

16 July 2018

PRESS NOTE

## Open letter endorsed by eminent citizens sent to Prime Minister Modi to make Road Safety a national priority



*Judges, bureaucrats, scientists, artists, authors, industrialists, MPs, civil society organizations and road crash victims call upon the Government to strengthen road safety laws*

In light of the horrible road crashes that are occurring across the country killing people by the thousands, eminent citizens and road accident victims have sent an open letter to the Prime Minister appealing to him to make road safety a national priority and ensure the passage of the Motor Vehicles Amendment Bill 2017 during the upcoming session, which seeks to strengthen the laws regarding road safety. The Bill has been languishing in the Parliament for almost two years.

The letter reminds the Prime Minister that over 1.5 lakh road traffic fatalities occur year after year, with more than 5 lakh injuries, many of them disabled for life. Road safety shows no sign of improvement despite the matter being closely monitored by the Supreme Court. While the Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Gadkari has often made a personal commitment to the issue of road safety, the Ministry has failed to push the Bill through the Parliament where it first faced roadblocks in the Lok Sabha and now the Rajya Sabha. The country will also miss the goal of reducing road traffic injury and death by 50% by 2020 set in the Brasilia Declaration, to which India is a signatory.

The road safety community has consistently stressed that road safety is not about blaming the drivers, but about creating a safer road system, which includes safer roads, safer vehicles, safer users and speed control. “The Motor Vehicles Amendment Bill addresses many of these issues, which coupled with robust enforcement, can significantly reduce the burden of road traffic trauma, thus avoiding needless loss of human life, suffering and economic loss to the country”, said the Road Safety Network, a coalition of road safety organizations, which led the effort to get eminent citizens from across the nation to endorse the letter which highlights this grim issue to the Prime Minister.

“The law needs to be strengthened, to enhance the road safety in India. The passage of the bill in the upcoming monsoon session will help in saving hundreds of lives on Indian Roads” said George Cheriyan Director CUTS International. CUTS is one of the organisation, who is doing advocacy for the earliest passage of the Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Bill, 2017.

*The Road Safety Network is a national coalition of road safety organizations promoting safe roads in India*

Issued by *CUTS International* on behalf of the Road Safety Network

**Jeetali Agnani**, Project Officer

CUTS International

D- 217, Bhaskar Marg, Banipark, Jaipur- 302016

Mob.: 7690088472; Email: [jag@cuts.org](mailto:jag@cuts.org)

