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## Aurangabad Municipal Corporation to provide bicycles to 200 Std X girls

AURANGABAD: Come June, reaching school would be a breeze for some 200 Class X girl students in Aurangabad. In a first-of-its-kind move, the Aurangabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) is planning to provide bicycles to girl students in AMC-run schools who have to cover a distance of 3 km or more to reach their educational institutions.

"Municipal commissioner Harshdeep Kamble has initiated the drive to reduce the rate of school dropouts, especially among girls. The initiative is also aimed at developing interest in education among girls from the weaker sections of society," Dyanada Kulkarni, administrative officer and in-charge of the AMC's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, said on Sunday. The Women and Child Development cell of the civic body will implement the initiative.

Kulkarni said the scheme would be applicable to only girls. The municipal body would also consider the economic condition of the girl students. Kulkarni said many parents do not encourage girls going to schools located far away. "Bicycles will not only help the girls in reaching their schools, this will also help develop their confidence," she felt.

Kulkarni said more than 1,000 boys and girls are studying in Class X, in twelve different schools located within the AMC limits. "Out of these students, about 600 are girls. Further, the number of girls staying at a distance of 3 km or more from their schools could be in the range of 200," she said.

Kulkarni said the AMC administration had directed all the concerned school principals to collect data on the targeted girls and submit the list. "The municipal body is trying to distribute the bicycles at the beginning of the new academic session," she said. AMC-run schools will reopen on June 17, 2013.