Savitribai Phule

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Why in news?

\nCommemorating the 186th birth anniversary of social reformer and poet Savitribai Phule, Google has dedicated a special doodle on the day.

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Who is Savitribai Phule?

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- Savitribai Phule was the wife of Jyotirao Phule, an Indian activist, thinker, social reformer and writer from Maharashtra.
- She was determined to study and was one of the very few indigenous literate women in her era.
- Savitribai, along with her husband Jyotirao Phule, stood up for the rights of women and fought against the injustice faced by them.
- They were the pioneers of women education in India and started the first girls' school in 1848 in Pune.
- Their work extended to many fields including eradication of untouchability and the caste system, women's emancipation and the reform of Hindu family life.
- Savitribai Phule started Mahila Seva Mandal in 1852, which worked for raising women's consciousness about their human rights, dignity of life and other social issues.
- First ever infanticide prohibition home of India was started by Savitribai Phule in 1853.
- They championed widow remarriage and started a home for lower and upper caste widows in 1854.

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- In September 1873, Phule, along with the followers, formed the Satyashodhak Samaj (Society of Seekers of Truth) to attain equal rights for peasants and people from lower castes.
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- Savitribai Phule was the first Dalit woman, in-fact the first woman whose poems got noticed in the British Empire.
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- The prestigious University of Pune was renamed to Savitribai Phule Pune University in 2014.
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- The Government of Maharashtra has instituted an award in her name to recognize women social reformers.
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Legacy of Jyotirao Phule:

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- He opened the first native library for low-caste students.
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- In 1854, Jyotirao joined the Scottish Mission School as a teacher.
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- He was against Sati and child marriages. He was in favor of Western education and demanded free and compulsory primary education—up to the age of 12.
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- He advocated technical education for the lower classes.
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- He always agitated for better living conditions for the workers in the mills in Bombay as well as for the farmers, a majority of whom were untouchables.
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- Phule was bestowed with the title of Mahatma on 11 May 1888 by another social reformer from Bombay, Vithalrao Krishnaji Vandekar.
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- His Published works include Tritiya Ratna (1855), Gulamgiri (1873), Ishara (1885).
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