

# BANGLADESH

## ROAD SAFETY PROFILE

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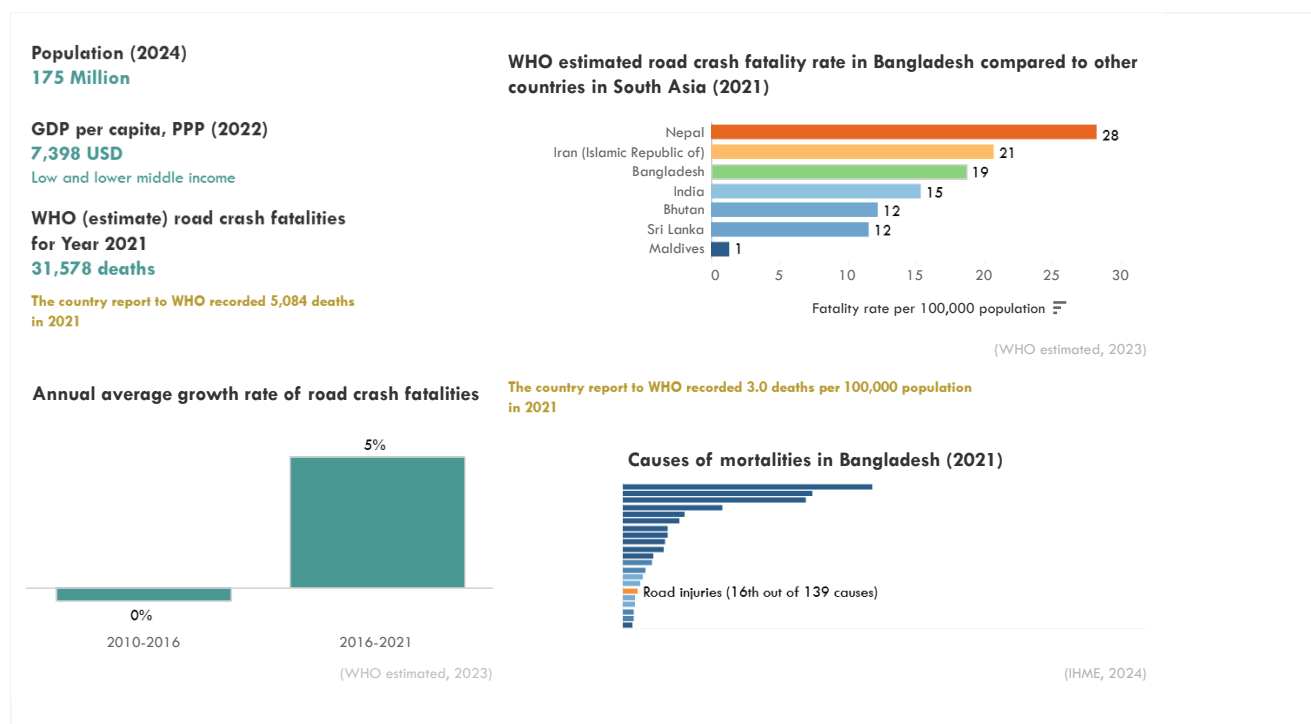


The ATO road safety profiles offer insights into the road safety in 37 Asia-Pacific countries by utilizing road safety related data from various sources and policy information extracted from a range of documents.

These road safety profiles were developed by the Asian Transport Observatory in collaboration with the Asia Pacific Road Safety Observatory (APRSO) and the International Road Federation (IRF). This September 2025 edition updates the February 2025 release—prepared for the Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Marrakech—to inform discussions at the Asia-Pacific Regional Road Safety Conference in Manila.

## Country Summary

Bangladesh faces a significant challenge with road crash fatalities. While official statistics report lower figures, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates a staggering 32,000 deaths in 2021 equivalent to 1% of total deaths in the country.



There is a significant discrepancy in the data reported by different sources for Bangladesh. The numbers reported by country statistics and Global Burden of Disease, for 2020 and 2021 are respectively about 4 thousand and 11 thousand fatalities. While WHO estimates almost 32 thousand fatalities for the same year. This inconsistency underscores the need for improved data collection and reporting mechanisms to accurately assess the burden of road crashes.

### Road crash fatality rate, by source

WHO (estimate) for Year 2021

**18.6 per 100,000 population**

WHO (country-report) for Year 2021

**3.0 per 100,000 population**

Country official statistics for Year 2019

**2.5 per 100,000 population**

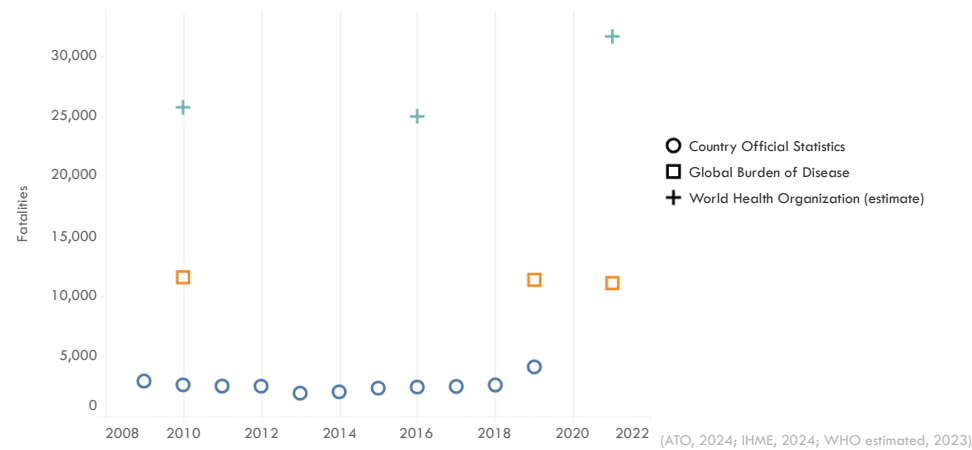
GBD estimate for Year 2021

**6.6 per 100,000 population**

(WHO estimated, 2023)

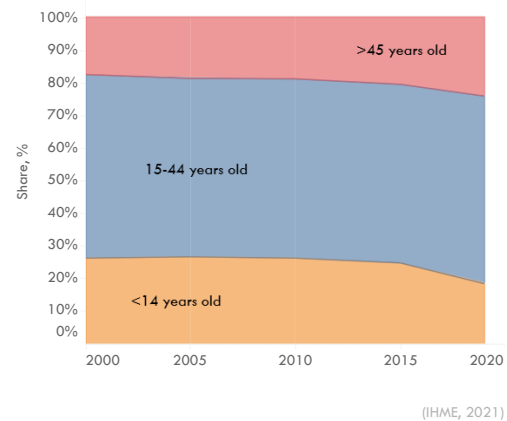
**Every 6 minutes, someone dies in a road crash in Bangladesh**

### Road crash fatalities, by source

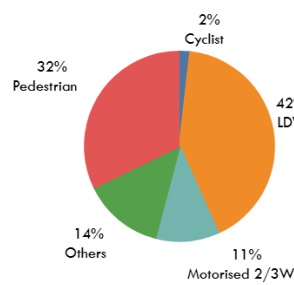


Road safety in Bangladesh presents a concerning picture. While the share of female fatalities in road crashes decreased from 12% to 9% between 2015 and 2021, it is notably lower than the Asia-Pacific average of 23%. However, the combined share of fatalities among minors (<14 years old) and seniors (>65 years old) remains high at 40%, exceeding the regional average. Vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians and cyclists, account for a disproportionate 34% of fatalities, highlighting the need for improved infrastructure and safety measures.

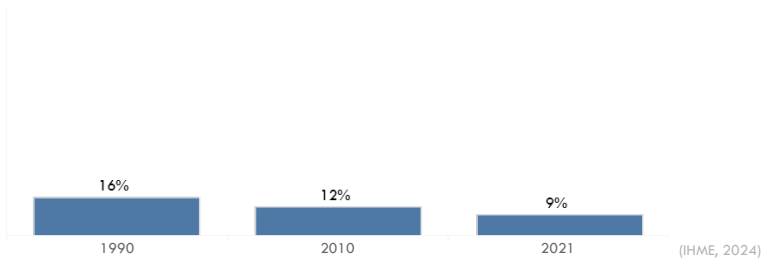
### Road crash fatalities, share by age group



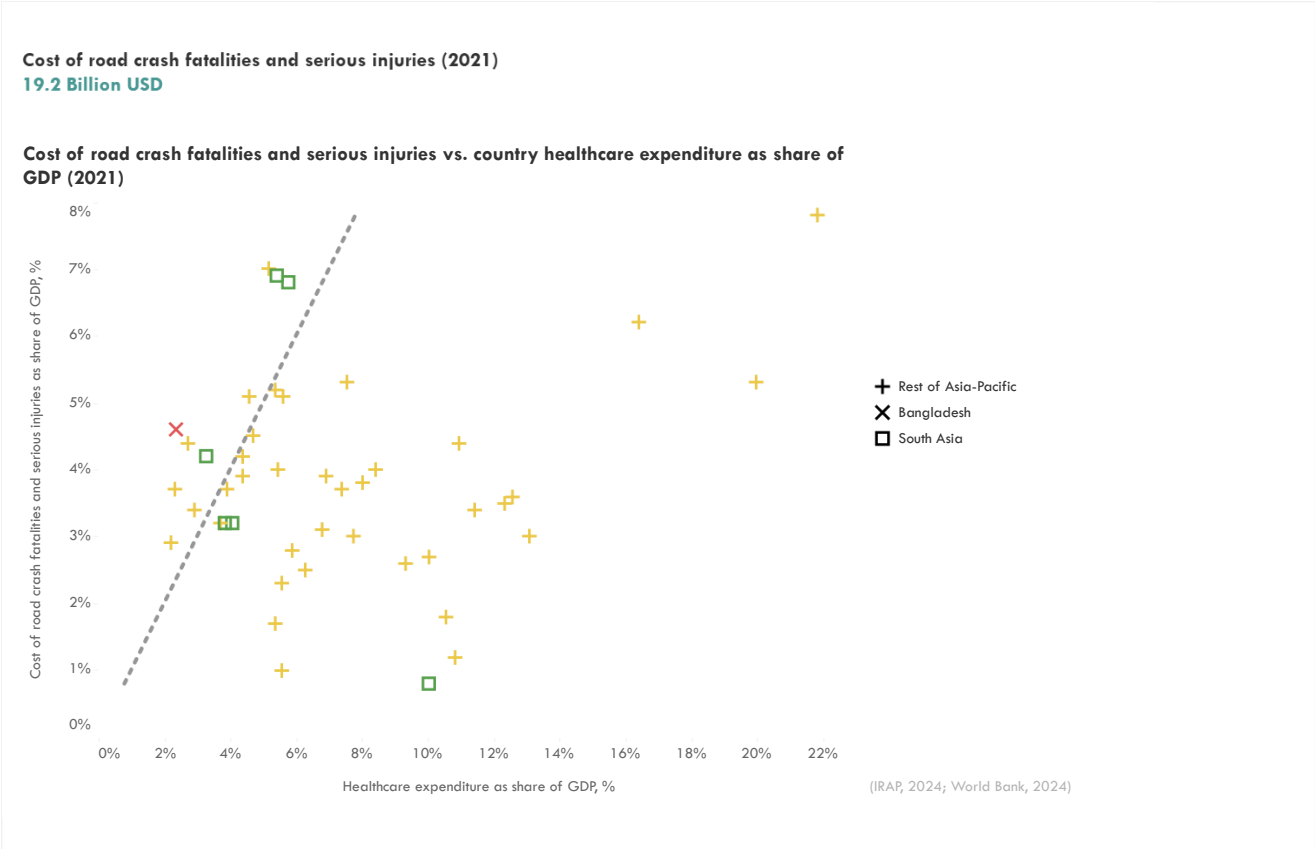
### Road crash fatalities, share by road user



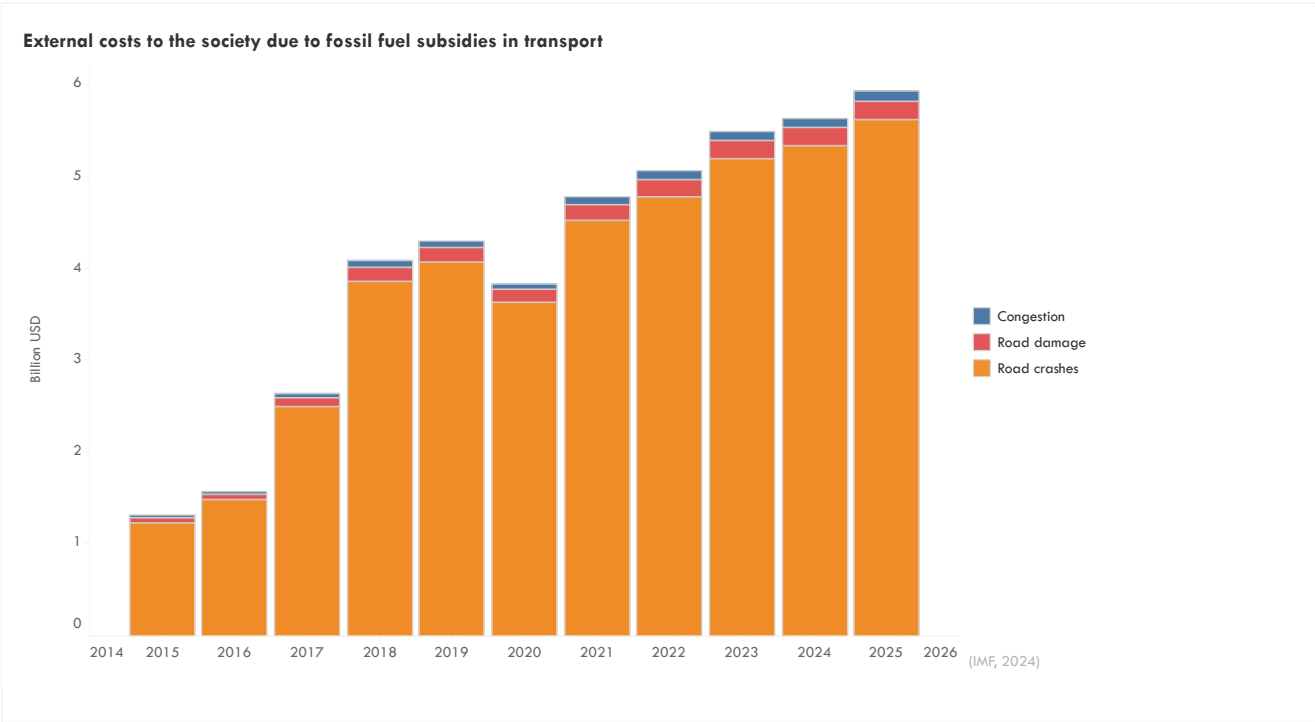
### Share of female road crash fatalities



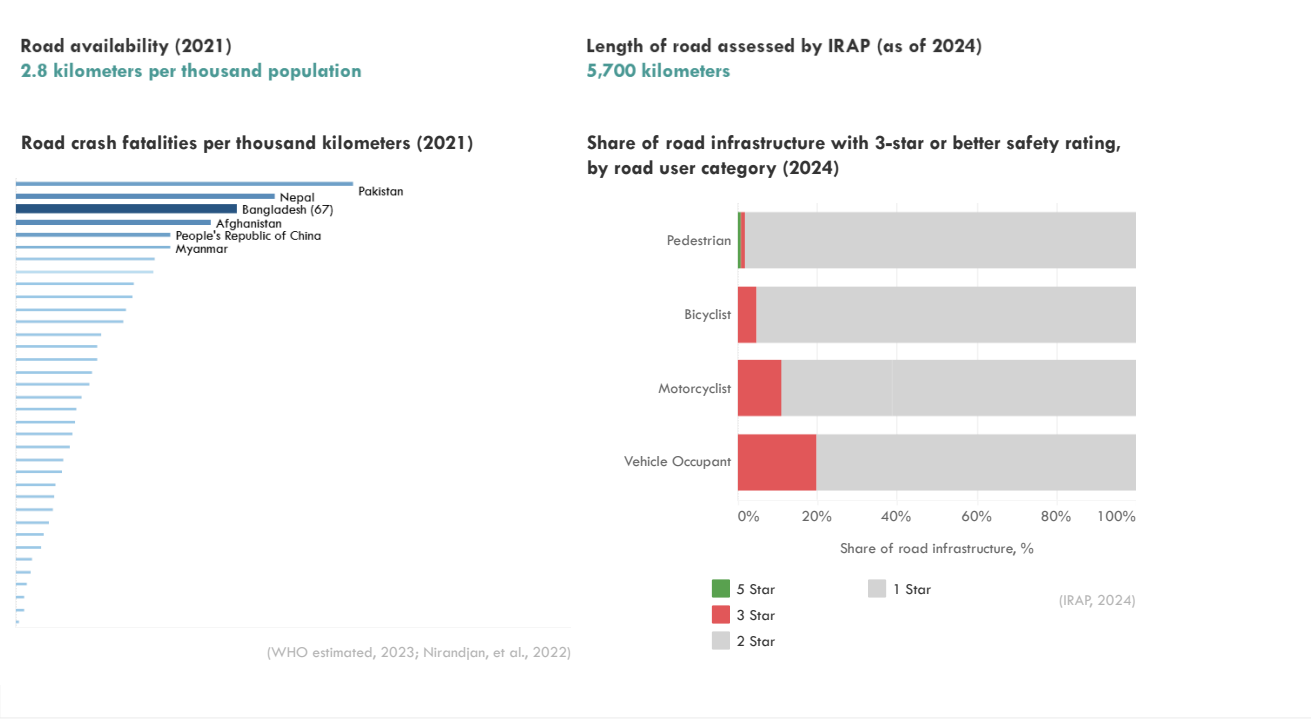
The human cost extends beyond the immediate victims. The economic cost of road crashes is substantial, amounting to approximately 5% of Bangladesh's GDP in 2021. Despite the challenges, there is a significant opportunity for improvement. A relatively modest annual investment of 0.2% of GDP could potentially save 11,000 lives. This underscores the urgent need for investment in road safety infrastructure, particularly for vulnerable road users.



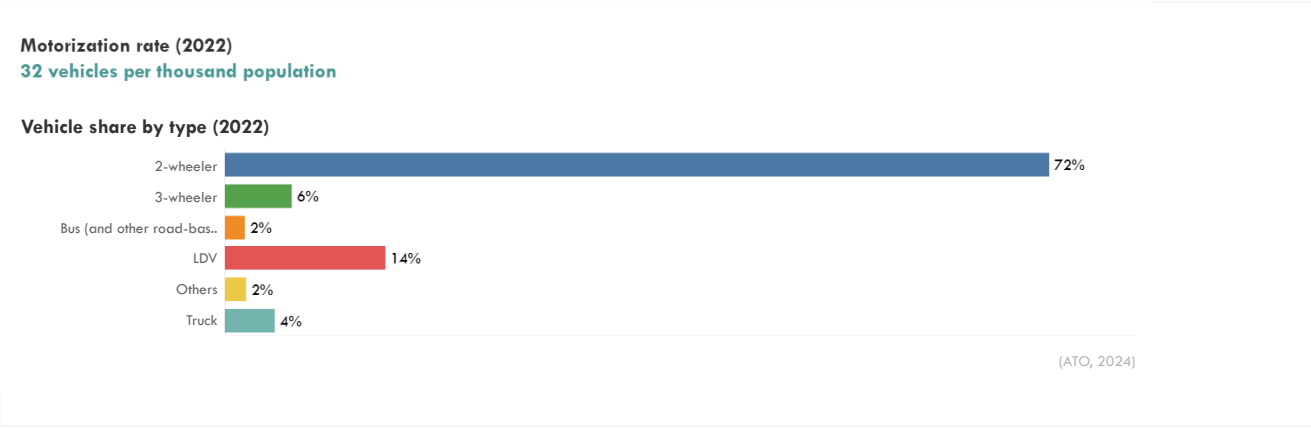
Road crashes constitute about 95% of the total implicit costs due to fossil fuel subsidies in transport. IRAP estimates that an annual investment of 768 million USD, or just about 0.2% of Bangladesh's GDP, could potentially save about 11 thousand fatalities per year.



Bangladesh has a high rate of road fatalities (about 67) per thousand kilometers of road. In Bangladesh, currently, only 2% of roads have a 3-star or better safety rating for pedestrians and 5% for cyclists, lagging significantly behind regional averages. While vehicle occupants have a 20% share of 3-star or better roads, motorcyclists remain particularly vulnerable, with only 11% of roads meeting this safety standard.

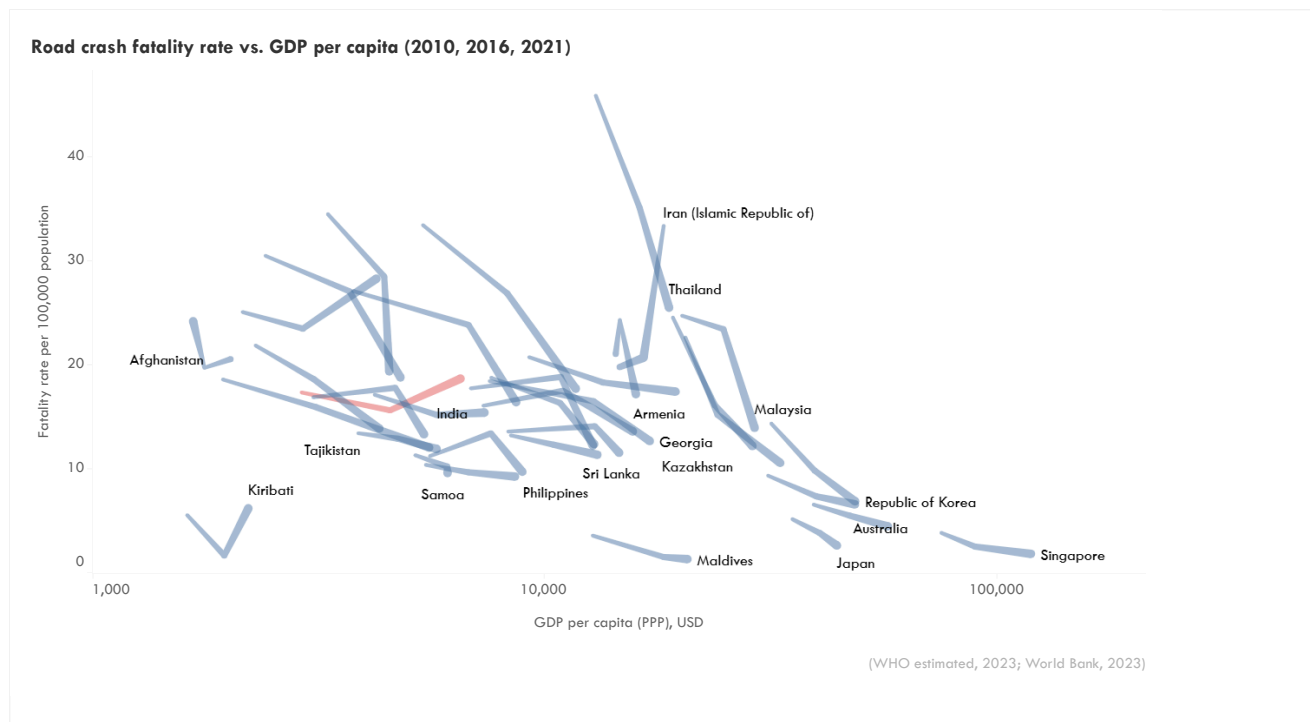


Bangladesh's vehicle fleet has experienced significant growth, with 5.46 million vehicles currently in use, representing 32 vehicles per thousand people. This marks a substantial increase from 5 vehicles per thousand in 2000. However, Bangladesh's vehicle density remains relatively low compared to the Asia-Pacific average of 577 vehicles per thousand population in 2022 and the South Asia subregion's average of 234. The composition of the vehicle fleet is dominated by two-wheelers, which account for 72%, followed by light-duty vehicles (LDVs) at 14%. Three-wheelers comprise 6%, while buses and trucks represent 2% and 4%, respectively, with other vehicle types making up the remaining 2%.

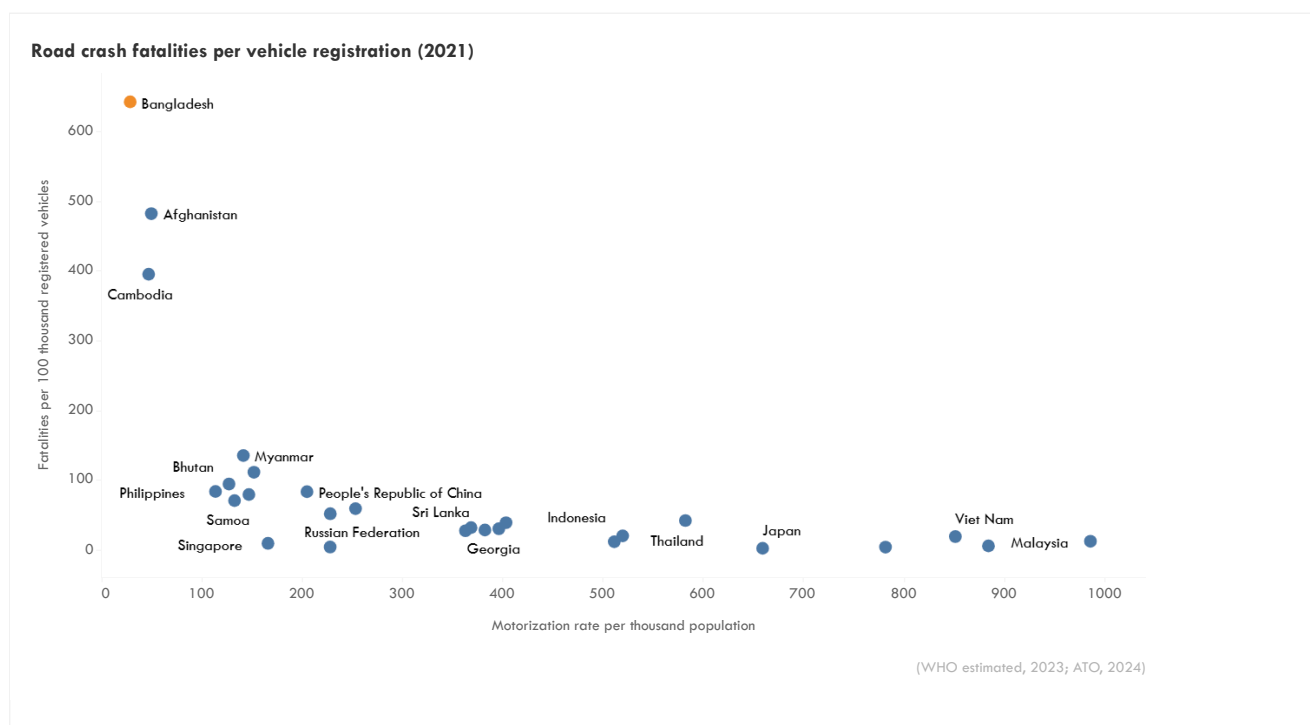


## Benchmarking

World Health Organization (WHO) estimates a staggering 32,000 deaths in 2021, with a fatality rate of 18.6 per 100,000 population. This is notably higher than the Asia-Pacific average of 15.2 and the South Asia average of 16.1. Alarmingly, the situation has worsened over time, with a 8% increase in fatality rate between 2010 and 2021, contrasting with the improvements seen in the broader Asia-Pacific and South Asia regions.

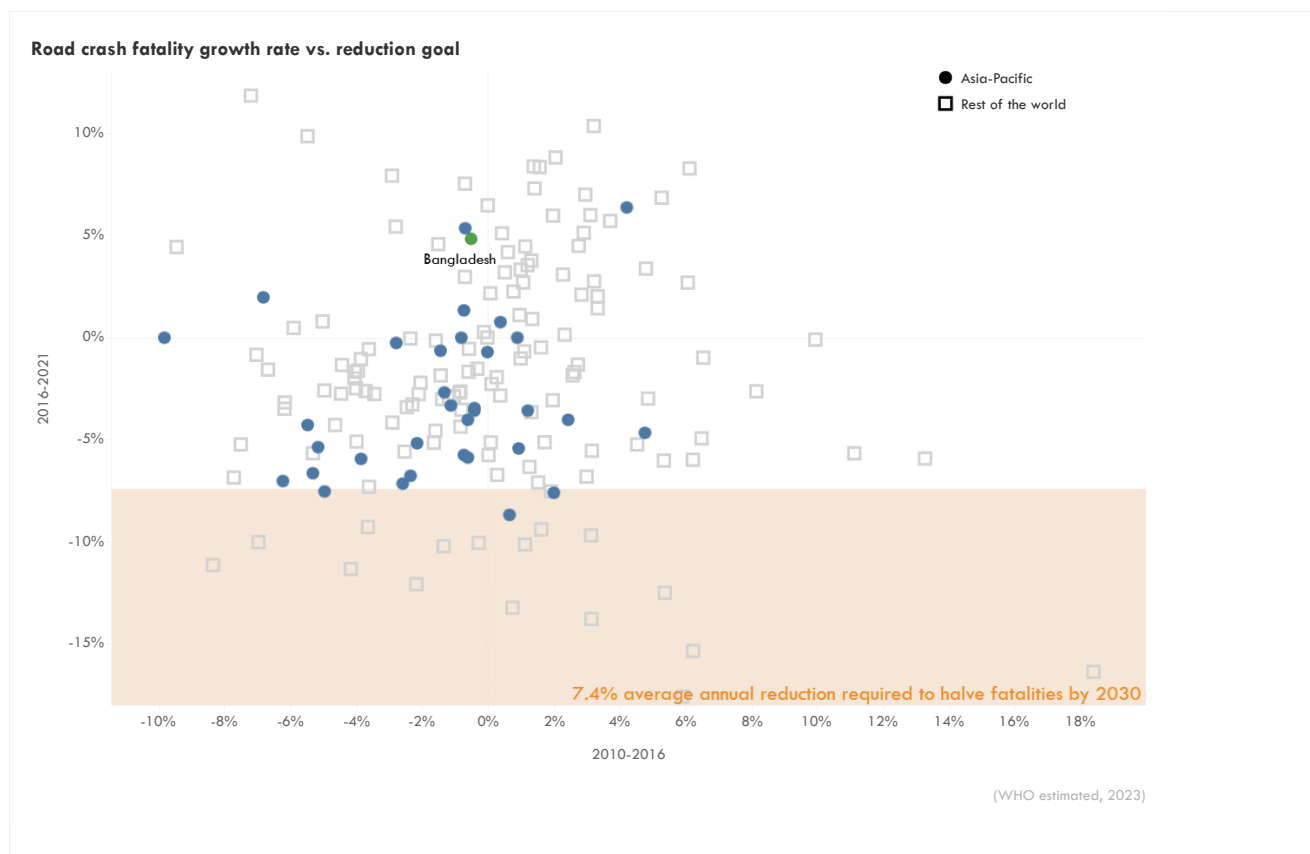


Bangladesh had about 641 fatalities per 100 thousand registered vehicles.



## Can Asia meet the 2030 target of halving fatalities?

- Urgent action needed to reduce road fatalities** The Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 aims to cut road fatalities in half by 2030. An annual reduction of at least 7.4% is necessary to achieve this.
- Asia-Pacific region falling behind** Despite reaching a peak in road crash fatalities, the Asia-Pacific region is not on track to meet the 2030 goal. The average annual reduction in deaths between 2016 and 2021 was only 0.6%, far below the required rate.
- Varying progress across Asia** Using the 2016-2021 road crash fatality growth rate as a basis for estimates until 2030:
  - Only 3 Asian countries are projected to achieve the 50% reduction target by 2030.
  - 18 Asian countries are expected to reduce fatalities by at least 25%.
  - Worryingly, 7 Asian countries will continue to increase road fatalities, moving further away from the target.
- In Bangladesh, road crash fatalities increased by approximately 4.8% per year between 2016 and 2021. If this pattern persists, the gap between current trends and the 2030 target will only widen



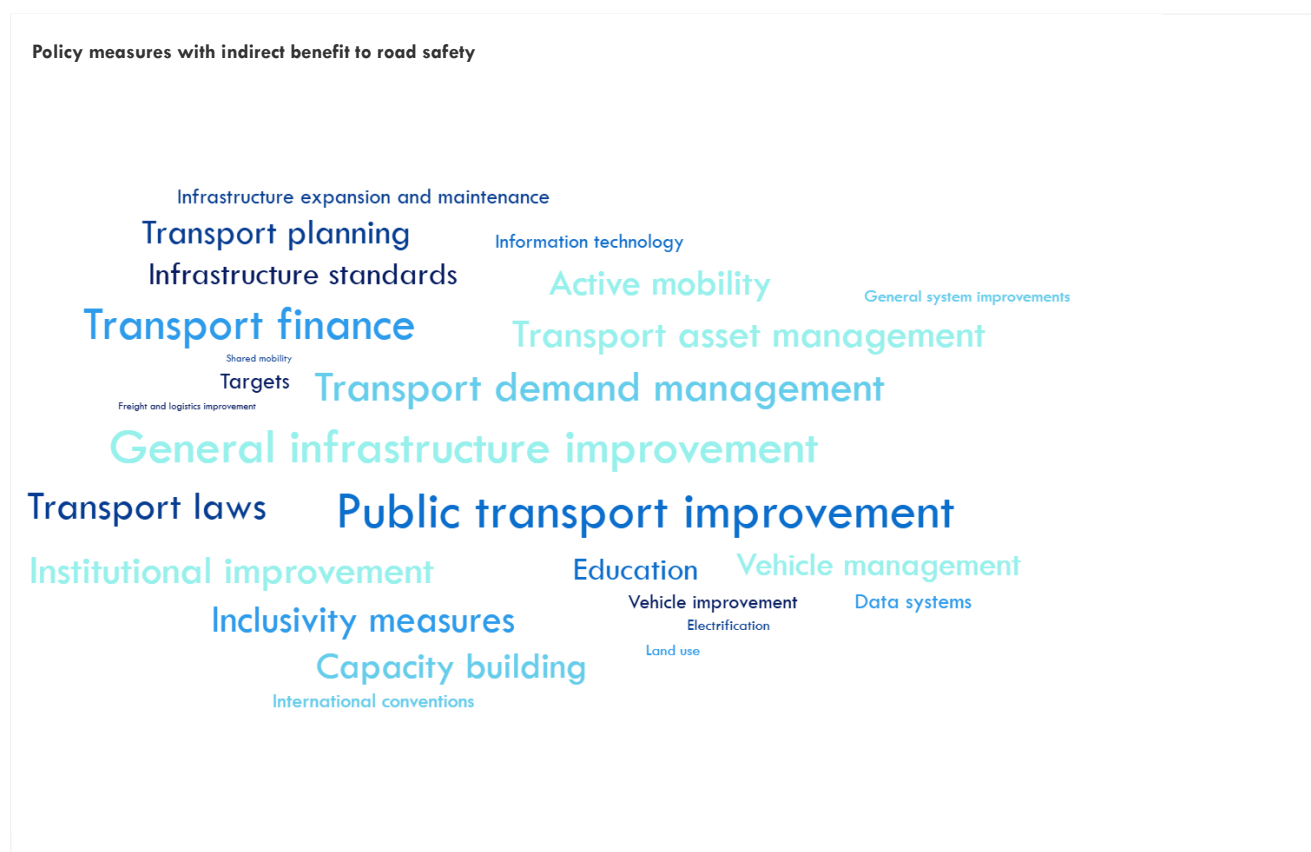
## Policy Landscape

Bangladesh is committed to significantly reducing road crash fatalities by 2025 and beyond, in line with the targets set in the National Road Safety Strategic Action Plan, the Eighth Five-Year Plan, and the Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2021-2041. To achieve this, the government will adopt a multi-faceted approach encompassing infrastructure development, vehicle safety standards, public awareness campaigns, and stricter enforcement of traffic laws. Drawing upon the Road Transport Act 2018 and the Speed Limit Guideline 2024, enforcement will focus on speeding, drunk driving, and using helmets and seatbelts. Infrastructure improvements, guided by the Road Master Plan 2009, will include constructing 10,000 km of bike lanes and footpaths, upgrading road quality to achieve a ranking of 40th globally by 2025, and modernizing railway infrastructure to encourage a modal shift from road to rail, as envisioned in the National Integrated Multi-modal Transport Policy and the Final Report on Updating Railway Master Plan. Furthermore, the "Vision Zero" approach to road safety will be promoted, emphasizing that no loss of life is acceptable.

Targets to reduce road crash fatalities or injuries		Target year	Document	Year published
Target 2025: Road safety accident death rate by country (WHO 2018) (Per 100,000) = 13 Baseline 2019: Road safety accident death rate by country (WHO 2018) (Per 100,000) = 14.43 in accordance with SDG Target no. 3.6 number of fatalities due to road traffic accidents on national highways will be reduced by 25% at the end of 8FYP		2025	Eighth Five Year Plan	2020
Measure type	Other targets with indirect benefits to road safety	Target year	Document	Year published
Active transport infrastructure expansion	Construct 10,000 km of bike lanes Construct 10,000 km of footpaths	2030	Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan	2021
Asphalt mix resurfacing	All village roads would be converted to asphalt standard with at least one lane to facilitate rural mobility of passengers and products.	2041	Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2021-2041	2012
General infrastructure improvements	Infrastructure quality: Country ranking = 40 (Baseline, 2018 = 120) Score = 5.0 (Baseline, 2018 = 2.8)	2041	Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2021-2041	2012
General public transport	Target 2025: Urban mass transit no. of cities = 1 Baseline 2019: Urban mass transit no. of cities = 0	2025	Eighth Five Year Plan	2020
General public transport	Urban mass transit in number of cities by 2041 = All major (Baseline, 2018 = 0)	2041	Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2021-2041	2012

General rail improvement	<p>Target 2025: ☐ Modernize Railway Workshop and other infrastructure. ☐ Improvement level crossing gates, other infrastructures and rolling stocks ☐ Construct new ICDs ☐ Procure adequate equipment to modernize railway maintenance ☐ Modernize signaling system of 222 stations to ensure safety. ☐ Increase efficiency and improve performance of Bangladesh Railway ☐ Ensure full operational cost recovery by FY2025.</p>	2025	Eighth Five Year Plan	2020
General rail improvement	<p>To permit the passage of broad gauge rolling stock on the entire network by 2040 and on the core network by 2035 BR plans to update ATP and train control systems before 2040. The Railway will install: 1. Automatic Train Protection (ATP)/Train Protection Warning System (TPWS) on all main line sections. 2. Communication Based Train Control (CBTC)/European Train Control System (ETCS) on corridors identified as international TAR (Trans Asian Railway) routes.</p>	2040	Final Report on Updating Railway Master Plan	2017
General transport asset management	<p>Targets 2025: ☐ Rehabilitate/ Upgrade 846 km existing rail line. Target 2025: Transport Infrastructure quality Country ranking = 80 Score = 47 Baseline 2019: Transport Infrastructure quality Country ranking = 100 Score = 42 share of Fair to Good road surfaces will be increased from 81% to 90% for overall RHD Road Network</p>	2025	Eighth Five Year Plan	2020
General transport asset management	<p>Retrofit 13,000 km (approx.) of zilla and upazila (farm to market) roads</p>	2030	Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan	2021
Target - Modal shift	<p>Unconditional: Modal shift from road to rail (10% modal shift of passenger-km) through different Transport projects such as BRT, MRT in major cities, Multi-modal hub creation, Padma Bridge etc. Conditional: Modal shift from road to rail (25% modal shift of passenger-km) through different Transport projects such as BRT, MRT in major cities, Multi-modal hub creation, new bridges etc.</p>	2030	First Nationally Determined Contributions (Updated)	2021
Target - Modal shift	<p>To achieve a shift in passenger traffic from road to rail of up to around 20% by 2030 compared to the business as usual.</p>	2030	Intended Nationally Determined Contributions	2015
Target - Transport activity	<p>Target 2025: Passenger Traffic (billion passenger kilometres) Road = 246 Inland water = 23 Railways = 15 Total = 284 Baseline 2019: Passenger Traffic (billion passenger kilometres) Road = 169 Inland water = 16 Railways = 10 Total = 195 Target 2025: Freight Traffic (billion-tonnes kilometres) Road = 31 Inland water = 7 Railways = 3 Total = 41 Baseline 2019: Freight Traffic (billion-tonnes kilometres) Road = 24 Inland water = 5 Railways = 2 Total = 31 Target 2025: Air Traffic (million passengers / million tons) Passenger = 14.63 Freight = 0.50 Baseline 2019: Air Traffic (million passengers / million tons) Passenger = 13.09 Freight = 0.41 Target 2025: Sea Port Cargo Traffic (million numbers /million tonnes) Container = 3.6 Tonnes = 122 Baseline 2019: Sea Port Cargo Traffic (million numbers /million tonnes) Container = 2.9 Tonnes = 98.24</p>	2025	Eighth Five Year Plan	2020

Target - Transport activity	<p>Target 2041: Passenger Traffic (billion passenger kilometres) Road = 4215 Inland water = 843 Railways = 562 Total = 5620 Baseline 2018: Passenger Traffic (billion passenger kilometres) Road = 169 Inland water = 16 Railways = 10 Total = 195 Target 2041: Freight Traffic (billion tonne kilometres) Road = 177 Inland water = 74 Railways = 44 Total = 295 Baseline 2018: Freight Traffic (billion tonne kilometres) Road = 24 Inland water = 5 Railways = 5 Total = 31 Target 2041: Freight Traffic Air = 1.14 million tonne Sea Port Cargo = 48.2 million containers Sea Port Cargo = 1612 million ton Baseline 2018: Freight Traffic Air = 0.38 million ton Sea Port Cargo = 2.2 million containers Sea Port Cargo = 86 million ton Target 2041: Passenger Traffic Air = 55.97 million passenger Baseline 2018: Passenger Traffic Air = 12.4 million passenger</p>	2041	Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2021-2041	2012
Technical standards for general transport infrastructure	achieve 80-110 kmph design speed with a level of Service 'B' for 900 kilometres of important highway corridors, which are now operating merely at 30-35 kmph	2025	Eighth Five Year Plan	2020
Travel time improvement	Improvement of road traffic congestion % improvement in fuel efficiency High = 15% Medium = 10% Low = 5%	2030	Bangladesh. National Communication (NC). NC 3	2018



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