Being petroleum-independent

Why in news?

Recently PM insisted on the need for clean sources of energy on account of increase in petrol and diesel prices.

What are the lacunas in the existing steps taken to reduce energy import dependence?

- National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP) was constituted to reduce import of petroleum products but it primarily focused on hybrid electric vehicles.
- Hence most of the incentives under it went towards subsidising mild hybrids instead of electric vehicles.
- So global manufacturers deployed their electric vehicles in European market ignoring India.
- Moreover India's 2022 fuel efficiency standard for passenger cars is 20% less stringent than the European Union's standards.

What are the steps taken to address this?

- Heavy-duty vehicles which consume nearly 60% of the diesel used in the country are now subjected to fuel efficiency standards.
- The 2018 National Policy on Bio fuels raised the share of bio ethanol in petrol by 8% of its volume.
- The importance of transiting to electric vehicles is focussed & several additional fiscal and non-fiscal incentives are provided to encourage this transition.
- Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME-II) scheme gives importance to electric vehicles.

What can be done to reduce dependence on petroleum?

- Firstly, zero-emissions vehicle (ZEV) programme should be formulated which ensures all vehicle manufacturers to produce a certain number of electric vehicles.
- Such programmes are already present in China, certain States in U.S., British Columbia in Canada and South Korea.
- Secondly, fuel efficiency requirements needs to be strengthened for new

passenger cars and commercial vehicles.

- International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT) analysis suggests 50% reduction in fuel consumption of new two-wheelers by 2030 will lead to internal combustion engine efficiency.
- This also ensures that nearly 60% of all new two-wheelers sold in India are electric driven & consumers can also save money as electricity is cheaper when compared to petrol and diesel.

What more can be done?

- FAME scheme which currently focuses on two- and three-wheelers, taxis and buses needs to be extended to agricultural tractors.
- Extending fiscal incentives to all kinds of vehicles and stepping up investments in charging infrastructure can complement the existing policies.
- GST rates for all passenger vehicles should be made proportional to their fuel efficiency level instead of the present system that relies on vehicle length and engine size.

Source: The Hindu

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering