PM's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2026: portal opens

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News

The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) launched the web portal (pmawards.gov.in) for the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2026 on 13 November 2026, opening registration. Over 2,000 officers from about 750 locations – Union Ministries, State Principal Secretaries for Administrative Reforms and District Collectors – joined the launch by video conference. There are 16 awards this year: Holistic Development of Districts (5), Aspirational Blocks Programme (5) and Innovation (6 – two each at Central, State and District levels). The Holistic Development category has been revamped with 9 new schemes – SBM (Urban) & AMRUT, Gyan Bharatam, PM Matsya Sampada Yojana, TB Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan, Crop Diversification, PM SHRI, Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen), National Mission on Natural Farming and capacity building under iGOT – while Har Ghar Jal, PM Surya Ghar and Saksham Anganwadi–Poshan 2.0 continue. The period of consideration is 1 April 2024 to 30 November 2026; Ministries must send their evaluation parameters to DARPG by 17 November. Each awarded district/organisation gets a trophy, a scroll and an incentive of ₹20 lakh for a public-welfare project; the awards are presented on Civil Services Day, 21 April.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Award	PM's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2026

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Portal	pmawards.gov.in – launched 13 Nov 2026
Run by	DARPG – Ministry of Personnel, PG & Pensions
Awards	16: Holistic Dev. 5, Blocks 5, Innovation 6
New schemes	9 (incl. Gyan Bharatam, PM SHRI) + 3 continued
Aspirational Blocks	513 blocks in 331 districts
Period	1 Apr 2024 – 30 Nov 2026
Prize	Trophy, scroll, ₹20 lakh incentive
Presented on	21 April – Civil Services Day

Background

- History: the awards were instituted in 2006. In 2014 they were restructured to recognise District Collectors' performance in priority programmes and innovation; an Aspirational Districts category was added later. Since 2021, entries are judged on good governance, qualitative achievement and last-mile delivery rather than quantitative targets alone.
- Civil Services Day: on 21 April 1947, at Metcalfe House, Delhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, then Home Member, addressed administrative-service probationers and called the civil services the 'steel frame of India'. To mark this, 21 April has been observed as National Civil Services Day since 2006, when the Prime Minister presents the awards.
- New schemes: 'Gyan Bharatam' is the Union Culture Ministry's mission (announced in Budget 2025-26) to survey, conserve and digitise over one crore manuscripts. The Aspirational Blocks Programme (2023) aims to lift lagging blocks in health, nutrition, education, agriculture and related areas.

Tamil Nadu link: Ramanathapuram and Virudhunagar are Tamil Nadu's two districts in NITI Aayog's Aspirational Districts Programme (January 2018), which has also been a category of the PM's Awards. Tamil Nadu also has 16 Aspirational Blocks (e.g. Javvadhu Hills in Tiruvannamalai, Kalvarayan Hills in Kallakurichi, Kothagiri in the Nilgiris, Thiruvadanai in Ramanathapuram and Tiruchuli in Virudhunagar), per the State Planning Commission. Tamil Nadu's districts and blocks can apply for the 2026 awards through this portal.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

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What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Award: PM's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2026; Portal: pmawards.gov.in – launched 13 Nov 2026; Run by: DARPG – Ministry of Personnel, PG & Pensions; Awards: 16: Holistic Dev. 5, Blocks 5, Innovation 6.

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Practice questions (with answers)

1. When is National Civil Services Day, on which the PM's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration are given?

A) 21 April

B) 24 April

C) 31 October

D) 26 November

Answer: A – Explanation: 21 April – since 2006. 24 April is National Panchayati Raj Day; 31 Oct is National Unity Day; 26 Nov is Constitution Day.

2. Where did Sardar Patel address administrative-service probationers in 1947?

A) LBSNAA, Mussoorie

B) Metcalfe House, Delhi

C) Viceregal Lodge, Shimla

D) Rashtrapati Bhavan

Answer: B – Explanation: Metcalfe House, Delhi – 21 April 1947; Civil Services Day marks it. LBSNAA in Mussoorie came up only in 1959.

3. How did Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel describe India's civil services?

A) Steel frame of India

B) Backbone of democracy

C) Iron hand of the State

D) Pillar of the Republic

Answer: A – Explanation: Steel frame – a structure that holds the nation together and keeps administration continuous. Patel is the father of the All India Services.

4. 'Gyan Bharatam', newly added to the PM's Awards 2026, relates to what?

A) Teacher training

B) Rural broadband

C) Manuscript heritage

D) Skill loans

Answer: C – Explanation: Manuscripts – the Culture Ministry's mission to survey, conserve and digitise over one crore manuscripts.

5. Which Tamil Nadu districts are covered by NITI Aayog's Aspirational Districts Programme?

A) Ariyalur, Perambalur

B) Ramanathapuram, Virudhunagar

C) Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri

D) Theni, Sivaganga

Answer: B – Explanation: Ramanathapuram and Virudhunagar – among 112 districts in the programme launched in Jan 2018. TN also has 16 Aspirational Blocks.

Sources: PIB – DARPG (PRID 2336039, 13 Nov 2026); pmawards.gov.in (PMA Scheme); PIB – Ministry of Culture (Gyan Bharatam, Budget 2025-26); DARPG / PIB (National Civil Services Day releases); Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission (spc.tn.gov.in). © Shanmugam IAS Academy.