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# Tribal Heritage as IP: Jharkhand's 11 New GI Tags

20 June 2026

HISTORY &amp; CULTURE

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CURATED &amp; WRITTEN BY

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# Tribal Heritage as IP: Jharkhand's 11 New GI Tags

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 Source: [ujjyari.com](http://ujjyari.com) — researched, fact-checked & UPSC-mapped

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## WHY IN NEWS

On June 18, 2026, Jharkhand was granted Geographical Indication (<https://ujjyari.com/terms/geographical-indication/>) (GI) tags for 11 traditional products, raising the state's GI tally from a single product in 2019 to twelve. The recognition converts the state's tribal and artisanal heritage into legally protected intellectual property.

## BACKGROUND: WHAT IS A GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION?

A Geographical Indication is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities, reputation or characteristics essentially attributable to that origin. GI protection in India runs under the **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999**, which came into force in 2003.

FEATURE	DETAIL
Governing law	GI of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999
In force since	2003
Registry location	Chennai
Administered by	DPIIT (Ministry of Commerce and Industry)
Validity	10 years, renewable
International basis	TRIPS Agreement of the WTO
First Indian GI	Darjeeling Tea (2004)

A GI is a collective right held by producers of a region, not an individual. It prevents unauthorised use of the name by others and protects the reputation and livelihoods tied to the product.

## JHARKHAND'S NEW GI PRODUCTS

The eleven products span textiles, metalcraft, painting, jewellery and food, reflecting the depth of the state's tribal culture:

PRODUCT	CATEGORY
Tussar Silk and Sarees	Textile
Kuchai Silk Saree	Textile
Dokra Craft	Metalcraft
Jadopatia Painting	Folk / tribal art
Munda Jewellery	Tribal jewellery
Kesaria Kalakand	Traditional sweet

### Notable Crafts Explained

- **Dokra Craft** is non-ferrous metal casting using the ancient **lost-wax (cire perdue)** technique, also practised in Odisha, West Bengal and Chhattisgarh. Each piece is unique because the wax mould is destroyed during casting.
- **Tussar silk** is a wild silk; Jharkhand is India's largest producer of Tussar silk, making it central to the state's textile economy.
- **Jadopatia painting** is a scroll-painting tradition of the Santhal community, narrating myth and social themes.

## ANALYSIS: WHY GI TAGS MATTER FOR TRIBAL ECONOMIES

### Economic empowerment

- GI tags raise the market value and premium of authentic products.
- They protect artisans from cheap imitations that erode their livelihoods.
- They open export and branding opportunities, linking remote artisans to wider markets.

### Cultural preservation

- Recognition incentivises younger generations to continue dying crafts.
- It documents and dignifies tribal knowledge systems as intellectual property.

## Inclusive development

- Most beneficiaries are women, weavers and tribal artisans, advancing equitable (<https://ujivari.com/vocab/equitable/>) growth.
- GI complements schemes for handlooms, handicrafts and tribal welfare.

## CHALLENGES

- Weak post-registration support: a GI tag alone does not guarantee market access.
- Need for branding, quality control and e-commerce linkages.
- Risk of middlemen capturing the premium instead of artisans.
- Limited awareness among artisans about the rights a GI confers.

## WAY FORWARD

- Couple GI recognition with marketing, design and digital-commerce support.
- Strengthen producer collectives and self-help groups to hold and enforce the GI.
- Integrate GI products with tourism circuits and government procurement.
- Provide working capital and skill upgrades so quality is sustained.

## UPSC RELEVANCE

**Prelims:** GI Act 1999 (in force 2003); GI Registry at Chennai; administered by DPIIT; 10-year renewable validity; TRIPS link; Dokra lost-wax technique.

**Mains (GS1 / GS3):** “Geographical Indication tags can transform tribal heritage into a tool of inclusive economic development. Discuss with examples.” Examine the role of GI in protecting traditional knowledge and the challenges of translating recognition into livelihoods.

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GI law: Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999; in force 2003.

Registry: GI Registry at Chennai under DPIIT; validity 10 years, renewable; recognised under TRIPS.

Jharkhand: Tally rose from 1 (2019) to 12 with 11 new tags in June 2026.

Products: Tussar Silk and Sarees, Kuchai Silk Saree, Dokra Craft, Jadopatia Painting, Munda Jewellery, Kesaria Kalakand.

Dokra: Lost-wax (cire perdue) casting; also in Odisha, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh.

Tussar: Jharkhand is India's largest producer of Tussar silk.

Sources: Press Information Bureau (<https://pib.gov.in>), *The Hindu* (<https://www.thehindu.com>)

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