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Calcutta

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JOYNAGAR MOAS GET GI PATENT

Amita.Ghose@timesgroup.com

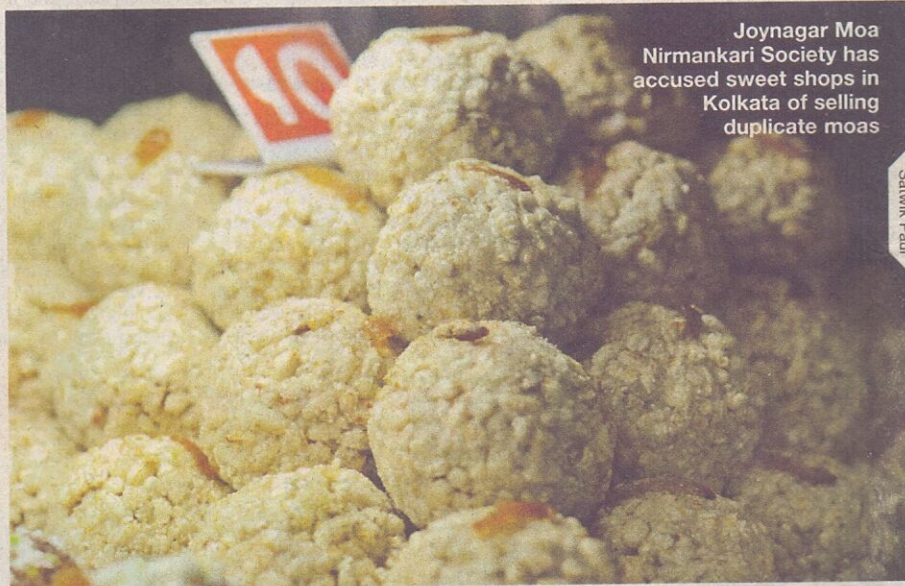
Do you like munching on Joynagarer moa on local trains? Do you pride yourself on serving those to outstation friends? Are Joynagarer moas indispensable in family gatherings? Well, be aware, you might be gorging on duplicate, low-quality moas. However, the good news is, that is about to change as the traditional Bengali sweetmeat — little balls of puffed, sugary rice and date palm jaggery, originally from Joynagar — has finally been given a Geographical Identification (GI) patent. Interestingly, this is the second time a produce of Bengal has been patented under the GI act, the first one being Darjeeling tea.

So, what does this patent entail for Joynagar, for sweet sellers and for moa lovers? We give you the lowdown.

MOAS TO GO OFF SHELVES IN THE CITY

"A geographical indication is a patent which is valid for unlimited years and used on certain products which correspond to a specific geographical location or origin. In order to conserve the heritage food art, Joynagar Moa Nirmankari Society had approached me a couple of years back to apply for the patent. The process started in 2011 and we have recently got the patent approved by the government," said Dipankar Mukherjee, senior advocate, Calcutta high court.

While the GI allows the Joynagar Moa Nirmankari Society to have a patent valid



Joynagar Moa Nirmankari Society has accused sweet shops in Kolkata of selling duplicate moas

Satwik Paul

for unlimited years, Mukherjee also told us that the GI has already come into effect. As a result, sweet shops of Kolkata and the outskirts, selling moas prepared locally under the brand of Joynagar, will have to take them off the shelves immediately. "Both nolen gur and kanak chur dhan (the variety of paddy that is used for the moa) are indigenous to Joynagar. Now that we have got the patent, we have dispatched notices notifying the shops of Kolkata and other districts that the sale of moas should

be stopped by next week. If not, legal actions will be taken under section 2 (F) of GI Act," Mukherjee told us.

AUTHENTICITY — A MAJOR CONCERN

Joynagar Moa Nirmankari Society has accused sweet shops in Kolkata of selling duplicate and inferior quality moas, which is damaging the reputation of the famous sweetmeat.

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