by the prevailing local geographical conditions of that particular region. The specialty and uniqueness in the goods/product of a particular region comes from its natural environment which makes it different from goods of other regions in terms of quality and other characteristics. A region also gets famous based on a particular product of that region (Ahmed and Camble, 2021). Geographical Indication (GI) is a recognition given to particular products/goods related to a specific geographical region, i.e., GI is the identification and certification of a specified region's products, handicrafts and others. However, GI and other intellectual property rights are two different things. GI is attributed to goods/services of a particular region which allows all the entrepreneurs to produce

the said product of that specified region. On the other hand, intellectual property right is a sign assigned to an entrepreneur/enterprise which is the single user of that right to distinguish his/her product from others. Thus, GI is related to a specific region whereas intellectual property is related to entrepreneurs/enterprises (Chintala et al., 2021). Patil (2021) has emphasized the importance of geographical indications (GIs) and has also put light on difficulties faced in getting GI registered by tribal communities in India.

At present, internationally, GIs are regulated by Article 22 of the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS, 1994) Agreement sanctioned by World Trade Organization (WTO). This defines GI as, "indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a member, or a region or locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or other characteristics of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin". The member countries are responsible to protect all GIs through enacting respect acts and legalize the certain identity of particular local products. Few studies are available related to Geographical Indicator across the world, e.g., Bagade and Metha (2014) defined GI and its conceptual framework, Manjunatha (2016) studied and analyzed the current status of GIs in an Indian state, viz., Karnataka, Yadav et al., (2018) described the GI framework and the process of

*Corresponding author: **Sana Rafi**

Department of Geography, HNB Garhwal University, SRT Campus, Tehri, Uttarakhand, India

registration of goods as GI tag, Mir and Ain (2010) discussed different goods which could be considered for GI registration under the handicraft category, Bowen and Zapata (2009) correlated the certification of GIs and sustainable development in Mexico, Zhao et al., (2014) studied the GIs of Chinese agro-food supported by Chinese Government for increasing farmers income, Venkatesh and Kumarasamy (2015) studied the problem of handloom industry and emphasis on the need of GI for handloom industry.

Globally, about 55800 goods were registered as GI tags in 2019. The maximum GIs were registered in Germany (14289) followed by China (7834) and Hungary (6494) (Chintala and Gyanendra, 2020). In India, for the protection and regulation of GIs, the government of India enacted Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act in 1999 when an American company prepares a patent of Basmati rice in USA, this act came into force in 2003. Since the introduction of the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, several products from various regions in India have been granted geographical indication status, e.g., Darjeeling tea was the first GI tag product of India registered in 2004 for its natural quality. Till now (i.e., August, 2023), India has total 504 products registered as GIs in the GI Registry of India which comprises of agriculture (161), handicrafts (266), foodstuff (25), manufactured (14) and natural (04) goods. Out of the total, 34 foreign goods/products from 14 different countries that have been also registered as GIs in India comprises of foodstuff (03), handicrafts (01), manufactured (30) goods. In India, Tamil Nadu (58 goods) state has the maximum number of GI tagged goods/products followed by Uttar Pradesh (54 goods) and Karnataka (45 goods) (MCI, 2023). The specific objective of the present study is to understand the present scenario of GI goods/products of Uttarakhand and also aims to identify the potential goods/products that could be registered as GI tags in the GI Registry of India. Overall, the Geographical Indication

in India aimed to protect the unique identity and qualities of products associated with specific regions, thereby supporting the economic interests of local producers and preserving traditional knowledge and skills. Singh et al., (2023) has studied the GI tag products of Uttarakhand state in detail. The basic objective of the research paper is to work out the GI registered goods of Uttarakhand state and elaborate them for ease of understanding of these indigenous goods/products.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study is based on primary and secondary data. The details of GI products of India as well as of the study area were collected from the official website of the Department for Promotion of Industries and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. The downloaded data has analyzed in MS excel and documented in MS word. The photographs of the existing GIs have collected from secondary sources.

STUDY AREA

The study area, viz., the Uttarakhand state extends between 77°34' to 81°02' E longitudes and 28°43' to 31°27' N latitudes and encompasses an area 53483 km² which accounts for 1.63% of the total geographical area of the country (Fig. 1). Out of the total geographical area, about 86% (i.e., 46035 km²) area falls under hilly region and the remaining 14% (i.e., 7448 km²) area falls under plain region. Administratively, the Uttarakhand state is divided into two commissionaires, 13 districts, 95 developmental blocks, 110 tehsils, 670 nayay panchayats, 7791 gram panchayats and 16793 revenue villages (DESDP, 2020). The state is bordered by Tibet and China in the north, Uttar Pradesh in the south, Himachal Pradesh in the west and Nepal in the east.

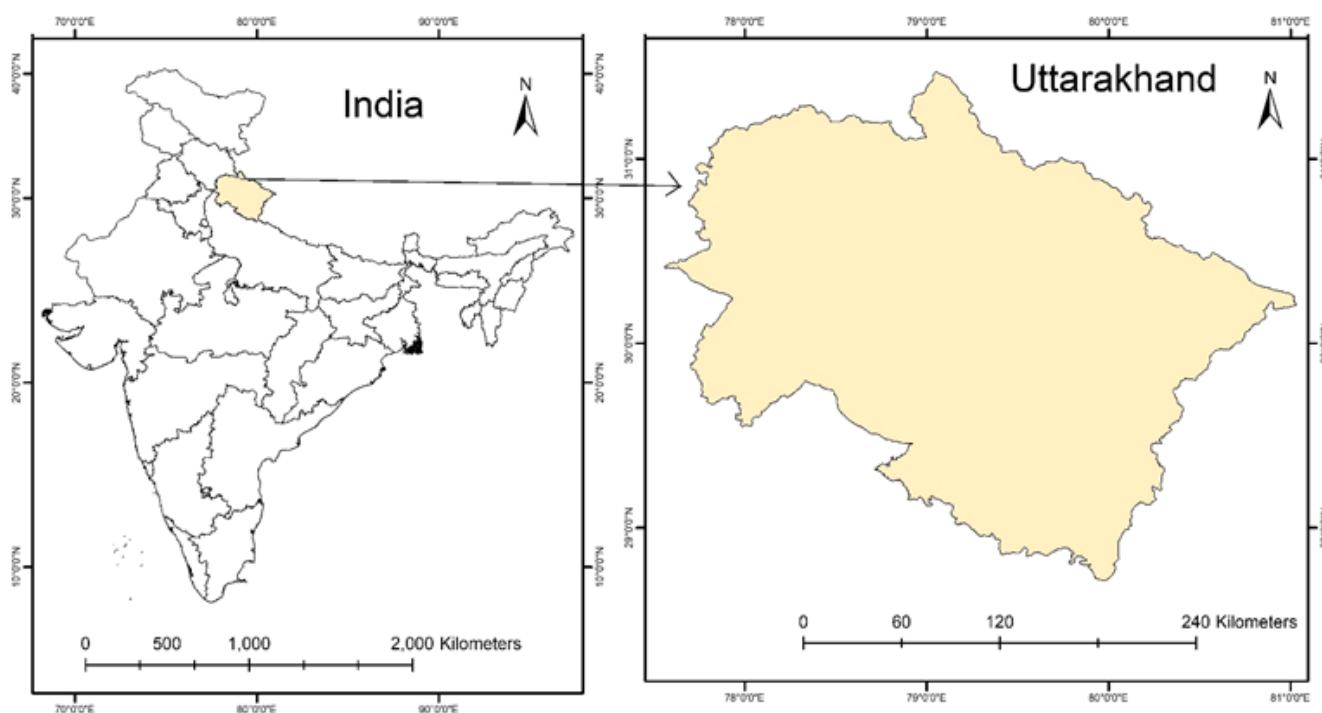


Fig.1 Location map of the study area, viz., the Uttarakhand State.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The Status of Geographical Indications in Uttarakhand

Uttarakhand State contributes only 5.15% of the total GI goods of the country. Uttarakhand Tejpat was the first Uttarakhand product that was awarded by GI tag in 2016. Till December, 2023, 26 products of the State, i.e., Uttarakhand Tejpat, Uttarakhand Aipan, Munsyari Razma, Uttarakhand Ringal Craft, Uttarakhand Tamta Product, Uttarakhand Thulma, Bhotia Dann and Kumaon Chyura Oil, Uttarakhand Chaulai, Uttarakhand Jhangora, Uttarakhand Red Rice, Uttarakhand Mandua, Almora Lakhori Chili, Berinag Tea, Ramnagar Nainital Litchi, Ramgarh Peach, Uttarakhand Malta, Pahari Tor, Uttarakhand Kala Bhat, Uttarakhand Gahat, Uttarakhand Nettle Febric, Kumaoni Coloured Pichhoda, Chamoli Wooden Ramman Mask, Wood Carving, Buransh Sharbat and Nainital Candle have been registered as GIs by the GI Registry of India. In 2023, Uttarakhand secured GI tags for 18 local products, making it the first state in India to achieve the highest number of GI certificates in a single day. These registered commodities belong to four different categories: agriculture (15) and handicraft goods (09), foodstuff (01), and manufactured (01) (Table-1). A brief description of these GI-tagged products is presented in the following paragraphs.

Uttarakhand Tejpat- Uttarakhand Tejpat (Plate-1A) was the first product from Uttarakhand to be awarded the GI tag in 2016. It is known by different names in various parts of the country. The botanical name of Tejpat is *Cinnamomum Tamala* which belongs to the Lauriaceae family and its occupational name is Indian bay leaf. This plant has also medicinal quality which is commonly found in the Uttarakhand Lesser Himalayan region between the elevation of 900 m to 2000 m. In the national and international market, this is also known as ‘meetha tejpat’ and this sweetness is due to the presence of Cinnamaldehyde. This is an evergreen forest which is helpful in soil and environment conservation as well. The leaves and bark of this tree are used for both kitchen and medicinal purposes. There is a global demand for Tejpat and related products, particularly in the European and North American countries.

Uttarakhand Aipan- Uttarakhand Aipan (Plate-1B) is a popular ritual folk art of the State made by girls and women, especially in the Kumaun region of the State. In Aipan different types of paintings of God, Goddess and other theme objects are drawn with white color on a red-coloured background board of paper, cloth, and wall on happy occasions such as festivals, marriage etc. This Aipan art is used to decorate a wall, worship place and threshold/entrance of the house.

Table 1 Details of GI-tagged products, their registration year and fields in the Uttarakhand state.

S.N.	Registration Year	Name of Product (GIs)	Field of Product	State
1	2016	Uttarakhand Tejpat	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
2	2021	Uttarakhand Aipan	Handicraft	Uttarakhand
3	2021	White Munsyari Razma	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
4	2021	Uttarakhand Ringal Craft	Handicraft	Uttarakhand
5	2021	Uttarakhand Tamta Product	Handicraft	Uttarakhand
6	2021	Uttarakhand Thulma	Handicraft	Uttarakhand
7	2021	Bhotia Dann	Handicraft	Uttarakhand
8	2021	Kumaon Chyura Oil	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
9	2023	Uttarakhand Chaulai	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
10	2023	Uttarakhand Jhangora	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
11	2023	Uttarakhand Red Rice	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
12	2023	Uttarakhand Mandua	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
13	2023	Almora Lakhori Chili	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
14	2023	Berinag Tea	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
15	2023	Ramnagar Nainital Litchi	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
16	2023	Ramgarh Peach	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
17	2023	Uttarakhand Malta	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
18	2023	Pahari Tor	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
19	2023	Uttarakhand Gahat	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
20	2023	Uttarakhand Kala Bhat	Agriculture	Uttarakhand
21	2023	Uttarakhand Nettle Febric	Handicraft	Uttarakhand

22	2023	Kumaoni Coloured Pichhoda	Handicraft	Uttarakhand
23	2023	Chamoli Wooden Ram-man Mask	Handicraft	Uttarakhand
24	2023	Wood Carving	Handicraft	Uttarakhand
25	2023	Buransh Sharbat	Food Stuff	Uttarakhand
26	2023	Nainital Candle	Manufactured	Uttarakhand

White Munsyari Razma- White Munsyari razma (Plate-1C) is named after Munsyari, a place located in the Development Block of the Pithoragarh district in the Uttarakhand State. The Munsyari razma is renowned for its delightful flavor and naturally occurring high protein content. This is a cash crop which is grown above an elevation of 2200 m by the villagers of Munsyari region. The Munsyari razma was awarded the GI tag in 2021 for its exceptional natural quality.

Uttarakhand Ringal Craft- The botanical name of Ringal is *Chimnobabusa falcate*. Ringal is a socio-economically important type of dwarf bamboo which is abundantly found in the Himalaya region of Uttarakhand. Ringal is an important natural resource which is crafted (Plate-1D) and used by local people in their day-to-day activities. Ringal weaving is a traditional craft of Uttarakhand almost all areas' people were directly involved in this work but globalization has affected this traditional indigenous art by providing substitute products which are also harmful to the fragile environment of the Himalayas. However, Ringal craft has been awarded by GI tag which will protect our traditional indigenous knowledge-based product and the fragile ecosystem of the Himalaya.

Uttarakhand Tamta Product- Since ancient times, the coppersmiths in the State are known as 'Tamta' and their crafted products are called Tamta products. Coppersmith uses copper ore for making varieties of Tamta products such as water filter,

utensils, musical instruments and so on (Plate-1E). Copper kitchen utensils are particularly popular for its health benefit. The Tamta products are also closely related with the cultural values of the region. Globalization has affected this indigenous knowledge-based small industry of the State. Although, the coppersmiths have updated their products as per the demand from the market but these goods are too expensive than the other available substitute products in the market. However, now Uttarakhand Tamta products have been protected under GI tag which will help in protecting indigenous knowledge-based eco-friendly technique and people will be aware of its health benefits.

Uttarakhand Thulma- Thulma (Plate-1F) is a kind of blanket which is woven with woolen threads using traditional throw fly shuttles. Generally, thulma were woven with uncoloured/undyed or white wool but the weavers have started woven thulma in different colours to meet the required demand of customers. Thulma is mainly woven by female weavers of the Bhotia community of Pithoragarh district. Thulma is mainly used in the very low/minus temperature of the higher Himalayas region to protect from extreme cold.

Bhotia Dann- Bhotia Dann (Plate-1G) is a unique hand-knotted carpet which is woven in the high altitude Himalayan region of Uttarakhand by the Bhotia community/tribe. These are woven with pure wool in traditional designs and themes of



A- Uttarakhand Tejpat



B- Uttarakhand Aipan



C- White Munsyari Razma



D- Uttarakhand Ringal Craft

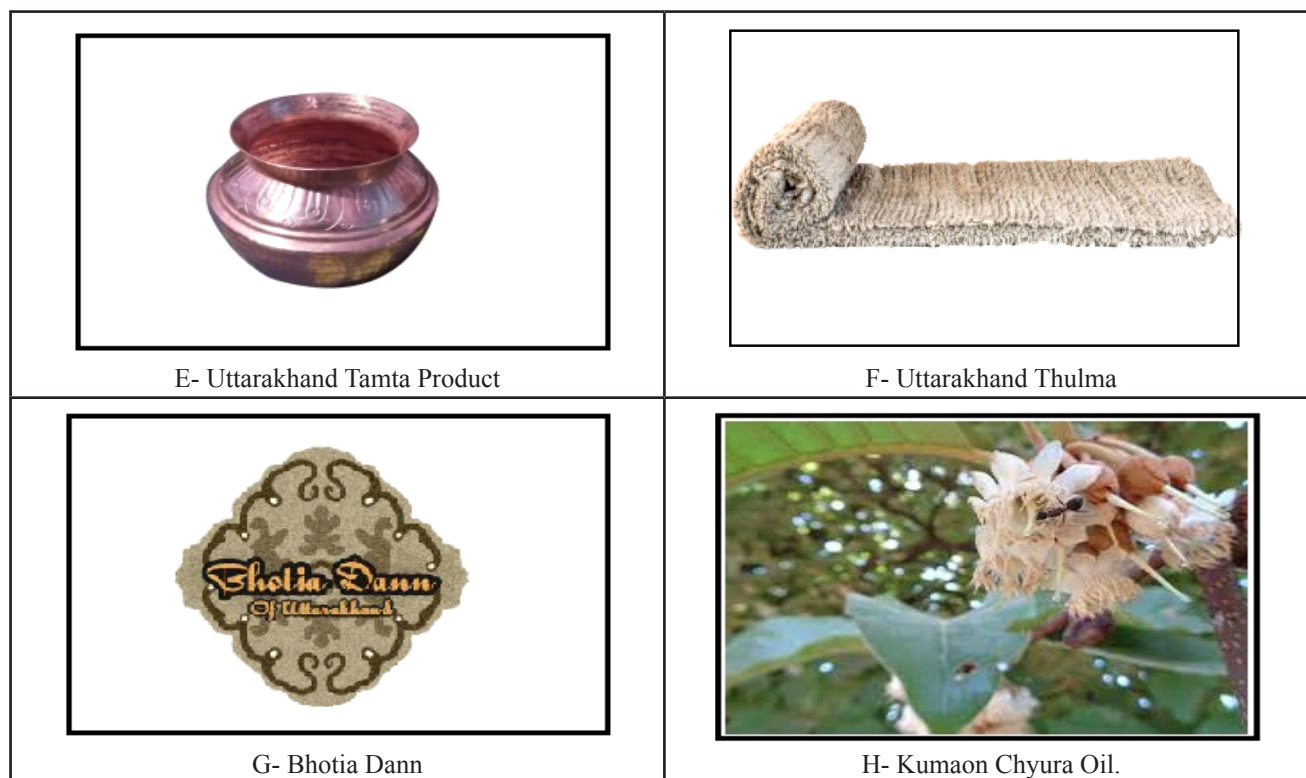


Plate 1. Typical examples of GI tagged products of Uttarakhand: A- Uttarakhand Tejpat, B- Uttarakhand Aipan, C- White Munsyari Razma, D- Uttarakhand Ringal Craft, E- Uttarakhand Tamta Product, F- Uttarakhand Thulma, G- Bhotia Dann and H- Kumaon Chyura Oil.

the Bhotia community. Basically, geometric patterns are used for dann's design to make it unique and attractive. Pure wool is obtained from sheep which are reared by this community at high altitudes. These products are highly durable with a life span of 20-40 years. The marketing of dann is limited to local people and traders. The registration of dann as a GI tag would help in branding, value addition, marketing and improving the socio-economic conditions of the local people.

Kumaon Chyura Oil- Chyura or Indian Butter Tree found extensively in the Himalayas which is economically important for the local people. Traditionally, this tree was also used for beekeeping by local inhabitants of the region. The Chyura tree provides various goods such as seeds for chyura oil, wood/timber for fuel and furniture, fodder for cattle and flower nectar for honey. The Chyura oil is extracted from chyura seeds (Plate-1H) using the traditional indigenous technique. The Chyura ghee and honey are also important products used in cosmetics, pharmaceutical and other sectors.

Uttarakhand Chaulai (Ramdana)- Chaulai is also known as Rajgira and its scientific name is *Amaranthus*. This is a versatile and nutritious agricultural product that has been cultivated for centuries in the State. Chaulai (Plate-2A) is a coarse grain and is also rich source of essential nutrients such as proteins and fiber. Its adaptability allows it to grow in hilly regions of the State, making it a valuable crop for the State with challenging agricultural conditions. In the study region, Chaulai is used as green vegetable and its seeds are used for making sweet dish known as Chaulai laddu. The resurgence of interest in ancient coarse grains and the recognition of their health benefits have contributed to the growing popularity of Chaulai as a sustainable and nutritious agricultural product.

Uttarakhand Jhangora- Jhangora is a famous coarse grain agricultural good produced in the entire State. The scientific name of Jhangora is *Echinochloa esculenta*, commonly known as barnyard millet. Jhangora (Plate-2B) is a versatile and nutritious coarse grain that has gained attention for its agricultural significance and potential as a food product. Jhangora is valued for its rapid growth and adaptability to various environmental conditions, making it a resilient crop in diverse agricultural settings. As a food product, Jhangora offers a range of nutritional benefits such as carbohydrates, proteins, and dietary fiber. The grain's versatility extends beyond direct consumption, as it can be processed into various food products, including flour for baking, rice substitutes, kheer and even fermented products. One of the notable characteristics of Jhangora is its ability to grow in less water availability region (Kaur and Sharma, 2020).

Uttarakhand Red Rice- Laal Chawal (Plate-2C), also known as Uttarakhand Red Rice, is cultivated organically in the Purola region of Uttarakhand. Renowned for its robust texture and nutty flavor, this highly nutritious rice owes its distinctive characteristics to the heavy rain in the high-altitude Himalayan valleys. Serving as a staple dish with its unique taste, Purola Red Rice is grown in the Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand and is recognized for its heart-friendly properties and benefits for diabetes management. Cultivated and harvested by farmers in Purola, Muri, and surrounding areas, red rice is rich in antioxidants, dietary fiber, and complex carbohydrates. Uttarakhand Red Rice contributes to overall health, as its minimal processing helps retain essential vitamins and minerals such as iron, zinc, potassium, magnesium, manganese, and phosphorus (GIR, 2023). Laal chawal is processed by local people through traditional methods.



Plate 2. Typical examples of GI tagged products of Uttarakhand: A- Uttarakhand Chaulai (Ramdana), B- Uttarakhand Jhangora, C- Uttarakhand Red Rice, D- Uttarakhand Mandua, E- Almora Lakhori Chili, F- Berinag Tea, G- Ramnagar-Nainital Litchi and H- Ramgarh Peach.

Uttarakhand Mandua- Mandua is also known as Ragi or finger millet and the scientific name of Mandua is *Eleusine*

coracana. Mandua (Plate-2D) is a versatile and nutritious coarse cereal which is farmed in the both Kumaun and Garhwal

regions of the State. This is an ancient grain in India (2300 BC) and is renowned for its exceptional nutritional content, making it a valuable addition to a balanced diet. Mandua is rich in essential nutrients such as calcium, iron, and fiber, making it beneficial for bone health, anemia prevention, and digestive well-being (Shobana et al., 2013). Beyond its nutritional value, in the state, this is being used for a variety of traditional dishes such as ragi flour-based bread, sweet dishes, as well as modern dishes like biscuits, etc. Mandua is processed by local people through traditional methods.

Almora Lakhori Chili- The word “Lakhori” has its roots in the village of Lakhora, situated on the Garhwal and Kumaon border of Uttarakhand, where the distinct variety of chili was initially cultivated, thus lending its name. Apart from its yellow colour (Plate-2E), the distinguishing feature of Lakhori mirch lies in the unique wrinkle it develops during the drying process. This chili can be classified into two parts, the smaller in size, known as Lakori Jamri, containing the highest seed count and purportedly used for making Mirchi flakes. Conversely, the larger one is used as whole spices or ground into powder. Lakhori Mirchi boasts a nutritional profile that includes proteins, carotenoids, fat, cholesterol and sodium. Lakhori Chilli is rich in Vitamin A, C, K, B6, potassium, copper, manganese, dietary fiber, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, folate, iron, magnesium, and phosphorus. Lakhori chilli is mainly produced in Bhikiyasen and Sult regions of the Almora district of Uttarakhand (GIR, 2023).

Berinag Tea- Berinag tea derives its name from the local Berinag Temple which is dedicated to Nag Devta and situated at the top of Berinag Hill. The renowned “Uttarakhand Berinag Tea” (Plate-2F) is known as the Champagne of teas and is cultivated in the state of Uttarakhand, India. Synonymous with premium quality, Berinag Tea is highly esteemed for its exquisite taste, texture, flavor, aroma, and color. The charm of Berinag lies in its expansive tea gardens, making it a celebrated destination for tea enthusiasts. Initially crafted from leaves of a wild plant found across various locations in the Pithoragarh district, “Uttarakhand Berinag Tea” is now exclusively cultivated in Berinag and Chaukori, charming hill stations within the Pithoragarh district, where the Britishers established tea gardens (GIR, 2023).

Ramnagar Nainital Litchi- Litchi, a sub-tropical fruit, flourishes most in a humid sub-tropical climate. The Ramnagar Litchi stands out as an exceptionally delightful and nutritious fruit of the summer season, belonging to the Sapindaceae family. Renowned for its sweet and floral taste, Ramnagar Litchi is commonly consumed fresh and is also utilized in ice creams, and processed into juice, wine and jelly. Recognized for its inedible, pink-red (Plate-2G), leathery skin, which is peeled before consumption, the fruit’s flesh is white and encases a dark seed at its core. Referred to as the “Pearl of India,” Ramnagar Litchi is celebrated for its superb quality and pleasant flavor. This is rich in various vitamins such as vitamin C, copper, potassium etc (GIR, 2023).

Ramgarh Peach- Ramgarh Aadu (Peach) is typically enjoyed as a freshly picked fruit (Plate-2H); however, its diverse varieties can be utilized to create delightful squash. The scientific name of peach is *Prunuspersica*. The essential oil extracted from peach kernels finds applications in the production of various

cosmetic and medicinal products. Abundant in essential minerals such as potassium, fluoride, and iron, Ramgarh Peach thrives in temperate zones. Although originally confined to specific regions, it is now cultivated globally. Uttarakhand, with its favorable climate, soil characteristics, specific water quality, and environment, stands out as a major peach-producing state in India. Ramgarh Nainital Aadu, a small to medium-sized deciduous tree with an upright spreading and open-topped growth pattern, features dark brown, rough bark on the trunk and smooth, pinkish young shoots. This peach variety remains rich in essential minerals, including potassium, fluoride, and iron (GIR, 2023).

Uttarakhand Malta Fruit- The Malta fruit, scientifically known as *Citrus sinensis* (L.), commonly known as sweet orange, holds significance as a seasonal citrus fruit in the hilly regions of Uttarakhand, India. While it is cultivated across all 13 districts of Uttarakhand, its primary cultivation areas include Chamoli, Rudra Prayag, Bageshwar, Pithoragarh, Uttarkashi, and Dehradun. The widespread popularity of the “Malta fruit” can be attributed to its appealing color (Plate-3A), distinctive flavor, and taste. Rich in minerals such as Potassium and Calcium, Malta contributes to enhancing the immune system, bolstering resistance against blood-borne infections. Additionally, Malta fruit serves as a valuable source of folate, calcium, and thiamine (GIR, 2023).

Uttarakhand Pahari Toor Dal- Uttarakhand Toor dal (Plate-3B), also referred to as Pigeon Pea in English (scientifically known as *Cajanus cajan*), boasts a high protein content. This legume holds significance in Uttarakhand’s rainfed agriculture, particularly in the hills. Toor, a short-lived perennial shrub, is a staple in traditional Uttarakhand cultivation practices. It serves as a crucial legume crop in the region, contributing to the nutrition, health, and livelihoods of smallholder farmers. The cultivation of Pahari Toor in the Uttarakhand hills is fostering sustainable and eco-friendly agricultural methods that are both cost-effective and easily embraced by the farming community. Pahadi Toor dal stands out for its richness in carbohydrates, iron, phosphorous, manganese, and essential vitamins such as C, B1, and B9, making it a valuable source of homegrown, high-protein food (GIR, 2023).

Uttarakhand Gahat- The scientific name for Uttarakhand Gahat is *Macrotyloma uniflorum*, commonly referred to as horse gram. This pulse holds significant importance in the arid regions of Uttarakhand. Its medicinal properties have been recognized by Ayurveda and traditional practitioners in Uttarakhand for centuries. It is commonly utilized in medicinal preparations for its tonic, astringent, and diuretic qualities. Additionally, it is recommended for conditions such as rheumatism, neuralgia, and various other ailments. Uttarakhand Gahat is recognized as a valuable source of iron. The seeds of Gahat (Plate-3C) are particularly beneficial for addressing stomach and kidney-related issues. According to Ayurveda, Gahat seeds are considered a panacea for treating appendicitis. Urolithiasis, a complex process involving physicochemical events like super saturation, nucleation, growth, aggregation, and retention within the kidneys, is also associated with this pulse (GIR, 2023).

Uttarakhand Kala Bhat- The scientific name of Uttarakhand Kala Bhat is *Glycine max*, and it possesses a predominantly



Plate 3. Typical examples of GI tagged products of Uttarakhand: A- Uttarakhand Malta Fruit, B- Uttarakhand Pahari Toor Dal, C- Uttarakhand Gahat, D- Uttarakhand Kala Bhat, E- Uttarakhand Bichhu Buti, F- Kumaoni Coloured Pichhoda, G- Wooden Ramman Mask and H- Uttarakhand Likhai.

rustic texture. Without a doubt, its distinctive aroma and highly palatable taste, is a dietary staple made from Kala Bhat. Kala Bhat (Plate-3D) and its soy products stand out as the richest sources of flavones in human nutrition. Consumption of Kala Bhat is considered beneficial, potentially offering a protective

effect against various chronic diseases. Notably, Kala Bhat can lower cholesterol levels, hinder the growth of cancerous cells, and possess remarkable curative powers. Additionally, its iron and protein content make it an excellent substitute for meat, particularly suitable for vegetarian diets. Kala Bhat is cultivated

in both Garhwal and Kumaon regions of Uttarakhand state. As a rare legume in Uttarakhand, Kala Bhat is also utilized as a medicinal remedy for detoxifying the body (GIR, 2023).

Uttarakhand Bichhu Buti (Nettle) Febric- Uttarakhand Bichhu Buti (Plate-3E), scientifically identified as *Urtica dioica*, is a plant with high fiber yield, prominently present in the Garhwal and Kumaon region of Uttarakhand. The fibers derived from Uttarakhand Bichhu Buti surpass Flax fibers in length, strength, and elasticity. Also known as Himalayan Nettle, Uttarakhand Bichhu Buti possesses a distinctive quality that renders it an excellent material for clothing, suitable for both winter and summer wear. The fibers are situated in a broad ring in the outer part of the stem, existing as individual fiber cells separated by parenchyma cells rather than bundled together. In cross-section, these fiber cells exhibit polygonal or roundish shapes, featuring a wide lumen and relatively thin walls. Traditionally, the production of one kg of hand-spun Bichhu Buti yarn takes approximately five days (GIR, 2023).

Kumaoni Coloured Pichhoda- The Rangwali Pichhoda of Kumaon stands as a traditional attire donned by women during ceremonies in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand. This attire holds significant importance in the lives of married women, being a staple during various religious and cultural events, such as weddings, Nomenclature, and Janeus. Wearing this garment is imperative for women participating in marriage rituals, and it holds a sacred status in Kumaoni Hindu traditions. Commonly referred to as “Rangwali Pichhoda,” it consists of a fine cloth (dupatta) in a yellowish-orange colour and red/brown circles motifs printed on it, earning its name from its vibrant colors (Plate-3F).

Chamoli Wooden Ramman Mask- The Ramman mask (Plate-3G) and festival hold a distinctive significance exclusive to the villages of Chamoli district in Uttarakhand, standing apart from any replication or performance in other parts of the Himalayan region. Dedicated to the village deity, Bhumiya Devta, the festival and its eponymous art form unfold as a sacred offering within the village temple’s courtyard. In Garhwal region, the historical and cultural dimensions of Ramman mask making and the associated festival are deeply rooted. The craft of crafting these masks mirrors the narrative of Ramayana, evolving over time into a form that encapsulates artistic, cultural, and religious elements. Utilizing locally

available materials, the costumes and masks are meticulously crafted. The act of creating these masks is revered as a sacred process by the artisans, as it breathes life into the mythological gods and goddesses of the narrative (GIR, 2023).

Uttarakhand Likhai (Wood Carving)- Likhai, in Kumaoni language, refers to the traditional art of wood carving. This craft has a rich heritage and is widely practiced throughout the state of Uttarakhand. Wood carving, particularly on doors, holds significant popularity in Uttarakhand. The Likhai wood craft is intricately woven into the architectural fabric of buildings and temples in the region (Plate-3H). In the local context, decorative wood carvings on front doors are referred to as “Kholi.” The woodcarving tradition in Uttarakhand is renowned for its exquisite designs, where doors and windows come alive with creeper patterns and floral motifs. The ornate woodcarvings on front doors, known as Kholi locally, contribute to the region’s artistic legacy (GIR, 2023).

Uttarakhand Buransh- The Burans, scientifically known as *Rhododendron arboretum*, is a vibrant red flower (Plate-4A) that belongs to the Ericacea tree family and holds the distinction of being the state flower of Uttarakhand. The Buransh plant carries significant ecological importance, with its flowers possessing distinctive medicinal and nutritional properties. Buransh juice, a completely natural beverage (sharbat), is highly esteemed for its excellent medicinal qualities and enjoys widespread popularity in the community. This refreshing and delightful drink is commonly consumed daily as an invigorating appetizer and is also believed to help prevent high sickness (GIR, 2023).

Nainital Candle- The distinctive characteristic of Nainital candles (Plate-4B) lies in their intricate hand-carving and the incorporation of multicolored waxes. Those engaged in the craft of candle making are referred to as Chandlers. As the popularity of light bulbs grew, candles transitioned from mere functional items to decorative pieces. The candle industry responded by diversifying production methods, introducing various sizes, shapes, and colors. A premium selection of natural flower candles is crafted using high-quality raw materials, renowned for their durability. Furthermore, an extensive array of top-notch flower-printed pillar candles is manufactured using the finest raw materials and advanced technological innovation (GIR, 2023).



Plate 4. Typical examples of GI tagged products of Uttarakhand: A- Uttarakhand Buransh and B- Nainital Candle.

PROPOSED GOODS FOR GI

The State varies between 183 m to 7817 m elevation from the Tarai region in south to the Trans Himalaya region in the north which is attributed to diverse climatic conditions ranging from sub-tropical climate to alpine climate which characterize the State in diverse micro-climatic regions with special regional characteristics in terms of natural and man-made goods. Although, Twenty Six goods of the State has been registered as GI tag till now but the State has much potential and possibilities for GI tagging of naturally occurring and man-made goods. The present study proposes mainly three goods, viz., Almora Bal Mithai, Bheemal Shampoo and Yarsa Gambu for GI tagging. Almora Bal Mithai is the famous sweet dish of the Uttarakhand state which is made with local roasted khoya and butter (pure ghee) and coated with small sugar balls. Yarsa Gambu is a kind of herb found at high altitude regions of the state and known as Caterpillar fungus. This herb is mainly used for medicinal purposes by pharmaceutical companies.

CONCLUSION

The present study aims to understand the concept of Geographical Indications and products registered as GIs in the Uttarakhand state. The study reveals that till now 26 products of the State have been registered as GIs by the GI Registry of India which accounts for only 5.15% of total GI goods of the country. These registered commodities belong to four different categories, i.e., agriculture (15) and handicraft goods (09), food stuff (01) and manufactured (01) goods. The study shows that the people of the State are not aware about GI tagging. Apart from the registered products/goods, the State have much potential for GI tagging of naturally occurring and man-made goods, e.g., Almora Bal Mithai, Yarsa Gambu etc. The study suggests that the State government should assist local entrepreneurs in obtaining GI tags for unique indigenous products.

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