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## Restraints for safety



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**T**he most significant advancement in car crash safety to reduce deaths globally has been the installation and proper usage of adult seatbelts and child restraint devices inside deaths.

However, the 8th leading cause of death in the world is Road Crashes. According to the World Health Organization's Global Status Report on Road Safety 2018, 1.35 million people die in road crashes every year and 20-50 million suffer non-fatal injuries. Road crashes are one of the leading causes of death for people aged 5-29 years and 90% of these deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries. According to the World Health Organization, annually about 25 thousand people die in road crashes in Bangladesh. Many more people become crippled. Road crash rates and deaths can be reduced to a great extent by taking specific measures.

There are numerous reasons the traffic crashes happen for. One of those is that seat belts are not mandatory for all passengers of the vehicle. Road crashes are also caused by the negligent movement

of pedestrians and the enforcement authority of the current law. Being fully ejected from a motor vehicle is nearly always fatal; yet, being strapped up during a crash may keep one safe and secure inside the vehicle. Usually, the seat belt prevents this from happening. Without a seat belt, passengers risk to be ejected from the vehicle or hurled into

Furthermore, children appear to be strapped up 92 % when adults in the car do, but 72% of the cases when adults appear to be neglecting it. 47% of the 22,215 passengers died in 2019 who weren't wearing seat belts. Seat belts saved an estimated 14,955 lives and could have saved an additional 2,549 people if they had been wearing seat belts, in 2017

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different areas of the vehicle. According to statistics from the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) when properly worn, seat belts reduce the risk of fatality by 45%-50% and minor and serious injuries by 20% and 40% respectively to front-seat passengers. The study also shows that rear seat belts had a 75% probability of preventing minor injuries and 25% of fatal and serious injuries for the passengers in the back seats of a car during a crash. It is to be noted that in more than half of all fatal traffic crashes, the victims do not appear to be adequately strapped.

alone. Naturally, seatbelts cannot stop a crash from happening. They do, however, contribute significantly to lessening the intensity of injuries sustained by crash-involved drivers and passengers.

The second half of section 49 of the current "Road Transport Act 2018" of Bangladesh merely states in sub-section (Kha) that "the passengers must respect the prescribed provisions for seatbelt fastening." Although wearing seatbelts is required in this section, the term "passenger" solely refers to the occupant in

the front seat. However, in car crashes, passengers in the back seat suffer higher injuries. This is a major problem that could lead to a far more vulnerable situation. However, it is advised that this law guarantees a functional seatbelt for all drivers, including both the front and rear seat passengers. If any of the passengers are not adequately restrained by seat belts, the driver and all other passengers must be responsible for violating the law. According to the WHO report, rules requiring the use of seat belts by all passengers are present in 57% of the nations surveyed. And what's even more shocking is that the figure for low-income nations is much lower (just 38%). Additionally the mandate that young children use child restraints, 90% of high-income countries have them, compared to 20% of low-income countries (such as Bangladesh and Malaysia). Some vehicles in lower-income nations do not even have passenger seat belts.

In conclusion, it is obvious that, if one is hurt or unintentional death in a road crash, a life with a disability cannot be desired. The seatbelt is an effective safety tool that not only saves human lives but also significantly reduces the severity of the injury that vehicle users may have sustained if they were not wearing the seatbelts. More public enlightenment is needed to increase awareness and compliance of use of seatbelts nationwide. The relevant authorities must go forward to support the usage of proper seatbelts as well as they must bring a safe child restraint system in motor vehicles under light.

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**Link:** <https://epaper.observerbd.com/2023/03/09/index.php>