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MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



MK Yadav Sir

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DTE

Jan 8

STUDY ON TROPICAL CYCLONE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 – Geography)

Ocean surface waves — and their hazards — due to tropical cyclones are growing bigger, warns study

Maximum height of tropical cyclone waves, area of its footprint has increased significantly over 40 years

Context: Ocean surface waves brought on by tropical cyclones (TC) have increased over time, according to a new study (Nature Communications), which has cautioned that these could be a concern in the future.

Key Finding of Reports

- The fastest-increasing rates of tropical cyclone wave footprint (17-32 per cent per decade) were in the North Atlantic, eastern Pacific and North Indian Ocean.
- **According to the researchers**, the rise in wave area is the primary cause of the trend of rising global wave energy.
- All ocean basins show a significant long-term increase in the maximum wave height, with the largest increase of 5 per cent per decade in the North Atlantic.
- The **researchers suggested that the ocean warming caused** by tropical cyclones goes deep enough to persist for months or years and travel far from its point of origin, potentially altering the broader patterns of ocean circulation that partly regulate Earth's climate.

Tropical Cyclone

- **About**: A tropical cyclone is a warm-core low pressure system that develops over tropical or subtropical waters and has an organised circulation.
- **Example**: These include hurricanes and typhoons. TCs produce high winds, large waves, extreme water levels and heavy rainfall.
- **Main Role**: It play an important role in maintaining the energy balance at the air-sea interface. TCs take heat energy from the ocean surface to fuel their development.
- They also dissipate kinetic energy into the ocean through waves.
- **Recent Tropical Cyclone**: Freddy was a long-lived tropical system that traversed the Indian Ocean and seriously impacted Madagascar, Mozambique and parts of southeast Africa with intense rain and flooding.

THE HINDU

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GRANT OF REMISSION

Syllabus GS Paper 2 – Polity)

Grant of remission a 'classic case' of using SC to violate law: verdict

Several facts regarding the application for premature release in Bilkis case had been suppressed before court, Bench says; it adds that court was defrauded into delivering its decision to consider the plea for pre-mature release under 1992 policy

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday said the grant of remission to 11 men serving life sentence in the Bilkis Bano case was a "classic case" of using a Supreme Court order to violate the law.

The court was referring to its May 2022 decision, delivered by a Bench headed by Justice Ajay Rastogi (now retired), allowing Gujarat to decide the application of one of the convicts, Radheshyam Bhagwandas Shah, for premature release in terms of the State's remission policy of July 9, 1992. Following this order from the court, the other 10 convicts had joined in with their pleas for remission.

In its judgment on Monday, a Bench of Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan said the court was defrauded into delivering its decision on May 13, 2022. The respondents had not divulged a series of facts which would have tilted the Supreme Court's decision against them.

The judgment pointed out that Shah was told by the Gujarat High Court in 2019 to approach the Maharashtra government with his plea for remission. Following this rebuff, he had moved the Home Department of the Maharashtra government. The department had, in turn, asked the CBI, which had prosecuted the Bilkis Bano case. The agency had replied that Shah ought to "serve his sentence fully" and did not deserve any leniency.

Following this, the Special CBI Court in Mumbai, which had tried the case after its transfer from Gujarat, had also given a negative report to his plea for premature release in January 2020.

The Superintendent of Police in Dahod had, in fact, apprehended the commission of "serious crime" against Ms. Bano and her family if the convict was granted an early release. The Collector/District Magistrate of Dahod had seconded the police officer's negative opinion.

Justice Nagarathna said these facts had been suppressed by Shah in the court in 2022.

The Monday verdict, directing the released convicts to report back to the jail authorities within two weeks, said the May 2022 decision also suffered from a misrepresentation made by Shah that there was a "divergence in opinion" between the Bombay and Gujarat High Courts. In fact, a Gujarat High Court order of March 13, 2020 refusing remission to Shah and reiterating its 2019 position to approach the Maharashtra government was never challenged or set aside.

"That order still holds the field," Justice Nagarathna observed.

Justice Nagarathna also drew attention to how the Gujarat government, in the run-up to the May 2022 decision, had in fact agreed in the top court that Maharashtra was indeed the competent authority to consider the grant of remission. The judge noted how the State had curiously reversed its position and not sought a review of the May 2022 decision.

"The State of Gujarat never sought for the review of the May 13, 2022 order of this court by bringing to the notice of this court that it was contrary to Section 432 (7) and judgments of this court. Instead, the State of Gujarat acted in tandem and was complicit with what the respondent had sought before this court," he said.

The judge added that this conduct of the Gujarat government had been exactly why the court transferred the investigation of the case to the CBI and the trial to the Special Court at Mumbai.

Twists and turns

Following is the timeline of events in the Bilkis Bano case:



Seeking justice: Activists participate in a protest rally in support of Bilkis Bano, in Kolkata on August 24, 2022. AFP

March 3, 2002: A mob descended upon the family of Bilkis Bano, 21, at Randhikpur village near Ahmedabad. She was gang-raped and seven members of her family were murdered

December 16, 2003: Supreme Court orders a CBI inquiry

January 21, 2008: A special court convicts 11 men and sentences them to life imprisonment

May 4, 2017: Bombay High Court upholds the sentence

May 13, 2022: Supreme Court directs Gujarat government to consider the plea of a convict for pre-mature release under its policy of July 9, 1992

August 15, 2022: As part of the Gujarat government's remission policy, 11 convicts are released from the Godhra sub-jail

August 25, 2022: Top court issues notice to the Centre and Gujarat government on a PIL plea against the premature release

November 30, 2022: Bilkis moves SC challenging the remission

December 17, 2022: Court dismisses her plea seeking a review of its May 13 verdict in which it had said the State of Gujarat was the "appropriate government" competent to examine the application for the pre-mature release

March 27, 2023: Court notice to Centre, Gujarat government and others on a plea filed by Bilkis Bano

August 7, 2023: Court starts final hearing on petitions challenging the remission

January 8, 2024: Court quashes remission to 11 convicts

Context: Recently, the Supreme Court highlighted that the grant of remission to 11 men serving life sentences in the Bilkis Bano case was a "classic case" of exploiting a Supreme Court order to breach the law.

Grant of Remission

- **About**: Remission is the complete ending of a **sentence at a reduced point.** It differs from furlough and parole, as it involves a reduction in sentence rather than a temporary break from prison life.
- **Nature of Sentence**: In remission, the nature of the sentence remains unchanged, while the duration is shortened. The individual is not required to serve the remainder of the original sentence.
- **Release and Conditions**: The effect of remission is the **assignment of a specific release date for the prisoner**, and legally, they attain the status of a free person.

Background of the Remission System

- **Legal Basis**: The Remission system is defined under the Prison Act, 1894, outlining rules for awarding marks to prisoners, thereby shortening their sentences.
- **Judicial Perspective**: In the **Kehar Singh vs. Union of India (1989) case**, the court emphasized that prisoners have the right to be considered for remission. Denying this right goes against principles of reformation and leaves the convict without hope for freedom.
- **Executive Power**: **State of Haryana vs. Mahender Singh (2007)** established that while there is no fundamental right to remission, the state, through its executive power, must consider individual cases, taking relevant factors into account.

Constitutional Provisions on Remission

- **President's Power:** Under **Article 72, the President can grant pardons**, reprieves, respites, or remissions for offenses tried by a court-martial, under Union government executive power, and in cases involving death sentences.
- **Governor's Power**: Article **161 grants the Governor the authority to grant pardons**, reprieves, respites, or remissions for offenses falling under the State's executive power.

PIB Jan 8

JAN ASUSHADHI KENDRA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Govt Scheme)

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah addressed the program of 'Distributing Store Codes for Operation of Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra to PACS of 5 States' in New Delhi today

Context: Recently, the Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah, addressed the program in New Delhi, overseeing the distribution of store codes for the operation of Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra to PACS in five states.

Jan Aushadhi Kendra

- **Establishment of PMBKs:** Under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana, PMBKs were established, with the initiative launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers in November 2008.
- **Objective**: To provide quality medicines at affordable prices for all, with a particular focus on reducing out-of-pocket expenses in healthcare, especially for the economically disadvantaged.
- **Generic Drugs at Lower Prices**: PMBKs offer generic drugs that are available at lower prices while maintaining an equivalent standard in terms of quality and efficacy compared to more expensive branded drugs.
- **Availability of Medicines**: All therapeutic medicines are made accessible through Jan Aushadhi Stores, ensuring a wide range of medicines for various medical needs.
- **Target:** Jan Aushadhi Kendras to 10,000 by March 2024.

Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS)

- **About**: PACS is a basic unit and smallest cooperative credit institution in India.
- **Objective**: It provides short-term, and medium-term agricultural loans to the farmers for the various agricultural and farming activities. It works at the grassroots gram Panchayat and village level. The PACS functions at the base of the co-operative banking system and constitute the major retail outlets of short term and medium-term credit to the rural sector.
- **The first PcooperativeACS was formed**: In the year 1904.
- **Registered under**: The Co-operative Societies Act and also regulated by the RBI. They are governed by the "Banking regulation Act-1949" and Banking Laws (Co-operative Societies) Act 1965.

PRAVASI BHARTIYA DIWAS
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Poilty/IR - Diaspora)

PM Narendra Modi greets people on occasion of Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas

Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has greeted people on the occasion of Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas.

Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas

- **Historical Background:** It has been observed annually since 2003 on January 9 to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi's return from South Africa in 1915.
  - The day acknowledges the noteworthy contributions of the Overseas Indian community to India's development.
- **Establishment**: In 2003, Pravasi Bhartiya Divas was later revised in 2015 to be observed every two years, accompanied by theme-based conferences.
- **Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award**: The PBSA is the highest honor for Indians residing abroad.
  - Bestowed by the President of India during the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conventions, initiated in 2003, this award recognizes outstanding contributions by the overseas Indian community.
- **Significance of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas**
  - This day serves as a **crucial occasion for the overseas Indian community** to interact with both the government and the local populace.
  - **Conventions provide a valuable platform for networking** among overseas Indians worldwide.
  - **Participants can share their diverse experiences and insights in various fields** during these gatherings.

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Page 2

ONLINE GAMING

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

SC to hear landmark online gaming tax case in 2 months

Tussle between tax authorities and online gaming firms over tax demands of nearly ₹1.5 tn

Krishna Yadav & Shouvik Das
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court will shortly begin the final hearing of cases in the tussle between tax authorities and online gaming firms over tax demands of nearly ₹1.5 trillion. The court on Monday issued a notice to the Directorate General of GST Intelligence in response to petitions filed by the E-Gaming Federation and gaming start-ups Games24x7 and Head Digital Works challenging the tax demands, which they say are retrospective.

The Supreme Court asked the government's goods and services tax enforcement body to submit written responses to the petitions within two weeks. The court, however, did not issue a stay on the tax notices. Its final hearing will include pending appeals at the Supreme Court as well as all similar cases pending at various high courts.

The hearing is likely to begin by end-February or March. It is expected to draw to an end a prolonged tax overhang on online gaming, and clarify if these are games of skill or chance, and if they come under the ambit of betting and gambling.

After the Supreme Court completes a three-day hearing on the matter, a window of at least three more months is expected before it issues its judgment. The DGGI has told the court it will file a petition seeking the transfer of all cases related to the same issue from various high courts to the Supreme Court. An appeal on a notice issued to Bengaluru-based Gameskraft Technology for alleged tax evasion amounting to ₹21,000 crore is also set to be included under the same ambit.



The apex court has asked the government's goods and services tax enforcement body to submit written responses to the petitions within two weeks. PTI

THE END-GAME

THE court on Monday issued a notice to the Directorate General of GST Intelligence

THE apex court, however, did not issue any stay on the tax notices

THE final hearing will include pending appeals at SC as well as all similar cases pending at HCs

THE hearing is now likely to begin by the end of February or in March

The issue blew up in August when the GST Council amended the law to enforce a 28% tax rate on the "full face value" of bets or entry amounts in online games. This was to become effective from October. However, the DGGI has made additional tax claims going back five years. On 19 December, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the 28% GST was "prospective", not retrospective. The companies are also insisting that recurring playing amounts should not come under actionable claims of tax.

Mint reported on 27 September that the DGGI was in the process of issuing notices to online gaming companies regarding retrospective GST claims for the previous five fiscal years, amounting to nearly $1.5 trillion.

Senior advocate Harish Salve, arguing on behalf of the gaming industry, objected to categorizing the prize pools, or the total operating value of an online game, as an 'actionable claim'.

He added that since the games are played between players, with the companies solely drawing a platform fee, even actionable claims should not be factored into the GST demand as the platforms and the services only function as intermediaries.

Salve said the tax claims on online gaming startups were several times companies reported net revenues in the previous five financial years-and would push the nascent sector toward bankruptcy. An actionable claim is a claim made in a court against a sum of money that one party owes another.

In online gaming, since prize pools and winnings are held in escrow accounts of gaming operators, the claim that a winner has on the money held in escrow becomes an actionable claim. While actionable claims were not applicable to online gaming until September, they were brought under the amended GST laws from 1 October.

A spokesperson for the E-Gaming Federation could not be reached until press time. Games24x7 declined to comment, since the matter is subjudice.

krishna.yadav@livemint.com

Context: The Supreme Court will shortly commence the final hearing of multiple cases between tax authorities and the online gaming industry over tax demands adding up to nearly ₹1.5 lakh crore.

- **Gaming companies argue that the 28% tax should be applicable only from 1 October,** but the government contends that the revision clarified an existing law, and, thus, its demand for t**ax dues was not retrospective.**

Size of the Gaming Industry

- **India's gaming industry is expected to become a $5 billion industry** by 2025, growing at a compounded annual growth rate of 28-30 per cent.
- The **real-money gaming segment generated over 10,000 crore** in revenue in 2022.
- Currently, **online gaming companies pay the government a GST of 18 per cent** levied on the Gross Gaming Revenue (GGR) or the platform fee. Besides this, TDS of 30 per cent is deducted on the winnings.

Regulation of Online Gaming in India

- **7th Schedule Empowerment**: The Constitution of India grants State governments the authority to legislate on matters related to betting and gambling **through Entry 34 and on sports through Entry 33 of the State List** in the Seventh Schedule.
- **Limitation on State Legislation**: While States can legislate on betting, gambling, and sports, they lack the jurisdiction to legislate on games of skill, as these are distinct from activities falling under the ambit of games of chance.
- **Judgements on Online Gaming**: Various court judgments affirm the legality of betting on games of skill, distinguishing them from games of chance.
    - This aligns with the constitutional protection provided under Article 19(1)(g) and **Article 21 for playing online games and sports of skill**.
- **State Authority**: States are vested with the power to enact laws and regulate gambling activities, including betting on the practice of gambling.
- **Legal Entity Requirement:** Any online gaming platform, whether domestic or foreign, that offers real money online games to Indian users must be a legal entity incorporated under Indian law.

THE PRINT Jan 8

LUNAR GATEWAY STATION
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Sci and Tech)

UAE announces its participation in Nasa's Lunar Gateway Station

Context: The UAE recently announced its participation in developing a module on NASA's Lunar Gateway Station alongside the USA, Japan, Canada, and the European Union.

Nasa's Lunar Gateway Station

- **About**: The Lunar Gateway is a vital element of NASA's Artemis program, signaling a significant step in space exploration.
- **Countries involved**: USA, Japan, Canada, and the European Union
- Features and Purpose: Similar to the ISS but orbiting the Moon, the Gateway facilitates long-term lunar presence, deep space missions, and scientific research.
- **First-Ever Space Station Beyond Low Earth Orbit**: The Gateway marks a historic development as the first space station situated outside of low Earth orbit (LEO).
- **Deep Space Missions**: Positioned to offer crucial support for extended human missions on the Moon, the Gateway enables launches for deep space exploration.
- **Elliptical Orbit and Strategic Positioning**: The Gateway follows a highly elliptical orbit, strategically positioned both close to the Moon's surface and farther away for efficient Earth resupply missions.
- **Communication Relay:** Serving as a communication relay, the Gateway acts as a base for scientific research, contributing to advancements in lunar exploration.
- **Functionality**: Weighing around 40 tonnes, the Gateway consists of modules for communication, living space, spacewalks, and operations, showcasing a comprehensive design.
- **Extended Astronaut Occupancy**: Astronauts can stay aboard the Gateway for up to 90 days, conducting lunar surface missions for science experiments and technology testing.

PIB Dec 8

ONE DISTRICT ONE PRODUCT

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Economy)

UP Vishwakarma thanks PM for One District One Product Scheme

Context: Recently, UP Vishwakarma expressed gratitude to the Prime Minister for the One District One Product Scheme.

One District One Product Scheme

- **About**: The 'One District, One Product (ODOP) was later launched in 2018, to help districts reach their full potential, foster economic and socio-cultural growth, and create employment opportunities, especially in rural areas.
- **Funding**: It is a centrally sponsored scheme to be shared by the central government and states in 60:40 contributions.
- **Origin**: It was launched in January 2018, by the Uttar Pradesh Government, and due to its success, was later adopted by the Central Government.
    - ODOP is basically a Japanese business development concept, which gained prominence in 1979.
- **Nodal Ministry**: Ministry of Food Processing Industries.
- **Agency**: Department of Commerce through DGFT is engaging with State and Central Government agencies to promote the initiative of One District One Product.
- **Merged with the 'Districts as Export Hub' initiative**: ODOP initiative is operationally merged with the 'Districts as Export Hub' initiative being implemented by DGFT, Department of Commerce, with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) as a major stakeholder.
- **Objectives of ODOP**
    - **Alleviate economic and regional imbalances among art producers** by implementing targeted measures.
    - Safeguard **traditional knowledge in art and craft production**, emphasizing creativity and manufacturing.
    - **Expand MSME sectors in all districts of Uttar Pradesh** to boost local art production.
    - **Enhance the quality and quantity of local craft production** through the development of manufacturing sectors.
    - **Establish a stable marketing platform** to enhance income, local employment, skills, and livelihood.

TRIBUNE Dec 8

RULE OF LAW
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

Courts duty-bound to enforce rule of law 'without fear or favour, affection or ill-will': Supreme Court

Context: Recently, the Supreme Court emphasized that to preserve the rule of law as the essence of democracy, it is the duty of courts to enforce it "without fear or favour, affection or ill-will."

Rule of Law

- **About**: Rule of law ensures that everyone is subject to the law, emphasizing that no individual is above its authority, fostering equal accountability for all.
- **Fundamental Principle**: The concept of the Rule of Law is ingrained in the British Constitution, highlighting that no one, regardless of position or status, is exempt from the authority of ordinary courts of law.
- **Supremacy of the Law**: One of the most fundamental principles, the Rule of Law underscores that the law is supreme, necessitating government actions to align with and operate within the legal boundaries.

Indian Constitutional Articles Regarding the Rule of Law?

- **Article 14:** It is the foundational constitutional provision, ensuring the right to equality before the law and equal protection of the laws.
- **Article 19:** It guarantees the right to freedom of speech and expression, assembly, association, and movement, with reasonable restrictions.
- **Article 21**: It ensures the right to life and personal liberty, stating that deprivation of these rights must follow a lawful procedure.

DTE Dec 8

STUDY ON MIGRATION OF BIRDS
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

Bird species in northeastern India shifting to higher elevations, face threat of extinction

Context: Bird species in northeastern India have started shifting to higher elevations due to increasing temperatures owing to deforestation, a new study showed.

Highlights of Report

- **Tropical Montane Forests**: Ranging from 150-200 m to 3,500 m in altitude, are distinct ecosystems with a high level of biodiversity.
  - Each species in tropical mountains occupies a specific niche, contributing to increased diversity within a confined space.
- **Threats to Tropical Montane Forests**: Forest loss and climate change pose significant threats to these ecosystems, impacting temperature-sensitive flora, fauna, and biodiversity concentration.
  - Despite their ecological importance, there is limited research on the combined effects of forest loss and climate change on tropical montane forests.
- **Impact of Temperature on Bird Species**: Rising temperatures have led many bird species to migrate to higher elevations, with logged forests experiencing faster transitions due to higher temperatures and lower humidity.
- **Study Area**: The study focused on the Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary in Arunachal Pradesh, part of the Eastern Himalayan biodiversity hotspot, known for its diverse bird species.
- **Importance of Community Support in Research**: Conducting studies in remote wildlife sanctuaries like Eaglenest requires essential support from local communities.
  - The challenging conditions, including lack of infrastructure and amenities, highlight the necessity of community cooperation for successful and sustained research efforts.

GI TAGS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)



THIS WORD MEANS

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION TAG

Seven products from Odisha have bagged the coveted geographical indication (GI) tag, which recognises their exclusivity to the state

(Clockwise from top left) Kapdaganda shawl; Lanjia Saura painting; Khajuri guda; a red weaver ant, used in Kai chutney. *Odisha State Tribal Museum, Wikipedia*

GI tag is a sign assigned to products that have a specific geographical origin, and possess their intrinsic qualities due to said origin. They assure consumers of the quality and authenticity of the product, while protecting interests of local producers.

In India, GI tags are awarded by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry. GI registration is given to an area, not a trader. Those dealing with a GI tagged product can apply to sell with the GI logo. Authorised traders are then each assigned a unique GI number. Crucially, unauthorised traders can be prosecuted under The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.

Here are seven products from Odisha which bagged the GI tag last Thursday.

Kapdaganda shawl

The distinctive shawl is made by the women of the Dongria Kondh tribe, a particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG) in the Niyamgiri Hills of Odisha's Rayagada and Kalahandi districts. Embroidered with red, yellow and green threads, motifs comprise lines and triangles. The shawls, worn by both genders, are presented during courtship as a sign of formal commitment.

Koraput Kala Jeera rice

This variety of rice is as famous for its aroma and taste, as it is for its distinctive black colour. It gets its 'kala jeera' name due to its grains resembling cumin seeds. Preserved for over a 1,000 years by tribal farmers from Koraput, it continues to be cultivated using and traditional methods.

Lanjia Saura painting

Also known as *Idital*, the art form belongs to the Lanjia Saura community, a PVTG largely residing in Rayagada district. Traditionally adorning the exterior and walls of residences, the paintings comprise white figures on a crimson-maroon background. Through the artwork, the Lanjia Sauras show gratitude to their deities and forefathers, and pray for the well-being of the community. The artwork features humans, trees, animals, birds, and celestial objects.

Similipal Kai chutney

Made by manually grinding red weaver ants on a *sil batta* (grinding stone), this delicacy comes from Mayurbhanj district. The particular ants are found in the jungles of Mayurbhanj, including Similipal — Asia's second largest biosphere. The chutney is a highly nutritious food source, rich in protein, and a number of vitamins and minerals. Consumption is believed to boost immunity and prevent diseases.

Odisha Khajuri Guda

This jaggery which originates in Gajapati district is extracted from the sap of date palms. Traditionally prepared in a trapezoidal form called *patali gur*, it is dark brown in colour and has a unique taste, different from sugarcane jaggery.

Nayagarh Kanteimundi Brinjal

With prickly thorns all over the plant, this variety of brinjal is known to be resistant to insects. It contains more seeds than other genotypes, and is famous for its relatively short cooking time. Cultivated in Nayagarh district, historical records suggest that the locals got the brinjal from nearby hilly areas and started cultivation nearly 100 years ago. The variety yields around 200 kg of fruit per hectare.

Dhenkanal Magji laddu

Dhenkanal Magji *laddu* is a sweetmeat made from buffalo milk *chhena* (cottage cheese). Said to have originated from the Mandar-Sadangi area, it can be found across Dhenkanal district today. The region became a hub of buffalo milk production during British times, and *chhena* was the third largest produce — after milk and curd. It is prepared by draining all moisture from the *chhena*, then frying it, and finally forming balls of the mixture

Context: Seven products from Odisha, ranging from the Similipal Kai chutney made with red weaver ants to the embroidered Kapdaganda shawl, have bagged the coveted Geographical Indication (GI) tag in recognition of their exclusivity to the state.

Kapdaganda Shawl

- Woven and embroidered by the Dongria Kondh tribe, a particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG) in the Niyamgiri hills in Odisha's Rayagada and Kalahandi districts.
- Worn by both men and women; the Dongrias give it to their family members as a token of love and affection.

Lanjia Saurpa Painting

- One of the oldest tribal art forms, also known as Idital.
- Belongs to the Lanjia Saura community, a PVTG largely residing in the Rayagada district; these paintings are exterior murals on mud walls.

Nayagarh Kanteimundi Brinjal

- Known for prickly thorns on stems and the entire plant.
- Green, round fruits have more seeds compared to other genotypes.
- Famous for unique taste and relatively short cooking time; plants are resistant to major insects, requiring minimal pesticide.

Odisha Khajuri Guda (Jaggery)

- Natural sweetener extracted from date palm trees; originates in the Gajapati district.
- Traditionally prepared in a trapezoidal form called 'Patali Gur'; organic by nature, dark brown, and possesses a unique taste.

Dhenkanal Magji

- Sweet made from buffalo milk cheese; distinct characteristics in appearance, taste, flavor, shape, and size.

Similipal Kai Chutney

- The chutney made with red weaver ants is a traditional delicacy of the tribals in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district.
- The ants are found in the forests of Mayurbhanj, including in the Similipal forests – Asia's second-largest biosphere.

Koraput Kala Jeera Rice

- Black-colored rice variety, known as the 'Prince of Rice,' renowned for aroma, taste, texture, and nutritional value.
- Consumption aids in increasing haemoglobin levels and improves metabolism.

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