Hunu App

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Science & Technology*

Why in the news?

The Mongolian herders enlist new tech against harsher, drier climate.

- **Hunu app** – It is a mobile tool designed to *empower nomadic herders in Mongolia* by helping them track livestock, monitor pasture conditions, and navigate extreme weather.
- **Developed by** – a Mongolian, Bilgudei Gankhulug, he was inspired to help herders after a 2024 "dzud".
    - **Dzud** – A severe winter characterised by extremely low temperatures as low as minus 45C and heavy snow; more than eight million livestock died.
- **Key Features**
- **GPS-based livestock tracking** – A solar-powered GPS device is attached to one animal per herd; since herds usually move together, tracking one animal helps monitor the entire group.
- **Weather and climate alerts** – Provides real-time forecasts and AI-powered early warnings for severe weather, dust storms, blizzards and climate-related risks.
- **Environment mapping** – Compiles maps showing snow depth, soil moisture, and wind direction to help herders decide where to move safely.
- **Emergency SOS** – Features an emergency alert system that can transmit requests for help even when offline via SMS.

- **Climate challenges facing Mongolia** – Herders are among the most affected communities because they depend directly on grazing land and livestock.
- **Key Problems** – Frequent droughts, extreme weather events, harsh winter conditions, rapid desertification, land degradation and overgrazing of grasslands.
- According to Mongolian authorities, about 82% of the country's territory is affected by desertification and land degradation.
- **Importance of Mongolia's Rangelands** – According to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), around 80% of Mongolia consists of rangelands.
- These grasslands are vital for nomadic livelihoods, livestock grazing and biodiversity conservation.
- **Global Significance** – Mongolia recently hosted COP17 of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), where countries discussed land restoration, drought resilience and financing for combating desertification.

Reference

The Hindu | Mongolian herders enlist new tech against harsher, drier climate

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