

SAVITRIBAI PHULE

Recently, The Prime Minister has paid homage to Savitribai Phule on her birth anniversary.



About:

Who Is Savitribai Phule?

- A pioneer who challenged oppressive social norms in her quest for women's education, equality and justice, **Savitribai Phule is formally recognised as India's first woman teacher.**
- A Dalit woman from the Mali community, Savitribai was born on January 3, 1831, at Naigaon in Satara District.
- In 1840, at the tender age of 9, she was married to Jyotirao (also known as Mahatma Jyotiba Phule one of the leading social reformers and anti-caste activists of India) is said to have educated her at home and later on admitted her to a teacher's training institution in Pune.

The Establishment of India's First Girls' School

- At a time when education was limited mostly to the upper-class, affluent men, and women were not deemed eligible for going to school, the Phules **established a girls' school in Bhidewada, Pune, in 1948.** This was the **first girls' school in India.**

Phule's role as a social reformer

- In 1852, she **established a women's rights advocacy organisation, Mahila Seva Mandal.**
- In 1860, the Phule's organised a **barber's strike against shaving the hair of widowed women.**
- Along with Jyotirao, Savitribai started the **Balhatya Pratibandhak Griha** ('Home for the Prevention of Infanticide') for pregnant widows facing discrimination.
- Savitribai Phule also advocated inter-caste marriages, widow remarriage, and eradication of child marriage, sati and dowry systems, among other social issues.

- In 1873, the Phules set up the **Satyashodhak Samaj** (‘Truth-seekers’ society’), a platform open to all, irrespective of their caste, religion or class hierarchies, with the sole aim of bringing social equity.

Literary works

- Savitribai Phule published her first collection of poems, called **Kavya Phule** (‘Poetry’s Blossoms’), at the age of 23 in 1854.
- She published **Bavan Kashi Subodh Ratnakar** (‘The Ocean of Pure Gems’), in 1892.

INDIAN RHINOCEROS

Assam Chief Minister has recently announced that no rhinos were poached in the state in 2022.



About:

- **Distribution:** The Indian rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) is found only in the Brahmaputra valley, parts of North Bengal, and parts of southern Nepal.
- **Characteristics:** It has a single black horn that can grow up to 60 cm, and a tough, grey-brown hide with skin folds, which gives the animal its characteristic armour-plated look.
- **Conservation:** The Indian rhino is listed as vulnerable (better than endangered, worse than near threatened) in the IUCN Red List; it was earlier placed in the endangered category.
- **Population:** According to the WWF, there are around 3,700 Indian rhinos in the wild today. Assam’s Kaziranga National Park (KNP) alone has 2,613 animals, according to a census carried out in March 2022. There are more than 250 other rhinos in the Orang, Pobitora, and Manas parks.
- **Rhino poaching:**
 - Rhinos have been poached for their horn, which is prized in some cultures.
 - Ground rhino horn is used in **traditional Chinese medicine** to cure a range of ailments, from cancer to hangovers, and also as an aphrodisiac”; in Vietnam, a rhino horn is **considered a status symbol**.

YO-YO TEST AND DEXA SCAN

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has recently announced the (re)introduction of the Yo-Yo Test and the introduction of Dexa scans for the purposes of selection to the team.



About:

What is the Yo-Yo test?

- The Yo-Yo test was first introduced to the Indian cricket team during Virat Kohli's fitness-focused captaincy reign.

Developed by Danish football physiologist Jens Bangsbo, it is a “**maximal aerobic endurance fitness test**, involving running between markers placed 20 metres apart, at increasing speeds, until exhaustion.”

- Players are given scores on the basis of how many levels they are able to clear. Previously, the minimum score set by the BCCI to pass the test was 17 (increased from 16.1).

Dexa scans

- Dexa scans were recommended to the BCCI and the National Cricket Academy (NCA) as far back as 2011 because of a significant increase in players' workloads with the introduction of T20 cricket and professionalisation of the game.
- Through Dexa tests, the **trainers will be able to measure body fat percentage, lean muscle mass, water content and bone density.**
- It helps to understand where the fat is and whether the training methods are yielding the result.

SARI FESTIVAL “VIRAASAT”

The second phase of the Sari Festival “VIRAASAT”- Celebrating 75 handwoven Saris of India will begin from 3rd to 17th January 2023 at Handloom Haat, Janpath, New Delhi.



About Sari Festival “VIRAASAT”:

- It is organised by the **Union Ministry of Textiles**.
- Handloom saris drawn from some of the exotic locations of India are on display and sale at the exhibition.
- A brief list is given below:

States	Prominent sari varieties
Andhra Pradesh	Uppada Jamdhani Sari, Venkatagiri Jamdani Cotton Sari, Kuppadam Sari, Chirala Silk Cotton Sari, Madhavaram Sari and Polavaram Sari
Kerala	Balaramapuram Sari and Kasavu Sari
Telengana	Pochampally Sari, Siddipet Gollabamma Sari and Narayanpet Sari
Tamilnadu	Kancheepuram Silk Sari, Arni Silk Saris, Thirubuvanam Silk Sari, Vilandai Cotton Sari, Madurai Sari, Paramakudi Cotton Sari, Aruppukottai Cotton Sari, Dindigul Cotton Sari, Coimbatore Cotton Sari, Salem Silk Sari and Coimbatore (Soft) Silk Saris & Kovai Kora Cotton Saris
Maharashtra	Paithani Sari, Karvath Kathi Sari and Nagpur Cotton Sari
Chhattisgarh	Tussar Silk Sari of Champa
Madhya Pradesh	Maheshwari Sari and Chanderi Sari
Gujarat	Patola Sari, Tangaliya Sari, Ashawali sari and Kuchchi Sari/ Bhujodi sari
Rajsthan	Kota Doria Sari

Uttar Pradesh	Lalitpuri Sari, Banaras Brocade, Jangla, Tanchoi, Cutwork, and Jamdani
Jammu & Kashmir	Pashmina Sari
Bihar	Bhagalpuri Silk Sari and Bawan Buti Sari
Odisha	Kotpad Sari and Gopalpur Tassar Sari
West Bengal	Jamdani, Santipuri and Tangail
Jharkhand	Tussar and Gichha Silk Sari
Karnataka	Ilkal Sari
Assam	Muga Silk Sari, Mekhla Chadar (Sari)
Punjab	Embd. & Croch (Phulkari)

DEMONETISATION CASE VERDICT

Why in news?

- The Supreme Court upheld the government's 2016 decision to demonetise currency notes of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 by a 4:1 majority.

What is demonetisation?

- Demonetization is the process through which a nation's economic unit of exchange loses its legally enforceable validity.
- It is a drastic intervention into the economy that involves removing the legal tender status of a currency.
- It arises whenever the official currency is changed. The existing kind or types of currency are withdrawn through circulation and supplanted with new currency.

Why countries opt for demonetisation?

- To address issues like hyperinflation and to stabilize the currency
- To eliminate negative situations or actions like counterfeit currency, terror, and tax fraud
- To introduce a new monetary system in some circumstances
- To facilitate trade and access to markets,
- To push informal economic activity into more transparency

What are the advantages and disadvantages of Demonetization?

Advantages	Disadvantages
Control criminal activities	Illegal activity will not be stopped entirely
Forbids tax avoidance and other financial crimes	Expenses issuing new currency and coinage minting can be high
Fosters innovation by converting currency to digital currency and promoting digital transactions	Introduces new types of currency risk such as cybercrime
Often results in higher long-term GDP due to higher tax revenue being reinvested in the nation	Likely stalls a nation's GDP during the conversion process
Enhances transparency and discourages the circulation of black money	Imposes a burden on citizens, especially those who must convert one currency to another

Demonetisation in India

- **Previous demonetisation** - Demonetisation has been implemented twice:
 - In 1946, RBI demonetized 1000- and 10000-rupee notes.
 - In 1978, the government demonetized 1000-, 5000-, and 10000-rupee notes in order to curb the menace of black money.
- **2016 demonetisation**
 - On November 8, 2016, PM Modi announced the decision of the government to demonetise currency notes of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 in a bid to tackle corruption.

Why was demonetisation challenged?

- 58 petitions challenging various aspects of the government's note ban decision was filed in the SC.

- These petitioners contended that the procedure prescribed in Section 26(2) of RBI Act, 1934, was not followed.
- Section 26(2) of the RBI Act states that on recommendation of the Central Board of the RBI, the Central Government may declare that **any series** of bank notes of any denomination shall cease to be legal tender.
- The petitioners argued that the word “any” would have to be given a restricted meaning.

What is the Supreme Court’s verdict on demonetisation?

- In its majority 4:1 judgment, it was held that the Centre’s notification dated November 8, 2016, was valid and satisfied the test of proportionality.
- The court held that the central government’s decision was after RBI board’s approval which shows in-built safeguard against centre’s powers.
- The hardships faced by citizens following demonetisation six years ago cannot be a ground to reverse the decision.

‘SMART’ (SCOPE FOR MAINSTREAMING AYURVEDA RESEARCH IN TEACHING PROFESSIONALS) PROGRAM

The National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM) and the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), the two prominent institutions under the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India for regulating medical education and conducting scientific research respectively, have launched ‘SMART’ (Scope for Mainstreaming Ayurveda Research in Teaching Professionals) program.



About 'SMART' (Scope for Mainstreaming Ayurveda Research in Teaching Professionals) Program:

- It is aimed to boost scientific research in priority healthcare research areas through Ayurveda colleges and hospitals.
- The proposed initiative is conceptualised with an objective to identify, support and promote innovative research ideas in healthcare research areas including Osteoarthritis, Iron Deficiency

Anaemia, Chronic Bronchitis, Dyslipidemia, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Obesity, Diabetes Mellitus, Psoriasis, Generalised Anxiety Disorder, Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD).

- The eligible Ayurveda academic institutions may apply by 10 January, 2023.
- All details regarding contact information, eligibility criteria and application process has been shared to all recognized academic institutions and hospitals through NCISM.
- The ‘SMART’ program will motivate teachers for taking up projects in designated areas of healthcare research and create a large database.

BRAZIL

The Prime Minister of India has congratulated Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva on assuming office as the President of Brazil.



About Brazil:

- Brazil is the largest country in both South America and Latin America.
- Its capital is **Brasília**.
- It is bounded by the **Atlantic Ocean on the east, and borders all other countries in South America except Ecuador and Chile.**
- Brazil is a founding member of the **United Nations, the G20, BRICS, Union of South American Nations, Mercosul etc.**
- **Brazil's physical features can be grouped into five main physiographic divisions:**
 - The Guiana Highlands in the North
 - The Amazon lowlands
 - The Pantanal in the Central-West
 - The Brazilian Highlands (including the extensive coastal ranges)
 - The coastal lowlands
- **The Brazilian Highlands**
 - The Brazilian Highlands are a system of plateaus, mountains, uplands.
 - The highest point is Pico da Bandeira, located in the Espinhaço Mountain range.

- **The Guiana Highlands**

- The Guiana Highlands have their smaller southern parts cutting into Brazilian territory.
- The highest summit of the country is located here- Pico da Neblina.

- **The Amazon River and Basin**

- The Amazon River in South America is the largest river by discharge volume of water in the world.
- The Amazon River begins in the **Andes Mountains and drains into the Atlantic Ocean.**
- The Amazon basin is the part of South America drained by the Amazon River and its tributaries.
- The Amazon drainage basin is located in the countries of **Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela.**
- Most of the basin is covered by the Amazon Rainforest, also known as Amazonia, which is a dense tropical forest, and also the largest rainforest in the world.
- The Amazon Basin is a vast plain, with huge rivers intersecting its surface, coming from the Andes Mountains, the Brazilian Highlands and the Guyana Uplands.
- The basin is bordered by the Brazilian Highlands on the south, and the Guyana Upland on the north.

DELIMITATION IN INDIA

Why in News?

- On 27th December 2022, the Election Commission began the delimitation of Assembly and Parliamentary constituencies in Assam by using the Census data of 2001 for the readjustment seats.

What is Delimitation?

- According to the Election Commission, the word ‘delimitation’ is defined as “**the act or process of fixing limits/boundaries of territorial constituencies in a country or a province having a legislative body**”.
- In the Indian context, the exercise of redrawing the boundaries of Lok Sabha and Legislative Assembly Constituencies in a region is known as delimitation.

- In this process, the number of seats allocated to a particular state/UT in Lok Sabha or in the Legislative Assembly may vary.

Why is it needed?

- Delimitation helps in redrawing the boundaries (based on the data of the last Census) in such a way that the population of all the constituencies, as far as practicable, remain equal throughout the State/UT.
- It ensures a fair division of geographical areas so that all political parties or candidates contesting elections **have a level playing field in terms of a number of voters.**

Constitutional Provisions:

- **Article 82** and **Article 170** of the Constitution empowers the Parliament to readjust the allocation of seats in the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assemblies of States respectively, after every census.
- The present delimitation of constituencies has been done on the basis of 2001 census data under the provisions of **Delimitation Commission Act, 2002.**
- The next Delimitation Commission will be set up after 2026.

About Delimitation Commission:

- The Delimitation Commission is a high-powered committee entrusted with the task of drawing and redrawing of boundaries of different constituencies for state assembly and Lok Sabha election.
- It is appointed by the President and works in collaboration with the Election Commission.
- **The Commission consists of –**
 - A retired or working Supreme Court Judge (chairperson)
 - Election Commissioner
 - Concerned State Election Commissioners
- The Commission's orders have the force of law and **cannot be called in question before any court.**