

Opposition to Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill

Why in news?

\n\n

\n

- The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, passed last year by the Lok Sabha, now faces opposition in the Rajya Sabha.

\n

- Click [here](#) to know more on the Bill.

\n

\n\n

What is the need for the amendment?

\n\n

\n

- The Motor Vehicles (MV) Act, 1988 governing motor vehicles and transport is largely outdated.

\n

- It lacks the provisions that are necessary to manage the present fast motorisation.

\n

- Especially, the passenger transport sector operating for inter-city services has grown with vested interests.

\n

- This is a result of exploitation of the lack of transparency and regulatory bottlenecks.

\n

- So with a transparent system, professional new entrants can come into the sector.

\n

- Also, State-run services have not kept pace with the times.

\n

- E.g. investments in the urban metro rail systems are yielding poor results in the absence of last-mile connectivity services.

\n

- These lacunae have to be addressed to improve road safety, ensure orderly use of vehicles and expand public transport.

\n

- But the bill faces opposition from the states.

\n

\n\n

What are the concerns?

\n\n

\n

- Some state governments are concerned about the new provisions, Sections 66A and 88A.

\n

- This will empower the Centre to form a National Transportation Policy.

\n

- Notably, it would be through a process of consultation, and not concurrence.

\n

- It will also enable Centrally-drafted schemes for national, multi-modal and inter-State movement of goods and passengers, for rural mobility and even last-mile connectivity.

\n

- The provisions would bring in a new paradigm that would overhaul the sector, and hence the States see it anti-federal.

\n

- Clearly the issue is not one of legislative competence as the subject is in the Concurrent List.

\n

- So clearly, parliament can make a law defining powers available to the States.

\n

- The opposition is thus more due to the perceived shift of power from the States to the Centre.

\n

\n\n

What is the way forward?

\n\n

\n

- Well-run bus services have to be enabled to operate across States with suitable permit charges.

\n

- This is an imperative to meet the growing needs of a transforming economy.

\n

- The regulatory changes could contribute to fostering competition, reducing fares and increasing services.

\n

- Other provisions on road safety, fines and curbing corruption need proper enforcement.

\n

- A professional accident investigation agency has to be put in place to determine the best practices.

\n

- In all, an equitable regulatory framework has to be created for the orderly growth of transport services.

\n

- States should thus reconsider their opposition to amendments to the Motor Vehicles Act.

\n

- The passage of the Bill would also help meet the UN mandate to reduce road accidents up to 50% by 2020.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Hindu

\n

