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Autos go green, city air to get cleaner

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Bengaluru, Aug. 24: Pollution levels in the city could go down with around 90 per cent of autorickshaws plying on Bengaluru's roads being converted to run on LPG. The push for the change in fuel has come from the transport department which has been slowly but steadily promoting the use of the gas in the state as environment friendly, safe, and cost-effective.

Mandatory conversion of three-wheelers registered after April 1, 1991 to bi-fuel mode (such as LPG and petrol) in a phased manner started in 2003 with the use of authorised LPG kits and fixed LPG cylinders.

"The four-stroke LPG autorickshaws cost Rs. 1.5 lakh. A subsidy of Rs 10, 000 is being given to those who own diesel autorickshaws over 14 years old to convert the vehicles to run on LPG. Now almost 75,000 autos run on LPG in the city," says a senior transport official.

According to the officer, all city regional transport offices have completely restricted the registration of diesel-run autorickshaws as they are largely responsible for the city's noise and air pollution.

“Diesel-run three wheelers are Euro2 and are unauthorised. They cannot be registered in the city any more,” the officer explains.

The department is also being alert about the 35,000-odd autorickshaws that are running on unauthorised LPG kits and use detachable cylinders, to ensure that they follow safety standards.

The aggressive measures to replace diesel-run autorickshaws and to convert petrol-run three-wheelers to use LPG have earned the transport department appreciation. It recently received an award from the Indian Auto LPG coalition (IAC) for the effort it has made to promote use of environment-friendly fuel.