Gopal Ratna 2026: Kallakurichi's Thatchur MPCS tops dairy co-op list

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News

The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), Union Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, announced the winners of the National Gopal Ratna Awards 2026 on 20 November 2026 (PIB). In the best dairy cooperative society/milk producer company/dairy farmer producer organisation category, Tamil Nadu's 'TND 93 Thatchur Milk Producers Cooperative Society', Kallakurichi district, won first place (₹5 lakh). Muralidharan Nair of Kottayam, Keralam, came first among dairy farmers rearing indigenous breeds, and Subhankar Nandi of Hooghly, West Bengal, among artificial insemination (AI) technicians; each category also has a special award for the North Eastern Region and Himalayan States. A total of 1,583 applications were received on awards.gov.in between 10 August and 30 September 2026. Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh (Lalan Singh) will confer the awards on National Milk Day, 26 November 2026, at Bapu Sabhagar, Patna, Bihar. In the first two categories the first, second and third prizes are ₹5 lakh, ₹3 lakh and ₹2 lakh, with a special award of ₹2 lakh for the North Eastern Region and Himalayan States. AI technicians receive only a certificate of merit and a memento.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Award	National Gopal Ratna Award 2026

Point	Details
Given by	Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying
Scheme	Rashtriya Gokul Mission (since Dec 2014)
Since	Annually in present form since 2021
Categories	Dairy farmer; DCS/MPC/FPO; AI technician
Prize	₹5 lakh, ₹3 lakh, ₹2 lakh + special ₹2 lakh
Eligibility	55 cattle and 22 buffalo recognised indigenous breeds
Winners announced	20 November 2026 (PIB) – TN's Thatchur MPCS, Kallakurichi, 1st in cooperative category
Presentation	26 November 2026 – National Milk Day, Bapu Sabhagar, Patna (Bihar); by Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh
Other first places	Muralidharan Nair (dairy farmer, Kottayam); Subhankar Nandi (AI technician, Hooghly)
Applications	1,583 (10.08.2026 – 30.09.2026)

Background

- The Rashtriya Gokul Mission was launched in December 2014 to conserve and develop indigenous cattle breeds. The National Gopal Ratna Awards have been given under it, in their present form, every year since 2021, with applications on the national awards portal since 2022 (PIB, DAHD).
- National Milk Day (26 Nov) is the birth anniversary of Verghese Kurien (26.11.1921, Kozhikode), 'father of the White Revolution'. The National Dairy Development Board (NDDB, Anand, Gujarat), set up in 1965, launched 'Operation Flood' in 1970, and India became the world's largest milk producer in 1998 (New India Samachar, PIB).
- Science: sex-sorted semen can produce female calves with up to 90% accuracy (PIB). Artificial insemination and IVF help multiply high-merit indigenous breeds. Breed data are maintained by ICAR's National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR), Karnal.
- 2026 guidelines: a dairy cooperative must collect at least 100 litres a day and have 50 farmer members (20 litres and 20 members in NER/Himalayan States). An AI technician needs at least 90 days of AI training; veterinary doctors are not eligible (DAHD).

Tamil Nadu link: In the 2026 awards, 'TND 93 Thatchur Milk Producers Cooperative Society', Kallakurichi district, won first place (₹5 lakh) in the best dairy cooperative/MPC/FPO category – the State's headline result this year (PIB). (In 2025 Ariyalur district's 'TYSPL 37 Sendurai Milk Producers Cooperative Society' was third in the same category – DAHD list.) Tamil Nadu's cooperative milk federation is 'Aavin'. TN's native breeds are Kangayam, Umblachery, Alambadi, Bargur and Pulikulam (cattle) and Toda and Bargur (buffalo) (TN Animal Husbandry policy note).

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), Union Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, announced the winners of the National Gopal Ratna Awards 2026 on 20 November 2026 (PIB).

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Award: National Gopal Ratna Award 2026; Given by: Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying; Scheme: Rashtriya Gokul Mission (since Dec 2014); Since: Annually in present form since 2021.

What is the background to this news?

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Practice questions (with answers)

1. Under which central scheme for conserving indigenous breeds are the National Gopal Ratna Awards given?

A) Rashtriya Gokul Mission

B) National Livestock Mission

C) NPDD

D) NADCP

Answer: A – Explanation: Rashtriya Gokul Mission – December 2014. NPDD is dairy infrastructure; NADCP vaccinates against FMD and brucellosis; NLM covers entrepreneurship and fodder.

2. National Milk Day (26 November), when the Gopal Ratna Awards are presented, is whose birth anniversary?

A) M.S. Swaminathan

B) Tribhuvandas Patel

C) H.M. Dalaya

D) Verghese Kurien

Answer: D – Explanation: Verghese Kurien (1921, Kozhikode) – 'father of the White Revolution', who built Amul. Tribhuvandas Patel chaired the Kaira union; Dalaya made buffalo-milk powder.

3. Which indigenous buffalo breed of Tamil Nadu is reared by a pastoral tribe in the Nilgiris?

A) Murrah

B) Toda

C) Jaffarabadi

D) Pandharpuri

Answer: B – Explanation: Toda buffalo – tied to the life of the Toda tribe. Murrah is from Haryana, Jaffarabadi from Gujarat and Pandharpuri from Maharashtra.

4. Where is the headquarters of the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), which ran 'Operation Flood' from 1970?

A) Karnal

B) Izatnagar

C) Anand

D) Mehsana

Answer: C – Explanation: Anand, Gujarat – NDDB was set up in 1965. Karnal has the National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI); Izatnagar the Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI).

5. What is the main purpose of using 'sex-sorted semen' in artificial insemination of cattle?

A) Raise milk fat

B) Prevent FMD

C) Get female calves

D) Cloning

Answer: C – Explanation: Up to 90% of calves born are female (PIB), adding milch animals and cutting unwanted male calves. FMD is prevented by vaccination.

Sources: DAHD / PIB, 20 Nov 2026 (NGRA 2026 winners); DAHD – NGRA 2026 guidelines (07.08.2026); DAHD – NGRA 2025 winners; PIB (RGM); PIB (sex-sorted semen); PIB, 25 Nov 2021 – pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1775038 (National Milk Day, Kurien birth centenary); DAHD (NDDB); New India Samachar (PIB); NDDB Dairy Knowledge (Toda); TN Animal Husbandry Policy Note 2024-25. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.