

**SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE  
AT THE INAUGURATION OF AMUL'S CATTLE  
FEED MANUFACTURING PLANT**

Kheda, Gujarat: Nov 30, 2015

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1. It is my privilege to be here today to inaugurate the state-of-the-art cattle feed manufacturing plant of AMUL. At the outset, let me congratulate AMUL for achieving yet another milestone in its illustrious journey.
2. I am also glad to have this opportunity to visit Gujarat, a vibrant state which has shown the way forward for comprehensive socio-economic development. Gujarat is a historical land having major sites dating back to the ancient Indus Valley Civilization. Lothal is considered to be one of the earliest seaports in the world. Coastal cities like Bharuch and Khambhat were important trading centres in the Maurya and Gupta empires. Gujarat played a leading role in India's freedom struggle. Some of the tallest leaders of the movement belonged to this region. The Sabarmati Ashram of Mahatma Gandhi served as the nerve centre of the freedom movement.
3. Gujarat has progressed on all fronts after independence. This has been possible due to the industrious and enterprising nature of the Gujarati people. The state has some of the largest industrial corporations while its agricultural growth is amongst the highest in the country. It is the forerunner of the cooperative movement in the dairy sector.
4. On this occasion, I pay my tribute to great leaders like Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Morarji Desai, Tribhuvandas Patel and Dr. Verghese Kurien for their guidance and leadership in the AMUL co-operative movement. I also acknowledge the tremendous contribution of the 3.6 million farmers of AMUL family; and salute the 150 million Indian milk producers for their efforts toward nation-building. It is your dedication, ingenuity, sacrifice and hard work that have ensured food security for our country in the critical area of milk and dairy products.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

5. Before the beginning of cooperatives in the dairy sector, the milk marketing system was controlled by contractors and middlemen. In the absence of any sellers' union, it was a buyers' market where dairy farmers were forced to sell milk at throwaway prices. In 1945, the Bombay Milk Scheme was started under which the Government of Bombay entered into an agreement with a private dairy unit - Polson's - to supply milk from Anand in Kaira district to Bombay after pasteurizing. The arrangement was satisfactory to all parties except the farmers for whom the exploitative conditions at the hands of milk contractors continued.
6. On the advice of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and the efforts of Morarji Desai, milk producers' co-operative societies were organized to collect milk from their member-farmers. A fifteen-day milk strike when not a drop of milk was sold to the milk merchants turned successful. The milk societies federated into a Union - the Kaira District Co-operative Milk Producers' Union Limited, Anand, or AMUL Dairy - that was formally registered on December 14, 1946. Its objective was to provide proper marketing facilities for the milk producers of the district. AMUL Dairy began pasteurizing milk in June 1948 for the Bombay Milk Scheme with a handful of farmers in two village co-operative societies producing about 250 litres a day. However by the end of 1948, 432 farmers had joined village societies. The quantity of milk handled by AMUL Dairy increased to 5,000 litres a day.
7. On October 31, 1964, Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri came to Anand to inaugurate the first cattle feed plant of AMUL. He preferred to spend a night in a village at Kheda district interacting with farmers. The prevailing milk shortage in the country and import dependence for dairy commodities prompted him to replicate the AMUL model on a much wider scale. A national body – the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) – was created to draw up a dairy development programme. This task was entrusted to Dr. Verghese Kurien who was then managing AMUL. Due to the untiring efforts of Dr. Kurien and his team, "Operation Flood" as the initiative was called, became the largest dairy development programme in the world. It was, therefore, the AMUL movement that steered our nation towards prominence on the global dairy map, making India the world's largest milk producer.
8. AMUL Dairy is now a group under the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation. This apex marketing body has 3.6 million dairy farmers in Gujarat with an average daily milk procurement of 16 million litres and annual turnover of over 22,000 crore rupees. AMUL is today the largest liquid milk brand in Asia and the largest food brand in India. It is also India's largest exporter of dairy products.

Friends:

9. To my mind, AMUL personifies the spirit of selfless dedication and far-sighted leadership. Though your journey since 1946 from a 'drop' to a 'flood' of milk was challenging, it was made possible because of your ability to be sensitive and proactive to the needs of farmers and being dynamic to the changing circumstances. The institutional structure called 'AMUL Model' or 'Anand Pattern' that emerged from the dairy cooperative movement created a billion rupees worth brand while embracing the poorest of poor farmers. Through logistics innovation, AMUL has ensured easy availability of high-quality, packaged milk and dairy products across the country.
10. As the entire value-chain from milk production and processing to marketing is owned and controlled by dairy farmers or farmer-owned institutions, this model has ensured remunerative prices for the farmers and has insulated them from price fluctuations. In the last one year, the sharp decline in global dairy commodity prices has reduced milk prices to dairy farmers by 20 to 50 percent worldwide. In pleasant contrast I am told, farmers associated with AMUL Dairy have received higher prices for the milk they have poured into their cooperative. These efforts have brought smiles in the faces of Indian farmers, improving their quality of life while meeting the nutritional requirements of the nation.
11. AMUL Dairy from the very beginning has been a trend-setter in adopting improved technology. Breakthrough dairy technology enabled AMUL to spray-dry buffalo milk into products such as cheese, butter, condensed milk and baby food. For the health and well-being of the cattle population, it started a mobile veterinary dispensary in 1950. For meeting the nutritional requirements of cattle, it established the cattle feed plant in 1964 where the technology of cattle feed in pellet form ensured its efficient usage.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

12. Dairy is one sector where cooperative efforts complemented by Government support have worked wonders. For instance, the long distance transportation of milk in India has been made possible through the National Milk Grid. This process innovation has helped liquid milk and milk products find better markets in the country. The Government has now prioritized its support for the dairy sector through a National Dairy Plan, being managed by NDDDB. Given that the productivity of our milch animals is still low compared to global standards, an outlay of 2,242 crore rupees will be invested in the first phase of the plan. It is expected that the resultant growth in milk

production will fully meet the estimated growth in demand for milk and milk products in our country.

13. In this context, I recollect what Dr. Kurien had once said and I quote: *“While we have been largely left alone to manage our business, various governments have also played an extremely supportive role. However, for the cooperative sector to flourish in the entire country, the Union and State governments can further help by providing a level-playing field, in terms of their macro-economic policies. It is imperative for our policy-makers to recognize that cooperatives can serve as instruments of development and therefore need all the possible support.”* (Unquote) The dairy farmers can rest assured that they will continue to receive all support from the Government.

Friends:

14. Gandhiji, while envisaging the necessity of cooperative societies for his programme of ‘Gram Swaraj’, had mentioned and I quote: *“Cooperative societies are ideally suited organizations not only for developing village industries but also for promoting group effort by the villagers”* (unquote). The spirit of cooperation espoused by the pioneering farmers of AMUL triggered a socio-economic revolution in rural India transforming an entire nation. The winning combination of the AMUL experiment has been the convergence of farmers’ wisdom, democratic set-up, professional management, and adoption of right technology. It is a model worth emulating, the followership of which could address problems in other areas faced by our farming community.
15. AMUL is truly the pride of India. The onus is on the current generation of farmer-leaders, professionals and other stakeholders to expand the AMUL movement in a way that benefits farmers across the board. I urge you all to ensure that this world-class institution continues to progress with the same passion and commitment, and with the same values of integrity, efficiency and honesty which the founding fathers had instilled in AMUL. With the starting of this modern plant today, AMUL would revolutionize cattle feed manufacturing to address the nutritional requirements of the cattle population. I once again compliment you on this occasion and wish Godspeed for your endeavours.

Thank you.

Jai Hind.

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