



## Report on Road Accidents: World Bank

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### Why in News

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Recently, the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways released the **World Bank** Report titled “**Traffic Crash Injuries And Disabilities: The Burden on India Society**”.

- The Report has been prepared in collaboration with the **NGO-Save Life Foundation**.
- The survey data was collected from four Indian states i.e. **Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra**.

### Key Points

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- **Global Fatalities due to Road Accidents:**
  - Road Traffic Injuries (RTIs) - **Eighth leading cause of death**.
  - **Road Crash Fatality Rate** - Three times higher in low-income countries compared to high-income countries.
- **Road Accidents and Related Deaths in India:**
  - **Accounts for 11% of the global death** in road accidents, the **highest in the world**.
  - Accounts for about **4.5 lakh road crashes per annum**, in which 1.5 lakh people die.
- **Economic Impacts of Road Accidents:**
  - **Estimated Economic Loss** - 3.14% of **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**, indicating **underreporting phenomenon** in the country.
  - **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) Estimates** -
    - Socio-economic cost of Road Crashes is equivalent to **0.77% of the GDP**.
    - **76.2% of people** who are killed in road crashes are in their prime working-age, **18-45 years**.

- **Social Impact:**

- **Burden on Households:**

- At the individual level, road crash injuries and deaths **impose a severe financial burden and push entire (non-poor) households** into poverty and the already poor into debt.
- Every road accident death causes **depletion of nearly seven months' household income in poor families**, and pushes the kin of victims in a cycle of poverty and debt.

- **Vulnerable Road Users (VRUs):**

- **VRUs bear a disproportionately large burden of road crashes** and account for more than half of all road crash deaths and serious injuries in the country.
- It is often the **poor, especially male road-users** of working age, that constitute the category of **VRUs**.
  - Daily wage workers and workers employed as casual labourers in informal activities are more prone to be defined as vulnerable compared to workers engaged in regular activities.
- In India, where **VRUs** are forced to share space with other less vulnerable road users, **the income level of an individual has a direct bearing on the mode of transport used.**

- **Gender Specific Impact:**

Women in the families of victims **bore the burden across poor and rich** households, often taking up extra work, assuming greater responsibilities, and performing caregiving activities.

- About **50% of women were severely affected by the decline in their household income** after a crash.
- About **40% of women reported a change in their working patterns** post-accident, while around **11% reported taking up extra work** to deal with the financial crisis.

- **Rural-Urban Divide:**

The **income decline** for low-income **rural households (56%) was the most severe** compared to low-income urban (29.5%) and high-income rural households (39.5%).

- **Steps Taken at Global Level:**
  - **Brasilia Declaration on Road Safety (2015):**
    - The **declaration** was signed at the second Global High-Level Conference on Road Safety held in Brazil. **India is a signatory** to the Declaration.
    - The countries plan to achieve the **Sustainable Development Goal 3.6** i.e. to half the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2030.
  - **Decade for Road Safety:**

The United Nations (UN) declared **2011-2020** as the decade of action for Road Safety.
  - **UN Global Road Safety Week:**

It is **celebrated every two years**, the fifth edition (held from 6-12 May 2019) highlighted the need for strong leadership for road safety.
  - **The International Road Assessment Programme (iRAP) :**

It is a registered charity dedicated to saving lives through safer roads.
- **Steps Taken by Indian Government**
  - Motor Vehicles Amendment Act, 2019:**
    - The **Act** hikes the penalties for traffic violations, defective vehicles, juvenile driving, etc.
    - 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 also provides for a **National Road Safety Board**, to be created by the Central Government through a notification.
    - It also provides for the protection of good samaritans.

## Way Forward

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- **Policy-oriented approaches are needed** for saving lives and improving the ability of victims and their families to get back on their feet, including providing immediate financial, medical and legal aid.
- Areas that require immediate improvements include **post-crash emergency care and protocols, insurance and compensation systems**.
- There is a need for development agencies, policymakers and respective state governments to **prioritize a complete policy overhaul** of the existing system and **implement sustainable solution-oriented, inclusive measures** to improve their performance on road safety.

**Source:PIB**