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Market Watch

24,000 Old autos to go off-road from this April

BY ET BUREAU | JAN 08, 2018, 10.37 AM IST

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BENGALURU: Come April, about 24,000 auto-rickshaws with two stroke engines will lose their permits to run in Bengaluru. In an effort to curb noise and air pollution, the [Transport Department](#) has started offering a [subsidy](#) of Rs 30,000 each to those who scrap their two-stroke vehicles and move over to newer fourstroke LPG auto-rickshaws.

Chief minister [Siddaramaiah](#), in his previous budget, announced a ban on two-stroke auto-rickshaws from April 1, 2018 and had allocated Rs 30 crore as subsidy. The proposal does not apply to other cities in Karnataka. A similar exercise has already been carried out in cities including New Delhi, Kolkata and Pune.

“Earlier, there were around 35,000 [autos](#) with two-stroke engines in the city. The number has come down to 22,000-24,000 as several owners have scrapped their old vehicles and bought new ones ever since a subsidy of Rs 15,000 was in place since 2011,” a transport official said.

Transport commissioner B Dayananda said the department has permitted three firms to set up scrapping centres in Bengaluru with a set of guidelines. “The vehicle owners will have to scrap their vehicles in these centres to avail the subsidy. Once the deadline is up, we will start seizing the old vehicles,” he said.

The department, he said, has frozen the registration of new auto-rickshaws after the number of permits issued touched 1.25 lakh a couple of years ago. “We will issue Aadhar-based and tamper-proof permits to autorickshaw owners through a special drive from next week to weed out fake permits,” he said.

M Manjunath, president of Adarsha Auto & Taxi Drivers’ Union, was unhappy with the late payment of subsidy. “The department is not providing subsidy on time and auto-rickshaw owners end up earning nothing for several months until they buy new vehicles. We have also written to the department asking it to increase the subsidy to Rs 50,000 as an auto-rickshaw costs not less than Rs 1.6 lakh,” he said.

Cedrick Tandong, CEO of Three Wheels United, a nonprofit, said the group was talking to several auto-rickshaw drivers to convert their vehicles into electric-run autos. “The owners will have to scrap the entire two stroke auto or can convert it with an electric engine with the help of government subsidy. We have been educating over 10,000 autorickshaw drivers in the past eight years,” he said. The NGO works to improve the quality of life of auto-rickshaw drivers by helping them to acquire environment-friendly vehicles.



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