

Road Accidents, Fatalities Rise to Record Levels in 2015

BY [GAURAV VIVEK BHATNAGAR](#) ON [10/06/2016](#) • [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

Youth and two-wheeler riders are most prone to fatal accidents, a report released by the transport ministry has found.



Representational image. Credit: PTI

The first complete year of the Narendra Modi government in office – 2015 – saw a 4.6% increase in deaths in road accidents and a 1.4% increase in injuries, indicating that the country needs to take more steps to make its roads safer. Immediate remedies are needed as the nation is seeing one of the highest growth rates in motorisation in the world, along with rapid urbanisation and expansion in the road network, according to government data.

The [Road Accidents in India 2015](#) report, released by transport minister Nitin Gadkari, has revealed how Indian roads have become the biggest cause of unnatural deaths. The data paints a grim picture; it shows over 146,000 people, or nearly Shimla's entire population, have lost their lives in close to five lakh road accidents during the year. Gadkari was hard pressed to reiterate India's resolve as a signatory to the [Brasilia Declaration](#) to reduce the number of road accidents and fatalities by 50% by 2020.

However, that seems easier said than done. With the increase in the speed and size of vehicles, and the expansion of road networks, conflict points between pedestrians and other road users are also increasing. Moreover, as the data indicated, the severity of road accidents, measured in terms of number of persons killed per 100 accidents, has increased from 28.5 in 2014 to 29.1 in 2015.

According to Gadkari, immediate steps by the government will include rectifying black spots, incorporating engineering solutions for vehicles at the design stage, high safety standards for automobiles, providing proper trauma care and generating public awareness.

The report stated that the total number of road accidents increased by 2.5%, from 4,89,400 in 2014 to 5,01,423 in 2015. The total number of persons killed in road accidents increased by 4.6%, from 1,39,671 to 1,46,133. Road accident injuries have also increased by 1.4%, from 4,93,474 to 5,00,279.

Analysis of the 2015 road accident data also revealed that 1,374 accidents and 400 deaths take place every day on Indian roads. About 54.1% of all persons killed in road accidents in the last year were in the 15-34 age group.

Most accidents were reported from Tamil Nadu (69,059), Maharashtra (63,805), Madhya Pradesh (54,947), Karnataka (44,011), Kerala (39,014), Uttar Pradesh (32,385), Andhra Pradesh (24,258), Rajasthan (24,072), Gujarat (23,183), Telengana (21,252), Chattisgarh (14,446), West Bengal (13,208) and Haryana (11,174), together accounting for 86.7% of all road accidents in the country. Around 83.6% of all fatalities from road accidents also occurred in the top 13 states.

The 50 Indian cities with million-plus populations accounted for 22.1% of all accidents, 11.3% of fatalities and 16.4% of injuries. Mumbai reported the highest number of accidents, at 23,468 and Delhi accounted for the most deaths, at 1,622.

According to the survey drivers were responsible for 77.1% of the accidents in 2015, against 78.8% during 2014. Over speeding by drivers accounted for 62.2% of all accidents (2,40,463 out of 3,86,481) and 61% of fatalities (64,633 out of 1,06,021).

An analysis of this data by the SaveLife Foundation, which has been spearheading the campaign for protection of good samaritans who rush accidents victims to hospitals, stated that the death of 1,46,133 people, (11 deaths per 1 lakh people) and injuries to 5,00,279 was not only the highest that India has ever recorded in history, but it represents a 53.9% increase over the last decade. There has also been nearly a ten fold increase in the number of fatalities since 1970.

Adding that one fatality is reported in India every four minutes, the foundation said according to the data a two-wheeler rider is the most at risk of being killed in a road accident. The number of people killed in accidents involving two-wheelers was 36,803 in 1,44,391 incidents. Vulnerable road users (two-wheelers, bicycles, pedestrians, etc.) make up for 46.3% of the total fatalities.

The foundation found that the age-group of 15-44 years was most at risk of being killed, with 72% of all fatalities occurring among this age group. Men constituted over 82% of all fatalities, with 1,20,559 being killed in road accidents in 2015. The foundation has also highlighted how overloading, protruding loads and defects in vehicles result in accidents and fatalities.

Reflecting on the change in the patterns and trends of road accidents, the foundation said, "The last decade registered the first decline in the number of road accidents as well as fatalities from one year to the next. However, both accidents as well as fatalities then rose to the highest number ever recorded in 2015."

Elaborating, it said, "The number of road accidents nationwide registered its first decline in 2011, a decline of 1,942 road accidents. The number continued to fall till 2013, by which time the drop in road accidents was 13,152. The number began to rise again after 2013 and subsequently rose to the highest ever recorded in 2015". On fatalities, the foundation added, "The number of fatalities registered its first decline in 2012, a decline of 4,227 fatalities. The number continued to fall till

2013, by which time the drop in fatalities was 4,913. The number began to rise again after 2013, and subsequently rose to the highest ever recorded in 2015.”