

Standard Digital

Number of deaths on Kenyan roads goes up

By Antony Gitonga Updated Tuesday, October 20th 2015 at 00:00 GMT +3

The number of Kenyans who have lost their lives in road accidents in the last one year has increased, according to the latest figures from the National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA).

The authority said this year alone, a total of 2,357 Kenyans have died compared to 2,251 last year, an increase of 4.2 per cent.

NTSA Director General Francis Meja said the figures were worrying, adding that the authority was doing its best to see the numbers go down.

He said pedestrians contributed to the large number of fatalities, saying in Nairobi alone, 73 per cent of reported incidents involved them.

This came as the authority launched the second phase of speed governor validation and universal policing unit clinic programme in Naivasha yesterday.

Mr Meja said all public service vehicles would be checked for free ahead of the festive season in an exercise that will run to January next year.

"We have started early because we know that during the festive season, the number of fatalities goes up and after this, any vehicle that will flout the rules will have its licence cancelled," he said.

He also issued an alert over increase of fake public service documents that were being sold to unsuspecting drivers. Meja said the authority was keen to end the menace and urged all drivers to check the validity of their documents via a short message code that the authority has provided.

"NTSA has a clear formula on how a genuine PSV licence is issued and I call on all Saccos to adhere to this process as one way of eliminating the fake ones," he said.

He said NTSA has acquired new gadgets to check faulty speed governors and will be distribute them countrywide.

Addressing matatu drivers, conductors and owners when he toured Naivasha town, Meja also expressed concern over corruption on the roads.

New Traffic Commandant Jacinta Kinyua issued a tough warning to corrupt officers, saying their days were numbered. She called on drivers to report officers who engaged in corrupt activities, noting that they were denting the image of the police service.

"Even as you co-operate with us, you should know that the givers and the takers of bribes are criminals and should be in jail," she said.

Naivasha Matatu Owners Association Chairman Steven Mungai, said they had complied with the regulations set by the authority. "What we now want is a meeting with the officials as some of us do not know how the fake documents are ending up with drivers," he said.