

83% car occupants who died in 2021 weren't wearing seatbelts: Report

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NEW DELHI: At least eight out of every 10 car occupants (nearly 83%) killed in accidents across India in 2021 were not wearing seatbelts, according to a report of the Union road transport ministry. It also highlights how two out of every three two-wheeler riders (about 67%) who died in road crashes last year were not wearing helmets.

According to WHO data, use of seat belts can reduce serious crash-related injuries and deaths by half, while using properly strapped full-face covering helmets can reduce fatal injuries of two-wheeler riders by up to 64% and brain injuries by up to 74%. The report titled "Road Accidents in India 2021", which is based on data provided by state police departments, has highlighted 16,397 out of the total 19,811 car occupants killed last year were not wearing seatbelts. It also shows while 8,438 such victims were drivers, the remaining 7,965 were passengers. The data, however, do not specify how many of those killed for not wearing seatbelts were rear-seat passengers.

UP reported the maximum deaths of car occupants for not wearing seatbelts at 3,863, followed by MP (1,737) and Rajasthan (1,370).

The issue of most rear-seat passengers in the country not wearing seatbelts came to the fore after the tragic death of industrialist Cyrus Mistry in a car crash in September.

Two-wheeler riders' deaths account for 45% of total road fatalities

New Delhi: Nearly 47,000 people out of a total of 69,385 two-wheeler riders killed in accidents last year were not wearing helmets, according to a report of the Union road transport ministry. The share of two-wheeler drivers killed in such crashes was nearly two-and-a-half times more than that of pillion riders. As per data provided by the state police departments, 32,877 two-wheeler drivers not wearing helmets were killed, while in the case of pillion riders, the number stood at 13,716.

Uttar Pradesh reported a maximum of 6,445 two-wheeler riders killed for not wearing helmets. Tamil Nadu recorded 5,888 such fatalities, followed by Maharashtra (4,966). Despite the Central Motor Vehicle Act making it mandatory for all two-wheeler occupants, including pillion riders, to wear ISI-certified helmet and increasing the fine, the rule is violated rampantly across states.

The Union road transport ministry's report has also flagged serious concerns over how the number and share of two-wheeler riders and pedestrians getting killed in road crashes have increased consistently over the past few years. For example, the share of two-wheeler riders' deaths in total road fatalities was 45.1% during last year, which is the highest since the government started publishing the yearly report. Nearly 30% of these fatalities (22,786) were recorded on the National Highways (NHs).

Similarly, in the case of pedestrian deaths, the total number increased to an all time high of 29,124 last year and 9,462 of these fatalities were reported on the NH network. Even in the case of death of cyclists, 1,667 of the total 4,702 fatalities took place on NHs.