

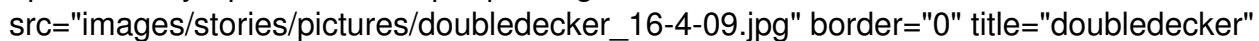
## Double-decker buses may not be safe

Written by Administrator

Thursday, 16 April 2009 09:04 - Last Updated Thursday, 16 April 2009 09:13

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Thursday April 16, 2009



SIX die in dawn crash  
(The Star, April 14) is indeed heart breaking news. The tragic accident ought to be investigated thoroughly by the authorities.

According to some of the passengers who escaped with minor injuries, the driver was not speeding at the time of the accident. Apparently the driver's inability to control the vehicle after overtaking another bus was said to have brought about the horrifying fatal crash.

Of late, I have seen increasing numbers of double-decker buses on the roads and news of such buses being involved in accidents is also on the rise. Many a time the blame is put on a careless or irresponsible act of the bus driver. Apart from the driver, we should also look at the suitability of such buses on our roads and whether our drivers are adequately trained to handle double-decker buses.

I understand some double-decker buses are made or assembled locally. Are the companies involved in the manufacture of such buses adhering to all the safety standards and features?

Among the important safety aspects one should take note of is the stability of double-decker buses during an unexpected event like avoiding a crash, which may involve a swerving movement.

The sudden shift of weight during such negotiations can affect its centre of gravity, thus making it extremely difficult for even a trained double-decker bus driver to control it.

I suggest the authorities review the safety features for double-decker buses. Also, some stretches of our roads may not be suitable for double-decker buses.

Double-decker bus drivers must also be specially trained and licensed. Repairs, refurbishing and prefabricating of double-decker buses must only be done at specially licensed workshops under the supervision of the relevant authorities.

I also notice that the metal guardrails on our highways pose a hazard on the road with their sharp edges. Perhaps the authorities should replace metal guardrails with those made of a less dangerous or hazardous material, such as rubber.

S. PARAM,  
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