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India to adopt mandatory fuel economy standards

India will introduce mileage standards for all vehicle classes within the next two years, according to the Times of India. After a voluntary agreement with the automotive industry failed, the government now hopes to improve fuel efficiency by 50% by 2030 with mandatory measures.

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The Indian government is currently drafting fuel efficiency standards for all types of vehicles, including cars, trucks and buses. According to government projections, the country could save up to \$36 billion if fuel efficiency is improved by 50% by 2030 in all sectors. A committee of experts is now being set up by the Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) to set target values.

"We now have the legal mandate to bring standards and they will be put in place in less than two years. We want to move fast on this and want the industry to participate constructively in the process," Sanjeev Capoor, PCRA, said early October.

The government decided to introduce mandatory standards to close the gap with developed, such as the U.S., Japan or the EU. Following the example of China that recently announced stringent standards, India now targets progressive limits. These are expected to accelerate the uptake of new automotive technologies, as well as the drop of outdated and inefficient systems being phased out in richer countries.

Voluntary approach not working

In 2002, the so-called "Mashelkar Committee" required the car industry to comply with voluntary fuel efficiency standards. Up to now, carmakers have refused to commit to this voluntary scheme. On the contrary, they have failed to provide consumers with clear fuel efficiency data on each model sold, using instead rather confusing figures asterisked with "under test conditions". The introduction of mandatory minimum limits with penalties for manufacturers not achieving the target values, may soon put an end to this.

Background

With a more than 100% growth in passenger cars sales over the last five years, India is one of the world's fastest-growing automotive market. The country is one of the top 10 oil-consuming nations globally, using almost half of its oil for the transport sector.

More information:

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