

Essay on Rapid Increase in The Number of Motor Vehicles on The Road

Question: Many areas are suffering from increasingly large numbers of heavy goods vehicles on the roads. Comment on this and consider what you would do to solve the problems created.

Answer: As our country becomes more developed, we experience a rapid increase in the number of motor vehicles on the road. A great many of these vehicles are lorries, tankers and other heavy goods transporters. They are the main means of conveying goods from place to place, and they create some problems for other road users as well as the various traffic authorities.

In big towns and cities, the main hubs of commerce, lorries are aplenty. The problems they create are equally many. Firstly, these lorries usually have to stop to unload or load goods, and they do stop, often anywhere they like. Owing to their bulk, they interfere with traffic flow and as a result, cause a traffic jam. Sometimes they get booked for indiscriminate parking but they still carry on doing so, much to the displeasure of other road users. However, we cannot totally blame the lorry drivers for blocking traffic flow. They have to park somewhere, and the most convenient place is in front of the intended shop since then is no parking space allotted for them. One way out of his problem is to provide ample parking spaces for the lorries. In this way, the lorry drivers will then have no excuse for simply stopping their lorries in the middle of the road and thus impeding traffic flow.

Another possible solution to his over-congestion is to limit the number of heavy vehicles entering certain busy areas over a certain time every day. Obviously, this will infuriate a lot of lorry operators in the beginning but I believe that traffic flow will be

improved as a result and the lorries can enter and leave a busy area in less time. It is senseless to have all the lorries trying to enter all at one time, as is done now. All they do is to clutter up the roads and hold up traffic.

Then comes the problem of discipline. By discipline I mean the behavior of the lorry operators. The incidences of overloading, faulty vehicles and careless driving among the lorry operators are alarming. Drive on any busy road and you will see what I mean. There are lorries so overloaded that it takes very little to unbalance them. There are also lorries without signal lights or effective brakes. Together with their "go-to-hell" attitude, fatal accidents all too often remind us of this indiscipline.

What I think the authorities can do about this indiscipline is to be stricter on the lorry operators. Stringent tests and checks should be carried out as often as possible to keep them on their toes. They should be taught to be more responsible. Offenders should be fined heavily and if necessary, suspended for a period of time. "Hell-drivers" should be suspended indefinitely until they repent.

As regards the enforcement personnel who check these vehicles, the officers should be well-trained and efficient. This includes the qualities of tact and strong resistance to bribes. All too often lorry operators get away too easily through the almighty ringgit.

Finally, I would suggest that all drivers, regardless of what they drive, should undergo compulsory courses at regular intervals. These courses are not meant as fault-finding sessions but rather as opportunities for drivers to be reminded of basic road manners and also to be informed of new developments on the roads. I know the task is enormous but it is not insurmountable. The time spent on developing good driving habits coupled with up-to-date knowledge of

road conditions will certainly benefit everyone. We may see an end to this madness on the road yet.