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Delhi cops adopt Gen Z approach to road safety, drugs, cyber fraud

Post reels, memes on social media account to spread serious messages

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When Punjabi music sensation AP Dhillon came to Delhi for his December 7 concert, he didn't expect to become a road safety hero, but that's exactly what happened.

Outside the concert venue, the Delhi Police quietly borrowed AP Dhillon's popularity and cool appeal to push out a viral Instagram reel about Drug-Free Delhi by 2027.

In the short video, AP Dhillon can be heard saying, "say no to drugs" and his popular song can be heard in the background.

Instagram page of the Delhi Police (@delhi.police_official) has morphed over the past year from a formal public service account into something more akin to a meme page with a mission.

Whether it's preventing cyber fraud, discouraging rash driving or warning against drugs, the approach is the same — cool reel trends used for serious appeals.

In one post, for example, the police reworked a viral trend around the song "Johnny Johnny" and featured two young women filming a reel while driving and eventually meeting an accent. A policeman then comes to pick their phone and gives a clear message about wearing a helmet while driving and not filming reels on the wheels.

"Trend follow karte karte kahin hospital naa pahuch jaye (While following trends, make sure you don't end up in a hospital)," the caption reads. The reel has crossed 10 million views on Instagram alone.

In another similar trending reel, which uses Punjabi singer Karan Aujla's song "Boyfriend", the Delhi Police use the song visuals and give a message on road safety.

"Dil vahi le jaaega jo sadak niyam apnaega" (Only the one who follows road rules will take away the heart), the caption reads. This reel has crossed 6 million views on Instagram.

Last year, the Delhi Police used the viral "Pookie" trend. The reel caption read, "You are someone's Pookie. Forget excuses. Wear a helmet, if you do not want that someone to be dukhi."

Social media users quickly responded, calling the post a "banger" and labelling the creators "Pookie Police."

In another campaign, they leaned on the widely recognised "Ganji Chudail" meme. The animated bald witch appeared in a graphic reposted by the police, helmet firmly strapped, with the slogan "Sabko helmet pehnate

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REELS GET GOOD VIEWS

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hain Delhi Police wale" (Delhi Police make everyone wear helmets)".

The caption added a humorous warning, "Mujhse nahi, chot se daro! Helmet pehno!" (Don't fear me, fear the injury! Wear a helmet.)

The Delhi Police have also dipped into cyber fraud warnings and other public safety issues, packaging them with relatability, local humour and pop culture references. The strategy seems to be working. Memes get shared, reels get reposted but more importantly, serious messages get seen.

Some social media users have praised the innovation, calling the content "chill," "relatable," and "more meme page than police page."

Others have even jokingly questioned the salary of the creative team producing these posts, a testament to how much these messages feel like content created by peers, not bureaucrats.