

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### RISE IN THE NUMBER OF ROAD TRAFFIC CRASHES AND MEASURES THE GOVERNMENT IS PUTTING IN PLACE TO CURB ROAD CRASHES

**The Minister of Transport and Logistics (Mr Tayali):** Madam Speaker, with the leave of the House, kindly permit me to express my profound gratitude to you for allowing me this rare privilege and opportunity to deliver this ministerial statement on the continued escalation of road traffic crashes and fatalities on our roads.

Madam Speaker, it is, indeed, with a heavy heart that I come before this august House to make this statement owing to the many lives that we have lost in traffic accidents which, but for certain known facts, could have been avoided.

Madam Speaker, it is disheartening that despite several measures which the Government has put in place to curb the scourge, road traffic crashes increased to 32,372 in 2021 as compared with 28,484 recorded in 2020 and 30,648 in 2019. In the same unfortunate vein, the number of fatalities increased to 2,163 in 2021 as compared with 1,690 in 2020 and 1,746 in 2019. These statistics represent 13 per cent increase in road traffic crashes in 2021, and a 28 per cent increment in road traffic fatalities in the same year.

Madam Speaker, in December 2021, the number of road traffic crashes recorded was 2,658 and that number reduced slightly to 2,383 in January 2022. The first two months of 2022 have recorded several fatal crashes that include the following:

Madam Speaker, on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2022, at Kateshi along the Kasama/Mbala Road around 0730 hours, a van and a truck collided head-on as the driver of a van lost control of his vehicle. Two people were killed on the spot while three others were seriously injured.

Madam Speaker, sadly, the cause of this accident was driver fatigue according to the accident investigation report.

Madam Speaker, on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022, in Pemba, around 0430 hours, a Mitsubishi Rosa bus belonging to the United Church of Zambia and freightliner truck collided head-on as the driver of the bus failed to keep to his lane.

Madam Speaker, sadly, thirteen people lost their lives while seventeen were seriously injured. Here too, according to the accident investigation report, driver negligence, owing to failure to maintain his lane, may have also been attributed to driver fatigue going by the time that the accident occurred.

On 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2022, at Kafwimbi area in Isoka District around 1300 hours, a minibus overturned. Two people died while three others were injured.

Madam Speaker, the cause of the accident was a result of excessive speeding, according to the accident investigation report.

Madam Speaker, on 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2022, around 0730 hours at Luanshya turnoff, along the Ndola/Kitwe dual carriage way, a small car and a van collided and two lives were lost. According to the accident investigation report, the cause of the accident was human error owing to failure to stop at a junction.

Madam Speaker, on 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2022, around 1945 hours, along the Ndola/Kitwe dual carriage way, a truck driver lost control of the motor vehicle and plunged into the Kafue River and this resulted into the loss of two lives.

Madam Speaker, on 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2022, around 1020 hours, in Kapiri Mposhi, a Zambia Railways train collided with a fuel tanker and two lives of the locomotive operators were lost. According to the accident investigation report, the cause of the accident was human error due to failure by the fuel tanker driver to stop at all level crossings.

Madam Speaker, on 18<sup>th</sup> February, in Mazabuka, at Nyati area, around 1620 hours, a truck and a small car collided head-on and two people died on the spot. The cause of the accident was human error as the driver of the truck was overtaking improperly. This was according to the accident investigation report.

Madam, on 24<sup>th</sup> February, at Mkushi, around 0530 hours, a minibus collided head-on with a Tanzanian registered truck. It was in this accident that we sadly lost the Mayor of Mongu and two others. Here too, according to the accident investigation report, the cause of the accident was human error due to the driver of the truck overtaking improperly.

Madam Speaker, on 26<sup>th</sup> February, at Mpika, around 23 hours, a Lusaka bound big bus from Nakonde hit a pothole, causing the driving to lose control of the vehicle. It careered off the road and plugged into a nearby stream. Seven people died and thirty-three others were injured. The cause of the accident was human error due to excessive speed on a damaged road laden with potholes.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Government and, indeed, on my own behalf, I wish to convey the message that our thoughts and prayers go out to the bereaved families. May the souls of our dearly departed forever rest in God's eternal peace.

Madam Speaker, the aforementioned causes and effects of the mentioned accidents clearly spell out two overarching factors as follows:

- (a) human negligence and bad road user behaviour among motorists. Over speeding, failure to judge distance with on coming vehicles when overtaking, drunk driving and the use of mobile phones are major behavioural factors that have contributed to these road accidents;
- (b) poor state of the roads. Allow me to single out the road stretch between Lusaka and Ndola. This road stretch is associated with high traffic volumes and has predominantly been recording the highest number of road traffic crashes. Due to