



## High LPG prices are scorching the air pollution fight

The sustained rise in the price of LPG cylinders has been burning a hole in many a household budget for more than a year now. With no refill subsidies in place since May 2020, there is genuine concern about many households now slipping back to using polluting solid fuels for cooking, such as firewood and dung cakes.

### A start

1. Solid fuel use for cooking is the leading contributor to air pollution and related premature deaths in India, estimated to be around over 600,000 every year, as per the Global Burden of Disease Study 2019.
2. To tackle this issue head-on, the Government of India has taken several measures to improve access to clean cooking energy. For instance, under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana scheme, the Government distributed more than 80 million subsidised LPG connections.

### Sizing up India's LPG revolution

1. As per the India Residential Energy Survey (IRES) 2020, LPG has now replaced biomass as the most common cooking fuel in India. Nearly 85% of Indian homes have an LPG connection and 71% use it as their primary cooking fuel, compared to only 30% a decade back.
2. This reversal of trends could be attributed to the success of the Ujjwala, consumption-linked subsidies and gradual strengthening of the LPG distributorship.

### Challenges:

1. However, the battle is only half won. Around 30% of Indian households continue to rely on biomass as their primary cooking fuel, mainly due to high LPG prices. Another 24% stack LPG with biomass.
2. The practice of biomass usage is predominantly concentrated in rural areas, particularly among States such as Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal.
3. Urban slums are also critical hotspots where the use of biomass for cooking is widely prevalent. Easy availability of free biomass and lack of home delivery of LPG refills further reduce the efficacy of LPG as a reliable and affordable proposition.



## Way Forward:

To sustain the country's momentum on clean cooking energy access and thereby, cleaner air for all, we propose three key steps.

1. First, reinstate the subsidies on LPG refill for low-income households. At the current refill prices, an average Indian household would have to spend around 10% of its monthly expense on LPG to meet all its cooking energy needs.
2. Second, boost the timely availability of LPG and doorstep delivery for all consumers.
3. Third, create a new market for locally available biomass. The Government needs to pilot initiatives focused on promoting the use of locally available biomass in decentralised processing units that manufacture briquettes and pellets for industrial and commercial establishments.
4. For instance, the National Thermal Power Corporation recently invited applications to supply biomass pellets to fire their power stations. The Government can incentivise entrepreneurs to participate in such activities.
5. Similarly, households can be incentivised to supply locally available biomass (including crop stubble or dung cakes) to Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) production plants being set up under the Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) scheme.
6. Such measures would help enhance local income and livelihood opportunities, in turn encouraging rural families to use LPG on a regular basis.



## CASE STUDY: Biomass to Energy

**SATAT**  
SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVE TOWARDS AFFORDABLE TRANSPORTATION

**Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT)**

**A New Revolution in Transportation Fuel**  
**Compressed Bio-Gas**

Boosting availability of alternate fuel

**5,000**  
CBG plants by 2023-24

**15 MMT**  
CBG production

**75,000**  
Direct employment opportunities

Enhancing income of farmers

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## 5000 Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) plants across India in a phased manner under SATAT initiative

**A new paradigm in transport fuel**

**Boosting availability of more affordable transport fuels**

**'waste-to-wealth' creation by turning agricultural residues, municipal waste into energy**

**Generating direct and indirect employment and self employment opportunities for youth**

Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas  
Government of India

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