



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 06-01-2025

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1. Savitribai Phule a beacon of women empowerment

GS-2

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Savitribai Phule a beacon of women empowerment

Syllabus: GS-1: Indian History – Social Reformers

Context:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tribute to Savitribai Phule, who came from a backward community and is considered an iconic woman social reformer, on her birth anniversary on January 3, 2025, lauding her as a pioneer in education and social reform.

Savitribai Phule: A Pioneering Social Reformer

Early Life

- **Birth:** 3 January 1831, Naigaon, Maharashtra.
- **Family:** Born into a Dalit family belonging to the Mali community.
- **Marriage:** Married Jyotirao Phule at the age of nine.

Education

- **Education:** Savitribai received her education with the support of Jyotirao Phule.
- **Teacher Training:** Trained at the Normal School in Pune and later in Ahmedabad.

Contributions to Women's Education

- **First Female Teacher:** She is regarded as India's first female teacher.
- **First School for Girls:** In 1848, Savitribai and Jyotirao Phule started the first school for girls in Bhide Wada, Pune.
 - Emphasis on the education of marginalized castes and girls.
 - Managed and taught at several schools in Maharashtra.
- **Curriculum:** Focused on critical thinking, arithmetic, and language skills.

Social Reforms

- **Advocacy for Women's Rights:**
 - Fought against patriarchy and caste discrimination.
 - Championed widow remarriage and fought against child marriage.
- **BalhatyaPratibandhakGriha** (Home for the Prevention of Infanticide):
 - Established to prevent infanticide, especially of widows' children.
 - Provided support and shelter to widows and abandoned women.

- **Campaign Against Sati and Child Marriage:**
 - Spoke against regressive practices like Sati and child marriage.
 - Advocated for raising the marriageable age.
- **Work for the Marginalized:**
 - Opened schools for the Dalits and oppressed castes.
 - Encouraged the lower castes to break free from social taboos.

Literary Contributions

- **Poetry:** Wrote several poems emphasizing education, gender equality, and social justice.
 - Famous works include "*Kavya Phule*" (1854), a collection of her poems.
- **Prose:** Used her writings as a medium to inspire and educate society.

Role in Plague Relief

- During the 1897 bubonic plague, she tirelessly worked to help the affected.
- Established clinics to treat patients and provide necessary supplies.
- Died on 10 March 1897 while serving plague victims.

Legacy

- **Impact on Education:** Her efforts laid the foundation for modern women's education in India.
- **Symbol of Empowerment:** An icon for Dalit and women's rights movements.
- **Recognition:**
 - The University of Pune was renamed *Savitribai Phule Pune University* in her honor.
 - Numerous awards and institutions are named after her.

Conclusion:

Savitribai Phule remains an inspiration for movements aimed at promoting gender equality, education, and social justice in India. Her visionary leadership continues to influence modern social reform.

Women electors in 2024 LS election

Syllabus: GS-2: Indian Polity – Elections

Context:

- The Election Commission (EC) has released granular data for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections recently.

General Observations

- **Increasing Female Turnout:**
 - The gap between male and female voter turnout has been narrowing over recent elections.
 - Female turnout surpassed male turnout in the 2019 and 2024 elections.
 - The difference increased from **0.16 points in 2019** to **0.23 points in 2024**.
- **State-wise Trends:**
 - **Higher Female Turnout than Males:**
 - 15 out of 28 major States and Union Territories (U.T.s) recorded higher female turnout.
 - Notable States: Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, West Bengal.
 - **Higher Male Turnout than Females:**
 - States like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, and Karnataka.

Factors Influencing Gender Turnout Patterns

- **High Female Voter Participation:**
 - States like Bihar showed high female-to-male voter ratios, despite a lower female-to-male electorate ratio.
 - Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Andhra Pradesh exhibited both higher female electorate and turnout.
- **Low Female Voter Participation:**
 - States like Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh had lower female turnout due to a higher proportion of male electors.
- **Migration Impact:**
 - Male migration for work likely reduced male turnout in States such as Bihar and Jharkhand.

- Bihar features prominently among top sources of migrant workers traveling with unreserved tickets in 2023.

Conclusion

- Female voter turnout has emerged as a critical factor in recent elections.
- Structural issues like migration and political mobilization need further exploration to understand the patterns in States like Bihar and Jharkhand.
- More granular data is required to confirm migration's impact on male voter turnout.

Israel Strikes Gaza

Syllabus:GS-2; International Relations

Context:

- The Israeli military kept up the pressure on northern Gaza on Wednesday, striking in a suburb of Gaza City.

Ongoing Israel-Palestine Conflict



Historical Background

- **Balfour Declaration (1917):** British support for a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine.
- **Partition Plan (1947):** UN proposed dividing Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states.
 - Accepted by Jewish leaders, rejected by Arab leaders.
- **1948 Arab-Israeli War:** Creation of Israel; Palestinians displaced (Nakba).
- **Six-Day War (1967):** Israel captured West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, Sinai Peninsula, and Golan Heights.
- **Oslo Accords (1993, 1995):** Framework for a two-state solution; created the Palestinian Authority (PA).

Core Issues

- **Borders:** Dispute over the 1967 borders and land annexation by Israel.
- **Jerusalem:** Contested as the capital by both Israel and Palestine.
- **Settlements:** Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem are considered illegal under international law.
- **Refugees:** Millions of displaced Palestinians demand the right of return.
- **Security:** Concerns over violence, terror attacks, and military actions.

Recent Developments (2023-2025)

- **Hamas Attacks and Israeli Retaliation:**
 - October 2023: Hamas launched a large-scale attack; Israel responded with military strikes in Gaza.
- **Humanitarian Crisis:**
 - Widespread displacement, destruction of infrastructure, and loss of civilian lives.
 - Blockades in Gaza leading to shortages of essentials like food, water, and electricity.
- **International Involvement:**
 - **US:** Supporting Israel financially and militarily.
 - **UN:** Calls for ceasefire and aid corridors; limited consensus due to geopolitical divisions.
 - **Arab World:** Divided stance; some nations condemn Israel, while others seek normalization.

- **Abraham Accords:** Israel's peace deals with Arab states face strain due to the conflict.

Impact on India

- **Diplomatic Balancing Act:**
 - India supports a two-state solution, advocating peaceful coexistence.
 - Strong ties with Israel (defense and technology) and traditional support for Palestine.
- **Economic Concerns:**
 - Potential disruption of oil supplies from the Middle East.
 - Impact on trade routes and investments in the region.
- **Diaspora Concerns:**
 - Safety of Indian nationals in Israel and Palestinian territories.

Challenges to Resolution

- **Entrenched Hostilities:** Deep-seated mistrust and cycles of violence.
- **Political Divisions:**
 - Weak Palestinian leadership split between Hamas (Gaza) and Fatah (West Bank).
 - Hardline Israeli governments opposing concessions.
- **Geopolitical Interests:**
 - External powers fueling conflict through military and financial aid.
- **Humanitarian Crisis:**
 - Escalating civilian casualties and deteriorating living conditions.

Way Forward

- **Two-State Solution:**
 - Mutually agreed borders based on 1967 lines with East Jerusalem as Palestinian capital.
- **International Mediation:**
 - Active role by the UN, USA, and Arab nations to ensure ceasefire and dialogue.
- **Addressing Root Causes:**
 - Resolution of issues like settlements, refugees, and security.

➤ **Humanitarian Assistance:**

- Immediate aid for displaced populations and rebuilding infrastructure.

Practice Question:

GS-2 (International Relations):

Discuss the historical and contemporary dimensions of the Israel-Palestine conflict and India's position on the issue. (250 words)

Human Metapneumovirus

Syllabus: GS-3: General Science – Diseases.

Context:

- China's diseases control authority said that it was piloting a monitoring system for pneumonia of unknown origin, with cases of some respiratory diseases expected to rise through the winter.

Background:

➤ **Trends in Infections:**

- Increase in overall respiratory infections by mid-December.
- **Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV)** detected, showing upward trends, especially in northern provinces.
- Affected demographic: Predominantly individuals under the age of 14.

➤ **Social Media Claims:**

- Viral posts showing crowded hospitals in China.
- Allegations of emergency declaration for HMPV—no official confirmation yet.

Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV)

➤ **Overview:**

- A respiratory virus causing mild infections resembling a common cold.
- First identified in 2001; belongs to the **Pneumoviridae family** (related to RSV, measles, and mumps).
- Active mostly in winter and early spring.
- High-risk groups: Children, the elderly, and immunocompromised individuals.

➤ **Symptoms:**

- Cough, runny/blocked nose, sore throat, fever, wheezing.
- Incubation period: 3-6 days.
- Complications: In some cases, bronchitis or pneumonia requiring medical care.

➤ **Transmission:**

- Spread through:
 - Contact with infected persons (cough, sneeze secretions).
 - Contaminated objects (doorknobs, keyboards, etc.).
 - Close contact (shaking hands, hugging).
- Entry via mouth, nose, or eyes after contact.

➤ **Treatment:**

- No vaccine or specific antiviral treatment available.
- Symptomatic relief: Over-the-counter medications for fever and pain.
- Antibiotics ineffective against HMPV.

➤ **Prevention:**

- Handwashing with soap and water.
- Avoiding close contact with infected persons.
- Avoid touching face, nose, eyes, and mouth.
- Wearing masks to reduce transmission risk.
- Vulnerable individuals (e.g., with asthma or COPD) should take extra precautions.

Monitoring by India's Health Ministry

➤ **Action Taken:**

- National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) monitoring respiratory infections, including HMPV.
- Collaboration with international agencies.

➤ **Current Assessment:**

- Rise in acute respiratory infections (e.g., influenza, rhinovirus, RSV, HMPV).
- Overall scale and intensity of infections in China lower than the previous year.

- Seasonal increase in respiratory pathogens during winter is expected.
- **Official Statement:**
 - Continuous monitoring and validation of information.
 - Updates provided as needed.

Fog in Delhi

Syllabus: GS-3: Environmental Pollution & GS-1: Indian Geography - Climate

Context:

Friday (January 3, 2025) saw the worst spell of fog this winter in the national capital resulting in as many as 240 flights delayed and six flights cancelled at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport.

Introduction

- **Definition of Fog:** Fog is a visible mass of condensed water droplets or ice crystals suspended in the air near the Earth's surface.
- **Delhi Fogs:** A recurring phenomenon during winters in Delhi and surrounding regions, characterized by dense fog that significantly reduces visibility.

Types of Fog in Delhi

- **Radiation Fog:**
 - Forms during calm, clear nights when the ground cools rapidly, and air near the surface condenses.
 - Most common in Delhi due to temperature inversions.
- **Advection Fog:**
 - Occurs when warm, moist air moves over a cooler surface.
 - Contributes to prolonged fog episodes in Delhi.
- **Smog (Fog + Pollution):**
 - A mixture of fog and air pollutants like particulate matter (PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀), nitrogen oxides, and sulfur dioxide.
 - More prominent in Delhi due to high levels of vehicular and industrial pollution.

Causes of Delhi Fogs

- **Climatic Factors:**
 - **Temperature Inversion:** Cold air near the ground trapped below warmer air prevents dispersion of pollutants.
 - **High Humidity:** Facilitates condensation of water vapor.
 - **Calm Winds:** Prevents mixing of air layers.
- **Geographical Factors:**
 - **Location:** Proximity to the Himalayan foothills allows cold winds to descend into the plains.
 - **Topography:** Low-lying areas trap pollutants and moisture.
- **Anthropogenic Factors:**
 - **Stubble Burning:** Agricultural residue burning in Punjab and Haryana contributes to particulate matter in the atmosphere.
 - **Vehicular Emissions:** Major source of nitrogen oxides and carbon monoxide.
 - **Industrial Emissions:** Factories release sulfur dioxide and other pollutants.

Impacts of Delhi Fogs

- **Environmental Impacts:**
 - Reduction in air quality.
 - Increased concentration of pollutants like PM2.5 and PM10.
- **Health Impacts:**
 - Respiratory disorders: Asthma, bronchitis, and COPD.
 - Increased cases of eye irritation and skin problems.
- **Economic Impacts:**
 - Disruption in transportation: Flight delays, train cancellations, and road accidents.
 - Decline in productivity: Delayed commute and reduced working hours.
- **Social Impacts:**
 - Increased healthcare costs.
 - Lower quality of life due to reduced outdoor activities.

Government Measures to Address Delhi Fogs

➤ Policy Initiatives:

- **Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP):** Categorized measures for pollution control based on air quality levels.
- **Ban on Stubble Burning:** Use of alternatives like Happy Seeder and Pusa Decomposer.

➤ Technological Interventions:

- Use of anti-smog guns and water sprinklers.
- Promotion of electric vehicles (EVs).

➤ Awareness Campaigns:

- Programs to educate farmers and industries about sustainable practices.
- Encouraging carpooling and use of public transport.

➤ Long-term Measures:

- Afforestation programs in and around Delhi.
- Strengthening public transport infrastructure.

Conclusion

- Delhi fogs are a combination of natural and anthropogenic factors, exacerbated by climatic and geographical conditions.
- Effective policy implementation, public participation, and sustainable practices are essential to mitigate its impacts and improve air quality.

Facts and Data

- **Average Winter Visibility:** Often drops below 50 meters in dense fog.
- **Health Data:** As per CPCB, Delhi sees a spike in respiratory ailments by up to 30% during foggy months.
- **Pollution Contribution:** Stubble burning contributes 10-25% of Delhi's pollution during peak fog seasons.