

GI tag to 'Mithila Makhana'

August 25, 2022

In news- Geographical indication (GI) tag was awarded to Bihar's 'Mithila Makhana', in a bid to help farmers get the maximum price for their produce.

About Mithila Makhana-

- **Mithila Makhana is cultivated in the Mithila region of Bihar and some parts of Nepal.**
- **Its botanical name is 'Euryale Ferox Salisb'** and it is a special variety of aquatic fox nut.
- It is believed that the food is **famously consumed during Kojagara Puja by Maithil Brahmins**, who celebrate it for newly-married couples.
- **Makhana is generally hailed as a healthy Indian snack** and these seeds are edible after they are processed.
- **They grow on a leaf in a pond, before they are collected**, washed and sun-dried for hours.
- After that, they are roasted in a pan at a high flame. Following this, their outer shells are broken and the white puff comes out.
- It is said to be **low in cholesterol, fat and sodium**, and also an ideal weight-loss snack as it is low in calories.
- **It has a high nutritional value and is a rich source of proteins**, carbohydrates, fibre, potassium, iron, and zinc. They can be roasted with a sprinkling of spices and condiments to provide a tasty treat.
- They also **help one to overcome insomnia and arthritis, and improve cognitive functions.**
- It is the **fifth product from Bihar which has received the GI tag.**
- Prior to this, Bhagalpur's Jardalu Mango, Katarni Dhaan (rice), Nawada's Maghai Paan and Muzaffarpur's Shahi Litchi have been recognised.

What is GI Tag?

- **According to the World International Property Organization or WIPO, a GI or Geographical Indication Tag** is used for products which have specific geographical origin or have qualities that can be attributed specifically to the region.
- In addition, the qualities, characteristics or reputation of the product should be essentially due to the place of origin.
- Once a product gets this tag, any person or company cannot sell a similar item under that name.
- This tag is **valid for a period of 10 years** following which it can be renewed.