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Jyotirao Phule

Syllabus: GS-1; Modern Indian History

Context

- On the occasion of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule's 134th death anniversary, a solemn tribute was paid.



About

- Jyotirao Phule (1827–1890) was a prominent social reformer, thinker, and activist from Maharashtra, India, who played a significant role in the social reform movement in the 19th century.
- He is widely recognized for his contributions to the upliftment of the marginalized sections of society, particularly the lower castes, women, and Dalits.

Key Contributions and Works

Founder of Satyashodhak Samaj (1873):

- Jyotirao Phule founded the Satyashodhak Samaj (Society of Truth Seekers) in 1873 with the aim of promoting social justice, equality, and education, particularly for the lower castes and women.
- The organization sought to challenge the caste system and promote social equality through education and social reforms.

Criticism of the Caste System:

- Phule strongly criticized the rigid caste system and Brahmanical dominance, which he believed perpetuated social inequality and discrimination.
- He argued that the caste system was a man-made creation and not divinely ordained, as propagated by the orthodox Hindu scriptures.
- In his **book "Gulamgiri" (Slavery)**, he condemned the exploitation of lower castes by the upper caste Hindus, particularly the Brahmins.

Promotion of Education:

- Phule emphasized the importance of education for the oppressed sections of society. He advocated for education for women and lower-caste children, who were traditionally denied access to education.
- He started the **first school for girls in Pune in 1848**, at a time when female education was not encouraged in India.
- His educational reforms focused on removing caste-based barriers in education and promoting equal opportunities for all.

Social Reforms for Women:

- Phule was a strong advocate for women's rights and worked towards the empowerment of women, particularly in the context of their education and social position.
- He condemned the practice of **child marriage, the dowry system, and Sati (the practice of widow immolation)**.
- He was an early proponent of widow remarriage and advocated for the legal rights of women.

Philosophy of Social Equality:

- Phule's philosophy centered on the idea of social equality, challenging the social hierarchies that existed in Indian society.
- He believed that all human beings should have equal access to resources, opportunities, and justice.
- He promoted rational thinking and scientific temper to combat superstition and orthodoxy.

Influence on the Indian Social Reform Movement:

- Phule's work laid the foundation for the subsequent social reform movements in India, including the work of leaders like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who later carried forward Phule's ideas, particularly in the fight for Dalit rights and social justice.

- His writings, particularly "**Gulamgiri**" and "**Shetkaryacha Asud**" (The Cultivator's Whipcord), are still widely read for their critique of social injustice.

Legacy:

- Jyotirao Phule is remembered as one of the pioneering figures in the Indian social reform movement.
- His efforts towards the upliftment of the downtrodden and his progressive ideas on education and social equality continue to inspire movements for social justice in modern India.
- He is often hailed as the "**Father of Indian Social Reform**" and a precursor to the Dalit movement.

Relevance

- **Social Reform Movements:** Phule's contributions are relevant to the topic of social reform movements in the 19th century India, which is an important area in the General Studies paper on Modern History.
- **Caste System and Social Justice:** His ideas on caste and social justice are significant in understanding the history of caste-based discrimination and the various movements that challenged it.
- **Role in Women's Rights Movement:** Phule's work is crucial to understanding the evolution of women's rights in India, especially the early battles against child marriage, Sati, and for women's education.
- **Contribution to the Dalit Movement:** His work laid the groundwork for the Dalit movement, which is essential in the context of modern social justice movements in India.

Jyotirao Phule's legacy remains a key aspect of India's history of social reform, and his efforts in the areas of education, social justice, and equality continue to be relevant to contemporary debates and reforms in India.

Design Law Treaty

Syllabus: GS-2; International Relations – Treaties and Agreements

Context

- India signs final act of Riyadh Design Law Treaty, reaffirms commitment to strengthen IP framework.

About

- India signed the Final Act of the Riyadh **Design Law Treaty (DLT)**, reaffirming its commitment to strengthening the **intellectual property (IP)** ecosystem.
- The treaty, adopted under the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)** after two decades of negotiations, aims to harmonize industrial design protection globally.
- Facilitates easier, faster, and more affordable protection of industrial designs internationally.

Objectives of the Riyadh DLT

- **Harmonization of Industrial Design Protection**
 - Standardizes design registration procedures across jurisdictions.
 - Reduces procedural complexities and administrative burdens.
- **Promotion of Innovation and Creativity**
 - Empowers small and medium enterprises (SMEs), startups, and independent designers.
 - Encourages global collaboration in industrial design.
- **Simplified Mechanisms for Applicants**
 - Flexible deadlines for submissions and corrections.
 - Mechanism to restore rights in case of procedural lapses.
 - Allows filing multiple designs in a single application.
- **Digitalization of IP Processes**
 - Advocates electronic systems for design registration.
 - Facilitates digital exchange of priority documents globally.

Significance for India

- **Boost to Startups and SMEs**
 - Simplified IP processes and multi-design applications make patent filing more accessible.
 - Encourages innovation, especially under initiatives like **Startup India** and **SIPP (Startups Intellectual Property Protection)**.
- **Economic Impact**
 - Enhances India's competitiveness in the global IP landscape.
 - Strengthens the policy framework for leveraging design as a tool for innovation and economic development.
- **Global Recognition**

- India ranks among the top 10 globally for patents, trademarks, and industrial designs.
- Recorded a 15.7% growth in patent applications in 2023, reflecting double-digit growth for five consecutive years.

Impact of the Treaty

- Encourages **digital-first approaches** to design registration.
- Accelerates patent and design filings by startups and emerging businesses.
- Establishes India as a key player in global IP innovation.

Key Statistics

- India filed **64,480 patent applications** in 2023, ranking sixth globally.
- Indian filings now account for over **55.2%** of total filings in the country.

Eklavya Platform

Syllabus: GS-2; Governance

Context

- Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), General Upendra Dwivedi, launched "Eklavya," an online learning platform for the Indian Army.

Vision

- Aligns with the "Decade of Transformation" and the Indian Army's 2024 theme, Year of Technology Absorption.

Development and Hosting

- **Developed by:** Headquarters Army Training Command, sponsored by the Army War College.
- **Collaborators:** Bhaskaracharya National Institute of Space Applications and Geoinformatics (BISAG-N) and Directorate General of Information Systems.
- **Cost:** Developed at zero cost.
- **Hosting:** On the Army Data Network with scalable architecture.

Features

- Integration with all training establishments, hosting 96 courses by 17 Category 'A' Training Establishments.
- Allows student officers to register for multiple courses anytime, delinked from physical course nominations.

Categories of Courses

- **Pre-Course Preparatory Capsules**
 - Study material for physical courses, focusing on shifting foundational knowledge online.
 - Enables physical courses to cover contemporary, application-oriented content.
 - Aims to decongest courses and integrate emerging warfare concepts.
- **Appointment or Assignment-Specific Courses**
 - Designed for officers in specialized roles like information warfare, financial planning, and veteran affairs.
 - Supports on-the-job training and enhances domain specialization.
 - Enables officers to prepare for postings effectively.
- **Professional Development Suite**
 - Includes courses on topics like Strategy, Operational Art, Leadership, Finance, Emerging Technology, and Power Writing.
 - Aims to foster continuous professional development and enhance military education.

Additional Functionalities

- **Knowledge Highway:** A searchable repository of journals, research papers, and articles under a single window.

Benefits

- Encourages continuous military education.
- Enriches physical courses with contemporary content.
- Prepares officers for specialist roles and encourages domain specialization.
- Decongests existing training programs to include modern warfare concepts.

Dairy Sector in India

Syllabus: GS-3; Agriculture

Context

- India's milk production increased by nearly 4% to around 239 million tonnes in 2023-24 compared to 2022-23 whereas meat production rose by nearly 5% to reach over 10 million tonnes during the same period, shows the basic animal husbandry statistics released on National Milk Day.

About

- India is the **largest producer of milk** globally, contributing about 23% of the world's total milk production (FAO 2023).
- The dairy sector plays a critical role in the rural economy, contributing significantly to **livelihoods, nutrition, and employment**.
- It accounts for around **4.5% of India's GDP** and contributes nearly **25% to agricultural GDP**.

Significance of the Dairy Sector

- **Economic Contribution:**
 - Livelihood for over **80 million rural households**, primarily small and marginal farmers and landless laborers.
 - India's dairy market size is expected to grow at a **CAGR of 9-10%**, driven by domestic demand and value-added products.
- **Nutrition and Food Security:**
 - Milk is a primary source of protein, calcium, and other nutrients in the Indian diet.
 - Helps combat malnutrition and anemia, particularly among women and children.
- **Employment Generation:**
 - Provides **self-employment opportunities** in rural areas through milk production, processing, and marketing.
 - Promotes inclusive growth by empowering women (**over 70% workforce in dairying are women**).
- **Export Potential:**
 - India exports dairy products like butter, cheese, skimmed milk powder (SMP), and casein to markets in Asia and the Middle East.

Key Challenges

- **Low Productivity:**
 - Average milk yield of Indian cattle is **1,200–1,500 liters/year**, significantly lower than global standards (e.g., US average: 10,000 liters/year).
- **Animal Health Issues:**
 - High prevalence of diseases like Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) and inadequate veterinary infrastructure.
- **Climate Change Impact:**
 - Rising temperatures and erratic monsoons affect fodder availability and milk production.
- **Fragmented Supply Chain:**
 - Lack of cold chain infrastructure and organized marketing reduces efficiency and profitability.
- **Policy and Regulation:**
 - Inconsistent pricing policies and poor implementation of schemes.

Government Initiatives and Schemes

- **National Dairy Plan (NDP):**
 - Aimed at enhancing milk production by improving productivity and expanding infrastructure.
- **Rashtriya Gokul Mission:**
 - Focused on the conservation and development of indigenous breeds.
- **Dairy Processing and Infrastructure Development Fund (DIDF):**
 - Provides financial support for modernizing and expanding dairy processing plants and infrastructure.
- **Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF):**
 - Promotes entrepreneurship in dairy and animal husbandry by providing credit facilities.
- **Operation Flood:**
 - Launched by the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) in 1970, it transformed India into the largest producer of milk.

Way Forward

- **Technology Adoption:**
 - Promote **Artificial Insemination (AI)**, digital tools for monitoring cattle health, and modern milking methods.
- **Focus on Fodder Security:**

- Invest in high-yield fodder crop varieties and fodder preservation techniques like silage and hay.
- **Improved Infrastructure:**
 - Strengthen the cold chain, transport networks, and processing units to reduce wastage and improve supply chain efficiency.
- **Promotion of Indigenous Breeds:**
 - Incentivize farmers to rear high-yield indigenous breeds like Gir, Sahiwal, and Rathi.
- **Value Addition:**
 - Develop products like cheese, yogurt, butter, and milk-based beverages to boost farmer income.
- **Export Promotion:**
 - Encourage compliance with international standards to tap global markets more effectively.
- **Climate Resilience:**
 - Research on heat-tolerant breeds and climate-smart livestock practices.

Ophiophagus Kaalinga

Syllabus: GS-3; Biodiversity

Context

- Karnataka's own king cobra found in the Western Ghats and known as 'Kaalinga Sarpa' in the local parlance will get its name etched in the scientific world.
- The Western Ghat's species, which has inspired many popular references in films and literature, will be officially named Ophiophagus Kaalinga.



More to know

- **Scientific Name:** *Ophiophagus kaalinga*
- **Common Name:** Kalinga King Cobra / Kaalinga Sarpa (local parlance in Karnataka)

Key Highlights

- **Native Habitat:**
 - Found in Karnataka's Western Ghats, recognized as a biodiversity hotspot.
 - Known locally as '**Kaalinga Sarpa**', it is revered in regional culture and has inspired popular references in films and literature.
- **Scientific Recognition:**
 - Officially named *Ophiophagus kaalinga* after a nearly decade-long research led by noted herpetologist **Dr. P. Gowri Shankar**.
 - Published in the **European Journal of Taxonomy** in September 2024.
- **Discovery of Lineages:**
 - Previously, all king cobras were considered a single species (*Ophiophagus hannah*), named in 1836 by Theodore Edward Cantor.
 - Genetic studies identified **four distinct lineages** of king cobras:
 - **Western Ghats lineage** (*Kaalinga*)
 - **Indo-Chinese lineage**
 - **Indo-Malaysian lineage**
 - **Luzon Island lineage** (*Salvatana*)
- **Formal Recognition:**
 - On November 22, 2024, the **Western Ghats lineage ('Kaalinga')** and **Luzon Island lineage ('Salvatana')** were formally named in Bengaluru.

Biological and Ecological Characteristics

- **Physical Traits:**
 - Smaller size compared to *Ophiophagus hannah*, with distinctive features.
 - Builds large nests (4 ft x 3 ft) and guards them ferociously.
- **Reproduction:**
 - Female king cobras lay 23–43 eggs per clutch.
 - Leaves the nest before hatchlings emerge.
- **Diet and Venom:**
 - Feeds primarily on snakes, including venomous ones, and occasionally on small mammals and lizards.
 - Venom is a **neurotoxin** causing respiratory arrest and cardiac failure.
 - While not the most potent, a single bite delivers enough venom to kill 10 humans or an elephant.
- **Unique Features:**
 - King cobras are the **only snakes in the world to build nests**.
 - Their venom's large volume delivery makes bites particularly dangerous.

Conservation and Challenges

- **Conservation Efforts:**
 - Found under **Schedule II** of the **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**.
 - Habitat destruction and human-animal conflicts are significant threats.
- **Anti-Venom Research:**
 - Recent research highlighted the absence of a specific anti-venom for king cobras in India.
 - Identification of four species could lead to the development of **species-specific anti-venoms**.
 - This is crucial since polyvalent anti-venom (for other venomous snakes) is ineffective against king cobra bites.

Cultural and Ecological Significance

- **Cultural Reverence:**
 - King cobras evoke a mix of reverence and fear, especially in regions like Karnataka.
- **Ecological Role:**
 - As apex predators, they regulate populations of other snakes, contributing to ecosystem balance.