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Smog towers

- First ever smog tower has been installed in New Delhi, Smog towers are structures designed to work as large-scale air purifiers.
- They are usually fitted with multiple layers of air filters, which clean the air of pollutants as it passes through them.
- The smog tower installed in Delhi is capable of treating 6,00,000 cubic meters of air per day and can collect more than 75 per cent of particulate matters (PM) 2.5 and 10.
- After the cleaning, the tower releases clean air, it will focus on reducing particulate matter load.
- The filters installed in the tower will use carbon nanofibers as a major component and will be fitted along its peripheries.
- The project is a collaboration between the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, IIT-Delhi and the University of Minnesota.
- The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) will also be involved with the project.
- Similar to this china, has two smog towers in its capital Beijing and in the northern city of Xi'an.

Belum Caves

- The Belum Caves are located near Belum Village in Kurnool District in the state of Andhra Pradesh.
- Belum is part of a larger complex of caves carved out of the limestone deposits in the Erramalai region.
- The Belum Caves is the largest and longest cave system open to the public on the Indian subcontinent, known for its speleothems, such as stalactite and stalagmite formations.
- This cave system was formed over the course of tens of thousands of years by the constant flow of underground water from the now-disappeared river Chitravathi.
- It is the second largest caves on the Indian Subcontinent after the Krem Liat Prah caves in Meghalaya.
- It is one of the centrally protected Monuments of National Importance.

- Belum Caves are geologically and historically important caves, There are indications that Jains and Buddhists monks occupied these caves centuries ago.
- Many Buddhists relics were found inside the caves, These relics are now housed in Museum at Ananthapur.
- Archaeological survey of India (ASI) also found remnants of vessels of the pre-Buddhism era and dated the remnants of these objects to 4500 years BCE.
- The Belum Caves festival is also known as Kandanavolu Sambaralu, It is being organized to popularize the Belum caves.

Visakha Utsav

- Visakha Utsav is a tourism event every year conducted by the Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation and Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region Development Authority at Visakhapatnam.

Scientific Social Responsibility

- Union government is planning to implement scientific social responsibility (SSR) policy.
- Under the programme, researchers who are working on a science project funded by any of the Ministries under the Central government will have to undertake activities to popularize science and make it more accessible to the public.
- List of activities would be taken up under the Scientific Social Responsibility programme that was similar to Corporate Social Responsibility.
- This could range from going to colleges delivering lectures, writing an article in a magazine or doing something beyond the curriculum.
- The science outreach would be mandatory and researchers had to include this as part of their outcome report.
- It will be implemented this year after a consultation meeting with all stakeholders.

Women Science Congress

- The 9th **Women Science Congress (WSC)** is organized as part of the Indian Science Congress (ISC) at the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore.
- The event highlighted opportunities that can help women overcome the hurdles they face because of their gender in the pursuit of Science.

- Indian Science Congress Association is a premier scientific organisation of India with headquarters at Kolkata, West Bengal.
- The association started in the year 1914 in Kolkata and it meets annually in the first week of January.
- The first meeting of the Congress was held in January 1914 at the premises of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta.

KIRAN Scheme

- KIRAN (Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing) is the women-exclusive scheme of DST (Department of Science and Technology).
- Its mandate is to bring gender parity in S&T through gender mainstreaming.
- Different programs and components of KIRAN like Women Scientist Scheme-A (WOS-A), Women Scientist Scheme-B (WOS-B) deal with various crucial issues like Break in career primarily due to family responsibilities, Self-employment, Part time career, Relocation etc. faced by women scientists in their career path.

Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman

- Union Ministry of Information & Broadcasting will confer the first 'Antarrashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman', in New Delhi on 07th of January 2020.
- Ministry of I&B had instituted the first Antarashtriya Yoga Diwas Media Samman (AYDMS) in June, 2019 to mark the contribution of media in spreading the message of Yoga.
- The award will acknowledge the positive role & responsibility of media in disseminating the outreach of Yoga in India and abroad.
- The Samman to be conferred on Media Houses would be given under the following categories:

1. Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Newspapers.
2. Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Television.
3. Best Media Coverage of Yoga in Radio.

- The Samman will comprise of a special medal/plaque/trophy and a citation.

International Day of Yoga

- The International Day of Yoga has been celebrated annually on 21 June

since 2015.

- PM Narendra Modi, first proposed the idea of International Day of Yoga during his address at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), in 2014.
- Following this initial proposal, the UNGA held informal consultations on the draft resolution, entitled "International Day of Yoga".
- India's Permanent Representative introduced the draft resolution in the United Nations General Assembly.
- The draft text received broad support from 177 Member States who sponsored the text, which was adopted without a vote.
- 177 nations co-sponsored the resolution, which is the highest number of co-sponsors ever for any UNGA resolution of such nature.

Al-Shabaab Militant Group

- Al-Shabaab is a jihadist fundamentalist group based in East Africa.
- In 2012, it pledged allegiance to the militant Islamist organization Al-Qaeda.
- Recently Somalia’s al Shabaab militant group killed three Americans during an attack in a military base in Kenya.
- The Manda Bay Airfield in Lamu county of Kenya is closer to the Somali border is used by both U.S. and Kenyan forces.

Source: PIB, the Hindu, Indian Express

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