

Anwar Ratol Mango GI Conflict between India and Pakistan

Samina Yaqoob*

Dr Hasan Murad school of Management, University of Management and Technology Lahore, Pakistan

* Correspondence: sameenayaqoob130@gmail.com

Abstract: Mango (*Mangifera indica L*) is native to the Indian sub-continent fruit, and is the national fruit of Pakistan and India. The Anwar Ratol or Anwar Rataul or Rataul (as spelled in India) or Anwar Ratol (as spelled in Pakistan) mango, a small, fibreless mango is renowned for its unmatched sweetness. The territorial map and horticulture regime of Indian sub-continent were mutated in 1947. At the time of the partitioning of British India into India and Pakistan, millions of individuals moved across the newly drawn border and along with them they carried seeds, cuttings and saplings of their motherlands. Rataul mango was one of such botanical migrants. India has granted it GI while Pakistan still did not since the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 of India is bit mature than the Geographical Indications (Registration and Protection) Act of 2020 of Pakistan. There was no formal opposition to it by Pakistan, as there was in the Basmati rice GI, where Pakistan objected to the Indian GI application and sought its own protection in EU. The main question here is whether GI protection is historically oriented, or reputation and economic affiliation based. Current study explores the history of this GI dispute. The study highlights the fluidity of the germplasm across borders, emotional partition legacy and the use of the king of fruits to assert the national identity.

Keywords: Anwar Ratol; Anwar Ratol; geographical Indication; intellectual property; agricultural heritage; TRIPS

1. Introduction

The WTO TRIPS Agreement, defines geographical indications (GIs) as those indications of goods whose qualities or reputations can be connected to their geographical origin (Gervais 2015). GIs play a key role in the intellectual property (IP) law for identification of goods and cultural identity (Raustiala and Munzer 2007; Gangjee 2012). In contrast to trademarks, GIs focus on the mutual connection between a product and its place of origin for economic value (Moschini, Menapace, and Pick 2008). The historical origin is also important in GI claims because the traditional doctrine focuses on the geographical place of origin of a product (Gangjee 2012). GIs represent the national identity and the cultural heritage (Trubek 2008; Bowen 2015). GIs have become a significant IP right whereby products are associated to the place of origin.

The transboundary products challenge the territorial nature of GI law (Rangnekar 2004). Both India and Pakistan, have historically and culturally owned a high-quality type of mango, i.e., Anwar Ratol mango (Business Standard 2017). During the mass migration at the time of partition of British India in 1947, the agricultural knowledge and the varieties of plants were relocated across the newly established borders (Talbot 2009). The 1947 partition was not just a political separation, but a socio-economic separation that redistributed resources including farm resources (Jalal 1995). GIs increase economic gains through improvement of product value and sustenance of the rural communities (Maskus 2000). But in transboundary situations, they can also increase inequalities through the establishment of monopolies on a common resource. The global IP regimes usually benefit wealthy economies leading to the issue of sharing of benefits equally (Deardorff 1994). These disputes will increase in future as global trade emphasize the origin of products (Giovannucci et al. 2009).

GIs, politics, trade, and national identity overlap in South Asia, for agricultural products like Basmati rice and Fazli Mango (Das 2006; Rangnekar 2010; Haque 2026; Islam, Shazia, and Maamoon 2024). Such transboundary GI conflicts are common where the divided countries share cultural heritage (Rangnekar 2010). The post-partition cultural patrimony whereby the agriculture has been linked with national identity, led to such types of GI disputes. The Anwar Ratol mango (as spelled in Pakistan) and Anwar Rataul, Anwar Rataul or just Rataul (as spelled in India) is a transnational GI conflict, based on migration history, post-colonial identity and economic value. The

Citation: Samina Yaqoob. 2026. Anwar Ratol Mango GI conflict between India and Pakistan. *Trends in Intellectual Property Research* 4(2), 29-34.

<https://doi.org/10.69971/tipr.4.2.2026.119>



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Anwar Ratul, commonly known in South Asia as the King of Mangoes, well-known for its organoleptic characteristics is now the hot issue due to the cross-border GI controversy between India and Pakistan. This small and yellow-green mango with fiber less pulp and honey-like sweetness is cherished due to its juicy nature and enticing fragrance. As opposed to other varieties of mango, such as Chausa, Langra, Safeda, Daseri cultivated in India and Pakistan, Anwar Ratauls are smaller in size, lemon-yellow in color and get premium price than other mango varieties. Anwar Rataul mangoes are cultivated late April and early August annually. Planting can be done from February to April and August (Anonymous 2016).

This GI dispute arose first time in 1981 when Pakistani President General Zia-ul-Haq offered the fruit to Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi (Economic Times 2016). This study highlights the importance of legal interpretations, identification of common heritage and collaborative governance systems. The absence of such reforms will lead to the emergence of similar disputes in the regions that have a shared or common history.

2. Indian Narrative

There are two narratives of Anwar Rataul GI in India.

- a. Anwar Ratul mango has its origin in the village of Rataul, in the Khekra Tehsil, Baghpat district of Western Uttar Pradesh, India, around 40 kilometers Northeast of Delhi (Express Tribune 2014; Anonymous 2022; Vij 2015) since 1912. In Rataul, Mr. Abdur Razzaq, Mr. Kareem-uddin, Ch. Kuvar Hussain and Kallu bought the majority of land in the late 19th century under the name of 4 Takhta, Deputy Sahib Wala Bagh, Nehar Ke Pul Wala Bagh and Kallu respectively. At that time, mangoes were grown by traditional methods, i.e., by tukhm (seeds) or ungrafted (without seeds). Bambaï variety mangoes were grafted in the village Rataul in 1874, which were introduced by an Engineer of Eastern Yamuna canal project, Mr. Barden of Maharashtra who had collected them in the Village of DAULA of Baghpat District. Sheikh Inayat Ali son Mr. Abdur Razzaq established 1.5-hectare mango orchards in the year 1880 in Rataul village. The Anwar Ratul was developed by Sheikh Mohammad Afaq Faridi, the grandson of Mr. Abdur Razzaq, who came back to Rataul in 1905 after finishing his education. Afaq Faridi later on resigned from his job and dedicated his life for mangoes cultivation. In 1917, he discovered a seedling that had a distinct carrot-flower aroma of the leaf and superior flavor which he grafted and cloned by the year 1928. He planted four mango trees of the original one in a year and 30-40 plants in the following year. He named this variety Anwar Rataul on his wife whose pen name was Anwar Khatoon hence Anwar while Rataul came from the name of a village. Faridi opened a nursery named Shohra-e-Afaq on 7th May 1928 and registered it on 4th November 1935 (Economic Times 2016). The first governor of Uttar Pradesh, Nawab of Chhatari, Mr. Ahmed Sayeed Khan who represented India in an exhibition in 1935 in London, displayed Rataul mangoes and won First prize and appreciation. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru (first Prime minister of India), dubbed Faridi as the Mango King.
- b. Contrarily, Rahat Abrar, of the Rataul village claims that his uncle Abrarul Haq took the cuttings of the plant to Pakistan after the partitioning of India in 1947 (Express Tribune 2014). The variety is named after his grandfather, Anwarul Haq who had an orchard in Rataul. In Multan, Abrarul propagated the Anwar Rataul where he had migrated in 1956 (Anonymous 2016). Zahoor Siddiqi, who supplemented Abrar assertion, revealed that the nursery catalogue of the Faridi family reported that the variety was bred at Mubarak Bagh, an orchard that was owned by Mubarak Ali who was the father of Anwarul Haq (Express Tribune 2014).

The Rataul Mango Producers Association (RMPA) started the GI registration of the Rataul Mango by filing the application No. 206 on 5 April 2010, facilitated by the Central Institute of Subtropical Horticulture (CISH), Lucknow. After advertisement in the GI Journal No. 140 (31 August 2020) under Class -31 as Mango, it was accepted under Sub-section (1) of Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999. The GI Registry of Chennai awarded GI tag to Anwar Rataul on 14 September 2021 until 4 April 2030 as shown in Figure 1 (Rawat 2021). It is the second mango variety in Uttar Pradesh, after Malihabadi Dussheri Mango (GI No. 125) and the 34th type of products in Uttar Pradesh to be granted the GI tag (Anonymous 2021). In India, the cultivation still remains small with about 85 hectares of more than 10,000 trees in Rataul and the adjacent villages (Shekhpuri, Vinaypur, Mubarikpur, Tigri, and Lahchoda). The GI describes it as medium size 140-220g, ovate-oblong, fibreless mango, with unique aroma having total soluble solids 18-22o Brix (Geographical Indications Journal 2020). The 15,000 inhabitants of the Baghpat village are also proud of a 100-year-old mango tree, and the RMPA took its centennial in 2012 (Anonymous 2016).

In 1981, Pakistani president General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq sent Indian Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi and the president, Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, the gift Anwar Ratol mangoes from Pakistan (Economic Times 2016) as a sign of friendship between the two neighbors. Indira Gandhi, happy with the quality of mangoes wrote an open letter to the General Zia-ul-Haq thanking him. She called the mangoes as being only available in Pakistan (Economic Times 2016). This diplomatic courtesy, angered the mango growers of Rataul village. They sent Rataul mangoes, grown in Rataul, India to the Indian Prime Minister to make her know that the Pakistani Anwar Ratol mangoes were actually of Indian origin. To counter her letter, Indra Gandhi sent the Rataul mangoes that were growing in India to the President Zia-ul-Haq (Economic Times 2016).

3. Pakistan Narrative

There are three narratives of Anwar Ratol in Pakistan.

- a. In 1945, Mohammad Afaq Faridi dispatched the plants to Damodar Swarup, Hafizullah Khan and Peer Baksh, who were his friends at Multan and there they opened a nursery of Anwar Ratol there (Economic Times 2016).
- b. Pre-partition migration disseminated the variety. Grafts reached Mirpur Khas (Sindh) around 1934 (Anonymous 2025), and during 1947 in Multan (Punjab). The variety became famous, and symbol of pride for Pakistan (Sarita 2022).
- c. Pakistan Agricultural Research Department developed the species from a graft from the Rataul trees and it was named Anwar meaning 'better' (Paracha 2019).

प्ररूप 0-2

बौद्धिक सम्पदा भारत

भारत सरकार
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

FORM 0-2

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY INDIA

भौगोलिक उपदर्शन रजिस्ट्री
Geographical Indication Registry

वस्तुओं का भौगोलिक उपदर्शन (रजिस्ट्रीकरण तथा संरक्षण) अधिनियम, 1999
Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999

घारा 16 (2) के अधीन भौगोलिक उपदर्शन अथवा प्राधिकृत उपयोक्ता के रजिस्ट्रीकरण का प्रमाणपत्र
Certificate of Registration of Geographical Indication or of authorised user under section 16(2)

भौगोलिक उपदर्शन संख्या:
Geographical Indication No.: 206

CERTIFICATE NO. 401

दिनांक
Date : 05.04.2010

प्रमाणित किया जाता है कि भौगोलिक उपदर्शन (जिराकी समाकृति इसके साथ उपाबद्ध है)

के नाम से	वर्ग में	संख्या के अधीन	दिनांक को
			के लिए रजिस्टर में रजिस्ट्रीकृत किया गया है।

Certified that the Geographical Indication (of which a representation is annexed hereto) has been registered in the register in the name of **Rataul Mango Producers Association** at C/o Umar Faridi, Village & Post Office, Rataul, District: Baghpat – 250 101, Uttar Pradesh, India. Facilitated by: ICAR – Central Institute for Subtropical Horticulture, Rehmankhera, P.O. Kakori, Lucknow – 226 101, Uttar Pradesh, India.

in class 31 under no. 206 as of the date 05.04.2010
in respect of "RATAUL MANGO" Falling in Class – 31 – in respect of – Mango

Rataul

आज दिनांक 20 21 माह 20 21 को चेन्नई में मेरे निदेश पर मुद्रांकित किया गया।
Sealed at my direction this 14th day of September 20 21 at Chennai.

रजिस्ट्रार, भौगोलिक उपदर्शन
Registrar of Geographical Indication.

Figure 1. GI certificate issued by Chennai GI registry (Rawat 2021).

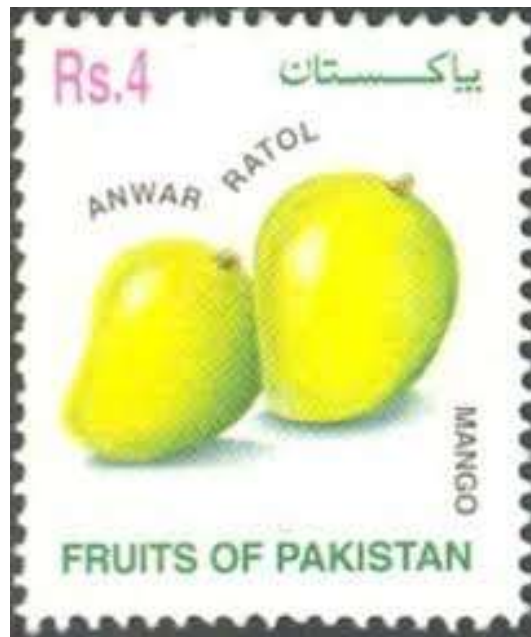


Figure 2. Anwar Ratol stamp issued in Pakistan.¹

It thrived in Pakistan's Punjab and Sindh regions, becoming a premium export variety prized for its sweetness (TSS 18-22° Brix), low fibre, and short early-season window (May-June). Pakistan developed the variety as a major export commodity. Anwar Rataul is even featured along with three other mango varieties on a four-rupee postage stamp that is part of the "Fruits of Pakistan" series as shown in Figure 2 (Anonymous 2016; Wikipedia 2023). In August 1988, the plane carrying Pakistan's president, General Zia-Ul-Haq, crashed over Bahawalpur (Punjab), killing him. Investigators found chemicals used to make small explosives on the mangoes which were stored on the plane. The mangoes were Anwar Ratole (Paracha 2019).

The developing nations tend to use GI systems inefficiently because of institutional barriers (Shafi et al. 2024). Pakistan has not registered it yet as GI under the Geographical Indications (Registration and Protection) Act, 2020² of Pakistan but registered the Sindhri mango as GI in 2023 (Trade Development Authority of Pakistan 2023). Since 1981, Pakistan has used Anwar Ratul mangoes as diplomatic presents to heads of state and foreign diplomats to market mangoes in the world (Gulf News 2017). Anwar Ratul mangoes are the new product in the high-end markets in the gulf region, Europe, and North America (Gulf News 2017). Mango is the 2nd largest fruit crop of Pakistan and Pakistan is 6th largest producer of mangoes globally.³ Anwar Ratol in Pakistan is mostly grown in Multan, Rahim Yar Khan and Bahawalpur (Punjab) and Mirpur Khas and Sukkur (Sindh),

4. TRIPS and GIs

Within the WTO TRIPS Agreement (WTO 1994), geographical indications (GIs) are indications that designate goods whose qualities or reputation could be attributed to their geographical origin (Gervais 2015). This definition is ambiguous as it identifies quality and reputation as two grounds of protection. This twofold standard gives flexibility in the interpretation, making it possible to have competing claims (Correa 2002; Addor and Grazioli 2002). GI regimes in the TRIPS Agreement can't deal the collective cultural and agricultural heritage (Das 2010). This weakness makes it clear that more adaptable or collaborative GI frameworks are required (Blakeney 2015).

The geographical products are able to obtain new reputational identities regardless of their source (Barham 2003). The GI claims are difficult because the 1947 partition interfered with geographical continuity of India (Bowen 2010). The rivalry claims are general nationalistic in a sense, and the agricultural products are the tool of cultural heritage. In GI disputes, such as the one between Champagne and Feta, this is not necessarily about the economic value rather it is about symbolic ownership and identity (Hughes 2006). The history of partition and the perpetual geopolitical conflicts in South Asia enhance such symbolism. This reflects broader challenges in applying IP law to post-colonial contexts (Bowen 2010).

5. Recommendations

Following practical steps can mitigate such situations.

Joint Scientific and Horticultural Cooperation: Agricultural research institutes (e.g., the ICAR-CISH, Lucknow) in India and Pakistan (e.g., under PARC) should begin technical exchange (low-politics) on grafting techniques resistant to climate change, conservation of germplasm, control of disease, and improvement of varieties of Anwar Ratol and other common mango varieties

¹ https://colnect.com/en/stamps/stamp/183887-Mangos_Anwar_Ratol-Fruits_of_Pakistan-Pakistan

² <https://pakistancode.gov.pk/english/UY2FqaJw1-apaUY2Fqa-apaUY2NpaZ1j-sg-jjjjjjjjjjjj>

³ https://www.pakistantradeportal.gov.pk/storage/company_brochure/626089096e4af1650493705.pdf

This kind of partnership may be put in the context of wider SAARC or bilateral agricultural MoUs, which pay attention to the livelihood of farmers, but not ownership.

GI Awareness and Capacity building: Pakistan, which already has a Geographical Indications (Registration and Protection) Act, 2020, ought to hasten the process of registering unique local varieties (as it has done with Chaunsa and Sindhri mangoes). India would have best practices of its developed GI system. The discussions on how to protect common heritage products without enforcing harmonization could be held on a neutral platform, e.g., FAO or a Track-II dialogue.

People-to-People and Cultural Exchanges: Bigger and more diverse with the mango diplomacy: Find ways of hosting joint mango festivals or tasting events or online farmer exchanges that celebrate the shared mango diversity of the subcontinent. Bringing growers of Rataul and Pakistani Anwar Ratol regions to the table to communicate knowledge may help humanize the story and eradicate the notion of zero-sum. The diversity in crossing of borders in horticultural variety could be emphasized by educational efforts- documentaries, school curricula or museum exhibits about subcontinental horticulture.

Monitoring and De-escalation Mechanisms: For future mislabeling complaints or increased rhetoric, informal bilateral expert groups should be established under the available channels of trade or agriculture to solve problems in a fast and objective manner so that the cultural flashpoints do not contribute to the larger problems.

These suggestions can change the competition to respect towards each other. In the age of climatic difficulties, water stress, and international market competition, mango biodiversity protection and sustainable development is much more beneficial to both farmers and consumers across the border than the long-standing "nomenclature wars."

6. Conclusions

Anwar Rataul mango conflict implies the cultural heritage in a post-colonial post partition society. It was carried to the other border after origin in Rataul Village at partition that turned a local agricultural produce to an icon of national identity of both India and Pakistan. The GI certification of India creates a legal reality under its jurisdiction but it is not able to force Pakistan to comply. Instead of zero-sum claims of exclusive proprietorship, systems that acknowledge common heritage will be more beneficial to the communities of both sides of the border. Pakistan has not made any formal objection to Indian GI. The assertions are informal, media-based and mango nationalism. The conflict does not survive in the law courts, it lives in the media and the folklore. The way out may be mutual appreciation instead of exclusivity in the future, maybe with the help of transparent labelling or person-to-person contacts.

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