

Most road accident victims are youth

Road safety forum opens in Doha

DOHA: Sixty to 75 percent of the Qataris who die in road accidents are young men, according to a healthcare expert.

Most of them are aged between 10 and 29 years, said Dr Rafael Consunji, Injury Prevention Director Hamad Medical Corporation.

They make up to two percent of the population but comprise 35 to 45 percent of all road accident victims, and these accidents account for 11 to 12 percent of deaths, he said while presenting the findings of a study on road safety in Qatar at the third Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and Road Safety Forum, which opened yesterday.

The forum discusses road safety, challenges and solutions in the Middle East's transportation and infrastructure industries. Together with officials from Public Works Authority (Ashghal) and Ministry of Interior, many experts from different countries present their experience and suggestions at the forum.

Yousef Abdulrahman Al Emadi, Director of roads operations and maintenance department at Ashghal said that since the launch of National Road Safety Strategy in 2013 all road projects

in the country strictly follow safety guidelines and accredited road safety auditors are appointed for monitoring.

"The Work Zone Traffic Management Guide launched by Ashghal has helped to significantly reduce road accidents at work sites," he added.

The first ITS & Road Safety Awards were also presented for outstanding contribution in road safety.

Kulluna safety campaign by the Hamad International Training Centre (HITC) was given the Industry recognition award for outstanding road safety implementation for the car seat safety project. The award was received by the campaign head Dr Khalid Abdulnoor Saifelddeen and his team.

Ashghal was awarded for outstanding partnership for road safety improvement.

Khalaf Amri of Petroleum development Oman won best engineering Innovation, while Husum Musharbash, President and CEO of Traffic Tech too the award for most innovative ITS implementation.

Saudi's Aramco's Sultan Al Zahrani Director of the Traffic



Winners of the first ITS and Road Safety Awards presented at the forum yesterday.

Safety signature Programme and secretary general for eastern province traffic safety council received the best youth engagement programme, while Virginia Commonwealth University Qatar, Mersk Oil and Ministry of Interior were awarded for best public awareness campaign one second.

The two day forum also discuss about how to integrate safety into the design and delivery of an exponentially growing road and transport network, methods to determine and enforce effective policies that will influence safer driver behavior, how to develop engaging public

awareness campaigns that will inspire the prioritization of road safety, ways to adopt a holistic approach to ITS to ensure all networks operate efficiently and how to incorporate traffic management systems to improve levels of safety.

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Problem of heat in Qatar being sensationalised

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Qatar also remains committed to the original objective of creating new opportunities for ambitious youth in the region who form the majority of the population and inspire them to achieve success.

The problem of heat in Qatar is being sensationalised. The US, in 1994, hosted a World Cup with high temperatures of above 45 degrees, Italy in 1934 hosted the Cup in the sizzling heat of above 40, and temperatures were high when the Cup was played in Mexico in 1970 and 1986.

Even in the recently concluded World Cup in Brazil, some games were played in places with high temperatures. In Qatar and the Middle East, people live in scorching heat but no one has died.

There is nothing impossible if there is a dream and the will. Technology is capable of changing the hot weather conditions as it is capable of changing many other things. But technology cannot stop racist ideologies that seek to deny the right of people in this region to host the biggest soccer event in the world.

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Many secondary school students may be prediabetic

DOHA: A new study has found that up to 4.2 per cent of secondary school students in Qatar could be prediabetic.

Prediabetes is a condition in which blood sugar level is higher than normal but not sufficiently high to be labelled as diabetes.

The study was conducted by Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar (WCMC-Q) and Qatar Diabetes Association (QDA).

The research involved four independent schools and 1,694 students aged between 11 and 18.

In all, 56 boys and 15 girls were found to have the high blood sugar levels associated with prediabetes. Significantly, the researchers were also able to identify the risk factors associated with prediabetes. The knowledge could help prevent a disease that afflicts between 15 and 17 percent of Qatar's population.

Of the 1,694 participants, 988 were Qatari citizens and 706 came from mostly Middle Eastern countries. Strikingly, almost half of the students were overweight. In the case of the boys, 46 percent were

either overweight or obese. In the girls, 44 percent were classed as overweight or obese.

The study, published in the prestigious *Journal of Royal Society of Medicine* has been authored by Drs Javaid Sheikh, Ravinder Mamtani and Sohaila Cheema from WCMC-Q and Dr Abdulla Al Hamaq, Sharoud Matthis and Katie El Nahas from QDA.

The researchers used a questionnaire to collect the demographic and health information, for example the weight and height

of a student, how much exercise they did and their basic lifestyle.

After all the data was collated and analysed, it was found that 4.2 percent of the students were prediabetic. However, being male significantly increases the risk. Of the 974 boys in the study, 56 were found to be prediabetic — or 6 percent. Of the 720 girls, 15 were prediabetic, or 2 percent.

Apart from being male, another factor associated with prediabetes was having a parent who was diabetic and having a girth to height

ratio greater than 0.5. This means that a child who is 160cm tall should have a waist measurement of no more than 80cm.

Dr Sohaila Cheema, Director of Global and Public Health at WCMC-Q, said that regular exercise and a balanced, nutritious diet played a huge role in the prevention and progression of type 2 diabetes. "We found that children who exercised daily tended to have lower weight than those who did not," said Cheema.

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Indian Embassy to hold Open House on Friday

DOHA: The Indian Embassy will hold an Open House on Friday to address any urgent consular and labour problems of Indian nationals. The Open House will be held from 5.30 pm to 6.30 pm. Written information on issues proposed to be discussed with the embassy can be given from 5.30 pm to 6 pm. This will be followed by a meeting with embassy officials from 6 pm to 6.30 pm.

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