

After two deaths, Orissa cracks down on bus operators

Three days after a man and his little daughter died after being thrown out of a moving bus for paying less fare, the Orissa government has decided to crack down on private bus operators if they misbehave with passengers.

Transport Minister Jaya Narayan Mishra said Saturday the government will soon come out with a code of conduct for bus operators and punish the owners of private buses if their staff misbehave with passengers.

On Thursday, a man and his three-year-old daughter died after they were thrown out of a bus for paying Rs.2 less than the fare. They were killed after coming under the wheels of the vehicle near Jharsuguda city, over 350 km from here.

The state government announced a compensation of Rs.100,000 to the family of the victims and the bus conductor was arrested.

"This is a serious matter. We are coming across incidents of misconduct by private bus staff from various parts of the state and have decided to take strong measures to prevent such incidents in future," Mishra told IANS.

The government will bring out a notification to make the registration of all bus employees mandatory and criminal cases will be filed against bus owners if their staff misbehave with passengers, the minister said.

'We will introduce a code of conduct for bus staff and its owners and make bus owners accountable,' he said.

Orissa has around 6,000 private buses and hundreds of people get killed in road accidents every year.

'The new steps will also help prevent accidents in the state,' Mishra said.

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