

The Traffic Accidents During The “Tet” Holidays from 2013 to 2017 in Vietnam

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Abstract: The Lunar New Year Holidays in Vietnam is called “TẾT” in Vietnamese. “Tết” is the most important celebration for "Feast of the First Morning of the First Day". Many Vietnamese prepare for “Tết” by cooking special holiday foods and cleaning the house. There are a lot of customs practiced during “Tết”. “Tết” is also an occasion for pilgrims and family reunions ...In the view of transportation, there are many problems which must be considered during the “Tết” as traffic jams, increasing of transportation demand and also the traffic accident at high risk. Therefore, the objective of the paper is to synthesis and analysis of traffic accidents occurred in the “Tết” holiday in Vietnam for five years. Through analysis, the author wishes to clarify the situation of traffic accidents during “Tết”, which summarize lessons learned and outlined several proposals contribute to improving the safety of traffic during the holiday.

Keywords: Traffic accident, traffic safety, Lunar New Year, Vietnam

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Vietnamese culture and religions, “Tết” is the most important celebration. Many Vietnamese prepare for “Tết” by cooking special holiday foods and cleaning the house. There are a lot of customs practiced during “Tết” such as visiting a person's house on the first day of the New Year, ancestral worshipping, wishing New Year's greetings, giving lucky money to children and elderly people, and opening a shop. “Tết” is also an occasion for pilgrims and family reunions. During “Tết”, we visit their relatives and temples, forgetting about the troubles of the past year and hoping for a better upcoming year. Vietnamese people usually return to their families during “Tết” ...

In the view of transportation, there are so many problems which must be considered during the “Tết”. The main of them is as followings:

- 1) Traffic jams: In the days leading up to “Tết”, the streets and markets are full of people so that traffic jams is often occurred.
- 2) Transportation demand: increasing of transportation demand and also the traffic accident at high risk
- 3) Traffic accident: Traffic accidents: increase, with a high risk of causing damage to property and human

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the situation of traffic accidents during “Tết”, which summarize lessons learned and outlined several proposals contribute to improving the safety of traffic during the holiday.

2. OVERVIEW ABOUT “TẾT”

“Tết” is the most important celebration for Feast of the First Morning of the First Day. “Tết” usually has the date falling between the months of January or February based on the Vietnamese lunisolar calendar. “Tết” celebrates the arrival of spring. “Tết” can be divided into three periods, known as penultimate New Year's Eve (Tất Niên in Vietnamese), New Year's Eve (Giao Thừa), and the New Year (Tân Niên), representing the preparation before “Tết”, the eve of “Tết”, and the days of and following “Tết”, respectively. These customs are to celebrate “Tết” in Vietnam.

- 1) Before New Year's Eve: This period begins one or two weeks before the actual celebration. The general atmosphere leading up to “Tết” is in the bustle of shopping, decorating the home, cooking traditional “Tết” food and waiting for relatives to return home. People try to pay off their debts in advance so that they can be debt-free on “Tết”. Parents buy new clothes for their children so that the children can wear them when “Tết” arrives. In the days leading up to “Tết”, the streets and markets are full of people. As the shops will be closed during “Tết”, people try to stock up on supplies as much as possible. Traditionally by lunar calendar, the three kitchen guardians for each house (Ông Táo) return to heaven on the 23rd day of the twelfth month and report to the Jade Emperor about the events in that house over the past year and come back to the earth on the 30th day of the twelfth month. Vietnamese families usually have a family altar, to show respect to their ancestors. During “Tết” the altar is thoroughly cleaned and new offerings are placed there. This includes a tray of five different fruits on the altar (Mâm Ngũ Quả - pic.1). In the days leading up to “Tết”, each family cooks special holiday foods such as “Tết” cake (bánh chưng, bánh dầy - pic.2). Vietnamese families also buy peach or apricote blossom trees, kumquat trees and orange trees, flowers such as chrysanthemum or orchid to decorate their homes.



Pic.1



Pic.2

- 2) New years' Eve is the moment of transfer of the old year to the new year. This is a critical moment, harmony of heaven and earth, yin and yang blend everything to burst forth new life. According to the customs of the ancient Vietnamese, every house celebrate outdoor and indoor New years' Eve worship (pic.3 and 4), we prepared to welcome people to the ground burst, bringing resources into the spirit. At this moment, local committee organize spectacular fireworks display lasted 15

minutes at multiple locations.



Pic.3



Pic.4

- 3) The New Year: the common “Tết” greetings between peoples are Happy New Year (Chúc Mừng Năm Mới in Vietnamese), Gracious wishes of the new spring (Cung Chúc Tân Xuân); Security, good health, and prosperity (An khang thịnh vượng), May myriad things go according to your will (Vạn sự như ý), Plenty of health (Sức khỏe dồi dào), May money flow in like water and flow out like coffee drops. The first day of “Tết” is reserved for the nuclear family. Usually, children wear their new clothes and give their elders the traditional “Tết” greetings as Long life of 100 years (Sống lâu trăm tuổi) so children would wish their grandparents health and longevity. After the greetings, children receive a red envelope containing money from their elders (pic.5). Because we believe that the first visitor in the year determines their fortune for the entire year, so that we never enter any house on the first day without being invited first. This act is one of the most important rituals during “Tết”. According to Vietnamese tradition, if good things come to the family on the first day of the lunar New Year, the entire following year will also be full of blessings. Usually, a person of good temper, morality and success will be the lucky sign for the host family and be invited first into the house. During “Tết”, Sweeping is taboo, since it symbolizes sweeping the luck away. It is also taboo for anyone who experienced a recent loss of a family member to visit anyone else during “Tết”. The second day of “Tết” is usually reserved for friends, while the third day is for teachers. Local Buddhist temples are popular spots as people like to give donations and to get their fortunes told during “Tết” (Pic.6).



Pic.5



Pic.6

- 4) Traditional Celebrations during “Tết”: These celebrations can last from a day up to the entire week, and the New Year is filled with people in the streets. People use firecrackers, drums, bells, gongs, and anything and try to make as much noise as possible because they can think of to ward off evil spirits. This parade will also include different masks, and dancers hidden under the guise of what is known as the Lân or Lion Dancing (pic.7 and 8). The “Lân” is an animal between a lion and a dragon, and is the symbol of strength in the Vietnamese culture that is used to scare away evil spirits. After the parade, families and friends will come together to have a feast of traditional Vietnamese dishes, and share the happiness and joy of the New Year with one another.



Pic.7



Pic.8

3. TRAFFIC ACCIDENT SITUATION DURING “TẾT”

"Tết" is the time for reunion with family and loved ones to welcome the new year in the hope of luck, good things are coming for a year. So the holiday time is relatively long, with many festivals are held.

During the holiday, road spikes often happen that the vehicle carries more passengers cramming rules, regulations increase ticket prices on some short routes. In the days before and after the festival, the largest urban pressure of traffic as people return home for “Tết”, the situation is particularly complex in the bus station. Traffic and vehicles in traffic in the streets of the inner city have dropped significantly in the New Year. Although prolonged congestion does not occur, but the status of intercity bus pick-up along the road, running encroaching lane, no parking pass right places still happening. Status of speeding vehicles allowed on highways, expressways still ongoing, focused mainly means of transporting goods and workers return home for “Tết”.

For rail transport, Vietnam Railways sector perform traditional method of selling tickets and electronic train ticketing system to help people have more choices. Passengers have bought tickets more convenient. With the sale of electronic tickets, railroad Vietnam has removed a significant negative situation, speculation tickets, and ticket to give directly to people who really need to travel.

During the peak New Year, in addition to the usual flight, the Corporation Vietnam Airlines exploitation increased by about 1,200 flights on routes with high demand for downloads. Accordingly, the total number of flight operators in the New Year peak period trips to nearly 18,900, an increase of 12% compared to weekdays. Separate routes between Hanoi-Ho Chi Minh City flights increased by approximately 260 aircraft A321, A330 and B777; routes between Danang-Ho Chi Minh City flights increased by approximately 340 A321 ...

But sadly when compared to other times of the year, the number of traffic accidents during the holiday more often, there is a higher degree of danger, loss of assets more deaths in traffic accidents and more. Some very painful accident (Pic 9 and 10).



Pic.9



Pic.10

Due to the holiday lasts many days so many families organized coming back home, traveling; young people get together for journey... leading to traffic density spike. During the holiday, many people gathered to eat and drink at the feast ... leads to drunkenness. Traffic accidents thus increased.

The accident is the obsession with the emergency physician, traffic police on duty during “Tết”. Status alcohol and the driver was very popular, accidents can happen anywhere at any time. Worries about traffic safety which has always standing with the Vietnamese. The accident happened very often tragic, serious consequences for families and society.

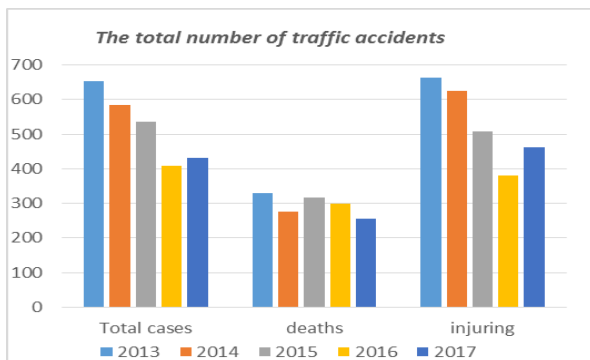
According to the statistics of the National Traffic Safety Committee or to the Police Road Traffic, the traffic accident during “Tết” holiday in five recently years are listed in Table 1 and shown in graph 1 as below:

Traffic accidents in the New Year over the last five years are listed in Table 1, shown in graph 1 ~3 as below.

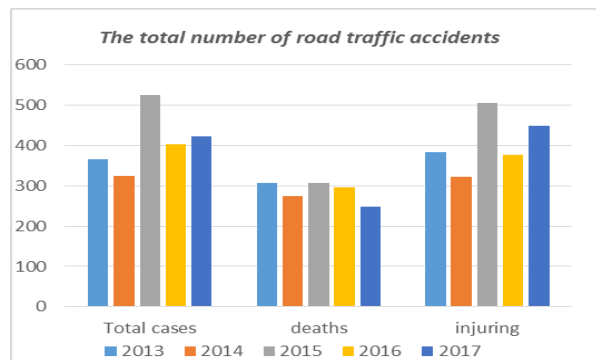
Table 1. Statistical information on traffic accident in last five years

Accidents in year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total cases/days	373	338	536	408	432
deaths	314	286	317	300	256
injuring	387	324	324	380	461
Road accidents					
Total cases/days	367	325	525	403	423
deaths	307	275	308	297	249
injuring	384	322	505	376	450
Railway accidents					
Total cases/days	5	9	10	5	9
deaths	6	8	9	3	7
injuring	3	1	3	4	11
Waterway accidents					
Total cases/days	1	3	1	0	0
deaths	1	3	0	0	0
injuring	0	1	1	0	0

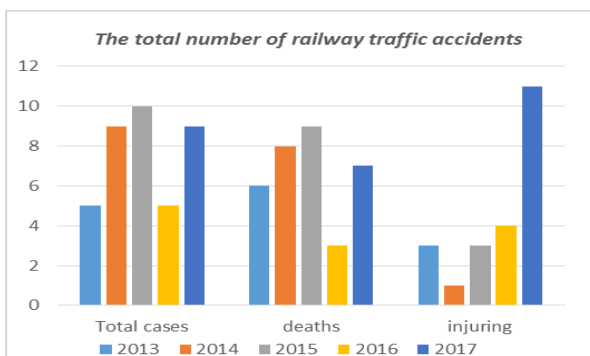
Source: www.csgt.vn



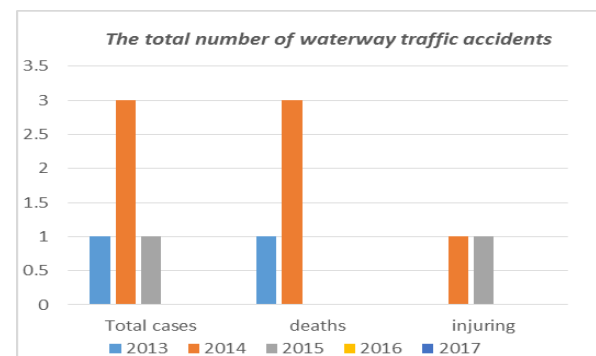
Graph 1. The total number of traffic accidents



Graph 2. The total number of road traffic accidents



Graph 3. The total number of rail traffic accidents



Graph 4. The total number of water traffic accidents

- 1) In the year 2013: in 9 days of “Tết”, there were 373 number of traffic accidents occurred, killing 314 and injured 387. Almost of them occurred on the road traffic.
- 2) In the year 2014: in 9 days holiday, there were 338 number of traffic accidents occurred, killing 286 and injured 324. Compared with 9 days in year 2013, the number of accidents this year has decreased by more than 35 cases (-9,3%); 28 deaths (-8,9%) and 63 injured (-16,3%).
- 3) In the year 2015: During 9 days of the “Tết”, there were 536 traffic accidents, killing 317 people, injuring 324 people. Compared with the 9 days of the Lunar New Year 2014, the number of traffic accidents increased by 198 cases, 31 deaths and “0” injured. Of these, 525 occurred road traffic accidents, killing 317 people, injuring 324 people; compared with 9 day Lunar New Year in 2014 decreased 200 cases, up 33 deaths and 121 injured.
- 4) In the year 2016: During 9 days of the “Tết”, 408 cases occurred, killing 300 people, injuring 380 people. Compared with 09 days “Tết” 2015 decreased 128 cases; 17 people died; up 56 people were injured.
- 5) In the year 2017: compiled by traffic accidents by the local police, in 9 holiday days, nationwide occurred 432 traffic accidents, killing 256 people, injuring 461 people. Compared with the same period of night days in 2016 Lunar New Year holiday, traffic accidents increase 24 cases (+5,88%), 81 wounded (+21,31%), decreasing by 44 people died (-14,66%). Number of deaths by motorcycles and motorcycle tends to rise. Location of the accident mainly in the highways, provincial highways and rural roads.

During 9 days holiday of year 2017, traffic police forces nationwide have been checked, processed 32 thousand cases of violation of order and safety of road traffic and waterways,

the State treasury collection and payment of 18.5 billion; custody 223 cars, on motorcycles 7300, nearly 1,300 deprived driving license.

According to the Committee of the National Traffic Safety, in three days 29th, 1st, 2nd of "Tết" holidays, traffic accident under control. But in two days 3rd and 4th Year, the people go to meet and give "Tết" greeting each to other so that traffic accidents increase high mainly due to the control motor, motorcycle speeding, dangerous overtaking, go wrong lane, drinking drivers, carrying over the specified number ... From the 5th day of the New Year onwards, the traffic accidents reduce because traffic accident was controlled by the military patrol, handle violations of the traffic police force.

According to the Traffic Safety Commission (Road Safety) National evaluation, during the orderly traffic safety ensure peak and transportation activities serves for "Tết", authorities forces and the transport industry company has made synchronization solutions, serving the people traveling convenient, safe and accident bus particularly serious. However, traffic accidents remain high, mostly motorcycle accident and occurred more in rural areas. The reason the driver of the motorcycle owner, negligence, violation of traffic rules, such as not wearing a helmet, carrying three carrying four people, speeding, violating regulations on alcohol content, especially on provincial roads, district roads, communal roads.

According to the Committee of the National Traffic Safety, traffic accidents increase high mainly due to the drivers do not control vehicles, run at high speed under control or dangerous overtaking, go wrong lane, drinking drivers. Recently, student status, adolescent motorcyclists not wearing helmets became very popular.

The main reason is because people do not strictly adhere to the law and order of traffic safety, speed abuses, no helmet, violating alcohol concentration, the regulation carries more often frequently occurs.

As a rule, every end of the year or in the New Year, the proportion of patients hospitalized due to traffic accidents has risen, mainly due to the "drunk" cause. Although the story is known, however, the situation drunk alcohol control means has occurred, causing the tragic accident, many people who have lost their lives or were injured for life, to welcome spring and "Tết" in the hospital. So, the lesson from alcohol vigilance is never old, especially during the Lunar New Year. There are too many hard lessons from the holiday drinking, causing tragic accident, but the days until Spring Festival, people still find enough reasons to hold wine. In the wine, they found hundreds of thousands of reasons for drinking: drinking for right ideas, drinking for wrong ideas, winner and loser can drink, but it also runs fine glass of 100% ... With human respectful Psychology, it does not make fun of people when people can awake and see that he or she was in the hospital, and feel terrible consequences caused by alcohol. There is many people who are forced to drink dock, so that it appears more and more people being forced, to the respectable, leading to drunk, staggering gait causing traffic accidents. Spending spring time with alcohol is a major concern. It is time to change the drinking culture at "Tết". According to statistics, every year Vietnam consumes about 2.7 billion liters of beer and 350 million liters of wine. Thus, the average share for the 90 million people in Vietnam, each of about 16 liters of beer and 4 liters of wine, the amount of alcohol, partly speaks number of traffic accidents occurred in the whole country.

4. SOME REGULATION AND EXPERIENCE LESSONS

Facing to increasing traffic accidents in the New Year, the competent authorities have proposed and implemented a number of policies, strategies and actions for the purpose of drag reducing traffic accidents. To prevent and reduce traffic accidents during the New Year's Eve and New Year, especially to prevent and avoid motorcycle accidents, motorcycle, Chairman of

the Traffic Safety Commission proposed Chief of the Traffic Safety of provinces and cities urgently directed the Department and related organizations continues to perform direct the Prime Minister for ensuring traffic safety and order during “Tết”; timely reporting of traffic accidents particularly serious for the Commission. There are five measures to curb traffic accidents as below:

- 1) The local authorities’ processor timely people’s information which reflects to safety and order situation of traffic, transit operations through telephone hotline for New Year.
- 2) Police of provinces and cities must mobilize maximum traffic police forces in coordination with other police forces (police order, public security ...) boost patrols, strict handling behavior violation of traffic order and safety, with particular emphasis handle violations of regulations on alcohol content; violation of speed when driving; not wearing a helmet while jet skiing, motorcycles, electric bicycles.
- 3) People's Committees at district and commune level need attention, often concentrated direction, determined, synchronous solutions to curb traffic accidents. Through enhanced communication radio system at district and commune in the risk of traffic accidents while driving in the state had been drinking alcohol; the risk of brain injury and death in the event of a traffic accident while jet skiing, motorcycle without wearing a helmet regulations; ask people to exercise "Don't drive while drunken", "Wearing a helmet while driving motorcycle," "Do not hold mobile phone and listen to while driving."
- 4) Vietnam Television, Voice of Vietnam, Vietnam News Agency enhanced propagation time, mobilize people to strictly abide by the rules of order and safety in traffic because "The core of the problem is to raise the self-consciousness". Associated with it is sanctioned, constantly patrolling and controlling the implementation of traffic rules. It is because of the drastic measures that regulation helmet was done well.
- 5) The management of the State need to strengthen, to review the rules and regulations edit immediately see inappropriate. In particular, strengthen the management of transport, resolutely eliminate unsafe vehicles. It is needed to emphasize the solution to thoroughly treat the "black spot" traffic accidents.

5. CONCLUSION

“Tết” is a chance to relax, have fun and reunited with their families. However the situation of traffic accidents in the “Tết” particularly serious and dangerous. One of the main reasons is due to drunk driver and do not comply with traffic laws. Therefore, the competent authorities should strengthen advocacy solutions to improve people's own authentication when participating in traffic, strengthen inspection and strict sanctions for violations of traffic laws to ensure a safe and happy holiday season.

REFERENCES

Report on traffic accident of Traffic Safety Commission