

## Ramesh Agarwal Is Saving Lives Of Many Truck Drivers. Thousands Of Them Die Due To Lack Of Sleep

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### The untold story of lorry drivers losing their lives

While travelling in the buses and comfortable SUVs, we see the convoy of huge lorries plying across the highways day and night with big loads of supplies. Decked with colourful decors, reflectors and signs these lorries run hundreds of miles everyday to deliver goods from one place to another. But hardly we feel apathy for the drivers, who, without any sleep or rest, relentlessly carry out the responsibility of driving these giant machines to deliver our needs to our cities.

According to a study by All India Transport Welfare Association (AITWA), an industry body of transporters, an estimated 26,650 people died (out of a total of 139,091 deaths) as a result of drowsy driving in 2012. In 2013, this figure was 24,081 (out of a total of 137,423).

This was a matter of concern for Mr. Ramesh Agarwal, the Managing Director of Agarwal Packers, India's leading packing and moving service. To address this problem, in 2012 Agarwal built a 500-bed 'Nindra Daan Kendra' — a free rest house for the truck drivers so that the truck drivers get sufficient rest and sleep. Located on National Highway 8 between Jaipur and Ajmer, this rest house has bathrooms, barber shops, a laundry room, ambulances, parking and security guards. As many as 30,000 trucks pass through this area and the service is open for drivers 24x7 and completely free of charge. All they have to do is sign a statement that says they will use the facility for six hours to sleep.

### He came back to fix the problem

What made Mr. Agarwal to come up with this noble effort to help those who are never been thought off, is the revelation in a transport presentation in Istanbul when India was leading the number of road deaths in the world. After coming back to India Agarwal started researching about it. He found that thousands of people die in road accidents every year and in most of the cases these happen due to lack of sleep. Drivers of the commercial vehicles who travel for long distances are the ones most deprived of sleep and adequate rest and for that's why they are the victims of these accidents in most cases.



The lorry drivers hardly get uninterrupted sleep more than two- to three-hours a day and resort to having opium-based 'kali goli' to stay awake. Sleep deprivation affects their normal life span and many of them hardly get time for their family. To ensure that these truck drivers get sufficient sleep and rest, Ramesh and his brother Rajinder came up with this idea of rest house. It because of this initiative, the truck drivers are getting proper rest and living a better life.



Soon, there will be a second facility of Nindra Daan Kendra opened in NH-6 between Surat and Kolkata. Agarwal's team estimates that around 41 lives are saved every month on the Jaipur stretch alone, thanks to the initiative.



The Logical Indian appreciates this noble effort of Mr. Agarwal and we request the government to do something about the deprived section of the lorry drivers, who are a section of invisible heroes crossing all the daunting challenges of the road to provide us with our requirements.