
In São Paulo, Brazil, Traffic Kills 4 a Day and a Robbery Happens Every 40 Seconds

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Every day four people die from a traffic accident in São Paulo, South America's most populous city, according to the CET (Traffic Engineering Company), the public organ in charge of controlling the flow of cars in town.

In a city where traffic laws seem made to be broken and where popular wisdom teaches you that sometimes is more secure to run a red light than to stop, the main victims are pedestrians and motobikers.

It may seem preposterous but Paulistanos (São Paulo city natives) are celebrating these new statistics. That's because the situation used to be much worse. Until 1996 when a more strict Traffic National Code was put in place the number of people killed daily due to car accidents used to be nine or more than double when compared to today.

Nobody is celebrating, however a new study by the Ibope (Brazilian Institute of Public Opinion and Statistics) about personal safety and robbery in the state of São Paulo.

The Ibope found out that one in every three São Paulo residents has already been robbed. Numbers from the Public Security Secretariat show that every hour 88 people are victims of robbers, which translates to close to one and a half robbery every minute.

The statistics also show that 18% of the people were robbed when driving their cars even though the majority says that they were assaulted in the middle of the street. 31% of all victims have also revealed that they have never filed a police report about the incident.

Lawyer Ângela Barral, a victim of robbery interviewed by SPTV, a TV news program from Globo network, declared while sitting behind the wheel: "They accosted me, asking for money. When I was handing them some change they took my wallet and my purse. I'm so afraid that I rarely drive in São Paulo now."

The south zone of São Paulo, the most prosperous, is also the most frequent target of robbers. The east zone comes in second, followed by the west, central and north zones.