

09 MARCH 2019**82% of Ujjwala families return for LPG refill****Why in news?**

- Recently, Oil Minister has handed over LPG connection under the Ujjwala scheme to beneficiary number 7 crore.
- Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna
- Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna is a scheme of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas for providing LPG connections to women from Below Poverty Line (BPL) households. It was launched in May 2016.

Key features:

- Aim: To replace unclean cooking fuels used in the most underprivileged households with clean and more efficient LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas)
- Families below the poverty line are to be provided with LPG connections with a support of Rs. 1,600 per connection.
- Oil Marketing Companies would provide an option for the new consumer to opt for loan to cover the cost of a cooking stove and first refill.
- The LPG connections will be issued in the name of the women of the households.

Target:

Initially the target was installation of 5 crore new LPG connections by 2019

Target revised to 8 crore- to be achieved by 2019-20

Beneficiaries:

BPL households identified through Socio-Economic Caste Census data

All SC/STs households beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) (Gramin)

Beneficiaries of Antyoday Anna Yojana (AAY)

Forest dwellers

Most Backward Classes (MBC)

Tea & Ex-Tea Garden Tribes

People residing in Islands

People residing in river island

LPG Panchayats:

- LPG Panchayat serves as platform for interaction between those who received LPG cylinders under PMUY.
- It aims to raise awareness among LPG users about proper use of clean fuel and its advantages

SC appoints 3 member panel to mediate in Ayodhya dispute**Why in news?****Note**

- The Supreme Court has referred the Ayodhya case for mediation. The Ayodhya case pertains to the Ram Janmabhoomi - Babri Masjid land dispute

In brief:

- The court has formed a three-member panel which will meet all the stakeholders in the Ayodhya dispute case for mediation.
- The panel is headed by former SC judge Justice F M Kalifullah to resolve the issue. The other members of the panel include spiritual guru Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and Senior Advocate Sriram Panchu. The panel has to submit a progress report of the mediator proceedings within four weeks.

Dispute redressal mechanisms:

- **Arbitration:-** It consists of hearing and determining of a dispute between parties by persons chosen by them.
- **Conciliation:-** It is the process of facilitating amicable settlement between parties. It can't be forced on a party not intending for conciliation.
- **Mediation:-** It is devised to assist disputants in reaching an agreement on their terms and conditions in arriving at a settlement. A "process whereby parties attempt to reach an amicable settlement of their dispute with the assistance of a third person (the mediator).

SBI links savings account, short term loan rates to repo rate

Why in news?

- State Bank of India (SBI) has decided to link its interest rate on savings account with balance above 1 lakh and short-term loans to Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) repo rate.

In Brief:

- Earlier, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had proposed a major change in the way banks price their loans. It had said that banks will now have to link the interest rates charged by them on different categories of loans to the external benchmark like Repo rate or Treasury Bill rate instead of the used internal
- benchmark like marginal cost of fund based lending rate (MCLR).
- The biggest problem with the MCLR system was lack of required transmission of policy rates to the borrowers. The new system of linking interest rate to repo rate is expected to bring in more transparency in fixing rates and faster transmission of rates.

Do forest surveys separately'

Why in news?

- A high-power committee constituted by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has recommended that forest surveys should explicitly demarcate trees grown in forests from those grown in plantations and private lands. Currently, both within forests and outside forests are counted together to estimate the portion of India's geographical area covered by forest.

Repo Rate

Repo stands for 'Repurchasing Option'. It refers to the rate at which commercial banks borrow money from the RBI. It is one of the main tools of RBI to keep inflation under control. The repo rate currently stands at **6.25%**.

Marginal Cost of Funds based Lending Rate (MCLR)

MCLR is an internal benchmark rate that depends on various factors such as fixed deposit rates, source of funds and savings rate.

The price of loan comprises the MCLR and the spread or the bank's profit margin. Spread refers to the difference in borrowing rates and lending rates of financial institutions.

Note



In Brief:

- Forest Surveys are conducted every two years to assess forest cover in India using satellite data. The main objective is presentation of the information on forest resources of the country at state and district level and to prepare forest cover maps.
- The survey is carried out by the Forest Survey of India (FSI) and published in a report titled “India State of Forest Report”. The first State of Forest Report was brought out in 1987. The India State of Forest Report 2017 is the latest one- the 15th in the series of reports.
- According to ISFR 2017, the total forest and tree cover is 24.39% of the geographical area of India-a 0.21% rise in the area under forest between 2015 and 2017

Forest Survey of India (FSI)

It is an organisation under the Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India Its principal mandate is to conduct survey and assessment of forest resources in the country. It was established as an organization called Pre- Investment Survey of Forest Resources (PISFR) in 1965.

Cancer drugs 87% cheaper after trade margin cap

Why in news?

Government has announced that maximum retail price(MRP) of 390 non-scheduled cancer medicines have been reduced by up to 87%

In Brief:

- Earlier, National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) had invoked powers under Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 and brought 42 non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs under price control by capping trade margin at 30%.
- The trade margin is the difference between the price at which manufacturers sell drugs to stockists (and distributors) and maximum retail price (MRP) to patients.

National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority

- NPPA is an independent body set up in 1997 under Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers. Its mandate is to fix/revise controlled bulk drugs prices and formulations, enforce prices and availability of medicines under Drug(Price Control) order, 2013.
- **Functions** of NPPA are:(a) To implement and enforce the provisions of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order (b) Deal with all legal matters arising out of the decisions of the Authority (C) To monitor the availability of drugs, identify shortages and (d)To collect/ maintain data on production, exports and imports, profitability of companies etc, for bulk drugs and formulation.

Gadkari flags off project for Delhi-Mumbai Expressway

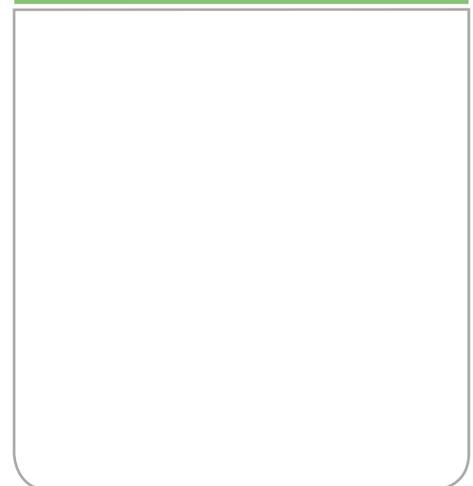
Why in news?

- Government has announced that maximum retail price(MRP) of 390 non-scheduled cancer medicines have been reduced by up to 87%

In Brief:

- Earlier, National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) had invoked powers under Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 and brought 42 non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs under price control by capping trade margin at 30%.
- The trade margin is the difference between the price at which manufacturers sell drugs to stockists (and distributors) and maximum retail price (MRP) to patients. Gadkari flags

Note



<p>NATIONAL HIGHWAYS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT</p> <p>Legend Golden Quadrilateral North-South Corridor East-West Corridor N.H. Number</p>	<p>Golden Quadrilateral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a network of highways connecting four big metropolitan cities of India viz. Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, thereby, forming a quadrilateral. The project was launched in 2001 as part of National Highways Development Project (NHDP). National Highways Development Programme (NHDP) was launched in 1998 with the objective of developing roads of international standards which facilitate smooth flow of traffic. It is implemented by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI),
--	--

UIDAI to levy fees for verification

Why in news?

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has issued the Aadhaar (Pricing of Aadhaar Authentication Services) Regulations 2019. The gazette notification has mandated private organisations using Aadhaar services to pay Rs 20 for each customer verification and 50 paise for authentication of the unique ID.

In Brief:

- Organizations have been mandated to pay for the service based on usage within 15 days of raising an invoice by the authority. Delays in payment would attract interest and could lead to discontinuation of authentication and e-KYC services.
- Recently, the government had approved the promulgation of an Ordinance to make amendments to the Aadhaar Act 2016, Prevention of Money Laundering Act 2005 & Indian Telegraph Act 1885. The amendments proposed are the same as those contained in the Aadhaar and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2018.
- The Ordinance was necessitated as the bill though passed by Lok Sabha was pending in the Rajya Sabha and would have lapsed with the dissolution of the current Lok Sabha.
- The ordinance has allowed voluntary use of the Aadhaar number to authenticate both offline and online.
- It has also mandated that the entities should perform authentication only after they are compliant with privacy standards and security specified by the UIDAI.
- It has also deleted section 57 of the Aadhaar Act. Section 57 relates to the use of Aadhaar by private entities. These amendments are in pursuance to the Supreme Court judgement in 2018. The Supreme Court had upheld that the Aadhaar is constitutionally valid but struck down section 57 of the Aadhaar Act. Taliban denies

Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)

It is a statutory authority established under the provisions of Aadhaar Act 2016 under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology. It is mandated to issue Unique Identification numbers (UID)–“Aadhaar”, to all residents of India.

Note

