



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 12-04-2025

GS-1

1. Velakali
2. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule

GS-3

3. IMF
4. Indian Star Tortoises
5. Malabar Grey Hornbill

Velakali

Syllabus: GS-1; Art & Culture

Context

- Recently, Velakali performance in front of **Sree Padmanabha Swamy temple** in connection with **Panguni festival**, in Thiruvananthapuram took place.



Origin & Significance:

- Velakali is a traditional martial dance form from Kerala, performed mainly in southern regions, especially Thiruvananthapuram.
- It is associated with temple festivals, particularly at the Sri Padmanabhaswamy Temple.

Performance & Theme:

- Depicts a mock war between the soldiers of **Kaurava and Pandava clans** from the Mahabharata.
- Combines martial arts (**Kalaripayattu**), rhythmic movements, and vibrant costumes.

Costumes & Instruments:

- Dancers wear colorful attire, resembling ancient warriors, with headgear (Kireedam), shields, and swords.

- Accompanied by percussion instruments like **Chenda, Maddalam, and Elathalam**.

Cultural Importance:

- Performed during annual festivals (Utsavams) in temples.
- Showcases Kerala's martial heritage and religious traditions.

Difference from Theyyam & Kathakali:

- Unlike **Theyyam (ritual worship)** or **Kathakali (classical dance-drama)**, Velakali is more martial and war-themed.

Mahatma Jyotiba Phule

Syllabus: GS-1: Socio-religious reform movements – Significant Personalities.

Context:

April 11 marks the 198th birth anniversary of Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, celebrated as a pioneer of social justice and equality in India.



Mahatma Jyotiba Phule (1827–1890)

- A **visionary social reformer, educationist, and anti-caste crusader** from Maharashtra.
- Revered as the “**Father of the Indian Social Revolution**”.
- Among the **first to use the term “Dalit”** for oppressed castes.
- Worked extensively for the **upliftment of Dalits, women, farmers, and laborers**.

Early Life and Education

- **Born:** April 11, 1827, in Pune, into the **Mali (gardener) caste**.
- Educated at the **Scottish Mission School**, graduated in **1847**.
- **Married Savitribai Phule** in 1840, who later became **India’s first woman teacher**.

Key Contributions

Education & Women Empowerment

- **1848:** Established **India’s first school for girls** in Pune.
- Opened **night schools** for farmers and laborers.
- Championed **universal, compulsory, and practical education** for women and backward castes.

Social Reform

- **Critic of casteism, untouchability, and Brahminical patriarchy.**
- **1873:** Founded **Satyashodhak Samaj (Society of Truth Seekers)** to promote **equality, rationalism, and justice**.
- Promoted **widow remarriage**, set up **anti-infanticide centers**, and **orphanages** for Hindu children.

Agriculture and Rural Reform

- **Wrote:** *Shetkaryacha Asud* (The Whipcord of the Farmer) – on agrarian exploitation.
- Advocated:
 - Construction of **dams and bunds** for irrigation.
 - Use of **military labor** for rural infrastructure.
 - **Agricultural education** and farmer empowerment.

Public Advocacy and Politics

- Opposed **filtration theory** in colonial education policy.
- Submitted critical suggestions to the **Hunter Commission (1882)**.
- As **Pune municipal council member**, pushed for reforms in **public health, water supply, and worker rights**.
- Co-founded **Bombay Millhands Association** (with Narayan Meghaji Lokhande) – early labor rights group.

Major Literary Works

- **Gulamgiri (Slavery)** – Critique of caste oppression; dedicated to African-American freedom fighters.
- **ShetkaryachaAsud** – Highlights farmers' exploitation.
- **Sarvajanik Satya Dharma Pustak** – Advocates a universal, rational religion.
- **Tritiya Ratna, Powada on Shivaji Maharaj**, and reformist essays on education and society.

Associated Organizations & Legacy

- **Satyashodhak Samaj**:
 - Opposed Brahminical dominance.
 - Supported **inter-caste marriages, non-Brahmin priesthood, mass education**.
- Started **Din Bandhu newspaper** (1877) for voicing concerns of the oppressed.
- **Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj** supported his ideology.
- Deeply **influenced Dr. B.R. Ambedkar** and the broader Dalit movement.

IMF

Syllabus: GS-3; Economy

Context

- IMF approves \$20 billion extended fund facility arrangement for Argentina

1. Overview of the IMF

- **Establishment:** Created in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference (along with the World Bank). Officially launched in 1945.
- **Headquarters:** Washington D.C., USA.
- **Membership:** 190 countries (as of 2024).
- **Primary Objective:**
 - Ensure global financial stability.
 - Facilitate international monetary cooperation.
 - Promote sustainable economic growth and trade.
 - Reduce poverty and inequality.

2. Key Functions of the IMF

- **Surveillance (Monitoring):**
 - Tracks global and national economic developments (via Article IV Consultations).
 - Provides policy advice to member countries.
- **Financial Assistance:**
 - Provides loans to countries facing Balance of Payments (BoP) crises.
 - Examples: Stand-By Arrangements (SBA), Extended Fund Facility (EFF), Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (PRGT).
- **Technical Assistance & Capacity Development:**
 - Helps countries strengthen economic policies and institutions (e.g., taxation, monetary policy).
- **Special Drawing Rights (SDRs):**
 - Acts as an international reserve asset to supplement member countries' official reserves.
 - SDR basket includes USD, Euro, Chinese Yuan, Japanese Yen, British Pound.

3. IMF Governance Structure

- **Board of Governors:** Highest decision-making body (1 governor per member).
- **Executive Board:** 24 Directors overseeing daily operations.
- **Managing Director:** Chief (currently Kristalina Georgieva).
- **Voting Power:** Based on quotas (financial contributions). The US has the highest voting share (~16.5%), followed by Japan and China.
- **India's Quota:** ~2.75% (8th largest quota holder).

4. IMF & India

- India is a founding member of the IMF.
- **IMF's Role in India:**

- Provided loans during the 1991 BoP crisis (as part of economic reforms).
- Conducts annual Article IV consultations to review India's economy.
- Praised India's growth but highlighted challenges like fiscal deficit, inflation, and NPAs.
- **India's Contributions:**
 - Played a key role in quota reforms for better representation of emerging economies.
 - Provided financial aid to IMF during the 2008 Global Financial Crisis and COVID-19 pandemic.

5. Recent IMF Reports

- **World Economic Outlook (WEO):** Predicts global growth (e.g., India remains the fastest-growing major economy in 2024 at ~6.5%).
- **Global Financial Stability Report (GFSR):** Analyses risks like inflation, debt, and geopolitical tensions.
- **Debt Sustainability Analysis:** Warns about rising debt in developing nations.

6. Criticisms of the IMF

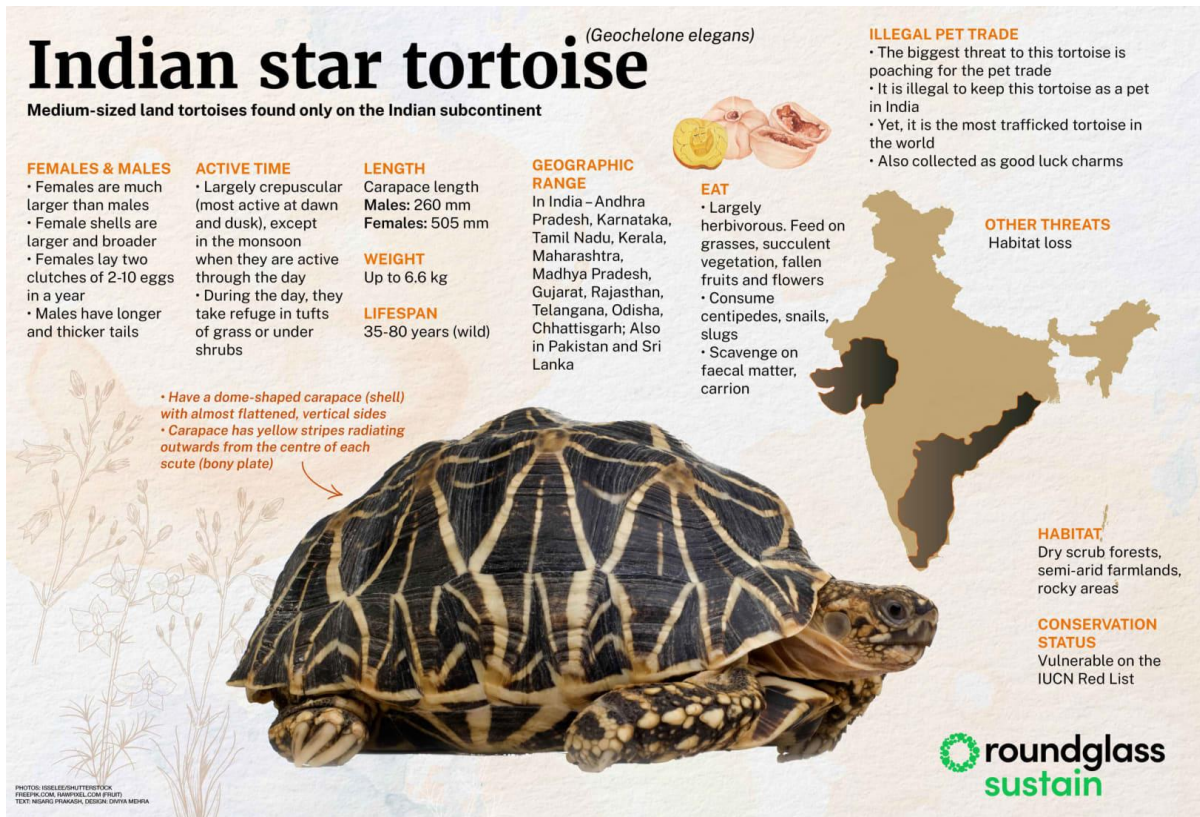
- **Conditionalities:** Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) often impose austerity measures (e.g., subsidy cuts, privatization).
- **Dominance of Developed Nations:** Voting structure favors the US and EU.
- **One-Size-Fits-All Approach:** Policies may not suit all economies.

Indian Star Tortoises

Syllabus: GS-3: Wildlife –Conservation

Context:

A total of **340 Indian Star Tortoises** were successfully rehabilitated and released into the **Jogapur Reserve Forest, Chandrapur**, under the **Turtle Rehabilitation Project (TRP)** in April 2025.



About Indian Star Tortoise

- **Scientific Name:** *Geochelone elegans*
- **Conservation Status:**
 - **IUCN Red List:** Vulnerable
 - **CITES:** Appendix I
 - **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972:** Schedule I
- **Habitat & Distribution:**
 - Arid & semi-arid regions of **Northwest India, South India, and Sri Lanka**
 - Found in **thorn scrub forests, semi-deserts, grasslands, and dry lowland forests**
- **Unique Features:**
 - Named for **star-like patterns** on their high-domed shell
 - Highly trafficked in the **illegal exotic pet trade**
 - **Crepuscular** (active during dawn and dusk)

- **Herbivorous** – feeds on grasses, leaves, and flowers

About Turtle Rehabilitation Project (TRP)

- **What is it?**
 - A **state-level conservation initiative** to curb illegal trade and captivity of tortoises and turtles in **Maharashtra**
- **Launched:** Late 2024
- **Major Milestone:** Mass release in April 2025
- **Organizations Involved:**
 - **RESQ Charitable Trust**
 - **Maharashtra Forest Department**
- **Key Objectives:**
 - Rehabilitate and reintegrate rescued tortoises into wild habitats
 - Ensure **post-release survival** via **medical care, acclimatisation, and biometric monitoring**
 - Promote **community awareness** through school involvement and local engagement

Malabar Grey Hornbill

Syllabus: GS-3: Wildlife – Conservation.

Context:

- Kerala researchers win international grant for hornbill conservation.

Kerala Research Team Wins Future Conservationist Award

- **Awarding Body:** Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP)
- **Project Focus:** Community-based conservation of the **Malabar Grey Hornbill**
- **Significance:** Recognizes grassroots efforts involving local communities in biodiversity conservation.

Malabar Grey Hornbill (*Ocyrocus griseus*)

Feature	Details
Scientific Name	<i>Ocyrceros griseus</i>
IUCN Status	Vulnerable
Legal Protection	Schedule IV, Wildlife Protection Act, 1972
Geographic Range	Endemic to the Western Ghats, Nilgiris, Wayanad, and Anamalai Hills
Habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evergreen forests - Modified habitats like coffee, rubber, and arecanut plantations - Requires dense canopy cover - Sensitive to habitat fragmentation
Activity	Crepuscular (active during early mornings & late afternoons)
Physical Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smallest Asian hornbill - No prominent casque - Male: reddish bill - Female: yellowish bill with black markings
Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highly vocal (cackling, screeching, laughing) - Loyal to nest cavities, often reused for decades

Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP)

- **Nature:** A global partnership program
- **Partners:**
 - Fauna & Flora International
 - BirdLife International
 - Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
- **Purpose:** Support early-career conservationists with funding, training, and mentorship.

Hornbill Conservation Initiative (Tamil Nadu Government)

Feature	Description
Target Species	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Malabar Grey Hornbill- Malabar Pied Hornbill- Indian Grey Hornbill- Great Hornbill
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Protect and restore nesting habitats- Involve private landowners as “Hornbill Protectors”- Set up a Centre of Excellence for hornbill research and community involvement
Focus Areas	Western Ghats (inside and outside protected areas)

Conservation Significance

- The Malabar Grey Hornbill is a vital **seed disperser** and indicator species of forest health.
- Protecting hornbills supports the broader conservation of **Western Ghats biodiversity**.