

A Comparison of Road Accidents in India and Kerala

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ABSTRACT

India has highest road accidents rate in the world. Over 1.46 lakhs people were killed in road accidents in India in 2015 alone. Kerala has road accident rate twice that of India. Over 4,100 people are killed in road accidents in Kerala every year. The problem of traffic accidents has become a serious social and health hazard resulting in tremendous loss of human, financial and other resources. The traffic accident conflicts points and risk factors have been constantly rising on our road. The problem of road accidents in Kerala is becoming more acute and calls for the immediate attention from all corners. The state is very much concern about the increasing trend of road accidents in the state and much financial expenditure from the limited resource base have been made by various departments and agencies in the state on road safety related activities during the last few decades. Kerala is known for its human development achievements with lower economic growth, but the increasing number of road accidents, the loss of productive lives and the permanently disabled population followed by it arises too many questions to the planners and academic community of the state. As India as a whole is following the prescribed objective of United Nations, zero accident rates by 2020 the assessment of road accidents in Kerala compared to India is meaningful. In the paper the various aspects of road accidents in the state and its comparison to the country and southern states etc are being discussed.

KEY WORDS: Road Accidents and Road Safety

1. INTRODUCTION

The whole world is worried about the increasing trend of road accidents and its impact in the countries. Road accidents have become one of the major health problems in the world and many international associations and agencies started to take the matter seriously in their discussions and action plans. The United Nations is observing the decade of 2011-2020 as the Decade of Action for Road Safety aiming to reduce the accident rate. The member countries of the United Nations are regourasily following the objective with various policies and efforts including India. India witnessed 5, 01,423 road accidents in 2015 alone with 1.4 percentage change over the previous year where it was 4, 89,400 (Road Accidents in India-2015 by Ministry of Road Transport and Highways).The number of road accidents brought out by various government agencies and official sources demand a serious discussion on it. This paper is trying to pave a flat form for that discussion by analyzing the different dimensions of the problem.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY AND DATA BASE

The main objectives of the paper are to discuss the road accidents statistics of the country in terms of number of road accidents, number of persons killed and number of persons injured in it. The paper also attempts to assess the position of Kerala's road accidents in the Indian context. In preparation of this paper, secondary data source, especially the various yearly report

of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways have been referred. In addition to this, Road Accidents statistics published by National Transportation Planning and Research Centre and State Crime Record Bureau etc have also been used.

DISCUSSION OF THE PROBLEM

India has become one of the dangerous accident spot in the world with more than 1.46 deaths and 5, 00,279 injured persons in the year 2015. The number of road accidents in the country crossed five lakh figure with 5, 01,423 road accidents in 2015. In the same year, Kerala registered 39,040, road accident cases that is 7.7 percentage to the all India and when the country registered 1, 46,133 number of killed and 5, 00,279 number of injured (both minor and major) the state contributed to 2.7 and 8.7 percentage with 4,052 and 43,562 numbers respectively. The table: 1 below shows it.

NUMBER OF ROAD ACCIDENTS IN INDIA AND KERALA AND KERALA'S PERCENTAGE CONTRIBUTION TO INDIA

YEAR	NUMBER OF ROAD ACCIDENTS IN INDIA	NUMBER OF ROAD ACCIDENTS IN KERALA	KERALA'S PERCENTAGE TO INDIA
2005	439,255	42363	9.64
2006	460,920	41647	9.04
2007	479,216	39917	8.33
2008	484,704	37263	7.69
2009	486,384	35388	7.28
2010	499,628	35013	7.01
2011	497,686	35309	7.09
2012	490,383	36137	7.37
2013	486,476	35230	7.24
2014	489,400	36318	7.42
2015	501,423	39040	7.79

Source: Report of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways & Road Accident Statistics For Various Years Compiled by National Transportation Planning and Research Centre.

TABLE NO 1

As the table shows, the road accidents number has been increasing year by year and crossed five lakh figure in India in 2015 with 501,423 number of road accidents. In the same years Kerala the southern state of Indian union, small in geographical area also witnessed nearly forty thousand number of road accidents. In Kerala, no year from 2005 to 2015, witnessed road accidents number below thirty five thousand and seven percentage contribution to all India in the road accidents statistics.

NUMBER OF ROAD ACCIDENTS AND PERSONS KILLED

When an accident takes place there may be victims who died in it, in short such an accident cases is called as fatal road accidents. When fatal road accidents take place followed by it

imposes huge financial burden to the families and the country as a whole. The number of killed persons on roads in India and Kerala is shown in the table: 2, below;

TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS KILLED IN ROAD ACCIDENTS IN INDIA AND KERALA AND KERALA'S PERCENTAGE CONTRIBUTION TO INDIA.

YEAR	NUMBER OF PERSONS KILLED IN INDIA	NUMBER OF PERSONS KILLED IN KERALA	KERALA'S PERCENTAGE TO INDIA
2005	94,968	3203	3.37
2006	105,749	3589	3.39
2007	114,444	3778	3.30
2008	119,860	3810	3.18
2009	125,660	3831	3.05
2010	134,513	3942	2.93
2011	142,485	3990	2.80
2012	138,258	4133	2.99
2013	137,572	4151	3.02
2014	139,671	3964	2.84
2015	146,133	4052	2.77

Source: Report of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways & Road Accident Statistics For Various Years Compiled by National Transportation Planning and Research Centre.

TABLE NO 2

As the table shows, in India after 2005, the number of road accidents has not fallen below one lakh number and in the last five years it is above 1.3 lakh in number. In the same years, Kerala also witnessed above three thousand and four thousand number of killed persons from road accidents and in terms of percentage it is 2 to 3. The fatal road accidents depend on many factors the speed of the vehicles involved in it or the violation of the traffic laws by the drivers such as not wearing helmets and seatbelts etc sometimes it may also be the cause of complacency from the people who ought to rescue the victims because of the legal procedures they tend to go through.

NUMBER OF ROAD ACCIDENTS AND PERSONS INJURED

When the road accidents happen, there may be injured persons in it; injury may be minor or major. Minor injury is one which doesn't require overnight stay at hospital or surgeries but in the case of the later it requires at least one over night stay in the hospital and sometimes under goes surgeries and post treatment and rehabilitation. The table: 3 below shows the number of such type of road accidents in India and Kerala. This number is the sum of both minor and major road accidents;

TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS INJURED IN ROAD ACCIDENTS IN INDIA AND KERALA AND KERALA'S PERCENTAGE CONTRIBUTION TO INDIA

YEAR	NUMBER OF PERSONS INJURED IN INDIA	NUMBER OF PERSONS INJURED IN KERALA	PERCENTAGE TO INDIA
2005	465,282	49459	10.63
2006	496,481	48640	9.80
2007	513,340	51228	10.00
2008	523,193	51124	9.78
2009	515,458	49881	9.68
2010	527,512	48246	9.15
2011	511,394	43473	8.50
2012	509,667	41455	8.15
2013	494,893	40997	8.28
2014	493,474	40709	8.25
2015	500,279	41287	8.25

Source: Report of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways & Road Accident Statistics For Various Years Compiled by National Transportation Planning and Research Centre.

TABLE NO 3

The year 2015 witnessed more than five lakh road accident victims from the Indian roads and the same year Kerala contributed 8.25 percent of injured persons to the all India with 41,287 injured persons from Kerala roads .The share of the state to the total number of injured persons is eight to ten percentage which arises dangerous questions to the state which basically strives for its human development and welfare policies. When people are getting life time disability from road accidents, their rehabilitation and social inclusion is a matter of huge financial and social responsibility.

ROAD ACCIDENTS AND TOP THIRTEEN STATES IN INDIA

As per the 2015 Ministry of Road Transport and Highway's report takes the accident statistics of 13 states together and analyzed that these 13 states together contributed 86.7 percent of road accidents in the country. At the national level, the assessment of the top accident states and their share to the total road accidents can be used to form policies and to decide on how much money to be invested in those states for road safety activities. The table below shows it

TOP 13 STATES' CONTRIBUTION TO THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ROAD ACCIDENTS IN INDIA

STATES	PERCENTAGE SHARE	TOTAL NUMBER OF ROAD ACCIDENTS
1.Tamilnadu	13.8	69,059
2.Maharashtra	12.7	63,805
3.Madhy a Pradesh	11.0	54,947
4.Karnataka	8.8	44,011
5.Kerala	7.8	39,014
6.Uttar Pradesh	6.5	32,385
7.Andhrapradesh	4.8	24,258
8.Rajasthan	4.8	24,072
9.Gujarath	4.6	23,183
10.Telangana	4.2	21,252
11.Chattisgrah	2.9	14,446
12.West Bengal	2.6	13,208
13.Haryana	2.2	11,174
TOTAL	86.7	4,34,814

Source: Source: Report of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways & Road Accident Statistics For Various Years Compiled by National Transportation Planning and Research Centre.

TABLE NO 4

There are four southern states in the list including Kerala. The southern states including Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Telengana together registered 1, 97,594 number of road accidents with total 39.4 percent of road accidents out of 86.7 percent. Kerala occupied fifth position among them with 39,014 road accidents and 7.8 percentages to the total.

NUMBER OF INJURED PERSONS AND TOP THIRTEEN STATES IN INDIA

The classification of road accidents based on injury is significant for the various road safety activities by analyzing the depth of the injury whether it's minor or major. In the identification of the injured persons and their number gives a direction to the future policy formation including the process of imparting rescue education to the people who are on the sides of road such as v vendors and shop employees etc and also it will help the government to formalize ambulance codes for their post road accidents response etc. The table: 5 below shows the top thirteen states which contributed most number of injured road accidents.

**TOP 13 STATES AND THEIR SHARE TO THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS
INJURED IN THE COUNTRY**

STATES	PERCENTAGE SHARE	TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS INJURED IN ROAD ACCIDENTS
1.Tamilnadu	15.9	79,746
2.Karnataka	11.4	56,971
3.Madhyapradesh	11.2	55,815
4.Kerala	8.7	43,735
5.Maharashtra	7.9	39,606
6.AndhraPradesh	5.9	29,439
7.Rajasthan	5.2	26,153
8.Uttar Pradesh	4.6	23,205
9.Telangana	4.6	22,948
10.Gujarat	4.3	21,448
11.Chattisgarh	2.7	13,426
12.Odisha	2.4	11,825
13.West Bengal	2.4	11,794
TOTAL	87.2	4,36,111

Source: Report of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways & Road Accident Statistics For Various Years Compiled by National Transportation Planning and Research Centre.

TABLE NO 5

In the list of thirteen states which registered 87.2 percent number of injured persons in which five are southern states including Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. These five states together registered 2565663 numbers of injured persons with 35.6 percentages to the total. Kerala occupied fourth position with 43735 road accidents and 8.7 percentage of it.

3. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The number of road accidents in India and Kerala has not shown much reduction in the discussed years. The number of road accidents, persons killed and injured number from it also remains more or less stagnant over the years. The share of Kerala to the different categories of road accidents is a

matter of serious concern as the state thrives for its human development. The state has secured its position as five and four in the category of total number of road accidents and number of persons injured. In this context, the aim of achieving zero accident rate by 2020 demands strict road safety policies in the country and in the state also. Such an approach should be based on the principles like human life and health are paramount, and safety consideration should take priority over mobility. Human beings are prone to make errors due to their physical, mental and driving limitations. Therefore, transportation system should be designed to such level of safety so that the scope for human errors is minimized and the harm is reduced when they occur. And safety of all segments of road uses must be the main concern of any road safety policy. Providers, enforcers and health authority must guarantee the best safety standards for all citizens, be they motorist, pedestrians, school children, elderly people, disabled persons, females or any other group.

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