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Community policing gets a boost in Thripunithura

2,000 residents take up combined patrolling

72 residents' associations join combined patrolling

Cycle Civil Cops scheme to be implemented this month

KOCHI: Even as the City Police went all out in its efforts to stop night-time robberies, the suburb of Thripunithura had always been a weak spot. Till a couple of years ago, a series of house-breaks, especially during the night, were reported from the region.

Not any longer, if the unique attempt by the police works out. Stretching the concept of community policing to new heights, the Thripunithura police brought nearly 2,000 residents, including 200-odd women, out on the road on Monday to take up combined patrolling.

The combined force, titled Janakeeya Pradirodha Sena, was flagged off by K. Babu, MLA, at Statue Junction at 11.45 p.m. on Monday, in the presence of Manoj Abraham, City Police Commissioner; P.H. Ashraf, Deputy City Police Commissioner and P.M. Varghese, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Thrikkakara. Mr. Babu also took part in the patrolling for nearly 30 minutes.

Representatives of 72 residents associations in the area joined the police in combined patrolling, along with those of autorickshaw drivers, headload workers and other such groups. "The idea was to increase public participation and seal the area against the threat of robbers during night," said Biju K. Stephen, Circle Inspector, Thripunithura.

During Monday's checking, the combined patrol party stopped four persons found under suspicious circumstances. Two locals among the four were found in a inebriated condition and two Tamil Nadu residents were interrogated for their unauthorised presence in the area.

Ahead of the combined patrol, the police had started contacts with various residents association groups. The police officers concerned are provided with contact numbers of the persons leading these groups, be it residents associations or autorickshaw drivers' union. They will be in touch with the rest of their members.

"Combined patrolling like this will be organised twice a week, after giving a short notice for preparation. Similarly, if any crime is reported in the circle, the news would spread among the network so that the entire area could be sealed in no time," said Mr. Stephen.

The combined patrolling comes beside the regular patrolling teams set out by residents associations in their areas. "The combined patrolling will be done in areas that were found vulnerable to crime during the last five years," he said. This is for the first time in the State that public participation on this scale has been brought in for night patrolling.

"A review meeting of the first night's patrolling will be held on Saturday and future plan of action will be decided after that," Mr. Stephen said.

Meanwhile, the night-time security will be given a fillip with the launching of Cycle Civil Cops (CCC). The City Police will be implementing this scheme this month, under which it is proposed that residents association could appoint a security guard and provide him with a bicycle.

These security personnel will be given special training by the police. They will be on duty in their respective residents association's area between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. and will be put on constant interaction with the beat officer in that region. The police will also check the antecedents of security personnel appointed by the residents associations.