

## Cars fitted with LPG tanks help cut costs, reduce pollution

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Cars fuelled with LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) instead of petrol are increasingly gaining importance in the light of soaring petrol prices. While there is a general impression that cars fitted with the LPG are highly unsafe, the president of the Indian AutoLPG Coalition (a trust creating awareness and promoting the use of LPG) Mr John Joseph says, "Cars fitted with the LPG kit are safer because, the tank has several safety valves. If the gas leaks, it will come out in a controlled manner and will not just explode. Moreover, the LPG kits fitted in vehicles are RTO approved."

Thus, not only can one banish safety-fears regarding a car fitted with LPG, but one can also estimate the cost cutting that is possible with the use of LPG. While the rate of petrol as of today is around Rs 49/ltr, LPG costs around Rs 27/ltr.

"I easily save Rs 3,000 to Rs 4,000 per month thanks to my LPG tank," says Mr K.J. Jayakumar, an executive working with an oil company who has fitted his Maruti Esteem with a LPG kit. His car covers a distance of around 70 km each day and has not given any problems till date.

Mr Jayakumar adds, "As an employee of an oil company, I know how safe this LPG kit is. Apart from the cost factor, I find that my car gives me an equally good mileage vis-à-vis a petrol car. Also, the car's pick up and functioning is as good as it was when I had a petrol tank."

Another plus point of the gas would be that it cannot be stolen and adulterated.

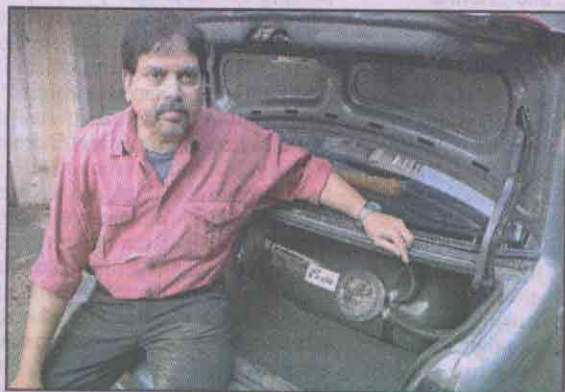
For the consumer, it is economics that comes into play and for the city and the nation it is the environment friendly attribute of LPG that needs to be taken into account. Studies have proved that LPG vehicles emit significantly less fumes than their diesel and petrol counterparts.

"The need is to increase the number of LPG-filling stations and to encourage people to fit their vehicles with dispensed LPG kits, instead of domestic LPG cylinders which are unsafe. However the domestic cylinders will be replaced by dispensed LPG tanks only if the price disparity between the two reduces. However, the price of LPG is only 60 per cent of the petrol price. So it works out cheaper if we compare it with petrol," said Mr Joseph.

Currently, most petrol driven cars with the Euro 2 standardisation can be fitted with LPG kits. Mumbai has around 10,000 cars that have been fitted with these kits.



**PICTURE PERFECT:** Bollywood actress Sushmita Sen along with her daughter Renee pose for *The Asian Age*. A photograph by Anshuman Poyrekar



Mr Jayakumar with his LPG-fitted Esteem. A photograph by Rajesh Jadhav