



CURRENT AFFAIRS



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GLOBAL STATUS REPORT ON ROAD SAFETY 2023

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details " Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023". This topic has relevance in the Social Issues section of the UPSC CSE exam.

GS 2: Social issues

Why in the news?

Recently, Global Status Report on Road Safety was released by WHO

Key Findings from the Road Safety Report:

- **Global Decline in Road Traffic Deaths:** Positive strides with a 5% annual reduction in global road traffic deaths, reaching a total of over 1.19 million per year. Despite the improvement, the persistently high numbers remain a cause for concern.
- **Vulnerability of Youth and Children:** Road accidents emerge as the leading cause of mortality among individuals aged 5 to 29 years, highlighting a critical issue affecting the younger population globally.
- **Road Safety Challenges in India:** India experiences a concerning surge in road crash deaths, witnessing an increase from 1,50,785 in 2018 to 1,53,792 in 2021, presenting a complex scenario demanding attention.
- **Disparities in Global Progress:** Disparities persist among countries, with some achieving a reduction in road traffic deaths. Notably, low and middle-income nations, while having a minimal share of the global vehicle count, contribute to 90% of road traffic fatalities.
- **Vulnerable Road Users' Predicament:** More than half (53%) of road traffic fatalities involve vulnerable road users, encompassing pedestrians, motorcyclists, cyclists, and users of micro-mobility devices.
- **Infrastructure and Safety Concerns:** Challenges include insufficient road infrastructure, inadequate pedestrian safety measures, and gaps in legislation addressing risk factors like speeding, drunk driving, and vehicle safety standards.
- **Legislative Gaps and Urgent Recommendations:** A limited number of countries align with WHO's best practices for road safety laws. The anticipated doubling of the global motor vehicle

fleet by 2030 underscores the pressing need for enhanced legislation and infrastructure to curb road traffic deaths on a global scale.



Road Safety Challenges in India:

India's rapid economic growth has spurred a surge in vehicle ownership, fostering convenience and progress. However, this accelerated expansion has concurrently given rise to intricate challenges in ensuring road safety, encompassing various aspects of the nation's dynamic landscape.

Challenges:

- **High Accident Rates:** Despite representing only 1% of the world's vehicles, India contributes to a staggering 11% of global road traffic deaths, translating to approximately 1.5 lakh lives lost annually. This alarming disproportion underscores a critical road safety concern.
- **Vulnerable Road Users:** Pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists face heightened risks due to inadequate infrastructure and insufficient awareness. The incomplete or poorly designed roads often neglect the safety of non-motorized users, leading to a higher incidence of accidents involving these vulnerable road users.
- **Speeding and Reckless Driving:** Disregard for traffic rules and exceeding speed limits emerges as a significant contributor to accidents. Behavioral issues, particularly reckless driving, play a substantial role in exacerbating the overall road safety challenge.
- **Inadequate Infrastructure:** Unsafe road surfaces, absence of accurate lane demarcations, and insufficient signage collectively pose risks to road safety. The critical role of infrastructure in ensuring safe road usage is compromised when deficiencies in these aspects persist, leading to increased accident rates.
- **Drunken Driving:** Despite legal prohibitions, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs remains a serious concern. The prevalence of this behavior poses a substantial threat to overall road safety, despite regulatory measures in place.
- **Weak Enforcement:** Insufficient traffic monitoring and lax enforcement of road safety laws hinder progress. The existence of regulations alone is not enough; effective enforcement is crucial to ensure compliance and mitigate the lenient approach towards road safety.

In navigating the complex road safety landscape in India, addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach involving infrastructure development, behavioral changes, and robust enforcement mechanisms.

Addressing Road Safety Challenges in India:

- **Stricter Laws and Enforcement:** The implementation of the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act 2019, with heightened penalties for traffic violations, serves as a deterrent against dangerous driving. Strengthening legal consequences is pivotal for promoting safer driving practices.
- **Focus on Vulnerable Road Users:** Initiatives such as dedicated cycling lanes and pedestrian walkways prioritize the safety of vulnerable road users. Targeted infrastructure improvements play a crucial role in creating a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

- **Road Safety Awareness Campaigns:** Promoting responsible driving habits and educating the public about traffic rules are paramount. Informative campaigns contribute to a culture of responsible behavior on the roads, fostering safer driving practices.
- **Investing in Infrastructure:** Upgrading roads, installing proper signage, and implementing intelligent traffic management systems significantly improve safety. Addressing infrastructure deficiencies directly tackles challenges posed by inadequate roads and signage.
- **Technological Advancements:** Utilizing technology such as driver assistance systems and advanced traffic monitoring enhances safety measures. The integration of technology in road safety measures provides real-time monitoring and assistance, contributing to safer road conditions.

Initiatives in Road Safety

Global Initiatives:

- **Brasilia Declaration on Road Safety (2015):**
 - This declaration, signed at the second Global High-Level Conference on Road Safety in Brazil, involves India as a signatory. The goal is to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 3.6, aiming to halve the global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2030.
- **Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030:**
 - The UN General Assembly adopted the resolution “Improving global road safety,” setting an ambitious target to prevent at least 50% of road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030. Aligned with the Stockholm Declaration, this Global Plan emphasizes a holistic approach to road safety
- **International Road Assessment Programme (iRAP):**
 - A registered charity committed to saving lives through safer roads on a global scale.

Initiatives in India:

- **Motor Vehicles Amendment Act, 2019:**
 - This act introduces increased penalties for traffic violations, defective vehicles, and juvenile driving. It establishes a Motor Vehicle Accident Fund for compulsory insurance coverage and mandates the creation of a National Road Safety Board by the Central Government.
- **Carriage by Road Act, 2007:**
 - This act regulates common carriers, limiting their liability and facilitating the declaration of the value of goods for determining liability in case of loss or damage due to negligence or criminal acts.
- **Control of National Highways (Land and Traffic) Act, 2000:**
 - This act controls land within National Highways, the right of way, and traffic moving on National Highways, aiming to remove unauthorized occupation.
- **National Highways Authority of India Act, 1998:**
 - Enabling the constitution of an authority for the development, maintenance, and management of National Highways, addressing various facets related to their functioning.

Conclusion:

The report emphasizes the immediate need for a global commitment to prioritize road safety, especially for vulnerable road users. It underscores the imperative of addressing legislative gaps, enhancing

infrastructure, and elevating safety standards. Governments worldwide must unite in concerted efforts to reduce road traffic deaths and create safer roads for everyone.

Source:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/road-crash-deaths-down-by-5-globally-numbers-in-india-continue-to-rise-who/articleshow/105968111.cms>

Q.1 Regarding the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023 recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:

1. It is released by WHO annually.
2. It shows that there is a increase in road accidents related deaths globally
3. Number of road accidents related deaths have decreased in India, according to the report.

How many of the above statement/s is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

ANSWER: D

Q.2 Analyze the Implications of India's Position in the Global Status Report on Road Safety. Discuss the Significance of International Collaborations and Domestic Policies in Addressing Road Safety Concerns

Rishabh