

Car ownership has increased so rapidly over the past 30 years that many cities in the world are now 'one big traffic jam'.

How true do you think this statement is?

What measures can governments take to discourage people from using their cars?

In recent decades, more people have been buying vehicles due to their increasing affordability and the lack of adequate public transportation. This trend is largely responsible for the worsening traffic situation seen in many big cities today. In response, governments should impose limitations and taxes on vehicle ownership to mitigate the issue.

The rising prevalence of cars has contributed significantly to traffic congestion in cities. Firstly, vehicle ownership is often perceived as a status symbol and as cars have become more affordable in recent decades, more people are choosing to buy a car. For example, even in cities with convenient public transit, people often choose to use private transportation and this causes daily gridlocks, especially at rush hour. However, other cities have similar issues due to their underdeveloped public transit systems. Cities like Los Angeles and New Delhi are difficult to navigate using the bus and subway systems, making private vehicles essential, and traffic jams unavoidable.

To address this, governments should take action and intervene. The most obvious way that governments could alleviate this problem would be to impose a strict vehicle ownership tax. For example, Beijing and Shanghai imposed exorbitant fees for vehicle registration, which greatly reduced the traffic congestion in those cities. Moreover, the number of cars each household can have could be limited to only one in big cities. For instance, forcing families with multiple cars to be limited to only one car would directly reduce the number of vehicles on the roads and thus improve the overwhelming traffic congestion.

In conclusion, while inadequate public transportation has contributed to traffic congestion in some cities, the rapid increase in car ownership remains the primary cause of this problem. Therefore, governments should intervene through measures such as vehicle ownership taxes and restrictions on the number of cars each household can own.

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