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Daily Current Affairs Encyclopedia

03 April 2024

National and International News

Tropical Cyclone

Context:

- In a recent research paper published in the Proceedings of the **National Academy of Sciences**, a proposal was made to **modify the Saffir-Simpson (SS) wind scale**.
- The suggested modification involves **linking category 5 to peak wind speeds ranging between 252 and 309 km/hour**, with the addition of a new **category 6 for wind speeds exceeding 309 km/hour**.

Key points:

- Tropical cyclones are also called hurricanes or typhoons, depending on the region.
- A tropical cyclone is a rapidly rotating storm that begins over tropical oceans, and they can vary in speed, size, and intensity.
- Tropical cyclones are the second-most dangerous natural hazards, after earthquakes.

Saffir-Simpson (SS) wind scale

- The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale is a **1 to 5** rating based only on a hurricane's maximum sustained wind speed.
- This scale does not take into account **other potentially deadly hazards such as storm surge, rainfall flooding, and tornadoes**.

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RBI Commemorates its 90th year



Context:

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was established **under the RBI Act, 1934**, and began operations on **April 1, 1935**. This year marks its 90th anniversary.

Key points:

- The Reserve Bank's evolution as an institution has been closely intertwined with the **development of the Indian economy**.
- From being a **central bank primarily concerned with allocation of scarce resources** during the planning period, the Reserve Bank has transitioned into being an **enabler for the market economy**.
- The path-breaking structural reforms are the **enactment of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) and the adoption of Flexible Inflation Targeting**.
- Moving towards **RBI@100**, the Reserve Bank remains focused on **ensuring a stable and strong financial system that would act as a bedrock for our country's economic progress**.

About:

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was established on **April 1, 1934**, following recommendations from the **Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance**.
- Its primary goal is to maintain the country's monetary stability. Operations began on **April 1, 1935**, with **Sir Osborne Smith as its first Governor**.
- The RBI has seen **26 Governors to date**, with Shaktikanta Das currently serving as Governor since October 2021.
- Initially located in **Kolkata**, the **Central Office was moved to Mumbai in 1937**.



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Closing Ceremony of International Year of Millets



Context:

- The **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** recently hosted the closing ceremony of the **International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023** at its headquarters in Rome.

Key points:

- Throughout the year, the celebration highlighted **millet's nutritional benefits, their adaptability to adverse climates, and their role in creating sustainable market opportunities.**
- Millets are **small-grained, annual, warm-weather cereals** belonging to the grass family.
- **In India, Jowar (Sorghum), Bajra (Pearl Millet), and Ragi (Finger millet) are the important millets cultivated.**
- These crops are particularly important in **semiarid tropics due to low rainfall and poor soil fertility.** Compared to major cereal crops, millets have higher nutrient content and are tolerant to drought and extreme weather conditions.

Hume AI

Context:

- Hume AI is an advanced conversational AI chatbot powered by its **empathic large language model (eLLM).**
- **New York-based startup Hume AI** launched the **first voice AI with emotional intelligence** which can generate conversations for the emotional well-being of its users.

Key points:

- Unlike traditional AI, **Hume emphasizes the tones of voice behind words to understand different emotions.**
- It can emulate tones across **23 different emotions**, including **admiration, adoration, and frustration, to generate human-like conversations.**
- The chatbot is trained on data from millions of human conversations worldwide to understand voice tonality, human reflexes, and feelings.
- **Responses are optimized in real-time based on the user's emotional state.**

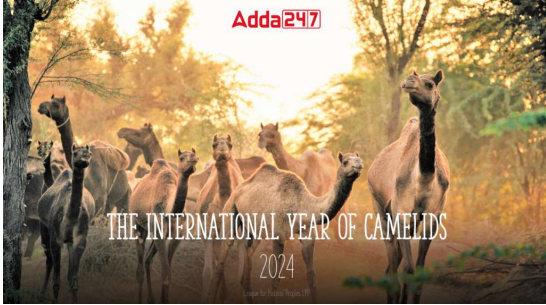
Benefits and Applications:

- Hume's product is gaining recognition for its potential uses in various fields such as robotics, healthcare, and wellness.
- AI assistants powered by **Hume's eLLM could not only engage in conversations but also assist in daily tasks.**
- This technology opens up possibilities for AI assistants to understand user frustrations, offer genuine emotional support, and empathize with complaints, according to industry experts.



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International Year of Camelids



Context:

- 2024 is designated by the UN as the International Year of Camelids.

Key points:

- These animals, including **camels, llamas, alpacas, vicuñas, and guanacos**, play a crucial role in the lives of millions of families, particularly pastoralists, living in **dryland and mountainous rangeland ecosystems worldwide**.
- The Year aims to **raise awareness among the public and policymakers about the vital role of camelids in ecosystem protection, biodiversity conservation, food security, and climate change adaptation**.
- The resolution for the International Year of Camelids was proposed by **Bolivia and presented by Ecuador**, the Country Chair of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), at the UN General Assembly on 17 October 2017.
- **The resolution was approved upon recommendation by the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN)**.
- The visual identity of the IYC was unveiled at a side event titled **"Towards the International Year of Camelids: perspectives and challenges"** during the FAO Conference on Sustainable Livestock Transformation in September 2023.
- **FAO officially launched the IYC 2024 on 4 December 2023, in Rome, Italy.**
- The first international event of the IYC2024 was the International Workshop on **Camelid Pastoralism, held on 5–10 January 2024, in Sadri, Rajasthan, India**, hosted by Lokhit Pashu-Palak Sansthan (LPPS), the League for Pastoral Peoples (LPP), and the Godwar camel pastoralist milk producers.



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Katchatheevu Island Dispute



Context:

- The controversy surrounding **Katchatheevu Island's transfer to Sri Lanka has resurfaced** with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent remarks on social media.

Background:

- The historical background of Katchatheevu, a **small, uninhabited island located in the Palk Strait, between India and Sri Lanka**, adds complexity to its political significance, particularly in Tamil Nadu.

About:

- **Katchatheevu, a 285-acre island**, has been a point of contention since the **early medieval period**, transitioning through control by various entities, including the **Jaffna kingdom, the Ramnad zamindari**, and eventually becoming part of the Madras Presidency during British rule.
- Disputes over its ownership persisted into the 20th century, with both India and Sri Lanka laying claim to it.
- In **1974, then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, as part of the Indo-Sri Lankan Maritime agreement, relinquished India's claim over Katchatheevu to Sri Lanka.**
- The decision, perceived by many as **unilateral and without consulting Tamil Nadu**, sparked protests.
- **Despite provisions allowing Indian fishermen access to the island, issues regarding fishing rights remained ambiguous, leading to ongoing tensions between Indian and Sri Lankan fishermen.**

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