



Rashtriya Gokul Mission

For Prelims: [Rashtriya Gokul Mission](#), Sahiwal, Tharparkar, Red Sindhi, National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), [Krishi Vigyan Kendra](#), [White Revolution](#), Jersey.

For Mains: Significance of promoting indigenous cattle breeds and their impact on employment generation and economic growth.

Source: DTE

Why in News?

With almost a decade into [Rashtriya Gokul Mission](#), it is found that instead of improving the quality of all the indigenous breeds, as envisioned under the scheme, it has ended up promoting only one indigenous variety, the **Gir cow**, across the country.

What is the Issue With Rashtriya Gokul Mission?

- **Prominence of Gir Cow in Rashtriya Gokul Mission:**
 - **India's Rashtriya Gokul Mission, established in 2014**, initially designed to research and develop high-quality semen for various indigenous bovine varieties, the mission has primarily focused on Gir cows and not much on other breeds.
 - This preference for Gir cows **stems from their milk production and adaptability to different regions.**
- **Impact on Livestock Numbers:**
 - **The 2019 livestock census showed a 70% increase in purebred Gir cows since 2013.** In contrast, other indigenous breeds like Sahiwal and Hariana have not experienced similar growth, with some even witnessing a decline in numbers.
 - This trend raises concerns about the **loss of diversity in indigenous cattle breeds in India.**

What are the Issues with Indigenous Gir Cow Breed?

- **Inconsistent Performance of Graded Gir Cows:**
 - Contrary to the growing obsession with Gir cows, research reveals that graded Gir cows (**a crossbreed between Gir and other nondescript varieties**) **do not consistently outperform indigenous breeds in many states.**
 - For example, **in Haryana, there is no evidence of increased milk production in graded Gir cows.**
 - East Rajasthan has reported lower milk production in graded Gir cows compared to indigenous varieties, leading to farmer complaints about shorter lactation periods and reduced daily milk yields.
 - However, in west Rajasthan, graded Gir cows perform better due to favorable climatic conditions.
- **Factors Beyond Adaptation to Microclimates:**

- The performance of graded Gir cows is **influenced by factors beyond their adaptability to microclimatic conditions**. For instance, Gir cows thrive in herds, and their milk production decreases when raised in isolation.
 - Without adequate resources and support, **these cows can become a liability for farmers. This was evident in a previous case in Vidarbha.**

What Solutions Can be Adopted ?

- **Emphasis on Genetically Superior Indigenous Cows:**
 - Experts suggest a **shift from the current focus on a few high-yielding bovine varieties to identifying and breeding genetically superior cows from among indigenous breeds**.
 - Maharashtra's animal husbandry department **conducted a successful experiment in 2012-14** by delivering semen from genetically superior indigenous breeds to farms, showcasing the potential of this approach.
- **Long-Term Prospects of Indigenous Bovine Varieties:**
 - India boasts a diverse cow population, each adapted to specific regions. Continuous crossbreeding could lead to the extinction of region-specific traits in graded varieties.
 - For instance, crossbreeding **Badri cows from Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand with Gir cows** may increase milk production but could alter their physiology, which need to be avoided.
- **Lessons from the Past and Future Goals:**
 - Experts caution against repeating the mistakes of the **White Revolution**, which imported exotic breeds like Jersey for crossbreeding with Indian varieties.
 - While this increased milk production, it did not necessarily lead to higher income for livestock rearers, **as crossbred cows were more susceptible to diseases and required more care.**

What is Rashtriya Gokul Mission?

- **About:**
 - It is being implemented for **development and conservation of indigenous bovine breeds since December 2014**.
 - The scheme is also continued under umbrella scheme [Rashtriya Pashudhan Vikas Yojna](#) **from 2021 to 2026** with a budget outlay of Rs.2400 crore.
- **Nodal Ministry:**
 - Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
- **Objectives:**
 - To enhance productivity of bovines and increase milk production in a sustainable manner using advanced technologies.
 - To propagate use of high genetic merit bulls for breeding purposes.
 - To enhance Artificial insemination coverage through strengthening breeding network and delivery of Artificial insemination services at farmers doorstep.
 - To promote indigenous cattle & buffalo rearing and conservation in a scientific and holistic manner.

What are the Related Schemes for the Livestock Sector?

- [Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund \(AHIDF\)](#)
- [National Animal Disease Control Programme](#)
- [Rashtriya Gokul Mission](#)
- [National Artificial Insemination Programme](#)
- [National Livestock Mission](#)
- [National Kamdhenu Breeding Centre](#)
- [Gokul Grams](#)
- [“E-Pashu Haat”- Nakul Prajnan Bazaar](#)

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Years Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q.1 Consider the following crops of India: (2012)

1. Cowpea
2. Green gram
3. Pigeon pea

Which of the above is/are used as pulse, fodder and green manure?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (a)

Q. 2 Livestock rearing has a big potential for providing non-farm employment and income in rural areas. Discuss suggesting suitable measures to promote this sector in India. (2015)

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