Prelim Bits 06-01-2019

Agasthyarkoodam

- Agasthyarkoodam or Agathyamala is the second highest peak in Kerala.
- It is a 1868m tall mountain within the Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary in Thiruvananthapuram district.
- It lies on the border between Kerala and Tamilnadu.
- It has long been known as a bird watcher's paradise.
- It is also known for its remarkable flora and fauna, especially certain rare medicinal herbs which have been discovered here.
- The various vegetations found in this area are moist deciduous forests, semi evergreen forests, grasslands and evergreen forests.



- Over 2000 species including lichens, orchids, mosses and ferns have been recorded in the area.
- The peak was named after the sage Agastya and is a popular pilgrim site.
- Sage Agasthya is one of the seven maharishis(Saptarishis) in Hindu puranas
- A shrine dedicated to him is located in the hilltop.
- The original inhabitants of these hills are a tribe known as "Kanis"

Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary

- The Neyyar Wildlife sanctuary is situated in the southeast corner of the Western Ghats.
- The Neyyar sanctuary is the drainage basin of the Neyyar river and its tributaries – Mullayar and Kallar
- Neyyar wildlife sanctuary forms a part of Agasthyamalai Biosphere Reserve (ABR).
- ABR is a part of the World network of Biosphere reserves.
- The common mammals found are, Tiger , Leopard, sloth bear, Elephant, sambar, barking deer, bonnet macaque, Nilgiri Langur, Nilgiri tahr etc.
- The Neyyar Dam nearby is also situated in its vicinity.

Lakhon Khol

- Lakhon khol is a dance drama mask theatre from Cambodia in Southeast Asia.

- The Cambodian lakhon khol (also lakhon khaol or lakhon bhani) is a sister form of Thailand’s khon mask-theatre
- It was recently listed by UNESCO, the United Nations’ cultural agency, as an intangible cultural heritage, along with Thailand’s Khon.
- Lakhon Khol began in the early Angkor era.
- In accordance with reliefs on Angkor temple walls, it is believed that the genre was first performed in the ninth century.
- The only story specifically performed by Lakhon Khol is the Reamke, the Khmer version of the Ramayana, an ancient Indian epic poem.
- There are different variations in Southeast Asia, all featuring dancers wearing elaborate painted masks depicting the Ramayana.



- In Cambodia, the art form is still struggling to recover from the Khmer Rouge, under whose genocidal 1975-79 rule at least 1.7 million people, including artists, dancers and writers, died, mostly from starvation, over work, disease, execution or torture.

PhotoDNA

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) sent an official request to social media platforms to use Microsoft's PhotoDNA for purposes of investigation in regular criminal cases.
- PhotoDNA is a technology developed and owned by Microsoft, to be used exclusively to identify child exploitation images.
- It is mainly used to prevent child pornography from being uploaded on the web and is free to use.
- The company has restricted the use of this software beyond this purpose in all countries.
- The software creates a unique digital signature of any image and then compares it to other photos to find a similar one.
- It is used by giants like Google and its applications Twitter, Facebook and Adobe Systems.
- This initiative assists in narrowing the focus of child pornography law enforcement investigations through the use of this technology.

Time Capsule

- A Time Capsule with items representing today’s technology and India’s scientific prowess was buried on the occasion of the 106th Indian Science Congress.
- It contains 100 items that represent modern-day technology as experienced

in India.

- The replicas of Mangalyaan, Brahmos Missile and Tejas fighter jet representing India's scientific prowess and other gadgets such as laptop, landline phone,smart phone, drone, VR glasses, stopwatch, Amazon Alexa etc are the items buried.
- The Capsule and will remain buried for the next 100 years.
- The Time Capsule has been developed to represent the technology know-how as it stands today and will provide an opportunity for future generations to have a glimpse of today's technology a century later.

Source: PIB, The Hindu

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering