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Only BS-VI Vehicles To Be Sold From April 2020

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The Supreme Court has ruled that no Bharat Stage IV vehicle shall be sold or manufactured across the country with effect from April 1, 2020. Instead, the Bharat Stage VI (or BS-VI) emission norm would come into force from April 1, 2020, across the country.

- The Supreme Court's order came while deciding whether grace period should be given to the automobile manufacturers for the sale of BS-VI non-compliant vehicles after April 1, 2020.
- In 2016, the Centre had announced the country would skip the BS-V norms altogether and adopt BS-VI norms by 2020 to reduce vehicular pollution.
- Supreme Court ruled that any extension of time in introducing the new emission norms would adversely impact the health of citizens as the pollution has reached an "alarming and critical" level.
- It has been held that the right to live in an environment free from smoke and pollution follows from the "quality" of life which is an inherent part of Article 21 of the Constitution.
- Further, the Supreme Court has observed that the right to live with human dignity becomes illusory in the absence of a healthy environment.

Bharat Stage VI

- **Bharat Stage Norms**
 - Based on the European regulations (Euro norms), introduced in the year 2000, the Bharat stage norms are emission control standards put in place by the government to keep a check on air pollution.
 - These standards set specifications/limits for the release of air pollutants from equipment using internal combustion engines, including vehicles.
 - The higher the stage, the more stringent the norms.

- **What is BS VI's Key Improvement in Fuel Quality Over BS IV?**
 - BS VI norms seek to cut down sulphur content to 10 parts per million (ppm) from 50 ppm
 - Sulphur in the fuel contributes to fine particulate matter emissions.
 - BS VI norms seek to reduce the level of certain harmful hydrocarbons in the emissions that are produced due to incomplete combustion of fuel.

Challenges in Implementation

- It takes a long time in research and development for automakers to develop a new kind of an engine or to tweak around with the current ones to meet the latest norms.
- Once the research and development are over, the task of setting up full-scale production comes up. All of this comes at a cost which eventually makes the vehicle more expensive for the end customer of the product and that can be a cause of concern for automakers given how price sensitive the Indian market is.
- There is a requirement of cleaner fuel to run these vehicles that comply with a stricter emission regulation as it is not feasible to make internal combustion engines pollute less while using poor quality of fuel.
- This will require a huge amount of investments to make the oil refineries capable of producing a better quality of fuel and also investments in the infrastructure to make that fuel available across the country.

Way Forward

- India has some of the most polluted cities in the world and automobiles are often considered as one of the biggest factors responsible for it.
- The implementation of advanced norms is a critical step as India, the world's third largest emitter of Greenhouse gases after China and the US, is a signatory to Paris climate deal on combating climate change. As part of the agreement, by 2030 India has to reduce its carbon footprint by 33-35% from the 2005 levels.
- So, the need of the hour is to control the pollution levels by all means possible and since globally, countries are adhering to Euro 6 levels of emission regulations, India needs to step up its effort by switching to BS VI norm as soon as possible which will give the much needed fillip to pollution reduction.

[Read about 'Air Pollution in Delhi'](#)