



And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.

Anais Nin

Roads kill. It must stop

Road safety does not figure prominently on people's list of priorities. We tend to ignore the issue as long as our personal lives are not hampered, till the time when one of our own falls victim.

the friend would come, he could place himself in his hands and shut his eyes. The friend came and the rest is history. My biodata is a product of that care..."

I wanted to stir the audience and its participants on the importance of 'road safety'. I asked the audience what my destiny would have been had the unidentified man not stopped the speeding jeep and my father was not taken to the hospital on time.

The message being, save the life first. Despite the apprehensions of legal harassment that cross our minds. To save lives, we will have to compel change... Let the legislators and civil servants hear what they must. Invoke courts, where the machinery is slow or dysfunctional. Urgently prioritise installation of cameras on highways, as they amount to major undetected fatalities.

The fine money collected from violators of stiff traffic offences, made even stiffer, can be spent on the aforesaid purpose. It's biggest benefit would be the on-camera recording of corrupt practices of officials who extort money from trucks and buses and believe they can get away with it. Speeding drivers who think they too can get away because there is no one watching can also be brought to book. Further, proactively pursue the implementation of a national driver license policy based on biometrics.

All this is dependent on how sensitive we are towards others!

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I was invited to a colloquium. My biodata was read as introduction. The speaker listed out for the audience what he thought was essential. It was not short! On being asked to speak, I began by saying "that none of all that you stated was possible, but for one sensitive person in my life, when I was merely six years old..."

And the recall was like this:

"One Sunday morning, when my younger sister and I were playing outside our house, we saw a person come running to our house and walk straight in. Within minutes, we saw our mother rush out, sobbing. She hurriedly told us to stay home and left the house. We instinctively followed her, barefoot as we were.

Mummy was crying as she ran. She hailed transport. A cycle rickshaw was all she could find. Since we were following her, we jumped in too. A few minutes later we came to a closed railway crossing. My mother aban-

doned the vehicle and walked across the pedestrian crossing on foot. We followed her. A few yards away was the famous V.J. (Victoria Jubilee) Hospital of Amritsar, where my mother started to look for my father...

Daddy was battling for life. He had been knocked off his motorcycle by a speeding jeep. One person, who was witness to the accident, had somehow managed to stop the jeep and shouted at the culprits saying, "Oh you cruel brutes! You are running away after taking the life of this man."

The occupants of the jeep were shocked when they saw my father's face. They recognised him. "You Parkash"? (My father's name). My father asked them to rush him to hospital and inform my mother. Daddy later told us how he had struggled to stay conscious and survive for us.

After reaching the hospital, my father asked the nurse to send an urgent message to his doctor friend. He was confident that if