CURRENT NEWS

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WHEN KITCHENS GO ELECTRIC: RETHINKING ELECTRICITY GOVERNANCE IN TAMIL NADU

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Over the past few months, global tensions and shipping uncertainties have contributed to shockwaves through global energy markets. India imports roughly 60% of its LPG demand; these global shipping delays have severely impacted local distribution. With Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) shortages disrupting daily cooking, many households are turning to electric alternatives. What appears to be a temporary adjustment is, in fact, a significant transition with deep implications for affordability and energy conservation.

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For decades, LPG has been the dominant cooking fuel in Indian households, due to its convenience and reliability. However, recent supply disruptions have reduced LPG availability and increased waiting times. In some areas, households report waiting periods of up to 25-35 days for a single refill. Electric cooking appliances are increasingly becoming an important option. This has pushed households, especially urban and peri-urban consumers, towards electric cooking.

In March 2026 alone, domestic LPG prices in Chennai jumped by Rs. 60, bringing the cost of a 14.2 kg cylinder to approximately Rs. 928.50. Recent retail data from March 2026 shows that the change we're seeing is not just a slow trend anymore. Major e-commerce platforms like Amazon India reported a 20-fold jump in induction stove sales in a single 24-hour window following news of West Asian supply disruptions. Flipkart noted that sales volumes tripled within one week as consumers "hedged" against future LPG volatility. Beyond stoves, electric pressure cookers and rice cookers saw a 4 times increase in demand, while electric kettles used to offload gas usage for boiling water saw sales double.

How do LPG stoves & Induction Cooktops work?

An LPG stove works by burning liquefied petroleum gas to produce a flame. Heat is transferred from the flame to the cookware due to which some energy is lost to the surrounding air. In an induction cooktop, electricity is used to generate a magnetic field. The cookware itself heats up directly, making it more energy-efficient than traditional gas stoves.

Efficiency - LPG stove Vs Induction Cooktops

To understand this better, consider a standard 14.2 kg LPG cylinder, which contains approximately 198 kWh of energy (about 7,10,000 kJ). However, due to the limited efficiency of LPG stoves, only about 40-60% of this energy is actually useful for cooking. This means the effective usable energy is roughly 120 kWh (or 120 units). In other words, even though a household pays for the full energy content of the LPG cylinder, nearly 50% of it is lost during the cooking process.

Efficiency - LPG stove Vs Induction Cooktops

Electric cooking appliances, while high in wattage, typically operate for shorter durations, which moderates their overall energy consumption.

Appliance	Typical Wattage	Estimated. Units (kWh) per Hour	Estimated units per day (2 hours usage)	Bi-Monthly consumption (60 days)
Induction Cooktop (Stove)	1200W - 2000W	1.2 - 2.0	2.4 - 4 units/day	144 - 240
Electric Kettle	1000W - 1500W	1.0 - 1.5	2 - 3 units/day	120 - 180
Air Fryer	1200W - 1800W	1.2 - 1.8	2.4 - 3.6 units/day	144 - 216
Electric Cooker	600W - 1000W	0.6 - 1.0	1.2 - 2 units/day	72 - 120

The Emerging Shift: From LPG to Electricity, is it costlier or cheaper?

At a basic level, cooking costs differ between LPG and induction depending on efficiency and electricity tariffs. For example, a 14.2 kg LPG cylinder in Chennai costs about Rs. 928.50 and typically lasts a household for one bi-monthly cycle (two months).

Taking the average of Induction Cooktop (Stove), if the same household shifts to using a 1500W induction stove for about two hours per day, it would consume roughly 180 units over a bi-monthly period. At an average lower-slab electricity rate, this may appear to cost as little as Rs. 183. Based on this simple comparison, households may perceive a saving of around Rs.745 when switching from LPG to induction cooking.

However, this comparison of individual cooking costs alone is misleading and does not reflect real household conditions. A more meaningful assessment requires examining the total household energy budget. This is because cooking electricity is added on top of existing household consumption, such as lighting, fans, televisions, and air conditioning, etc. What matters, therefore, is not just the cost of cooking, but the total household energy budget.

To understand this better, consider a family of four under three different electricity consumption levels: 200 units, 400 units, and 800 units in a bi-monthly cycle.

Scenario 1: LPG-Based Cooking • Electricity consumption: 300 units • Electricity bill: Rs.705 • LPG cost (1 cylinder) for one billing cycle: Rs.928.50 **Total energy Budget = Rs.1,633**	Scenario 1: LPG-Based Cooking • Electricity consumption: 400 units • Electricity bill: Rs.1,175 • LPG cost (1 cylinder) for one billing cycle: Rs.928.50 **Total energy Budget = Rs.2,103**	Scenario 1: LPG-Based Cooking • Electricity consumption: 800 units • Electricity bill: Rs.4770 • LPG cost (1 cylinder) for one billing cycle: Rs.928.50 **Total energy Budget = Rs.5,698**
Scenior 2: Shift to Electric Cooking • Electricity consumption: 300 units • Additional electricity: 180 units • Total consumption: 480 units **Total Electricity bill: Rs. 1,679**	Scenior 2: Shift to Electric Cooking • Electricity consumption: 400 units • Additional electricity: 180 units • Total consumption: 580 units **Total Electricity bill: Rs. 2,712**	Scenior 2: Shift to Electric Cooking • Electricity consumption: 800 units • Additional electricity: 180 units • Total consumption: 980 units **Total Electricity bill: Rs. 6,660**
Savings of Rs.46/-	**Over spending of Rs.609/-**	**Over spending of Rs.962/-**

- For a household consuming 300 units, the electricity bill is about Rs.705. Adding LPG (Rs. 928.50), the total energy cost comes to Rs. 1,633. If this household shifts to electric cooking, consumption increases to 480 units, and the electricity bill becomes about Rs. 1,679. In this case, the household actually saves around Rs. 46.
- For a household consuming 400 units, the electricity bill is around Rs. 1,175. With LPG, the total energy cost is Rs. 2,103. After shifting to electric cooking, total consumption rises to 580 units, and the electricity bill increases to about Rs. 2,712. This results in an additional cost of around Rs. 600
- For higher-consuming households using 800 units, the electricity bill is about Rs. 4,770, and the total energy cost with LPG is Rs. 5,698. When they switch to electric cooking, consumption rises to 980 units, and the electricity bill increases to around Rs. 6,660. An increase of nearly Rs. 960, which is roughly equivalent to the cost of one LPG cylinder.

The real reason for their increase in the energy budget is how electricity is priced, not just how much electricity is used. In all three scenarios, the electricity consumption for the induction stove is the same. However, the impact on the total bill differs significantly depending on whether the household crosses a tariff slab. In Tamil Nadu, domestic electricity is billed using a slab-based tariff system, where the price per unit increases as total consumption rises. This means your total bill depends not only on how many units you consume, but also on which slab your consumption falls into.

For example, if a household in Tamil Nadu consumes 490 units, the electricity bill is Rs. 1,742. However, if consumption increases by just 11 units, taking it to 501 units, the total bill can rise sharply to around Rs. 2,048. This is not because those extra 11 units are expensive on their own, but because crossing the 500-unit threshold pushes a larger portion of the total consumption into higher tariff slabs.

As a result, the effective cost per unit increases significantly, and households begin to lose the benefit of lower-cost slabs. The tariff slabs are given below.

Tariff	Category of Consumers & slabs			Tarifff payable by the consumer (After Govt. subsidy)	
				Energy Charges [Rs/Unit]	Fixed Charges [Rs for two months]
I-A #	Domestic, Muti-tenements, Old age homes, Handloom	Consumption upto 500 units bi-monthly	0-100 units	0	0
			101-200 units	2.35	0
			201-400 units	4.70	
			401-500 units	6.30	
		Consumption above 500 units bi-monthly	0-100 units	0	0
			101-400 units	4.70	0
			401-500 units	6.30	
			501-600 units	8.40	
			601-800 units	9.45	
			801-1000 units	10.50	
			Above 1000 units	11.55	

This is why many households may feel confused. You may have switched to induction, thinking it is cheaper, and technically, it is, if you look at cooking alone. But when you see your electricity bill, it feels like you are spending more than before. What's often missed is that LPG costs are no longer part of your expenses, but the electricity bill alone makes the shift feel like an added burden.

So, how can households navigate this transition effectively?

As per the media articles, more people are turning to electric cooking, and it's not just a trend - it is becoming essential due to the unpredictability of energy supplies and the rise of affordable electric appliances. However, to keep electricity bills from getting too high, families should pay attention to how they use these appliances. Making a few simple adjustments in daily habits can lead to significant savings.

- Using induction stoves with flat-bottom, compatible vessels improves heat transfer and reduces cooking time.
- Planning meals in batches, using lids while cooking, and switching off appliances a few minutes before completion (to utilise residual heat) can further cut energy use.
- Appliances like electric kettles and rice cookers should be used purposefully rather than as default options for all tasks.
- Avoiding the simultaneous use of high-wattage devices to reduce the risk of electric shock or the burden of electric circuit.

In the end, small changes in how you use electricity can help you manage your bills better. Keep an eye on your total consumption every billing cycle, especially as you approach the 400-500 unit range. The induction cooking may be cheaper than LPG on its own, but your total household bill depends on how much electricity you use overall. Understanding this can help you make smarter choices and avoid bill shocks.

CONSUMER FOCUS

The Appellant, a domestic consumer, stated that he purchased an 11-cent plot of land in a village on November 28, 2001, for which a patta was issued in 2002. He mentioned that at the time of purchase, his land had no High Tension (HT) lines, Low Tension (LT) lines, or electricity poles. The appellant first filed the complaint over the phone with the Assistant Engineer before February 2025. He stated that in 2018 and 2019, without informing, the department employees installed the LT poles and running lines across the interior of his property to provide connections to neighbouring buildings. Further, he argued that these installations are an illegal encroachment and a violation of his private property rights. He further claims that the presence of these lines has caused him significant mental agony and distress. Later in February 2025, the appellant directly filed a complaint with the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF) to remove the electricity infrastructure installed in his property.

During the CGRF's hearing, the respondent stated that the HT line was established in 1986 and the LT line was established in 1996 from the 200KVA substation. The appellant's claim that connections to neighbouring properties were provided from these pre-existing poles since 2001. The Respondents further noted that during field inspections, the land appeared as vacant "punjai" (dry) land with no fencing, compound walls, or boundary stones, which explains why the lines were originally routed along that path. The respondent argued that the infrastructure serves a wider public purpose and that the lines only pass over the edge of the appellant's property for approximately 44 meters, with only 20 meters actually overhanging the land. The respondent states that the vertical and horizontal distance between the poles, wires and the appellant's land are as per the regulation.

After reviewing the field reports and the department's records, the CGRF stated that the HT and LT lines were installed before the Appellant's ownership of his land. The Forum found that the service connections provided in 2018 and 2019 were merely extensions of the pre-existing infrastructure and did not constitute a new encroachment. Therefore, the CGRF ruled that the department was not at fault. It also directed that if the Appellant wanted to remove the poles and lines, the Appellant must submit an online application under the DCW method and bear the estimated costs of relocation.

Dissatisfied with the CGRF's order, the appellant filed an online application with the Electricity Ombudsman. Based on the hearing of both parties' arguments, the following were the Ombudsman's observations.

- Evidence confirmed the HT Line is approximately 30 years old, dating back to 1986 and 1996.
- Despite the land remaining unfenced and vacant, the Ombudsman noted that no objections were raised by the property owner at the time of the original installation.
- The Ombudsman examined Section 164 of the Electricity Act, 2003, and Section 10 of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885, which grant licensees (like TANGEDCO) broad powers to place and maintain telegraph/electric lines and posts on any immovable property for public utility purposes.

Based on the Observations, the Ombudsman presented his findings:

- The Appellant failed to prove that the HT lines were installed illegally or recently in 2018-2019 as a fresh encroachment. Instead, the findings indicated that the infrastructure was lawfully established long ago under the powers granted to the electricity authority to facilitate public power distribution.
- The Ombudsman cited Regulation 6 of the TNERC Supply Code,2004, which explicitly states that "when a consumer or owner requests the shifting of a service connection, lines, or structure for their own convenience, the cost of such shifting must be borne by the person making the request". The Ombudsman concluded that there was no "error" by the department that would necessitate them bearing the cost of relocation

The Ombudsman ordered in favour of the respondent, explaining that the appellant's request to have the lines removed at the department's expense was rejected.

SOURCE: OMBUDSMAN CASE

NEWS FROM TAMIL NADU

New power connections and complaint redress to get faster in Tamil Nadu with GIS integration

To speed up new electricity connections and redress of consumer complaints, Tamil Nadu Power Distribution Corporation (TNPDCL) has launched a mobile phone application-based functionality. It integrates the new service connection process for low-tension services with the geographic information system (GIS) and enterprise resource planning system (ERP). Under the new system, the assistant engineer of an area will get the application details on his mobile phone. He can directly assign the application to the commercial assistant and inspector to carry out the field study. The officers, in turn, can update the form with materials required and generate the estimate on the spot. This process will reduce the time taken to process applications, officials said. "So far, entries from the engineers were manually fed into the system. As there was no integration between ERP and the new application process, multiple estimates were generated for the same application. This won't happen anymore. Also, meters can no longer be delayed, as the service number will be allotted only after meters are fixed," said TNPDCL chief engineer (information technology) Niraimathi. GIS mapping of all TNPDCL assets, right from substations to transformers, poles to meters at consumer premises, which started in 2022, has now been extended to the new service connection process to ensure that new assets created for fresh service connections are mapped at the start. The project was implemented on a pilot basis in the Madurai and Tirunelveli region and will be extended to the rest of the State from March. In the first phase, all low-tension services except group-housing applications will be covered in the scheme, and it will be expanded later to hightension services, utility shifting works, and turnkey projects, said TNPDCL director A Selvakumar.

SOURCE: TIMESOFINDIA, 15 FEBRUARY 2026

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY

India needs $14.23 trillion investment in power sector by 2070 to meet net-zero goal: Niti Aayog

India will require cumulative investments of $14.23 trillion in the power sector, including renewables, storage and transmission, by 2070 under a net-zero scenario, where non-fossil fuelbased generation accounts for 98 per cent, a Niti Aayog report said on Tuesday. The report, “Scenarios Towards Viksit Bharat and Net Zero: Sectoral Insights - Power”, said India’s development and climate ambitions increasingly hinge on electricity. As the country moves towards Viksit Bharat 2047 and Net Zero 2070, reliable, affordable and cleaner electricity will be central to inclusive and sustainable growth, it noted. With nearly 258 GW of renewable energy capacity installed by December 2025, India has emerged as the world’s fourth-largest renewable energy market, reflecting the pace of clean energy expansion, reported news agency PTI. The report warned that the next phase of growth will be more complex, with electricity demand rising sharply due to urbanisation, cooling needs, digitalisation, electric mobility and green hydrogen. Electricity’s share in final energy consumption is projected to rise from 21 per cent in 2025 to nearly 60 per cent under the Net Zero Scenario by 2070. Per-capita electricity consumption is expected to jump from about 1,400 kWh in 2025 to 7,000- 10,000 kWh by 2070, approaching levels seen in advanced economies such as France and South Korea. By 2070, total installed power capacity is projected to be 14 times current levels under the net-zero pathway, with renewable energy accounting for about 90-93 per cent of capacity. Solar power is set to become the backbone of the system, with capacity reaching 3,250-5,500 GW, while onshore wind is expected to exceed 1,000 GW, alongside 50-70 GW of offshore wind. Battery storage is projected to expand to as much as 3,000 GW by 2070, while pumped hydro storage could reach around 160 GW. Nuclear power is also seen as a strategic pillar, scaling up from 8.8 GW in 2025 to over 300 GW by 2070 to provide firm, low-carbon power.

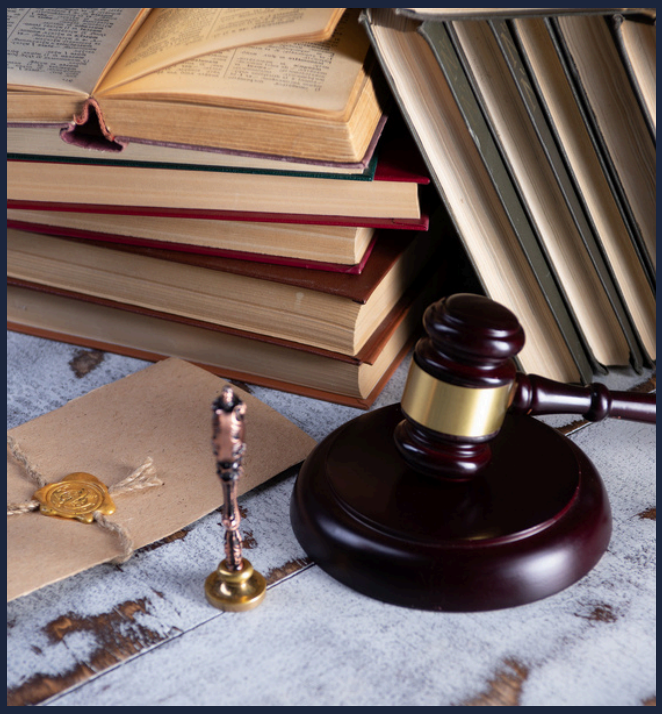
SOURCE: TIMESOFINDIA, 10 FEBRUARY 2026

WORLD NEWS

How electricity providers are adapting to the global data centre build out

Companies are racing to deploy emerging technologies like AI by standing up new data centres. AI technologies are expected to drive the future of economic competitiveness, national defense and many forms of innovation, making the race to build energy infrastructure to supply these data centres critical to these enablers of national success. The scale of data centre investment is large enough to reshape energy markets, with McKinsey projecting nearly $7 trillion in capital outlays for data centres by 2030, including $1.3 trillion in power generation, cooling and electrical equipment. The pace of deployment is equally impressive, with electricity demand for data centres growing at four times the rate of all other sectors. In Ireland, data centres already represent 20 percent of electricity consumption. This rapid increase in demand for electricity is producing a business supercycle around the infrastructure needed to produce new power. Whether energy infrastructure can be built fast enough to meet demand is an open question. Demand for power-producing infrastructure has escalated to the point where many corporate customers pay not just for new equipment, but to reserve the right to place future orders. Critical components like transformers used to see order backlogs of one to two months, but now see backlogs exceeding three years. Power producers that can rapidly deploy infrastructure for data centres stand to collect premiums from these power-hungry customers – if they can meet the necessary performance requirements. Agility innovations may be required to ensure that cybersecurity can adapt to attacker innovations over the lifetime of the infrastructure – without disrupting production for more than the eight allowable minutes per year. AI capabilities – and future innovations like quantum computing – will be fundamental for economic and defense infrastructure.

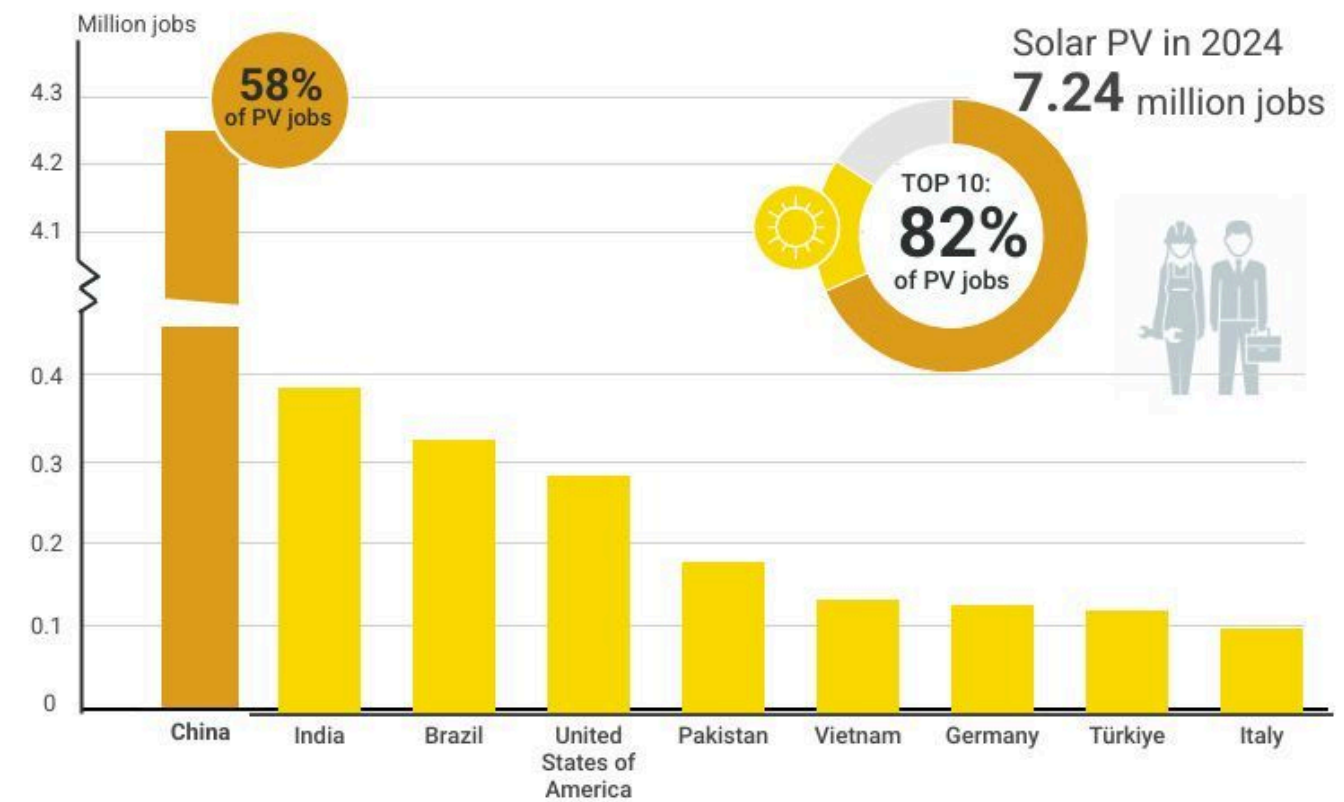
SOURCE: WEFORUM.ORG, 03 FEBRUARY 2026



PUBLICATIONS

- **Tamil Nadu Electricity Grid Code, 2026, TNERC**
- **The State of Energy Innovation 2026, IEA**
- **Solar PV Supply Chain Cost Tool: Methodology, results and analysis, IRENA**
- **Clean Energy Technology Supply Chain Data, IEA**
- **Scenarios Towards Viksit Bharat and Net Zero - Sectoral Insights: Power (Vol. 7), MoP**

SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC EMPLOYMENT TOP TEN COUNTRIES IN 2024



SOURCE: IRENA

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