

STATEMENT OF CASE

Report on Sitabhog

Origin and History

1. Proof of origin [Historical records]

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

The name "Burdwan" is very well connected with Sitabhog and Mihidana. These two sweets are sometimes said to be the recognition of the town in India and abroad. These delicious sweets were invented in Burdwan 144 years back in Burdwan but its reputation, recognition and prominence had spread around only after arrival of Lord Curzon in 1904 and his appraisal for these two scrumptious sweets of Bengal.

According to Late Nagendranath Nag his grand-father Late Khettranath Nag first invented special Sitabhog and Mihidana in Burdwan during the regime of Maharaja Late Mahatabchand Bahadur. Seventy two years after this invention the name of Sitabhog and Mihidana earned its reputation all over India after the arrival of Lord Curzon in Burdwan and his appraisal for these two sweets.

Lord Curzon visited Burdwan on 19th August, 1904 on invitation of Maharaja Vijaychand Mahatab. To memorize such an august arrival 'Curzon Gate' was constructed in the town. In the welcome lunch of Lord Curzon, Maharaja ordered Mr. Vairabchandra Nag, a renowned sweet-maker of the town, to prepare something new and unique which would amaze the Lord. Vairabchandra Nag undertook the responsibility and introduced two new preparations named Sitabhog and Mihidana. Lord Curzon was surprised to have such unique sweets and praised and thanked Vairabchandra Nag in the certificate given to him saying he never had such sweet ever before. Thereafter, the quality and name of these two sweets reached all over the country and abroad. Late Nagendranath Nag, son of Late Vairabchandra Nag, broadcasted this incident in Radio on 15th November, 1976. (CD enclosed and Paper cutting enclosed).

At present Vairab Mistanna Bhandar in Borobazar in Burdwan, famous for Sitaogh and mihidana is run by Nimaichandra Nag who is the grand son of Late Vairabchandra Nag. According to Mr.

Nimaichandra the renowned Scientist Satyen Bose who was a regular customer and appraiser of this sweet shop certified its reputation. Another renowned person of this Bengal Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, former Chief Minister of West Bengal, was a regular customer of these two products. Everyday 250 kilos of Sitabhog-Mihidana were used to be prepared for the consumption of the people in Durgapur All India Congress Session in 1965 where former Prime Minister Lalbahadu Sashtri also ate these sweets and admired vehemently. Pandir Jaharlal Nehru also praised when he came to Burdwan and had the occasion to have these sweets.

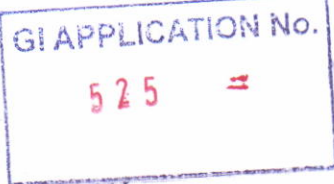
Sweet shop named "Udayan" which was set up by Sailendranath Nag, the third son of Late Vairab Nag, set up sixty years ago, is presently run by Krishnachandr Nag. According to him the name Mihidana came from its size like Poppy-seed and the name of Mihidana was derived from its first inventor Sitapati Nandi, a resident of Kanchannagar. Thereafter Vairab Nag is responsible for the wide spread reputation of these two sweets during arrival of Lord Curzon.

2. Technical Specification

Sitabhog, a dessert popular in West Bengal is originally from the Bardhaman district. It is basically made of gram flour or besan mixed with water to make watery dough that is passed through a sieve and deep-fried in clarified butter or ghee and soaked in sugar syrup. The result is a fine long sweet and crispy treat that can be garnished with finely chopped dried fruits of your choice like raisins or prunes. This is an indispensable treat in India and West Bengal even got a patent in making the sweet.

Sitabhog is yet another sweet dish from Bengal having a mass appeal all over India. Sitabhog of Burdwan in West Bengal is the most famous although it is now available all over India. Any tourist visiting Burdwan is bound to taste the sitabhog. Its exquisite taste makes people longing for more. Burdwan is also famous for its historical buildings and unique architecture.

Sitabhog gives the resemblance rice or sevian served with gulab jamuns. It is made of chenna, rice flour and sugar. The batter is then passed through a sieve so that the tiny threads drop into a sugar syrup. It may be mixed with spices like bay leaf and cloves, which enhance the flavor of the dish. The dish has a sweet delicate taste and makes a great dessert.



To the delight of the sweetmeat retailers in Burdwan, the scientists have come up with a special starch, which when mixed with the dish, will enhance its shelf life. The shelf life of the dish, till now being one day at the most, posed a great problem to the manufacturers for transporting the sweet to other parts of India and abroad.

Description of the goods:

Sitabhog is a flavourful dessert that looks like white rice or vermicelli mixed with small pieces of Gulab Jamuns. It is made from cottage cheese (also known as chhana in Bangla), rice flour and sugar. Sitabhog often gives the appearance of pulao, which is albeit sweet in taste. The cottage cheese and rice flour are rolled into a smooth dough using ghee in a 1:4 proportion. The dough is then passed through a 'sev mould' so that it strains like thin threads of vermicelli and is deep fried in a pan of ghee. These strips are fried until they are cooked properly and then soaked into sugar syrup that has been flavoured with bay leaf, cloves and saffron essence. The small dumplings that are added to Sitabhog are known as Nikhuti which are made up of flour, milk powder and ghee. These dumplings are deep fried in ghee, dipped into sugar syrup and then added to Sitabhog. (Chemical Analysis report-enclosed)

3. Uniqueness

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4. Socio economic profile :

There has been gradual degradation in the business causing harm directly and indirectly to the reputation and significance of these products. The use of original ingredient Kamini Bhog rice has become rare because of its non availability. Instead of using pure Deshi Ghee producers are applying Dalda so that cost of production remains low to satisfy customers who are willing to buy sweets at lower price and they are not much bothered about the high quality of sweets. Most of the new producers and sweet-makers are not of much experience, which is also a reason for ongoing dilapidation of the quality of these two sweets . But only ray of hope is that, few local business persons engaged in production of Sitabhog and Mihidana are endeavouring to organize themselves through association formation and keeping up the original / quality of the product. This attempt would also boost the producers to fix a reasonable price and sell those at that standard price applicable to all. According to Mr. Jayanta Dhar, Secretary of Burdwan Mistanna Babasayee Samity (Burdwan Sweet Producers Organisation), it is difficult to restore the quality of old days of these sweets since quality of raw materials used nowadays are not of fine quality. Even if producers make sweets using original pure ingredients, the cost of the sweet will rise up at such a level that consumers would be reluctant to buy at that price. Presently, producers in Burdwan are producing 25 quintal of Sitabhog and 20 quintal of Mihidana everyday, out of which a major chunk is supplied/exported outside Burdwan.

Present rate :

Normal Sitabhog	: 120 rupees per kg.
Special Sitabhog	: 220 rupees per kg.
Unique Sitabhog	: 240 rupees per kg.

Quantity of home consumption : Daily 24-25 quintals (approximately)

Export features :

Rate of export is the same as the price prevalent at home. However, on special circumstances (like increase in the price of raw materials), the rate can change. Certain special procedures are used for the purpose of exports. The rate of product tends to rise on increase of packing charge.

Customers place order in advance for the product to take them even to other states and other nations. Presently, there exist no difficulties whatsoever as far as exports are concerned.

Quantity of daily production in the city of Burdwan : 24-25 quintals (approx)

Quantity of monthly production in the city of Burdwan : 700-750 quintals (approx)

Quantity of yearly production in the city of Burdwan : 8500 - 9000 quintals. (approx)

During extremes of summer heat as well as the rainy season, the quality of the product can be preserved for a shorter period of time than usual. Under ordinary circumstances, the quality of the product can be preserved for 3 days in a non-refrigerated state and for 15 days in a refrigerated state. These sweets are served in all local customs, festivals and rituals as a matter of course. Formation of association may lead to development and adoption of novel and better methods, as far as exports are concerned. Efforts, both experimental as well as organizational in nature, are being made at present in order to improve upon the quality of the product. Upcoming sweet-makers, trainees and apprentices are given practical training in the skill of preparing and preserving the product.

Approximate Annual Turnover : As per annexure – A attached

Per capita income: As per annexure – A attached

Annual Turn over: As per annexure – A attached

Industry based on Gobindabhog Rice

Annual sale: As per annexure – A attached

Annual export: Nil

Along with the Statement of Case in Class (b) 30 in respect of (c) Sweets in the name(s) of (d) General Manager, District Industries Centre, whose address is(e) Purto Bhawan (5th Floor) Sadarghat, Post. – Sripally, Dist. – Burdwan – 713103, who claims to represent the interest of the producers of the said goods to which the geographical indication relates and which is in continuous use since 110 years in respect of the said goods.

5. Method of Production:

Product process

Ingredients :

Cottage cheese (Chhana) – 1 kg.

Govindabhog Rice powder/flour – 1 kg.

Sugar and water mixed syrup

Ghee (made of cow milk) or Banaspati

Leaves of Pulao plant

Method :

Mix rice powder and Chhana thoroughly and add 50 gm. of Ghee/Banaspati and water to prepare dough. Now take the Ghee in a pan and heat it. Take a mesh or an iron net over the pan, take some of the mixture in your hand and press and rub it against the net. Small droplets of the mixture in your hand and press and rub it against the net. Small droplets of the mixture will start coming out of the net which should be fried in a low heat. Then remove those droplets from the pan with the help of a strainer. Prepare a sugar syrup and put Pulao plant leaves into it to soak and thereafter pour those droplets in the syrup to become soft. Remove them after 10-12 minutes.

(6) List of association of persons/ producers/ organization/ authority:

List of association of persons/producers/organisation/authority: Paschimbanga Mistanna Babasayee Samity

List of Producers:-

Sl.No.	Name of the Shop	Name of the Proprietor	Telephone No.
1	Radha Ballav Mistanna Bhandar	Pradip Bhakat (Secretary)	9475004528
2	Srikrishna Mistanna Bhandar	Ashish Paul (Asstt. Secy)	9475124663
3	Udyan Mistanna Bhandar	Aniruddha Nag	9434677486
4	Prasiddha Mistanna Bhandar	Promod Singh (Treasurer)	9474487278
5	Netaji Mistanna Bhandar	Soumen Das (asstt. Treasurer)	9434933890
6	Ganesh Mistanna Bhandar	Indrajit Dutta	9153265315
7	Jogamaya Mistanna Bhandar	Srimanta Mondal	9434923500
8	Deshbandhu Mistanna Bhandar	Tapan Kumar Nag	9434977879
9	Indian Sweets	Dinabandhu Nag	9734756264
10	Sweets Home	Somnath Ash	9953844996
11	Ramkrishna Mistanna Bhandar	Khokan Da	9434698974
12	Janata Mistanna Bhandar	Gopal Chandra Sen	9775756788
13	Alpana Sweets	Mohor Lal Ghosh	7797732069
14	Sangam Sweets	Haradhan Dey	9933462305
15	Menoka Sweets	Bachhu Ghosh	9564669298
16	Lakshmi Mistanna Bhandar	Sonatan Bhattacharyya	9564390724

17	Soudamini Mistanna Bhandar	Subrata Rakshit	9475869843
18	Manoranjan Mistanna Bhandar	Lakshi Nag	9953994437
19	Saradmoni Mistanna Bhandar	Tapas Dutta	9474487855
20	Akarshani Mistanna Bhandar	Sarthak Ghosh	9953027276
21	Bijoy Mistanna Bhandar	Prasanta Sen	9434933929
22	Kaliburi Chandi Mistanna Bhandar	-	9933632292
23	Sree Lakshmi Mistanna Bhandar	Dipak Gupta	9332929588
24	Prasiddha Netaji Mistanna Bhandar	Bapi Ghar	
25	Rajlakshmi Mistanna Bhandar	-	
26	Baidyanath Sweets	Lachmi Prasad Sau	9474916458
27	New Netaji Mistanna Bhandar	Sibnath Ghar	-
28	Ashirbad Mistanna Bhandar	Sibnath Ghar	-
29	Radha Ballav Mistanna Bhandar	Probhat Nag	8916788330
30	Maa Tara Mistanna Bhandar	Sarthak Dey	9832725450
31	Barama Mistanna Bhandar	Probhat Nag	-
32	Riya Sweets	Bivash Ghosh	7699048960
33	Modak Sweets	Biswanath Modak	9333756929
34	Ananta Mistanna Bhandar	Subrata Kumar	9609647115

35	Shyam Sweets	Shyamal Ghosh	9378338859
36	Jay Maa Kali Mistanna Bhandar	Gopal Acharya	9832459190
37	Misti Mahal	Shyamal Sen	9735868311
38	Karuna Sweets	Sujit Nandi	8927579373
39	Kanak Sweets	Kalyan Ghosh	8097227535
40	Raghunath Mistanna Bhandar	Bapi Chatterjee	9647637843
41	Adhunik Mistanna Bhandar	Bandip Dutta	9733064969
42	Netaji Palika Bazar	Sitaram Ghar	7797904552
43	Sanjoy Sweets	S. Ghosh	94744786369

Above mentioned 43 nos. of producers are the main manufacturers and the other 97 nos. are seasonal manufacturers.

Source: data obtained from District Gazettier office, GoWB

Dipankar Chakraborty

(DIPANKAR CHAKRABORTY)

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District Industries Centre,
Burdwan

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