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MSME Ministry and DPIIT Sign MoU to Widen Market Access for GI-Tagged Products

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MSME Ministry and DPIIT Sign MoU to Widen Market Access for GI-Tagged Products

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✓ Every fact web-verified against primary sources

The Ministry of MSME and the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) signed a Memorandum of Understanding on August 5, 2026, at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi, to link enterprise-support systems with the Geographical Indications legal framework and widen market access for GI-tagged products.

WHAT THE MOU DOES

The agreement connects the MSME Ministry's enterprise-support infrastructure with DPIIT's Geographical Indications administrative and legal machinery, with the explicit goal of onboarding GI-tagged product collectives onto the **Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)** and the **Government e-Marketplace (GeM)** under a unified "**Bharat GI**" banner. The MoU also integrates the existing **One District One Product (ODOP)** ecosystem, meaning artisan and producer clusters already mapped under ODOP gain a more direct digital route to buyers through ONDC's e-commerce network and GeM's public-procurement channel.

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK BEHIND GI PROTECTION

Geographical Indications in India are governed by the **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999**, which allows producers of goods originating from a specific geographical region, and possessing qualities or a reputation attributable to that origin, to register and legally protect the name associated with the product. **DPIIT** functions as the nodal department overseeing India's GI registration and protection regime, working alongside the Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai. Well-known Indian GI-tagged products include **Darjeeling Tea** and the **Kanchipuram Silk Saree**, both frequently cited examples of the scheme's reach across agricultural and craft-based goods.

WHY MARKET ACCESS, NOT JUST REGISTRATION, IS THE GAP

GI registration alone protects a name from misuse but does not automatically translate into commercial reach for the often small, geographically dispersed producer collectives that hold GI tags. By routing GI products through **ONDC**, an open, interoperable e-commerce protocol rather than a single platform, and **GeM**, the government's centralised procurement portal, the MoU targets the practical last-mile problem: connecting legally protected but commercially under-leveraged regional products to buyers at scale, including government departments that are large, reliable procurement customers.

INSTITUTIONAL CONVERGENCE AS A POLICY MODEL

The MoU exemplifies a broader trend in Indian economic policy of stitching together previously siloed institutions and schemes, MSME support, GI legal protection, ODOP's cluster-mapping, and digital public infrastructure like ONDC and GeM, into a single delivery pipeline, rather than creating a new scheme from scratch. This **convergence** approach is increasingly used across Indian governance to extract more value from existing frameworks without new legislative or budgetary overhead.

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS Paper 2: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors; institutional convergence as a governance strategy; the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.

GS Paper 3: MSME sector policy, rural livelihoods and export diversification; digital public infrastructure (ONDC, GeM) as tools of economic inclusion.

Mains angle: "Legal protection of Geographical Indications does not automatically translate into market access for small producers. Discuss with reference to recent institutional convergence efforts." Use the MSME-DPIIT MoU and ODOP-ONDC-GeM integration as your case example.

 FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGE PEDIA**MSME-DPIIT MOU FOR GI PRODUCTS:**

Signed August 5, 2026, Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi

Onboards GI collectives onto ONDC and GeM under a “Bharat GI” banner

Integrates the One District One Product (ODOP) ecosystem

GI LEGAL FRAMEWORK:

Governing statute: Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999

Nodal department: DPIIT

Examples: Darjeeling Tea, Kanchipuram Silk Saree

Sources: PIB, DPIIT, The Hindu

Source: MSME Ministry and DPIIT Sign MoU to Widen Market Access for GI-Tagged Products — Ujiyari.com |
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