

Combating Counterfeiting: Enhancing Artisanal Goods with Geographical Indication Protection and Trademarks

Authors Information	
Name: Shivani Singh Designation: Program Coordinator for Law & Critical Emerging Technologies Name of the Organization: Advanced Study Institute of Asia at SGT University E-mail Address: shivani@advancedstudy.asia Mobile Number: 89798 86344	Name: Khushi Kesari Designation: Program Officer, History Lab: Community, Heritage, & Material Culture Name of the Organization: Advanced Study Institute of Asia at SGT University E-mail Address: Khushi.asia@sgtuniversity.org Mobile Number: 87504 39043

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ABSTRACT:

Counterfeiting poses a significant threat to geographical goods and the artisanal communities that produce them. Geographical Indication (GI) tags serve as markers of authenticity, linking products to their specific geographic origins and traditional methods. The impact of counterfeiting on GI-tagged goods undermines these products' integrity and market value, leading to economic losses and a diminished reputation. This erosion of market confidence affects the livelihoods of artisanal communities, who rely heavily on the premium prices and recognition associated with genuine GI products. Counterfeiting exploits traditional knowledge embedded in GI-tagged goods without

benefiting the communities that have preserved these practices over generations. This results in direct financial losses for artisans and jeopardizes the sustainability of traditional crafts and local economies. As counterfeit products flood the market, they create unfair competition, lowering the prices of authentic goods and reducing the income of legitimate producers. Additionally, consumers are deceived, often receiving substandard products that fail to meet the quality standards associated with GI tags, further harming the reputation of these goods.

To combat counterfeiting and protect the interests of artisanal communities, the use of trademarks in conjunction with GI tags offers an enhanced layer of protection. Trademarks can serve as a powerful tool in distinguishing authentic products from counterfeit ones. This dual protection strategy not only safeguards the economic interests of artisanal communities but also ensures that consumers receive genuine products, thereby maintaining the market value and cultural significance of GI-tagged goods. However, the rise of e-commerce platforms poses significant challenges in regulating the distribution of GI goods. Consumers' lack of awareness about GI certification exacerbates the difficulty in distinguishing between authentic and counterfeit products.

Indian GI products are gaining global recognition for their unique qualities, traditional production methods, and cultural heritage. Growing consumer awareness about the importance of geographical origin and associated attributes has made GI essential in marketing strategies and public policies. This paper underscores the importance of preserving traditional knowledge, protecting indigenous resources, and fostering sustainable development, paying tribute to the weavers, artisans, farmers, and craftspeople who bring each unique product to life.