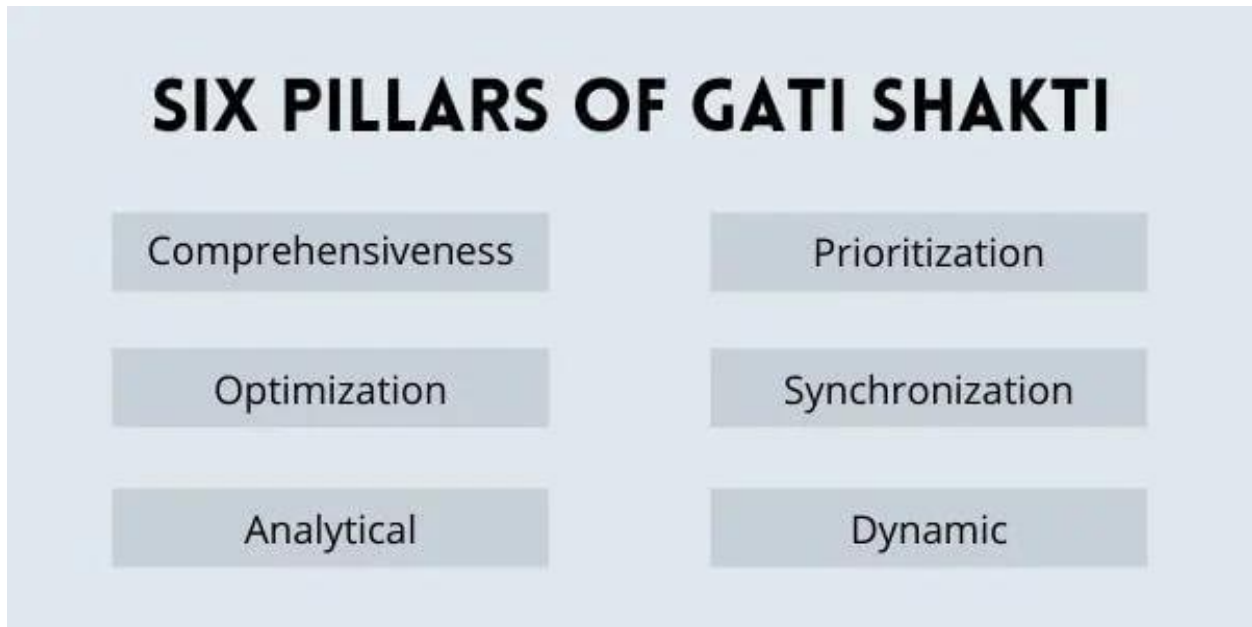




1. PM Gati Shakti initiative



Topic: Polity and Governance

In News: The Union government is in the process of extending PM Gati Shakti initiative to Social sectors.

More on the Topic

- The plan is **to improve functioning of** social sector departments and ministries, including health and education, using PM Gati Shakti initiative.
- Health, Education, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Urban development and women and child development departments will be benefitted.
- It will help different departments to prioritize their projects through **cross-sectoral interactions**.

About PM Gati Shakti National Masterplan:

- Government of India has launched the ambitious Gati Shakti scheme or National Master Plan for multi-modal connectivity plan, with **the aim of coordinated planning and execution of infrastructure projects to bring down logistics costs**.
- It is a national master plan for infrastructure development to give impetus to 21st century India.
- By incorporating infrastructure schemes under various ministries and states, the platform aims at **boosting last-mile connectivity bringing down logistics costs with integrated planning and reducing implementation overlaps**.
- **A project monitoring group under the Department of Promotion of industry and Internal trade (DPIIT)** will monitor the progress of key projects in real-time.

- They will also report any inter-ministerial issues to a group of ministries, who will then aim to resolve these.
- PM Gati Shakti will **incorporate the infrastructure schemes of various Ministries and State Governments like Bharatmala, Sagarmala, inland waterways, dry/land ports, UDAN, etc.**

Source: Indian Express

2. Coastal Red Sand Dunes



Topic: Geography

In News: Scientists have urged Andhra Pradesh govt. to protect glacial-period coastal red sand dunes of Vizag..

More on the Topic:

- This site needs to be protected to study the impact of climate change as **Erra Matti Dibbalu (Red Sand Dunes)** have seen both the glacial and the warm periods.
- The dunes are about 18,500 years old and is a lively scientific evolution site, which depicts the real-time effects of climate change.
- It represents the **late quaternary geologic age.**
- The dunes are **home to prehistoric man with three distinctive periods of stone implements.**
- They are fragile and vulnerable to natural degradation.

- As such sand deposits **do not occur in equatorial regions or temperate region**. It is a rare occurrence.
- Red sand dunes have been reported only from three places in the tropical regions in south Asia such as Teri Sands in Tamil Nadu, Visakhapatnam and one more site in Sri Lanka.

About Erramati Dibble:

- Erra Matti Dibbalu also called as **Red Sand Hills is situated at the outskirts of Visakhapatnam City**.
- It was declared a geo-heritage site (National Geological Monuments) by the Geological Survey of India (GSI) in 2014.
- National Geological Monuments, are geological areas of scientific, cultural and educational value.

Source: Hindu

3. District wise Price Monitoring Centre for Essential Commodities



Topic: Economy

In News: Department of Consumer Affairs has All states should establish price monitoring centres for essential commodities in all districts.

More on the Topic:

- The Centre intends to achieve target of having 750 price monitoring centres by 31 March , 2023 for which financial support will be assured.
- The Price monitoring centres will be useful in controlling prices of the commodities there by keeping check over inflation.
- Department of consumer affairs collects and disseminates wholesale and retail prices of 22 essential food commodities in the country.

- To improve quality of price data, department launched PMS App for reporting of daily prices by price reporting centres.

Significance of Price Monitoring:

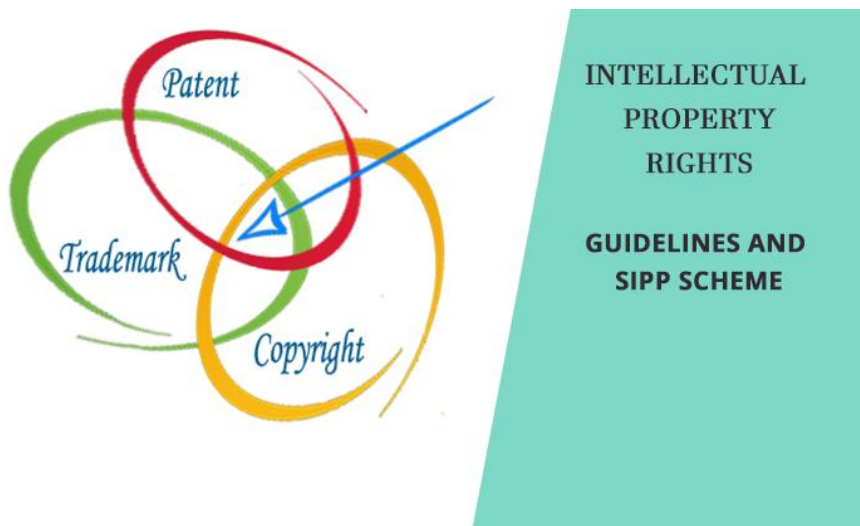
- It enables businesses to quickly understand changes in prices and promotions, allowing for quick strategy changes.
- Pricing data can also be extremely valuable on a macro level. Monitoring a select basket of goods can provide an indication if there is inflation or changes in the market that might need to be acted upon.
- It also ensures that shortages of commodities do not adversely affect consumers, particularly vulnerable sections.

Price Stability Schemes by Govt of India:

- **Price Stabilisation Fund:** Established in 2014-15, PSF is any fund created to absorb extreme volatility in selected commodity prices. (Ex: Onion, tomato etc.)
- Such goods will be procured **directly from farmers or farmers' organisations** at the farm gate/mandi, and made available to consumers at a more affordable price.
- **Market Intervention Scheme:** It intends to tackle higher price issues as well as availability of commodities like pulses and certain vegetables.

Source: Hindu

4. Scheme for Facilitating Startups Intellectual Property Protection (SIPP)



Topic: Government Schemes

In News: According There was huge jump in the number of patent filing by the Indian start ups mainly due to impetus provided by the SIPP scheme.



More on the Topic:

- Start-ups Intellectual Property Protection (SIPP) scheme launched by Government of India, facilitates the start-ups to file applications for patents, designs and trademarks through registered facilitators in appropriate IP offices by paying only the statutory fees.
- The scheme has been Implemented by **office of CGPDTM (Controller General of the Patents, Designs and Trade Marks)**.

The services provided include:

- Providing general advisory on different intellectual property on pro bono basis
- Providing information on protecting and promoting IPRs to startups in other countries on pro bono basis
- Providing assistance in filing and disposal of the IP applications related to patents, trademarks and Design under relevant Acts at the national IP offices under the CGPDTM
- Drafting provisional and complete patent specifications for inventions of start-ups
- Appearing on behalf of start-up at hearings, as may be scheduled etc.

Source: PIB

5. National Commission for Backward Classes



Topic: Social Justice

In News: Shri.Hansraj Gangaram Ahir assumed charge as Chairperson, National Commission for Backward Classes recently.

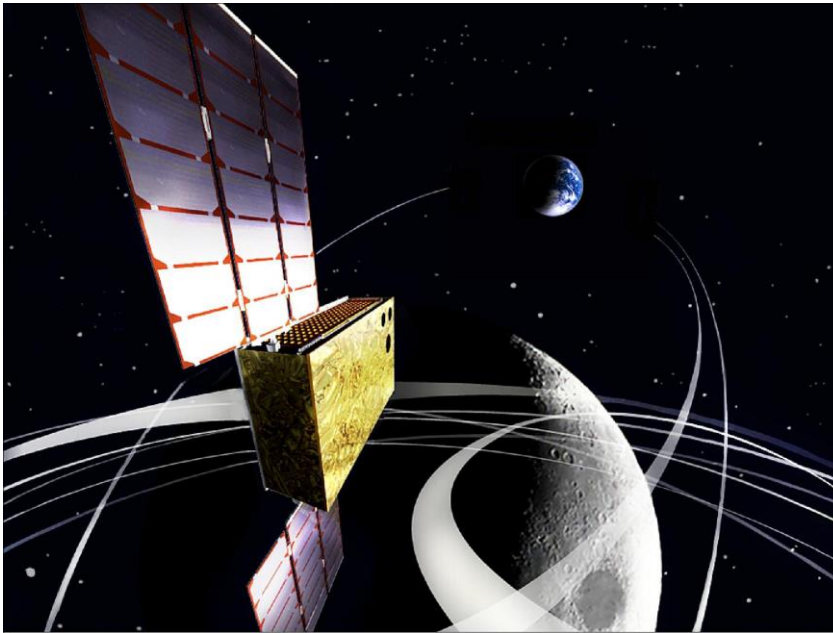
More on the Topic:

- National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) was initially constituted by the Central Govt by the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993.
- So far the Commission had been reconstituted 7 times up to 2016.

- The National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993 (27 of 1993) has been repealed through the National Commission for Backward Classes (Repeal) Act, 2018.
- The present Commission (8th) has been accorded **Constitutional Status and constituted through “The Constitution (One Hundred and Second Amendment) Act, 2018” Act,**
- Article 338B has been inserted, forming a Commission for the socially and educationally backward classes to be known as National Commission for Backward Classes.
- **Organisation Structure:**
- The Commission consists of a **Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and three other Members in the rank & pay of Secretary to the Govt of India** and their condition of service and tenure of office has been notified vide Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Source: Business Standard

6. EQUilibriUm Lunar-Earth point 6U (EQUULEUS) Spacecraft



Topic: Science and Technology

In News: In a world first, Japan's space agency announced it successfully used steam to propel a spacecraft toward the Moon. It is name as EQUULEUS.

More on the Topic:

- Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency's (JAXA) **water-powered CubeSat spacecraft, EQUilibriUm Lunar-Earth point 6U (EQUULEUS),** was launched on its way by NASA's Orion spacecraft, which recently broke a record for the **farthest distance traveled** by a human-rated spacecraft.



- The EQUULEUS spacecraft performed a maneuver that moved it toward its planned orbital path on **the second Earth-Moon Lagrange point (EML2)**, located beyond the Moon.
- Lagrangian points are locations in space where the gravity of large objects, such as planets, are balanced out by the centrifugal force of a spacecraft, allowing for a very stable orbit.
- NASA's **James Webb Space Telescope**, for example, is located out in Lagrange Point 2 (LP2).

Purpose of the Mission:

- Much like NASA's CAPSTONE mission, which is testing a lunar orbit for the U.S. space agency's lunar Gateway orbital station project, the EQUULEUS spacecraft will allow scientists to test the stability of **EML2 for a potential construction of a deep spaceport that will enable deep space exploration.**
- The mission will carry out a number of investigations, including **testing of the radiation environment** to help determine what precautions future astronauts would have to take out in the deep space location.
- The EQUULEUS mission's primary goal is **to demonstrate low-energy trajectory control technologies for reaching deep space locations such as EML2 using less fuel.**

Source: BBC

7. Natovenator polydontus - Dinosaur



Topic: Science and Technology



In News: Paleontologists have published new research on *Natovenator polydontus*.

More on the Topic:

- The dinosaur, called *Natovenator polydontus*, lived about 72 million years ago during the **Cretaceous Period** and was built like a diving bird with a streamlined body while possessing a **goose-like elongated neck and a long flattened snout with a mouth bearing more than 100 small teeth. It almost surely was covered in feathers.**
- While it was a cousin of speedy little predator *Velociraptor*, **Natovenator was adapted to a semi-aquatic lifestyle in a freshwater ecosystem.**
- It was floating on rivers and lakes, paddling with its front limbs, and using its flexible neck to catch fish and insects or diving underwater to capture its prey,

Source: Business Standard
