

## **Ujjwala 2.0**

### **What is the issue?**

With the launch of Ujjwala 2.0, there has been questions arising over the success of Ujjwala Yojana

### **What was the need for clean fuel?**

- Health and safety issues of women and girls, while using firewood and dung cakes
- Indoor pollution, as chulhas (firewood-based stoves) release CO and CO<sub>2</sub>
- Deforestation for fuel needs contributes to climate change

### **What are the initiatives taken by the government regarding clean cooking fuel?**

- National Programme on Improved Chulha was launched in 1984 backed by training programs. But these programs failed when the subsidies were withdrawn.
- PAHAL scheme was launched in 2013 providing LPG subsidy directly to the beneficiary's account.
- Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMYU) was launched in 2016 to avail LPG to rural and deprived households.

### **What are the key features of PMYU?**

Introduced in 2016 by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MOPNG)

Objective - To create a smoke free rural India by providing concessional LPG connections to entire nation

- It aims provide 8 crore LPG connections to BPL families, with deposit free LPG connection amounting to financial assistance of Rs 1,600
- The beneficiaries also have an option of zero-interest loan from the public sector OMCs for the stove and the first refill.
- Connections will be issued on the name of women beneficiaries.
- It was expanded in April 2018 to include women beneficiaries from seven more categories (SC/ST, PMAY, AAY, Most backward classes, tea garden, forest dwellers & Islands).
- EMI facility will also be provided for stove and refill cost.
- It is complimentary to PM's GiveitUp Campaign under which 75 lakh middle class and lower middle-class households have voluntarily given up their cooking gas subsidy.

### **What is Ujjwala 2.0?**

- Additional 1 crore LPG connection
- Apart from a deposit-free LPG connection, a free refill worth over Rs 800 and a free stove will be provided
- Requires minimal paperwork
- Migrants will not be required to submit any address proof to get the benefit
- Self-declaration is enough for both 'family declaration' and as a 'proof of address'

## How has the scheme been progressing?

- As per the data of Petroleum Analysis and Planning Cell, 2018 94% of all households had an LPG connection as of September 2019
- Yet, many LPG connection holders were found to still be using other fuels like firewood since refill has become expensive.
- The long waiting time is also an additional factor
- So there have also been reports of partial usage of LPGs since conventional sources of fuel are easily available

## What is the need of the hour?

- There is a need to promote other affordable alternatives, such as solar energy and solar cookers, smokeless chulhas, biogas plants and electric cookers.
- R&D must be boosted in the public and private sectors to explore alternatives.

**Source: The Hindu**

