

## Brazil's Bad Roads and Neglect Kill 65 on Christmas

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During the Christmas holiday in Brazil (between the days of 24 and 26 of December), sixty-five people died and 935 people were injured in traffic accidents. The figures were announced December 27 by the Brazilian Federal Highway Police.

In all, 1,149 accidents occurred throughout the country. According to Inspector Alvarez Simões, Head of the Traffic Inspection Department of the Federal Highway Police, besides the big flow of vehicles on the country's highways during this period, drivers' lack of prudence is one of the major causes of highway accidents.

According to Alvarez Simões, it is mostly the highways headed for the coast that register an increase in the flow of cars, causing an increase in the number of accidents and deaths.

### US\$ 12.6 Billion for Infrastructure

Brazil needs annual investments of US\$ 12.6 billion for the country to rebuild its infrastructure, according to a study by the National Confederation of Industry's (CNI) Infrastructure Council.

Brazil's exports this year should attain US\$ 90 billion, and the entrepreneurs are worried about problems in getting the country's merchandise to market.

"Highway, rail, and water transport, sanitation, and even electricity infrastructure requires immediate investments on maintenance and expansion," the CNI report alerts.

According to the CNI, "regulatory benchmarks consistent with international experience, legal security, and adequate priority in the government budget are essential elements for this mandatory investment to resume."

In the study the CNI asserts that private investments will only materialize when the laws referring to the regulatory agencies and the Public-Private Partnerships project, both of which are being discussed in the National Congress, are made clear.

The entrepreneurs underscore that the deteriorated state of the country's infrastructure has direct consequences for company balance sheets, since costs are raised, and delivery schedules are jeopardized.

The CNI calls on the government to reorder its budget priorities. "Speeches and appeals for private investment are insufficient by themselves to arouse the interest of companies," the entrepreneurs affirm.

According to the CNI, just to recuperate the energy sector will require annual investments of US\$ 6.6 billion.

The CNI points out that various international institutions, such as the World Bank (IBRD) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), as well as the Chinese government, have already offered resources to finance investments in this area, and the National Economic and Social Development Bank (BNDES) and the Federal Savings Bank (CEF) have also expressed the same interest.

Translation: David Silberstein  
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