

Savitribai Phule

Every year on January 3rd, India celebrates a special day called Savitribai Phule Jayanti.



About Savitribai Phule:

- **Born in** a small village in Satara district of Maharashtra on January 3, 1831, Savitribai Phule was an Indian social reformer, poet, and powerful voice in the Indian freedom struggle.
- She was an **active participant in the women's liberation movement**.
- Savitribai trained at Ms. Farar's Institution in Ahmednagar and at Ms. Mitchell's school in Pune to become the **first female teacher in India**.
- **Savitribai Phule and her husband, Jyotirao Phule** (one of the most famous social reformers in Maharashtra), **opened India's first school for women in Pune in 1848**.
- Despite resistance from society, **by 1851, Phule was running 18 schools for children of different castes, with a strength of 150 girls**.
- They also established two educational trusts: the **Native Female School, Pune**, and the **Society for Promoting the Education of Mahars, Mangs, and others** from downtrodden castes.
- **In 1852, the British government acknowledged** the great work of the Phule family in the field of education and honored Savitribai **by naming her the best teacher**.
- She, along with her husband, Jyotirao Phule, actively **worked against the caste-based discrimination** prevalent in society.
- She played a crucial role in grooming Jyotirao Phule's pioneering institution, **Satyashodhak Samaj (1873) that fought for equality of all classes**.
- **In 1852, she initiated the Mahila Seva Mandal**, a platform aimed at **creating awareness about women's rights**. Notably, this platform brought together members of all castes, challenging entrenched social hierarchies.
- Savitribai also fought **against dowry and other oppressive social customs**.

- In 1863, Jyotirao and Savitribai began Balhatya Pratibandhak Griha, India's first home prohibiting infanticide, helping pregnant Brahmin widows and rape victims.
- Savitribai Phule wrote two books, Kavya Phule in 1854 and Bavan Kashi Subodh Ratnakar in 1892, which are collections of her poems.
- She wrote the famous poem 'Go Get Education' to encourage backward and oppressed class people to get an education.
- Her birth anniversary, celebrated as Savitribai Phule Jayanti, is a day to commemorate her legacy and contributions to education and social equality.

WHAT IS SWADESH DARSHAN 2.0 SCHEME?

The tourism ministry has included Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary in the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme.



About Swadesh Darshan Scheme:

- It was launched in 2015 by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, to develop sustainable and responsible tourism destinations in the country.
- It is 100% centrally funded scheme.
- Under the scheme, the Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to State governments, Union Territory Administrations or Central Agencies for development of tourism infrastructure in the country.
- Operation & Maintenance (O&M) of the projects sanctioned under Swadesh Darshan Scheme is the responsibility of the respective State Government/UT Administration.
- Swadesh Darshan 2.0:
 - The Ministry of Tourism has revamped its Swadesh Darshan scheme as Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD2.0) for development of sustainable and responsible tourist destinations covering tourism and allied infrastructure, tourism services, human capital development, destination management and promotion backed by policy and institutional reforms.

- The objective for the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme envisage increase in private sector investment in tourism & hospitality.
- It may help in increasing Public Private Partnerships (PPP) in the field of tourism and operation and maintenance of the created assets under the scheme.

Key Facts about Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary:

- **Location:** It is situated in the Bargarh district of Odisha near the Hirkud dam (Mahanadi River).
- It finds a special mention because of noted freedom fighter Veer Surendra Sai. During his rebellion against the British, his base at 'Barapathara' was located within the sanctuary.
- It was declared a wildlife sanctuary in 1985.
- **Vegetation:** Dry deciduous mixed forests.
- **Flora:** Major trees found here are Sal, Asana, Bija, Aanla, Dhaura etc.
- **Fauna:** A huge variety of wild animals reside in the dense forest of the sanctuary, such as Tiger, Sloth Bear, Leopard, Hyena, Spotted Deer, Antelopes, Sambar, Gaur, Nilgai, Bison, Langur Monkeys etc.

[KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES COMMISSION \(KVIC\)](#)

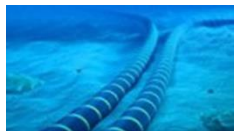


The Quality Council of India (QCI) and Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) recently signed an initial pact to enhance the quality of the latter's products, train artisans, and introduce 'Made in India' label for Khadi.

About Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC):

- It is a statutory body established under the Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act of 1956.
- It is an apex organization under the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, with regard to khadi and village industries within India.

- The KVIC is charged with the **planning**, promotion, organisation and **implementation** of programmes for the development of **Khadi and other village industries in rural areas** in coordination with other agencies engaged in rural development wherever necessary.
- **The functions of the KVIC are as follows:**
 - To **build a strategic reserve of raw materials** and implements for supply to producers.
 - To **create common service facilities for processing raw materials** as semi-finished goods and provisions for **facilities for marketing KVI products**.
 - To **enhance the sale and marketing** of Khadi and other products of village industries or handicrafts.
 - To be responsible for encouraging and **promoting research** in the production techniques and equipment employed in the Khadi and Village Industries sectors.
 - To **provide financial assistance to institutions and individuals** for developing and guiding the Khadi and Village industries through the supply of designs, prototypes, and other technical information.
 - To **assure the genuineness of the products and to set standards for the quality** of products from Khadi and Village Industries.
- **At the state level, Khadi & Village Industries Boards were set up** to effectively implement the schemes of KVIC in their respective states.



[KOCHI-LAKSHADWEEP ISLANDS SUBMARINE OPTICAL FIBER CONNECTION PROJECT](#)

Recently, the Prime Minister of India in Kavaratti, Lakshadweep, inaugurated Kochi-Lakshadweep islands submarine optical fiber connection (KLI-SOFC) project.

- It is the submarine cable connectivity project from **Mainland (Kochi)** to **eleven Lakshadweep Islands** namely, Kavaratti, Agatti, Amini, Kadmat, Chetlet, Kalpeni, Minicoy, Androth, Kiltan, Bangaram and Bitra has been extended.

- The project is **funded by Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF)**, Department of Telecommunication.
- **Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)** was the Project Executing Agency and the work was awarded to M/s NEC Corporation India Pvt Ltd through Global Open Tendering process.
- The major activities related to the project include Marine Route Survey, Submarine Cable laying, Civil Construction of CLS stations, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of End Terminals (SLTE).
- **Significance of the project**
 - The KLI-SOFC project will lead to an **increase in internet speed** unlocking new possibilities & opportunities.
 - For the first time since independence, Lakshadweep will be connected through Submarine Optic Fibre Cable.
 - The dedicated submarine OFC will ensure a paradigm shift in **communication infrastructure** in the Lakshadweep islands, enabling faster and more reliable internet services, telemedicine, e-governance, educational initiatives, digital banking, digital currency usage, digital literacy etc.

SMART 2.0 PROGRAM

The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) along with National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM) has launched 'SMART 2.0' program.



About SMART 2.0 program:

- Scope for Mainstreaming Ayurveda Research among Teaching professionals (SMART) program promotes **robust clinical studies** in priority areas of Ayurveda with Ayurveda academic institutions/hospitals across the country through mutual collaboration.

- The **objective** of ‘SMART 2.0’ is to generate a tangible evidence to demonstrate **efficacy and safety of Ayurveda** interventions using interdisciplinary research methods and translating it into public health care.
- The study aims at safety, tolerability and adherence to Ayurveda formulations in the priority research areas of **Bal Kasa, malnutrition, insufficient lactation, Abnormal Uterine Bleeding**, Osteoporosis in post-menopausal women and Diabetes Mellitus (DM) II.

What is CCRAS?

- It is an autonomous body of the **Ministry of AYUSH** (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy), Government of India.
- It is an **apex body** in India for the **formulation, coordination, development and promotion of research** on scientific lines in Ayurveda and Sowa-Rigpa system of medicine.

Key facts about National Commission for Indian System of Medicine

- It is the **statutory body** constituted under **NCISM Act, 2020**. An Act to provide for a medical education system that improves access to quality and affordable medical education, ensures availability of adequate and high quality medical professionals of Indian System of Medicine in all parts of the country.
- **Functions**
 - Framing policies for regulating medical institutions and medical professionals of Indian System of Medicine
 - Assessing the requirements of healthcare related human resources and infrastructure.
 - Ensuring compliance by the State Medical Councils of Indian System of Medicine of the regulations made under the Bill
 - Ensuring coordination among the autonomous boards.

FOG PASS DEVICES

Recently, to ensure smooth rail operations, Indian Railways have provisioned 19,742 Fog Pass Devices during the foggy weather.



About Fog Pass Devices:

- It is a **GPS based navigation device** that helps the loco pilot to navigate during dense fog conditions.
- It provides **on-board real-time information** (Display as well as voice guidance) to Loco Pilots regarding location of fixed landmarks such as Signal, Level Crossing gate (Manned & Unmanned), Permanent Speed Restrictions, Neutral Sections etc.
- It displays approach indications of next three approaching fixed landmarks in geographical order accompanied with **voice message approximately 500m** on approach.
- **General features of Fog Pass Device**
 - Suitable for all types of sections like single line, double line, electrified as well as non electrified sections.
 - Suitable for **all types of electric and diesel locomotives**, EMUs/MEMUs/ DEMUs.
 - Suitable for train speeds up to 160 KMPH.
 - It has built-in re-chargeable battery back-up for 18 hrs.
 - It is portable, compact in size, light in weight (not more than 1.5 Kg including battery) and of robust design.
 - Loco Pilot can carry the device easily with him to the locomotive on resuming his duty.
 - It can be easily placed on the cab desk of locomotive.
 - It is a standalone system.
 - It is unaffected by weather conditions like Fog, Rain or Sunshine.

INDIAN SCIENCE CONGRESS BEEN POSTPONED

Why in news?

- The Indian Science Congress has been postponed. The five-day event will not begin on its customary date, January 3.
 - The Science Congress is the biggest meeting of scientists and science students in the country and has been a regular event for over a century.
- Also, there is no firm word on when — and whether — the congress will meet this year.

Indian Science Congress (ISC)

- **About**
 - ISC is a one-of-its-kind event in the country which brings together the scientific communities on a platform for their interaction with students and the general public on matters related to science.
- **Organised by**
 - The event is organized by the **Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA)**.
 - ISCA is an independent body functioning with the support of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) in the central government.
- **Permanent fixture on the calendar**
 - Dubbed as the largest gathering of scientists and students in the country, the Science Congress is an annual five-day event from January 3 to 7, a permanent fixture on the Prime Minister's calendar.
 - The first session of the Indian Science Congress was held in 1914 at the premises of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta.

Declining glory of ISC

- In more recent times, the event has attracted attention for all the wrong reasons:
 - lack of serious discussion, the promotion of pseudoscience, outlandish claims by random speakers, and the absence of useful outcomes.
- As a result, several top scientists have advocated the discontinuation of the event, or at least withdrawal of government support.

- For organising the Science Congress, the government provides an annual grant.
 - Besides this, the government has no role to play in organising the ISC.
-

KUNO NATIONAL PARK

Three cubs were born to the Namibian cheetah Aasha at Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district recently.



About Kuno National Park:

- **Location:**
 - It is located in the Sheopur district of **Madhya Pradesh**.
 - It is nestled near the **Vindhyan Hills**.
 - It is **named after the Kuno River**(one of the main **tributaries of the Chambal River**) that cuts across it.
 - Initially established as a wildlife sanctuary, it was only in 2018 that the government changed its status into a national park.
 - It was **selected under 'Action Plan for Introduction of Cheetah in India'**. It has gained international recognition for conservation and restoration because of the **recent reintroduction of cheetahs**.
 - **Vegetation:** The vegetation in the park varies from **tropical dry deciduous forest to savannah grasslands**.
 - **Landscape:** It is characterized by **rocky hills, ravines, and plateaus**.
 - **Flora:** **Kardhai, Salai, and Khair trees** dominate the forested area.
 - **Fauna:**
 - The protected area of the forest is home to the **jungle cat, Indian leopard, sloth bear, Indian wolf, striped hyena**, golden jackal, Bengal fox, and dhole, along with more than 120 bird species.
-