

## Road Safety

### Why in news?

The recent Pune Porsche case has reignited the concern surrounding hit-and-run accidents in India.

#### Road Accidents in India Report 2022

- **Area of accidents** - 32.9% in National Highways, 23.1% in Road Highways and 43.9% in other roads.
- **Rural Vs Urban** - About 69% happened in rural areas and around 32% in urban areas.
- **Age group** - 66.5% of young adults (18-45 years of age).
- **Type of users** - 44.5% of 2-wheelers followed by 19.5% of pedestrians.
- **Vehicles involved** - Two-wheelers tops for the 2nd consecutive years followed by light vehicles.
- **Vulnerable States**- In 2022, Tamil Nadu topped in number of road accidents followed by Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh topped in number of fatalities due to road accidents followed by Tamil Nadu.

### What are the challenges of road safety in India?

- **Drunk driving**: Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs is a leading cause of road accidents.
- **Distracted Driving**- The use of mobile phones and other distractions while driving increases the risk of accidents.
- **Non-compliance**- Aggressive driving behaviors such as overtaking dangerously, not obeying traffic signals, and lane indiscipline.
- **Poor road infrastructure**- The poor condition of roads along with low visibility and subpar road design and engineering, including the quality of materials and construction.
- **Vehicular condition**- Old vehicles are more likely to experience frequent breakdowns, malfunctions, and lack safety features.
- **Overloading of vehicles**- It could pose a hazard to road traffic, increasing the risk of accidents for both themselves and other road users.
- **Driving without licenses**- Easy access to driving licenses without a thorough assessment of skills and driving without them is a major contributing factor to the increase in road accidents.
- **Inadequate law enforcement**- Although laws and regulations for ensuring road safety are in place but enforcement is often lacking, allowing offenders to escape accountability for their actions.
- **Lack of awareness**- Most road accident cases occur due to carelessness or lack of awareness, making road safety education essential for survival.

#### Global initiatives on road safety

- **Brasilia Declaration on Road Safety, 2015-** Under the declaration, the countries plan to achieve SDG 3.6, which is to halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2030.
- India is a signatory to the declaration and is committed to a reduction in fatalities.
- **Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030-** The UN General Assembly adopted resolution “Improving global road safety” with the ambitious target of preventing at least 50% of road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030.
- The Global Plan aligns with the Stockholm Declaration, by emphasizing the importance of a holistic approach to road safety.
- **Bloomberg Initiative for Global Road Safety (BIGRS) 2020-2025-** It aims to reduce road crash fatalities and injuries in low and middle-income countries and cities by implementing a comprehensive set of actions that are proven to save lives

### What are the steps taken by India to promote road safety?

- **Motor Vehicle Amendment (MVA) Act 2019-** It provides for the constitution of the National Road Safety Board to advise the Central Government or State Government, on all aspects pertaining to road safety and traffic management.
- **Vehicle Scrapping Policy-** Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has formulated the policy based on incentives/dis-incentives and for creating an ecosystem to phase out older, unfit polluting vehicles.
- **National Road Safety Policy-** Based on the recommendations of the *Sunder Committee* the policy initiatives to be framed/taken by the Government at all levels to improve road safety activities in the country.
- **e-DAR project-** Electronic Detailed Accident Report (e-DAR) project has been initiated to establish a *central repository* for reporting, management, and analysis of road accident data across the nation.
- **Good Samaritan law-** The law protects good samaritans from harassment on the actions being taken by them to save the life of the road accident victims.

*Good Samaritan is a person who renders emergency medical or non-medical assistance to a victim at the accident scene.*

- **India State Support Programme for Road Safety-** The World Bank has approved loan for 7 States under which a *single accident reporting number* will be set up to better manage post-crash events.

### What lies ahead?

- It is crucial to establish a proper driving licensing system to ensure standardised driving skills.
- Regular, professional enforcement of rules and swift and innovative solutions to traffic indiscipline and bottlenecks by the administration could help evolve a healthy safe-road culture.

## References

1. [NDTV- India's hit and run data](#)
2. [PIB- Steps taken by India to promote road safety](#)

