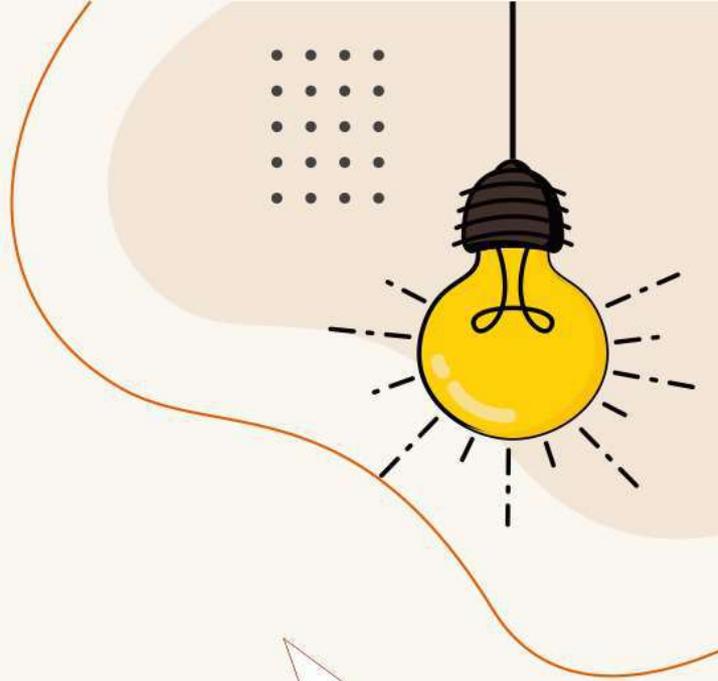




**PERFECTION
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Mains Answer Writing Program
for **BPSC 67**



**Current Affairs
International Relations**

35. To what extent has the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) led to LPG adoption in India leading to a shift towards clean fuel. Examine.

प्रधानमंत्री उज्ज्वला योजना (पीएमयूवाई) भारत में किस सीमा तक एलपीजी अपनाने का नेतृत्व किया है जिससे स्वच्छ ईंधन की ओर बदलाव हुआ है। परीक्षण करें।

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35. To what extent has the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) led to LPG adoption in India leading to a shift towards clean fuel.

Examine.

Introduction

PMUY is a **flagship scheme** with an objective to make clean cooking fuel such as LPG available to the rural and deprived households which were otherwise using traditional cooking fuels such as firewood, coal, cow-dung cakes etc. Usage of traditional cooking fuels had detrimental impacts on the health of rural women as well as on the environment.

Success of Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana:

- **Early achievement:** The target under the scheme was to release 8 Crore LPG Connections to the deprived households by March 2020. This target was achieved by September 2019.
- **Coverage:** The release of 8 Crore LPG connections under the scheme has also helped in increasing the LPG coverage from 62% on 1st May 2016 to 99.8% as on 1st April 2021.
- **Smokeless initiative:** Women in the states of UP, West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan have been the biggest beneficiaries of the smokeless kitchen initiative.
- **International recognition:** International Energy Agency said it is a “major achievement” in improving the environment and health of women.
- **Clean energy:** WHO said that Ujjwala Yojana has provided 37 million women, living below the poverty line, with free LPG connections to support them to switch to clean household energy use.
- **Increased connections:** Total Connections Released under Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (as on 20th October 2021) – 8,48,40,912
- Connections released under Ujjwala 2.0 (as on 20th Oct 2021) – 48,24,282.
- **Budget appreciation:** Under the Union Budget for FY 21-22, provision for release of additional 1 Crore LPG connections under the PMUY scheme has been made. In this phase, special facility has been given to migrant families.

Benefits of PMUY:

1. **Health:** Research showed that people using solid biomass frequently suffer from headaches, nausea, chronic bronchitis and many skin diseases. Indoor air pollution and acute respiratory illnesses caused by it were observed in most rural women.
2. **Women empowerment:** Ujjwala has empowered women and protected them and their families through the use of clean burning fuel by helping prevent a significant number of acute respiratory illnesses and other ailments.
3. **Safety:** Women going to the forests for collecting firewood are also often exposed to health and safety issues, even sexual harassment at times. This is considerably decreased as a result of the LPG connections.
4. **Economic empowerment:** Release of LPG connection under this Scheme shall be in the name of the women belonging to the BPL family enabling the subsidy provision in the women’s account.
5. **Time saving-** using LPG saves time for women as they do not have to collect solid fuel and then use it for cooking, with this cooking time can be effectively used in other economic activities.
6. **Empowering women’s-** Women in many villages formed self-help groups to indulge in community economic activities in their free time.
7. **Environment:** There is a definite positive impact on forest cover and the environment from stopping the use of firewood.
8. **Youth employment:** It will also provide employment for rural youth in the supply chain of cooking gas. Employment in the logistics and maintenance services are an additional benefits.

Challenges to PMUY:

- A recently published study called ACCESS by the Council for Energy, Environment and Water across six cities shows, a large number of households **stack LPG and biomass**.
- Only a **small proportion** of these households use LPG alone for cooking.
- **Affordability** of refill and difficulty in getting a refill are the reasons for this scenario.
- In rural India many households are **using biomass** such as firewood, crop residue and dung cakes as their primary cooking fuels which are much affordable for them.
- The CEEW study across Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal and Odisha found people were unwilling to pay upfront Rs.900-1,000 for a 14 kg refill but would pay about Rs.300 for a refill which is about the price of refilling a 5 kg cylinder.
- While it is true that use of cylinders does increase over the years, the assumption of union government on cylinder consumption **ignores the volatility in rural incomes**.
- It also ignores that that most rural women do not have a say in determining when a refill is ordered, even though the connection is in their name.

Way ahead:

- **Strengthening the supply chain**, ensuring affordability, availability, and accountability is the need of the hour.
- **‘Give it up’ campaign**, LPG Panchayat etc have been remarkable in bringing in behavioral changes. This must be promoted.
- **Target beneficiary expansion** and identification must be carried out carefully to eliminate fake accounts and corrupt use of the scheme.



- Government needs to ensure and **provide subsidies refills** and that rural households are able and willing to pay for them.

Conclusion

Thus, This approach will enhances the health and quality of life in the rural areas, as well as urban air quality. It is a kind of social investment and will help India **achieve SDG 3**.

