Costlier LPG Fuel

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What is the issue?

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- Recent government announced to withdraw LPG subsidies.
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- This move is likely to aggravate household air pollution, and impact the health bills.
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How significant id household air pollution?

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- The household air pollution is largely due to improper ventilation combined with the use of biomass fuels for cooking and lighting.
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- The biomass emits pollutants such as carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide, particulate matter, benzene, and metals including lead and copper.
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- Household air pollution leads to a range of diseases among women, who are the primary cooks in most Indian households.
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- There are many reported cases of chronic bronchitis, cataract and various adverse pregnancy outcomes among Indian women.
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- Pollution from such fuels contribute to 12% of still births in the country.
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What is the role of LPG in Rural households?

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- To tackle the use of biomass the government introduced the Pradhan Mantri Ujwal Yojana (PMUY) in 2016 to promote the use of LPG for cooking.
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- LPG connections to households have steadily and significantly increased over the past few years.
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- It assists the poor in ensuring that this clean cooking fuel remains within the budget of many poor households.
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- It keeping them healthy and saving on time spent on collecting wood.
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What are the negative impacts of LPG subsidy elimination?

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- This will impact marginal households and keep many households trapped in biomass use for daily cooking.
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- There will be an undeniable impact of air pollution on both public and personal health expenditures.
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- The affordability of LPG cylinders will be dubious, and people may turn towards biomass fuels and kerosene.
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- LPG vendors may face job loses if rural households turn back to biomass fuels.
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Source: Business Standard

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