New Alzheimer's drug lecanemab

January 9, 2023

In news– The Food and Drug Administration of the USA has approved a new Alzheimer's drug recently.

About the drug-

- **Lecanemab is a monoclonal antibody that targets a protein called amyloid** which builds up on the brain in people with Alzheimer's.
- The antibody is administered intravenously every two weeks in doses determined by a patient's body weight with 10 milligrams given per kilogram.
- The drug modestly slows the pace of cognitive decline early in the disease but also carries risks of swelling and bleeding in the brain.
- The approval of the drug, **lecanemab**, to be marketed as Leqembi, is likely to generate considerable interest from patients and physicians.
- The FDA approved lecanemab based on the reduction of amyloid plaque observed in clinical trial participants who received the treatment.
- Studies of the drug – an intravenous infusion administered every two weeks – suggest it is more promising than the scant number of other treatments available.
- Eisai, a Japanese pharmaceutical company, led the development and testing of the drug.
- It is partnering with the US company Biogen, maker of the controversial Alzheimer's drug Aduhelm, for its commercialisation and marketing.
- Though lecanemab may slow cognitive decline somewhat, the treatment also carries risks.
- Nearly 13% of those who received lecanemab developed

brain swelling compared with about 2% in the group that didn’t receive the treatment.

- However, most of these cases were mild to moderate in severity, did not cause symptoms, and typically resolved within four months.