

WAS NOIDA'S AIR QUALITY INDEX RECORDED ON TUESDAY

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Increases, but no domestic gas cylinders available in black market, but at double the rate

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Restrictions on commercial LPG supply have pushed prices up sharply in the black market, leaving small businesses and roadside vendors in Noida, Greater Noida and Ghaziabad struggling to operate. Factory owners and food vendors say they are being forced to pay significantly higher prices for cylinders due to the disruption.

Pranav Upadhyay, who runs a packaging unit in Ecotech-3 Greater Noida, said his factory had to wind up operations on Tuesday after commercial LPG cylinders became unavailable through official channels.

"When I checked the black market, a 19-kg cylinder that normally costs around Rs 1,500 is being sold for up to Rs 2,000. Even after paying that, there is no guarantee it will be delivered the same day," said Upadhyay, president of the Industrial Business Association. On regular days, the price typically ranges from Rs 2,000 and Rs 2,200. Several vendors said they are now demanding advance payments because of limited stock.

"They say the supply is so tight that we have to pay first to get a cylinder," said a food vendor operating in Nagar District Centre, Ghaziabad. "Many small food cart vendors, the sudden spike



Vendors said suppliers are demanding advance payments due to limited stock

eroding already thin profit margins. A paratha seller in Noida's Sector 16A said he could not pass on the rising cost to customers. "I sell two parathas for Rs 20. If LPG becomes this expensive, I cannot sell it for Rs 40. No one will buy. If this continues, I might shut the stall and return to my village in Banda," he said.

A large number of roadside vendors in the twin cities operate without formal commercial LPG connections. Many run small carts and depend on informal supply networks that become volatile whenever commercial distribution is disrupted.

For vendors who rely on daily earnings, the situation has become even more difficult. Instead of buying full cylinders, many get small quantities of LPG refilled from illegal bottling units to run their carts for a single day. "Earlier, we could refill just enough gas for a day at

tea stall operator in Indirapuram. "Now they are asking nearly Rs 200 per kg. If we take five or six kg for the day, the cost becomes too high."

These daily refills are common among vendors selling tea, momos, chowmein and other snacks, where earnings barely cover day-to-day expenses.

Much of the LPG sold in the black market comes from subsidised domestic cylinders meant for household use. "Cylinders are diverted from domestic connections because they are cheaper," said a person involved in the illegal supply chain, requesting anonymity. Under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, a 14.2-kg cylinder receives a subsidy of Rs 300 and currently costs around Rs 613, while a non-subsidised domestic cylinder is priced at about Rs 913. Noida DM Medha Roopam said inspections have been

Elevated Noida Expressway bypass to have three loops

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Noida: The Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA) and irrigation department teams on Tuesday inspected the Yamuna Pushta road to assess the feasibility and alignment of a proposed elevated corridor that is expected to ease pressure on Noida Expressway.

Traffic on the expressway is expected to rise sharply once the Noida International Airport becomes operational later this month. Officials said the proposed 31.2km six-lane elevated road, from Okhla Barrage near Sector 94 to the Yamuna Expressway near Gharbara village, opposite Gautam Buddha University, is being planned as a key alternative route. It will run along the Yamuna embankment, link sectors in central Noida, and eventually merge with the Yamuna Expressway after crossing the Hindon river.

Three loops are also proposed to improve access to adjoining sectors. Officials said the corridor will pass through sectors 95, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134 and 135—areas that house several offices, institutions and residential complexes.

Noida CEO Krishna Karunesh confirmed that officials

inspected the alignment on Tuesday. "The road will improve connectivity for commuters travelling from Noida towards Greater Noida and Jewar," he said.

A three-member team from Almondz Global Infra, the consultant appointed by UPEIDA to carry out a feasibility study, will now assess the technical viability, route alignment and environmental considerations. Once the firm submits its report, the Authority will draw up a detailed project report within three months. Construction is expected to take around two years, with costs shared by the Noida, Greater Noida and Yamuna authorities.

Earlier, the project was considered for execution by National Highways Authority of India, but it would have required the Pushta road to be declared a national highway and did not progress.

The state govt later decided to construct an elevated embankment expressway on the stretch and implement the project through UPEIDA instead.

Noida is likely to begin resurfacing damaged sections in the coming weeks to improve traffic flow along the embankment road. Officials said work will also be taken up to plug missing links on the 45-metre-wide sector road along the expressway.

