New PUC rules: relief for BS-VI vehicles, tighter checks for older ones



Original symbolic illustration: pcsmantra.com

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What changed -

The Centre has revised how long a Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificate stays valid: the notification is dated 13 November 2026 (G.S.R. 991(E), the Central Motor Vehicles (Sixteenth Amendment) Rules 2026), and the rules are in effect from 19 November 2026. Validity now depends on the vehicle's emission standard, its age, and whether it is a non-transport vehicle (car, motorcycle, scooter) or a transport vehicle.

New validity periods -

- BS-VI non-transport vehicles up to 6 years old: 3 years (was 1)
- BS-VI transport vehicles up to 6 years old: 2 years (was 1)
- BS-VI vehicles aged 6-10 years (both kinds): 1 year (unchanged)
- BS-VI vehicles older than 10 years: 6 months
- BS-IV vehicles: 6 months (was 1 year)
- BS-I, BS-II, BS-III vehicles: 3 months (was 6 months)

How it applies -

- Applies from a vehicle's first renewal after the rules came into force; current certificates are unaffected. The notification is dated 13 November 2026 (G.S.R. 991(E), the sixteenth amendment to the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, amending Rule 115(7)); the rules are in effect from 19 November 2026
- A certificate renewed within 10 days before expiry runs from the old expiry date; one renewed after lapse runs from the renewal date

Proposed BRO exemption -

A separate Gazette notification proposes exempting Border Roads Organisation (BRO) construction equipment operating in areas above 1,700 metres from CEV Stage-V emission limits.

Expert views -

Experts say new intervals cut emissions only with better maintenance, and note that the current PUC test does not measure particulate matter (PM) or nitrogen oxides (NOx), which matter for public health.

Prelims practice question

Consider the following statements:

Statement 1: Under the new rules, BS-VI non-transport vehicles up to 6 years old will get a PUC certificate valid for 3 years

Statement 2: BS-IV vehicles will now need PUC renewal every six months instead of every year

Statement 3: The new rules immediately cancel currently valid PUC certificates

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer and explanation

Correct answer: (a)

Statement 1 is correct: the period rose from 1 year to 3 years for BS-VI cars, motorcycles and scooters up to 6 years old.

Statement 2 is correct: BS-IV validity fell from 1 year to 6 months.

Statement 3 is incorrect: existing certificates are unaffected; the new periods apply from the next renewal.

FAQ

Q: What is a PUC certificate? A: A Pollution Under Control certificate, showing a vehicle's emissions are within norms.

Q: From when do the new rules apply? A: The notification is dated 13 November 2026; the rules are in effect from 19 November 2026. For your vehicle, the new period applies from the first renewal after that.

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Sources:

- https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/government-extends-bs-vi-vehicles-puc-validity-cuts-for-bsiv-101795135526671.html
- https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/govt-revises-puc-certificate-validity-extends-renewal-intervals-for-newer-bs-vi-vehicles/article71719683.ece
- https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/centre-revises-puc-validity-of-up-to-3-years-for-bs-vi-passenger-vehicles/article71719526.ece

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