

THE KERALA MOTOR VEHICLES TAXATION ACT, 1963

(Act 24 of 1963)

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ACT 24 OF 1963 *

THE KERALA MOTOR VEHICLES TAXATION
ACT, 1963

An Act to unify and amend the law relating to the levy of tax on motor vehicles in the State of Kerala.

Preamble.—WHEREAS it is expedient to unify and amend the laws relating to the levy of tax on motor vehicles in the State of Kerala;

BE it enacted in the Fourteenth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

1. *Short title, extent and commencement.*—(1) This Act may be called the Kerala Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1963.

(2) It extends to the whole of the State of Kerala.

(3) It shall come into force on such date as the Government may, by notification in the Gazette, appoint.

2. *Definitions.*—In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—

(a) 'fleet owner' means a person, an institution or the Government who, or which, is the registered owner of one hundred or more transport vehicles used or kept for use in the State,

(b) 'laden weight'

(i) in relation to a motor vehicle means, in case a permit is issued to the vehicle under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939 (Central Act 4 of 1939), the maximum laden weight specified in such permit, if no such permit is issued, the maximum laden weight specified in the registration certificate of the vehicle, and if such weight is not specified in such certificate, the maximum laden weight of the vehicle determined in such manner as the Registering Authority may deem fit;

(ii) in relation to a trailer means, in case a permit is issued to the vehicle to which the trailer is attached under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939 (Central Act 4 of 1939), the maximum laden weight specified in such permit in respect of the trailer, if no such permit is issued, the maximum laden weight specified in respect of the trailer in the registration certificate of the vehicle to which the trailer is attached, and if such weight is not specified in such certificate, the maximum laden weight of the trailer determined in such manner as the Registering Authority may deem fit;

(c) 'local authority' includes a cantonment authority within the meaning of the Cantonments Act, 1924 (Central Act 11 of 1924);

* Received the assent of the President on 11th April 1963 and published in the Gazette Extraordinary dated 15th April, 1963.

(d) 'prescribed' means prescribed by rules made under this Act;

(e) 'registered owner' means the person in whose name a motor vehicle is registered or deemed to be registered under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939 (Central Act 4 of 1939),

(f) 'State' means the State of Kerala;

(g) 'Schedule' means a schedule appended to this Act,

(h) 'tax' means the motor vehicle tax imposed under this Act;

(i) 'taxation officer' means, in the case of a fleet owner, the Regional Transport Officer, and in other cases such other officer as may be appointed by the Government to exercise the powers and to perform the functions of a taxation officer under this Act,

(j) 'tax licence' means a licence issued under sub-section (3) of section 4 and includes a duplicate tax licence issued in place of the original licence,

(k) 'year' means the financial year; 'half year' means the first six months or second six months of such year; and 'quarter' means the first three months or the second three months of such 'half year';

(l) words and expressions used but not defined in this Act but defined in the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939 (Central Act 4 of 1939), shall have the meaning respectively assigned to them in that Act.

3. *Levy of tax.*—(1) Subject to the other provisions of this Act, on and from the date appointed under sub-section (3) of section 1, a tax at the rates fixed by the Government by notification in the Gazette, not exceeding the maximum rates specified in the First Schedule, shall be levied on all motor vehicles used or kept for use in the State:

Provided that no tax shall be levied on a motor vehicle kept by a dealer in, or a manufacturer of, such vehicle for the purposes of trade and used under the authorisation of a trade certificate granted by the registering authority.

(2) The registered owner of, or any person having possession or control of, a motor vehicle, of which the certificate of registration is current, shall, for the purposes of this Act, be deemed to use or keep such vehicle for use in the State except during any period for which the Regional Transport Officer has certified in the prescribed manner that the motor vehicle has not been used or kept for use.

(3) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), the Government may, by notification in the Gazette, from time to time direct that a temporary licence for a period not exceeding thirty days at a time may be issued in respect of any class of motor vehicles on payment of such tax (not exceeding the maximum specified in Schedule II) and subject to such conditions as may be specified in such notification.

(4) In the case of motor vehicles in respect of which any reciprocal arrangement relating to taxation has been entered into between the Government of Kerala and any other State Government, the levy of tax shall notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, be in

accordance with the terms and conditions of such reciprocal arrangement:

Provided that the tax leviable under any such arrangement shall not exceed the tax leviable under the First Schedule or the Second Schedule, as the case may be:

Provided further that the terms and conditions of every such reciprocal arrangement shall be published in the Gazette and a copy thereof shall be placed before the Legislative Assembly.

4. *Payment of tax and issue of licence.*—(1) The tax levied in pursuance of sub-section (1) of section 3 shall be paid in advance, in such manner as may be prescribed, by the registered owner or person having possession or control of the motor vehicle, for a quarter, half year or year, at his choice, upon a quarterly, half yearly or annual licence to be taken out by him.

Explanation.—The tax for a half yearly licence shall not exceed twice, and the tax for an annual licence shall not exceed four times, the tax for a quarterly licence.

(2) In the case of half-yearly and annual licence such rebate in respect of the tax as may be prescribed shall be granted.

(3) When any person pays the amount of tax in respect of a motor vehicle used or kept for use in the State or produces a certificate from the Regional Transport Officer, on proof, that no tax is payable in respect of such vehicle, the Taxation Officer shall—

(a) grant to such person a licence in the prescribed form, and

(b) record that the tax has been paid for the specified period or that no tax is payable in respect of that vehicle, as the case may be, in the certificate of registration granted in respect of the vehicle under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939, or in the case of vehicles not registered under that Act, in a certificate in such form as may be prescribed by the Government.

(4) No motor vehicle liable to tax under section 3 shall be kept for use in the State, unless the registered owner, or the person having possession or control of such vehicle has obtained a tax licence under sub-section (3) in respect of that vehicle.

(5) No motor vehicle liable to tax under section 3 shall be used in the State unless a valid tax licence obtained under sub-section (3) is displayed on the vehicle in the prescribed manner.

(6) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), no person shall be liable to tax during any period on account of any taxable motor vehicle, the tax due in respect of which for the same period has already been paid by some other person.

5. *Exemption from tax.*—(1) In the case of a motor vehicle not being intended to be used or kept for use during the first month or first and second months of a quarter, or the whole of a quarter, half year or year, as the case may be, the registered owner or person having

possession or control of such vehicle, shall give previous intimation in writing to the Regional Transport Officer in whose jurisdiction the motor vehicle is kept that such vehicle would not be used for such period and may at the same time surrender the certificate of registration and permit, if any, of the vehicle, and thereupon notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (2) of section 3, the registered owner or such other person shall not be deemed to have used or kept for use the vehicle for such period and no tax shall be payable in respect of such vehicle for such period.

(2) Nothing in sub-section (1) shall exempt a person from liability to pay tax in respect of such vehicle, if on verification it is found that the vehicle has been used during such period or any portion thereof.

6. *Refund of tax.*—Where the tax for any motor vehicle has been paid for any quarter, half-year or year and the vehicle has not been used or kept for use during the whole of that quarter, half-year or year or a continuous part thereof not being less than one month, a refund of the tax at such rates as may, from time to time, be notified by the Government, shall be payable subject to such conditions as may be specified in such notification.

7. *Payment of additional tax.*—When any motor vehicle in respect of which tax has been paid is altered or proposed to be used, in such a manner as to cause the vehicle to become a vehicle in respect of which a higher rate of tax is payable, the registered owner or person who is in possession or control of such vehicle shall pay an additional tax of a sum which is equal to the difference between the tax already paid and the tax which is payable in respect of such vehicle for the period for which the higher rate of tax is payable in consequence of its being altered or so proposed to be used and the licensing officer shall not grant a fresh tax licence in respect of such vehicle so altered or proposed to be so used until such amount of tax has been paid.

8. *Production of certificate of insurance.*—Every registered owner or person having possession or control of a motor vehicle shall, at the time of making payment of the tax, produce before the taxation officer a valid certificate of insurance in respect of the vehicle complying with the requirements of Chapter VII of the Travancore-Cochin Motor Vehicle Act, 1125 (Act X of 1125).

9. *Liability to payment of tax by persons succeeding to the ownership, possession or control of motor vehicles.*—(1) If the tax leviable in respect of any motor vehicle remains unpaid by any person liable for the payment thereof and such person before having paid the tax has transferred the ownership of such vehicle or has ceased to be in possession or control of such vehicle, the person to whom the ownership of the vehicle has been transferred or the person who has possession or control of such vehicle shall be liable to pay the said tax to the Taxation Officer.

(2) Nothing contained in this section shall be deemed to affect the liability to pay the said tax of the person who has transferred the ownership or has ceased to be in possession or control of such vehicles.

10. *Levy of tax, etc., in the case of fleet owner.*—In the case of a fleet owner, the provisions of sections 3, 4 and 6 shall, so far as may be, apply subject to the following modifications, namely:—

(a) In order to determine the amount of tax payable by a fleet owner in any year, before the commencement of such year, the fleet owner shall first make and deliver to the Regional Transport Officer concerned a preliminary declaration in the prescribed form stating the prescribed particulars in respect of the transport vehicles liable to tax under this Act kept by him on the last day of February of the year immediately preceding the year for which such declaration is made. Such declaration shall be accompanied by a certificate of final assessment of tax, if any, issued by the Regional Transport Officer concerned for such previous year, and such other documents as may be prescribed.

(b) On receipt of such preliminary declaration and as soon as may be after the commencement of the year, the Regional Transport Officer concerned shall, on the basis of such declaration, determine the amount of tax to be paid by such fleet owner provisionally and communicate the same to the fleet owner by issuing a certificate of provisional assessment of tax for the year in such form as may be prescribed.

(c) The amount of tax provisionally determined under clause (b) shall be paid by the fleet owner to the Regional Transport Officer within fifteen days from the date of receipt of the certificate of the provisional assessment by him.

(d) The fleet owner shall then fill up and sign a final declaration in the prescribed form stating the prescribed particulars in respect of the transport vehicles liable to tax under this Act kept by him in the current year and shall deliver within the prescribed time the final declaration so filled in and signed to the Regional Transport Officer concerned. Such declaration shall be accompanied by the certificate of provisional assessment of tax issued by the Regional Transport Officer concerned for the year and such other documents as may be prescribed.

(e) On receipt of such final declaration the Regional Transport Officer concerned shall verify the number of transport vehicles used or kept for use by the fleet owner during the current year, the passenger capacity in the case of stage carriages and contract carriages, the permit laden weight in the case of goods vehicles, the unladen weight in the case of other vehicles and such other particulars as may be deemed necessary and shall finally determine the amount of tax leviable at the rate fixed under section 3 on the transport vehicles of such fleet owner and communicate the same to the fleet owner by issuing a certificate of final assessment of tax for the year in such form as may be prescribed.

(f) When the amount of tax is finally determined under clause (e) taking into consideration the amount paid by the fleet owner under clause (c), the difference that may be due shall be paid by, or refunded to the fleet owner in such manner and within such time as may be prescribed:

Provided that the fleet owner shall be entitled to a proportionate reduction in the amount of tax finally leviable in respect of vehicles which are certified by the Regional Transport Officer concerned as not used for a period of one calendar month or more,

(g) Within thirty days of the transfer of ownership of any of his transport vehicles, the fleet owner shall report the transfer to the Regional Transport Officer concerned.

(h) The Regional Transport Officer concerned may, for the purposes of this section, require the fleet owner to produce before him any transport vehicle or any accounts, registers, records or other documents or to furnish any information or may examine the vehicles or the accounts, registers, records, or other documents and the fleet owner shall comply with any such requirement made of him.

11. *Power of an Officer of the Police or of the Motor Vehicles Department to stop a motor vehicle.*—(1) Any Police Officer in uniform or any officer of the Motor Vehicles Department not below such rank as may be prescribed by the Government in this behalf, may require the driver of any motor vehicle in any public place to stop such vehicle and cause it to remain stationary, so long as may reasonably be necessary for the purpose of satisfying himself that the amount of the tax due in accordance with the provisions of this Act in respect of such vehicle has been paid.

(2) Any person failing to stop a motor vehicle when required to do so by any such officer under sub-section (1) shall, on conviction, be punishable with the same penalty as provided in section 15.

12. *Penalty payable when tax not paid.*—When any registered owner or any person who has possession or control of any motor vehicle used or kept for use in the State is in default in making a payment of the tax, the Regional Transport Officer may direct that, in addition to the amount of arrears, a sum not exceeding such arrears in respect of such vehicle shall be recovered from him by way of penalty:

Provided that before giving any such direction the registered owner or person shall be given a reasonable opportunity of being heard.

13. *Tax recoverable as an arrear of land revenue.*—Any tax due under this Act shall be recoverable in the same manner as an arrear of land revenue. The Motor Vehicle in respect of which tax is due or its accessories may be distrained and sold in pursuance of this section whether or not such vehicle or accessories are in the possession or control of the person liable to pay the tax.

14. *Transport vehicle permit to be ineffective if tax not paid.*—Notwithstanding the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939 (Central Act 4 of 1939), if the tax due in respect of a transport vehicle is not paid within the prescribed period, the validity of the permit shall become ineffective from the date of expiry of the said period until such time as the tax is actually paid.

15. *Other penalties*—Whoever contravenes any of the provisions of this Act or any rule made thereunder shall, on conviction, if no other penalty is elsewhere provided in this Act or the rules for such a contravention, be punishable with fine which may extend to one hundred rupees and in the event of such person having been previously convicted of an offence under this Act or any rule made thereunder, with fine which may extend to two hundred rupees.

16. *Offences by companies.*—(1) Where an offence under this Act has been committed by a company, every person who at the time the offence was committed, was in charge of, and was responsible to the company for the conduct of the business of the company, as well as the company shall be deemed to be guilty of the offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly:

Provided that nothing contained in this sub-section shall render any such person liable to any punishment provided in this Act if he proves that the offence was committed without his knowledge or that he exercised all due diligence to prevent the commission of such offence.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), where an offence under this Act has been committed by a company and it is proved that the offence has been committed with the consent or connivance of or is attributable to any neglect on the part of, any director, manager, secretary or other officer of the company, such director, manager, secretary or other officer shall also be deemed to be guilty of that offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

Explanation.—For the purposes of this section,—

- (a) “company” means a body corporate, and includes a firm or other association of individuals; and
- (b) ‘director’ in relation to a firm means a partner in the firm.

17. *Trial of offences.*—No court inferior to that of a Magistrate of the Second Class shall try an offence punishable under this Act.

18. *Compensation to local authorities from the proceeds of tax collected.*—From the proceeds of the tax collected under this Act every year, there shall be paid to each local authority such compensation as may be fixed by the Government with due regard to the length of the roads maintained by such local authority and the volume of motor traffic making use of such roads. The annual compensation payable shall be fixed in advance for periods of five years on the recommendation of a Committee to be appointed by the Government from time to time. The decision of the Government in the matter shall be final.

19. *Protection for bona fide acts.*—No prosecution, suit or other proceedings shall lie against any person for anything in good faith, done or intended to be done, under this Act.

20. *Exemption for motor vehicles used for agricultural operations.*—Where the registered owner or the person having possession or control of a motor vehicle is an agriculturist and that motor vehicle has been designed for agricultural operations relating to food crops and is used solely for such operations in relation to his own land, then, that vehicle shall be exempt from the payment of the tax.

Explanation.—For the purposes of this section the expression “agricultural operations” includes,—

- (i) tilling, sowing, harvesting, crushing of any agricultural produce or any other similar operation carried out for the purpose of agriculture;

(ii) transport of manure, seeds, insecticides and other like articles required for work in the land from the market to the land, and

(iii) transport of any agricultural produce from the land to the place of storage or from the place of storage to the market.

21. *Reduction of tax in cases of certain motor vehicles.*—Where the registered owner of a motor vehicle used or kept for use in the State is a co-operative society registered or deemed to be registered under any law relating to co-operative societies for the time being in force, the tax payable in respect of that motor vehicle shall be one half of the rates specified in Schedule I, if the taxation officer is satisfied, after such enquiry as he deems fit, that,—

(i) the co-operative society is solely engaged in the business of transport of goods or passengers or both from one place to another in motor vehicles;

(ii) at least seventy-five per cent of the members of the co-operative society are its employees;

(iii) at least fifty per cent of the members of the co-operative society are not related to each other;

(iv) at least ninety per cent of the employees of the society are its members; and

(v) the motor vehicle is used or kept for use exclusively for the purpose of the co-operative society.

Explanation.—For the purposes of this section a member shall be deemed to be related to any other member if that member is the husband, wife, brother or sister or any lineal ascendant or descendant of that other member.

22. *Exemption from or reduction of tax.*—The Government may, if in its opinion, it is necessary in the public interest so to do, by notification in the Gazette, make an exemption, reduction in the rate or other modification in regard to the tax payable—

(i) by any person or class of persons; or

(ii) in respect of any motor vehicle or class of motor vehicles;

or

(iii) in respect of any motor vehicle or class of motor vehicles using a specified route.

23. *Appeals.*—Any person, who is aggrieved by any order of a Taxation Officer or Regional Transport Officer made under this Act, may within the prescribed time and in the prescribed manner, appeal to the District Collector.

24. *Power of Government to make rules.*—(1) The Government may, subject to the condition of previous publication, by notification in the Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power the Government may make rules for all or any of the following purposes, namely :—

(a) to prescribe the manner in which tax shall be paid and the documents to be produced for the issue of tax licence;

- (b) to prescribe the manner of certifying under sub-section (2) of section 3;
- (c) to prescribe the form of any tax licence, certificate or declaration, and the particulars to be stated therein;
- (d) to prescribe the conditions under which duplicate tax licence may be granted and the fee payable for such grant;
- (e) to regulate the manner in which refunds or deductions or exemptions may be claimed;
- (f) to prescribe the rank of officer who may exercise power under section 11;
- (g) to provide for the total or partial exemption from liability to payment of the tax of any motor vehicle brought into the State by any person visiting the State or making a temporary stay therein, the amount which shall be payable on account of such vehicle and the tax licence which any such vehicle shall carry;
- (h) the time within which and the manner in which an appeal may be made under section 23, the fees to be paid in respect of such appeal and the conduct and hearing of such appeal;
- (i) any other matter which may be prescribed.

(3) Any rule made under sub-section (1), may provide that a breach thereof shall be punishable with fine which may extend to fifty rupees.

(4) Every rule made under this Act shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before the Legislative Assembly while it is in session for a total period of fourteen days which may be comprised in one session or in two successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session in which it is so laid or the session immediately following, the Legislative Assembly make any modification in the rule or decide that the rule should not be issued, the rule shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be; so however that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule.

25. *Additional tax payable in certain cases.*—(1) Where before the commencement of this Act tax in respect of a motor vehicle for the quarter, half year or year commencing on the first day of April, 1963, has been paid at the rates in force at the time of payment, the registered owner or person having possession or control of such motor vehicle shall be liable to pay, in addition, an amount equal to the difference between—

- (i) the tax calculated at the rate fixed under this Act for the period beginning with the date of commencement of this Act and ending with the quarter, half year or year as the case may be, and
- (ii) the tax calculated at the rate in force immediately before the commencement of this Act for the same period.

(2) The amount payable under sub-section (1) shall be paid in such manner and within such time as may be prescribed.

26. *Repeal.*—The Madras Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1931 (Madras Act III of 1931) as in force in the Malabar District referred to in sub-section (2) of section 5 of the States Reorganisation Act, 1956 (Central Act 37 of 1956) and the provisions of the Travancore-Cochin Vehicles Taxation Act, 1950 (Act XIV of 1950) in so far as they relate to taxation and licensing of motor vehicles are hereby repealed:

Provided that such repeal shall not affect—

(a) the previous operation of the said enactments or anything duly done or suffered thereunder; or

(b) any right, privilege, obligation or liability acquired, accrued or incurred under the said enactments; or

(c) any penalty, forfeiture or punishment incurred in respect of any offence committed against the said enactments; or

(d) any investigation, legal proceeding or remedy in respect of such right, privilege, obligation, liability, penalty, forfeiture or punishment as aforesaid; and any such investigation, legal proceeding or remedy may be instituted, continued or enforced and any such penalty, forfeiture or punishment may be imposed as if this Act had not been passed:

Provided further that any licence issued under any of the repealed enactments shall continue to be valid for the period for which such licence or token has been issued as if it were a tax licence issued under this Act.

SCHEDULE I

[See Section 3 (1)]

Class of vehicles	Maximum quarterly tax	
	For vehicles fitted with pneumatic tyres Rs.	For other vehicles Rs.
1. Motor cycles (including Motor Scooters and Cycles with attachment for propelling the same by mechanical power):		
(a) Bicycles not exceeding 100 kg. in unladen weight	6·00	8·00
(b) Bicycles exceeding 100 kg. but not exceeding 200 kg. in unladen weight	9·00	12·00
(c) Bicycles exceeding 200 kg. in unladen weight	12·00	16·00
(d) Bicycles with side car or drawing a trailer	15·00	18·00
(e) Tricycles	15·00	18·00
2. Invalid carriages	7·50	10·00
3. Goods vehicles.		
(a) Motor cycle trucks not exceeding 300 kg. in laden weight	33·00	43·00
(b) Vehicles not exceeding 1,000 kg. in laden weight	67·00	100·00
(c) Vehicles exceeding 1,000 kg. but not exceeding 1,500 kg. in laden weight	133·00	200·00
(d) Vehicles exceeding 1,500 kg. but not exceeding 2,000 kg. in laden weight	160·00	240·00
(e) Vehicles exceeding 2,000 kg. but not exceeding 3,000 kg. in laden weight	210·00	315·00
(f) Vehicles exceeding 3,000 kg. but not exceeding 4,000 kg. in laden weight	270·00	405·00
(g) Vehicles exceeding 4,000 kg. but not exceeding 5,500 kg. in laden weight	325·00	525·00
(h) Vehicles exceeding 5,500 kg. but not exceeding 7,000 kg. in laden weight	425·00	675·00
(i) Vehicles exceeding 7,000 kg. but not exceeding 9,000 kg. in laden weight	525·00	825·00
(j) Vehicles exceeding 9,000 kg. but not exceeding 9,500 kg. in laden weight	575·00	900·00
(k) Vehicles exceeding 9,500 kg. but not exceeding 10,500 kg. in laden weight	625·00	975·00
(l) Vehicles exceeding 10,500 kg. in laden weight	725·00	1,125·00