

TRAFFIC CHALLAN BUT THE NUMBERS DON'T ADD UP

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By Ahna Prakash

Data says Karnataka recorded only 36,159 e-challans and Rs 39 lakh in revenue from Sep 2019 to Feb 2023

From September 1, 2019 to February 28, 2023, Karnataka recorded 36,159 e-challan notices and a total revenue of just Rs 39 lakh. This data has come as a shock to city traffic police because as per the numbers, Karnataka has recorded the least number of e-challan notices as compared to other big states in the country.

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The numbers are in stark contrast to the statistics of Rs 120 crore collected in traffic fines in February 2023 in Bengaluru.

The reply was submitted to Lok Sabha by ministry of road, transport and highways to answer the query related to implementation of the new traffic rules under the Motor Vehicles (amendment) Act, 2019.

The state has collected a revenue of Rs 39,06,829 which is far less than the revenue collected by other states like Maharashtra, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, which collected, Rs 6,03,79,46,427, Rs 3,42,52,18,628 and Rs 3,89,40,48,090 respectively.

However, experts said that there was discrepancy in data as in the first two months of 2023, the traffic police have registered more than 12 lakh cases of traffic violations under the Motor Vehicle Act.

MA Saleem, additional director general and special commissioner of police (traffic), told BM that the data was not correct.

“The data is not accurate because in the first two months itself we have collected Rs 150 crore and maximum are from AI cameras and technology. Also, from the past four months that I have been working, the department has not submitted any data regarding e-challan,” he said.

Sanjeev Dyamannavar, transport expert, says, “If you compare the data with the number of vehicles in the state, it shows that the data provided to the Parliament is misleading. According to news reports, Bengaluru alone has more than 1 crore vehicle population as of 2022, so how come the data shows that only 36,000 challan notices were issued? The authorities should take action whoever compiled the data and gave it to the Parliament because this creates a wrong image of the state. Karnataka and especially Bengaluru is the IT hub of India where people take immense pride in use of technology in everyday life, this data however shows that we are lagging far behind than other states when it comes to using technology in regulating traffic.”

Mobility expert from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Prof Ashish Verma, also says that the data presented is not accurate and there is also a need to lessen human intervention in recording traffic violations.

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“The enforcement using technology should be credible 24 hours and 365 days. We need to use AI and technology to avoid human intervention because when there is human intervention, there is a chance of error and corruption. We don't have to compare different states with Karnataka because I believe that enough technology to detect cases is not being used in any state along with Karnataka. We have yet not reached a saturation level when it comes to using technology because there are so many new systems that can be introduced like speed guns or a new system to detect drink and driving cases,” he said.

Additional commissioner (enforcement) of Transport Department C Mallikarjuna says that in a month, the department will also be responsible for e-challan enforcement.

“As of now e-challan cases are not being handled by the transport department but the e-challan system will be introduced to the transport department in a few days, hopefully in the next month,” he said.

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