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Ministry's Report on Road Accidents in India

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The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways released The Road Accidents in India report for 2017.

Findings of the report

- The year 2017 saw 4.65 lakh road accidents that killed 1.48 lakh and injured 4.71 lakh people.
- Major reasons for Deaths in Road Accident:
 - overspeeding (~66%)
 - Use of mobile phones (~2%)
 - driving on the wrong side (~6%)
 - drunken driving (~3%)
- The road accidents in the country fell by around 3% as compared to 2016.
- Tamilnadu reported the highest number of accidents, around 75000 in one year, followed by Madhya Pradesh (~57000) and Karnataka(~52000).
- More number of accidents were recorded in the Southern States, more deaths were recorded in the Northern States.
- Young adults in the age group of 18 - 45 years accounted for around 72% of victims during 2017.
- People in the working age group of 18- 60 years accounted for a share of around 87% in the total road accident fatalities.
- In terms of accidents on road categories, the National Highways accounted for 30% of total road accidents and 36% of deaths in 2017.

Justice K.S. RadhaKrishnan Committee

- Supreme Court had set up the three-member KS Radhakrishnan panel on road safety in April 2014. The SC had termed the roads in India as “giant killers”

- The main recommendations of the committee were:
 - Ban on the sale of alcohol on highways (both state and national) to restrain drunk driving.
 - The states were directed to implement laws on wearing helmets.
 - Audit of road safety to be implemented by states to ensure the safety standards in the design, construction, and maintenance of roads.
 - The committee stressed on the importance of creating awareness among people on road safety rules.

Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2016

- It proposes to create a National Register for Driving Licence and a National Register for Vehicle registration through “Vahan” and “Sarathi” web portals. This is in order to smoothen the process of registration and licensing.
- It proposes alterations in vehicles, in order to make them suitable for specially-abled people.
- It provides for a Motor Vehicle Accident Fund, which would provide compulsory insurance cover to all road users in India for certain types of accidents.
- It provides for a National Road Safety Board, to be created by the Central Government through a notification. The Board will provide advice to the Central and State Governments on all aspects of road safety and traffic management.
- Contractors, consultants, and civic agencies will be accountable for faulty design, construction or poor maintenance of roads leading to accidents. Those found guilty would be penalized up to Rs 1 lakh.

Brasilia Declaration on Road Safety

- The declaration was signed at the Second Global High-Level conference on Road Safety held in Brazil in 2015.
- Through the Brasilia Declaration Countries plan to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal 3.6 which aims to halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2020.
- The main points of the Brasilia Declaration are:
 - Countries should form transport policies in order to favor more sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and using public transport.
 - It highlights strategies to ensure the safety of all road users
 - by improving laws and enforcement
 - making roads safer through infrastructural modifications
 - ensuring that vehicles are equipped with life-saving technologies
 - enhancing emergency trauma care systems