



General Studies-1

Chau mask given GI Tag:

The Chau mask of Purulia, the wooden mask of Kushmandi, the Patachitra, the Dokras of Bengal, and Madhurkathi (a kind of mat) have been presented with the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Geographical Indication Registry and Intellectual Property India.

About GI Tag:

A geographical indication (GI) is a name or sign used on certain products which corresponds to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g. a town, region, or country).

India, as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), enacted the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.

GIs have been defined under Article 22(1) of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement as: "Indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a member, or a region or a locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographic origin

A GI tag connects the quality and authenticity of a given product to a particular geographical origin, thereby ensuring that no one other than the authorised user can use the popular product's name.

GI tags are given on the basis of the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.



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The first product to be included in the list was Darjeeling Tea.

The GI status for five rural products will have a direct impact on the occupation of 5,000-6,000 families in the State

General Studies-2

PRAAPTI App and Web portal launched for bringing transparency in electricity payments to Generators.

A Web portal and an App namely PRAAPTI (Payment Ratification And Analysis in Power procurement for bringing Transparency in Invoicing of generators), www.praapti.in, has been officially launched today.

About PRAAPTI:

PRAAPTI App and web portal has been developed to bring transparency in power purchase transactions between Generators and Discoms.

The App and Web Portal will capture the Invoicing and payment data for various long term PPAs from the Generators.

This will help the stakeholders in getting month-wise and legacy data on outstanding amounts of Discoms against power purchase.

The app will also allow users to know the details related to the payments made by the Discoms to the power generation company and when they were made.

PRAAPTI will also enable the consumers to evaluate financial performance of their Discoms in terms of payments being made to the generation companies.

The Portal would also help DISCOMs and GENCOs to reconcile their outstanding payments.

The portal would facilitate relative assessment of various State DISCOMs on "Ease of making payments" to various Generation Companies, and will also help make transactions in the power Sector more transparent.



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Government has approved setting up of an exclusive "Brahmaputra Study Centre" at Gauhati University, Guwahati, for which a fund of about Rs. 28 crore will be provided by the Ministry of DoNER.

Gauhati University is one of the oldest universities in the country and it needs to cultivate a unique identity for itself which could attract scholars from far and wide by setting up the "Brahmaputra Study Centre".

About Brahmaputra center:

Describing it as a "one stop destination" for all issues and problems that may emerge from time to time with respect to the Brahmaputra River System, Dr Jitendra Singh informed that the first major study at the Centre has already been initiated

It is devoted to the research on the causes and prevention of frequent floods in the river and includes some of the internationally renowned scholars from across the world.

Ministry of DoNER in the last four years has gone beyond the mandate of focusing only on development works and has also tried to contribute for enrichment of education sector in Northeast.

General Studies-3

Broccoli Seed with bacteria sent to ISS:

Scientists have sent broccoli seeds coated with a healthy dose of good bacteria to space in a quest to find a viable way for astronauts at the International Space Station (ISS) to grow their own vegetables — and possibly one day on the Moon or Mars.

Six broccoli seeds were aboard the Orbital ATK Cygnus spacecraft that launched this week from Wallops Island, Virginia, as part of a space station cargo resupply mission.



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Three of the seeds are travelling to space as it is, while the other three were coated with two different species of bacteria, developed at the University of Washington, that can live inside crop plants and improve their growth.

These “beneficial” microbes, also called endophytes, may also help plants grow better in extreme low-gravity environments, and where nutrients or water could be lacking.

The goal of the experiment, is to learn how to grow vegetables in the challenging, microgravity conditions of the space station — and eventually on the Moon and Mars — as human space exploration expands.

Farming in space

Developed by a team of 11 students, the initial ground experiments proved successful, as the broccoli grew faster and significantly larger than the control study.

Previous research has found that plants can better tolerate drought and other environmental stressors with the help of natural microbes that provide nutrients to their plant partners.

These specific endophytes and broccoli plants were chosen for the space flight experiment because they performed well together in greenhouse tests under conditions similar to Mars, where nitrogen and phosphorus are limited.

While vegetable growing experiments have been conducted aboard the ISS, this is the first that studies natural microbes to possibly help plants grow under nutrient limitations and in microgravity, he said.



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Great Barrier Reef under Stress:

Australia's Great Barrier Reef, under severe stress in a warmer, more acidic ocean, has returned from near-extinction five times in the past 30,000 years, researchers said on Monday.

In the past, the reef shifted along the sea floor to deal with changes in its environment — either seaward or landward depending on whether the level of the ocean was rising or falling, the team found.

Based on fossil data from cores drilled into the ocean floor at 16 sites, they determined the Great Barrier Reef was able to migrate between 20 cm and 1.5 metres per year.

This rate may not be enough to withstand the current barrage of environmental challenges.

Over 10 years, they studied how it had responded to changes caused by continental ice sheets expanding and waning over 30 millennia.

About great Barrier Reef:

The Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest coral reef system composed of over 2,900 individual reefs and 900 islands stretching for over 2,300 kilometres (1,400 mi) over an area of approximately 344,400 square kilometres (133,000 sq mi).

The reef is located in the Coral Sea, off the coast of Queensland, Australia.

The Great Barrier Reef can be seen from outer space and is the world's biggest single structure made by living organisms.

This reef structure is composed of and built by billions of tiny organisms, known as coral polyps.



It supports a wide diversity of life and was selected as a World Heritage Site in 1981.

CNN labelled it one of the seven natural wonders of the world.

The Queensland National Trust named it a state icon of Queensland.