

Auto dealers drive home need to 'buckle up'

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Auto dealers across the country will soon run a "Buckle Up India" campaign, with either a Bollywood personality or a senior politician onboard. This is being done to encourage customers to buckle up (seat belts) before starting their cars and wear their helmets before riding their two-wheelers.

For four-wheelers, the focus of the campaign would be to motivate passengers to wear seat belts on the front and the rear seats, Sai Giridhar, secretary, Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA), told *Business Standard*.

"After the unfortunate accident of Cyrus Mistry, we have seen that if you are not wearing the seat belt on the front or the rear seat, it can be life-threatening," he said.

Mistry, Tata Sons former chairman, was killed in a car accident in Maharashtra's Palghar on September 4.

Though he was in the rear seat of the ill-fated Mercedes SUV, according to the police, he wasn't wearing a seat belt at the time of the accident.

FADA represents over 15,000 automobile dealers having 26,500 dealerships across India.



"We will be roping in some prominent personalities either from Bollywood or political circles. Generally, we have seen that if there is a video message, it gets circulated and people actually listen to it and adherence (to the rules) is more among them," Giridhar noted.

At a *Business Standard* event on September 7, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari had said that the government

will soon announce penalties for those who are found not wearing seat belts while sitting on the rear seats.

Gadkari had said there will soon be a mandatory alarm-beeping feature in all vehicles if the rear-seat passenger does not buckle up. This alarm-beeping feature has already been implemented for front seats.

FADA president Manish Raj Singhania said that for two-wheelers, the "Buckle Up India" campaign will encourage the pas-

Cyrus Mistry death: Brakes were applied 5 seconds before car crashed: Merc report

The brakes of the Mercedes car carrying industrialist Cyrus Mistry and three others were applied five seconds before it crashed, the luxury carmaker said in its interim report submitted to Palghar police, an official said. A team of experts from Mercedes-Benz is scheduled to visit Mumbai on Monday from Hong Kong to inspect the car, the official said.

Meanwhile, the automaker said in a statement that it was cooperating with authorities in the investigation of the car crash and

will share the findings only with them as it respects customer privacy and confidentiality. Mistry (54) and his friend Jahangir Pandole were killed on Sunday afternoon when their Mercedes car hit a road divider in Palghar district. Luxury carmaker Mercedes-Benz has submitted its interim report on the fatal accident of industrialist Cyrus Mistry to the Palghar police, which mentions that the brakes of the vehicle were applied five seconds before it crashed into the road divider, a senior official said on Friday. **PTI**

sengers to buckle up their helmets. "Wearing helmet is your only safety mode in a two-wheeler. It can be very critical," he said.

According to government rules, people must wear seat belts in front seats as well as in rear seats while driving their cars. Similarly, the rules state that people must wear helmets when driving their two-wheelers.

FADA is planning to develop some

animation videos and creatives for the campaign, Singhania said.

"These (videos) will be played across dealerships in India when the vehicle is being delivered. This will help the customer understand the importance of seat belts and helmets," he added.

FADA will also ensure that the salesman delivering the vehicle or the two-wheeler makes the customer aware about the importance of buckling up, he said.