

UK seeks higher protection for its GI products from agri sector under FTA with India

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THE UK'S demand of a higher level of protection for its GI products from the agriculture sector under the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) with India remains an unresolved issue as the talks for the pact are on to iron out differences, an official said.

British GI (Geographical Indication) products include Scotch whisky, Stilton cheese and Cheddar cheese.

A GI is primarily an agricultural, natural or manufactured product (handicrafts and industrial goods) originating from a definite geographical territory. Typically, such a name conveys an assurance of quality and dis-

tinctiveness, which is essentially attributable to the place of its origin. Once a product gets this tag, any person or company cannot sell a similar item under that name.

India normally provides general protection for violation of GI rules, but the UK is seeking a higher level of protection, the official, who did not wish to be named, said.

"Negotiations are going on between the two countries. There are some issues pending in the intellectual property rights (IPRs) chapter," the official added.

According to experts, the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) under the World Trade Organisation outlines an elevated level of protection for GIs.