




03 April 2024

National and International News

<p>Tropical Cyclone</p>	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>Saffir-Simpson (SS) wind scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
<p>RBI Commemorates its 90th year</p> 	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.




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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>About:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
<p>Closing Ceremony of International Year of Millets</p> 	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) recently hosted the closing ceremony of the International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023 at its headquarters in Rome. <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throughout the year, the celebration highlighted millets' 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.
<p>Hume AI</p>	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hume AI is an advanced conversational AI chatbot powered by its empathic large language model (eLLM). New York-based startup Hume AI launched the



	<p>first voice AI with emotional intelligence which can generate conversations for the emotional well-being of its users.</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>Benefits and Applications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<p>International Year of Camelids</p> 	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 is designated by the UN as the International Year of Camelids. <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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





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Katchatheevu Island Dispute



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.

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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Kerala Regional News

New technology unveiled at CSIR-NIIST conclave



Context:

- A new technology for biomedical waste management was presented at the Biomedical Waste Management conclave conducted by the CSIR-NIIST, Pappanamcode, Thiruvannanthapuram, under the Union Ministry of Science and Technology.
- This innovative approach promises to be safe, sustainable, and cost-effective.

Key Points:

- **Focus on Safe Disposal:** The technology efficiently treats biomedical waste, potentially addressing a significant challenge in healthcare.
- **Quick and Efficient:** It can convert 1 kilogram of waste into a harmless soil additive within just three minutes.
- **Environmentally Friendly:** The resulting soil additive can be used for agricultural purposes, promoting a circular economy.
- **Reduced Reliance on Incineration:** This technology offers an alternative to traditional methods like incineration, which can be energy-intensive.
- **Wide Applications:** The technology is beneficial for hospitals, clinics, laboratories, and the healthcare sector as a whole.

Bengal Governor's award for P.G.R. Pillai



Context:

- Public health expert P.G.R. Pillai has been conferred the Rajya Vibhushan Award by the Governor of West Bengal C.V. Ananda Bose.

About:

- The award was presented during the 84th birthday celebrations of Dr. Pillai at Kottayam.
- Mr. Pillai, who has been instrumental in setting up several Medical College Hospitals and allied services in Kerala, was conferred the award in view of his stellar contributions to society.

World Cloud Security Day

Context:



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- **World Cloud Security Day**, celebrated annually on **April 3rd**
- It is a reminder of the importance of securing data stored in the cloud.
- As cloud technology becomes increasingly integrated into our lives, this day highlights the potential security risks and emphasizes the need for vigilance.

About:

- **Cloud storage** is a cloud computing model that enables storing data and files on the internet through a cloud computing provider that you access either through the public internet or a dedicated private network connection.
- **Cloud storage leverages several key technologies to function:**
 1. Remote Servers
 2. Virtualization
 3. Data Distribution
 4. Networking
 5. APIs (Application Programming Interfaces)

Theme:

- The theme for World Cloud Security Day 2024 is **“Evaluate the security of your digital identity”**

State faces shortage of solar net meters; PM Surya Ghar subsidy applications flood in

Context:

- As there is a **surge in rooftop solar installations due to the PM Surya Ghar subsidy program**, it has led to a **shortage of solar net meters**
- **These are needed to track electricity generation from home solar panels.**
- Thousands are waiting on meter installation despite installing panels before a previous subsidy deadline.
- The state is working to resolve the shortage, with new meters expected by April 10th. .

About:

- The **PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana** is a government initiative launched in **February 2024** to **promote rooftop solar power** and **reduce electricity bills** for Indian households.

Key features:

- Provides subsidies for **installing solar panels on rooftops, covering up to 40% of the cost** for systems up to **3 kW capacity**.
- **Aims to benefit 1 crore families** and generate significant electricity cost savings.



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Masala bond: KIIFB submits affidavit rejecting ED's claim of Thomas Isaac's involvement

- Encourages energy independence and reduces reliance on the traditional grid.

Context:

- KIIFB(Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board) has denied ED's allegation that former finance minister Thomas Isaac was instrumental in **issuing masala bonds abroad to raise funds.**

About:

- Masala bonds are a **unique financial instrument that allows Indian entities to raise capital from foreign investors.**

Key Features:

- **Rupee-denominated:** Issued outside India, but denominated in Indian rupees (INR).
- **Foreign issuance:** Offered in foreign markets, enabling Indian companies to tap into a wider investor base.
- **Currency risk on investor:** Unlike dollar bonds, masala bonds transfer currency fluctuation risk to the investor, not the issuer.
- **Benefits for issuers:** Potentially lower interest rates compared to borrowing in India.
- **Benefits for investors:** Access to Indian assets and potential for rupee appreciation.

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