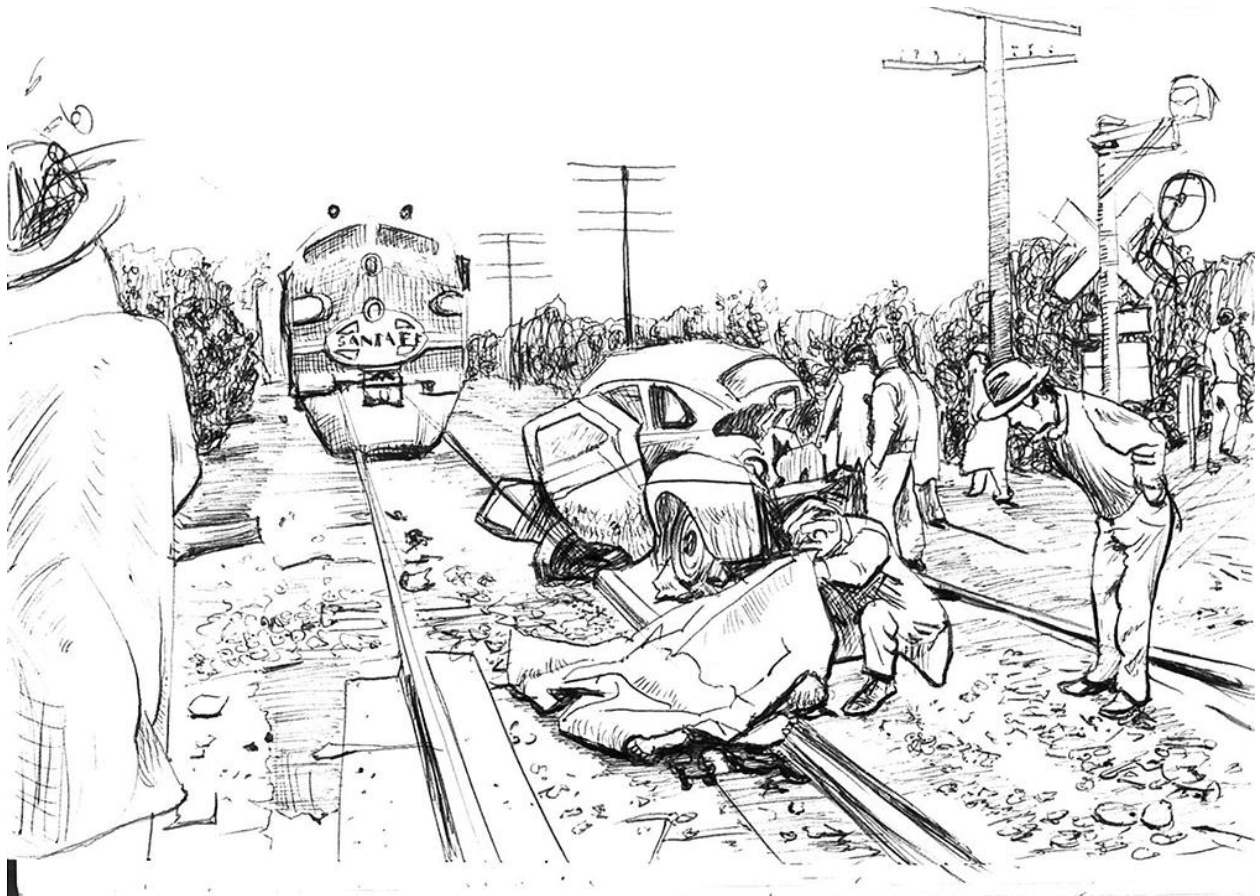


# ACCIDENT



## Train tragedy

### ACCIDENTS happen.

But many, like the one in which a passenger train crashed into a stationary cargo train near Sadiqabad early Thursday morning, resulting in a number of deaths, could have been avoided if the authorities had paid more attention to improving passenger safety protocols and investing money in the decaying railway infrastructure, including the replacement of weak tracks and an erratic signal system.

Instead, they prefer to launch new routes for political gains.

The fact that the latest tragedy has occurred in less than one month of a similar accident in which three people lost their lives in a collision between a passenger train and a freight car near Hyderabad should be enough to awaken the railway authorities from their deep slumber.

### But will it?

Train accidents are common in Pakistan and rarely shock the authorities. Apart from major incidents, the railways suffer hundreds of minor accidents every year that are either not reported at all or find very little space in prime-time news bulletins. Take the example of a locomotive ramming into a car at an unmanned level crossing and killing two in Rajanpur or the seven coaches of a running express train getting detached from the other rakes near Khanewal the same day, that is, Wednesday. Even major accidents make headlines only for a day or two; cash compensation is announced for the injured or the family of the deceased, and inquiries that never see the light of day are ordered. The accident is then forgotten until there is another similar event.

The government and the railway authorities know very well why accidents take place and what needs to be done. However, they have never bothered to fix the problem.

Governments often succumb to populism and spend the little money available on new train projects and on-board services, instead of maintaining and revamping the aging overused infrastructure or training railway personnel. This approach costs human lives.

Prime Minister Imran Khan too, who took to Twitter shortly after Thursday's accident, blames "ageing, poorly maintained rail infrastructure that has fallen into disrepair due to chronic underinvestment and poor maintenance". He has also asked the railway minister to take emergency steps to counter decades of neglect and to ensure safety standards.

The question is: will his government walk the talk and allocate enough funds for proper maintenance of railway infrastructure, and hold to account the officials responsible for neglecting the safety of passengers?  
(By Editorial Dawn, 08, 12/07/2019)

## Bike racing claims lives of four youths in DHA

Bike racing reportedly claimed the lives of four persons in Defence Housing Authority early on Thursday morning, according to Korangi Industrial Area police and Edhi Foundation.

They added that four friends were on their way to Seaview from their residence in Korangi while riding motorbikes.

"They were involved in bike racing and collided with each other owing to overspeeding near Ayesha Masjid in Defence," said area SHO Ubaidullah Khan.

They sustained critical injuries and were transported to Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre where doctors pronounced two of them dead on arrival. Two others died during treatment, said Dr Seemin Jamali, executive director of the hospital.

An Edhi Foundation spokesperson identified the deceased as Mohammed Moeed, 17, Mohammed Sami, 18, Hasan Salman, 20, and Shahbaz Yusuf, 22.

The SHO denied involvement of any vehicle in the incident and claimed that the victims' relatives did not approach the police for pursuing the case legally. All deceased were friends and neighbours.  
(By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 15, 02/08/2019)

## Traffic accidents

WHAT starts as a time for celebration quickly turns into sorrow for many families in Pakistan. Over the three-day Eid holidays, a staggering 4,677 road accidents were recorded across Punjab. Tragically, 33 lost their lives while another 5,500 people were injured. Most of the deaths occurred on Independence Day that coincided with the Eid holidays. In Peshawar, two youngsters lost their lives; 400 accidents took place between Aug 13 and 14. Meanwhile, in Karachi, at the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, there were 1,155 patients between Aug 12 and 17 due to traffic and road-related accidents. The vast majority of these deaths and injuries were attributed to speeding motorcyclists and impatient drivers trying to get to their destinations quickly. During such festive occasions, it is also not unusual to see motorcyclists doing tricks on their bikes or children behind the wheel. While it may be exhilarating for some, the brazen disregard and violation of traffic rules endangers not only their own lives but also the lives of those around them. The sheer number of casualties from such incidents is far too high to not be taken as a major public health concern.

According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, there were 5,958 fatalities throughout the country in 2017-18 — the highest in a decade — while another 14,489 others sustained injuries. Despite having comparatively better roads, highways and services, Punjab had the highest fatalities at 3,371. This was followed by KP, which recorded 1,295 deaths. Meanwhile, Sindh witnessed 802 deaths and Balochistan 313. And whether it is due to the increased number of vehicles on the roads, a growing population, or other factors, the Edhi Foundation considered 2018 to be the worst year for road fatalities in Karachi, with 797 deaths and 16,980 injuries documented. Enforcing preventive measures such as the wearing of seatbelts and helmets, constructing new pedestrian bridges, and ensuring working traffic signals, appropriate speed breakers and road signs, while being vigilant of corruption in the ranks of the traffic police, are just a few steps in the right direction.

(By Editorial Dawn, 06, 19/08/2019)

### **301 people died in accidents on Indus Highway in three years**

As many as 301 people were killed and 1,533 injured in accidents on the Indus Highway, spread over 132 kilometres from Jamshoro to Sehwan, during the last three years up to August 2019. The host of causes ranged from perceived engineering faults in the highway to running of overloaded straw-carrying trucks and heavy vehicles without route permits, it emerged on Saturday.

This has been stated in a report about road traffic accidents for 2017, 2018 and 2019 up to Aug 9 submitted by Additional Inspector General (Establishment and Training), Sindh, Dr Aftab Ahmed Pathan to IGP Dr Syed Kaleem Imam.

According to the Sindh police data, 171 people were killed in the 340 accidents while 776 others were injured in which 560 vehicles were involved in 2017.

It has been stated that 268 accidents were reported in 2018 in which 111 persons were killed and 667 injured. A total of 433 vehicles were involved in the accidents.

However, in 2019 up to Aug 9, 19 persons expired while 90 others were injured in 33 accidents in which 52 vehicles were involved.

A police spokesperson said that a majority of such tragic accidents tended to occur during the urs celebrations of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar.

The police claimed that this year no traffic accident happened during the urs of the Sufi saint while in previous years around 60 to 70 road accidents occurred.

The police data claimed that a significant reduction in fatal accidents had emerged due to the recently set up Sindh Police Accident Analysis and Research Centre (Spaarc).

Spaarc has been established under directions of the Sindh IGP to ascertain the causes of the accidents and suggest ways to prevent them.

(By Our Staff Reporter Dawn, 15, 13/10/2019)

### **Three protesters killed as transporters, FWO personnel clash near Kathore**

Three persons were shot dead during a protest by transporters on the Link Road near Superhighway, now called M-9 Motorway, on Wednesday afternoon when they clashed with personnel of the Frontier Works Organisation (FWO) who allegedly resorted to firing, police and witnesses said.

The drivers of cargo vehicles parked their trucks on the Link Road adjacent to Superhighway near Kathore in protest against the FWO's decision to implement a recent judgement of the Supreme Court with regard to the 'axle load regime' — meaning the heavy vehicles could not carry load beyond a sanctioned weight in order to save highways from destruction and prevent fatal accidents.

DIG East Amir Farooqi told Dawn that there was an issue of "axle load regime" and the FWO was trying to implement the SC verdict in this regard.

In protest against the move, the drivers of loaded vehicles started parking heavy vehicles on the road. Reportedly, when the FWO personnel tried to prevent them from doing so, the transporters allegedly pelted them with stones. Upon which, the FWO personnel resorted to firing ostensibly to disperse them. As a result, some protesters were shot at and wounded, said the DIG.

*Traffic remains suspended on Karachi-Hyderabad Motorway due to protest sit-in*

The wounded persons were taken to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, where doctors pronounced three of them dead on arrival, said Dr Seemin Jamali, the executive director of the hospital.

The victims, said to be drivers, were identified as Saad Ayub, 25, Niaz Ali, 30 and Rasool Khan, 29.

Police Surgeon Dr Qarar Ahmed Abbasi told Dawn that the post-mortem examination of the three victims revealed that all the three suffered one bullet each. A wounded person, identified as Syed Wali Shah, 40, was shifted to another hospital for further treatment, he added.

**Motorway close due to sit-in**

A heavy contingent of police rushed to the scene to prevent the situation from deteriorating further.

The DIG said that at present, the police were trying to get the Motorway and adjoining Link Road opened for the traffic as the M-9, which links Karachi with other parts of the country, was closed.

A spokesperson for the Motorway police said in a statement that due to a protest sit-in, "Motorway-9 has been blocked near Kathore".

He said that the tragic incident did not occur on the Motorway, but afterwards the transporters blocked both tracks of M-9 in the evening, causing a severe traffic jam.

The official urged the public coming from Hyderabad to Karachi to proceed towards the National Highway from Nooriabad to reach the city. Similarly, the people travelling from Karachi to Hyderabad had been advised to take U-turn from Toll Plaza Karachi towards Malir-Quaidabad leading to National Highway to avoid traffic jams.

The Motorway police also urged the citizens to avoid unnecessary travel.

**No arrest made so far**

DIG Farooqi said a legal course would be adopted and identity of the suspects would be ascertained. He said so far no one had been arrested.

Inspector General of Police Syed Kaleem Imam took notice of the killings and sought an immediate report from the Malir SSP. "Legal action should be ensured against the suspects involved in the incident," he told the SSP.

The Motorway spokesperson said that the Motorway police, district Malir administration and Rangers were trying to persuade the protesting transporters to vacate the highway for traffic.

Sources said that the FWO was given a contract of collecting toll tax on Motorway from Karachi to Hyderabad for 25 years by the National Highway Authority.

They added that the FWO personnel were implementing the SC verdict in addition to collection of toll tax as the apex court had directed all authorities concerned to comply with its order.

The Motorway was still closed for traffic when our pages went to press around midnight.  
(By Our Staff Correspondent Dawn, 15, 17/10/2019)

**Transporters end sit-in on M-9 after registration of FIR over killing of three protesters**

Transporters in the early hours of Thursday ended their hours-long protest sit-in on main Superhighway (now called M-9 Motorway) near Kathore over the killing of their three colleagues during a clash with toll tax collectors and Frontier Works Organisation (FWO) guards a day earlier.

On Wednesday afternoon, three persons were shot dead and two others were injured during a protest by transporters on the Link Road near Superhighway when they clashed with FWO personnel who allegedly resorted to firing. The drivers were demonstrating against the FWO's decision to implement a recent judgement of the Supreme Court with regard to the 'axle load regime' when the violence occurred.

The blockade was ended and traffic resumed on the busy highway after successful talks today between the protesters and a government team led by Sindh Minister for Labour and Human Resources Ghulam Murtaza Baloch and comprising MNA Agha Rafiullah, DIG East Amir Farooqi and others, according to officials.

DIG Farooqi told Dawn that "transport association members, the area's elected representatives and senior officers of FWO played a positive role in ending the road blockade."

"Assurances were given by FWO that a thorough probe will be conducted into the whole incident and those responsible will be dealt as per law," the senior officer added.

A First Information Report (FIR) was registered as per a request of the affected drivers, the DIG said, vowing that the "investigation will be done on merit".

"The FWO will bear the cost of medical treatment of those injured and will contribute towards the well being of the families of the deceased," the police chief of Karachi's East Zone revealed.

Provincial minister Baloch told the media that the transporters had ended their protest after successful talks, and that an FIR would be registered against the personnel responsible for the killings and they would be brought to justice.

Baloch said that he had held talks with representatives of the transporters' union under directions of Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah, who had taken notice of the killings.

A Motorway police spokesperson said that traffic resumed on the Superhighway at around 2:30-3:00am on Thursday after the protest which lasted over seven hours ended.

#### **FIR registered**

According to Memon Goth police, the incident's FIR was registered on the complaint of a transporter, Bashir Ayub, against the toll tax collection staff and FWO guards under Sections 302 (murder), 324 (attempted murder) and 34 (common intention) of the Pakistan Penal Code.

According to contents of the FIR obtained by [Dawn](#), the complainant said that he had gone to Ranipur, Khairpur for some personal work where he received a phone call about the clash that occurred at Toll Plaza Link Road.

Ayub said that after receiving this information, he returned to the city and when he reached the Link Road, he saw that the transporters and truck drivers had blocked M-9 in protest.

The complainant claimed that the clash had occurred because the drivers had been subjected to "undesirable attitude" for the last one week and several vehicles were stopped during the last three to four days, according to the FIR.

(By Imtiaz Ali Dawn, 15, 18/10/2019)

### **Two seminary students killed in accident**

Two seminary students who were on their way to join 'Azad March' announced by the Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl near Sohrab Goth on Sunday afternoon were killed in road accident, according to police and rescue services.

They added that Mehmood, 24, and Najam, 26, were riding a motorbike when a dumper (loaded truck) hit them near Gana Mandi off the Superhighway. They sustained critical injuries and were transported to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital, where doctors pronounced them as dead.

A Sohrab Goth police officer said that the victims were students of a seminary in the SITE area and had gone there to attend the march of the religious party when the tragedy struck them.

A Chhipa ambulance official who shifted the bodies to the hospital said that the deceased were brothers. However, the police expressed ignorance about it.

The police claimed to have impounded the dumper while the errant driver managed to escape from the scene.

(By Newspaper Staff's Reporter Dawn, 13, 28/10/2019)

### **Toddler killed as dumper falls into Drigh Road underpass**

A two-year-old boy was killed and three other people were wounded when a fast-moving dumper fell on a moving vehicle in an underpass while negotiating a turn on Sharea Faisal near the Drigh Road stop on Sunday, police said.

They said the heavy vehicle was heading towards Sharea Faisal from Dalmia and the driver lost control near the COD road while moving along the walls of the underpass.

"The exact cause of the incident is yet to be ascertained, but apparently it is due to over-speeding and rash driving," said an official at the Sharea Faisal police station. "A family on a motorbike was passing through the underpass when the dumper fell from the above and hit the bike. As a result, two-year-old Rohan died while two other men also riding a motorbike suffered injuries."

The official said that the dumper driver was arrested and the vehicle seized.

The accident caused suspension of vehicular traffic in the underpass, which led to a traffic mess on the key road. It took more than two hours to restore the movement of the vehicles, he added.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 13, 25/11/2019)

### **Seven injured in accidents across Karachi**

Seven persons were injured in different accidents in Karachi on Sunday. Meanwhile, the body of a young man was found in Defence Housing Authority.

A pedestrian sustained severe injuries after being run over by a speeding vehicle on Maulvi Tamizuddin Khan Road. The injured man, identified as Sultan, 24, son of Mudassir, was rushed to Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC) for treatment.

In a separate incident, 57-year old Shah Hussain, son of Ghulam Hussain, was injured after his motorcycle collided with a car on FTC flyover, on Shahrah-e-Faisal. He was shifted to JPMC for treatment.

Another four persons, including a minor and two teenagers, sustained injuries as result of collision between two motorcycles due to speeding in Sector 51-C, Landhi. The injured have been identified as 20-year-old Hamza, son of Ali Nawaz, 13-year-old Subhan, son of Sarfaraz, nine-year-old Usama, son of Sarfaraz and Abdullah, 17. All of them were shifted to JPMC for treatment and were later discharged.

Separately, a minor girl was injured as the roof of a house under construction collapsed in Janjal Goth near Super Highway. The injured child, identified as Kainat, 10, daughter of Noor Hameed, was rushed to JPMC, where doctors declared her condition to be stable.

### **Body found**

The body of a young man was discovered in a bungalow in DHA.

According to the police, they arrived on the scene after receiving information about the body and shifted the body to JPMC for an autopsy. They added that according to initial investigations, the deceased had died of a heart attack.

The deceased was identified as 32-year-old Nadir Ali, son of Taj Muhammad. He was employed as a driver at the house where he was found, and lived in the servant quarter there.

Police are carrying out further investigations.

### **Car catches fire**

A car caught fire in Baloch Colony, near Iqra University, on Sunday. The car, a Suzuki Mehran, was completely burned in the incident.

The cause of the fire was reportedly a short circuit. The car was reportedly enveloped in flames immediately.

The driver, Abdul Faheem, who drove it for an online car service, was able to escape the burning car swiftly, thus preventing any loss of life.

(By Our Correspondents The Express Tribune, 04, 23/12/2019)