

## The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2019

### Why in News?

The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2019 that seeks to amend the Motor Vehicles Act of 1988, was passed in Parliament recently.

### What is the act about?

- The Act provides for grant of licenses and permits related to motor vehicles, standards for motor vehicles.
- It also provides for the penalties for violation of these provisions.

### What is the compensation for road accident victims in the bill?

- The central government will develop a scheme for **cashless treatment** of road accident victims during golden hour (i.e. up to one hour following a traumatic injury).
- The Centre may also develop a scheme to provide interim relief to claimants seeking compensation under 3<sup>rd</sup> party insurance.
- The bill increases the minimum compensation for hit and run cases:
  1. In case of death, from Rs 25,000 to Rs 2 Lakh,
  2. In case of grievous injury, from Rs 12,500 to Rs 50,000.

### What is the Motor Vehicle Accident Fund?

- The central government should constitute this fund which will provide a compulsory insurance cover to all road users in India.
- It will be utilised for:
  1. Treatment of persons injured in road accidents,
  2. Compensation to representatives of a person who died or grievously hurt in a hit and run accident,
  3. Compensation to any other persons as prescribed by the central government.

### Who is a Good Samaritan?

- **Good Samaritan** - A person who renders emergency medical or non-medical assistance to a victim at the accident scene.
- The assistance must have been in good faith, voluntary and without the

expectation of any reward.

- Such a person will not be liable for any civil or criminal action for any injury to or death of an accident victim.

### **How are the vehicles recalled?**

- The Bill allows the central government to order for recall of motor vehicles if a defect in the vehicle may cause damage to the environment, or the driver, or other road users.
- The manufacturer of the recalled vehicle will be required to:
  1. Reimburse the buyers for the full cost of the vehicle, or
  2. Replace the defective vehicle with another vehicle with similar or better specifications

### **What is the National Transportation Policy?**

- The central government may develop a National Transportation Policy, in consultation with state governments. The Policy will:
  1. Establish a planning framework for road transport,
  2. Develop a framework for grant of permits,
  3. Specify priorities for the transport system.

### **What is a Road Safety Board?**

- It can be created by the central government through a notification.
- It will advise the central and state governments on all aspects of road safety and traffic management.

### **What are the Offences and penalties?**

- The Bill increases penalties for several offences under the Act such as, for drunken driving, non-compliance of vehicle manufacturer with motor vehicle standards, non-compliance of contractor to comply with road design standards, etc.,
- The central government may increase fines mentioned under the Act every year by up to 10%.

### **Who are the taxi aggregators?**

- **Aggregators** (As per the Bill) – Digital intermediaries or market places which can be used by passengers to connect with a driver for transportation purposes (taxi services).
- They will be issued licenses by state. Further, they must comply with the Information Technology Act, 2000.

## How were the charges of being anti-federal tackled?

- It was said that the proposed amendments were reviewed by 18 State Transport Ministers, and the Bill reflects the modifications they suggested.
- Also, Rajya Sabha which represents the states in Parliament introduced some last-minute changes.

## What is the way forward?

- The Centre must deliver on its promise that the amended Act will help reduce dependence on personal vehicles.
- It must present its National Transport Policy without delay.
- States must be incentivised to provide clean, comfortable and affordable services for all users, including people with disabilities.
- State Transport Corporations must adopt modern management practices to tackle the structural reform and an upgrade to subsidised electric buses for low-cost air-conditioned travel.
- Sustained, zero tolerance enforcement of small fines will reduce violations, while the stringent ones which lead to more bribery.

**Source: PRS India, The Hindu**

### **Related links:**

[Motor Vehicles \(Amendment\) Bill, 2017](#) , [Opposition to Motor Vehicles \(Amendment\) Bill](#) and [Motor vehicle amendment bill and road accidents](#)

