



DAILY MAINS NEWSLETTER

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Mains Value Addition

China gives green light for first downstream dams on Brahmaputra.

Syllabus- GS-2: geographical features and their location-changes in critical geographical features (including water-bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes.

Analysis:

- A draft of China's new Five-Year Plan (2021-2025), which is set to be formally approved on March 11, 2021, has given the green light for the first dams to be built on the lower reaches of Yarlung Zangbo river, as the Brahmaputra is known in Tibet before it flows into India.

- The draft outline of the new **Five-Year Plan (FYP) for 2025** and "long range objectives through the year 2035" specifically mentions the building of hydropower bases on the lower reaches of the river as among the priority energy projects to be undertaken in the next five years.
- The lower reaches refer to the sections of the river in Tibet before it flows into India.
- The inclusion of the projects in the draft plan suggests the authorities have given the go-ahead to begin tapping the lower reaches for the first time, which marks a new chapter in the **hydropower** exploitation of the river.

All-women crew of MT Swarna Krishna make history.

Syllabus- GS-1: Social empowerment.

Analysis:

- Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has flagged off an all-woman crew onboard Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) vessel m.t. Swarna Krishna, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways said.
- It is the first time in maritime history that a ship is being sailed by only women officers
- T. SWARNA KRISHNA is an Oil Products Tanker that was built in 2010 and is being operated by Shipping Corporation of India (SCI).



- The move demonstrated the gradual shift in the perception of seafaring as a male-oriented profession and the principles of Diversity & Inclusion that SCI upholds.
- **SCI has been a pioneer in employing** women seafarers onboard its vessels and has implemented various initiatives including age relaxations and fee concessions to aspiring female cadets through its Maritime Training Institute to promote their integration into the maritime sector.

International Women’s Day 2021: Date, history, and why we celebrate it on March 8.

Syllabus- GS-1: Role of women and women’s organization, population and associated issues.

Analysis:

- **International Women's Day 2021 is being celebrated on 8th of March with theme #ChooseToChallenge. It indicates that a "challenged world is an alert world, and from challenge comes change".**
- After the Socialist Party of America organized a Women's Day in New York City on February 28, 1909, German delegates Clara Zetkin, Käthe Duncker, Paula Thiede and others proposed at the 1910 International Socialist Woman's Conference that "a special Women's Day" be organized annually,
- IWD has occurred for well over a century, with the first? ?IWD gathering in 1911 supported by over a million people in

Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland.

- Prior to this **the? Socialist Party of America**, United Kingdom's Suffragists and Suffragettes, and further groups campaigned for women's equality.

Why scientists want ‘Australia’s worst female serial killer’ to be pardoned based on genetics.

Syllabus-GS-3: Science and Technology-developments and their applications and effects in everyday life.

Analysis:

- In Australia, Leading scientists and medical experts are calling for the pardon of convicted child killer Kathleen Folbigg after a recent study showed that her victims — four of her children — may have died of natural causes.
- Medical experts have argued that her children died due to a rare genetic defect. They inherited a genetic mutation from their mother called **CALM2**.
- CALM-2 mutations are known to cause sudden death due to cardiac arrest.
- Calmodulin 2 is a protein that in humans is encoded by the CALM2 gene. Mutations in CALM2 are associated to cardiac arrhythmias.

Mains Analysis

Misplaced concern: On Supreme Court and OTT regulation.

Why in News: - Supreme Court (SC) Suggests Regulating OTT Platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video in India, it favoured a screening mechanism for online video streaming services, dominated in the country by Amazon and Netflix and which currently are aired freely.

Syllabus: - GS-2: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

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- The Supreme Court on Friday granted interim protection from arrest to **Aparna Purohit**, **Amazon** Prime Video's head of original content in India, in connection with the ongoing investigation against web series '**Tandav**'. The top court also asked Purohit to co-operate in the ongoing investigation.
 - **It is a matter of concern that** the Supreme Court chose to convert a routine hearing on a petition for anticipatory bail from an executive of the Amazon Prime Video into an occasion to call for tightening the regulatory norms for over-the-top streaming services in the country.

What are the Over-The-Top (OTT) streaming services?

1. An over-the-top (OTT) is streaming media platform online service offered directly to viewers through Internet. **OTT bypasses cable, broadcast, and** satellite television

platforms, the companies that traditionally act as a controller or distributor of such content.

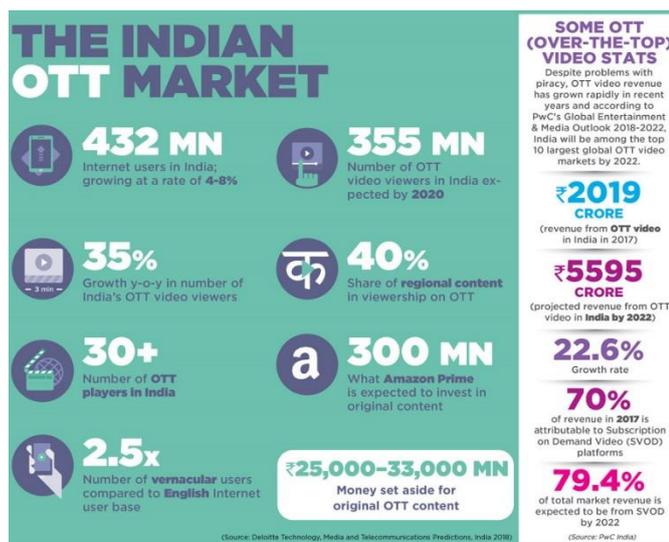
2. It has also been used to **describe no-carrier cell phones**, where all communications are charged as data, avoiding monopolistic competition, or apps for phones that transmit data in this manner, including both those that replace other call methods and those that update software.

3. Over-the-top (OTT) is platform where Individuals who watch video via any app or website that provides streaming video content and **bypasses traditional distribution**. **Examples** include HBO Now, Hulu, Netflix, Amazon Video, YouTube/YouTube Red and SlingTV etc.

The Supreme Court verdicts (Concern):

1. It is quite unusual and, in fact, gratuitous, that a constitutional court should push for more stringent rules after finding that the Information Technology (**Guidelines for Intermediaries and Digital Media Ethics Code**) **Rules, 2021**, did not provide for punishment and fine.
2. The Court's very approach is way out of line. The new rules are essentially restrictions on free speech and expression through digital media. Courts generally examine the validity of such curbs on free speech and decide whether they are reasonable or too restrictive.
3. It is unusual that the apex court should seek to go beyond what the executive

describes as ‘soft-touch monitoring’, and press for inclusion of punishment clauses.



Religion and Challenge with court verdict:

1. While refusing pre-arrest bail, the High Court has made an unusual claim that the title ‘Tandav’ itself could hurt the sentiments of a majority of Indians because it is associated with Lord Shiva.
2. It has observed that alluding to Lord Ram gaining popularity on social media is a reference to the Ayodhya dispute, and, therefore, offensive. It has a sweeping claim that the Hindi film industry, in contrast to its southern counterparts, was generally disrespectful to the Hindu religion.
3. It would be unfortunate if the judiciary lets itself be seen as departing from its record of protecting individuals harassed by those claiming that their religious or cultural sentiments have been hurt by some work of art, or even remarks or gestures by celebrities.

Regulatory mechanism under existing laws:

1. **The Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI)**, on 11 February, announced the adoption of a 'toolkit' to implement the Universal **Self-Regulation Code** that was signed by 17 major streaming services and put in motion on 4 September 2020.

2. All such platforms come under the **Information technology Act, 2000** as they qualify to be called as Intermediaries. Section 79 of the IT Act, intermediaries must exercise due diligence while streaming content.

The Self-regulation emphasis on abiding “Laws”:

1. **The Indian Penal Code, Section 293 (to punish anybody violate Copyright), IPC Section 295 A** (outraging religious sentiments), **IPC Section 499** (such imputation will harm, the reputation of such person) and **Section 354 (Any act of publishing defamatory who insults any woman’s modesty)**.

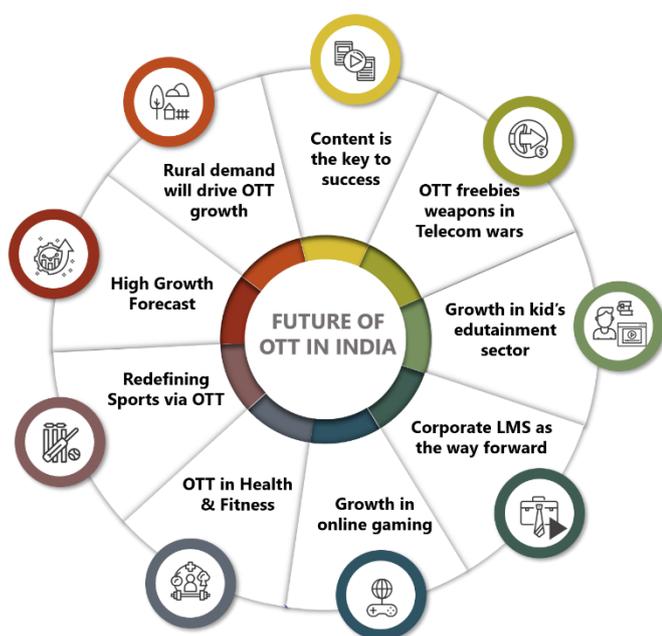
2. **The Indecent Representation of Women (Prevention) Act, 1986 acts**, the complete prohibition of indecent representation of women in advertisements, books, movies, painting etc.

3. **The POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Act**, The offence to sell and distribute child pornography.

4. Sections 67A, 67B, 67C and 69 A of “the **Information Technology Act, 2000**”

“provides penalty or imprisonment to published any kind of obscene material: like sexual content.

To violate the Freedom of Speech but right under **Article 19(2)** of the Indian Constitution who authorizes the government to impose, by law, reasonable restrictions upon the freedom of speech and expression.



Way Forward: -

- The Content on these platforms is not subject to vetting. But the government new rule has ordered that the platforms classify content into five categories based on the age groups it would be appropriate for.
- Case was concerning freedom of expression **granted under Article 19 of constitution.**
- The new norms for regulation of online content have their **origin in the Supreme Court voicing** concern about child pornography and content that could provoke

sectarian violence. While that was a justified concern.

- The tendency to allow anyone **professing a sense of hurt** to prosecute anyone anywhere in the country should not be encouraged. The higher judiciary is expected to clamp down on the ‘**marketplace of outrage**’, not join it.

Question: -

Discuss the strategies which may be adopted for OTT platforms self-regulation and management. What are the legal provisions for management and handling of social media in India?

Now, an expanded horizon of surveillance.

Why in News: - ‘Citizen Watch’ gets a new meaning after the notification on the IT Rules, 2021 the promotion of lateral surveillance.

Syllabus: - GS-3: Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security;

1. The Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), launched the Cyber Crime Volunteers Program with the aim to allow citizens to register themselves as “Cyber Crime Volunteers” in the role of “Unlawful Content Flaggers”.

2. Now, an expanded horizon of surveillance ‘Citizen watch’ gets a new meaning after **the notification on the IT Rules, 2021** the promotion of lateral surveillance.

3. As per the official website of the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal the programme will help law enforcement agencies in identifying, reporting and in the removal of illegal/unlawful online content.

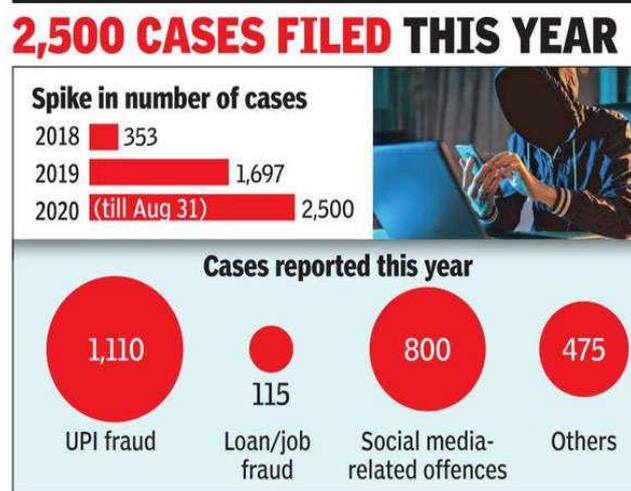


National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal:

1. This portal is an initiative of Government of India under **ministry of home affair** to facilitate victims/complainants to report cyber crime complaints online.
2. This portal caters to complaints pertaining to cyber crimes only with special focus on cyber crimes against women and children.
3. **Complaints reported** on this portal are dealt by law enforcement agencies/ police based on the information available in the complaints.
4. It is imperative to provide correct and accurate details while filing complaint for prompt action.

An explainer:

1. **This is a form of surveillance, which enables citizens to “watch over” one another** is called lateral surveillance. The conventional understanding of the term, surveillance, is its use in the hierarchical sense,
2. The vertical relationship between the person watching and the person being watched, which is usually the state and its citizenry. Lateral or social or peer-to-peer surveillance differs from typical surveillance.
3. **While surveillance of any kind shows an imbalance** of power between the person who surveils, and the one under surveillance, lateral surveillance specifically ensures that the imbalance of power no longer exists.
4. Informal watching of communities by their members has been an age-old part of society, and its members view it as a harmless activity. **The problem arises when it is organised and state-sponsored.**



Its extent in Indian states:

1. **The programme, which** will be launched all over the country, is going to have its test run in Jammu and Kashmir and Tripura
2. The state-sponsored lateral surveillance has been implemented in India. For **example, the C-Plan App in Uttar Pradesh** launched for keeping a tab on anti-social elements, is designed to receive inputs from certain identified individuals in **villages across the State.**
3. The **scope of lateral surveillance was greatly** expanded during the pandemic lockdown, both with and without the introduction of technology.
4. The Karnataka government released a PDF with the names and addresses of around 19,000 international passengers who were quarantined in Bengaluru
5. **In delhi, a woman was** harassed and boycotted by her neighbours after the Delhi government marked her house with a quarantine sticker.

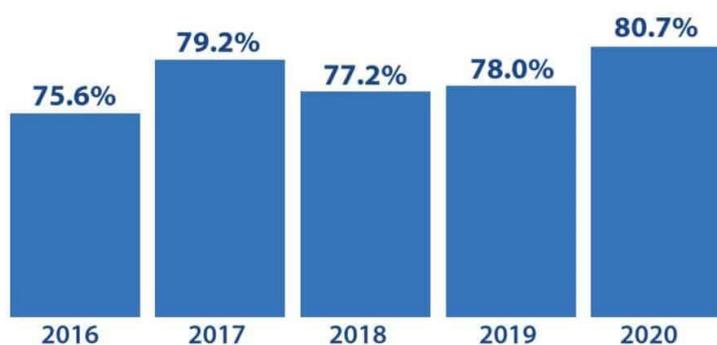


Figure 2: Percentage compromised by at least one successful attack, by year.

Tool for exclusion, suspicion:

1. The lateral surveillance is used further for emotional objectives such as community

building and strengthening relationships with neighbors where emotional **and social factors act as a driving force**, thus creating a situation where privacy may be undermined for the betterment of the community.

2. The surveillance technologies not only act as a tool for social control but also as a tool for social exclusion. Lateral surveillance thus makes it easier to discriminate between those who conform to the social norms of the majority.

3. This not only made it difficult for authorities to collect information but also increased troubles for the people belonging to the **sexual minority in getting themselves tested.**

In policy:

1. Despite the potential harm, the government, **on February 25, notified** the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 which intends to expand “due diligence” obligations by intermediaries.

2. This not only substantially **increases surveillance but also promotes lateral surveillance.**

3. This will further create an incentive to take down content and share user data without sufficient due process safeguards, violating the fundamental right to privacy and freedom of expression.

Online Safety Tips:

1. Cyber awareness among child, Talk to your children about the potential online threats such as grooming, bullying, and stalking, keep track of their online activities. And protect your child from Cyber Grooming.
2. Secure your online presence just like you secure yourself: If you have not selected the right settings on your social media accounts, then photos and videos posted can be viewed, downloaded and used by others without your knowledge.
3. All organisations should have clear and strong HR policies on how to deal with content on Child Pornography (CP)/ Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) or sexually explicit material.
4. Under Section 67 and 67A of Information Technology Act, 2000 makes publication and distribution of any material containing sexually explicit act or conduct in electronic form a punishable offence.
5. Section 67B of IT Act, criminalizes browsing, downloading, creation, publication and distribution of child pornography.

Way Forward: -

1. With the introduction of '**Citizen Watch**' technology and development of applications such as Citizen and Nextdoor, monitoring of people and their behaviour has become easier.

2. The government and private sector institutions alike collect swathes of data for supposedly 'public functions. **Specifically, in the sphere of crime prevention**, much like the cyber-crime prevention programme, there has been a transition in the outlook from a 'punishing state' to a 'preventive state'.

3. State-sponsored lateral surveillance is harmful as it creates a culture of 'hate', 'fear' and 'constant suspicion' against an 'enemy'. Wherever the state identifies that it "cannot be everywhere", it deploys this mechanism.

4. Such perceived threats have a tendency to increase intolerance, prejudice, xenophobia and casteism in our society, **while also violating the fundamental** right to privacy, and, consequently, the unfettered expression of free speech and behaviour.

Question: -

What is the The Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), Project? Explain how it can be useful in controlling internet crimes in India.

Health first, fiscal prudence later

Why in News: - The Subsidised LPG prices have increased Rs 50 per cylinder this month but industry executives said there is not much clarity on whether most customers would receive subsidies to cushion the impact.

Syllabus: - GS-2: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

GS-2: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY):

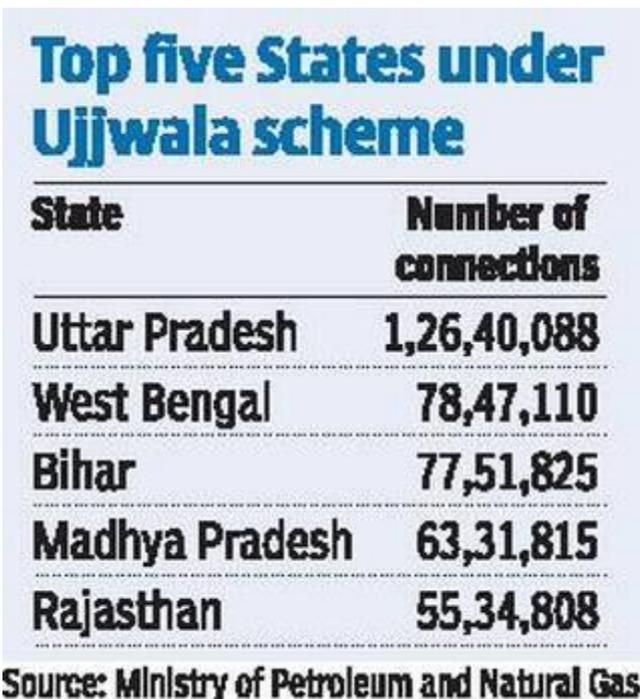
1. Prime Minister's Lighting Scheme was launched by Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi on 1 May 2016 to distribute 50 million LPG connections to women of Below Poverty Line (BPL) families.

2. A **budgetary allocation of ₹80 billion (US\$1.1 billion)** was made for the scheme. In the first year of its launch, the connections distributed were 22 million against the target of 15 million.

3. As of 23 October 2017, 30 million connections were distributed, 44% of which were given to families belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

4. Since 2016, PMUY has provided LPG connections to 8 million poor households to reduce women's drudgery and indoor air pollution.

5. Providing an upfront connection subsidy of ₹1,600, PMUY helped expand LPG coverage to more than 85% of households. In comparison, less than a third of Indian households used LPG as their main cooking fuel in 2011.



State	Number of connections
Uttar Pradesh	1,26,40,088
West Bengal	78,47,110
Bihar	77,51,825
Madhya Pradesh	63,31,815
Rajasthan	55,34,808

Source: Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

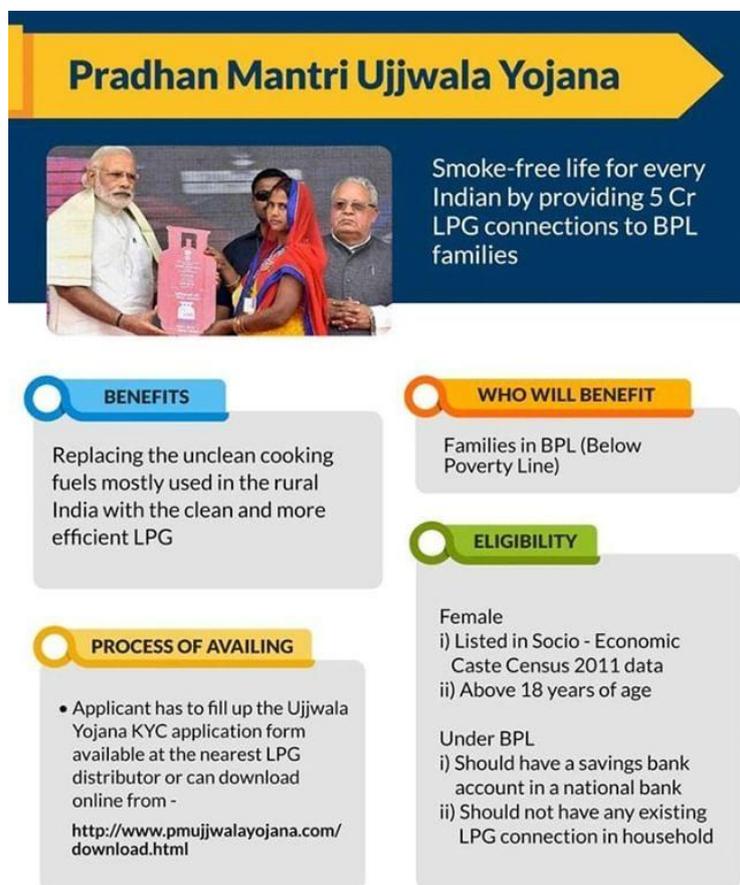
The cooking gas subsidy:

1. The **government, cooking gas subsidy** has shrunk to Rs 1,126 crore in the first half of this financial year from Rs 22,635 crore for the entire 2019-20.

2. LPG subsidy had fallen 28% in 2019-20 from Rs 31,447 crore in 2018-19 as oil prices stayed low and domestic refill rates rose.

3. Multiple studies assessing PMUY concluded that while access has increased, many new beneficiaries are not consuming LPG in a sustained manner.

4. Large-scale primary surveys by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) suggest that, on average, recent PMUY beneficiaries consumed only about half the LPG compared to long-standing regular consumers.



Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana

Smoke-free life for every Indian by providing 5 Cr LPG connections to BPL families

BENEFITS
Replacing the unclean cooking fuels mostly used in the rural India with the clean and more efficient LPG

WHO WILL BENEFIT
Families in BPL (Below Poverty Line)

ELIGIBILITY
Female
i) Listed in Socio - Economic Caste Census 2011 data
ii) Above 18 years of age

Under BPL
i) Should have a savings bank account in a national bank
ii) Should not have any existing LPG connection in household

PROCESS OF AVAILING
• Applicant has to fill up the Ujjwala Yojana KYC application form available at the nearest LPG distributor or can download online from - <http://www.pmujiwalayojana.com/download.html>

Limited uptake of LPG among poor households has two main reasons.

1. First, the effective price of LPG is not affordable for such households, despite the subsidy.
2. Second, many rural consumers have access to freely available biomass, making it difficult for LPG to displace it.
3. Beyond causing indoor air pollution, biomass use for cooking contributes up to

30% to the ambient PM2.5 at the national level, more than the contribution of transport, crop residue or coal burning.

Changing prices:

1. The recent increases in the subsidised LPG price have made it more difficult for the poor to sustain LPG use. India determines domestic LPG prices based on imported LPG price we import more than 50% of our consumption.

2. As the pandemic set in, the LPG subsidised price began to rise, even when global LPG prices plummeted, contributing to the refiners' margins and government finances.

3. However, now with LPG prices rising globally, a 50% reduction in the LPG subsidy budget for FY22 (versus FY21) does not bode well.

4. The government is either banking on low global prices (wishful thinking) or reducing its subsidy burden significantly, even while offering 1 crore new connections under Ujjwala 2.0 in FY22.

5. The government's lack of transparency in the pricing of subsidised LPG adds further to the citizen's plight. The information about LPG price build-up and subsidy has become more difficult to obtain in recent years.

Better targeting:

1. Currently, the government provides a uniform subsidy per cylinder to all **LPG consumers (PMUY or otherwise)**. Many long-term LPG users, who are also middle- and higher-income households, will continue to use LPG even at a (higher) unsubsidized price.
2. In contrast, economically poor households need a greater subsidy to make it **affordable for them to use LPG as their** main cooking fuel.
3. One approach for such targeting is to rely on the existing LPG consumption patterns of consumers. Provide **households exhibiting low consumption** or a decline in LPG consumption over time with greater subsidy per cylinder to sustain health gains.
4. The subsidy levels **could be dynamic with different** slabs reflecting the previous year's consumption. Alongside, the de-duplication efforts to weed out households with multiple LPG connections must continue to avoid subsidy leakages.

Way Forward: -

1. Most **cooking gas customers have not received** subsidies as the combination of international oil price collapse and domestic refill rate increases brought parity between subsidised and market rates.
2. **In the post-pandemic** rebuilding, the continued support to the economically poor for sustaining LPG use is not merely a fiscal subsidy but also a social investment to free-up women's productive time and reduce India's public health burden.
3. **The balance LPG subsidies** are a social investment will yield rich dividends in the years ahead through a healthier and productive population.



Question: -

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) which provide support to the economically poor for sustaining LPG use is not merely a fiscal subsidy but also a social investment. Do you agree with this for financial inclusion of the poorer section of the Indian society? Give arguments to justify your opinion.