Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2017

What are the key provisions?

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- **License** - The Bill seeks to take the license issuing process online.
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- Tests for driving licences will be automated, and learner’s licences will be issued online.
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- Aadhaar will be mandatory for getting a driving licence and vehicle registration.
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- The time limit for renewal of driving licence is increased from one month to one year before and after the expiry date.
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- **Compensation** - Government will provide a compensation of Rs 2 lakh or more to the victim's family for deaths in hit-and-run cases (currently - Rs 25,000)
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- The time limit would be 6 months for application of compensation to the Claims Tribunal with regard to road accidents.
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- **Fund** - A Motor Vehicle Accident Fund is proposed to be created.
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- It will provide compulsory insurance cover to all road users in India for certain types of accidents.
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- **Violation** - In traffic violations by juveniles, the guardians or owner of the vehicle would be held responsible.
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- It proposes three-year jail for parents of minors drivers causing fatal accidents
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- However, they could prove the offence was committed without their knowledge or they tried to prevent it.
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- The registration of the motor vehicle in question will be cancelled.
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- The juvenile will be tried under the Juvenile Justice Act.
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- **Penalties** - The penalties for violations have been increased substantially from the present amounts.
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- E.g. Drunk driving - from Rs 2,000 to Rs 10,000, rash driving from Rs 1,000 to Rs 5,000, driving without a licence - from Rs 500 to Rs 5,000
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- **Good Samaritans** - People coming forward to help accident victims will be protected from civil or criminal liability.
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- It will also be optional for them to disclose their identity to the police or medical personnel.
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- **Accountability** - Contractors, consultants and civic agencies will be accountable for faulty design, construction or poor maintenance of roads leading to accidents.
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- The government can recall vehicles whose components or engine do not meet the required standards.
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- Manufacturers can be fined up to Rs 500 crore in case of sub-standard components or engine.
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- It will be mandatory to alter vehicles to make them suitable for specially-abled people.
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- **Aggregators** - The Bill defines taxi aggregators as “a digital intermediary or market place for a passenger to connect with a driver for the purpose of transportation.” E.g. Uber, Ola
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- The 2016 Bill required State governments to issue licences to aggregators as per guidelines issued by the Central Government.
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- The 2017 Bill made it optional for State governments to follow central guidelines.
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- Aggregators, however, now have to be compliant with the Information Technology Act, 2000.
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- **Insurance** - The Bill removes the cap on liability for third-party insurance.
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- The 2016 Bill had capped the maximum liability at Rs 10 lakh in case of death and Rs 5 lakh in case of grievous injury.

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- Third-party offers coverage against claims of damages and losses incurred by a driver who is not the insured.
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Source: Economic Times, The Hindu

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