

# NITI Aayog rejects auto firms' request on definition of ZEVs

**THINK TANK'S VIEW.** Transition shall begin with phased elimination of polluting vehicles

**S Ronendra Singh**  
New Delhi

NITI Aayog has strongly supported bio-fuels in the run-up to net zero by 2070, rejecting three car makers' — Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra and JSW MG Motor — requests of straight away moving to electric vehicles as zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) without mixing other alternatives like hybrids. These companies opposed a February 10, 2026, transport report by NITI Aayog and have written requesting to reconsider the expanded definition of ZEVs "to preserve conceptual clarity around true zero tailpipe emission technologies".

The NITI Aayog's report has definition of ZEVs that include ethanol-based flex fuel vehicles (FFVs), hybrids and compressed bio-gas (CBG) vehicles, alongside battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and hydrogen-based vehicles.

Sources told *businessline* that the NITI Aayog turned down the request and stated that adoption of ZEVs, including BEVs, FFVs, CBGs



**CAR MAKERS' PITCH.** Tata Motors, M&M and JSW MG Motor wrote to NITI Aayog requesting to reconsider the expanded definition of zero emission vehicles "to preserve conceptual clarity around true zero tailpipe emission technologies"

and hydrogen-based vehicles, should be kept as key priority for the long-term vision, and accordingly segment-wise ZEV acceleration will be formalised. The government think tank said the transition strategy should begin with the phased elimination of polluting diesel vehicles and the adoption of lower-emission CNG vehicles, hybrids, and electric vehicles.

"The subsequent phase should advance the use of biofuels through FFVs, CBG, and hybrid FFV models, alongside continued growth in EV adoption. The final

phase should ensure full deployment of ZEVs such as EVs, FFVs, hydrogen based vehicles and CBG-based models," it said.

## 'GOOD MOVE'

The Indian Federation of Green Energy (IFGE) wrote to NITI Aayog, thanking it for not coming under industry pressure and for continuing to support biofuels in the national interest. "We would like to place on record our strong appreciation that NITI Aayog has not buckled under pressure from certain industry lobbies and self-interest groups and has re-

tained the core framework of a biofuel-led, technology-neutral and India-relevant decarbonisation pathway," sources told *businessline*, quoting Sanjay Ganjoo, Director General, IFGE in the letter.

IFGE is an umbrella organisation representing India's green and bioenergy ecosystem in its entirety, spanning biofuels, CBG, ethanol, and the broader renewable energy sector. It has several companies and associations as members such as NTPC, GAIL, Bajaj, Murugappa, Shree Renuka Sugars and Hero Future Energies.

Addressing the letter to Suman Berry, Vice-Chairman, NITI Aayog, IFGE appreciated the clarification of NITI Aayog that ZEVs are defined based on lifecycle emissions across the value chain. "This further reinforces the principle that for any technology, tailpipe emissions alone cannot be the basis of assessment, and emissions must be evaluated across the entire lifecycle to arrive at a scientifically robust and policy-relevant conclusion," the source added.

# As Bengaluru hotels cut menus amid LPG crisis, a restaurant uses city waste to take on more cooking

Express News Service  
Bengaluru, March 25

EVEN AS many restaurants in Bengaluru cut their menus and scramble for alternative fuel amid a shortage of commercial LPG linked to the conflict in West Asia, one chain is expanding its cooking operations and supplying food to its 59 outlets across the city.

In 2023, the iconic Empire Hotel's Koramangala branch switched to biomethane as its main cooking fuel through a tie-up with a civic waste management unit next door – a move that seems to be paying it rich dividends now.

A biomethane plant at the Kasa Rasa waste management unit, built to process eight tonnes of wet waste into biogas, supplies about 120 kg of biomethane daily to the Empire Hotel on one of South Bengaluru's busiest "eat streets." "We are facing an LPG problem across our outlets and only the



In 2023, Empire Hotel's Koramangala branch switched to biomethane through a tie-up with a civic waste management unit. EXPRESS

Koramangala unit is self-sustained because of the biomethane supply... Our entire cooking is with biogas," said Abdul Gaffar, a cluster manager for the NKP Empire Hotel Group. "We are using the biogas to even cook our biryani for other outlets..."

The biomethane plant at the Koramangala waste disposal unit, set up by the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike in collaboration with bio-energy start-up CarbonMasters,

the Koramangala Residents Association, and the NGO Sahaas, was funded through CSR support from tech firm CGI, which invested Rs 2.4 crore.

The plant processes eight tonnes of segregated wet waste every day, producing about 120 kg of odourless biomethane. This gas is supplied to the Empire Hotel next door via a pipeline.

An additional five-tonne-per-day waste-processing unit

was inaugurated on March 21, as demand among Bengaluru restaurants for alternatives to LPG grows. "For five tonnes of input processes, the capital will be about Rs 2.6 crore. As you scale, the cost will come down," said Som Narayan, the co-founder of Carbon Masters.

CarbonMasters also operates a 50-tonne-per-day waste processing unit on the outskirts of Bengaluru. This facility is set to be scaled up to 200 tonnes and is expected to produce nearly 10,000 kg of biogas for supply. For the first time in South India, the gas will be distributed through a GAIL pipeline.

According to Narayan, biomethane can reduce costs by up to 15 per cent compared to LPG. "We generate 300 cubic metres of raw gas and after purification, around 170 to 180 cubic metres of pure methane (around 120 kg) is obtained and supplied to the Empire Hotel," said Manjunath, the Carbon Masters plant manager at Koramangala.

Amid the shortage of commercial LPG, Carbon Masters, co-founded by Som Narayan and a US-based partner, has been flooded with requests from restaurants for biogas supply. "It has been a challenge to scale in terms of making the gas available. Restaurants are continuously calling. Back then (when starting out), it was very hard. We got the initial buyers after a lot of effort. Now, India has passed a blending mandate. GAIL has become our customer, so we have a situation where the distributing company is buying gas from us," Narayan said.

"In Bengaluru, at least 2,500 to 3,000 tonnes of wet waste is generated every day... If we replicate this model in two or three locations in every constituency, the city will not face a waste problem at all," Karnataka Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy, who inaugurated the five-tonne-per-day waste-to-energy processing unit on March 21, said.

# औद्योगिक इकाइयों में गैस उपयोग की लिमिट अब 55%, ज्यादा प्रयोग पर चुकानी होगी अधिक कीमत

## गेल गैस ने उद्योगों को जारी किए नोटिस, पत्र के जरिए आइआइए ने जताई आपत्ति

जागरण संवाददाता, मेरठ : औद्योगिक इकाइयां अब अंतिम छह महीने की औसत खपत का 55 प्रतिशत गैस का उपयोग ही कर सकेंगी। इसके अतिरिक्त उपयोग करने पर उन्हें अतिरिक्त गैस का अधिक दाम चुकाना पड़ेगा। गुरुवार से यह लिमिट लागू हो जाएगी। गेल गैस लिमिटेड की ओर ने करीब 200 औद्योगिक इकाइयों को यह नोटिस जारी कर दिया गया है।

गेल गैस लिमिटेड के महाप्रबंधक विनय कुमार ने बताया कि 55 प्रतिशत

**124** रुपये 50 पैसे प्रति यूनिट देने पड़ेंगे अतिरिक्त गैस का इस्तेमाल करने पर

गैस का उपयोग करने पर 80.50 रुपये प्रति यूनिट के हिसाब से गैस की कीमत देनी होगी। इससे अतिरिक्त गैस उपयोग करने पर अतिरिक्त गैस की कीमत 124.50 रुपये प्रति यूनिट हिसाब से देना पड़ेगा। यानी निर्धारित खपत से अतिरिक्त गैस के उपयोग पर 44 रुपये अधिक कीमत चुकानी पड़ेगी। बुधवार

तक औद्योगिक इकाइयां अंतिम छह महीने की औसत खपत का 65 प्रतिशत तक उपयोग कर सकती थीं। इससे पहले 80 प्रतिशत की लिमिट थी। धीरे-धीरे इसे घटाया जा रहा है। अब 65 प्रतिशत की जगह 10 और कम करते हुए 55 प्रतिशत कर दिया गया है।

इंडियन इंडस्ट्रीज एसोसिएशन की ओर से गेल गैस लिमिटेड के महाप्रबंधक को पत्र लिखकर आपत्ति जताई गई है। आइआइए के सचिव गौरव जैन ने कहा कि गेल गैस का यह

कहना है कि यह कदम उचित नहीं है। औद्योगिक इकाइयों पर इसका बुरा असर पड़ेगा। 55 प्रतिशत लिमिट पर इकाइयां चला पाना संभव नहीं है। इससे उत्पादन घटेगा। उपकरण क्षतिग्रस्त होंगे और सुरक्षा रिस्क बढ़ेगा। सप्लाइ चैन प्रभावित होगी। काम के घंटे कम होंगे तो रोजगार पर असर पड़ेगा। स्वीकृति क्षमता का शत-प्रतिशत गैस का उपयोग करने की मांग की। कहा कि पुराने कैपेसिटी पर औद्योगिक इकाइयों को चलने दिया जाए।

# Govt in big PNG push as LPG supply risks mount

**Rishi Ranjan Kala**

New Delhi

With LPG supply risks rising as the West Asia conflict rages on and India's piped natural gas (PNG) base still at just 16.2 million consumers, compared with nearly 330 million LPG users, the government has moved decisively to accelerate PNG adoption in cities where the pipeline networks exist.

In a key policy shift, the Oil Ministry mandated that households in areas with PNG connectivity switch from LPG in three months or face disconnection, a move aimed at fast-tracking migration of nearly 60 lakh LPG consumers in the first phase.

Imported LPG accounts for 60 per cent of domestic consumption compared with natural gas, where imports meet roughly half of the country's needs. Officials also point to stronger supply visibility in natural gas, both from domestic output and diversified global sources.

## **FUEL STRATEGY**

In a notification on Tuesday, the Ministry laid out a timeline requiring households in PNG network areas to shift to piped gas, signalling a decisive shift in urban fuel strategy.



The country's PNG base is just 16.2 million, compared with 330 million LPG users.

Although piped gas infrastructure is more predominant in the North and West, including Delhi-NCR, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra, it is expanding in the South.

The government has been prioritising CNG and PNG infrastructure in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka (both GAIL), Andhra Pradesh and Telangana (both Bhayanagar Gas).

The transition is gaining traction, with the government issuing about 2.5 lakh new PNG connections in the last 25 days while receiving a similar number of applications. Alongside, around 2.2 lakh LPG consumers have already migrated to PNG.

Officials estimate that nearly 60 lakh LPG consumers are located in areas where the PNG infrastructure is already available, making them immediate candidates for migration.