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THE TIMES OF INDIA

57 MPs seek strong law to make roads safer

TNN | May 16, 2016, 04.32 AM IST



NEW DELHI: Nearly one-fifth of Members of Parliament (MPs) have written to the prime minister in the past four months to bring a strong and effective law to make roads safer. One life is lost on Indian roads every 3.6 minutes and one crash is reported every minute, according to latest government data.

A fortnight ago, a petition signed by 57 MPs cutting across party lines was sent by Consumer Voice, a consumer protection group, to PM Narendra Modi with the appeal to introduce the Road Safety and Transport Bill.

"More such letters will be submitted in due course, which give us confidence that this subject (road safety) cuts across all party lines is a due demand from citizens in all states since untimely road tragedy deaths/ impairments are causing agony to many individuals and families," the consumer organisation said.

In December, 50 MPs had written to the PM for urgent introduction of the bill. In the joint letter forwarded by SaveLife Foundation, the MPs had said each day of delay in introducing the bill was costing over 380 lives. Mentioning how soon after Modi took charge, one of his Cabinet colleagues Gopinath Mude died in a road crash in Delhi, the lawmakers had stated that the government had promised to come out with a stronger law within one month.

Recently road transport secretary Sanjay Mitra recently told a parliamentary panel that his ministry is working with state governments and is trying to do things which are non-controversial such as increasing penalty for drunken driving or unauthorized driving, minor driving. These are crucial to make roads safe and approach is to bring changes in the present Motor Vehicles Act rather than introducing a new one.