

Road Safety consultation held in Guwahati



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Guwahati: Consumer Legal Protection Forum and Consumer VOICE, New Delhi is consumer protection organizations working to promote road safety. They organized a stakeholder workshop at hotel Aarian Atithya, Guwahati today. The main objective of the workshop was to strengthen the road safety aspects of MVA 2019.

Recently the Motor Vehicles Amendment Act 2019 has been passed and got assent of the President of India. This amendment aims to make Indian roads safer, reduce corruption and use technology to overhaul the country's transportation system. The next step is to frame the Motor Vehicle Rules by Central and State governments to implement the amended law for improving road safety.

The consultation mainly focused on the six vital pillars of road safety which are seen as the best global practice to reduce road casualties. The next step is to adopt the CMVR in the state / UT agenda for immediate implementation to enhance road safety. Assam has taken lead in efforts to strengthen road safety and it's high time to have a consultation processes with the concerned stakeholders to make the necessary legislative framework within the shortest possible time.

Ashim Sanyal, COO Consumer VOICE said “The most effective ways to reduce road crash deaths is through strengthening road safety laws. We appreciate and congratulate the Government for giving green signal to the most awaited Motor Vehicles Act 2019. According to the road transport and highways ministry, half a million accidents are reported in India every year, in which 150,000 people lose their lives. The amendment Act will help to reduce the road fatalities and injuries with the stringent penalties / other provisions and change the road habits of citizens who are breaking the rules. We urge the Assam government to include the new rules of MVA 2019 in the Assam Motor vehicle rules.”

Gautam Das, District Transport Officer, Kamrup (R) said “The transport department is working on road safety in Assam to make state roads safer. We were following the Central government MVA 1988 and also have Assam Motor Vehicles Rules 2003 which also includes the main risk factors of road safety. We will follow and include the new amended rules by MVA 2019 to make stringent enforcements.

According to the data of ministry number of road crash fatalities in India currently hovers around 1.5 lakh with another 5 lakh injured. Number of lives lost on national highways during last year was, 54,046 as compared to 53,181 in 2017.

Prasanta Saikia, DCP (Traffic), Commissionerate of Police, Guwahati said that in the last six months itself in Assam around 2,359 accidents occurred in which 1,980 people were injured and 928 lost their life. It's time to take the new rules amended in Motor Vehicles Act 2019 to make police enforcement drives more effective to prevent casualties.

Motor Vehicles Amendment Act 1988 which came into force in 1989 was 30 year old act and new MVA 2019 replaced this act. In the new Motor Vehicles Act 2019 around 89 provisions include increase in penalty related to risk factors such as drunk driving, over speeding, helmet wearing , seat belt and child restraint , culpability of parents of juveniles for violation of rules, provisions for the electronic monitoring and enforcement of road safety, good Samaritan provisions etc are included to strengthen the road safety.

Ajoy Hazarika, Secretary, Consumer Legal Protection Forum said that over 50% of road deaths in recent years have been in the age group of 14-35 which is prime productive age group. These were caused because of high speed, breaking traffic signals, not wearing helmets / seat belts, drink driving among other causes. These can be effectively stopped by enforcing the new MVA rules.

Rinki Sharma, Project Head, Consumer Voice, Joysing Rongphar, MVI, Kamrup and Bikram Gogoi, Enforcement Inspector, Kamrup speaks on "next steps to enforce amended laws and the best practices to enhance road safety beyond just law enforcement" in the panel discussion as a panelist.

The program was largely attended Transport and Traffic Police officials, Students, Media, CSOs and activist working on road safety.

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Assam Times Staff. editor@assamtimes.org

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