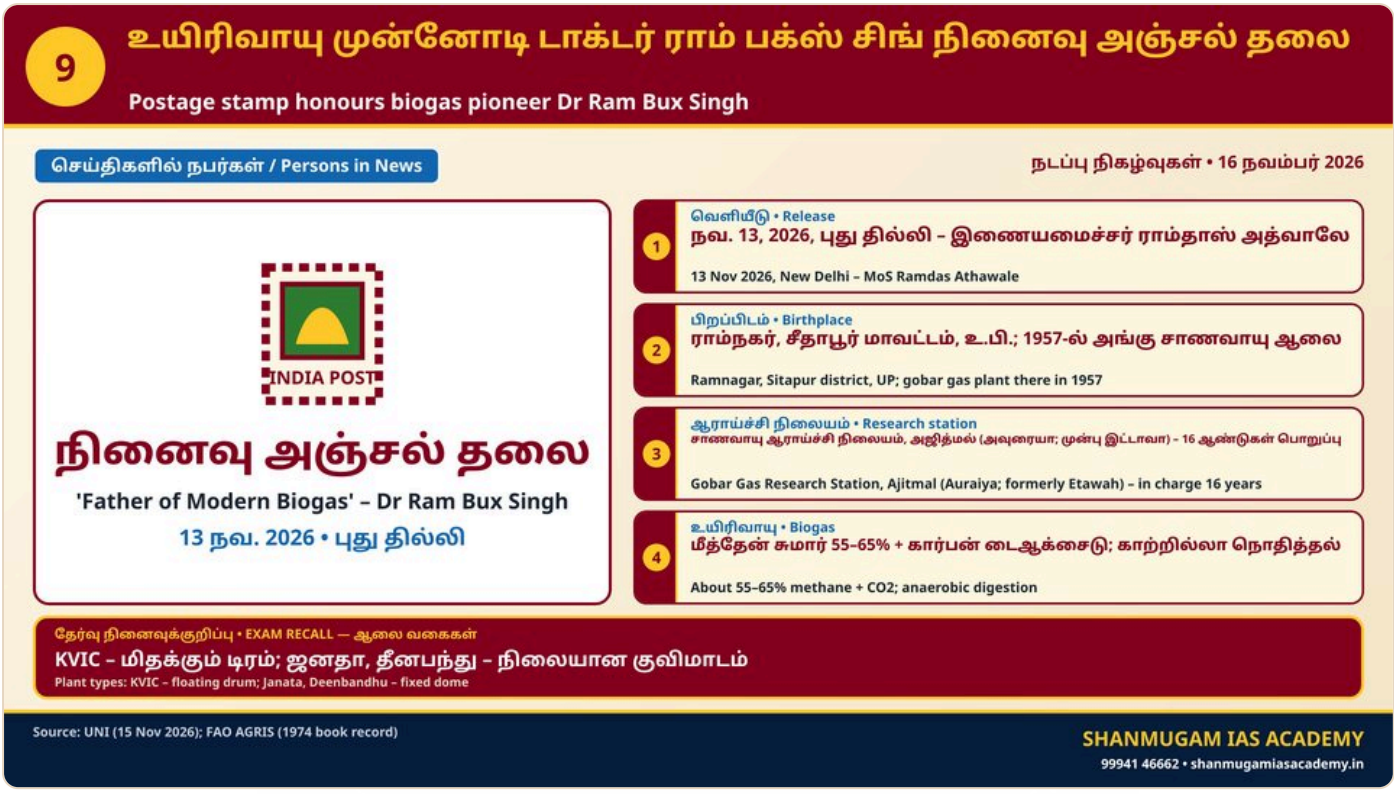
Postage stamp honours biogas pioneer Dr Ram Bux Singh

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News

India Post has issued a commemorative postage stamp in honour of Dr Ram Bux Singh (1925–2016), a pioneer of biogas technology often called the 'Father of Modern Biogas'. Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Ramdas Athawale released the stamp at an event in New Delhi on 13 November 2026, along with a book, 'Complete Guide to Biogas – Renewable Energy from Waste: Featuring the Legacy of Dr Ram Bux Singh'. Born in 1925 at Ramnagar in Sitapur district, Uttar Pradesh, he set up one of India's early successful gobar gas plants there in 1957. Under the UP Government's State Planning Institute, he developed the Gobar Gas Research Station at Ajitmal, in present-day Auraiya district (formerly Etawah district) – described as Asia's first – and was its Officer-in-Charge for 16 years. His 1974 book 'Biogas Plant: Generating Methane from Organic Wastes' became a classic; he contributed to biogas and renewable-energy programmes in more than 15 countries (incl. USA, Denmark, UK, Germany, Mexico, Costa Rica, Canada). His birth centenary fell in 2025.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Person	Dr Ram Bux Singh (1925–2016)
Title	'Father of Modern Biogas'
Release	13 Nov 2026, New Delhi – MoS Ramdas Athawale

Point	Details
Birthplace	Ramnagar, Sitapur district, UP; gobar gas plant there in 1957
Research station	Gobar Gas Research Station, Ajitmal (Auraiya; formerly Etawah) – in charge 16 years
Book	Biogas Plant: Generating Methane from Organic Wastes (1974)
Biogas	About 55–65% methane + CO2; anaerobic digestion
Plant types	KVIC – floating drum; Janata, Deenbandhu – fixed dome

Background

- Science: biogas forms by 'anaerobic digestion' – microbes breaking down organic matter such as dung, kitchen waste and farm residue without oxygen. It contains about 55–65% methane, 35–45% carbon dioxide and traces of hydrogen sulphide. The leftover slurry is a good organic manure. Purified to raise methane content and compressed, it becomes compressed biogas (CBG).
- History: India has two main families of biogas plants – the 'floating drum' type popularised by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) (designed by Jashbhai Patel), and the 'fixed dome' types – 'Janata' (developed by PRAD, Lucknow) and 'Deenbandhu' (AFPRO). The Ajitmal station where Ram Bux Singh worked was also under UP's State Planning Institute. In 1981-82 the Centre launched the National Project on Biogas Development (NPBD).
- Current schemes: the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) subsidises household/small biogas plants under its 'Biogas Programme' (formerly the National Biogas and Manure Management Programme – NBMMP; NNBOMP from 2018). The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas launched the 'SATAT' (Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation) initiative on 1 October 2018, under which oil companies buy gas from CBG plants. Postage stamps are issued by the Department of Posts under the Union Ministry of Communications.

Tamil Nadu link: Ram Bux Singh had no direct Tamil Nadu connection. However, the Centre's National Project on Biogas Development was implemented in Tamil Nadu through the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department, with a separate subsidy for toilet-linked biogas plants. The Department of Renewable Energy Engineering at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, works on biogas research and training.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

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What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Person: Dr Ram Bux Singh (1925–2016); Title: 'Father of Modern Biogas'; Release: 13 Nov 2026, New Delhi – MoS Ramdas Athawale; Birthplace: Ramnagar, Sitapur district, UP; gobar gas plant there in 1957.

What is the background to this news?

Science: biogas forms by 'anaerobic digestion' – microbes breaking down organic matter such as dung, kitchen waste and farm residue without oxygen.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. By which process is biogas produced from organic wastes such as cattle dung?

A) Aerobic respiration

B) Anaerobic digestion

C) Photosynthesis

D) Pyrolysis

Answer: B – Explanation: Anaerobic digestion – microbial breakdown without oxygen. Pyrolysis is thermal decomposition at high heat without oxygen.

2. Which initiative did the Petroleum Ministry launch in 2018 to promote compressed biogas (CBG) plants?

A) UJALA

B) PM-KUSUM

C) SATAT

D) PM JI-VAN

Answer: C – Explanation: SATAT (1 Oct 2018) – oil companies buy CBG. UJALA – LEDs; KUSUM – solar farm pumps; JI-VAN – 2G ethanol.

3. The 'floating drum' type of biogas plant in India is known by the name of which organisation?

A) NABARD

B) KVIC

C) IARI

D) BHEL

Answer: B – Explanation: The KVIC model (designed by Jashbhai Patel). 'Janata' (PRAD, Lucknow) and 'Deenbandhu' (AFPRO) are fixed-dome types.

4. The Department of Posts, which issues commemorative stamps in India, is under which Union Ministry?

A) Culture

B) Electronics & IT

C) Communications

D) Info & Broadcasting

Answer: C – Explanation: Ministry of Communications – both the Departments of Posts and Telecom come under it. A Philatelic Advisory Committee approves stamps.

5. Which Union Ministry runs the 'Biogas Programme' that subsidises household and small biogas plants?

A) Rural Development

B) Jal Shakti

C) Petroleum & Natural Gas

D) MNRE

Answer: D – Explanation: Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) – formerly NBMMP, then NNBOMP. Large CBG plants link to the Petroleum Ministry via SATAT.

Sources: UNI – uniindia.com/north-india/honour-postage-stamp-issued-biogas-pioneer-dr-ram-bux-singh/246239; ThePrint Hindi / Bhasha – hindi.theprint.in (16 Nov 2026); PIB / India Post release (16 Nov 2026); FAO AGRIS – record of 'Bio-gas plant' (1974, Gobar Gas Research Station, Ajitmal) – agris.fao.org/search/en/records/65de12cd0f3e94b9e5ca6d91; PIB – pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1548031 (SATAT); MNRE – Biogas Programme (mnre.gov.in); TN Rural Development Dept – tnrd.tn.gov.in/schemes/cen_biogas_13.html. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.