

OMCs to Sell Ethanol as Standalone Fuel

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In News: At a time when the petrol and diesel price hike is hurting the common man, the ministry of petroleum and natural gas has allowed the direct sale of ethanol as a standalone fuel for compatible automobiles.

Issue: Through a notification dated 22 March 2021 the government has amended the Motor Spirit and High-Speed Diesel Order 2005. The new notification will allow oil marketing companies – Indian Oil Corporation, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation and Bharat Petroleum Corporation to sell bioethanol (E100).

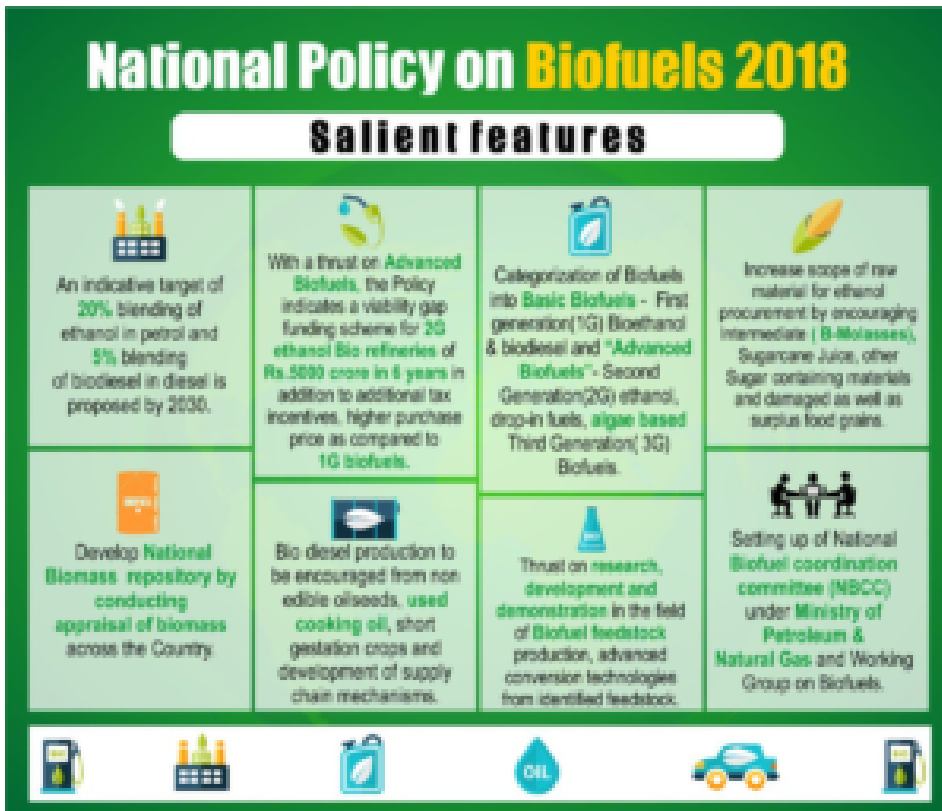
Why did the government amend the Motor Spirit and High-Speed Diesel Order 2005 through in Notification?

- Though the companies had a mandate of blending it up to 10 percent, the programme was moving at a slow pace.
- In 2013-14, the percentage of ethanol-blended petrol was 1.53 percent, which increased to 5 percent in the ethanol supply year 2019-20. This has further increased to 6.9 percent in 2020-21.
- In 2020-21, the OMCs have allocated 325.5 crore litres of ethanol up to March 1 against a requirement of 457 crore litres for 2020-21.
- The new rule will be a huge boost for the sugar manufacturers in the country.
- Due to the push by the government on blending, the ethanol procurement by OMCs increased from 38 crore litres in 2013-14 to 173.03 crore litre in 2019-20.

National Policy on Biofuels, 2018

- Under the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme, OMCs

were given a target of blending 20 percent of ethanol in petrol by 2030.



E100

- E100 or bioethanol means anhydrous alcohol recognised by BIS
- E100 is pure ethanol fuel. Straight hydrous ethanol as an automotive fuel has been widely used in Brazil since the late 1970s for neat ethanol vehicles and more recently for flexible-fuel vehicles.
- The ethanol fuel used is distilled close to the azeotrope mixture of 95.63% ethanol and 4.37% water (by weight) which is approximately 3.5% water by volume.
- The azeotrope is the highest concentration of ethanol that can be achieved by simple fractional distillation.
- The maximum water concentration is 4.9 vol.% (approximately 6.1 weight%)
- The E nomenclature for hydrated ethanol can be tagged as E100, meaning it does not have any gasoline, because the water content is not an additive, but rather a residue

from the distillation process.

- However, straight hydrous ethanol is also called E95 .