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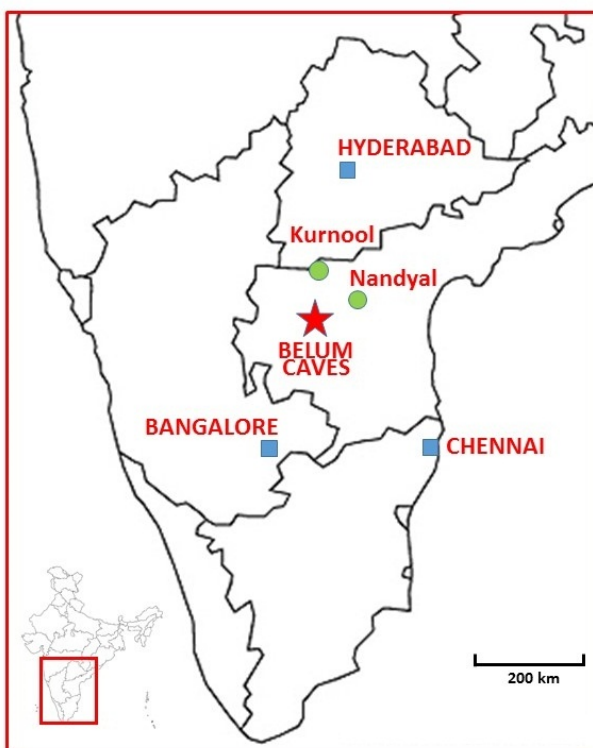
Belum Caves Festival

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Why in News

Andhra Pradesh Government will be hosting the Belum Caves festival in January 2020 to

popularise the Belum caves.



The name '**Kandanavolu Sambaralu**' has been proposed for the festival. **Kandanavolu** was the **ancient name of Kurnool** district.

Key Points

- **Location:** Belum Caves, also known as Belum Guhalu in Kurnool district of **Andhra Pradesh** is the **second-longest cave** in the **Indian subcontinent open to the public**. The **longest natural cave** in the Indian subcontinent is **Krem Liat Prah caves** in **Meghalaya**.

- **Formation:** The cave is **more than a thousand year old**, and was formed by the **constant flow of underground water** over a period of time.
- **Geographical Features:** These caves are renowned for their **speleothem structures** (Speleothems are secondary mineral deposits formed in a cave), such as **stalactite and stalagmite** formations.
- **Historical Background:** The caves were occupied by **Jain and Buddhist monks** many centuries ago. The presence of 4500 years old vessels from the pre-Buddhism era ensures the same.

Stalactites and Stalagmites

- **Stalactites** hang as icicles of different diameters. Normally they are broad at their bases and taper towards the free ends showing up in a variety of forms.
- **Stalagmites** rise up from the floor of the caves. In fact, stalagmites form due to dripping water from the surface or through the thin pipe, of the stalactite, immediately below it.
- The stalagmites and stalactites eventually fuse to give rise to columns and pillars of different diameters.

Source: TH
