

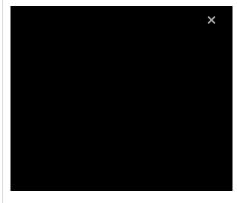




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# RTO to launch three-month road safety campaign

TNN | Oct 11, 2015, 09.36AM IST



KOLHA: The regional transport office (RTO) has decided to start a three-month road safety awareness campaign in Kolhapur, Sangli and Satara from November 1.

The first-of-its-kind initiative is aimed at creating awareness among youngsters. The RTO has already received support from the Shivaji University in this regard. The authorities are planning to reach out to at least one lakh vehicle owners with the help of colleges, National Cadet Corps (NCC) and National Service Scheme (NSS).

The university will provide a platform to the RTO to start the campaign in around 270 colleges spread in three districts where 27,000 students have enrolled this year. The authorities will come up with a team of communicators within the department to present the campaign before the students in an effective manner.

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"This is the first such exercise. We have been celebrating the road safety fortnight from January 1 to 15 since the last four years. However, we wanted to expand our reach beyond these 15 days. We approached the university with the concept and vice-chancellor Devanand Shinde extended valuable support. I think targeting young drivers is the best way to assure road safety," Laxman Darade, regional transport officer (Kolhapur), told TOI.

The RTO is preparing a 150-minute participatory programme for the students wherein the officers will deliver road safety message using multimedia tools. The office is mulling to reach out to the colleges in the city as well as taluka places.

"The road safety issue is not city specific. The increasing vehicular population across the districts indicates that rural areas urgently require awareness on road safety. The way of penalising errant drivers is often used. Now, we are adding a sustainable awareness campaign to ensure road safety," Darade said.

Both the RTO and the university have decided to stress on the need for driving skills among girls. In July, the university started a motor driving training school under the national skill set development programme. It has provided small cars to 42 colleges to start training schools. During the campaign, the RTO officials will visit these schools to ensure that maximum number of girls are taking part and learning driving effectively.

"We expect maximum people to learn driving. If we can tell students about the best driving skills, it will help reduce traffic rule violations and accidents," said Rameshchandra Kharade, assistant regional transport officer.





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In Kolhapur city, the traffic department has noticed several cases of signal jumping and zebra crossing violations despite imposing penalties on the drivers. In the last 10 months, the police have booked more than 1000 people, most of them bikers for jumping signals. The awareness campaign launched by city traffic department in June-July had seen decline in such cases.

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