

## **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**

