

Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Rajasthan Road Safety Policy

Road accidents are one of the leading causes of death, disability and hospitalization of people worldwide in general and particular in India. The high number of road accidents and consequent injuries and fatalities is a matter of serious concern. India tops the world in road crash deaths and injuries. India has one *per cent* of the world's vehicles but accounts for 11 *per cent* of all road crash deaths, witnessing 53 road crashes every hour, killing one person every four minutes. A study conducted (2018) by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) estimated the socio-economic costs of road crashes at ₹ 1.47 lakh crore in India *i.e.* equivalent to 0.77 *per cent* of nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, various reports have indicated that road accidents in the country are under reported and estimated road crash cost could be as high as ₹ 5.97 lakh crore *i.e.* equivalent to 3.14 *per cent* of nation's GDP. During the period of 2018 to 2024 a total of 1.58 lakh road accidents occurred in Rajasthan, leading to 1.49 lakh injuries and tragically claiming the lives of 0.75 lakh individuals.

In compliance to directions of the Supreme Court Committee¹, the Government of Rajasthan (GoR) formulated the Rajasthan State Road Safety Policy in March 2017. It outlines activities such as strengthening institutional, legal and financial environment, to ensure safer and efficient road infrastructure, improving quality of drivers, safer vehicles, safety for vulnerable road users, enforcement of safety laws, road safety education and training, emergency care and medical services for road accident victims, establishing road safety information database, *etc.* in order to make road travel safe for all users.

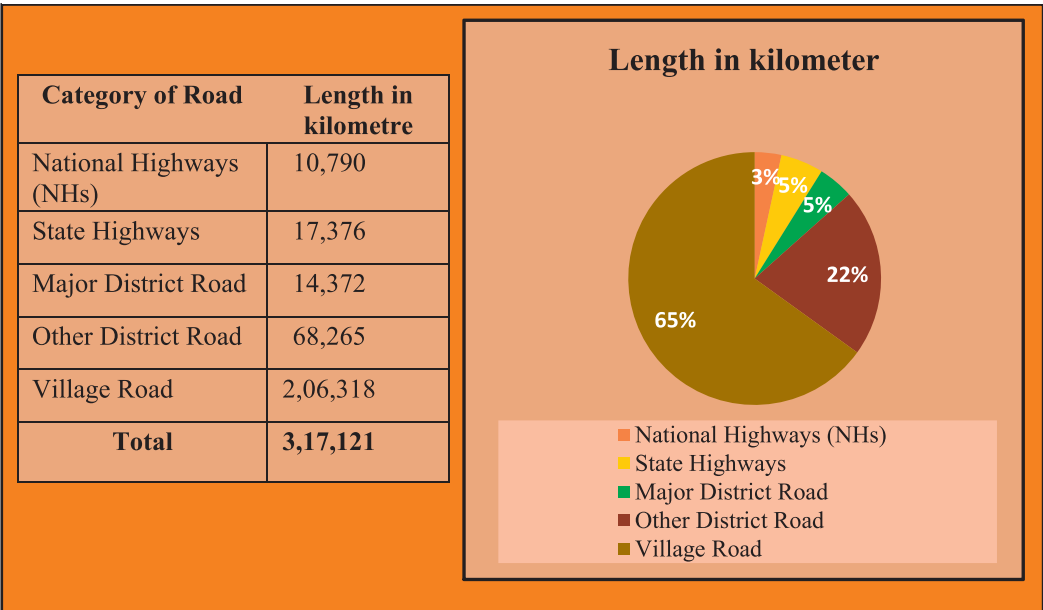
Further, in pursuance of the provisions laid down in the Rajasthan State Road Safety Policy 2017, GoR constituted dedicated Road Safety Fund by accumulating up to twenty-five *per cent* of the compounding fee/spot fines collected by two enforcement departments *i.e.* Transport and Police. The fund was non-lapsable in nature. Receipt in the fund and expenditure therefrom are shown in **Chart 1.3** of this chapter. The GoR issued (April 2017) separate guidelines for effective management and operation of the funds.

¹ Honorable Supreme Court, while hearing/deciding upon a writ petition no. 295/2012 with respect to road accidents, constituted (2014) a Committee to measure and monitor the implementation of various laws relating to road safety in respect of each state/Union Territories and concerned ministries, departments and wing of Central Government.

1.2 Highways and other road network in the State

According to Annual Report of MoRTH 2023-24, India has a road network of 63.45 lakh kilometers and out of which Rajasthan has a large network of roads with a total length of 3.17 lakh kilometers of roads *i.e.* 5.00 *per cent* of total roads of India. The status of road length in Rajasthan as on 31st March 2024 is shown in the **Table 1.1**.

Table 1.1: Details of Road Network in Rajasthan as on March 2024

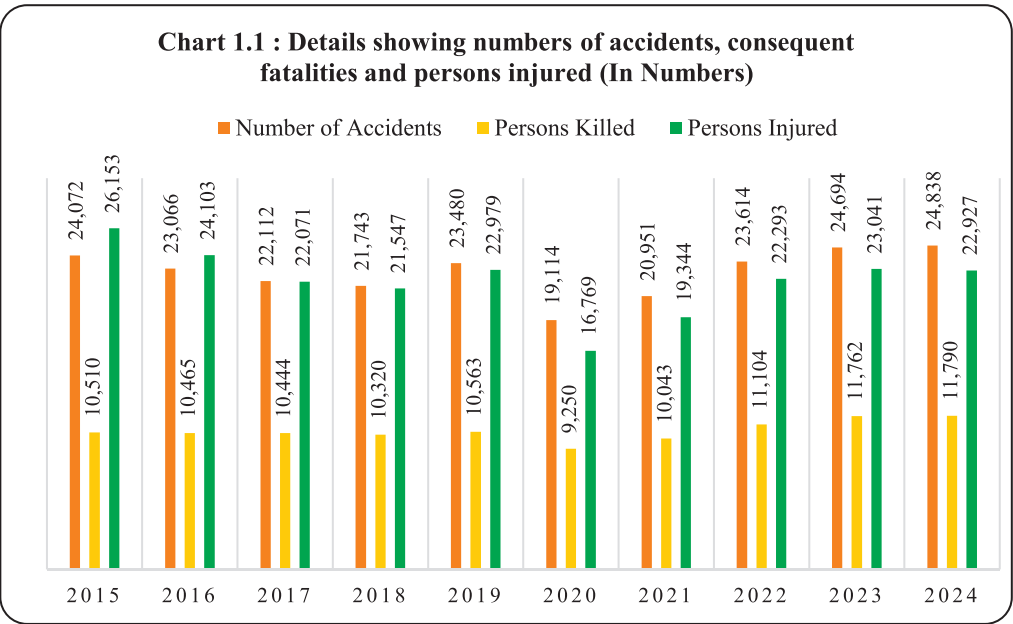


Source: Information provided by the Transport Department.

1.3 Trend of road accidents in the State

Details of road accidents and consequent fatalities and injuries in the State during 2015 to 2024 are given in the **Chart 1.1**.

(In numbers)

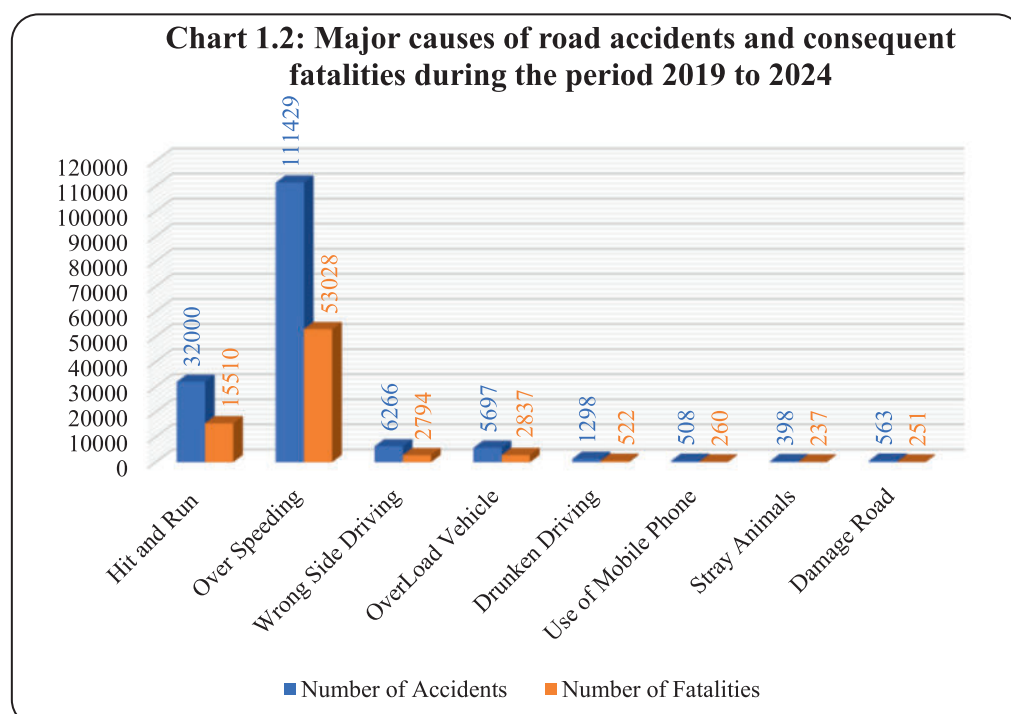


Source: Information provided by the Transport Department.

The **Chart 1.1** shows that while the number of road accidents fluctuated, the number of fatalities remained almost unchanged, despite an expenditure of ₹ 343.36 crore on road safety initiatives.

1.4 Major causes of road accidents

Accidents can be caused by a variety of factors, often resulting from a combination of human error, mechanical failures, defects of roads, *etc.* An analysis of fatal road accidents occurred during the year 2019-2024 revealed that maximum fatalities in road accidents occurred due to over-speeding. Some major causes of road accidents and resultant fatalities are shown in the **Chart 1.2**.



Source: Information provided by the Transport Department.

Some cases of fatal road accidents occurred during the year 2025 due to over speeding, drunken driving *etc.* are illustrated in the following case studies:

Case study -1



Source: Newspaper *Danik Bhaskar*

A major road accident occurred on 14 October 2025 on NH-11 in Jaisalmer, where a newly registered (1 October 2025) passenger bus suddenly caught fire while in motion, resulting in 28 fatalities and multiple grievous injuries to seven passengers. The iRAD data and investigation reports revealed that the fire was triggered by an air conditioner (AC) gas leak and a short circuit, causing the blaze to engulf the entire bus within minutes. Despite being recently registered, the bus caught fire without any collision, indicating critical electrical defects, poor-quality body fabrication, and absence of AIS-mandated Fire Detection and Suppression Systems (FDSS). Structural deficiencies such as permanent obstruction of the emergency exit due to improper seat placement, non-availability of fire extinguishers and safety hammers, and excessive rear overhang further confirmed that the bus had been registered in violation of prescribed safety norms.

These failures reflect serious negligence by the bus owner/operator and highlight systemic deficiencies within the Transport Department, which allowed a newly built vehicle to be registered and operated without verifying compliance with mandatory fire-safety standards, structural norms, and post-registration inspections.

The avoidable loss of 28 lives underscores the urgent need for strict enforcement of vehicle safety standards, fixation of accountability, and immediate strengthening of safety audit and monitoring mechanisms to prevent recurrence of such catastrophic incidents.

Case study -2



Source: State Road Safety Cell, Transport Department.

A major accident occurred on NH-754A near Phalodi (Jodhpur), on 02 November 2025, involving a Traveler and a Trailer. The Trailer was illegally parked in the left-hand lane of the carriageway and an unauthorized food outlet/*dhaba* was located within the Right of Way of National Highway Authority of India (NHAI).

While attempting to overtake another vehicle from the left side, the Traveler driver failed to detect the stationary trailer and collided with it at high speed. The Traveler, carrying struck the Trailer from the rear, resulting in 15 fatalities (including 10 women and four children) and two serious injuries.

Failure to remove the unauthorized food outlet/*dhaba* led to the trailer being halted at the location, which ultimately resulted in the collision involving the Traveler.

Case study -3



Source: Newspaper Times of India.

On 03 November 2025, a major road accident occurred in Jaipur, involving 13 vehicles, including a heavy goods vehicle (HGV Dumper). The accident resulted in 22 casualties, including 15 deaths, five grievous injuries, and two minor injuries.

Investigation revealed that the primary causes were over speeding and drunken driving and lack of traffic control for heavy vehicles in congested market and residential zones. Additionally, deficiencies in road safety engineering, such as absence of pedestrian protection, speed-calming measures, and warning signage, along with weak enforcement of traffic rules, contributed significantly to the severity of the incident.

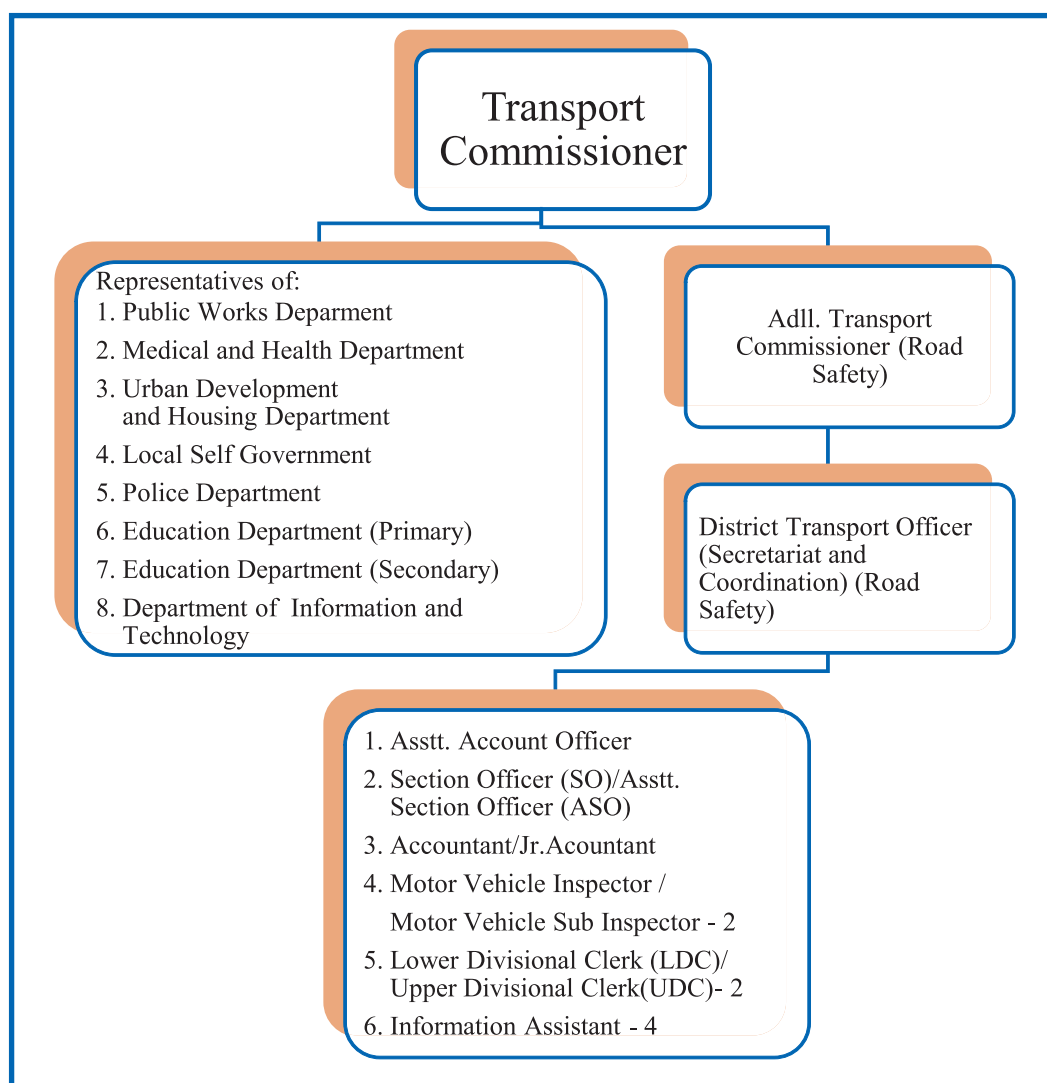
Collectively, these incidents demonstrate serious institutional lapses across Transport, Police and Highway authorities and underline the need for robust compliance mechanisms, coordinated enforcement and strengthened road safety audits to prevent avoidable fatalities

1.5 Organisational Set up

The Transport and Road Safety Department is the nodal department for implementation of Road Safety Policy in the State and responsible for management and operation of Road Safety Fund. A dedicated Road Safety Cell (Lead Agency) headed by the Transport Commissioner, has been constituted (June 2016) to strengthen road safety and to coordinate with all

stakeholder departments/agencies². Further, a Steering Committee for management and utilization of the Road Safety Fund, has also been constituted (April 2017) under the chairpersonship of Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary/Secretary, Transport Department GoR. The organizational set up of Road Safety Cell (Lead Agency) is depicted hereunder:

Organizational setup of Road Safety Cell



1.6 Formation of Road Safety Cell

The State Government constituted (June 2016) a dedicated Road Safety Cell under the chairmanship of the Transport Commissioner, comprising representatives of stakeholder departments. Its functions included ensuring compliance with the Road Safety Policy, acting as secretariat to the Road Safety Council, ensuring time-bound compliance with Supreme Court

² Transport Department, Police Department, Public Works Department, Medical and Health Department, Local Self Government Department, Urban Development and Housing Department, Education Department, Rajasthan State Road Development and Construction Corporation (RSRDCC), Road Infrastructure Development Corporation of Rajasthan (RIDCOR) and Other Departments.

Committee directions, monitoring road safety activities and coordinating with stakeholder departments. The prescribed organizational structure comprises 23 posts (eight from stakeholder departments and 15 from the nodal department). Out of which 15 posts were sanctioned against which only 11 persons were in position. The details are enclosed in *Appendix-1*.

The GoR accepted the facts and replied (April 2025) that correspondence is being done with stakeholder departments for filling up the vacant posts of Road Safety Cell.

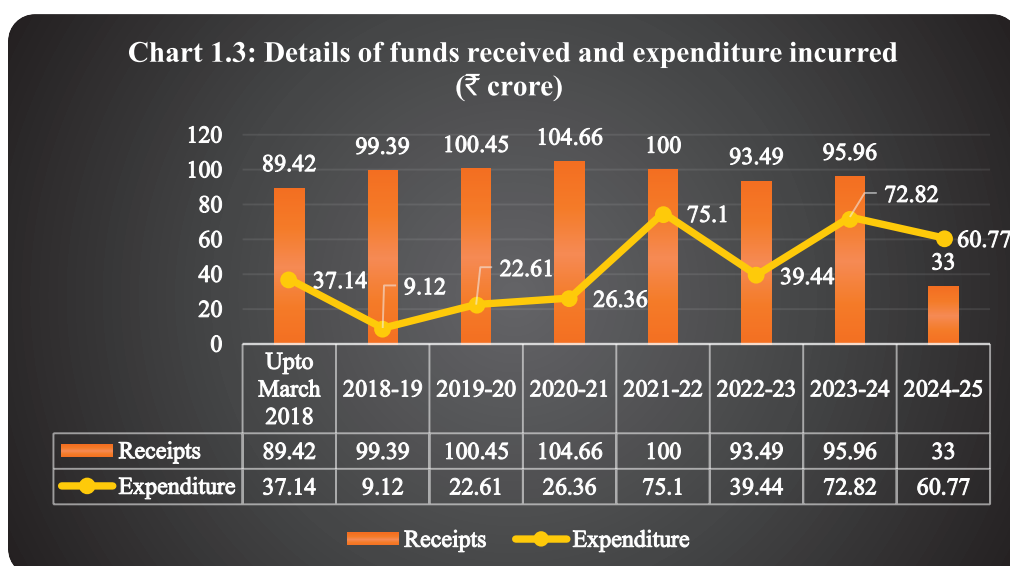
1.7 State Road Safety Act

For effective and efficient implementation of any Scheme and Act, Rules and Regulations are essentially required to be formed. As per budget announcement (2022-23), Rajasthan Road Safety Act was to be formed by GoR. The draft Road Safety Bill was prepared (2022) by Transport Department, however the same had not been formed in the State even after lapses of more than two years from the announcement.

The GoR replied (April 2025) that most provisions already exist in various acts and rules. It was also stated that the State is complying with regular directions received from Supreme Court and it's Committee on Road Safety. It was further stated (September 2025) that introduction of a new Act was a policy-level matter to be decided by the Government. It was also stated that the necessity of an exclusive Act on Road Safety would be re-examined in the near future and a report thereon would be submitted to the Government.

1.8 Road Safety Fund

The position of accumulation of Road Safety Fund and expenditure therefrom upto March 2025 is shown in the **Chart 1.3**.



Source: Information provided by the Transport Department.

Chart 1.3 highlights that, out of ₹ 716.37 crore received upto 31 March 2025, only ₹ 343.36 crore (47.93 *per cent*) could be utilized. The underutilization of funds resulted in several critical initiatives not being implemented, including the establishment of electronic enforcement devices in high-risk areas, installation of automatic number plate recognition systems with speed detection cameras, development of traffic parks, establishment of automatic driving tracks at 24 RTO/DTO offices and provision of equipment for trauma centres. These issues are discussed in detail in Paragraphs 2.3, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1.5, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4.1 of this report.

1.9 Audit objectives

The objectives of Performance Audit are to assess whether:

- Preventive actions and measures taken by the Government Departments (including stakeholder departments) aimed at reducing accident deaths and ensuring road safety were adequate;
- Adequate post-crash mechanism to ensure timely emergency response and trauma care was in place;
- Reporting and recording of accident cases was accurate and comprehensive;
- Utilisation of Road Safety Fund and availability of manpower for enforcement was adequate and efficient monitoring mechanism existed to ensure road safety.

1.10 Audit criteria

The following were used as source of audit criteria for Performance Audit:

- The Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 and the Rajasthan Motor Vehicles Rules, 1990.
- Directions issued by the Committee on road safety constituted by Hon'ble Supreme Court.
- Rajasthan State Road Safety Policy, 2017 and Dedicated Road Safety Fund Rules, 2017.
- Rajasthan Road Safety Action Plan 2018-20 and Rajasthan Road Safety Road Map 2020.
- Indian Road Congress specifications on road engineering and
- Gazette notifications, orders, circulars and instructions issued time to time by competent authorities for road safety.

1.11 Scope of Audit, Methodology and Sampling Procedure

The Performance Audit covered road safety activities carried out from Road Safety Fund by the Transport Department and other stakeholder departments *viz.* Police, Medical & Health, Public Works Department, *etc.* covering the period from April 2018 to March 2025. The actions taken by the Road Safety

Cell and the respective stakeholder departments/agencies between 2018 and 2025, regarding the investigation of accident causes, identification of remedial measures and their subsequent implementation, were also reviewed.

Six districts³ (taking two from high, medium and low categories each) were selected for field study by random sampling method through IDEA software based on the number of accidents. Besides, Jaipur district was selected for pilot study.

Out of 26 Primary Trauma Centres (PTCs)/Trauma Stabilization Units (TSUs) in the selected districts, 13 PTCs/ TSUs⁴ were selected by Random Sampling through IDEA software. Further, 14 National Highways and 13 State Highways⁵ (two National Highways and two State Highways from each selected district) were selected on the basis of highest number of accidents for Joint Physical Inspection with department officials. Besides, seven internal city roads (taking one from each district) were also selected judgementslly (as city road wise accident data was not available) for joint physical inspection. Functioning of Trauma Centers, emergency response time after accident, procurement and other activities of the stakeholder departments were also scrutinized during the field study.

Entry and Exit conferences with Transport Department were held on 27 July 2023 and 25 April 2025 respectively. The Report was issued to GoR on 17 January 2025 and reply was received on 24 April 2025. The responses from the Departments, provided in their written replies and during the exit conference, have been incorporated in this Report. Further updated Report was issued to GoR on June 2025 and reply received on 18 September 2025 are also incorporated in this Report.

1.12 Acknowledgement

Audit acknowledges the co-operation extended by the Transport Department and concerned officials of Police, Medical & Health and Public Works Department of the selected districts in conduct of the Performance Audit.

³ Alwar and Udaipur (High); Dausa and Tonk (Medium); Sirohi and Sri Ganganagar (Low).

⁴ Bansur and Tijara (Alwar), Baswa and Lalsot (Dausa), Uniyara (Tonk), Revdar and Shivgunj (Sirohi), Gharsana and Sadulsahar (Sri Ganganagar), Kherwada and Salumber (Udaipur), Jamwaramgarh and Bassi (Jaipur). Note: there was only one trauma centre in selected district Tonk.

⁵ Sirohi had only one State Highway, therefore, only one was selected.