

**PRELIMS EDGE 2025****01-07-2025**

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION TAG (GI TAG)

Context: Luxury brand Prada showcased Kolhapuri chappal-inspired footwear in Milan triggering a debate on cultural misappropriation of India's GI-tagged heritage products.

About GI Tag

- A geographical indication (GI) is a **designation applied to products originating from a specific geographical area**, indicating that the qualities or reputation of the products are inherently linked to that particular origin.
- Article 22 (1) of **Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)** defines GIs 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 characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographic origin".
- In many EU nations, GI is classified in two basic categories Protected GI (PGI) and Protected Destination of Origin (PDO). **India only has the PGI category.**
- This certification is **also extended to non-agricultural products**, such as handicrafts

based on human skills, materials and resources available in certain areas that make the product unique.

- GI is a powerful **tool for protecting traditional knowledge, culture and can boost socio-economic development.**

Legal Framework and Governance:

- GI is governed under the Agreement on **TRIPS at the World Trade Organisation (WTO).**
- **The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999** seeks to provide for the registration and better protection of geographical indications relating to goods in India.
- Paris Convention emphasises protecting industrial property and geographical indications in Articles 1(2) and 10.

Status of GI Tags Registration:

- Germany leads in GI registrations, with 15,566 registered products, followed by China (7,247), as per 2020 data with the World Intellectual Property Organization.
- Globally, wines and spirits comprise 51.8% of registered GIs, followed by agricultural products and foodstuffs at 29.9%.
- In India, handicraft (about 45%) and agriculture (about 30%) comprise the majority of the GI products.

Source: Can a G.I. tag prevent cultural misappropriation? (The Hindu)

GST COUNCIL

Context: There is a nationwide call for GST rates rationalization and associated reforms as the GST reforms is heading to its 8th anniversary.



About the GST Council:

- GST Council is a **constitutional body constituted under Article 279 A** of the Indian Constitution.
- Article 279 A was added to the Constitution by the **101st Constitutional Amendment** in 2017.
- GST council is a **joint forum of the centre and states**, which recommends the union and state government on the issues related to GST.

Composition of GST Council:

- **Union Finance Minister** is the Chairperson
- The **Union Minister of State, in-charge of Revenue or Finance** as Member
- The Minister in-charge of Finance or Taxation or any other **Minister nominated by each State Government** as Members.
- The GST Council takes every decision at its meetings by a **majority of not less than**

three-fourths of the weighted votes of the members present and voting.

- The **Union Govt. hold one third voting share** in the GST Council, with the states sharing the rest two-thirds votes. This **essentially provides the Union Govt. with a veto** in the GST Council.
- The least quorum required for conducting a meeting is 50% of the total number of members of the Council.
- Under Article 279A (4), the Council **makes recommendations to the Union and the States on important issues related to GST**, like the goods and services that may be subjected or exempted from GST, model GST laws, principles that govern place of supply, threshold limits, GST rates including the floor rates with bands, special rates for raising additional resources during natural calamities/disasters, special provisions for certain States, etc.
- The Supreme Court, in the Mohit Minerals case (2022), ruled **that the recommendations of the GST Council are not binding on states.**

Source : Eight years of GST: PwC suggests petro-products' inclusion, lowering tax slabs (The Hindu)

TERMS IN NEWS

Tobacco Board of India



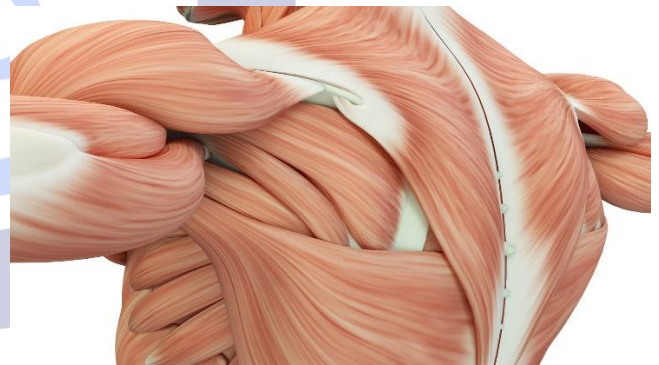
- It is a statutory body established on 1st January 1976 by an Act of Parliament "**Tobacco Board Act, 1975 (Act 4 of 1975)**".
- The Board is headed by a chairman and is responsible for the development of the tobacco industry.

Functions

- The primary function of the Board is **export promotion of all varieties of tobacco and its allied products**, its functions extend to production, distribution (for domestic consumption and exports) and regulation of Flue Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco.
- It ensures the smooth functioning of the farming system and to ensure fair and remunerative prices for tobacco farmers and the promotion of exports.
- Financial assistance is extended to farmers through banks, along with the necessary inputs for the production of quality tobacco.

- The Board also engages in extension and developmental activities to promote sustainable tobacco cultivation practices.
- The Board supports farmers by providing handholding assistance to produce tobacco of requisite quality to meet the standards of importing countries.
- **Headquarters:** Guntur, Andhra Pradesh
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- India is the **2nd largest producer of tobacco in the world after China**.
- India is the 4th largest producer of FCV tobacco in the world after China, Brazil and Zimbabwe.
- India is the 2nd largest exporter of unmanufactured tobacco (quantity terms) after Brazil.

Myogenesis



- It is **the process by which muscle fibers are formed**.
- It is a complex and highly regulated process that is crucial for the **development and maintenance of skeletal muscle tissue**.
- The significance of myogenesis lies in its role in forming the musculature of the body, **enabling movement, maintaining posture, and regulating metabolism**.

- Myogenesis involves the differentiation of precursor cells, known as **myoblasts**, into **multinucleated muscle fibers**.
- This process is not only essential during embryonic development but also plays a critical role in **muscle repair and regeneration throughout life**.

Kombucha



- Kombucha, also tea mushroom, tea fungus, or Manchurian mushroom is a **fermented, effervescent, sweetened black tea drink**.
- Kombucha is produced by **symbiotic fermentation of sugared tea using a symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast (SCOBY)** commonly called a "mother" or "mushroom".
- The microbial populations in a SCOBY vary. **The yeast component generally includes *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, along with other species.**
- The bacterial component almost always includes ***Gluconacetobacter xylinus* to oxidize yeast-produced alcohols to acetic acid**
- Although the SCOBY is commonly called "tea fungus" or "mushroom", it is actually **"a symbiotic growth of acetic acid**

bacteria and osmophilic yeast species in a zoogloeal mat [biofilm]".

- The living bacteria are said to be **probiotic that will enhance gut health and immunity in general**, one of the reasons for the popularity of the drink.

SPECIES IN NEWS

Asiatic Wild Dog (Dhole)



- It is a wild canid carnivorous species.
- **Other Names:** Indian wild dog, whistling dog, red wolf, red dog and mountain wolf.
- **Habitat:** Dholes are animals that inhabit dense jungles, steppes, mountains, scrub forests, and pine forests.

Distribution

- They are found throughout Central, Eastern Asia and Southeastern Asia.
- In India, they are found in three clusters across India, namely the Western and Eastern Ghats, the central Indian landscape and North East India.
- The Western and Eastern Ghats is a stronghold region for dholes.
- Threats: Habitat degradation, prey depletion, and retaliatory killings.

Conservation status

- IUCN Red List: Endangered
- CITES: Appendix II
- Wildlife Protection Act 1972: Schedule II

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q1: Consider the following statements regarding GI Tags

1. A geographical indication (GI) is a designation applied to products originating from a specific geographical area, indicating that the qualities or reputation of the products are inherently linked to that particular origin.
2. GI is governed under the Agreement on TRIPS at the World Trade Organisation (WTO).
3. Germany leads in GI registrations, followed by China as per the data with the World Intellectual Property Organization.

How many of the above statements are incorrect?

- A. Only One
- B. Only Two
- C. All of the Above
- D. None of the Above

Q2 : Consider the following statements regarding GST Council

1. GST Council is a constitutional body constituted under Article 279 A of the Indian Constitution that was added through the 101 Constitutional Amendment Act of 2017.
2. RBI Governor is the Chairperson of the council.
3. The GST Council takes every decision at its meetings by a majority of not less than three-fourths of the weighted votes of the members present and voting.

How many of the above statements are incorrect?

- A. Only One
- B. Only Two
- C. All of the Above
- D. None of the Above

Q3 : Consider the following statements regarding the Tobacco Board of India

1. It is a statutory body established on 1st January 1976 by the "Tobacco Board Act.
2. The Board is headquartered at Kochi, Kerala.
3. Ministry of Commerce and Industry is the nodal ministry in charge of the Board.

How many of the above statements are incorrect?

- A. Only One
- B. Only Two
- C. All of the Above
- D. None of the Above

Answers

- 1. D
- 2. A
- 3. A
- 4. B
- 5. A

Q4 : The term Kombucha has been in the news frequently. Which among the following is the correct description of the same

- A. Synthetic Drug
- B. Probiotic Drink
- C. Alcoholic Drink
- D. Medicinal Plant

Q5 : Consider the following statements regarding Asiatic Wild Dogs

- 1. It is a wild canid carnivorous species that has the native name Dhole.
- 2. They are endemic to the Western Ghats exclusively.
- 3. They are considered as endangered by the IUCN.

How many of the above statements are incorrect?

- A. Only One
- B. Only Two
- C. All of the Above
- D. None of the Above

