BioSpectrum
the business of Bi
24 years of leveraging the business of Bio
www.biospectrumindia.co

Countries in WHO South-East Asia Region to accelerate road safety measures

05 December 2017 | News

The WHO South-East Asia Region accounts for more than one-quarter of the global road accident deaths



Alarmed at the increasing incidence of deaths and injuries in road crashes, mostly involving motorcyclists and other vulnerable road users, countries in WHO South-East Asia Region has committed to accelerate action for road safety.

Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia, said, “Countries across the Region need to drive and fast-track road safety initiatives with highest political commitment to effectively address road traffic injuries which continues to be a leading cause of death in the age group of 15 to 29 years, mostly motorcyclists and other vulnerable road users.”

The Phuket Commitment calls for prioritization, high-level commitment, united efforts of all stakeholders, knowledge management, enforcement of regulations and time-bound deliveries.

Prof Dr Piyasakol Sakolsataydorn, said, “Everyone needs to participate and share the responsibility – the government, the ministries, the private sector, civil society organizations, non-government organizations, communities and the general public.”

The WHO South-East Asia Region accounts for more than one-quarter of the global road accident deaths. In 2013, as many as 316 000 people were killed in road crashes in the Region. Over 50% of these deaths were of vulnerable road users, primarily motorcyclists, and other two and three-wheeler riders.

The vulnerable road users (VRUs)– comprising of pedestrians, cyclists and riders of powered two and three wheelers - are exposed to greater risks and are disproportionately vulnerable. In some countries nearly 80% of all road traffic deaths are motorcycle riders.

Many countries in the Region have a large fleet of two-and three-wheelers, which is expanding further. Electricity powered bikes pose significant road safety risks as they are silent, fast and do not require registration in many countries.

With the number of VRUs set to grow further across the Region, countries need to vigorously focus attention on this group to reduce the number of road crash deaths, the Regional Director said.

Zahid Maleque, The State Minister of Bangladesh; Dunya Maumoon, State Minister of Health Maldives were present at the meeting that also sought accelerated implementation of UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 through ‘five road safety pillars’ – road safety management, safer road infrastructure, safer vehicles, safer road users and effective post-crash response.

Over 150 representatives from various sectors such as transport, vehicle standard regulators, police and health, from countries within and outside the Region participated in the meeting.