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## Motorists unaware of new traffic law



STOP: Motorists are no longer allowed to turn right while the traffic light is red at junctions with cameras monitoring violations. ( AN photo by Fouzia Khan)

A number of motorists have claimed ignorance of the new traffic rule in place where motorists can no longer turn right at the red signal.

Earlier, motorists could stop momentarily at the traffic signal when it turned red, and then take a right turn. However, this rule has now changed and motorists can be fined SR500 and liable to serve a 24-hour jail time.

The Jeddah Traffic Department has increased the number of Saher cameras nation-wide in a bid to curb the high number of traffic accidents. The Kingdom has the largest number of traffic-related casualties with drivers taking little heed of traffic rules such as changing lanes without warning, weaving through traffic, running the red light, driving at high speed, jumping the queue to name a few.

The traffic department also recently started a safety campaign targeted at motorists who

could face fines for not fastening the seat belt, turning right at the red traffic light signal, talking on the phone while driving, wrong parking, not being in possession of a driver's license and other documents.

The traffic department has also stepped up its surveillance through increasing the numbers of police officers on the roads and main arteries to monitor drivers.

A source at the department told Arab News that police vehicles are equipped with cameras and violators will no longer be served with conventional papers.

Hassan Khan, a motorist, who has been driving in Jeddah for the past 37 years, was fined SR500 when a Saher camera captured an image of his car turning right at a red light.

Motorists have also begun refraining from turning right at traffic signals which are monitored by Saher cameras.

Majed Al-Sharif, a Saudi, said his son received a fine of SR500 for turning right at a red light with the Saher camera. He said he was not aware of the new rules.

Another motorist Abdullah Baksh said: "When I drive at night I see several cameras flashing when cars turn right while the traffic light is red. Many motorists don't know about the new rule and keep honking their car horns if the vehicle in front of them doesn't turn right while the signal is red.

Mohammad Qadhi another motorist said the traffic department should have made a vigorous media campaign before introducing this new law. Many drivers will be caught off guard on being punished for turning right at the red signal.