

Daily Current Affairs

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Savitri Bai Phule & Rani Velu Nachiyar

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes to social reformer Savitri Bai Phule and first queen to fight against the British colonial power in India Rani Velu Nachiyar on their Jayanti.
- Mr Modi said, both of them inspired society with their compassion and courage and their contribution towards the nation is invaluable.
- Savitribai Phule was born on 3 January 1831 at Naigaon in Maharashtra's Satara district.



- She was the eldest daughter of Lakshmi and Khandoji Neveshe Patil, both of whom belonged to the **Mali community**, now an Other Backward Caste.
- In 1852, Savitribai started the **Mahila Seva Mandal** to raise awareness about women's rights.
- Savitribai called for a women's gathering where members from all castes were welcome and everybody was expected to sit on the same mattress.
- She published **Kavya Phule** in 1854 and **Bavan Kashi Subodh Ratnakar** in 1892.
- In her poem, **Go, Get Education**, she urges the oppressed communities to get an education and break free from the chains of oppression.
- She simultaneously campaigned **against child marriage**, while supporting widow remarriage.



- She initiated the **first Satyashodhak marriage**—a marriage without a dowry, Brahmin priests or Brahminical rituals in 1873. She was the first queen to fight against the British colonial power in India.
- **Rani Velu Nachiyar** known by Tamils as **Veeramangai**.
- She was the **princess of Ramanathapuram** and the only child of Raja Chellamuthu Vijayaragunatha Sethupathy and Rani Sakandhimuthal of the Ramnad kingdom.



- She was trained in war to match weapons usage, martial arts like Valari, Silambam (fighting using a stick), horse riding, and archery.
- She was a scholar in many languages and she had proficiency with languages like French, English and Urdu.
- She married the **king of Sivagangai**, with whom she had a daughter.

- She succeeded her husband in 1780 and She granted powers to the **Marudu brothers to administer the country in 1780.**

M S Swaminathan Award

- Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University's Vice Chancellor **Prof. B.R. Kamboj** has been honoured with the prestigious **M.S. Swaminathan Award** in recognition of his contributions as a scientist and extension specialist in the field of agronomy.
- Thawar Chand Gehlot, the Governor of Karnataka, presented him this award. The award ceremony took place at the International Conference on '**One Health One World,**' held at Rajmata Vijayaraje Scindia Agricultural University at Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh.



- A special committee, constituted for the M.S. Swaminathan Award, selected Prof. B.R. Kamboj for his excellent achievements in the field of education, research, technology development and extension in agricultural science.
- Vice Chancellor, Prof. B.R. Kamboj is well aware of the common problems, **needs and socio-economical conditions of the farmers.** The agricultural recommendations put forth by Prof. Kamboj, stemming from his research work and collaborative extension activities with university scientists, have consistently proven to be highly advantageous for farmers.
- Prof Kamboj has published about 300 research papers and articles in national and international journals, books and technical magazines.

Russia's 2024 BRICS Chairmanship

- Russian President Vladimir Putin officially marked the commencement of **Russia's 2024 BRICS Chairmanship**.
- During this handover, President Putin emphasized the motto for the upcoming tenure, **"Strengthening Multilateralism for Equitable Global Development and Security."**
- This signifies Russia's commitment to fostering collaboration among the BRICS nations – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.



- President Putin outlined **Russia's approach to its BRICS Chairmanship**. The emphasis will be on positive and constructive cooperation with all concerned countries.
- The overarching strategy will continue **to promote BRICS partnerships** in politics and security, economy and finance, as well as cultural and humanitarian contacts.
- President Putin articulated Russia's priorities, which **encompass a wide array of sectors**. These include cooperation in science, high technology, healthcare, environmental protection, culture, sports, youth exchanges, and civil society.
- Furthermore, Putin highlighted that BRICS is garnering increasing support from like-minded countries, emphasizing its principles such as sovereign equality, mutual consideration of interests, openness, consensus, and the aspiration for a multipolar international order.
- Russia's President underscored the need to work on the modalities of a new category of BRICS partner countries.



- **Approximately 30 countries** are being considered for inclusion in some form into the BRICS multidimensional agenda.
- This move aims to facilitate the integration of **new participants into various aspects of BRICS activities**, building on the experience gained by the association over the years.
- Putin emphasized Russia's commitment to **enhancing foreign policy coordination** among BRICS member countries. The focus will be on developing joint responses to challenges and threats to international and regional security and stability.
- Additionally, the practical implementation of the Strategy for **BRICS Economic Partnership 2025** and the Action Plan for BRICS Innovation Cooperation 2021-2024 will be prioritized.
- Russia aims to **contribute to energy and food security**, bolster the role of BRICS in the international monetary system, expand interbank cooperation, and increase the use of national currencies in mutual trade.

Expansion In BRICS

- The upcoming **BRICS summit in Russia this October** is set to undergo a significant transformation as it expands its membership to include five new nations alongside the original founding five – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.
- This expansion, featuring **Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates**, signifies a notable shift in the global landscape, characterized by increasing multipolarity and assertive middle powers challenging the established Western-led order.



- Notably, **Argentina**, under its new President Javier Milei, has decided to withdraw from its planned entry into the expanding BRICS club of nations. The last expansion of the BRICS took place in 2010 when South Africa joined, adding an "S" to the acronym a year after the bloc's inception.
- This move is seen as a strategic effort to reshape the global order into a multipolar world, with voices from the Global South taking a more prominent role on the international stage.
- The **inclusion of Saudi Arabia and the UAE** further emphasizes the changing dynamics of international relations, highlighting a trend towards a more multipolar world and the growing assertiveness of middle powers challenging the established Western-led order.



- However, it also underscores the inherent challenges of achieving unified goals within a diverse **"global south."**

- The expansion of the BRICS bloc is expected to create new investment opportunities for the Arab world's two largest economies – Saudi Arabia and the UAE.
- In 2022, **Saudi Arabia achieved** an impressive annual growth rate of **8.7%**, the **highest** among the world's 20 largest economies.
- Looking ahead to 2023, the International Monetary Fund projects a further **expansion of 0.8%**, demonstrating the kingdom's commitment to its Vision 2030 diversification agenda, with a particular emphasis on its non-oil economy.



- Similarly, the **UAE anticipates a robust economic performance** in 2023, with an expected growth rate of 3.4%, with expectations of further increase to 3.7% in 2024.
- A recent report from the World Bank highlights positive trends across various sectors, including tourism, real estate, construction, transport, manufacturing, and capital expenditure. The UAE's dedication to diversification and non-oil sectors positions it resiliently amidst global economic challenges.
- As these dynamic **economies join the BRICS bloc**, the geopolitical landscape is poised for further transformation, creating new opportunities for collaboration and economic development on a global scale.

Muhammad Yunus

- In Bangladesh, a **Dhaka court** has sentenced **Nobel laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus** and three top officials of **Grameen Telecom to six months' jail** in a case over violation of labor law.
- The court also fined Tk 30,000 each and ordered that, in case of default, the convicts would have to **suffer 25 more days' simple imprisonment**.
- The court, however, responding to petitions submitted by the convicts, granted bail to Dr Yunus and other three convicts for one month.

- On June 6, 2023, **Dhaka Labor Court-3 framed charges against the four accused.** The others accused in the case are: Ashraful Hasan, CEO of Grameen Telecom Trust; trustee Nurjahan Begum; and managing director M Shahjahan.
- According to the case, during an inspection visit to Grameen Telecom, inspectors of the department found that **101 workers and staff members** who were supposed to be permanent were not made so. No participation fund and welfare fund was formed for them and five percent of the company's profit was not provided to the workers following the law. Upon a complaint, a criminal case was filed under sections 4, 7, 8, 117, 234 of the Labor Act of Bangladesh.



India Pakistan Exchange List Of Nuclear Installations

- **India and Pakistan** exchanged the list of **nuclear installations** and facilities, covered under the Agreement on the **Prohibition of Attack against Nuclear Installations** and Facilities between the two countries.
- External Affairs Ministry said, the list was exchanged through diplomatic channels simultaneously at New Delhi and Islamabad.
- The Agreement was **signed in 1988.**
- India and Pakistan are required to inform each other of the nuclear installations and facilities to be covered under the Agreement on the first of January of every calendar year.
- The Ministry said, this is the 33rd consecutive exchange of such lists between the two countries.



Ola Electric

- India's electric vehicle (EV) landscape is witnessing a groundbreaking development as **Ola Electric, the IPO-bound electric scooter company**, secures eligibility for the government's **Production-Linked Incentive (PLI)** scheme. This achievement positions Ola Electric as a key player in the push towards sustainable transportation.
- In a **recent report by ET Auto**, it has been disclosed that Ola Electric successfully met the stringent eligibility criteria outlined in the PLI scheme, including a minimum of **50% domestic value addition** to its electric vehicles (e2W). This accomplishment makes Ola Electric the first Indian e-scooter company to gain approval, paving the way for potential financial benefits ranging from **INR 15,000 to 18,000 per unit**.
- Industry experts quoted in the report **suggest that the PLI certification** is poised to enhance the affordability of electric vehicles, potentially accelerating the adoption of EVs across the country.

The logo for Ola Electric, consisting of the word "OLA" in a bold, black, sans-serif font above the word "ELECTRIC" in a larger, black, sans-serif font, all set against a solid lime green background.

OLA
ELECTRIC

- The **Ministry of Heavy Industries'** approval, following a four-month evaluation process, is a testament to Ola Electric's commitment to meeting the government's criteria for boosting domestic manufacturing.
- While **Ola Electric celebrates** its achievement, it's essential to note that other major players in the Indian automotive industry, including Hero MotoCorp, TVS Motor Company, and Bajaj Auto, have also applied for the PLI scheme.



- To qualify, **e-scooter startups** are required to invest a minimum of Rs 1,000 crore, indicating a substantial commitment to advancing electric mobility.
- The PLI-Auto Scheme, approved by the Centre in 2021 with an outlay of Rs 25,938 crore over five years, aims to boost domestic manufacturing of Advanced Automotive Technology products. These include electric vehicles and their components, offering financial incentives of up to **18% of eligible sales** for electric vehicles and related components.
- This initiative aligns with India's broader goals of promoting sustainable and eco-friendly transportation solutions.

IMF - \$700 Million Bailout Tranche To Pakistan

- **Cash-strapped Pakistan** is poised to receive a crucial **\$700 million** bailout tranche from the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** during the Executive Board meeting on January 11.
- The disbursement, under the existing **\$3 billion Stand-By Arrangement (SBA)**, is expected to provide much-needed financial support to Pakistan's struggling economy.



- The **IMF Executive Board** is scheduled to discuss Pakistan's case on January 11, potentially granting final approval for the release of the **\$700 million tranche**. The current SBA, initiated in 2019, is set to conclude in April 2024, with approximately \$1.8 billion remaining undisbursed.
- The **IMF's updated economic projections** for Pakistan in 2024 indicate a challenging outlook, with a projected contraction of 0.5% in real GDP and a significant increase in the Consumer Price Index, pointing towards rising inflation.
- **Despite facing high inflation**, Pakistan has demonstrated its commitment to economic recovery, surpassing the revenue collection target set by the IMF for July-December.
- Pakistan's reliance on IMF support is underscored by its engagement in 24 arrangements since joining in 1950, reflecting the country's recurrent balance-of-payments challenges.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Which Year Did Savitribai Phule Start The Mahila Seva Mandal

- A. 1848
- B. 1852
- C. 1860
- D. 1873

ANSWER: B

2. What Was Rani Velu Nachiyar Known As In Tamil

- A. Veeramangai
- B. Rani Sahiba
- C. Maha Rani
- D. Singara Rani

ANSWER: A

3. What Did Rani Velu Nachiyar Grant The Marudu Brothers

- A. Administrative powers
- B. Control over the kingdom
- C. Ownership of territories
- D. Leadership of the army

ANSWER: A

4. What Field Is Prof. B.R. Kamboj Associated With

- A. Physics
- B. Sociology
- C. Agronomy
- D. Economics

ANSWER: C

5. Which Nation Withdrew Its Planned Entry Into The Expanding BRICS Club

- A. Argentina
- B. Egypt
- C. Ethiopia
- D. Iran

ANSWER: A

6. Significant About Satyashodhak Marriage Initiated By Savitribai Phule

- A. No Dowry Was Involved
- B. It Was The First Recorded Marriage
- C. It Was A Love Marriage
- D. Only Brahminical Rituals Were Followed

ANSWER: A

7. Who Is Regarded As The Founding Father Of The EU's Single Currency Project

- A. Angela Merkel
- B. Jacques Delors
- C. Jean-Claude Juncker
- D. Ursula von der Leyen

ANSWER: B

8. Who Is The Author Of "The Babri Masjid Ram Mandir Dilemma: An Acid Test For India's Constitution"

- A. Madhav Godbole
- B. Arun Desai
- C. Sanjay Patel
- D. Ritu Verma

ANSWER: A

9. Which Indian State Has Recently Directed Officials To Implement The Green Hydrogen Policy-2023 To Promote Clean Energy

- A. Uttar Pradesh
- B. Maharashtra
- C. Karnataka
- D. Gujarat

ANSWER: A

10. Who Is The Revered Poet Honoured With The Renaming Of Ayodhya Airport

- A. Surdas
- B. Tulsidas
- C. Kabir
- D. Maharishi Valmiki

ANSWER: D

11. Talaeieh And Nasir Cruise Missiles Were Recently Unveiled By Which Country

- A. UAE
- B. Turkey
- C. Iran
- D. Iraq

ANSWER: C

12. Which Ministry Is Responsible For Administering The FAME India Scheme

- A. Ministry of Finance
- B. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
- C. Ministry of AYUSH
- D. Ministry of Heavy Industries

ANSWER: D

13. Which Player Recently Clinched Chennai Grand Masters 2023 Title

- A. Dommaraju Gukesh
- B. Rameshbabu Praggananandhaa
- C. Vidit Santosh Gujrathi
- D. Sandipan Chanda

ANSWER: A

14. India's First Himalayan Air Safari Was Launched From Which Indian State

- A. Himachal Pradesh
- B. Uttarakhand
- C. Ladakh
- D. Jammu & Kashmir

ANSWER: B

15. Which Sport Is Introduced In 2024 Khelo India Youth Games For First Time

- A. Squash
- B. Canoeing
- C. Kayaking
- D. Canoe Slalom

ANSWER: A

16. Veer Bal Diwas Is Observed To Commemorate The Martyrdom Of The Four Sons Of Which Sikh Guru

- A. Guru Teg Bahadur
- B. Guru Ram Das
- C. Guru Gobind Singh
- D. Guru Arjan

ANSWER: C

17. Dean Elgar Announced Retirement From International Cricket, Is The Former Captain Of Which Team

- A. Australia
- B. South Africa
- C. England
- D. New Zealand

ANSWER: B

18. Amnya Fort Recently Making News, Is Located In Which Region

- A. Sahara
- B. Golan Heights
- C. Siberia
- D. Alaska

ANSWER: C

19. General Dong Jun In News, Is Defence Minister Of Which Country

- A. China
- B. Taiwan
- C. South Korea
- D. North Korea

ANSWER: A

20. Which Physician Was Sent By Bimbisara To Treat Avanti King Pradyota

- A. Jivaka
- B. Udayin
- C. Kalashoka
- D. Both a & b

ANSWER: A