

Highways! Expressways!!

What causes accidents?

I live in Lucknow for over 30 years. My parents, brother and sister live in Agra. The much hyped *Lucknow-Agra Expressway* has been extensively used by me recently during my father's illness when I travelled more than a dozen times covering a distance of 300 kms on *Expressway* in less than 3 hours averaging at 100 kms an hour. Most countries have strict upper speed limit which is 120 kms / hour on *Expressway*. European and German *Autobahns* have no upper limit but they have satellite surveillance of their *Expressway*. The trauma centers have become much less busy places throughout the developed world in the past decade on account of reduced road traffic accidents and deaths. This happy outcome is a direct result of **firstly**, high quality training of truck and car drivers, time regulation of professional lorry and bus drivers, stringent driving license tests, training of driving instructors, **secondly**, improved safety measures in automobiles (*ABS, EBD, seat belts, air balloons, crumpling-zone re-enforcements, sensors and radars enabling warnings in blind spots and auto-braking systems besides many other safety innovations in automobiles*) and **thirdly**, making roads not only worthy of fast driving but SAFE! A safe *Expressway* is not only on elevated ramp, 6 lanes with a hard shoulder for emergency stopping, pass-ways, service road on each side, wide middle divider island with anti-crash-anti-tilt railings on both sides, road patrolling, on-site basic and advance life support ambulances, SOS telephones etc. In addition, the *Expressways* in developed countries are having a large number of electronic gadgets with digital advances like lane changes, identification of impediments and impeding hazardous vehicle/element. Stringent regulatory methodology and above all high quality maintenance in case of damage of the structure are undertaken urgently. These are so far missing on Indian *Expressways*.



The following is a list of most **Common Causes of Accidents on Expressways (causes of accidents on Yamuna and Agra-Lucknow Expressways)**:

1. **Host factors ie Driver related factors.** Speeding, drunken, fallen asleep, not slept well, pre-morbid conditions like diabetes, hypertension, distracted or pre-occupied on mobile are common pre-disposing factors for accidents. Other occupants in the vehicle may contribute to above factors
2. **Agent factors ie the vehicle** Smaller vehicles speeding, vehicles equipped with less safety gadgets, tyre burst
3. **Environmental factors ie road or Expressways** not equipped as described above, poor maintenance, something standing/parked on the road without any warning, animals on the road, vehicles coming from wrong and opposite side, a careless driver are common environmental factors.

Most importantly though, driving at night more so driving on a foggy, misty, poor visibility day or night are both host and environmental related factors causing maximum accidents.

Think about above! Learn above!! Discuss the above!!! Safe driving !!!! Enjoy your *Expressways*!!!!

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