Depression in Bay of Bengal turns into tropical cyclone Maarutha

The depression over East-central Bay of Bengal has turned into the tropical cyclone 'Maarutha'.

About Maarutha

- Tropical Cyclone Maarutha has made landfall in Myanmar.
- Heavy rainfall continues to be the main threat, which could cause flooding in that country.

Maarutha is the first named storm of the 2017 Northern Hemisphere tropical cyclone season.

- The Joint Typhoon Warning Center said that Tropical Cyclone Maarutha had maximum sustained winds of 40 mph.
Maarutha is rapidly decaying, due to its interaction with land.
Maarutha is forecast to pass through capital city of Myanmar on April 17

**Tropical Cyclone**

- A **tropical cyclone** is a rapidly rotating storm system characterized by a low-pressure center, a closed low-level atmospheric circulation, strong winds, and a spiral arrangement of thunderstorms that produce heavy rain.
- Tropical cyclones typically form over large bodies of relatively warm water.
- They derive their energy through the evaporation of water from the ocean surface, which ultimately recondenses into clouds and rain.
- The strong rotating winds of a tropical cyclone are a result of the conservation of angular momentum imparted by the Earth's rotation as air flows inwards toward the axis of rotation.
- Tropical cyclones are typically between 100 and 2,000 km (62 and 1,243 mi) in diameter.
- Wind blowing **counterclockwise in the Northern Hemisphere and clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere**.
- The opposite direction of circulation is due to the Coriolis effect.

**What is the difference between Cyclone, Hurricane, Typhoon**

- Depending on its location and strength, a tropical cyclone is referred to by names such as hurricane, tropical storm, cyclonic storm, tropical depression, and simply cyclone.
- A hurricane is a storm that occurs in the Atlantic Ocean and northeastern Pacific Ocean.
- Typhoon occurs in the northwestern Pacific Ocean.
- Cyclone occurs in the south Pacific or Indian Ocean.

*Source: weather.com, Wikipedia*

*GS I: Salient features of world’s physical geography*
Election Commission seeks funds for paper trail units

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Nasim Zaidi has requested the Union Law Ministry for urgent release of funds to facilitate procurement of VVPAT (voter verifiable paper audit trail) machines for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

What is VVPAT?

- Method of providing feedback to voters using a ballotless voting system.
- It allow voters to verify that their vote was cast correctly.
- Detect possible election fraud or malfunction, and to provide a means to audit the stored electronic results.
- A paper slip is generated bearing name and symbol of the candidate along with recording of vote in Control Unit.
- Under VVPAT, a printer is attached to the balloting Unit and kept in the voting compartment.
- The paper slip remains visible on VVPAT for 07 seconds through a transparent window.
- Design of VVPAT made by BEL/ECIL was approved by ECI in 2013 and shown to persons who were pursuing matters in the Supreme Court.
- ECI used VVPAT in Nagaland bye election in 2013 which proved great success.
It contains name of the candidate (for whom vote has been casted) and symbol of the party/ individual candidate.

Why we need VVPAT?

- Protests by Opposition parties against electronic voting machines (EVMs) without paper trail units
- Commission had recently received a memorandum from 16 parties demanding that the paper ballot system be reintroduced for greater transparency.
- Also in last Parliament session, several members alleged that the voting machines used in the recently concluded Assembly elections were tampered with.
- EC felt that the procurement of VVPAT machines could not be delayed any longer.

Judicial Stand on EVM

- In some petition filed against EVM in High Courts, after going into all aspects of the technological soundness and the administrative measures involved in the use of EVMs at elections in India, have held that the EVMs in India are credible, reliable and totally tamperproof.
- In some of these cases, even Supreme Court has dismissed appeals filed by some petitioners against High Court orders.
- SC ordered introduction of VVPAT in phases and asked Government to sanction funds for procurement.

Benefits

It will increase transparency of the electoral process is enhanced, integrity of the voting preserved, and the voters’ confidence in the process is further strengthened.

Source: The Hindu

GS II: Functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional Bodies
AIMPLB against misuse of triple talaq

Muslim men who misuse triple talaq and use it arbitrarily without valid reason will be subjected to social boycott, the All India Muslim Personal Law Board concluded after an executive meeting.

**Outcome of the meeting**

- Triple talaq without valid Shariat reasons will be boycotted by the society... so that such cases do not arise in future
- The governing body for Muslim personal law in the country concluded after a two-day executive meeting at the Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulam, a key Islamic seminary in Lucknow.
- AIMPLB asserted its full constitutional right to implement Muslim personal law in the country.
- Islamic Sharia gives equal status to men and women and the truth is that talaq was kept to protect women from danger,
- Released an eight-point code of conduct for divorce, the Board encouraged Muslim couples to try and resolve differences on their own.
- If that fails, adopt the reconciliation and arbitration method though involvement of family elders, before settling for a divorce.
- After the waiting period (*iddat*), reconciliation happens, the two can, through mutual consent, restore the relationship with a fresh marriage.

**More for the security of women**

- To make more use of social media to spread its word and counter all myths related to Sharia and Islam.
- Muslim women’s wing and helpline would also be promoted.
Muslim organisations to help divorced and destitute women, and widows to get their rights under the Sharia.

Source: *The Hindu*

**GS I : Role of women and women’s organization, population and associated issues**

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### Telangana clears reservation bill

The Telangana Assembly has passed a Bill to raise the reservation for Muslims and Scheduled Tribes in admission to educational institutions and government jobs from 4% to 12% and 6% to 10% respectively.

**Need for the Bill**

- 12.68 per cent population of the community in the State is Muslim.
- Reservation for Muslims backed by the recommendations of the State Backward Classes Commission and the Sudhir commission that the quota for the community could be in the range of 9 to 12 per cent.
- Decision of the government to extend 12 per cent reservation to Muslims promise of the ruling TRS in its election manifesto.

**The Bill**

- 7 percentage point hike for Muslims as the community already enjoys 5 per cent reservation in listed Backward Classes of the State under group ‘E’ though the matter is pending in the Supreme Court.
- Once the bill becomes the act, the existing reservations in Telangana under all the categories will go up to 62 percent from the present 49.5 percent.
At present the Scheduled Castes (SCs) have 15 percent quota, Scheduled Tribes (STs) have 7.5 percent quota and the Backward Castes (BCs) including BC-E enjoy 27.5 percent reservations.

**Issues about the bill**

- Court had ruled in the Indra Sawhney (Mandal case) that the percentage of reservation should not exceed more than 50%.
- 76th Amendment Act placed Tamil Nadu 69% reservation to different social castes under the 9th Schedule of the Constitution to make it beyond judicial scrutiny.
- A Constitution Bench in 1997 had held that even those laws placed under the 9th Schedule were liable to be struck down as illegal if it violated the basic features of the Constitution.
- Currently Tamil Nadu 69, Jharkand 60, Maharashtra 52 having reservation more than 50%

*Source: The Hindu, Wikipedia*

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