

BS IV Deadline

What is the issue?

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- As a response to precipitous decline in air quality, the government had initiated the Bharat Stage IV (BS-IV) that were supposed to come into effect across the country from April 2017.

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- But most players in the automobile sector are now asking the government to relax the deadline.

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What are BS norms?

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- BS emission standards, introduced in 2000, have been set up to **regulate the output of air pollutants from internal combustion engine equipment**, including motor vehicles.

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- The different norms are brought into force in accordance with the timeline and standards set up by the Central Pollution Control Board.

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- The BS norms are based on European regulations.

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- In 13 major cities, Bharat Stage IV emission standards were put in place in April 2010.

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- Typically, the higher the stage, the more stringent the norms. The current norms in India are BS IV in 33 cities and BS III in the remaining country.

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- Implementation of the BS V standard that was earlier scheduled for 2019 has now been skipped.

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- BS VI, originally proposed to come in by 2024 has been now advanced to 2020, instead.

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Why is the shift to BSIV necessary?

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- The studies suggest that vehicular pollution is one of the key contributors to the high levels of pollution in Indian cities.
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- A recent study on Delhi's pollution showed that **28% of the pollution is due to vehicular emissions.**
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- The shift to BS IV will require cleaner fuel quality and improvements in engines and exhausts like fitting the vehicles with diesel particulate filter (DPF), selective catalytic reduction (SCR) etc.
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- Hence this will reduce the vehicular pollution thereby increasing the air quality.
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Why the industry's demand is flawed?

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- Currently the automobile sector wants a relaxation of the deadline again.
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- This reflects poorly on the industry's commitment to improving air quality.
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- The overall demand for private vehicles is quite rigid in India and, therefore, any increase in cost that affects all producers equally will not significantly impact industry-level sales in the long run.
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- The vehicular pollution, significantly worsens the health of all Indians therefore cannot be taken lightly on the cost of economic development.
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- Also, being at the frontline of global standards, will improve the ability of Indian automobile sector to compete globally.
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What is the way forward?

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- The government should remain firm on auto emission norms deadline

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- Given the alarming rise in pollution levels, the government might even consider advancing the BS VI deadline from 2020 to an earlier date.

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- Europe has achieved the result only after facing stiffer timelines.

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- Also, the industry's tendency to lobby for delays can be checked if deadlines are staggered.

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- If the environmental norms are applied in one go , the deadline of BS-IV norms applied to sales of older technology vehicles will make it worthless.

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- But a staggered deadline will allow companies to gradually shift production to better engines and avoid a situation where producers are stuck with unsold inventory.

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Source: Business Standard

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