



RACE IAS

Daily current affairs

14 April 2022

Jyotirao Phule

Context:

Social reformer Jyotirao Phule's birth anniversary was observed on April 11th.

- He was a multifaceted personality who worked tirelessly for social equality, women empowerment and boosting education.
- Phule is widely respected as a champion of social justice and source of hope for countless people.

Phule was born into a family that belonged to the Mali caste, that grew fruits and vegetables for a living.

Key contributions to the society:

- Along with his wife Savitribai Phule, worked for the uplift of women and children in the marginalised communities.
- In 1848, he started his first school for girls at Bhide Wada in Pune.
- In 1873, he formed the Satyashodhak Samaj (Society of Truth Seekers) along with his followers to fight for basic rights for people belonging to the lower castes.
- They also fought to stop infanticide and promote widow remarriage.
- To end the stigma of social untouchability, he opened his house to people of the lower caste and allowed them to use his water-well.
- The couple set up 'Balyata Pratibandak Gruha', a childcare centre for the protection of pregnant widows and rape victims.

Title "Mahatma":

In 1888, he was given the title of 'Mahatma' ('great soul') by another social activist Vithalrao Krishnaji Vandekar.

His famous works:

Tritiya Ratna (1855), Gulamgiri (1873), Shetkarayacha Aasud, or Cultivator's Whipcord (1881), Satyashodhak Samajokt Mangalashthakasaah Sarva Puja-vidhi (1887).



Sources: Indian Express.

Midday meal and supplements:

Context:

From the next academic session, Karnataka is likely to become the 13th state to provide eggs under the **midday meal** scheme.

- The proposal comes on the back of successive surveys pointing out high prevalence of malnutrition, anemia and low immunity among children in many parts of the
- The National Family Health Survey-V found 35% children under five stunted, and around 20% wasted.

ADDITIONAL FOOD ITEMS SERVED TO CHILDREN

STATE	FOOD	NUMBER OF DAYS/WEEK
Andhra Pradesh	Egg/Banana, Chikki	5, 3
Bihar	Egg	1
Gujarat	Milk (12 dists, 26 blocks)	5
Haryana	Milk	3
Jharkhand	Egg/Seasonal fruit	2
Karnataka	Hot flavoured milk	5
Kerala	Boiled egg/Banana, Milk	1, 2
Madhya Pradesh	Milk	3
Maharashtra	Banana/Soya biscuit/Rajgira laddu/Chikki	1
Odisha	Egg	2
Punjab	Sweet <i>kheer</i>	1
Rajasthan	Seasonal fruit, Hot milk	1, Daily
Tamil Nadu	Egg/Banana	Daily
Telangana	Egg	3



STATE	FOOD	NUMBER OF DAYS/WEEK
Uttar Pradesh	Seasonal fresh fruit	1
Uttarakhand	Egg/Fruit/Milk/Gud papdi/Ramdana ke laddu	1
West Bengal	Egg/Cheese/Mushroom	1

Note: For 2021-22, Source: Parliament Question

PM Poshan/midday meal scheme:

- Midday meal scheme was renamed PM Poshan Shakti Nirman or PM Poshan in 2021.
- It was launched on August 15 1995 as a centrally sponsored scheme.
- Coverage: Initially, it was launched for students up to Class 5. In 2007, the UPA government expanded it to Class 8.
- The Scheme comes under the Ministry of HRD.

History:

1. The first initiative to provide meals to children had been taken by the erstwhile Madras Municipal Corporation around 1920.
2. In post-Independence India, Tamil Nadu was again the pioneer, with Chief Minister K Kamaraj rolling out a school feeding scheme in 1956.
3. Kerala had a school lunch scheme run by a humanitarian agency from 1961.
4. The state government officially took over the initiative on December 1, 1984, making Kerala the second state in the country to have a school lunch programme.

What is the scale of the scheme today?

- The scheme covers 11.80 crore children across Classes 1 to 8 (age group 6 to 14) in 11.20 lakh government and government-aided schools and those run by local bodies.
- In the Budget for 2022-23, the Centre has earmarked Rs 10,233 crore for the scheme, while the states are expected to spend Rs 6,277 crore.

Legal rights:

- It is guaranteed under the provisions of the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA).
- It is also based on the Supreme Court's ruling in People's Union of Civil Liberties vs Union of India and Others (2001).

Calories requirements:

- For children in primary grades: at least 450 calories and 12 gm protein.
- For upper primary children, the requirements are 700 calories and 20 gm protein.

Implementation:

Under the rules, the allocation of Rs 4.97 per child per day (primary classes) and Rs 7.45 (upper primary) are shared in 60:40 ratio with states and UTs with a legislature, and 90:10 with the Northeastern states, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, while the Centre bears 100% of the costs in UTs without legislature.

- But the states and UTs that supplement the meals with additional items such as milk and eggs contribute more.
- Components such as payments to cooks and workers are also split in the same ratio between the Centre and states.

Sources: Indian Express.

Simplification of child adoption process in India:

Context:

The Supreme Court has agreed to hear a plea that seeks to simplify the legal process involved in child adoption.

Need for:

The present adoption procedure is complex. As a result merely 4,000 adoptions happen on a yearly basis in our country.

- The ongoing pandemic has left three crore children orphaned.
- There is also an anomaly on the legislature front as adoption is being governed by the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act of 1956 which has a nodal ministry as the Ministry of Law and Justice while the aspects of Orphans are dealt with by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- There are also concerns and loopholes wrt inter-country adoptions.

Adoption in India:

In India, an Indian citizen or a non-resident Indian (NRI) can adopt a child under the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act of 1956 and the Guardian and Wards Act of 1890.

Eligibility criteria for prospective adoptive parents:

1. The prospective adoptive parents shall be physically, mentally and emotionally stable, financially capable and shall not have any life threatening medical condition.
2. Any prospective adoptive parents, irrespective of his marital status and whether or not he has biological son or daughter, can adopt a child subject to following, namely:-
 1. the consent of both the spouses for the adoption shall be required, in case of a married couple;
 2. a single female can adopt a child of any gender;
 3. a single male shall not be eligible to adopt a girl child;
1. No child shall be given in adoption to a couple unless they have at least two years of stable marital relationship.
2. The minimum age difference between the child and either of the prospective adoptive parents shall not be less than twenty-five years.
3. The age criteria for prospective adoptive parents shall not be applicable in case of relative adoptions and adoption by step-parent.
4. Couples with three or more children shall not be considered for adoption except in case of special need children.

What is the procedure to be followed with children who have been orphaned?

1. If someone has information about a child in need of care, then they must contact one of the four agencies: Childline 1098, or the district Child Welfare Committee (CWC), District Child Protection Officer (DCPO) or the helpline of the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights.
2. Following this, the CWC will assess the child and place him or her in the immediate care of a Specialised Adoption Agency.
3. When there is a child without a family, the State becomes the guardian.

About CARA:

- Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) is a statutory body of Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India.
- It functions as the nodal body for adoption of Indian children and is mandated to monitor and regulate in-country and inter-country adoptions.
- CARA is designated as the Central Authority to deal with inter-country adoptions in accordance with the provisions of the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption, 1993, ratified by Government of India in 2003.
- CARA primarily deals with adoption of orphan, abandoned and surrendered children through its associated /recognised adoption agencies.
- CARA is also mandated to frame regulations on adoption-related matters from time to time as per Section 68 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

Sources: Indian Express.

What is the '2+2' format of dialogue?

Context:

The fourth '2+2' dialogue between India and the United States is underway in Washington DC.

- India's External Affairs and Defence Ministers, S Jaishankar and Rajnath Singh, are meeting with their American counterparts, Secretary of State Anthony Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin.

What are 2+2 talks?

The 2+2 dialogue is a format of meeting of the foreign and defence ministers of India and its allies on strategic and security issues.

Significance:

A 2+2 ministerial dialogue enables the partners to better understand and appreciate each other's strategic concerns and sensitivities taking into account political factors on both sides, in order to build a stronger, more integrated strategic relationship in a rapidly changing global environment.

India's strategic 2+2 partners:

India has 2+2 dialogues with four key strategic partners: the US, Australia, Japan, and Russia. Besides Russia, the other three countries are also India's partners in the Quad.

- The US is India's oldest and most important 2+2 talks partner.

Outcomes of the '2+2' dialogues:

Over the years, the strategic bilateral relationship with its partners, including the dialogues held in the 2+2 format, have produced tangible and far-reaching results for India.

- India and the US have signed a troika of "foundational pacts" for deep military cooperation, beginning with the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016, followed by the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) after the first 2+2 dialogue in 2018, and then the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) in 2020.

Sources: Indian Express.

5G Vertical Engagement and Partnership Program:

Context:

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has invited Expression of Interest (Eoi) for "5G Vertical Engagement and Partnership Program (VEPP)" initiative to build strong collaboration partnerships across 5G Use-case ecosystem stakeholders.

About the 5G VEPP:

- It is an Initiative, where the DoT will “facilitate necessary approvals, regulatory clearances to enable use case prototyping, pilots, demos, trials at the user or vertical industry premises”.
- The DoT will facilitate access to experimental spectrum, access to testbeds and engagement with academia, other ministries for necessary regulatory policies and pilots wherever feasible.

Objectives:

It seeks to build strong collaboration partnerships across 5G Use-case ecosystem stakeholders with velocity and with an exclusive emphasis to address User/Vertical Industry needs.

Significance:

It will enable close collaboration between User verticals and 5G Tech stakeholders (Service providers, Solution providers & partner Original Equipment Manufacturers), which can trigger a multiplier effect to try & finetune 5G digital solutions in respective economic verticals.

Where does India stand in terms of trials and launch?

- The government has said the auction of 5G spectrum would take place in March or April 2022. Some experts say it could be delayed by at least one quarter as telecom service providers are yet to complete their trials and test various aspects.
- Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is in the final stages of stakeholder consultations, and is likely to submit its recommendations to the DoT early 2022.
- Meanwhile, Private Telecom companies have progressed at various levels regarding the rollout of 5G - like conducting trials, testing speeds and building indigenous 5G networks.

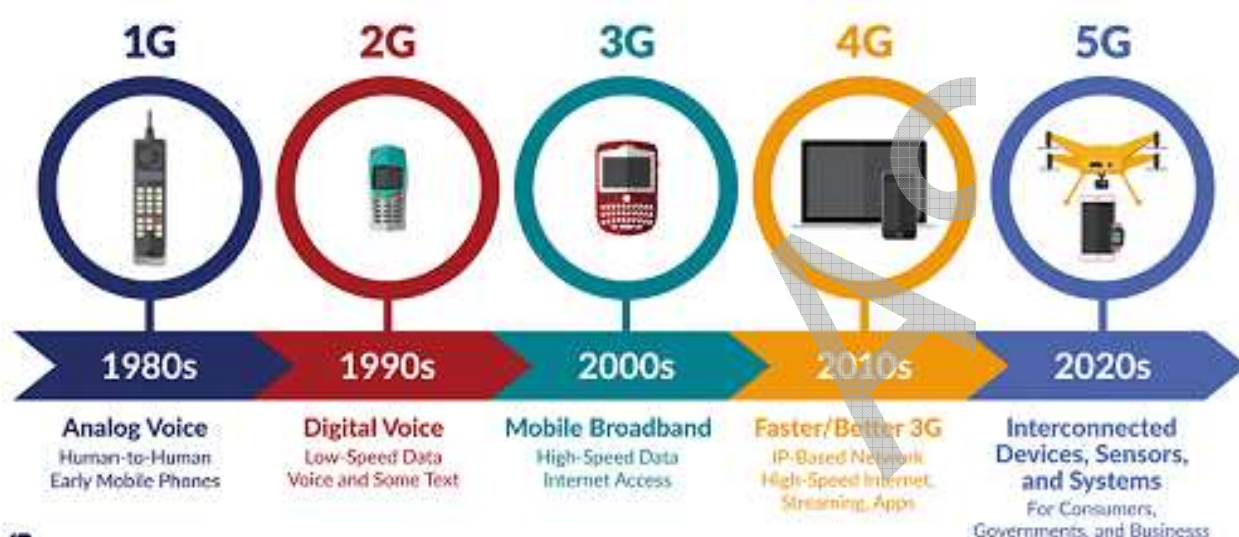
What is 5G?

- 5G is the next generation of mobile broadband that will eventually replace, or at least augment 4G LTE connection.

Features and benefits of the 5G technology:

1. Operate in the millimeter wave spectrum (30-300 GHz) which have the advantage of sending large amounts of data at very high speeds.

2. Operate in 3 bands, namely low, mid and high frequency spectrum.
3. Reduced latency will support new applications that leverage the power of 5G, the Internet of Things (IoT), and artificial intelligence.
4. Increased capacity on 5G networks can minimize the impact of load spikes, like those that take place during sporting events and news events.



Significance of the technology:

India's National Digital Communications Policy 2018 highlights the importance of 5G when it states that the convergence of a cluster of revolutionary technologies including 5G, the cloud, Internet of Things (IoT) and data analytics, along with a growing start-up community, promise to accelerate and deepen its digital engagement, opening up a new horizon of opportunities.

Sources: Indian Express.

State Energy and Climate Index:

Context:

Recently, the NITI Aayog launched the State Energy and Climate Index (SECI).

- It is the first index that aims to track the efforts made by states and UTs in the climate and energy sector.

State Energy and Climate Index:

- The States have been categorized based on size and geographical differences as larger and smaller States and UTs.
- The index is based on 2019-20 data.
- The states and UTs are categorized into three groups: Front Runners, Achievers, and Aspirants.

The objectives of the index are:

1. Ranking the States based on their efforts towards improving energy access, energy consumption, energy efficiency, and safeguarding the environment.
2. Helping drive the agenda of the affordable, accessible, efficient and clean energy transition at the State level.
3. Encouraging healthy competition among the states on different dimensions of energy and climate.

It ranks the states' performance on 6 parameters, namely:

1. DISCOM's Performance.
2. Access, Affordability and Reliability of Energy.
3. Clean Energy Initiatives.
4. Energy Efficiency.
5. Environmental Sustainability.
6. New Initiatives.

The parameters are further divided into 27 indicators.

Performance of various states:

1. Gujarat, Kerala and Punjab have been ranked as the top three performers in the category of larger States, while Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh were the bottom three States.
2. Goa emerged as the top performer in the smaller States category followed by Tripura and Manipur.
3. Among UTs, Chandigarh, Delhi and Daman & Diu/Dadra & Nagar Haveli are the top performers.
4. Punjab was the best performer in discom performance, while Kerala topped in access, affordability and reliability category.
5. Haryana was the best performer in clean energy initiative among larger States and Tamil Nadu in the energy efficiency category.

Sources: the Hindu.

Wagah of Gujarat:

- It is an Indo-Pakistan border viewing point in Nadabet in Gujarat.
- Located around 188 km from Ahmedabad in the Rann of Kutch region.
- Pakistan is around 150 metres from the border pillar 960 at Nadabet.
- Launched as part of the Seema Darshan project.



The biggest attraction of the Seema Darshan project is the access provided to civilians to view the fenced international border with Pakistan at 'Zero Point'. This is guarded round the clock by the Border Security Force (BSF).

CALM System:

CALM: Cannister Launched Anti-Armour Loiter Ammunition (CALM).

The Army has issued a Request for Information for the CALM System. It intends to procure 150 such systems.

- The CALM System is a pre-loaded canister with loiter ammunition or a drone which once fired can remain aloft for a period of time over the area of operation, and when a target is sighted it can be guided down to destroy the target with the explosive payload that it carries.

- Usually, they have camera and few components can be reused.
- It can be used on enemy tanks and other targets in the plains and deserts of Western India as well as on high altitude areas in the Northern borders in Ladakh.

Patent filings in India:

In India, for the first time in the last 11 years, the number of domestic patent filing has surpassed the number of international patent filing at Indian patent office in the Quarter Jan-Mar 2022.

- This means the total 19796 patent applications filed, 10706 were filed by Indian applicants against 9090 by non-Indian applicants.
- India's ranking in Global Innovation Index has increased to 46th in 2021 (+35 ranks) as compared to from 81st in 2015-16.

Megalithic stone jars in Assam:

The discovery of a number of megalithic stone jars in Assam's Dima Hasao district has brought to focus possible links between India's Northeast and Southeast Asia, dating back to the second millennium BC.

- The jars of Assam were first sighted in 1929 by British civil servants James Philip Mills and John Henry Hutton.
- While the jars are yet to be scientifically dated, the researchers said links could be drawn with the stone jars found in Laos and Indonesia.
- There are typological and morphological similarities between the jars found at all three sites