

INDIA ACCOUNTS FOR 10% OF GLOBAL ROAD CRASH VICTIMS: WORLD BANK

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: World Bank and India

India, which has one per cent of the world's vehicles, accounts for 10 per cent of all road crash victims, the latest World Bank report on road safety said on Saturday.

Hartwig Schafer, World Bank's Vice President for South Asia, said the Indian government in recent years has taken significant steps to address the issues related to road safety.

"For India, it's one per cent of the world's vehicles and 10 per cent of the crash victims. This is something where, in particular in India, we have to pay attention," Schafer told PTI in an interview on the occasion of the release of the report on road safety in New Delhi on Saturday.

While the attention in the last year has shifted due to Covid-19, there is an interesting link between road safety and pandemic right now, he noted.

"Unfortunately, the road crashes have not been going down and any time 10 per cent of the capacity in hospitals is being used for the treatment crash victims," he said.

Schafer said road crashes actually hit the poorest and the most vulnerable segments of the populations.

"The financial impact of the crash is much more on poorer households than on better-off households. It is much higher on women who have to take care of the burden of caregiving. It is much higher on those who rely on foot and also in the informal sector," he said.

However, according to Schafer, the good thing is that India was doing quite a bit on road safety.

Last year, India amended its Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Act, which is "bringing a lot of innovation" in terms of financing, protection and enforcement to the fore, he said.

Responding to a question, Schafer said that Tamil Nadu is one of the states which has reduced the number of crash fatalities by 25 per cent.

"For us in the bank, this is a major part of our engagement in the transport sector -- rural transport, urban transport -- the focus on new mobility post-Covid is something that we are doing," he said.

In South Asia, he said, the World Bank is helping in road safety standards and institutional aspects of it as well.

Building a safe infrastructure is one of the key aspects of addressing this major challenge, he said.

"We need to make sure that we have adequate roadside barriers. We need to make sure that traffic calming areas are being put in. The roads have to be safe. The vehicles have to be safe too," he said.

"If we don't have an appropriate vehicle inspection system then you have unsafe vehicles on the

road, and it's clearly documented that unsafe vehicles are actually contributing to crashes," he said.

Emergency health care facilities in the vicinity of highways make a huge difference in addressing the challenge of road safety.

"When we plan highways now, we need to make sure that crash victims are getting care within the first hour of the crash. That very often makes the difference between life and death," he said.

Highway corridors in India that have a very coordinated healthcare and emergency health care of access, in terms of hospitals, trauma centres for emergency treatment, make a huge difference in terms of whether a crash victim recovers or passes away, he added.

Enforcement is another key aspect of road safety.

In the countries having credible enforcement, the number of roads and traffic accidents is going down, he said, adding that data collection and generation related to it is also important.

The Indian government is working on all these aspects, he said, exuding confidence that moving forward there will be a reduction in the crash fatalities in India.

Minister for Road Transport & Highways Nitin Gadkari is "personally, very much committed to road safety," Schafer said, adding that the prospects of reducing road crashes in India are very good.

The goal of reducing the road crashes by half by 2030, is achievable, he asserted, noting that the foundation for this has been laid out in India.

Responding to a question, Schafer said that the global auto manufacturers should equip their vehicles in India with the same safety standards that they do in the United States and Europe.

"The UN Special Envoy for Road Safety is working with the vehicle manufacturers association, to not have doubled standards," he said, adding that this has to be addressed from both sides.

"I know that the Indian government is looking into raising those standards and setting standards, but it also has to come with a global pressure. It is important," it said.

"You look at things that are available in terms of, starting with antilock brakes to go to automatic computerized lane retention. Those are things that we should see as standard across the world because they make a huge difference," Schafer said.

Indian roads witness 415 deaths per day in accidents, the highest in the world, Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said last month.

According to the Road Accident Report for 2019, a total number of 449,002 accidents took place in India during the calendar year 2019, leading to 151,113 deaths and 451,361 injuries.

This story has been published from a wire agency feed without modifications to the text.

Click here to read the [Mint ePaper](#) Mint is now on Telegram. Join [Mint channel](#) in your Telegram and stay updated with the latest [business news](#).

Log in to our website to save your bookmarks. It'll just take a moment.

Oops! Looks like you have exceeded the limit to bookmark the image. Remove some to bookmark this image.

Your session has expired, please login again.

You are now subscribed to our newsletters. In case you can't find any email from our side, please check the spam folder.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com