

Sale of BS-VI non-compliant vehicles should stop from April 1, 2020: Centre to SC

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New Delhi, Jul 23 () The sale and manufacture of BS-VI non-compliant vehicles in India should not be allowed from April 1, 2020 as it would lessen environmental benefits to be accrued from using cleaner BS-VI fuel, the Centre today told the [Supreme Court](#).

In an affidavit filed in the apex court, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) said that it would not be possible to segregate pricing of diesel or have a differential pricing mechanism for the fuel for private vehicles.

The ministry told a bench of Justices Madan B Lokur and Deepak Gupta that sale and manufacture of BS (Bharat stage)-VI non-compliant vehicles from April 1, 2020 would have an adverse affect since investment of around Rs 28,000 crore has already been made for having a cleaner BS-VI fuel.

Meanwhile, the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers ([SIAM](#)) referred to a government notification of February 20 this year which said that registration of private vehicles manufactured up to April 1, 2020 should be done till June 30, 2020.

Advocate Aparajita Singh, who is assisting the court as an amicus curiae in the matter, raised the issue of Delhi reeling under air pollution and said that people were dying due to its ill-effects.

Additional Solicitor General A N S Nadkarni, appearing for the Centre, said that time till June 2020 has been given for registration of BS-IV vehicles manufactured up to March 2020.

"If BS-VI fuel is used in BS-IV vehicles, the environmental benefit of having a cleaner fuel would become marginal. After March 31, 2020, sale of non-compliant BS-VI vehicles should not be allowed," Nadkarni said.

When the counsel appearing for SIAM referred to the reduction of time given to the automobile manufacturers to jump to BS-VI from BS-IV, the bench said, "When this issue had cropped up, there was strong opposition from you."

"I am not sure what you (SIAM) are up to. When it is convenient for you then you say no to electric vehicles and when its beneficial, then you are ready for electric vehicles," Justice Lokur observed.

SIAM's counsel said that situation has now changed and 10,000 electric vehicles would be supplied in Delhi.

"All we are saying is that we have to be little cautious while dealing with your organisation," the bench said.

The amicus claimed that SIAM had earlier misled the court on electric vehicles and prototype of 23 such vehicles were shown during the auto show.

Meanwhile, the SIAM said that approval on prototypes of electric vehicles were pending with the government.

The bench said that MoPNG's affidavit be supplied to the SIAM so that they could respond to it and said that it would hear the issue.



The court was hearing the petition that has raised the issue of air pollution in the Delhi-NCR.

During the hearing, the bench was told that [Mercedes-Benz](#) was already manufacturing BS-VI compliant vehicles in India.

The amicus claimed the automobile manufacturers like Tata, Maruti and Mahindra were exporting BS-VI vehicles to Europe and for India, they say that they need time.

The amicus also suggested as to why the manufacturers cannot roll out BS-VI vehicles earlier in Delhi- National Capital Region (NCR) when BS-VI fuel would be made available by April 1, 2019 in 17 out of 23 districts in the NCR and Agra.

"Some car-makers are determined not to come out with BS-VI vehicles till March 31, 2020," the amicus said.

During the hearing, the bench observed that taxi operators in Delhi could also be given incentives if they purchase BS-VI compliant vehicles.

The amicus said roughly 80,000 taxis were plying in Delhi and all taxis, auto rickshaws and public transport buses were running on CNG.

The bench was also told that there were around 30 lakh private vehicles in Delhi and a minimum of 750 vehicles were registered every day here.

The amicus said since diesel-run vehicles were a major cause of concern, the Environment Pollution Control Authority (EPCA) has suggested levying an annual charge on diesel vehicles.

The court had earlier suggested that the Centre could contemplate fixing price of diesel and petrol on par for four wheelers, other than goods vehicles.

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