



WEEKLY EPIDEMIOLOGICAL REPORT

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Ministry of Health

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Road Traffic Accidents in Sri Lanka

This is the first article of three in a series on “RTA in Sri Lanka”

Road Traffic Accidents in Sri Lanka

This WER has expanded on road traffic accidents and road safety from a global point of view with the inclusion of available statistics in Sri Lanka pertaining to road traffic accidents.

Global & Regional situation

There were an estimated 1.19 million road traffic deaths in 2021 globally – a 5% drop when compared to the 1.25 million deaths in 2010, which corresponded to a rate of 15 road traffic deaths per 100,000 population. Between 20-50 million more people suffer from non-fatal injuries, with many have various disabilities. Road traffic injuries can cause drastic economic losses not just to the individual, but to their families and the country as well. These losses arise from the treatment costs as well as the lost productivity for those are either disabled or killed due to sustaining injuries. These losses would also extend to family members who would have to take time off work or school to care for the injured family member. Road traffic accidents are estimated to cost almost 3% of the gross domestic product for most countries.

Several people are at heightened risk for road traffic accidents. According to the WHO, >90% of RTAs occur in low- and middle-income countries in comparison to other regions. While injuries pertaining to RTA are the leading cause of death globally for children and young adults (aged 5-29 years), 2/3rds of road traffic fatali-

ties occur among people of working age (18-59 years); with males showing a 3 times higher likely rate of being killed in road crashes in comparison to females. Globally, occupants of 4-wheel vehicles represent 30% of fatalities, followed by pedestrians who represent 23% with powered two and three-wheeler users constituting 21% of fatalities. However, when considering the South East Asian region, powered 2/3-wheelers constitute 48% of country-reported deaths followed by 4 wheelers (15%), pedestrians (15%) & bicyclists (12%). In terms of absolute numbers, the highest number of fatalities occur in the South-East Asia Region (28% of the global burden). Globally, it is heartening to note that the global fatality rate per 100,000 population has fallen 16% since 2010 when set against the 13% rise in global population. Similarly, the global fatality rate per 100,000 vehicles has fallen 41% since 2010 when set against the 160% increase in the global motor vehicle fleet. In the four regions, 10 countries were able to achieve the target of a 50% reduction in road traffic deaths between 2010 and 2021.



ROAD ACCIDENTS

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According to the 2019 Global Health Estimates by the WHO, road related injuries are in the top ten leading causes of death for Sri Lanka at number nine, contributing to 19.72 deaths per 100,000 population. However, when considering the disease burden which is calculated using disability-adjusted life years (DALY), road injury peaks in at number four on the top 10 list with 930.76 DALYs per 100,000 population, coming only behind chronic disease conditions such as ischemic heart disease, diabetes mellitus and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

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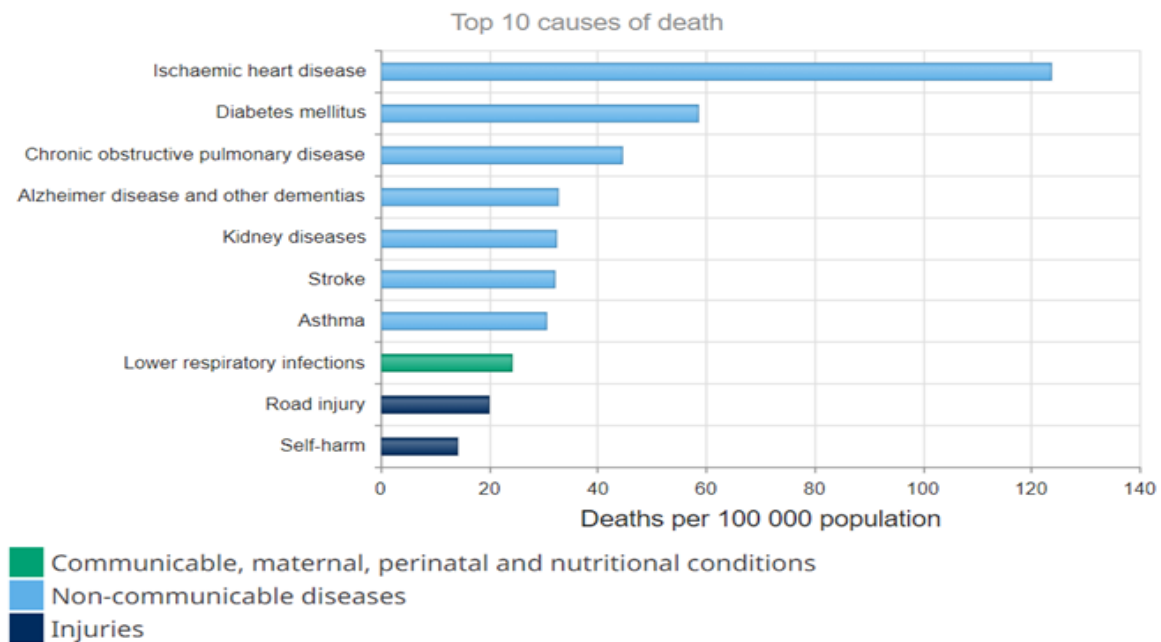


Figure 1: Global Health Estimates, WHO, 2019

Road Network in Sri Lanka

According to the World Bank (2019), Sri Lanka has a considerably high rate of population density (346 per km²), road density (173.9km per 100 km²) and vehicle density (109.73 per km²). A report issued by the Department of National Planning in Sri Lanka (2017) found that 3,000km of roads within the national road network of Sri Lanka have surpassed a traffic volume of 10,000 vehicles per day. Roads situated in urban areas usually exceed their service capacity especially during peak hours. With the inclusion of several highways and the ability to travel within less time to several destinations within Sri Lanka, more vehicles flock to the roads for trips and other activities. With increased economic activity, there are a larger number of freight vehicles involved in transportation and this lends added pressure to the road network system. This is especially cumbersome in areas where a large fraction of roads, especially in urban areas remain as two-way single carriage-way roads. The difficulties faced in expansion of the roads horizontally due to other landscape developments also remains a significant issue.

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Table 1: Selected notifiable diseases reported by Medical Officers of Health 27th-02nd Feb 2024 (05th Week)

RDHS	Dengue Fever		Dysentery		Encephali		Enteric		Food Poison-		Leptospirosis		Typhus		V. Hep.		H. Rabi.		Chickenpox		Meningitis		Leishmania-		WRCD	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	T*	C**
Colombo	349	2173	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	3	6	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	36	3	4	0	0	84	100
Gampaha	144	773	2	4	3	4	1	2	0	0	20	49	0	0	1	0	0	5	20	2	15	0	3	93	100	
Kalutara	118	499	2	5	0	0	1	3	0	0	16	64	0	0	1	2	0	9	62	3	10	0	0	80	100	
Kandy	126	944	2	5	0	0	0	0	3	9	28	0	2	0	0	0	0	18	61	0	1	0	2	100	100	
Matale	22	176	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	5	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	6	0	1	12	22	92	100	
Nuwara Eliya	13	100	3	12	1	2	0	0	2	8	38	2	6	0	1	0	0	5	17	0	1	0	0	100	100	
Galle	111	553	2	9	0	4	0	1	10	26	124	2	18	0	2	0	0	7	56	3	12	0	3	67	100	
Hambantota	37	213	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	123	0	5	0	0	0	0	2	28	2	7	4	45	86	100	
Matara	29	169	0	2	0	2	0	0	2	7	48	0	1	0	0	0	0	6	28	3	28	0	9	94	100	
Jaffna	483	3299	1	14	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	7	19	155	0	0	0	5	37	0	3	0	0	79	93	
Kilinochchi	22	164	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	100	100
Mannar	19	130	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	9	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	1	0	1	100	100	
Vavuniya	5	85	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	29	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	50	100	
Mullaitivu	11	116	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	29	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	83	100
Batticaloa	67	542	2	19	0	0	0	1	0	3	11	1	1	2	2	0	0	2	10	3	7	0	1	93	100	
Ampara	12	52	1	4	0	1	0	0	1	13	60	0	1	1	3	0	0	2	14	1	7	0	3	67	100	
Trincomalee	29	204	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	11	47	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	2	100	100	
Kurunegala	103	658	0	2	2	4	0	0	334	20	112	0	4	0	1	0	1	8	43	11	36	16	56	90	100	
Puttalam	52	411	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	17	75	2	3	0	0	0	0	3	20	0	6	0	2	67	100	
Anuradhapura	11	144	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	11	85	0	6	0	2	0	0	1	15	1	9	12	96	83	100	
Polonnaruwa	10	68	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	7	52	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	25	0	4	6	30	100	100	
Badulla	24	353	0	5	0	1	0	0	2	19	90	1	2	1	5	0	0	8	39	0	3	0	0	94	100	
Monaragala	36	198	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	35	224	1	2	0	2	0	0	2	8	7	21	4	15	64	100	
Ratnapura	72	369	0	12	0	0	0	0	2	43	208	0	3	0	3	0	0	5	29	2	11	0	10	95	100	
Kegalle	73	473	0	3	1	2	0	0	0	8	67	0	1	0	3	0	0	10	64	2	10	0	8	82	100	
Kalmunai	44	273	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	24	0	1	0	0	0	0	7	13	0	2	0	0	69	100	
SRILANKA	2022	13139	15	114	7	22	3	10	337	368	1664	29	218	6	28	0	1	118	640	44	207	54	309	85	99	

Source: Weekly Returns of Communicable Diseases (esurveillance.ephid.gov.lk). T=Timeliness refers to returns received on or before 02nd Jan, 2024. Total number of reporting units 358. Number of reporting units data provided for the current week: 358. C**=Completeness. A = Cases reported during the current week. B = Cumulative cases for the year.

Table 2: Vaccine-Preventable Diseases & AFP

27th–02nd Jan 2024 (05th Week)

Disease	No. of Cases by Province									Number of cases during current week in 2024	Number of cases during same week in 2023	Total number of cases to date in 2024	Total number of cases to date in 2023	Difference between the number of cases to date in 2024 & 2023
	W	C	S	N	E	NW	NC	U	Sab					
AFP*	00	00	00	01	00	00	00	00	00	01	03	07	09	-22.2 %
Diphtheria	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	0 %
Mumps	02	00	00	00	00	00	01	00	01	04	05	22	14	57.14 %
Measles	04	02	02	01	00	00	00	00	00	09	00	102	00	0 %
Rubella	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	00	0 %
CRS**	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	0 %
Tetanus	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	-100 %
Neonatal Tetanus	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	0 %
Japanese Encephalitis	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	00	0 %
Whooping Cough	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	-100 %
Tuberculosis	80	03	05	03	02	31	14	04	02	144	199	850	792	7.32%

Key to Table 1 & 2

Provinces: W: Western, C: Central, S: Southern, N: North, E: East, NC: North Central, NW: North Western, U: Uva, Sab: Sabaragamuwa.
RDHS Divisions: CB: Colombo, GM: Gampaha, KL: Kalutara, KD: Kandy, ML: Matale, NE: Nuwara Eliya, GL: Galle, HB: Hambantota, MT: Matara, JF: Jaffna, KN: Killinochchi, MN: Mannar, VA: Vavuniya, MU: Mullaitivu, BT: Batticaloa, AM: Ampara, TR: Trincomalee, KM: Kalmunai, KR: Kurunegala, PU: Puttalam, AP: Anuradhapura, PO: Polonnaruwa, BD: Badulla, MO: Moneragala, RP: Ratnapura, KG: Kegalle.

Data Sources:

Weekly Return of Communicable Diseases: Diphtheria, Measles, Tetanus, Neonatal Tetanus, Whooping Cough, Chickenpox, Meningitis, Mumps., Rubella, CRS,

Special Surveillance: AFP* (Acute Flaccid Paralysis), Japanese Encephalitis

CRS** =Congenital Rubella Syndrome

NA = Not Available

Take prophylaxis medications for leptospirosis during the paddy cultivation and harvesting seasons.

It is provided free by the MOH office / Public Health Inspectors.

Comments and contributions for publication in the WER Sri Lanka are welcome. However, the editor reserves the right to accept or reject items for publication. All correspondence should be mailed to The Editor, WER Sri Lanka, Epidemiological Unit, P.O. Box 1567, Colombo or sent by E-mail to chepid@slt.net.lk. **Prior approval should be obtained from the Epidemiology Unit before publishing data in this publication**

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