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Important Facts for Prelims (1st November 2018)

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NASA Kepler Telescope to Retire

- NASA has decided to retire the Kepler space telescope within its current, safe orbit, away from Earth after almost a decade of service. The telescope has run out of fuel needed for further science operations.
- The Kepler mission was named in honor of 17th-century German astronomer Johannes Kepler, who discovered the laws of planetary motion.
- The Kepler Mission was launched in 2009 with the expected mission life of one year.
- It was NASA's first planet-hunting mission - It discovered more than 2,600 of around 3,800 exoplanets — the term for planets outside our solar system — that have been documented in the past two decades.
- Kepler's observations have suggested that planets outnumber stars in the Milky Way and that potentially Earth-like worlds are common in the universe.
- Kepler is succeeded by NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite, or TESS, which was launched in April 2018. TESS is the new planet hunter for NASA.

Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)

- Recently the Government of India informed that PMBJP has led to the total savings of approximately Rs. 600 crores for common people, as these medicines are cheaper by 50% to 90% as compared to average market price of branded medicines.
 - The PMBJP medicines are procured from only World Health Organisation-Good manufacturing practice (WHO-GMP) certified manufacturers and each batch is tested at National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) accredited independent labs.
- Good manufacturing practice (GMP) is a system for ensuring that products are consistently produced and controlled according to quality standards.

- It is designed to minimize the risks involved in any pharmaceutical production that cannot be eliminated through testing the final product.
- GMP covers all aspects of production; from the starting materials, premises and equipment to the training and personal hygiene of staff.

- Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) is a campaign launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals in November 2008 under the name Jan Aushadi Campaign.
- Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI) is the implementation agency for PMBJP.

Salient Features

- It aims to provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses. PMBJP stores have been set up to provide generic drugs, which are available at lesser prices but are equivalent in quality and efficacy as expensive branded drugs.
- Extend coverage of quality generic medicines so as to reduce the out of pocket expenditure on medicines and thereby redefine the unit cost of treatment per person.
- Create awareness about generic medicines through education and publicity so that quality is not synonymous with only high price.
- Create demand for generic medicines by improving access to better healthcare through low treatment cost and easy availability wherever needed in all therapeutic categories.