

# Andaman & Nicobar's GI Tag Triumph: A Milestone in India's Heritage Recognition

IAS 2026 Coaching

Addressing the **nation through his Mann Ki Baat radio program**, Prime Minister **Shri Narendra Modi** on Sunday highlighted a significant achievement for the **Andaman and Nicobar Islands**—the recent **Geographical Indication (GI) tag** granted to **Virgin Coconut Oil of Nicobar district**. He emphasized the **economic and cultural impact** of this recognition and the initiatives being undertaken to promote it.

## Mann Ki Baat Special Broadcast

Before discussing this milestone, the Prime Minister noted a **change in the usual schedule** of his monthly address. Traditionally aired on the **last Sunday of the month**, this edition was broadcast on the **third Sunday** as the **last Sunday coincided with Republic Day celebrations**.

## Recognition for Virgin Coconut Oil

Speaking on the achievement, the Prime Minister said:

**“Friends, there is another piece of very good news from Andaman and Nicobar Islands too. Virgin Coconut Oil in Nicobar district has recently received the GI Tag. After the GI Tag, another new initiative has been undertaken for Virgin Coconut Oil. Self-help groups are being formed by organizing the women associated with the production of this oil. They are also being imparted special training in marketing and branding. This is a big step towards economically empowering our tribal communities.”**

He further expressed confidence that the **Virgin Coconut Oil from Andaman & Nicobar** would soon gain international recognition, thanks to the dedicated efforts of **women's self-help groups**.

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# Historic Moment: Seven GI Tags for Andaman & Nicobar at Once

For the **first time in Indian history**, seven products from any **Union Territory**—in this case, the **Andaman & Nicobar Islands**—were granted **GI tags simultaneously**. This achievement was made possible with the support of the **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** and the **Andaman & Nicobar Administration**.

The **NGO Human Welfare Association**, under the leadership of **Padma Shri Rajani Kant**, played a crucial role in coordinating the entire process. Rajani Kant, often referred to as the '**GI Man of India**', has been instrumental in securing **GI tags for 155 products across 21 states and Union Territories**.

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## Detailed Explanation of the Seven GI-Tagged Products

### 1. Nicobar Coconut

- A **native coconut variety** from Nicobar Islands, known for its **high oil content and rich flavor**.
- Cultivated using **traditional tribal farming methods**, ensuring its **organic quality**.

### 2. Nicobari Tavi-i-Ngaich (Virgin Coconut Oil)

- Extracted from **fresh coconuts** using a **cold-pressing method**, retaining **nutritional benefits**.
- Used for **medicinal, cosmetic, and culinary purposes**, prized for its **purity and quality**.
- With the **GI tag**, efforts are being made to enhance **branding and international marketing**.

### 3. Andaman Karen Musley Rice

- A **traditional rice variety** cultivated by the **Karen tribe**, known for its **unique aroma, taste, and high nutritional value**.
- Cultivated using **organic farming techniques**, ensuring **pesticide-free production**.

### 4. Nicobari Hodi (Outrigger Canoe)

- A **handcrafted traditional canoe** used by **Nicobari tribals** for **fishing and transport**.
- Built from **durable wood**, featuring a **unique design that enhances stability in rough waters**.
- The GI tag helps in **preserving the traditional craftsmanship** of the Nicobari people.

## 5. Nicobari Mat (Chatrai-Hileuoi)

- An **intricately woven mat** made by **Nicobari women** using **natural plant fibers**.
- Known for its **fine weaving patterns** and **durability**, often used for **ceremonial purposes**.
- The GI recognition aims to **support tribal artisans and promote local handicrafts**.

## 6. Nicobari Hut (To Chanvi Pati - Nyi Hupul)

- A **traditional hut architecture** unique to **Nicobar**, designed to withstand **cyclones and harsh weather conditions**.
- Constructed using **bamboo, palm leaves, and wood**, demonstrating **indigenous engineering expertise**.
- GI tag helps in **preserving this eco-friendly architectural tradition**.

## 7. Padauk Wood Craft

- Made from **Padauk wood**, a rare **red-colored hardwood** found in Andaman forests.
- Used to craft **furniture, sculptures, and intricate carvings**, showcasing **local craftsmanship**.
- GI status ensures **sustainable use of forest resources** while promoting **handicraft artisans**.

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## Conclusion: A Step Towards Economic and Cultural Empowerment

The recognition of these **seven indigenous products** under the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag** marks a **significant step** in preserving the **unique cultural and economic identity** of the **Andaman & Nicobar Islands**.

With the active involvement of **NABARD, local artisans, and self-help groups**, these products are set to gain **wider markets and international recognition**. This initiative not only helps in **economic empowerment** but also ensures the **preservation of traditional craftsmanship and biodiversity** in the region.

As India continues to celebrate its **diverse heritage**, such recognitions reinforce the **importance of indigenous products**, paving the way for **sustainable development and cultural preservation**.

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