India’s road safety

India’s Road Safety Month

- This year instead of "Road, Safety Week", a month-long campaign "National Road Safety Month" will be observed from 18th January 2021 to 17th February 2021.
- The theme of this year is, "Sadak Suraksha- Jeevan Raksha".

India’s road safety data

- India has the world’s worst record on road safety.
- India has, according to the just-released World Bank-commissioned report, Traffic Crash Injuries and Disabilities:
  - 1% of the world’s vehicles but 11% of all road accident deaths;
- The Union Transport Ministry put the number of dead in 2019 at 1,51,113, and injured at 4,51,361.
- Those who suffer the most are from low income households, especially in rural areas, and women bear the long-term financial and psychological impact of the losses more.
- India’s highways have witnessed 61% of deaths from just 5% of all accidents, as per 2019 data.
- Political parties and others fix illegal flag poles and spears on car bonnets and metal contraptions to SUV bumpers, which are deadly in an accident.

Steps to be taken

- The Centre must now set a timeline to operationalise the National Road Safety Board, to lay down engineering standards and complaints procedures that will help citizens hold States to account.
- Need for technical investigation which will be conducted by safety experts.

Way ahead

- Ending the “silent pandemic” of accidents will need education, civil society cooperation and professional policing.