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One million death warrants out

By Our Staff Reporter

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More than 5 million will be injured or killed in mishaps in the year 2001, according to a study by Prof. A. Indrayan of the division of biostatistics and medical informatics at the University College of Medical Sciences (UCMS) and Guru Tegh Bahadur Hospital.

This statistic for the first year of the next millennium has been extrapolated by Prof. A. Indrayan from a study of such mishap trends over 15 years. Prof. Indrayan was recently awarded the fellowship of the National Academy of Medical Sciences (NAMS).

The estimates are based on year to year reports of the survey of causes of death and of the Crime Records Bureau. Prof. Indrayan has also found that a large number of deaths due to accidents never find a place in the police records.

"Nearly 57 lakhs in India will be injured or killed by mishaps in the year 2001. That is 11 injured or killed every minute," Prof. Indrayan

stated. According to the UCMS professor, nearly 44 lakh injuries or deaths occurred due to mishaps in 1994 alone. "The situation is worsening every year," he added.

Even if injuries are excluded, deaths alone are a cause of anxiety. Mishaps are emerging among the top ten causes of deaths in India. Nearly 7.28 lakh deaths occurred in 1994 due to mishaps. "This will reach the million mark by the year 2001," the professor said.

"Males are affected 50 per cent more than females. The onslaught is increasingly in the 15-34 age group." Prof. Indrayan concluded that not only is a contingency plan needed to meet medical emergencies resulting from occasional disasters, but also a permanent facility is needed in all hospitals for every-day emergencies. "This will help save many lives."

Efforts in this direction have been half-hearted and a real breakthrough can be achieved by promoting a strong inter-face with the public so at least man-made mishaps are averted, he said.