

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting held by the Supreme Court Committee on Road Safety on 29th December, 2020 at 11.00 Hrs with Chief Secretary, Government of Uttarakhand, to discuss implementation of road safety measures in the State

The Supreme Court Committee on Road Safety convened a virtual meeting on 29th December, 2020 with Chief Secretary, Government of Uttarakhand, to discuss implementation of various road safety measures in the State. A list of participants is at Annexure.

2. The Chairman appreciated the 17.2% fatality reduction in 2019. He however underlined the fact that a consistent and clear downward trend in fatality reduction is not yet discernible with +4%, +5.4% and +11.1% increase in fatalities in 2015, 2016 and 2018 respectively. He further said that the fatalities in Jan-Sep, 2020 reduced by about 31% largely due to lock down; and that in terms of total fatalities, the State consistently ranked 21st/22nd (i.e. 21st in 2016 to 2018 and 22nd in 2014, 2015 and 2019).

3. The Chairman observed that the State should hereon focus, more on significant contributors to road accidents and fatalities with reference to type of vehicles, cause and location such as two wheelers and LMVs; over speeding, non-wearing of helmet and seatbelt and wrong side driving; fatalities on National and State Highways in rural/open areas; the high incidence of pedestrian fatalities; and hit & run cases. Reduction of fatalities should be the ultimate objective as also the yardstick for making an assessment of the measures taken.

4. The State Government gave a detailed presentation and explained various ameliorative measures taken by them. A number of important issues were discussed. Agreed action points are listed below:-

- i. Meetings of the State Road Safety Council would be held once every six months.
- ii. The State would ensure that the Lead Agency is granted financial and administrative autonomy in its functioning. It should be fully manned with trained personnel and be specifically authorized to seek and collate reports from all the relevant departments and agencies.
- iii. The Committee was informed that though the State has a non lapsable Road Safety Fund, the expenditure is being incurred through treasury channels. The Committee desired that, to enable the Committee to take a view, the State should send a copy of the notification(s) setting up the (non-lapsable) Road Safety Fund; a copy of the Rules or Regulations governing its sanction/expenditure/utilization etc (as amended up to date); date of opening of PLA bank account, if opened; the amount of compounding fine/fee collected year wise up to 31st March, 2020; the amount required to be transferred and the amount actually transferred to the Road Safety Fund PLA bank account year wise; the date by which the balance amount, if any, would be transferred to the

- Road Safety Fund PLA bank account; and a break up of expenditure incurred & proposed to be incurred from the Road Safety Fund.
- iv. The State agreed to complete all formalities required to ensure full compliance with all the provisions of the amended MV Act related to fines and penalties by March 2021
 - v. The State would take necessary enforcement measures to prevent over speeding, non-wearing of helmets and seatbelts and wrong side driving with focus in that order, on two wheelers and LMVs on straight roads in rural and open areas and submit an action taken report. A separate action taken report on enforcement measures taken on National and State Highways in rural and open areas should also be submitted.
 - vi. The State would set up Highway Patrol as per the Orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court.
 - vii.
 - a) The State would monitor the 71 rectified Black Spots submit a summary/gist of the outcome of monitoring of the rectified Black Spots indicating, inter alia, the number of identified Black Spots, the year of their identification, year of completion of their rectification, period and duration of monitoring and its outcome in respect of each road owning agency separately. The State also agreed to send a similar note on monitoring of 1059 rectified Vulnerable Road Segments.
 - b) In respect of other Black Spots and Vulnerable Road Segments which are yet to be rectified, the State would ensure that the degree of vulnerability of each sensitive or Vulnerable Road Segment is ascertained relative to vehicles, victims and the time period of the day when the vulnerability increases; location specific engineering, enforcement and emergency care strategies/action plan for all sensitive/vulnerable road segments are formulated and implemented by all stakeholder Departments. Lead Agency would coordinate & monitor it.
 - viii. The State agreed to send a note on how the State plans to reduce fatalities in rural areas; address fatigue amongst drivers on long haul drive/journey; e-enforcement throughout the State; inadequacies of Trauma Care Centers; in the existing Trauma Care Centers; and of ambulances; and the status of their mapping; the traffic offences for which the State has notified compounding fee or fine below those prescribed in the M.V. (Amendment) Act 2019 and details thereof; and the status of implementation of provisions of the M.V. Act relating to suspension of driving licenses.
 - ix. The State agreed to conduct independent audit by a third party of all vulnerable road segments where frequency of accidents and fatalities is higher and where audit by a third party has not already been conducted.

- x. The State agreed to install street lights at junctions and road segments vulnerable to accidents and fatalities at night.
- xi. In addition to putting up signages, road markings, rumble strips etc, all road owning agencies would take permissible physical traffic calming measures on all Vulnerable Road Segments on straight roads in rural/open areas (except on Highways & Expressways) and all junctions at the lower hierarchy roads immediately before they join higher hierarchy roads preference being given to road segments/junctions where fatalities took place in the last 3 years and junctions where roads join Highways or high speed corridors.
- xii. The State would fix a time line and prepare an action plan for converting all manual Driver Testing Tracks into Computerized Driver Testing Tracks and for setting up Automated Inspection and Certification Centers so as to cover, in a phased manner, each division and eventually each district depending upon their vehicle density and other relevant factors.
- xiii. The State would identify and map all road segments where pedestrian, hit & run fatalities and collisions with parked vehicles took place in the last 3 years to see if any pattern emerges. The State would also assess/ascertain the degree of their vulnerability and the time period of the day when such vulnerability increases. The State would use either technology or ensure police presence at the relevant time/period of the day at such locations or a combination of both, as deemed appropriate, to reduce pedestrian, hit & run & head-on-collision fatalities.
- xiv. The State would also identify and map all road segments where run off the road accidents took place and install crash barriers and take other appropriate engineering measures to prevent such accidents. The State and the NHA would formulate a policy/protocol for installation and maintenance of crash barriers
- xv. The State agreed to consider/examine the feasibility of empowering the District Magistrate/District Road Safety Committees.
- xvi. The State agreed that over 73% fatalities took place in 2018 in five districts, namely, Udham Singh Nagar, Dehradun, Haridwar, Nainital and Tehri, which increased to 85.33% in 2019 and assured the Committee that it will, on priority, comply with the Committee's earlier direction to set up effective operational administrative mechanism for reduction of fatalities in these focus district.
- xvii. The State would ensure that all road owning agencies invoke penal provisions in all cases where the contractors/concessionaires failed to comply with the prescribed road safety norms.

- xviii. The Committee desired that the status of implementation of the Committee's directions by various Departments/Agencies including NHAI and all other road safety issues, including the increase or decrease in fatalities and the factors negatively influencing it, should be reviewed preferably once every month at the level of Chief Secretary.
- xix. The State would continue to implement other directions given earlier by the Committee.
- xx. The Chairman stated that he will visit the State, after Covid-19 situation normalizes, to assess the road safety scenario in the State.

4. The Committee directed that the above observations be complied with by the concerned authorities/road owning agencies **by 30th April, 2021**. The State/Lead Agency should coordinate and submit a consolidated comprehensive compliance report along with copy of orders issued, Pen Drive containing copies of documents (in pdf or other appropriate format), videos and/or still photographs in support of the compliance report to the Committee **by 15th May, 2021**.

5. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.
