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2. Gi-Tagged Gifts as Cultural Diplomacy – PM Modi's 2026 Five-Nation Tour – Economy

1. Why in News

1. PM Narendra Modi used India's traditional crafts, textiles, agricultural products, GI-tagged items as instruments of cultural diplomacy during 2026 five-nation tour
2. Countries covered – Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Finland, Denmark, UAE
3. Gifts showcasing India's civilizational heritage, artisanal excellence, agricultural richness
4. Strategy reinforcing India's soft power through heritage, symbolism, cultural diplomacy

2. Key Highlights of the Giftings

Italy

1. PM Meloni – Muga silk stole (Assam), Shirui Lily silk stole (Manipur)
2. President Mattarella – Marble inlay work box (Agra) with CDs of Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, M.S. Subbulakshmi

Netherlands

1. King Willem-Alexander – Jaipur Blue Pottery (Rajasthan)
2. Queen Máxima – Meenakari, Kundan earrings (Rajasthan)
3. Dutch PM – Madhubani painting with fish motif (Bihar)

Norway

1. PM Støre – Pressed orchid paintings, orchid paperweights (Sikkim)
2. King Harald V – Tarakasi silver sailboat model (Cuttack, Odisha)
3. Queen Sonja – Tala Pattachitra palm-leaf artwork (Odisha)

Sweden

1. PM Kristersson – Ladakhi wool stole, Loktak tea, Santiniketan messenger bag

Iceland

1. PM Frostadóttir – Replica of Sherpa Tenzing Norgay's Everest ice axe (honoring mountaineering history)

Finland

1. PM Orpo – Kamal Talai Pichwai painting (Rajasthan's Nathdwara tradition)

Denmark

1. PM Frederiksen – Bidri silver work vase (Karnataka; Deccan metal craftsmanship)

UAE

1. President Mohamed bin Zayed – Rogan painting, Kesar mangoes, Meghalaya pineapples
2. Crown Prince – Koftgari dagger, Mithila makhana
3. Queen Mother – Maheshwari silk fabric, Chak Hao black rice (Manipur)

FAO Director-General

1. Diverse Indian rice varieties, millet bars promoting India's agri-biodiversity, nutritious grains

3. About the Products

Product	Region	GI Tag	Special Features
Muga Silk	Assam	Yes	Natural golden sheen; world's strongest natural fibres
Shirui Lily Silk Stole	Manipur	No	Inspired by rare endemic Shirui Lily; Tangkhul Naga culture
Marble Inlay Work (Pachauri)	Agra, UP	Yes	Pietra Dura craftsmanship; Mughal artistic legacy
Jaipur Blue Pottery	Rajasthan	Yes	Cobalt blue motifs; Persian-Indian fusion
Meenakari & Kundan Jewellery	Rajasthan	No	Enamel work with gemstones; royal heritage
Madhubani Painting	Bihar	Yes	Geometric patterns; natural colours; symbolic motifs
Orchid Paintings	Sikkim	No	Real pressed orchids; Eastern Himalayan biodiversity
Tarakasi Silver Filigree	Cuttack, Odisha	Yes	Intricate silver wirework; centuries-old Odia craftsmanship
Tala Pattachitra	Odisha	Yes	Palm-leaf engraving; mythological themes
Ladakhi Pashmina Wool Stole	Ladakh	Yes	Pure warm wool; Himalayan weaving tradition
Loktak Tea	Manipur	No	Artisanal tea grown around Loktak Lake ecosystem
Santiniketan Leather Bag	West Bengal	Yes	Handcrafted embossed leather; Visva-Bharati traditions
Bidri Silver Work	Karnataka	Yes	Blackened alloy with silver inlay; Persian-Deccan fusion
Rogan Painting	Kutch, Gujarat	Yes	Rare textile painting using castor oil paste
Kesar Mango	Gujarat	Yes	GI-tagged; saffron-coloured pulp; sweet aroma
Meghalaya Pineapple	Meghalaya	Yes	Naturally sweet; low fibre; hilly terrain grown
Koftgari Work	Rajasthan/Deccan	Yes	Metal inlay using gold/silver patterns on steel
Mithila Makhana	Bihar	Yes	Premium foxnut; rich nutritional value; wetland cultivation
Maheshwari Silk	Madhya Pradesh	Yes	Lightweight handloom; reversible borders
Chak Hao Rice	Manipur	Yes	Aromatic black rice; rich in antioxidants
Kamal Talai Pichwai Painting	Rajasthan	No	Devotional Nathdwara art; lotus ponds; Krishna traditions

Indian Rice Varieties Given to FAO Director-General

Rice Variety	Region	Special Feature
Joha Rice	Assam	Indigenous aromatic; soft texture
Kalana Mak Rice	Uttar Pradesh	"Buddha Rice"; distinct aroma; heritage grain
Gobindo hog Rice	West Bengal	Premium short-grain aromatic; Bengali cuisine

Palakkad an Matta/Red Rice	Kerala	Indigenous red rice; rich in fibre, nutrients
Basmati Rice	Indo-Gangetic Plains	Premium long-grain aromatic; global export value

4. About the GI Tag

Definition

1. Geographical Indication (GI) identifies products having qualities or reputation tied to geographic origin
2. Ensures authenticity, legal protection

Legal Framework

1. Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999
2. Supported by associated Rules (2002 Rules, recent 2025 Amendments)
3. Prevents misuse, protects consumers, boosts regional economies
4. Enforced through Geographical Indications Registry

Awarded By

1. Geographical Indications Registry, Ministry of Commerce & Industry

Significance of GI Tag

1. Enhances market recognition, export potential, branding
2. Protects traditional knowledge
3. Benefits local artisans, farmers
4. Promotes sustainable regional development

International Framework

1. TRIPS Agreement (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) under WTO provides international framework for GI protection
2. Lisbon Agreement for Protection of Appellations of Origin (WIPO)

5. Significance of Gifting as Cultural Diplomacy

Cultural Diplomacy

1. Gifts project India's civilizational heritage (5000+ years of craft traditions)
2. Strengthen emotional, cultural bonds with partner countries
3. Personalized gifts reflecting recipient country's connection with India (Netherlands-Blue Pottery ceramic tradition; Norway-Himalayan orchids)

Promotion of GI-Tagged and Indigenous Products

1. Showcases local crafts, handlooms, agricultural diversity
2. Boosts global recognition for Indian artisans, farmers
3. Creates international demand for products
4. Supports rural livelihoods, traditional craftspersons

Strengthening Soft Power

1. Traditional gifts enhance India's image as culturally rich nation
2. Heritage as diplomatic tool in international relations
3. Communicates values (creativity, sustainability, diversity) beyond words
4. Alternative to purely transactional diplomacy

Other Significance

1. **North-East India promotion** - Muga silk (Assam), Shirui Lily stole (Manipur), Loktak tea, Chak Hao rice highlighting often-overlooked northeastern heritage

2. **Agricultural diplomacy** – Kesar mangoes, Meghalaya pineapples, diverse rice varieties to FAO promoting India's agri-biodiversity
3. **Artisan empowerment** – International visibility translating into economic opportunities for craftspersons
4. **Tourism promotion** – Gifts creating curiosity about India's diverse regions
5. **Mission LiFE** – Sustainable, eco-friendly gifts (natural textiles, agricultural products) reflecting India's environmental commitments

6. Way Forward

1. Systematic database of GI-tagged products for diplomatic gifting protocol
2. Artisan training, quality standardization for export-ready crafts
3. International GI protection strengthening through bilateral agreements
4. Promote "vocal for local" through diplomatic channels
5. Digital storytelling accompanying gifts (QR codes linking to craft origins, artisan stories)

7. Conclusion

PM Modi's use of GI-tagged items, traditional crafts, agricultural products during 2026 five-nation tour exemplifies cultural diplomacy leveraging India's civilizational heritage as soft power instrument. Gifts spanning Muga silk (Assam), Jaipur Blue Pottery, Madhubani paintings (Bihar), Tarakasi filigree (Odisha), Chak Hao rice (Manipur), Kesar mangoes (Gujarat), diverse rice varieties for FAO Director-General showcase India's geographic diversity, artisanal excellence, agricultural richness. GI Tag framework under Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act 1999 protects traditional knowledge, benefits local artisans, boosts regional economies, enhances export potential. Cultural diplomacy through heritage gifts strengthens emotional bonds, promotes northeastern India's often-overlooked traditions, supports artisan livelihoods, and reinforces India's image as culturally rich civilization using heritage as diplomatic tool advancing national interests through people-centered, values-based international engagement.

Source - <https://ddnews.gov.in/en/pm-modi-showcases-indias-cultural-heritage-through-iconic-gifts-during-five-nation-tour/>