

The Great Indian Challan Crisis

₹12000 cr later, still no control



Route to the Truth

1. Why do we need challans?	3
2. Indian overview	4
3. Truth from behind the wheel	6
4. Major traffic offenses in India	9
6. The mindset behind traffic violations	11
7. Road safety	12
8. The way forward	13
9. A reflection of India's driving behaviour	16



With insights from



TEAM-BHP.COM

REDLINING THE INDIAN AUTOMOTIVE SCENE

&

Crashfree India



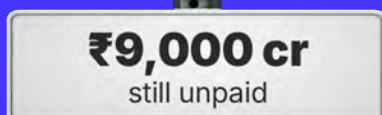
Why do we even need challans?

In a perfect world, we wouldn't.

But in India, where road culture is shaped by chaos, urgency and low accountability, they become essential.

Challans are not just fines. They are a systemic tool, one of the few levers we have to enforce discipline at scale. They exist because the consequences of careless driving does not end with the person behind the wheel. Every violation carries the potential to harm someone else.

Until self-regulation becomes the norm, challans are how the system holds the line.



Indian overview

92.14%

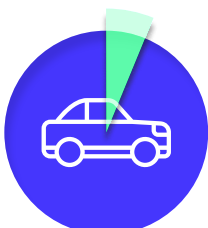
Non-Car Owners

7.86%

Car Owners

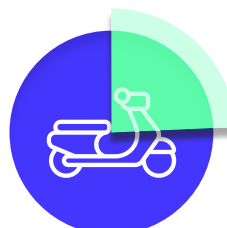


Out of **140 cr people** only **11 cr people** own a car



8 cr

four-wheelers



35 cr

two-wheelers

Indian overview

In 2024, a total of **8 cr** challans were issued.



Almost every second vehicle on the road has been fined at least once.

Fines collected in India **exceed the GDP** of many small nations.



Yet non-payment remains a significant issue.

Regulations mean little if the cost of breaking them is low or avoidable. Without timely enforcement, even the best rules fail to change behaviour.

Truth from behind the wheel

To understand how Indian drivers think about challans and road safety, we conducted a survey of 1000 people. The results expose an undeniable pattern, rules are followed only when necessary, not because of a safety-first mindset.

A. Who adjusts their driving based on law enforcement?

43.9%

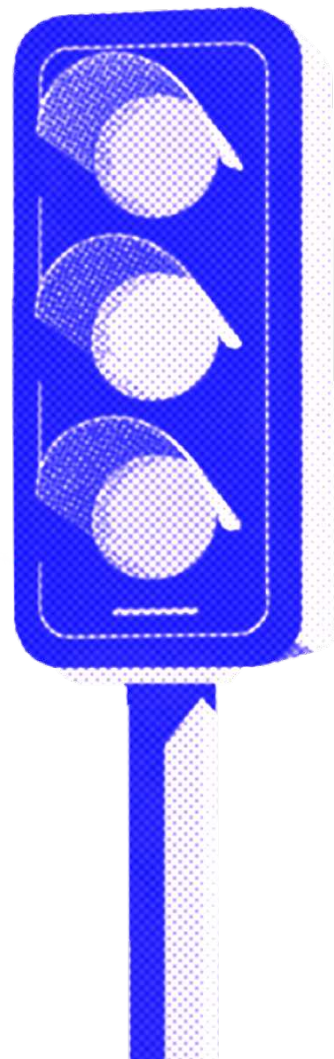
claim they follow traffic rules regardless of police presence.

31.2%

check for police occasionally before adjusting their driving.

17.6%

actively monitor their surroundings and adjust to avoid fines.



This suggests that many drivers view road rules as optional unless enforcement is visible.

Truth from behind the wheel

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B. How do people react to seeing a traffic police officer?

51.3%

check their speed and ensure they are following rules.

34.6%

slow down instinctively, even when not breaking rules.

12.9%

either adjust their driving or take a detour to avoid getting caught.



These numbers show that compliance is often fear-driven, rather than habit-driven.

Truth from behind the wheel

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C. The impact of surveillance on driving behaviour

47%

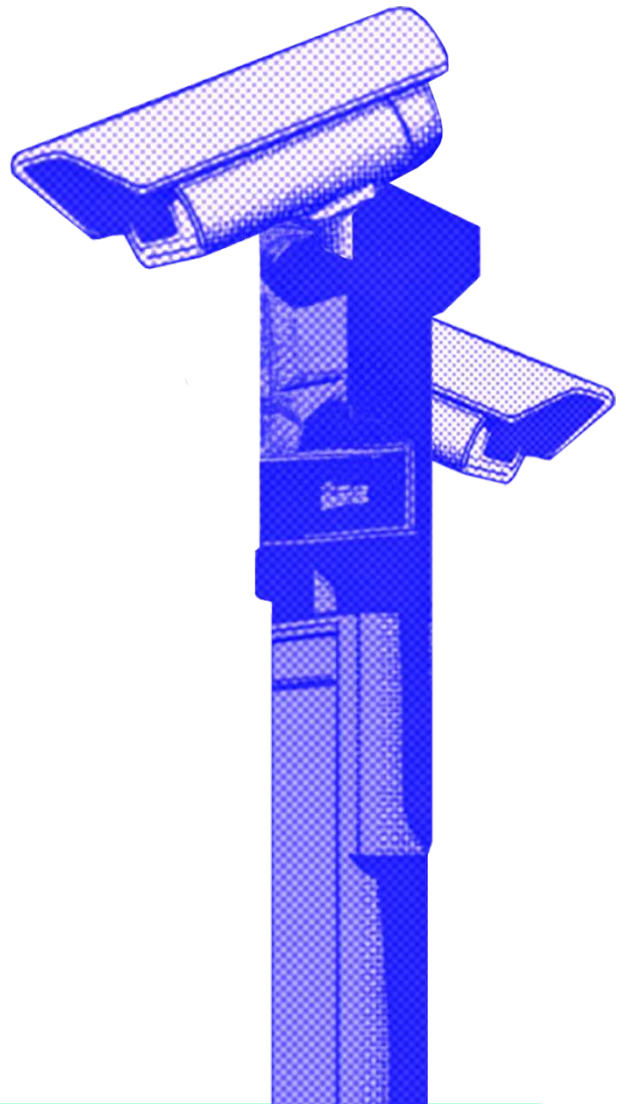
claim they drive the same way regardless of CCTV cameras.

36.8%

admit they slow down only when they spot a camera.

15.3%

only adjust for speed cameras, ignoring others.

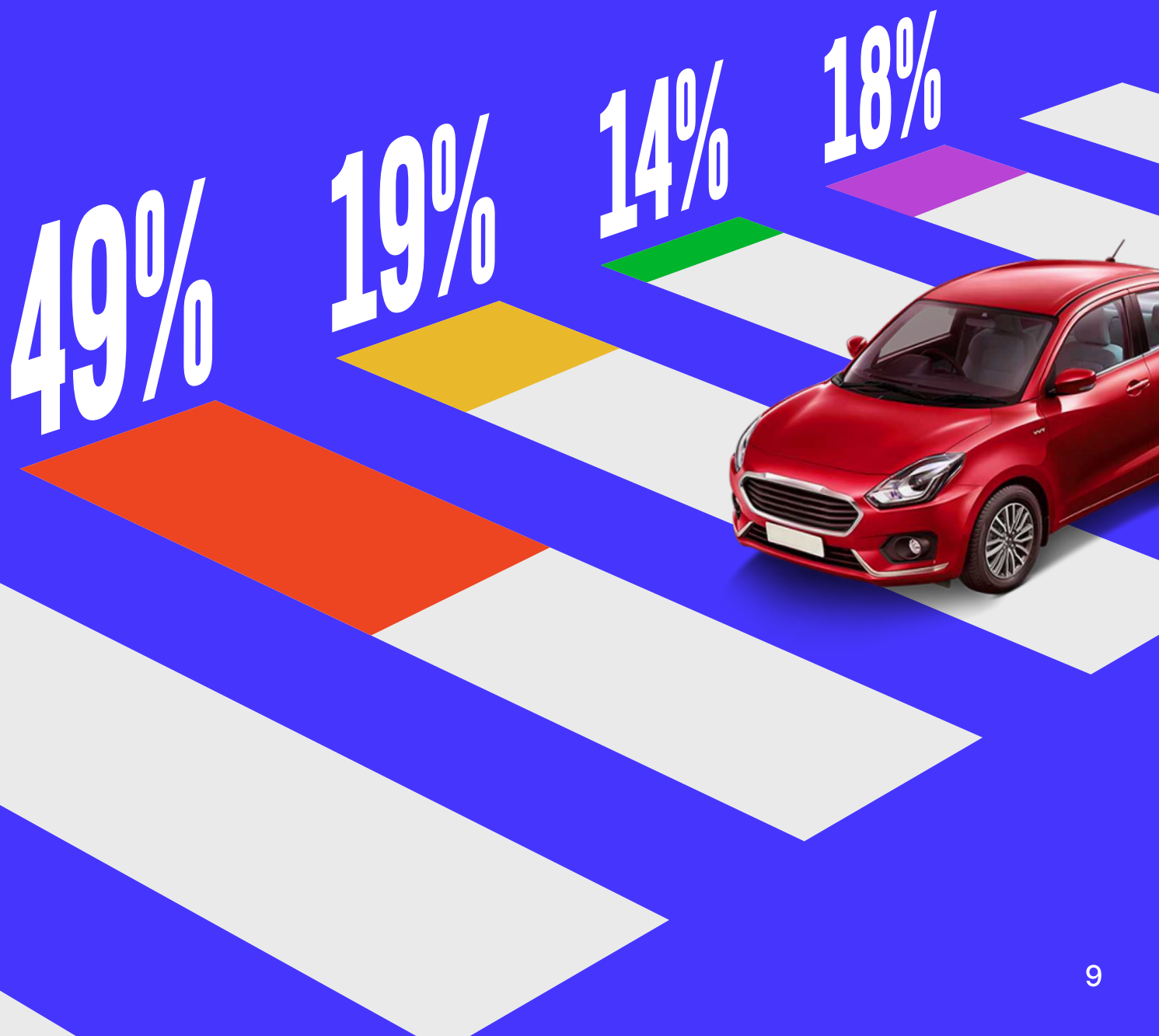


This selective rule-following indicates that technology alone cannot change behaviour unless penalties are severe enough to create fear.

Major traffic offenses in India

Data from official sources and surveys also revealed the most frequent violations

-  Over-speeding
-  Helmet/seatbelt non-compliance
-  Obstructive parking
-  Signal jumping & wrong-side driving

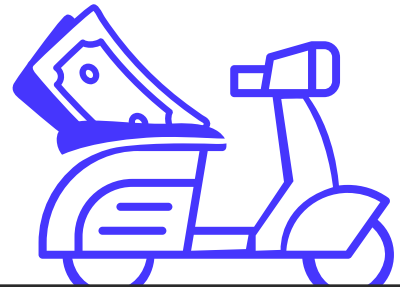


Did you know?

A truck owner from Haryana was fined more than **₹2 lakhs** for **over-speeding**.



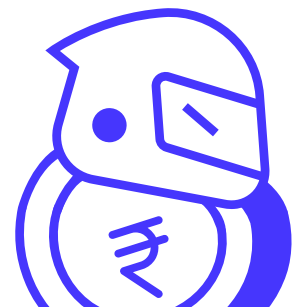
Two wheeler in Bengaluru paid **₹3 lakhs** in challan for **500 violations**.



Gurgram issues approx. **4500 challans** daily.



Noida issued over **₹3 lakh** in challans in a single month solely for **helmet violations**.



Why do people reoffend?

The survey revealed three key psychological reasons behind repeated traffic violations:

1. Low Perceived Consequences

Many drivers believe that fines are minor inconveniences rather than deterrents.

2. Conditional Compliance

60.3% say they already follow rules, but **20.4%** admit they would take risks even if fines doubled.

3. Informal Loopholes

14.2% negotiate their way out of a challan, proving that corruption and informal settlements remain prevalent.

Does India still pay in chai-paani ?

38.5%

admit they have paid a bribe once or twice.

15.9%

say they do it often.

29.2%

claim to always pay fines the right way.



The bystander mindset

Where are we going wrong?

India records over 1.5 lakh road fatalities annually. But who should we blame?

40%

Indians do not take traffic rules seriously.



This data reveals a deeper cultural issue: **people admit they adjust rules based on the situation**, not because they believe in following them.

Despite government encouraging citizens to, only **a fraction of them have ever reported a traffic violation**, and though **many wanted to**, they never acted. This bystander mindset feeds a loop of impunity. When violations go unreported and unpunished, they multiply.

Overall challans

55%

Challan violations are by four-wheelers



45%

Challan violations are by two-wheelers



Until we shift from compliance out of fear to discipline out of belief, the numbers will keep climbing. Enforcement can only go so far.

The way forward

Smarter solutions for an over-smart population

1. Stronger penalties & enforcement

With pending fines amounting to ₹9,000 cr, it's imperative to implement measures that ensure timely payment. Non-payment of traffic fines can lead to severe consequences on



Driving license suspension

Failing to clear e-challans within 90 days may result in the suspension of the driving license (DL) or registration certificate (RC) until the payment is made.



Increased insurance premiums

Drivers with at least two pending challans from the previous financial year may face higher vehicle insurance premiums.



Legal actions

Continued non-payment can lead to court summons, and persistent defaulters risk having their licenses confiscated for a minimum of three months.

Implementing these measures will deter habitual offenders and emphasize the seriousness of traffic violations.

2. More tech-driven enforcement

Leveraging technology can enhance monitoring and compliance:



AI-based real-time monitoring:

Utilizing speed cameras, CCTV surveillance, and automatic number plate recognition systems can detect violations more efficiently.



Instant penalty systems:

Automated systems can issue e-challans immediately upon detecting infractions, reducing reliance on manual policing and minimizing errors. These technological interventions can lead to more consistent enforcement and prompt penalty issuance.

3. Public awareness with accountability

Getting citizens to be involved can play a crucial role:



Reporting violations:

Creating accessible platforms for the public to report traffic violations can aid enforcement agencies and deter potential offenders.



Understanding consequences:

Publicizing the repercussions of non-payment, such as license suspension and increased insurance costs, can motivate timely fine settlements.

Building a culture where traffic rules are respected and upheld by all requires collective effort and awareness.

4. Changing driver behaviour

Long-term compliance stems from ingrained responsible driving habits:



Educational initiatives:

Integrating road safety education into school curriculums can instill respect for traffic laws from a young age.



Mandatory refresher courses:

Requiring periodic driving courses for license renewals ensures drivers remain updated on traffic regulations and safe practices.



A reflection of India's driving behaviour



Challans are meant to discourage unsafe driving, but when **75% of the ₹12,000 cr** in fines issued in 2024 remain unpaid, it raises serious questions about how we perceive traffic laws. It reflects a gap not just in enforcement, but in public accountability. If penalties are not taken seriously, they lose their power to correct behaviour and that weakens the entire system meant to keep our roads safe.

At CARS24, we have helped process over ₹200 cr in fines digitally proving that when convenience meets awareness, compliance follows. But we don't want to process more challans, we want fewer of them to exist.



"Every traffic violation is a silent vote against civic order. If we want safer cities, we need a cultural shift from compliance out of fear to responsibility out of pride." - Gajendra Jangid, Co-Founder, CARS24



Source

CARS24 internal challan data and survey, government websites and media reports