BS-VI Fuel Norms

Why in news?

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Union government announced that BS-VI fuel will be available in Delhi by April 2018.

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What is BS-VI emission norms?

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- Bharat stage emission standards (BSES) are emission standards instituted by the Government of India.
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- It is to regulate the output of air pollutants from internal combustion engines and Spark-ignition engines equipment, including motor vehicles.
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- The standards and the timeline for implementation are set by the Central Pollution Control Board under the Ministry of Environment & Forests and climate change.
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- All new vehicles manufactured after the implementation of BS norms have to be compliant with the regulations.
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- In 2016, the Indian government announced that the country would skip the BS-V norms altogether and adopt BS-VI norms by 2020.
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- By moving to BS-VI, the country will be using the highest specifications of fuel standard available in the world right now.
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What are the implications of this move?

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- Taking into account the serious pollution levels in Delhi and adjoining areas,

Petroleum Ministry decided for preponed BS-VI grade auto fuels in NCT of Delhi.
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- Bharat Stage VI (BS-VI) fuel will now be available with effect from 1 April 2018 in Delhi.
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- Union government is also examining the possibility of introducing BS-VI fuel across the national capital region by 1 April 2019.
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- This measure is expected to help mitigate the problem of air pollution in NCT of Delhi and surrounding areas.
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- The move is also in line with India's commitment under the Paris Climate Change Agreement to reduce its vehicular emission as part of the effort to cut emission intensity of the gross domestic product.
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- The government statement does not mention any plans on seeking automakers to sell only BS-VI vehicles in the city.
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Why this move is significant?

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- This new fuel norms is expected to reduce the PM 2.5, which are tiny particles in the air that reduce visibility and cause the air to appear hazy when levels are elevated.
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- The levels of poisonous, highly reactive gases that form when fuel is burned at high temperatures such as NOx, or oxides of nitrogen, are also expected to reduce.
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- The early introduction of BS-VI fuel gives confidence to the auto industry in migrating to manufacturing only BS-VI compliant vehicles on a pan-India basis.
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What are the practical challenges with BS-VI fuels?

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- The BS-IV norms were announced in April 2010 but it took nearly six years from then for the entire country to make the switch to these standards.
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- If the BS-VI fuel had to be available across the country by April 2020, as was already targeted, then oil companies had better increase supplies gradually because an overnight ramp-up might not be feasible.
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- Different automobile companies will have to source BS-VI fuel for testing new vehicles, from different refineries which are ready to produce higher-grade oil.
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Way forward

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- The National Capital Region has always received priority in introduction of new grades of fuel including low-lead, no-lead and BS-IV grade fuels.
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- With cleaner fuel, emission control systems in the existing fleet will also perform more optimally to control emissions.
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- It’s tough to say how much difference it would make, but overall there will be reduction in emissions.
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Source: Live Mint, Financial Express

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