

## **Traffic personnel sanctioned strength is 3,576 but here staff is 3,220**

The traffic police force finds itself hopelessly overwhelmed every day when they head out of their homes to bring order to the mayhem on Bengaluru's roads.

Facing a severe staff shortage, they are now counting on a bailout from the State government in the form of an approval to appoint traffic assistants.

While the sanctioned strength is 3,576, the city has 3,220 traffic police personnel. Of these, around 1,000 are undergoing training. This leaves just 2,220 personnel trying to manage over 60 lakh vehicles.

“There are 356 vacancies. We have a strong traffic warden association but they contribute mostly on weekends as they are volunteers who have other jobs. The idea of traffic assistants was mooted to get experienced people who will be paid an honorarium to assist the traffic police every day,” said a senior police officer.

The idea was first proposed in November last year. After a change of administration, the new leadership of the traffic police is of the opinion that this is a necessary step to manage the increasing traffic in the city.

“There are several issues which have to be dealt with immediately. This is one of them. The addition of 3,000 people to assist our force would help us,” says R. Hithendra, Additional Commissioner of Police (Traffic).

They propose to pay an honorarium of Rs. 500 per day to each traffic assistant. The total bill would be Rs. 54 crore per annum. To put this in perspective, the traffic police flagged over 76 lakh traffic violations in 2015 and collected fines amounting to Rs. 70 crore.