The Battle Over the Hapus Name: The Konkan vs Valsad GI Dispute

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News context: 24 November 2026 (press report)

Prelims: Geographical Indication (GI), the GI Registry, the Alphonso (Hapus) mango

Mains: General Studies I, regional identity; General Studies III, intellectual property rights, agricultural marketing



Original illustrative image: pcsmantra.com.

Why in news

The dispute over the **Hapus name** between mango growers of Maharashtra's Konkan region and Gujarat's Valsad has entered a decisive phase. Konkan's Alphonso mango has held a Geographical Indication (GI) tag since 2018. An application seeking recognition for Valsad Hapus has been opposed by Konkan's growers. According to press reports, the GI Registry had suggested that the two sides seek a settlement through mediation, but Konkan's growers rejected the compromise around 19 November, per a 21 November report. **The hearing has**

concluded and the decision has been reserved. Note that no existing GI has been cancelled and no new GI has been granted.

The registered GI is "Alphonso" (Application No. 139); the dispute is about use of the name Hapus.

Caution: this article draws on a news report (24 November 2026) and other press reports. The GI Registry's order is awaited.

What a Geographical Indication is

The basic idea: a Geographical Indication (GI) is an intellectual property right that links a product to its specific geographical origin and recognises that its qualities or reputation are tied to that place. It stops the name from being used for products from elsewhere and lets registered growers market their produce under that identity. In India, GIs are governed by the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999.

Konkan Alphonso's GI: in the GI Registry's records, "Alphonso" is registered as Application No. 139. The certificate is dated 3 October 2018, the applicant is the Director of Research of Dr Balasaheb Sawant Konkan Krishi Vidyapeeth, and the registration is valid until 21 September 2028. According to the PIB release of 5 October 2018, the GI covers the Alphonso mangoes of **Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Raigad, Thane and Palghar** districts.

What the dispute is about

The Valsad application: the application for Valsad Hapus was filed by Bharatiya Kisan Sangh and Navsari Agricultural University. (Reports differ on the filing date, so none is given here.) They argue that Valsad and the surrounding region have their own tradition of growing Alphonso mangoes, that the produce has distinctive qualities, and that it should be allowed to use the name Hapus.

The political push: according to press reports, in March 2025 the MP from Valsad wrote to the Union Commerce Minister seeking support for the application under the Centre's **One District One Product (ODOP)** initiative. He argued that the Ratnagiri Alphonso season generally ends by the third week of May, when the peak season for Valsadi Hapus begins, so a separate tag would help Gujarat's farmers build their own identity.

Konkan's objection: the objection is primarily to the **name Hapus**. Konkan's growers say Valsad can seek recognition for its mangoes under a different name; allowing the same name for two

regions will confuse consumers and dilute the reputation of Konkan Alphonso. They hold that Konkan's soil, climate and coastal conditions give the fruit its taste and aroma.

What is at stake

The economic stake: according to reports, Konkan Hapus earns around **Rs 200 crore** in the domestic market and **Rs 80 crore** in exports. Growers fear that a second GI using the same name could weaken the premium associated with their produce.

Market arrangement: the Maharashtra State Agricultural Marketing Board has instructed market committees to ensure mangoes are sold under the name of the state and variety they originate from. GI logos, details of registered growers and QR codes have been recommended to help buyers identify genuine Konkan Hapus.

Growers organising: a mango growers' conference has been announced at Devgad on 3 December to decide the next steps. Their demand is that Valsad should seek a distinct tag, as Goa's mangoes have done with names like Hilario and Mussarad.

Analysis for the exam

Name versus product: the dispute touches a foundational question of GI law: a GI belongs not to a variety but to a region's product and its reputation. This is why Konkan's objection is to the name, not to Valsad's mango.

Boundaries between neighbouring regions: when two geographically close regions share a similar climate, deciding where the GI boundary should lie is a difficult policy question.

The limits of a GI: registration alone is not enough; logos, grower registration and QR-based identification are needed to stop counterfeit sales in the market.

Way forward

The decision now rests with the GI Registry. Whatever it decides, the balance will turn on two things: protecting Konkan's established reputation and addressing Valsad farmers' demand for their own identity. The distinct-name option, which the Konkan side is reported to be willing to accept, could be one way to join both interests.

Prelims practice question

Question 1. Consider the following statements regarding the Hapus GI dispute:

Statement 1: The Alphonso mango of Konkan received its GI tag in 2010.

Statement 2: Konkan's growers object mainly to the use of the name Hapus.

Statement 3: The GI Registry has reserved its decision on this application and no new GI has yet been granted.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

▼ **Answer and explanation**

Answer: (b)

Statement 1 is incorrect: the certificate for Konkan Alphonso is dated 3 October 2018. Statement 2 is correct: Konkan's objection is mainly to the name Hapus. Statement 3 is correct: the hearing has concluded, the decision is reserved and no new GI has been granted.

Question 2. In the context of the recent Hapus dispute, under what name is the GI for Konkan's mango registered with the GI Registry?

(a) Hapus

(b) Ratnagiri Mango

(c) Alphonso

(d) Konkan Kesar

▼ **Answer and explanation**

Answer: (c)

The registered GI is "Alphonso" (Application No. 139). The dispute is not about this registered GI but about use of the name Hapus.

Mains practice question

Question 1. "The Hapus dispute shows that a Geographical Indication is not merely a registration but a balance of market identity and regional interests." Examine this statement with reference to the Konkan-Valsad dispute. (250 words, 15 marks)

Answer outline

Introduction: the concept of a GI and the background of the current dispute in brief.

Body: Konkan Alphonso's 2018 GI (Application No. 139); the Valsad application and its arguments; Konkan's objection to the name; the economic stakes; the policy difficulty of GI boundaries; the need for market identification systems such as logos and QR codes.

Conclusion: a balanced conclusion: protecting reputation while allowing new identity; the distinct-name option.

Sources

- https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/maharashtra-gujarat-farmers-fighting-hapus-gi-tag-10976889/
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- https://www.indiacode.nic.in/handle/123456789/1981?locale=hi

Sources 2 and 3 are official. Sources 4 and 5 corroborate the news (source 5 is in Marathi). Source 6 gives the Hindi title of the Act.

Frequently asked questions

▼ What is the essence of the Hapus GI dispute?

Konkan's Alphonso growers are opposing the GI application filed for Valsad Hapus; the hearing has concluded and the GI Registry's decision is reserved.

▼ What exactly are Konkan's growers objecting to?

The objection is to the name Hapus; Konkan says Valsad can seek GI recognition for its mangoes under a different name.

▼ Which districts does the Konkan Alphonso GI cover?

Five districts: Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Raigad, Thane and Palghar.

▼ Has Valsad Hapus been granted the GI tag?

No. The hearing has concluded, but the decision is reserved; no new GI has been granted and no existing GI has been cancelled.