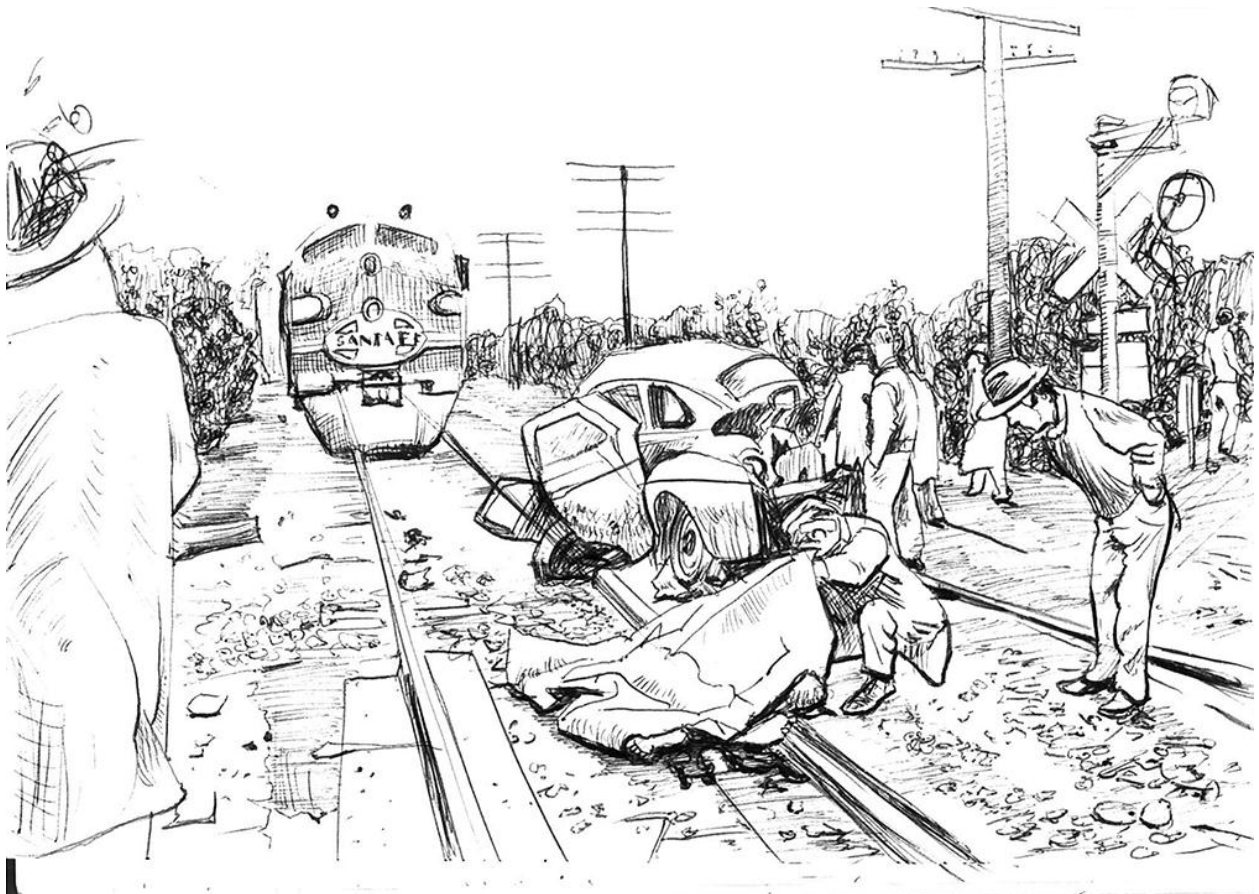


# ACCIDENT



## **Karachi's 'faulty' road designs causing over 10,000 accidents every year**

Despite some improvement brought about by civic agencies to minimise the risk of traffic accidents, faulty road designs remain one of the major factors contributing to mishaps that need to be effectively addressed in the development and rehabilitation drive continuing across the city these days, experts told Dawn on Tuesday.

The faulty road designs were responsible for 35 per cent accidents out of the total 30,000-32,000 road accidents taking place every year in the city, they said.

"This [ratio] translates into at least 10,500 accidents every year. It's a huge number. We believe that this issue should be addressed in the current road development works being carried out in the city," said Prof Mir Shabbar Ali, the head of the department of urban and infrastructure engineering of the NED University of Engineering and Technology.

According to him, the most important factor in faulty road designs in the case of Karachi is the removal of service lanes, which force drivers to opt for travelling on the wrong side of the road.

Road safety, he said, was equally important as road efficiency and there was a dire need for the officials concerned to give it due importance.

Studies carried out by NED University had shown that wrong-way driving alone caused 25pc (7,500 cases) accidents every year, he added.

"While the government is investing billions of rupees in road development and rehabilitation, it's the right time that this problem is addressed, too," he observed.

### **Risky U-turns**

Pointing out another factor relating to the flawed road designs, Dr Salman Zubair of Karachi University's geography department said that results from his 2015 study indicated that U-turns with medians were causing more accidents than those without medians.

"Out of the 120 U-turns examined in the city, 87 were without medians and 33 were with medians. After interviewing people living or operating their businesses in the vicinity, we came to the conclusion that more people suffered accidents who attempted to use U-turns with medians located on busy roads," he said, sharing findings of the study.

These poorly designed medians, he said, were often found without reflectors, broken at some points, suggesting a crash had occurred at least once.

Recently, he said, the civic agencies had removed two to three medians at U-turns at some places but they still existed in areas like the old Sabzi Mandi, North Karachi, North Nazimabad and on Shaheed-i-Millat Road.

"I think the government should take urban engineering experts on board to make medians safe at U-turns. Right now, they are very risky because they lack indication, warning the driver of the concrete divider ahead," he said.

Often, he observed, vehicles crashed into the medians at U-turns.

"I think it's better to remove them completely since the public lacks road sense and the government is least bothered about the risks poor road designing poses to people's lives," he said.

Citing data from some other studies, he said urban road crashes were a growing public health and safety problem both in the developed and developing world.

“Pakistan stands first in Asia and 48th in the world in this regard whereas Karachi ranks fourth in the list. Multiple factors are responsible for these crashes that include error on part of road users,” he said.

He strongly recommended use of remote sensing and geographical information system techniques in road planning and design.

“This will not only save our resources but also many lives,” he said.  
(By Faiza Ilyas Dawn 17, 01.02/2017)

### **Reckless bus driver claims four lives on University Road**

Four people, including three young women, lost their lives while 11 others were injured after a speeding bus overturned near the Baitul Mukarram Masjid in Gulshan-e-Iqbal, University road, on Thursday.

According to police surgeon Dr Aijaz Khokhar, 20-year-old Rabia Batool, daughter of Mumtaz Hussain Shah, 21-year-old Shahzadi, daughter of Zahid Zafer, 22-year-old Amina Batool, daughter of Syed Abdul Wahab, and 32-year-old Saifullah, son of Qadir Bux were identified as the deceased.



He said their bodies were brought to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital for medico-legal formalities. Three of the injured, identified as 27-year-old Muhammad Irfan, son of Mohammad Rizwan, 24-year-old Ayaz Ali, son of Ghulam Ali, and 50-year-old Shafi Bux, son of Noor Muhammad were under treatment at the same hospital.

The incident occurred within the jurisdiction of the Aziz Bhatti police station, on an under construction stretch of road. According to eyewitnesses two buses were in such a speed that driver of one of the bus could not bring his vehicle under control as it hit the under construction patch.

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah ordered a probe to ascertain the cause of the accident and arrest the bus driver who abandoned his vehicle and fled from the spot.

Mayor Karachi Waseem Akhtar who visited the site after the incident expressed grief over the unfortunate accident. He also expressed concerns over lack of safety measures at roads undergoing reconstruction.

As per Geo News, the SP Gulshan Town said investigation to track the bus driver down was underway. Sindh Transport Minister Nasir Hussain Shah said the chief minister had taken notice of the sad accident. The provincial government taking responsibility for the city's poor state of transport vowed to fix the problem within two months.

Hussain agreed that the situation on roads was indeed dire as most of the vehicles present in the city for transport purposes were not in good shape. “We can't completely shut down the existing means of transport, the ongoing projects need time for completion.”  
(The News 13, 10/02/2017)

### **Another varsity student killed in accident**

A university student was killed in a road accident near Lasbela on Friday. Ghulamullah Khan, 25, fell from a moving bus and came under its wheels on the bumpy Business Recorder Road.

The authorities blamed the ongoing construction work in the area without the provision of any proper alternative routes or diversions for the accident.

Jamshed Quarters SHO Inam Hasan Junejo told Dawn that the young man fell from the bus of route 55 when it wobbled due to the potholes on the road. The same vehicle ran him over, he added.

The driver escaped following the loss of life, leaving behind the bus, which was later impounded. The police, however, managed to arrest bus conductor, Ghulam Murtaza, and shifted the victim's body to the Civil Hospital Karachi for a post-mortem examination.

#### Advertisement

The victim, who originally hailed from Gilgit-Baltistan, was a private university student, the SHO said.

On Thursday, two university students were among four people killed when an overspeeding coach overturned after hitting a heavy stone kept in the middle of the under-construction University Road. The coach fell on the four persons who were waiting at the bus stop. The errant driver managed to escape.

Last week a young woman was killed while two persons, including a university student, were injured when a vehicle knocked them down on University Road.

The police authorities blamed both overspeeding and ongoing construction work without the provision of proper alternative routes and traffic diversions for making the life of commuters miserable, besides causing frequent accidents.

#### Students' clash

Gulshan-i-Iqbal police on Friday registered a case against over 35 workers of Muttahida Qaumi Movement-London over charges of beating around five workers of their rival faction, MQM-Pakistan, inside Sir Syed University of Engineering and Technology on Thursday, said Gulshan SHO Farooq Ahmed Sanjrani. The officer said the case has been registered on a complaint of the injured MQM-P worker, Zaheer Ahmed.

(Dawn 17, 11/02/2017)

### **Urdu varsity students stage protest as another accident victim dies**

A student of the Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology (Fuuast), who had been battling for life at a hospital for the past one week after being hit by a minibus, died on Friday.

Hunza Khan, an undergraduate student at the department of education at Fuuast, had been on the ventilator at a private hospital.

In the course of just over one week, half a dozen people have died in accidents on the same portion of under-construction University Road.

Employed at a private company, Khan was married with two children. She was a resident of Surjani Town. The accident on Feb 3 had left a woman dead on the spot and two others, including Hunza, injured.

Later, on Feb 9, three girls from the same university, Rabia Batool, Amna Batool and Kiran Shehzadi, died when a bus overturned at a bus stop near the Baitul Mukkaram mosque.

Rabia was a BS student of botany department, while both Amna and Kiran were students of microbiology department.

On Friday, funeral prayers for the victims were offered. The body of Rabia was taken to her native place, Sialkot, for burial.

While speaking to Dawn, Kiran's father Zahid Zafar said: "Kiran and Rabia were childhood friends and neighbours. They did their school, college and university education together and left this world together.

"She was the youngest of all my children and would have celebrated her 20th birthday on April 17," said her father, adding that Kiran was studious and planned to do a doctorate in her subject.

“She loved the subject of biology. I had given her the go ahead to do whatever she wants to do in her educational pursuits. But since she couldn’t get admission to a medical college after completing her intermediate studies, she opted for microbiology and got admission to Urdu varsity along with her friend,” he recalled.

Amna’s brother, Abdullah, expressed his family’s annoyance over the media organisations which aired footage or published photos of the deceased. “It’s painful to see pictures of my sister on TV screen and in newspapers. The media should respect the feelings of victims’ families,” he said, while requesting prayers for his departed sister.

Meanwhile, infuriated over the frequent accidents, students of the Urdu university staged a protest demonstration and blocked the road for some hours in the morning.

They demanded compensation for the victims, start of a bus service for students, action against the company tasked with the reconstruction of University Road, and immediate completion of the road project.

(By Faiza Ilyas Dawn 17, 11/02/2017)

### **Cost of ‘development’: City loses six students to road accidents this month**

Students of Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology (Fuuast) blocked University Road on Friday after the death of a sixth student in a road accident this month.



Five of the victims were Fuuast students while the sixth was a student of Indus University, Ghulamullah Khan, who was killed in Patel Para on a road that has been dug up for Green Line construction. As the authorities have dug up most roads across the city without providing alternative routes, road accidents have become commonplace.

With tears in her eyes, Aneela Sadaf held a placard demanding justice for her friends. She had said goodbye to her classmates, Amna Batool, Kiran Shehzadi and Rabia Batool, at the university gate at around 2pm on Thursday, shortly before the three girls had the accident. They boarded a minibus ‘Data’, whose driver was speeding and racing with another bus near Baitul Mukarram mosque when it overturned and took away their lives.

#### **Advertisement**

Sadaf was among the hundreds of students gathered inside the university to remember their friends, the latest victim of fatal road accidents that have claimed the lives of six students in the last 10 days.

However, the peaceful demonstration turned into outraged protest and sit-in against the Fuuast administration and the Sindh government after news broke that Hunza Farnaz, who was hit by a minibus F-11 outside the varsity gate a week ago, succumbed to injuries on Friday morning.

The students blocked both the tracks of University Road, disrupting the traffic and demanding the removal of the vice-chancellor.

University Road, which is used as the main artery of commute for more than 0.2 million students every day, has been dug up for the past several months with no viable alternative route. This road houses at least six universities, a college and several schools.

“This road has never been in good condition and now traffic accidents have become rampant,” complained one of the protesting students. “We have not been provided with a university transport system, which is why we have to travel on these buses and risk our lives,” she said.

The students demanded Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah ensure completion of University Road development work at its earliest and take action against the construction company that started work on

both the tracks simultaneously. They also demanded action against drivers of vehicles lacking fitness certificates and licences.

The students will be boycotting their classes in protest for a week and will be protesting until their demands are accepted.

### **Officials swoop in**

Karachi deputy mayor Arshad Vohra paid a visit to the students and announced the donation of two buses for university use. When University Road was dug up, an alternative route should have been defined, he said, adding that the workers should work day and night to complete it as soon as possible.

Criticising public transportation, Vohra said that the officials only make money in the name of fitness certificates while more than 90% buses cannot pass the fitness test in their current condition. "Karachi needs mega planning while the city government will provide help in any way they can to resolve the students' issues."

Describing the accident as the worst in the history of the university, FUUAST VC Dr Suleman Muhammad complained that the university was never allotted buses while time and again they have appealed to officials to donate transportation. "The students were our asset," he said.

### **Compensation**

On behalf of Sindh CM, transport minister Nasir Hussain Shah said that the government will pay compensation of Rs0.5 million for the heirs of each of the deceased students. The accused bus driver will be asked to pay for the damages he has done and the amount will be provided to the affected families, he added.

### **Meet the students: One has to die when it is time, student says 30min before accident**

Amna Batool and Kiran Shehzadi, two of the three students who died on Thursday, were second-year students of microbiology while Rabia Batool, the third victim, was a botany student. "The buses were overloaded as it was a day off for CNG supply," explained the victim's friend, Aneela Sadaf. "I asked Amna to wait for another bus but she had been waiting for 30 minutes and it was too hot so she decided to board it."

When Sadaf warned her to be careful, Amna replied, "One has to die when it is time." Sadaf cannot get Amna's last words out of her head. "Her words are still echoing in my ears and not in my scariest dreams I imagined it will be true the very next moment."

As for Kiran, she had been unwell and was not attending university for the last few days. She only came to attend a practical class on Thursday. "She was complaining that it took her a long time to get the bus in the morning as CNG supply was shut for two days and people have grabbed every possible spot on the bus to hang from it," recalled Sadaf, adding that Kiran took an Uber instead.

Meanwhile, Farnaz, 29, was hit when she was getting off the bus to enter Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology (FUUAST) where she was studying BEd. She was in coma for one week at Liaquat National Hospital and breathed her last on Friday morning. She leaves behind a six-year-old daughter, Anabia, and a four-year-old son, Hamdan.

After she met the accident last week, the university administration chipped in for her treatment. "The university has given Rs600,000 to the hospital and also requested the hospital give her the best of all facilities," said FUUAST VC Dr Suleman Muhammad.

(By Yusra Salim The Express Tribune 13, 11/02/2017)

## **Woman among five passengers killed, 27 injured in road accident**

At least five people, including a woman, were killed and 27 other passengers injured when a fast-moving bus hit a concrete pillar of the Sassui Toll Plaza on the National Highway on Tuesday morning, officials said.

While overtaking another vehicle, the fast-moving bus was about to hit an oil tanker head-on when its driver swerved sharply and collided with the concrete structure of the toll plaza, said the police while quoting some witnesses.

Four of the dead were identified as Raees Fatima, Anwar Saeed, Mohammad Sajid and Shahjehan.

“Usually traffic turns slow on such spots [toll and security posts] but that bus was in so high speed that it almost hit an oil tanker coming from the opposite direction in an attempt to overtake another vehicle. In the process, the driver lost the control and hit the concrete structure of the toll plaza,” said Malir SSP Rao Anwar. He said the bus was destroyed in the accident and it took more than an hour to cut its wreckage and pull out the injured victims and bodies.

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“We retrieved five bodies and 27 injured, including the driver. They were taken to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC).

The driver is being treated at the hospital,” he added.

According to passengers, speed limit violations by public transport buses are very common on the Karachi-Badin route.

The city has recently witnessed a sudden rise in fatal road accidents which is being blamed on poor infrastructure and sheer violations of rules by public transport operators. On Feb 3, two women were killed and another person was injured in an accident.

Later on Feb 9, an unidentified man and three female students of the Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology were killed when a bus overturned at a stop near Baitul Mukarram mosque.

Dr Seemi Jamali, the head of the JPMC emergency section, said that five people were brought dead to the health facility. Most of the injured suffered fractures and head injuries, she said, adding that a few of them were in critical condition.

“The impact of the accident was so strong that it left several bruises on the bodies of the victims. Several injured also suffered bone fractures due to force of the bus hit the concrete structure,” she said.

The police said they had not yet registered the case, as they were still recording the statements of the injured and witnesses. The investigators had also sought details of the bus and its owner from the department concerned to check if it was meeting all legal formalities or not, they added.

(Dawn 17, 15/02/2017)

## **Road accident compensation rates revised**

Governor endorses Sindh Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill 2015

Sindh Governor Mohammad Zubair on Wednesday endorsed the Sindh Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill 2015 with revised amounts for claims by road accident victims.

The amendment in the Sindh Motor Vehicle Ordinance 1965, adopted by the provincial assembly on February 2 this year, would be enforced with immediate effect across the province, said an announcement issued on Wednesday evening.

As per the approved law, in case of death of an insured passenger his/her heirs would be entitled to Rs500,000; victims losing sight in both eyes would be paid Rs250,000 and Rs140,000 would be paid to those who lose both lower limbs.

Victims of motor vehicle accidents could claim Rs75,000 for losing one eye and Rs10,000 to Rs65,000 for irreversible or reversible damage to any other organ.

Moreover, the word "Bank Guarantee" used in Sub-Section One of Section 49, Sindh Motor Vehicle Ordinance 1965, has been replaced with "Insurance Company Guarantee".

The insurance companies would also have to be listed with the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan and must be certified by the provincial government.  
(The News 19, 16/03/2017)

### **Three die, two children hurt as truck overturns under KPT interchange**

A woman was among three people that died while two children were injured when a fast-moving truck hit them under the KPT interchange on Thursday, according to officials and witnesses.

The 10-wheel truck, whose two tyres burst, hit a road island and overturned, leaving a motorcyclist and two passers-by dead and two children of the motorcyclist injured, the police said. The truck driver managed to escape after the fatal accident, added the officials.

The deceased were identified as Robin Mushtaq, 40, Hameeda Ghulam Hussain, 30, and Khan Mohammad, 34, while the injured were identified as nine-year-old Amal Robin and seven-year-old Zaidman Robin.

At least 17 people have been killed and dozens of others injured in major accidents in the city over the past two weeks, putting a question mark on violation of traffic rules by both public transport and goods transport as well as road safety measures.

Overspeeding, overtaking and overloading are often blamed for fatal accidents but lately, the reconstruction of thoroughfares being carried out simultaneously at a number of places without provision of alternative routes has emerged as one of the key factors behind the rising death toll within a short span of time.

#### **Advertisement**

Traffic police have blamed the civic administration for not taking them "on board" before launching about two dozen projects that not only cause traffic congestion but also result in fatal accidents.

Speaking to Dawn, SSP Traffic in Korangi Aijaz Hashmi said the truck (TKY-179) of Rehmania and Co was carrying goods of Nazir and Co Shipping, forwarded by Talha Ashraf and Talha, from Port Qasim to Karachi Shipyard at Karachi Port Trust. When the truck reached Qayyumabad on its way from the main Korangi Industrial Area Road, two of its tyres burst, the SSP said, adding that the truck hit a road island and overturned.

As a result, one motorcyclist, Robin Mushtaq, his two sons, Amal Robin and Zaidman Robin, two passers-by, Hameeda and Khan Mohammad, received injuries. They were rushed to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, where Robin, Hameeda and Khan were pronounced dead on arrival.

Dr Seemin Jamali, the head of JPMC's emergency department, said that the condition of the injured brothers was out of danger.

As the accident caused traffic jam on the main road, heavy machinery was called in to remove the truck from the road, said Landhi SP Arif Aslam.



SSP Hashmi said that the truck, which was operated by Submarine and Co Shipment for GUW, was impounded by the Korangi Industrial Area police. The police also seized a driving licence from the impounded truck in which the driver's name was mentioned as Khan Afsar.

In reply to a question about the ban on plying of heavy vehicles in daytime, SSP Hashmi told Dawn that up to 10-wheel vehicles were allowed to ply on roads during the day also.

Separately, DIG Traffic Asif Aijaz Shaikh told the media that he would recommend to the authorities concerned to ban such 10-wheel vehicles during daytime. But he quickly added that since such vehicles also carried essential goods, such as medicines and food, the decision could be taken only after taking the transporters into confidence.

Taking notice of the incident, the chief minister directed IG police A.D. Khowaja to get the traffic cleared and ensure arrest of the driver. The police chief subsequently directed DIG Traffic to take immediate steps to ease traffic congestion on the road and sought a detailed report from DIG East.

On Wednesday, three persons, including the driver, were killed while a man and his teenage son was injured when a fast-moving taxi fell from the under-construction interchange of Lyari Expressway. Earlier on Tuesday, five persons, including one woman, were killed and 27 passengers injured when a fast-moving bus hit a concrete pillar of a toll plaza on the National Highway.

At least six people, including five women, were killed in two accidents on the under-construction University Road near the Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology earlier this month. (By Imtiaz Ali Dawn 17, 17/02/2017)

### **Three perish as truck topples off KPT Interchange**

Three people were killed and two others injured as a trailer truck carrying a shipping container toppled off the Karachi Port Trust Interchange, Qayyumabad, on Thursday afternoon – the sixth major accident in the metropolis over the past 14 days which raised the two-week death toll to 18.



According to officials, the dead include one woman and two men, while the injured were two children. The accident, as per eyewitness reports, occurred when the truck was moving from Qayyumabad towards the Korangi Crossing area.

Police Surgeon Aijaz Khokhar identified two of the dead as 25-year-old Amar Baksh and 35-year-old Robin Mushtaq Masih. The woman's identity was still unknown but Khokhar said she was around 45 years old. The bodies and the injured were taken to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre.

Despite the plunge off the bridge, the truck driver, amazingly, survived and managed to flee the scene.

DIG Traffic Asif Ijaz Sheikh said that teams were out on the field to arrest the man.

As for the cause of the accident, the DIG said they were yet to pinpoint a reason as one of the truck's tyres had also burst. The police official said he had spoken to eyewitnesses who maintain that the truck was speeding. However, he reiterated that the actual cause would only be determined after proper investigations.

The nature of the accident and the vehicle involved led to much talk about the lax implementation of a ban repeatedly imposed by authorities on the movement of heavy vehicles within the city.

As per the city's traffic regulations, trucks transporting containers are only allowed to move through the metropolis after 10pm – this law too, though, has fallen prey to the pitfalls of slack implementation.

However, DIG Shaikh stated that the truck involved in yesterday's mishap was a 20-foot, 10-wheeler vehicle that does not come under the category banned from daytime movement.

"We will be writing to the relevant authorities to add these vehicles to the list of heavy traffic as well," he said, adding that there were also alternate routes earmarked for these vehicles.

Traffic accidents are frequently occurring in Karachi as its major roads have been dug up for reconstruction or other developments projects without providing proper alternate routes to motorists.

A day earlier, three people were killed and two others injured when a taxi overturned on Wednesday at Garden Interchange – the track which joins the two sides of Lyari Expressway.

The victims were taken to the Civil Hospital Karachi. Three of them, 50-year-old Saeed Qaleemullah, 60-year-old Syed Sawleh Muhammad and 50-year-old Syed Faiz Muhammad, succumbed to their injuries, while 45-year-old Haji Abdul Huq and 15-year-old Naveed Ullah were admitted for treatment.

On Tuesday, six people were killed and 27 others injured when a speeding Tando Bagho-bound bus smashed into a column of Sassui Toll Plaza on National Highway.

Police and witnesses said the bus driver tried to overtake an oil tanker when the brakes of the vehicle failed and it crashed into the column.

On February 3, a minibus had hit three pedestrians, killing one of them, a woman, on the scene. One of the injured people, Hunza Khan, a student of the Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology after battling for life at a private hospital for nine days passed away on Friday.

Then on February 9, a speeding minibus overturned at a bus stop near the Baitul Mukkaram mosque in Gulshan-e-Iqbal, killing three more FUUAST students, Rabia Hussain, 20, Kiran Zafar, 21, and Amna Batool, and a man.

The vehicle fell on them while they were waiting at the bus stop.

Police had impounded the minibus but driver and conductor managed to escape.

The next day on February 10, a university student, Ghulamullah Khan, 25, died when he fell from a moving bus and came under its wheels on the bumpy Business Recorder Road.  
(The News 13, 17/02/2017)

### **Speeding truck kills three people, injures two in Karachi's Qayyumabad**

Three people, including a woman, were killed when a speeding truck ran over a footpath and overturned near Qayyumabad roundabout in Karachi on Thursday.



According to Traffic DIG Asif Aijaz Shaikh, the driver lost control over the container-loaded 10-wheeler vehicle near the roundabout due to speeding. The driver and his conductor escaped after the accident.

One of the traffic police officers posted at the busy roundabout signaled the truck driver to stop but he didn't, said DIG Shaikh. A few metres ahead, it ran over a footpath, resulting in the death of pedestrians.

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#### **Horrific accident: Survivors recount Sassui Toll Plaza crash**

The traffic police chief said that he will write to the government to impose a ban on 10-wheeler vehicles' entry into the city during the day.

Heavy traffic, especially long vehicles, are allowed in the city only during the night after 11pm to avert such accidents from occurring.

According to Dr Seemin Jamali, head of emergency at Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, the two men and woman were brought dead to the hospital. They suffered multiple injuries causing instant death, she added.

### **Brakes failure: Five dead, 27 injured in Karachi bus crash**

Two children also suffered injuries in the incident but they were later discharged after they were given preliminary medical aid. "They were stable and did not have any serious injury," she said.

Meanwhile, two people, including a policeman, were injured in firing within the limits of Defence police station. Initial reports suggested that firing occurred over resisting a mugging attempt.

(By ZUBAIR ASHRAF The Express Tribune 13, 17/02/2017)

## **Drivers who kill shouldn't be allowed bail: traffic police chief**

DIG Asif Shaikh says he has asked transport department to review law under which cases of fatal accidents are bailable; 70pc public transport vehicles in city unfit to ply on roads

Though hundreds perish in road mishaps mostly because of rash driving, cases of fatal accidents are bailable and the provincial government has been requested to review this issue, the Karachi traffic police chief said on Sunday.

"These cases are registered under Section 320 of the Pakistan Penal Code and the drivers involved in fatal accidents manage to evade justice because it's a bailable offence. It has to be changed to prevent rash driving," DIG Traffic Karachi Asif Aijaz Shaikh told The News.



Besides, he added, most public transport vehicles in Karachi possessed fitness certificates even though they were not fit to ply on the roads.

"Seventy percent of public transport vehicles possess valid fitness certificates but they are too dilapidated to be on the roads."

He added that in 2014, the fitness certificate department was handed over to the transport department through a notification dated May 28, 2014 for its improvement.

Shaikh said the traffic police were devising a strategy to overcome public transport issues and suggestions were sent to the transport department.

The suggestions include declaring the transport sector as an industry and providing soft bank loans and subsidies to transporters.

"In the long run, this move will help in providing international standard transport facilities to citizens."

The DIG said Karachi had witnessed the disappearance of over 12,000 buses, mini-buses and coaches in the last decade.

According to one report, there were 20,000 buses, mini-buses and coaches in the city till 2000, but now only 8,000 are operating.

Similarly, there were 200 routes of public transport buses and mini-buses in the last decade, but now only 80 remain.

This decrease in the number of public transport vehicles has created a vacuum filled by illegal Qingqi motorcycles or extra seat rickshaws.

'Besides, transporters are reluctant to bring in new buses, mini-buses and coaches in the city because of the increase in fuel prices, the vehicle registration process, the government apathy and lack of insurance in case they were set ablaze in violence,' the official noted.

The DIG said some transporters had sold their vehicles in scrap while had converted them into contract carriages, trucks, and other goods vehicles.

"There is a huge gap between the demand and supply and to fill this vacuum the city has witnessed overloading, Qingqi rickshaws and conversion of three-seat rickshaws into six-seaters and even nine-seaters."

He observed that as transporters were not investing in new vehicles, 40 or 60 years old vehicles were plying on the roads.

He added that this was happening because the life of a vehicle was not specified by the government for use as public service.

"All public sector plans for mass transit are still in the pipeline and under these circumstances, there is no immediate solution."

Shaikh said the traffic police were making strenuous efforts to overcome the menace of overloading in public service vehicles, unfit buses and school vans and rash and negligent driving but these actions were not a permanent solution.

The official said to bring the public transport system in the city at par with international standards the following steps were required: Restarting the CNG green buses service, lifting the ban on the issuance of new public service routes that was in place since 1985, and providing subsidies to the transporters.

Besides, he said it would also help if the life of a public transport vehicle was specified so that decades-old vehicles that were not only responsible for fatal accidents but also causing environmental pollution could be stopped from plying on the roads.

The official said the conversion of public service vehicles into loading vehicles also needed to be discouraged.

"There should also be proper bus bays and stops. Major roads need to be widened to accommodate the growing number of vehicles and roadside encroachments which are a major cause of traffic gridlocks must also be removed."

The DIG said to overcome the problem of rash and negligent driving, it was obligatory to set up traffic signboards on all the important roads.

"Traffic signboards guide motorists and warned them to abide traffic rules and regulations"

The official also noted that the fine on rash and negligent driving was only Rs1,000 which needed to be increased to Rs5,000.

"Cases of fatal and non-fatal accidents are pending trial for a long time in lower courts and this process needs to be expedited," he added.

He said the transport department had been recommended to make amendments in Rule 57A and B for restricting old age buses from plying in the metropolis.

"We have also recommended outsourcing the vehicle inspection system as the existing one is sub-standard."

The DIG also said traffic police were launching special campaigns against unfit public transport vehicles.  
(By Salis Bin Perwaiz The News 13, 20/02/2017)

## Five picnickers dead, 11 injured in truck-van collision

Four of the victims were natives of Gujrat and were in Karachi

on vacations; van's driver also killed but truck driver escapes

Five people, including two women and a minor girl, were killed and eight others sustained injuries when an ill-fated Suzuki pick-up van carrying picnickers collided with a trailer on the ICI Bridge in the early hours of Wednesday morning.



Docks police SHO Inspector Shaukat Tanoli said 11 people were in the Suzuki pick-up, bearing registration number KD-2812, when it collided with a trailer, bearing registration number JU-8716, on the ICI Bridge.

The SHO said two people riding a motorcycle, bearing registration number KDR-6827, were also injured in this accident.

Four people, including two women, died during initial treatment at the Civil Hospital Karachi (CHK), while a minor girl succumbed to her injuries during treatment on Wednesday afternoon.

Tanoli said the trailer driver managed to flee from the spot but his associate was arrested. The trailer has also been seized by the police.

An FIR was registered on the complaint of Ahmed Javed against, the trailer driver, Tauseef. Talking to The News, Keamari SP Arif Aziz said the complainant told the police that his relatives hailed from Gujrat and they were on vacations in Karachi.

After having a picnic at the beach and paying their respects at the Abdullah Shah Ghazi shrine, they were returning to home when they met with the accident.

SP Aziz said the trailer owner, Malik Asghar, had been contacted who assured that he would reach Karachi before Thursday morning. Aziz said the trailer owner had also assured that he would bring the driver, Tauseef, with him.

Docks police Head Moharrar (HM) Abid Ali said the deceased were identified as pick-up driver Muhammad Ramzan, 38, son of Sultan Muhammad, Farzana, 40, wife of Shafique, Samina, 65, wife of Akhtar, Munir, 12, son of Shafique and five-year-old Amna, daughter of Shafique.

The ones who sustained injuries are Adil, 23, son of Muhammad Javed, Umair, 21, son of Muhammad Javed, Munawara, 12, daughter of Muhammad Javed, Abdul Rehman, 15, son of Shafique, Fouzia, 42, wife of Shafique and Robina, 35, daughter of Muhammad Shahzad.

Ali said the injured motorcyclists were identified as Kabil Khan, 45, son of Fateh Khan and Naimatullah, 17, son of Qabil Khan.

(The News 13, 13/04/2017)

## Pakistan's only research centre for road accidents shuts down

Pakistan had only one centre researching on road accidents. Situated in Karachi's Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC), the Road Traffic Injury Research and Prevention Centre (RTIR&PC) would share the stark figures of road accidents in the metropolis for 10 years. The centre shut down in December last year owing to the Sindh government's apathy.

The centre came into being on August 1, 2006, in the two rooms of JPMC's Neurosurgery Ward II.

## **Surge in head injuries**

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It was the regime of General (ret'd) Pervez Musharraf and Shaukat Aziz was the prime minister when several bank reforms were introduced that allowed car and motorcycle finance loans. As a result, there was an explosion of vehicles on roads.

## **Fatal collision: Seven children killed as truck hits school van**

It was then that neurosurgeon and former Health Director-General Dr Rashid Jooma found a sudden surge in head injuries due to road accidents. In 2004, Dr Jooma started collecting information of patients with head injuries from JPMC, Abbasi Shaheed Hospital, Civil Hospital, Karachi, Liaquat National Hospital and Agha Khan University Hospital (AKUH). "We collected good information [on] how pedestrians started [being] killed after getting hit by a car or motorcycle," he said. "... how dresses of ladies get stuck in motorcycle wheels and chain, which leads to severe road accidents."

After that, he went to the then elected mayor of the city, Mustafa Kamal, and then Sindh governor Dr Ishratul Ebad Khan, who expressed interest in their data and facilitated them to form a research centre.

## **Structure**

In the team, there was a combination of engineers – most of them from NED University – experts from public health and people from policing background. All of them were working pro bono.

## **Fatal mishaps: Three killed in road accidents**

The team trained and deployed people in surveillance of road accidents.

## **No one to finance**

Initially, the centre was funded through road-related companies and a few donors. As time passed, the bureaucratic local government came into being in 2013 that took little interest in the centre. Resultantly, the funds also halted. For two years, Dr Jooma ran the centre out of his own pocket and spent around Rs3 million to keep it going. "We went to the Sindh government's planning and development department and offered them to install the traffic injury and surveillance system in the entire province," said Dr Jooma. He added his team was even ready to form a PC-1 for the project. "They (Sindh government) showed no interest."

## **Indian TV anchor reads out news of her husband's death in accident**

According to the head of the urban and infrastructure department of NED University, Dr Mir Shabbar Ali, nobody in the Sindh government thinks that this centre is of any worth. Dr Ali along with Dr Jooma has highlighted several accident-prone spots of the city before the government through the research of this centre. Even the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee (CPLC) refused to fund the centre, he said.

## **Achievements**

According to Dr Ali, road safety audit of around 200 locations were conducted by the centre. Out of those, the Sindh government implemented their suggestions on 20% of the locations, after which the accidents' ratio declined manifold at certain locations. For example, on the recommendation of the centre, road strips were installed on the Baloch Colony Expressway after it experienced major accidents almost every week. Also, skid resistance was installed at the KPT Bridge.

## **Roads in Pakistan remain dangerous for pedestrians**

The road investigation officer of the centre, Irfan Saleem, shared that over 3,000 road accidents have been investigated by him.

Saleem used to examine the movement of heavy vehicles and motorcycles at accident-prone locations and what factors cause accidents at these locations. After that, he said, low-cost solutions would be provided to the government.

According to Saleem, the need of the centre can be gauged from the fact that according to Karachi traffic police's data, the city experiences only 600 deaths a year. "Whereas our data from only five hospitals shows that 1,200 people die due to road accidents every year," he said.

#### **Whose job is it?**

According to Dr Ali, in USA, the city government is responsible for collecting data of road accidents not the traffic police as they are law enforcers and won't be able to collect data impartially.

#### **Four killed, 25 injured in collision in Jamshoro district**

This is actually the job of the Traffic Engineering Bureau (TEB) under Karachi Development Authority (KDA), which is not doing it properly, said Dr Ali. Meanwhile, TEB's director, Qazi Abdul Qadir, was not available for comment despite repeated attempts.

When asked about the 10-year research data of the centre, Dr Jooma said that people in the city government might have that or it could be in the computers of JPMC. He, however, agreed that it is less easy now for new researchers to obtain data.

(By Oonib Azam The Express Tribune 13, 01/05/2017)