



Underwriters Laboratories and NIMHANS release national level research reports on road safety

Data driven study focuses on coordinated and convergent, multi-agency approaches to tackle road deaths and injuries in India.

BANGALORE, May 12, 2017: To mark the Fourth United Nations Global Road Safety Week (May 8 – 14), UL, a global safety science leader and National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) today released an exhaustive analytical study titled, **“Advancing Road Safety in India: Implementation is the Key”**. **To serve as a ready reckoner, the two partners also released a summary study, along with a ‘facts and figures’ report.** Intended as a reference document to aid multiple stakeholders in developing comprehensive mechanisms to address the road safety crisis currently afflicting the country, the pan-Indian study delves into the accident data sourced from various government and independent, national and international reports and studies. It also offers a state wise perspective to indicate differential burden of road traffic incidents.

The report examines the impact of rapid socio-economic development and motorization without accompanying prioritization to road safety. It analyzes conflicting data points and under reporting from varied sources, which occur on account of investigation by less

trained personnel. The data laden study also scrutinizes the patterns of road related fatalities and injuries across a plethora of criteria – gender, type of road user, economic background of the victim and location (urban/rural). Inferring that the complexity of the road safety problem in India is an amalgamation of varied macro and micro factors, the report lays bare the challenges of addressing the country's alarming rate of road traffic incidents – inefficiency in implementation of relevant laws owing to divided responsibility between central and state governments across various ministries, the lack of a coherent data collection system that combines police and hospital records, inadequacy of public infrastructure like well-maintained roads and trauma centres and the absence of in-depth crash analysis that results in ineffective, ad hoc measures to curb accidents, among other reasons. Key insights from the report are:

- Based on a summary of available data from Indian studies, it can be concluded that pedestrians (30 – 40 %), two wheeler riders/ pillions (30 – 40 %) and cyclists (approximately 10 %) account for nearly 80 % of road deaths and injuries, which is in contrast with official reports due to fallacies in reporting practices.
- Few Indian studies indicate the number of deaths is likely to be higher by nearly 20 %, while serious injuries are underreported by more than 50 % as compared to official reports.
- The five southern Indian states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra together accounted for 46.8% of accidents.
- As per national reports, only 22.1% of accidents and 11.3% of road deaths occurred in the 50 million plus cities in India in 2015. (MoRTH, 2015). Thus, it is clear that large number of road crashes and deaths occur on rural roads (that also include most of the national and state highways) where road safety is yet to gain prominence.
- Indian Highways (54,72,144 kilometres) account for 4.84% of road length but contribute to half (52.4%) of road accidents and 63% of road deaths in India.
- Very few injured and seriously affected persons receive adequate trauma care and situation is worse in rural India.
- Irrespective of data source and nature, in more specific terms, 100% of the severely injured, 50% of the moderately injured, and 10–20% of the mildly injured will have lifelong disabilities.

The study was released by **Shri R. Ramalinga Reddy, Honorable Minister for Transport, Government of Karnataka** at the national symposium 'Advancing Road Safety in India' jointly organized by UL and NIMHANS, where experts also deliberated on the study's suggestions for positive safety outcomes. The comprehensive reports were

developed by the WHO Collaborating Centre for Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion and Centre for public Health at NIMHANS, Bangalore.

Commenting on the launch of the report, Mr. R.A. Venkitachalam, Vice President, Public Safety, UL said, "It would not be an exaggeration to state that the lack of safety on Indian roads is tantamount to a public emergency. With the recent passage of the Motor Vehicles Bill in the Lok Sabha, there is a renewed vigor on part of the government to gear the country toward safer roads. However, the situation cannot be rectified by one agency alone – multiple stakeholders, from the government, corporates, auto manufacturers, law enforcement, health care professionals, educational institutions and road safety experts need to collaborate on a scientific level to evolve sustainable solution for the problem. At UL, we have always believed in the efficacy of applying science to solve any safety issue. Our association with NIMHANS is one of the most important engagements in India to further our public safety mission. Imbued with varied perspectives, this data rich report is without doubt, a crucial starting point to further advance the agenda of road safety in India".

Dr. G. Gururaj, Head of WHO CC and Centre for public Health at NIMHANS and the author of national road safety reports mentioned that "Road safety in India has been a neglected area amidst rapid developmental policies and programmes, and faces multiple challenges in implementation. Essentially road safety is science and requires a scientific approach to address the problem that needs to move beyond simplistic answers. Advancing road safety needs a framework based on good quality data that should bring multiple stakeholders to implement solutions in a convergent manner with systematic monitoring and evaluation of programmes and interventions".

About UL

UL fosters safe living and working conditions for people everywhere through the application of science to solve safety, security and sustainability challenges. The UL Mark engenders trust, enabling the safe adoption of innovative new products and technologies. Everyone at UL shares a passion for making the world a safer place.

About NIMHANS

National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) is an Institute of National Importance in the field of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences and the Collaborating Centre for Injury prevention and Safety Promotion has been working in road safety as well as other areas of injury prevention for several years. The Centre is engaged in public health and epidemiological research, capacity building and human resource development, advocacy, policy and programme development as well as monitoring and evaluation. Specific areas of expertise include road safety, drowning, burns, suicide, child injuries and workplace injuries. For more details visit <http://www.nimhans.ac.in/>.