

Guj amber-lights Centre's traffic fines, cuts up to 90%

Retains Hefty Penalties For Serious Violations

Kapil Dave & Dipak Dash | TNN

Gandhinagar/ New Delhi: Barely 10 days after the amended Motor Vehicles Act (MVA) came into force, the Gujarat government on Tuesday notified the fines for some of the traffic offences which are 25 to 90 per cent less than those notified by the Centre.

The state government's justification to reduce the penalties on "compassionate and humanitarian" ground is now likely to pave way for other states to notify the fines. The Gujarat government reiterated its commitment to ensure safety on roads by emula-

FINE BALANCE

Offence	Notified by Centre	Notified by State
Obstructing fire tender and ambulance	10,000	1,000
Triple seat riding	1,000	100
Driving without helmet	1,000	500
Wrong side driving (2 & 4 wheeler)	5,000-10,000	1,500 & 3,000
Driving without licence (2 & 4 wheeler)	5,000	2,000 & 3,000
Polluting vehicle	10,000	3,000
Driving without registration	5,000-10,000	2,000
Racing in public places	5,000-10,000	5,000-10,000
Over Speeding LMV	2000	2000-3000



Figures in ₹

ting Centre's hefty fine policy for serious offences like rash and drunken driving, which remain unchanged. The new fines will come into force from

September 16.

"Our priority is not collecting fines or filing cases against people. However, implementing law is not possible

without punitive action. We have taken a compassionate and humanitarian approach and reduced fines. No concessions can be granted in cases where people lose their lives. There will be a sustained clampdown against serious traffic offences," said chief minister Vijay Rupani.

The Gujarat government has largely tweaked the fines that fall under the "compoundable" offences category, which empowers the state governments to designate officers who can collect the fine on the spot and let the offender go. These include not wearing seatbelt, helmet, triple-riding on two-wheelers, speeding, plying vehicles without pollution under control certificate and driving without licence and registration certificate.

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"I have directed senior officers to ensure that officers on the field do not harass people unnecessarily. Anyone demanding bribe must face serious action. I request people to lodge a complaint with officials in case they are harassed without an offence."

Vijay Rupani
CHIEF MINISTER

"We will launch a drive from September 16 when the amended provisions will be implemented. Cops will work round the clock to enforce the new rules. Some clashes are likely between police and the public, but we will not allow anyone to break the law."

J R Mithalila
JCP, TRAFFIC

"People can pay compounded fines on the spot or pay full fine as per the Centre's new act in court. No concessions have been granted in serious offenses like drunken driving and fatal accidents."

Sunaina Tomar
PRINCIPAL SECRETARY,
TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

"This will aggravate the blame game between authorities and citizens, which we're seeing on social media as pictures of cops violating laws are posted. If heftier fines are imposed, citizens expect better roads. All stakeholders must work in cohesion."

Geetika Saluja
ENTREPRENEUR

"I've been advocating for raising fines, because the way people drive has to change and that can happen only by force of habit. If the fines impose discipline, so be it. If you don't want to pay the fine, don't break the law."

Amit Sheth
DEAN AT A UNIVERSITY

"Neither are traffic signals, timers functioning nor are roads well demarcated. Hefty fines are okay but one cannot have poor infrastructure that may lead to people being wrongly penalized. Traffic cops must be held accountable for managing traffic badly."

Shamik Shah
BUSINESSMAN

AUTHORITIES SAY MOVE NOT TO EXTRACT MONEY, BUT FOR SAFETY OF THE PEOPLE **CITIZEN VOICES** WILL PAY FINES BUT WANT BETTER INFRASTRUCTURE IN RETURN

NO CONCESSIONS FOR SPEEDING, RASH DRIVING

8,000 Lives Lost To Accidents Every Year, Appeal To People To Follow

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Signalling the state government's resolve to ensure safety of people on roads, chief minister Vijay Rupani on Tuesday stated that serious offences, especially those involving accidents due to rash driving, will be penalised heavily. At the same time he allayed fears of harassment and bribes by implementing officials, saying that strict action will be taken against erring officials.

"The government's priority is not collecting fines and filing cases against people, but implementation of the new motor vehicle rules will not be possible without strict implementation," the chief minister said. Explaining the rationale behind imposing heavy fines against persons involved in serious offences, the chief minister said that about 8,000 people lose their lives in road accidents every year in Gujarat.

Offences like speeding, racing in public places and riding noise-

polluting vehicles will be fined heavily under the new rules which take effect from September 16. Besides, the state government has also not lowered fines for not carrying a licence, insurance, PUC certificate and RC book. People, however, can produce soft copies of these documents on their phones only in the DigiLocker app of the Government of India, while driving, the chief minister said.

FINE ROADS

Rupani dwelled on fears being expressed from various quarters that the fines will result in harassment. "I request people to lodge a complaint with higher officials in case they are harassed without committing an offence. Spot challans can be issued only by officials above police head constable or assistant RTO," the CM stated.

The new act includes a set of heavy fines for violators in addition to imprisonment of up to one month for overspeeding and racing and up to six months for offences like accidents. The new act has also introduced stricter laws for juveniles.



ONLY DIGILOCKER DOCUMENTS COUNT

Contrary to messages on social media, only certified documents stored in DigiLocker, an application of the central government, will be considered valid while driving on the road. "Any photograph stored on a mobile phone will not be considered valid proof. These documents should be certified in the central government's digital locker," the CM said.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED WHILE TRAVELING:
Licence, RC book, insurance, PUC (bike, car)

FOR OTHER COMMERCIAL VEHICLES:
passenger or goods permit



STATE'S DISCOUNT ON HEFTY FINES

Fines Under MV Act	Existing	Notified by centre		Notified by State		Diff (%)
		1st Offence	2nd Offence	1st Offence	2nd Offence	
Obstructing fire vehicle and ambulance	100	10,000	10,000	1,000	1,000	90
Triple seat riding	100	1,000	1,000	100	100	90
Driving without registration (2-wheeler)	500	5,000	10,000	1,000	1,000	80
Car and other vehicles causing pollution	1,000	10,000	10,000	3,000	3,000	70
Wrong side driving (2-wheelers)	1,000	5,000	10,000	1,500	1,500	70
Driving without licence (2-wheelers)	500	5,000	5,000	2,000	2,000	60
Driving without helmet	100	1,000	1,000	500	500	50
Driving without seat belt (only front seats)	100	1,000	1,000	500	500	50
Wrong side driving (LMV)	1,000	5,000	10,000	3,000	3,000	40
Driving without licence (4-wheelers)	500	5,000	5,000	3,000	3,000	40
Driving without registration (4-wheelers)	2,000	5,000	10,000	3,000	3,000	40
Speeding (2-wheelers)	400	2,000	2,000	1,500	2,000	25

1ST TIME NO MERCY, RELIEF FOR REPEATERS!

Figures in ₹

Fines Under MV Act	Existing	Notified by centre		Notified by State	
		1st Offence	2nd Offence	1st Offence	2nd Offence
Not carrying licence, insurance, PUC, RC book	100	500	1,500	500	1,000
Racing in public places	500	5,000	10,000	5,000	10,000
Speeding (LMV)	400	2,000	2,000	2,000	3,000
Speeding (other vehicles)*	400	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Driving without registration (others)	5,000	5,000	10,000	5,000	5,000
Obstructive parking	100	500	1,500	500	1,000
Dark film	100	500	1,500	500	1,000
Third party insurance (2 & 4 wheelers)	500	2,000	4,000	2,000	4,000

Helmet not a must for pillion rider

Chief Minister Vijay Rupani said that while pillion riders wearing helmets is desirable, it will be made compulsory later. "We intend to ensure 100% compliance by riders first. Once that happens, helmets will be made compulsory for pillion riders too," he said. The CM added that a considerate stance is also being adopted in cases where middle class families travel triple seat on two-wheelers.

Reduction seen as a balancing act

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As per the law, the states cannot change some of the penalties for offences such as juvenile driving, drunk driving and jumping traffic light. However, there is one exception where the state has reduced penalties for wrong side driving, which is non-compoundable. In such cases, the violator needs to visit court.

Another major dilution is to exempt pillion riders from wearing helmets. "We have taken a moderate stand in this regard as middle class families including wife and children travel on two-wheelers," said Rupani.

The reduction in fines by the Gujarat government is being seen as a balancing act in the wake of widespread protests, especially in Rupani's home turf, Rajkot, which has witnessed demonstrations against hefty fines.

The amended MVA provides for Rs 1,000-fine for driving without wearing helmet or seat belt, which Gujarat has reduced to Rs 500.

Obstructing a fire vehicle or ambulance attracts a heavy fine of Rs 10,000 in the Central act. The state government has reduced this to Rs 1,000.

Similarly, triple-riding fine has also been reduced from Rs 1,000 to Rs 100. TNN



Double fines for minors

Minors who drive vehicles without a licence will be fined Rs 3,000 under the new rules. In addition, the parent of the offender will also be fined Rs 3,000. "If the offender is a minor, the fine will be doubled and this is being implemented as a deterrent against minors driving on roads," said an official.

DEFINING SPEEDING

Maximum speed for vehicles	Car		Two-wheeler	
	Highway	Expressway	<100 CC	>100 CC
National and state highways with dividers	120	80	80	60
State highways without dividers	100	80	70	60
In municipal limits	80	70	60	50
Main district road	70	60	60	50
Other district road	65	60	60	50
Village road	60	50	50	40

