

1. India's first 'Moss Garden' comes up in Uttarakhand

- The Uttarakhand forest department dedicated the newly-built Moss Garden to the people, claiming that it is the country's first such garden, spread over 10 hectares at Khurpatal in Nainital district.
- Approved in July last year under the CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority) scheme by the Research Advisory committee of Uttarakhand Forest Department, the moss garden was inaugurated by renowned water conservation activist Rajendra Singh.
- Moss Garden, Khurpatal houses around 30 different species of moss and certain other bryophyte species.
- Two of the moss species found here- *Hyophila involuta* (Cement Moss) and *Brachythecium Buchanani*- figure in International Union for Conservation of Nature's red list.
- **About Moss Garden:** Mosses are non-vascular plants that belong to Bryophyta division. They are small flowerless plants that typically grow in damp and shady locations. They play a very important role in maintaining and developing the ecosystem and biodiversity.

2. India becomes 4th nation to get IMO nod for navigation satellite system

- India has become the fourth country in the world to have its independent regional navigation satellite system recognised by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) as a part of the World Wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS).
- The other three countries that have its navigation systems recognised by the IMO are the US, Russia and China.
- The **Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS)** was designed to provide accurate position information services to assist in the navigation of ships in Indian Ocean waters.
- IRNSS was a modern and more accurate navigation system and at any given time, there are at least 2,500 merchant vessels in Indian waters that will now be able to use the system.
- The IRNSS will be used to assist in the navigation of ships in ocean waters within the area of approximately 1,500 km from the Indian boundary.
- **Note:** The Maritime Safety Committee of IMO during its recent meeting held from 4 to 11 November 2020 has approved the recognition of the IRNSS as a component of the World-wide radio navigation system.

3. LIC launches digital application 'ANANDA'

- Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has launched a digital application for agents for onboarding to get a life insurance policy.
- The Digital Application is called "ANANDA", which is an acronym for **Atma Nirbhar Agents NewBusiness Digital Application**.
- "The Digital application is a tool for the onboarding process to get the life insurance policy through a paperless module with the help of the agent or intermediary.



- It is built on a paperless KYC process using Aadhaar-based e-authentication.
- **About Life Insurance Corporation of India:** It is an Indian state-owned insurance group and investment corporation owned by the Government of India.

Headquarters: Mumbai

Chairperson: M R Kumar

Founder: Government of India

Founded: 1 September 1956

4. India - Singapore Bilateral Maritime Exercise SIMBEX-20

- Indian Navy hosts the 27th edition of India - Singapore Bilateral Maritime Exercise SIMBEX-20 (23 to 25 November) in Andaman Sea.
- Indian Navy ships including destroyer Rana with integral Chetak helicopter and indigenously built corvettes Kamorta and Karmuk participated in the 2020 edition of SIMBEX.
- In SIMBEX-20, two navies participated in advanced surface, anti-air warfare and anti-submarine warfare exercises including weapon firings, over three days of intensive joint operations at sea.
- **Note:** The SIMBEX series of exercises between Indian Navy and Republic of Singapore Navy being conducted annually since 1994, are aimed at enhancing mutual interoperability and imbibing best practices from each other.

5. Petroleum Minister inaugurates Seismic Survey Campaign in Mahanadi Basin in Odisha

- Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Hon'ble Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel, inaugurated the seismic survey campaign of Oil India Limited (OIL), India's second largest National Exploration & Production Company, at Kakatpur in Puri District, Odisha in the Mahanadi Basin.
- The Government of India since 2014 has launched a number of policy reforms in the hydrocarbon E&P sector, chief among them being Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP).
- The Government also is implementing the National Seismic Programme (NSP) for appraising unappraised areas of Indian sedimentary basins. Seismic data acquired under NSP in the state of Odisha led to an offer of five blocks by DGH and OIL won all the five blocks for hydrocarbon exploration under OALP-II and III rounds.
- The total envisaged expenditure on the entire exploration campaign in the five blocks in Mahanadi Basin (Onshore) is Rs. 1248.00 Crores of which Rs. 220.00 Crores is for Seismic survey.
- The blocks are spread in eleven districts of Odisha namely Puri, Khurda, Cuttack, Jagatsingpur, Kendrapara, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Baleshore, Maurbhanj and Keonjhar.

6. Union Minister of Education inaugurates 46 online ATAL Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs) organised by AICTE



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- Union Education Minister, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' inaugurated 46 online **AICTE Training and Learning (ATAL)** Academy Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs) to train teachers of higher education institutions associated with All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) in thrust and emerging areas in technology.
- ATAL Academy is to be included in the Book of World Records. London-based organization has recognized the FDPs as a world record, under which 1,000 online FDPs in over 100 emerging areas will benefit one lakh faculty members across premier institutions like IITs, NITs, and IIITs.
- In the year 2020-21, new thrust areas in the field of Engineering, Management, Life Skills, Design & Media have been incorporated.
- **Note:** Out of 1000, 499 FDPs have already been completed with more than 70,000 faculty members already trained.
- In 2019-20, 185 five-day face-to-face FDPs in nine thrust areas -- Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Block-chain, Robotics, Quantum Computing, Data Sciences, Cyber Security, 3D Printing & Design, and Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality -- benefited around 10,000 participants.

7. **MoU (Memorandum of understanding) signed to set up 900 CBG plants**

- To boost availability of affordable and clean transport fuels, a MoU was signed between the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and leading oil & gas marketing companies & technology providers to establish Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) plants across India under the **Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT)** initiative.
- In the presence of Union Minister of petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, MoUs were signed with energy companies viz. JBM Group, Adani Gas, Torrent Gas and Petronet LNG for setting up of Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) plants, and with technology providers in CBG sectors Indian Oil, Praj Industries, CEID Consultants & Bharat Biogas Energy for facilitating availability of technology for the projects.
- Letter of intent for 600 CBG plants has already been given and with signing of MoUs for 900 plants, a total of 1500 CBG plants are at various stages of execution.
- Rs 30,000 Cr of investment is envisaged in these 900 plants. A total of 5000 CBG plants with approximate investment of Rs. 2 lakh crores are envisaged.
- **Note:** SATAT (Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation) initiative for boosting production and availability of CBG as an alternative and affordable clean fuel for the transportation sector was launched by the Government of India on 1.10.2018. The scheme envisages setting up of 5000 CBG plants by FY 2023-24.

8. **Naseeruddin Shah honoured with Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskar**

- Veteran actor Naseeruddin Shah received the Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskar at Sangit Kala Kendra Awards.



- Two emerging stars, Neel Choudhary and Irawati Karnik were also honoured with the Aditya Vikram Birla Kalakiran Puraskars.
- "Theatre is the central theme for this year's awards.
- **Note:** The Sangit Kala Kendra's 'Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskar' and the 'Kalakiran Puraskars' were instituted in 1996 which was founded in 1973 by Aditya Vikram Birla (former Chairman of Aditya Birla Group).

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