

Bhopal Bans E-Rickshaws for School Transport Amid Safety Concerns



The Bhopal district administration has implemented a strict ban on the use of e-rickshaws for transporting schoolchildren within the capital city, effective Monday, July 21, 2025. This decisive action, driven by mounting safety concerns, impacts numerous schools and families who have relied on e-rickshaws for student commutes. District Collector Kaushalendra Vikram Singh emphasized that the primary motivation behind this prohibition is the paramount importance of ensuring the safety of young students.

The decision stems from a unanimous agreement during a meeting of the District Road Safety Committee, which included input from traffic police, transport experts, and other stakeholders. Officials cited several inherent risks associated with using e-rickshaws for school transportation. Being lightweight, three-wheeled vehicles, e-rickshaws are prone to accidents and can easily become unstable, particularly on waterlogged roads, in potholes, or in muddy conditions during monsoon seasons, frequently leading to toppling incidents. Furthermore, the open design of these vehicles exposes children to the elements and increases their vulnerability in the event of a collision.

District Collector Singh issued strict directives to school authorities, instructing them to rigorously enforce the ban and prevent e-rickshaws from transporting students to their premises. Schools found in violation of this order will face punitive action. Authorities have also indicated that e-rickshaw operators and parents will be counseled to make alternative arrangements for school transportation before enforcement begins in full swing. This period of advisement is intended to give families and schools time to adjust to the new regulations.

The ban also addresses broader traffic management issues within Bhopal. During a recent high-level meeting chaired by Member of Parliament Alok Sharma, which included senior officials from the police, district administration, and municipal corporation, the use of e-rickshaws as school vans was deemed unsafe. While there haven't been widespread reports of accidents involving schoolchildren in e-rickshaws specifically in Bhopal, concerns about their instability, potential for overloading, and instances of untrained or underage drivers operating them at high speeds have been a recurring theme. There are approximately 12,500 registered e-rickshaws operating in Bhopal, and while many are not formally affiliated with schools, a significant number of parents utilize them for daily commutes.

This move by the Bhopal administration shows a growing focus on child safety in public transportation across Indian cities. The enforcement of this ban will necessitate a shift in transport arrangements for many families, but it shows the authorities' commitment to prioritizing the well-being of schoolchildren over convenience or cost.