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## More fully-equipped ambulances soon

**Express News Service**

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KOCHI: The State Government, along with the Road Safety Authority, is planning to introduce 150-200 fullyequipped ambulances for trauma care during accidents and emergencies, Director-General of Police Jacob Punnoose said.

After inaugurating a police training course in Basic Life Support at the Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences here, he said the Rs 10-crore project would include training of 800 paramedical staff to support the ambulance facility. All major hospitals in the state should connect with this system by adding their ambulances on call so that an ambulance will be available every 3-4 minutes in a 5-km distance. There has only been a 30 per cent reduction in the number of road accidents - from 3,700 to 2,600 - and such a service will help link the hospitals with the police

control room that could be of great service to society, he said.

The police chief made a plea to the medical community to spread the message of helmet use among twowheeler riders as almost 750 of the total 980 two-wheeler accident deaths were accounted by non-users. These deaths were not due to speeding.

When the police try to implement helmet rule, it is treated as enforcement, but the medical community can probably drive home the message better. "Keralites have a self-killing instinct; that's probably why the suicide rate is high here," he said.

On the trauma care training that is being given to 2,000 policemen in Ernakulam district by the Amrita hospital, he requested other major hospitals also to join in the venture. "We are in talks with the Indian Medical Association to help prepare the police to handle trauma during accidents, emergencies and disasters," he said.

The police have been told not to harass those who come forward to help by calling them to testify at police stations or put them to hardships for being the good Samaritan, he added.

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