



# Road Safety: Role of Civil society - Understanding our Potential

# Introduction

India ranks high when it comes to number of accidents on the road. However, in the recent years, improvement has been seen in this area. With the rapid increase in the number of vehicles on the road, the traffic conditions are under a lot of pressure. Therefore, road safety is one of the most serious public health issues in our country. It has an impact on everyone, whether one drives a vehicle, walks or rides a cycle.



# Understanding Road Safety

Road safety refers to the measures which must be adopted by everyone while using roads. These safety methods are meant for reducing the risk of accidents and injuries or casualties on the road. These rules must be followed by all users of roads including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and bus and truck drivers. Safety methods also relate to the construction, layout of roads as well as traffic regulation systems. So, we can summarise that road safety involves:

- (i) the design of roads and highways;
- (ii) laws pertaining to traffic and vehicles;
- (iii) systems of traffic safety and control;
- (iv) driver education;
- (v) school students' education;
- (vi) mass education;
- (vii) traffic regulation and road safety signs;
- (viii) vehicle design; and
- (ix) motor vehicle safety inspection and maintenance.




Keeping our roads safe is not that difficult a task. Imagine if everyone follows simple safety measures and traffic rules, there will be no accident!



# Importance of Road Safety

Some of the major causes of road accidents are as follows.

- (i) Lack of highway safety
  - (ii) Drunken driving
  - (iii) Driving in an exhausted state for long hours
  - (iv) Using cell phone while driving
  - (v) Overspeeding or rash driving
  - (vi) Driving in wrong lanes
  - (vii) Turning without giving signal
  - (viii) Overtaking from wrong side
- It can be seen that road safety is a collective responsibility. Therefore each one of us has to take steps required of us.



“Jan jagrupta”- “Public awareness’  
begins from our own home.

We as a conscientious society,  
should ensure, that our families,  
friends and people around us, are  
aware and follow the “Road Safety  
Rules”.



Have we ever thought why despite creating awareness our target of safer roads is still far-fetched...

There are some points to ponder and more actions to be taken.





## Community Engagement Plays a Crucial Role in Road Safety

One of Prabhaav Foundation's core missions is to create a world with zero accidents, zero injuries and zero fatalities on the road. We are working toward this goal by creating awareness program on Pan India basis, but our commitment goes beyond that.


There is a need, too, to prepare local communities for impending changes to roads.



# Community Engagement Plays a Crucial Role in Road Safety

The desirability of increased community participation in road safety has been recognised internationally and nationally.


In India there has been a rapid expansion of community action in road safety initiatives. To date however, there have been relatively few published reports on such programs. Projects involving community participation conducted in other countries during the last two decades have recorded positive outcomes.



Community members also include professionals who, through their employment, maybe involved with a specific issue such as road safety.

Community participation can occur at many levels, ranging from minimal or passive involvement, such as watching televised road safety advertisements, to active involvement, such as planning and implementing road safety programs. However, it is often a major challenge to encourage significant numbers of the community to become actively involved.





It is acknowledged that road safety can progress with minimal community participation, and that community involvement is only one aspect of the road safety initiative. Nevertheless, it can make a significant contribution as part of an orchestrated and comprehensive approach to improving community safety.

Rwa should adopt their own area, by creating vigilance group which ensures a good condition of roads, good lightning so that there are no black spots, no encroachments of the foot paths.



# What we know and efforts we are taking .....

- ▶ People are aware of road safety measures
- ▶ Children are given training on road safety
- ▶ Senior class students are getting workshops on CPR and other measures to save lives
- ▶ We are making citizens understand that it is important to:
  - ▶ Use zebra crossing to cross roads,
  - ▶ Use footpath to walk,
  - ▶ Lane driving
  - ▶ No zig-zag driving
  - ▶ Follow traffic signals
  - ▶ Use foot-over bridges or underpasses to cross roads

Importance of seatbelts for all the riders

Helmets both for the driver and pillion riders. And also for the children, who are precious and delicate and have always been ignored.

pavement encroachments should not be encouraged

# Role of Government and Public Sector

- (i) Develop stricter road safety policies
- (ii) Generate funds for road safety awareness
- (iii) Stricter enforcement of rules by government
- (iv) Building better roads and highways

## **Role of General Community**

- (i) Acceptance of road safety rules, regulations and policies
- (ii) Participation in road safety awareness drives to enhance people's knowledge about road safety



## **Role of Education Sector**

- (i) Inclusion of road safety modules in school curriculum
- (ii) Impart road safety education with the help of experts in this area
- (iii) Impart effective driver training for learners as well as existing drivers

## **Role of Media**

- (i) Communicate road safety messages through print and electronic media
- (ii) Support road safety initiatives through responsible and objective reporting

## **Role of Health Professionals**

- (i) Strengthen trauma facilities in our country.
- (ii) Organise workshops for saving the lives of people in road accidents.

## **Improvement in Infrastructure**

- (i) Adopt effective and safe traffic management measures while planning and designing infrastructure. For example, government approved road design, design of overbridges, road signages, etc.

## **Hurdles in Road Safety**

- (i) Negligence by civilians
- (ii) Pathetic condition of roads
- (iii) Unsafe vehicle design
- (iv) Violation of road safety standards
- (v) Lack of emergency services
- (vi) Defects in highway designing



## Some measures undertaken by the Road Safety Cell are

- (i) Publicity programmes
- (ii) Grants-in-aid to voluntary organisations for organising road safety programmes
- (iii) National Highway Accident Relief Service Scheme
- (iv) Refresher training to heavy vehicle drivers in unorganised sector
- (v) Setting up of Model Driving Training school
- (vi) Within the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, massive road sector development programmes, such as observing Road Safety Week or conducting eye check-ups for truck drivers, the government is working closely with agencies like the World Bank, Asian Development Bank to improve road safety.

## Road Safety Tips

Road safety is a result of efforts from all the sectors of the society including civilians and government officials. In addition to the human suffering, the estimated cost of road injuries is a noticeable amount in Gross National Product (GNP) per annum.

A few important road safety tips are mentioned below.

- (i) Do not use your mobile phone while driving.
- (ii) Use seatbelts even while sitting at the back seat of the vehicle.
- (iii) Do not drink and drive.
- (iv) Always adhere to the speed limit.
- (v) Take special care with regard to children, senior citizens and pedestrians.
- (vi) Do not drive if tired.
- (vii) Pedestrians should walk cautiously and make use of zebra crossing.
- (viii) Stay alert and observant while driving.
- (ix) Keep distance from other vehicles while driving.
- (x) Always wear helmets and seatbelts.



# Safety Devices

**Two-wheeler Helmet** A two-wheeler helmet (Figs 4.2, 4.3) is a type of protective headgear used by bicycle, motorcycle and scooter riders. The primary goal- of a two-wheeler helmet is to protect the rider's head during impact, thus preventing or reducing head injury or saving the rider's life. Some helmets provide additional conveniences, such as ventilation, face shields, ear protection, etc.

Of all the organs in our body, the heart and brain are the most vital ones. When a two-wheeler rider meets with an accident, it is the brain that is at a greater risk of injury. A brain injury can result due to skull fracture, a concussion, brain haemorrhage, which can result in death.



*Fig. 4.2: Bicycle helmet*



*Fig. 4.3: Two-wheeler helmet*





Even if a part of the brain is damaged, it might result in the loss of speech or motor skills. In order to protect the brain, one must wear a helmet. A motorcycle helmet protects the skull and the brain from extensive damage.

**Airbag** An airbag (see Unit 3, Fig. 3.40) is fitted in a four-wheeler to protect the driver and passengers during an accident.

# Safe and Responsible Driving

## Getting Ready to Drive before Driving

- (i) Ensure that you are comfortable with your mental and physical condition.
- (ii) Inspect your vehicle and observe the driving conditions.

While driving, you should carry your driving licence, registration certificate, insurance certificate and pollution control certificate. Transport and commercial vehicle drivers should carry the permits and vehicle fitness certificates also.

A combination of knowledge, skill and attitude is required to be a safe driver.

- **Knowledge** of traffic rules and driving practices that help traffic move safely.
- **Skill** to care about the safety of others on the road. We all are responsible for avoiding accidents.
- **Attitude** to cooperate with other drivers to keep traffic moving safely. We must be courteous, giving other drivers space to change lanes, not cutting them off and signalling before turning.



# Physical and Mental Alertness

One must be in good physical and mental condition before driving (Fig. 4.5).

Do not drive if you

- (i) have been drinking alcohol.
- (ii) take any medicine or drug that affects your responses.
- (iii) are tired, as it affects your driving skills and reaction time.
- (iv) are sick or injured.
- (v) are angry or upset.

In such conditions, you could be risking your life or lives of others on the road.



Fig. 4.5: Ill effects of drunken driving



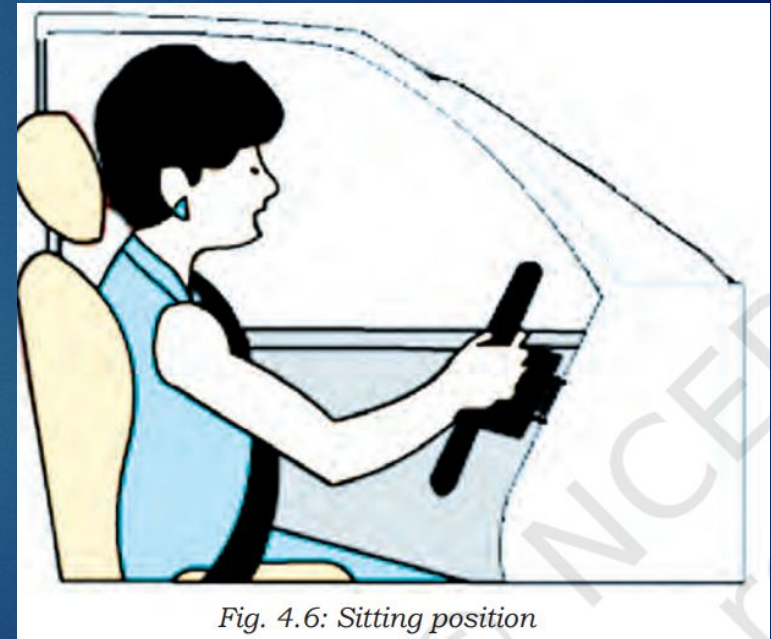
# Know Your Vehicle

Go through the vehicle owner's manual. You should know the features of the vehicle you are going to drive, for example, anti-lock brakes, four-wheel drive, etc.

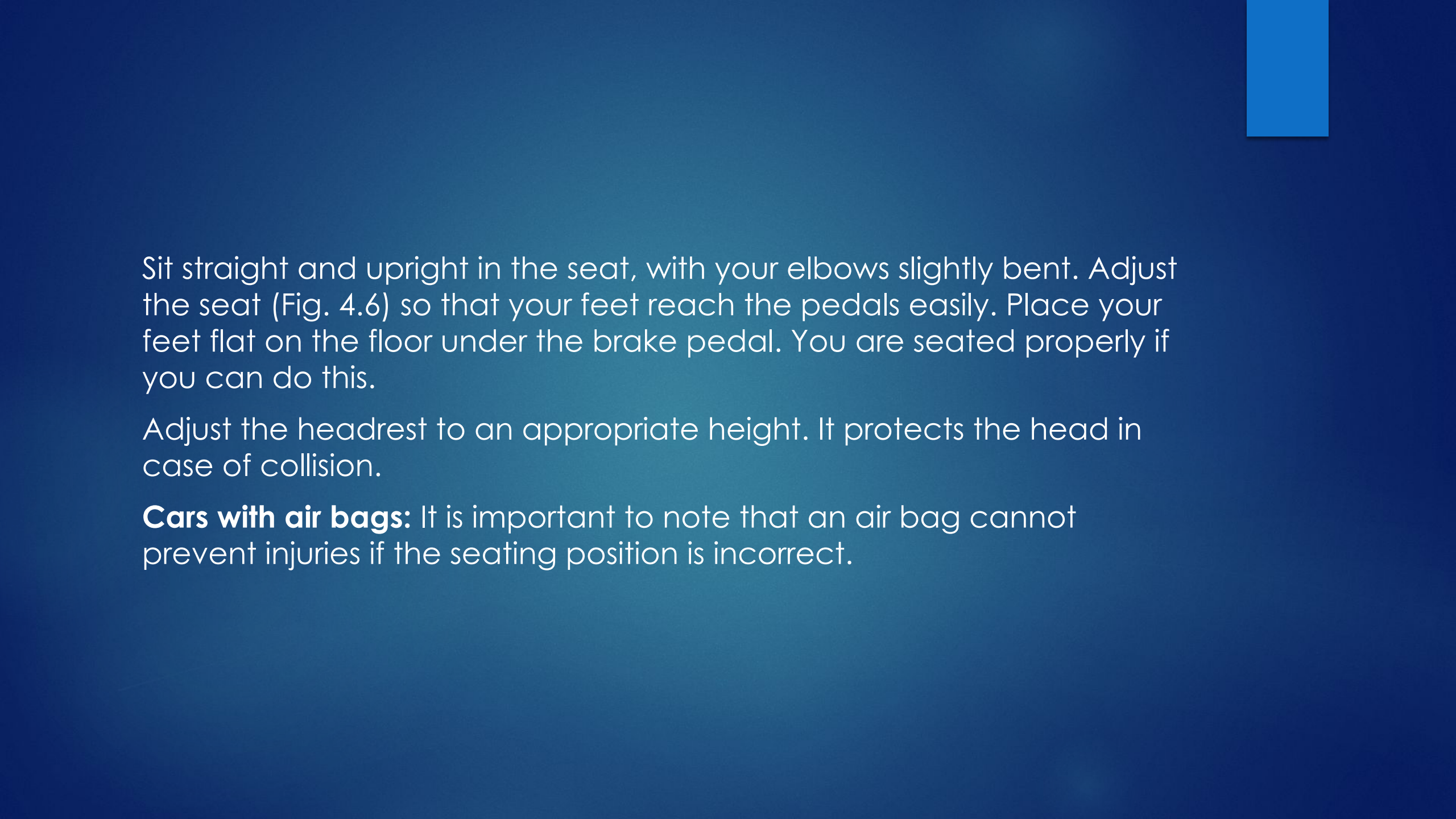
Ensure that you know where the controls and instruments are and what they do. Check that all emergency signals and instruments work. You should be able to turn on wipers, washers, headlights, indicators, etc., without having to look at them and without taking your eyes off the road.

## Seating Position

Proper, upright position gives more stability while driving. Make sure you can see over the steering wheel and hood. You should be able to see the ground 1.5–2.0 metre in front of the vehicle for proper judgement.



*Fig. 4.6: Sitting position*



Sit straight and upright in the seat, with your elbows slightly bent. Adjust the seat (Fig. 4.6) so that your feet reach the pedals easily. Place your feet flat on the floor under the brake pedal. You are seated properly if you can do this.

Adjust the headrest to an appropriate height. It protects the head in case of collision.

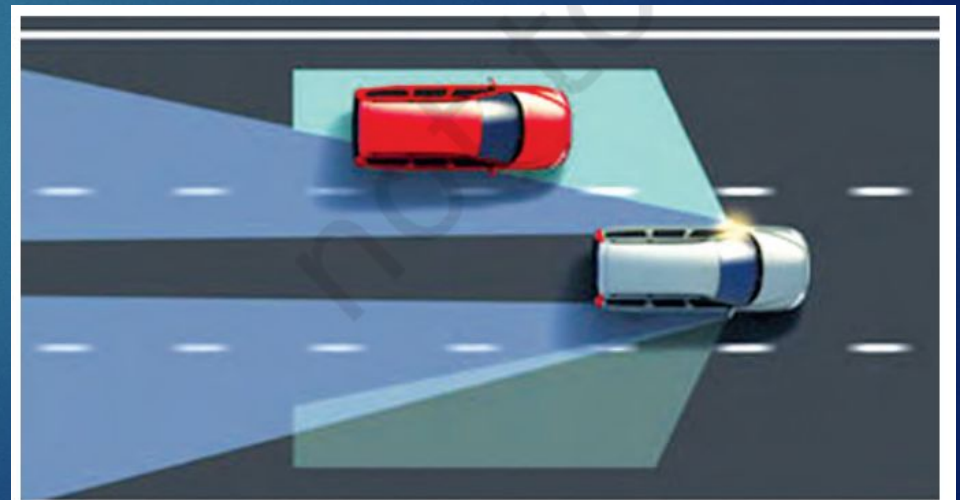
**Cars with air bags:** It is important to note that an air bag cannot prevent injuries if the seating position is incorrect.



# Know Your Blind Spots

Blind spot (Fig. 4.7) is an area on each side of the vehicle that you cannot see through the mirrors. Mostly blind spots are to the back left and back right of the vehicle. In Fig. 4.7, the red car is in the blind spot area of the silver car. The green areas show the blind spots of the silver car.

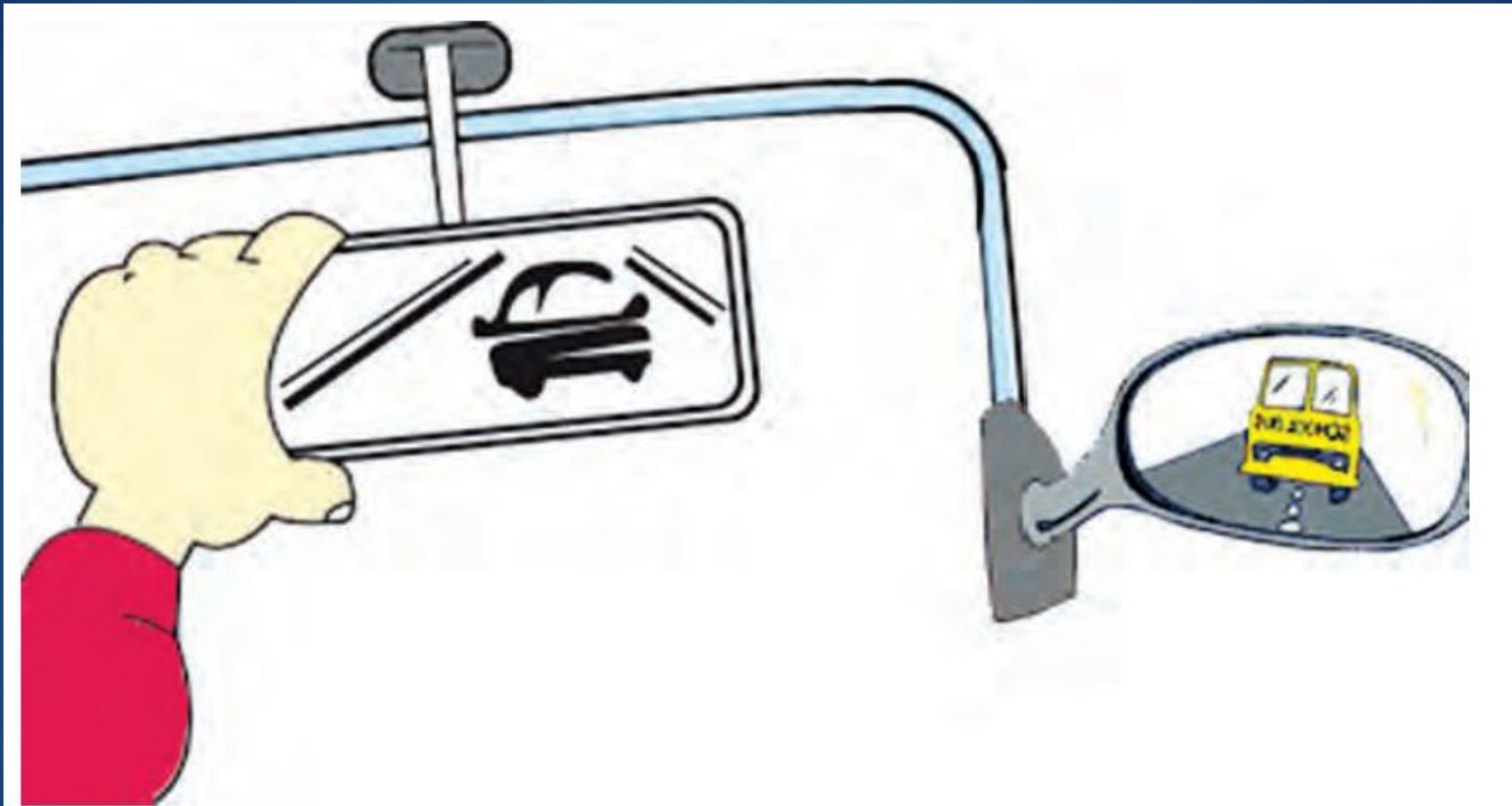
Adjust the mirrors to get the maximum view and identify your blind spots. You may not see vehicles when they are in these spots.



*Fig. 4.7: Know your blind spots*



Position the interior mirror so that the centre of the mirror shows the centre of the rear window. When the interior mirror is properly adjusted, you would be able to see directly behind your vehicle (Fig. 4.8).



*Fig. 4.8: Adjustment of interior mirror*

The exterior (wing) mirror adjustment should be made while seated normally for driving. Do not set the right-hand exterior mirror by placing your head against the glass of the driver's door window. Do not adjust the left-hand exterior mirror by leaning to the centre of the vehicle. Side mirrors show only narrow angles of view, so you have to turn your head to make sure there is nothing in your blind spots.

Fasten your Seat Belt Fasten your seat belt before you start (Fig. 4.9). Seat belts are for safety and not just for avoiding challans. Seat belts should be worn comfortable enough to keep you in your seat if there is a collision. Put the shoulder strap over your shoulder, never under your arm. The lap belt should be put low over the hips, not over the stomach.



*Fig. 4.9: Fasten your seat belt*



A seat belt saves life in the following ways.

- (i) It keeps you behind the wheel and in control of the vehicle in case of a collision.
- (ii) It keeps your head and body from hitting the inside of the vehicle.
- (iii) It keeps you inside the vehicle in case of a collision. A person who is thrown out of the vehicle during the collision has a higher chance of serious injury.



*Fig. 4.10: Headlight at night*



# Turn on Headlights at Night and in Poor Light Conditions

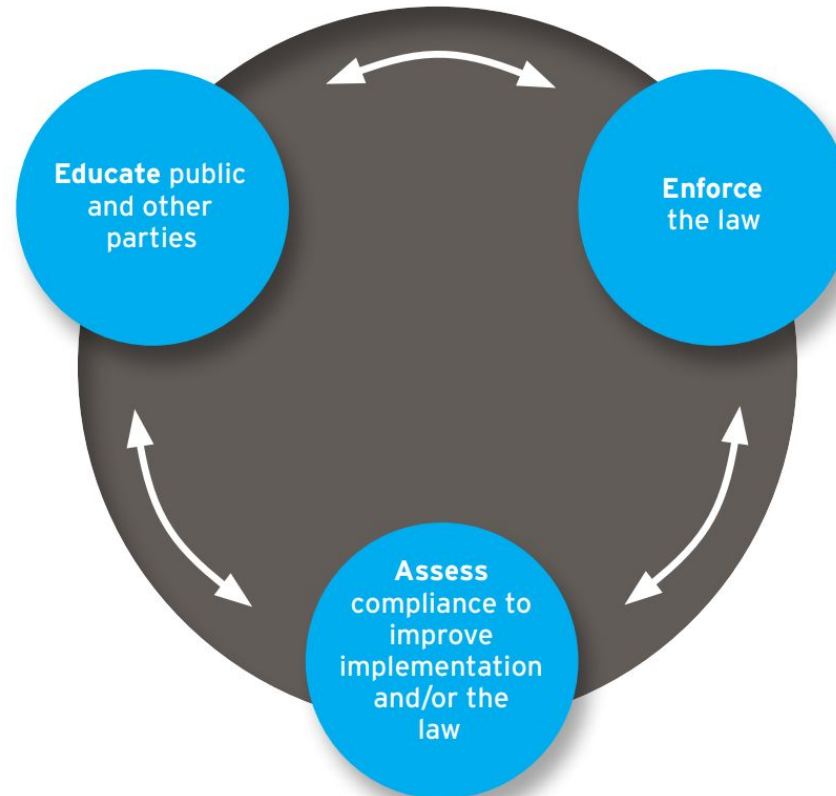
Turn on headlights around 30 minutes before sunset and keep them on until 30 minutes after sunrise. Turn on your lights when fog or rain reduces your visibility to less than 100 metres.

Keep your headlights clean and get them adjusted regularly so that they enable clearer vision while driving. In dim light, use your headlights, not parking lights. Parking lights are only for parking.

High beams are banned in cities like Delhi, Chandigarh and other cities. You should not use high beams on roads. If you are travelling on a highway and using high beam headlights, switch to low beams within 150 metres of an incoming vehicle. Switch to your low beams when you are less than 60 metres behind another vehicle.

**Develop & Adopt  
effective regulations**

**Plan for implementation**





Don't let your child drive without a license.

Neither encourage nor practice Drunk driving.

As a responsible citizen, please do not encourage the person to drink, if you were aware that he/she will be driving.

Mobile usage





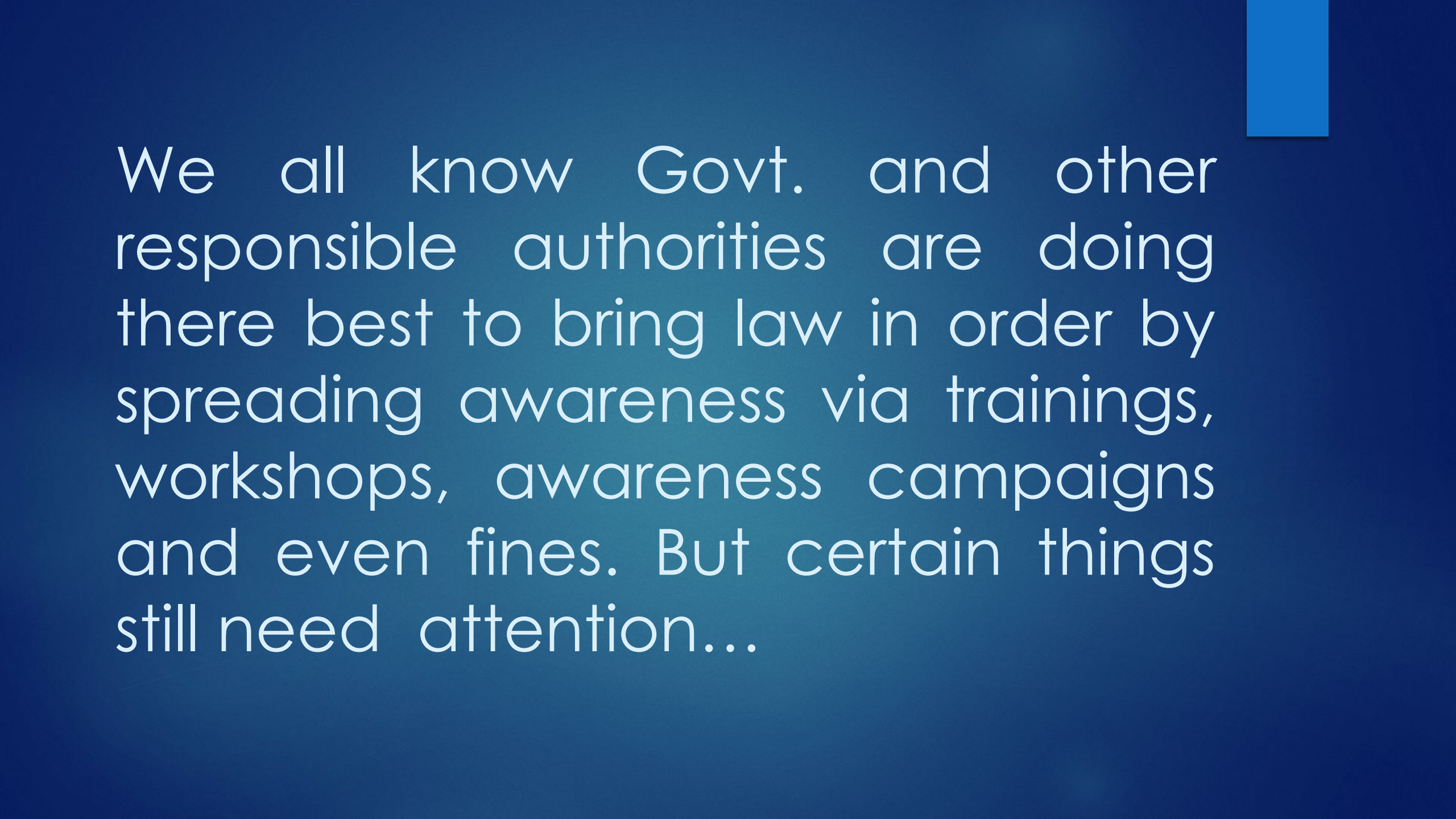
**Obey the speed limit.**





So, what's the  
problem is in  
following them





We all know Govt. and other responsible authorities are doing their best to bring law in order by spreading awareness via trainings, workshops, awareness campaigns and even fines. But certain things still need attention...





Certain problems identified in  
URBAN Setup...



# Missing/ damaged or encroached Footpaths





# No or not visible Zebra crossing or traffic signals





# Huge traffic load on roads





# Unmaintained roads causing zig-zag driving and accidents





# Dirty, lightly lit and unsafe underpasses/ subways





# Poor condition of Foot-over bridges/ Skywalks





# Encroached roads leaving not enough lanes to drive





# Animals(Cows and Buffalos) on the city roads





**Certain challenges identified in  
RURAL Setup...**



# Condition of roads in some some villages...



Need of zebra crossings/ traffic lights or some specified point to cross the road at regular intervals for pedestrians...





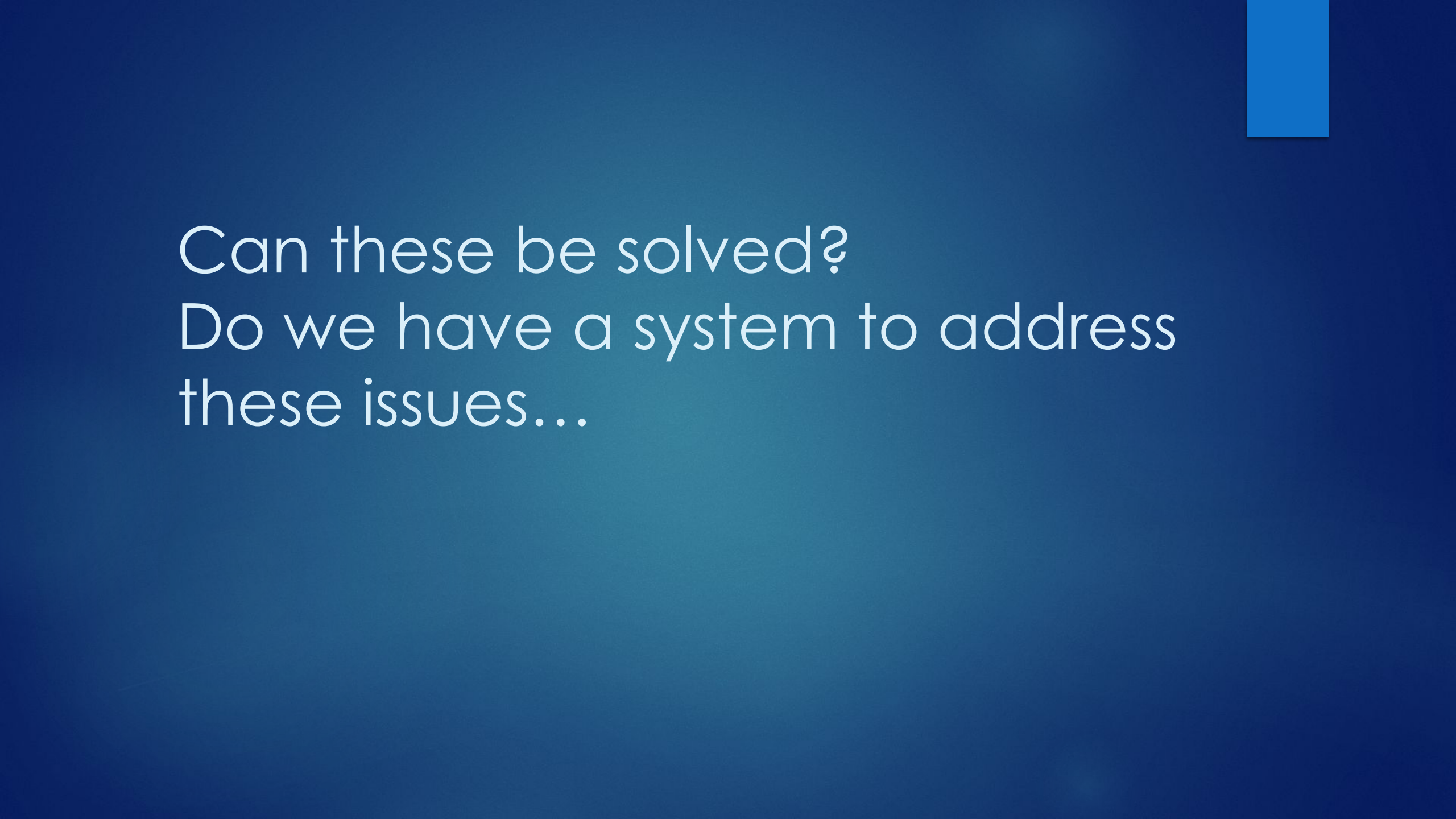
No animal corridor on highway  
protecting animals from climbing up  
the road to cross to the other side for  
grazing



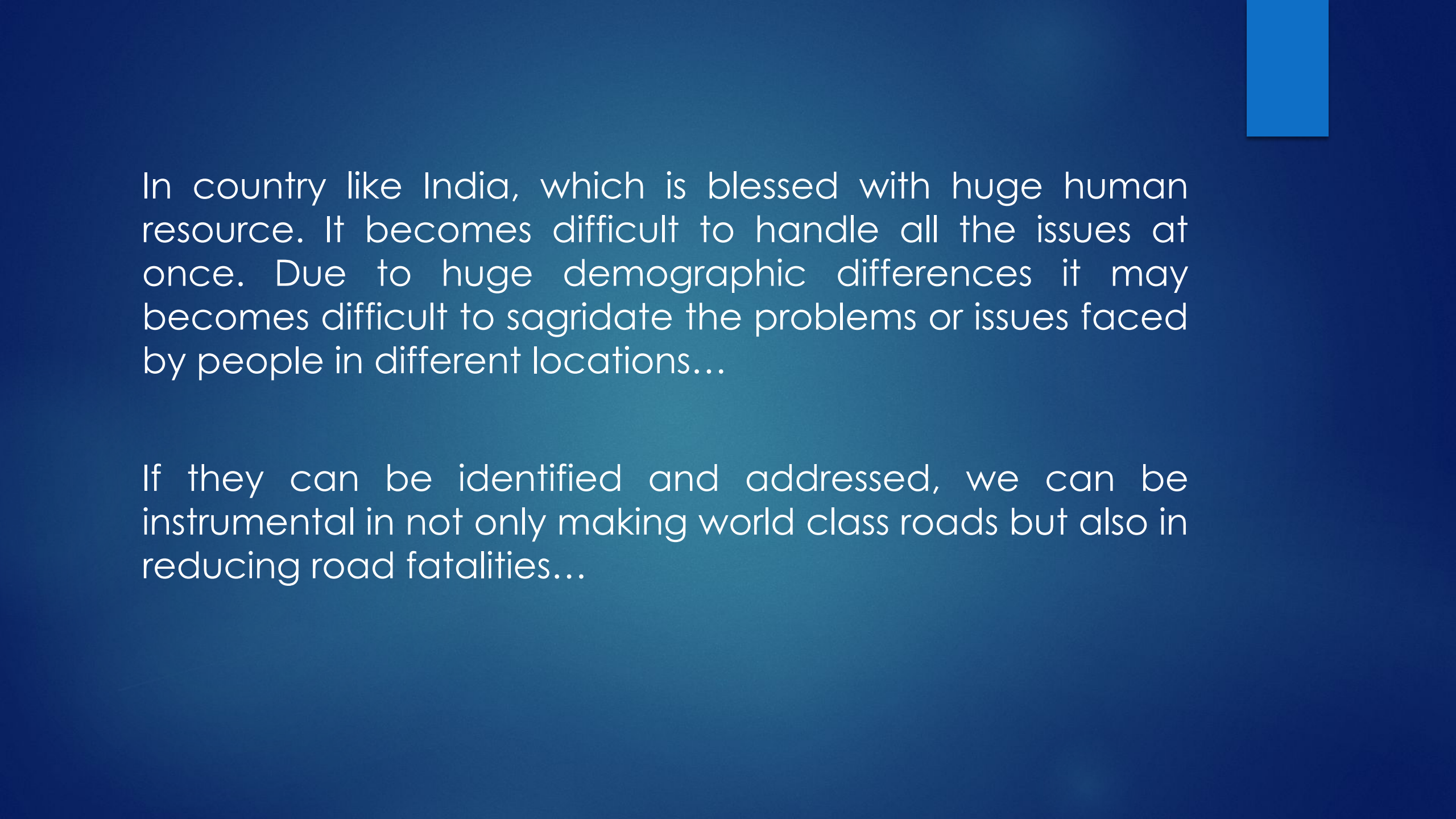
# Some more challenges need attention...

- ▶ Rural population feels that the cost of a helmet and going to the town to buy a helmet was too cumbersome.
- ▶ People unaware of the road safety rules.
- ▶ Even if they know, don't find it important to follow rules as there is no or very less vigilance on road.
- ▶ Distance and availability of quality trauma care services.
- ▶ Community health centres and primary health centres are not equipped to provide trauma care and the nearest facility where such care is likely to be available is a district hospital or a private trauma care facility in nearby towns.





Can these be solved?  
Do we have a system to address  
these issues...



In country like India, which is blessed with huge human resource. It becomes difficult to handle all the issues at once. Due to huge demographic differences it may becomes difficult to sagridate the problems or issues faced by people in different locations...

If they can be identified and addressed, we can be instrumental in not only making world class roads but also in reducing road fatalities...





- ▶ We come-up with a system where filing a complaint against an encroacher can be made EASILY and heard...
- ▶ Owners of the cows/ buffaloes are to penalized if they are found roaming on the road
- ▶ Roads are to made more sustainable and maintained at right intervals
- ▶ Conditions of the skywalks and subways are to be improved and maintained.
- ▶ Punishment for pedestrians for not following traffic rules on busy city roads and highways.
- ▶ Challan for people(pedestrians & motorists) overlooking railway crossings
- ▶ Imposing stricter punishment for encroaching sidewalks, skywalks or subways
- ▶ Having well maintained Emergency call boxes on rural areas and availability of quicker medical facilities



- ▶ Develop more rigorous awareness programs for rural populations
- ▶ Working on animal corridors where there are grazing land or wild animal habitation on both the sides of the road
- ▶ People's suggestion:
  - ▶ Helmets can be sold through self-help groups on instalments.
  - ▶ Companies selling motorcycles can also provide helmets as a compulsory accessory within the same cost.
  - ▶ Making helmets more affordable.
  - ▶ Making helmets lockable.





Lets all of us do our BIT to make a  
PRABHAAV