

## Mahatma Jyotirao Phule

*Prelims: Current events of national importance | Indian Culture*

### Why in News?

Recently, national leaders paid floral tributes on the 200<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule at Prerna Sthal, Parliament House Complex.

Aspect	Details
<b>Birth</b>	11 April 1827, Pune, Maharashtra
<b>Titles</b>	'Mahatma' (1888) by social activist Vithalrao Krishnaji Vandekar, and 'Booker T. Washington of India'.
<b>Organisation Founded</b>	<b>Satya Shodhak Samaj (1873)</b> - Aimed at social equality and liberation of oppressed classes.
<b>Municipal Role</b>	Member of Pune Municipality (1876-1882).
<b>Focus Areas</b>	Elimination of caste discrimination, upliftment of peasants, women's education, farmer welfare.
<b>Statue in Parliament</b>	<b>12-foot bronze statue</b> sculpted by Ram V. Sutar, unveiled by PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee (2003).

### Key Contributions

- He is known as *Father of Indian Social Revolution*.
- **Social Reform** - Radical critique of Brahmanical hegemony; described caste as institutionalised slavery.
- **Education as Emancipation** - Along with Savitribai Phule, he pioneered education for Shudras, Ati-Shudras (Dalits), and women.
- **Famous dictum** - "*Vidhye-vina mati geli*" (Without education, wisdom is lost).
- **Agrarian Reforms** - In *Shetkaryacha Asud* (The Cultivator's Whipcord), exposed exploitation of farmers by British bureaucracy and moneylenders.
- **Anti-Caste Ideology** - Used the symbol of Raja Bali to provide cultural identity for oppressed classes.
- He was one of the first leaders to use the term "**Dalit**" for oppressed castes and famously opened a water tank in his own home for

untouchables in 1868.

- **Satya Shodhak Samaj (1873)** - Rejected priestly mediation, promoted social service and equality.
- **Publications -**
  - **Gulamgiri (1873)** - Dedicated to the American abolitionist movement.
  - **Tritiya Ratna (1855)** - Play exposing priestly exploitation.
  - **Sarvajanik Satya Dharma Pustak** - Posthumous work advocating rationalism and universal religion of truth.
- **Newspaper - Deenbandhu** - Voice of the Satyashodhak movement.

## References

1. [PIB | Jyotirao Phule](#)
2. [PIB | Jyotirao Phule](#)

