

Regarding high price of LPG cylinder refills and promotion of other clean energy resources for cooking-laid

SHRI LAVU SRIKRISHNA DEVARAYALU (NARASARAOPET): The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna (PMUY) has been a landmark victory, greatly improving the lives of our mothers and sisters by eliminating their encounter with toxic effluents from burning firewood for cooking. However, the gains stand threatened if beneficiaries don't opt for LPG refills. Annual refills of LPG cylinders by beneficiaries have steadily declined and has averaged around 3 in the preceding four years. Excluding policy actions such as (i) three free cylinders under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojna and (ii) INR 200 subsidy on each cylinder, the average falls below 3. In 2021-22, out of 9.34 crore PMUY beneficiaries, nearly 2 crore (21.4%) took one or no refill. The primary reason is the 60% rise in cylinder prices since 2019, making it prohibitive. The Covid pandemic-induced inflation and geopolitical situation have further compounded the price rise. To combat this, I urge the Government to undertake the following pragmatic steps. In the medium-term, bear the increased subsidy cost on cylinders due to high inflation. In the long-term, promote electric cooking and allocate budget for renewable energy sources and capacity building. This will aid India's net-zero emission target and inter alia support government's clean air endeavors; while successfully transitioning to clean cooking methods.