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CNG or "Compressed natural gas" is essentially methane preserved at an elevated pressure, and is known to produce less unfavorable gases as compared to known fuel choices like petrol, diesel and LPG. Owing to it being lighter in comparison to air it spreads faster when discharged in the air.

Nevertheless, a new study by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has drove aside the fact that CNG is "eco-friendly" than other fuel choices, thereby producing confusion as lately CNG is being promoted as the better choice for fuel over others in an attempt to curb pollution, and its health hazards.

The study has indicated that CNG-operated vehicles are hazardous for human beings due to their emission of "nanocarbon" particles that has the ability to cause cancer.

Speaking at the 2015 Global Green Energy Conclave in Ahmedabad, Dr. MO Garg who is the director general of CSIR said that natural gas that is meant to be "a clean fuel" when utilized in "internal combustion engines" is actually not so eco-friendly. "But, I don't think people realize that what you see (smoke) is perhaps better than what you don't see (no smoke from CNG vehicles)," he added.

Garg said albeit the study was performed on a very restricted model size in Delhi, CSIR considered the outcomes sincerely due to the health risks it posed to human beings and alarmed the union government for additional follow-up.

He informed that the research was done with a professor from Alberta University, who build a device to determine and evaluate particles discharged by CNG-operated vehicles. "We have installed this machine on the exhaust of a natural gas-run DTC bus in Delhi," he added.

Garg believes that this research can alter the existing human thought that natural gas is a "clean fuel" for not discharging noticeable smoke against other fuel choices that do discharge noticeable smoke, and are considered to be hazardous for human beings.

The study discovered that nanocarbon particles discharging from natural gas combustion spreads in the air and goes right into the human lungs via the nose. Eventually it reaches the blood via membranes, Card explained.

He further explained that these "nanocarbon particles" can trigger cancer, owing to their carcinogenic status, which is why he and his team alarmed the union government about its consequences.

He said that these nanocarbon particles are filled with "polynuclear aromatic, having huge surface area."

Garg stressed for actions being taken immediately lest a day arrives when all the vehicles of Delhi operate on natural gas. "You can see smoke coming from diesel engine and tell that it is dangerous. But, nanocarbon particles coming out from vehicles is something we need to look at," he emphasized.

He also informed about India already being third in the world in nanotechnology research with more than 500 patents been filed by Indians.

The New Jersey Department of Health said that mercaptan, which is present in natural gas can prompt irritation in the nose, throat and lungs, and even cause chronic bronchitis after prolonged introduction. Other than this the American Academy of Environmental Medicine also found that those individuals who use natural gas at home stays at an increased risk of having asthma or deteriorate the situation for those who already suffers from the disease.

In a report by ehov, it is said that the toxic materials that natural gas discharges not only spreads in the air for people to breathe in, but also stick into the food that people consume it is being cooked on the natural gas – operated stove or even to one's robes while using a gas dryer.

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