The Road Rage: Problems and solutions

The recent tragic high-speed collisions in Kochi—one involving a high-end luxury hatchback near Nedumbassery that claimed three lives, and another involving an unlicensed minor driving a luxury sedan in Cheranalloor—underscore the severe danger posed by reckless driving, underage vehicle access, and high-performance machines on narrow state roads in Kerala.

There are high speed motor cycles and cars available in many houses in Kerala. But there are no facilities for training and practice racing in Kerala. Lack of these facilities prompt adventure minded children to do self-practice in highways during the early morning hours. These time period records the lowest traffic in the road and also the lowest patrolling by police.

The recent road accidents should act as an eye opener for both authorities and parents. The speed limit in Kerala roads is 80 kmph max. But the new gen bikes and cars allow drivers to go up to 200kmph or even beyond. In the both the cases cited, the youth crossed these speeds. There is not a single road in Kerala which allow riders to go beyond 100 kmph. Therefore, even without a single vehicular traffic, no vehicle can be allowed beyond 100kmph in Kerala. But in Tamil Nadu and other states there are eight lane, 10 lane, 12 lane roads which allow vehicle speed up to 120 kmph. Many drivers even go beyond this limit. But in Kerala Roads, speeding beyond 80 kmph is suicidal. But youth with their adventure mindset cannot contained by citing rules and limitations. Therefore, some facilities to vent their heat should be provided at district level.

*These incidents call for an urgent need for implementation of a two***-pronged strategy***—combining structured school/college traffic education with dedicated off-road speed tracks. This addresses both the psychological drive for high-speed thrills and the systemic gap in practical vehicle control training. This recognises the need for high-performance race tracks in Kerala for those kids and seniors who want to undergo skills training and highspeed racing.*

1. Safety Education & Traffic Rules

Integrating traffic rules into the academic system creates a progressive awareness model tailored to age-appropriate risk:

[Primary School] ---> [High School] ---> [Plus-Two / Higher Secondary]

Basic Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety & Licensure, Kinetic Energy,

& Bicycle Safety Traffic Signs Legal & Parental Liability

- **Primary Classes (Ages 5–10):** *Focus on basic pedestrian habits, sidewalk safety, crossing signals, and helmet compliance as passengers.*
- **High School (Ages 11–15):** *Focus on right-of-way rules, bicycle safety, understanding road signage, and early awareness of how speed impacts braking distance.*
- **Plus-Two & Colleges (Ages 16–20):** *Focus on legal responsibility under the Motor Vehicles Act (including parental penalties for minor driving), the physics of high-speed crashes, defensive driving, and the dangers of early-morning street racing.*

2. Controlled Speed Tracks & Training Infrastructure

The lack of enclosed motorsports facilities leads untrained drivers to use public highways during low-patrol hours (2:00 AM – 4:00 AM) as impromptu proving grounds. Providing controlled environments shifts this dangerous behaviour away from public roads.

The need for Controlled Racing Infrastructure

	Public Highway Racing	**Closed District Speed Track**
	Shared with innocent commuters	*Enclosed, barrier-protected circuit*
	Emergency hazards & pedestrians	*Required safety gear & marshals*
	Unchecked speed & alcohol risk	*Professional track coaching*
	Severe public fatality risk	*Risk confined to consenting riders*
Speed Limit	*80 km/h max (Design limit)*	*Unrestricted within vehicle/track limits*
Traffic Mix	*Pedestrians, scooters, heavy buses, mixed speeds*	*Homogeneous high-speed vehicles only*
Safety Margins	*Narrow lanes, roadside structures, utility poles*	*Wide run-off areas, gravel traps, soft barriers*
Enforcement	*Intermittent enforcement / Low early-morning patrols*	*Continuous track marshals & telematics*

- **District-Level Enclosed Tracks:** *Private investments or Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) can develop localized karting and high-performance track facilities equipped with run-off areas, tire barriers, and trained safety personnel.*
- **Skills & Handling Academies:** *Off-road tracks allow young motor enthusiasts to learn advanced vehicle dynamics, emergency braking, and threshold handling under professional guidance rather than through trial-and-error on public roads.*
- **Containment of Risk:** *Transporting high-speed vehicle testing off public roads isolates potential accidents to consenting participants within a controlled, medically equipped environment.*

3. Legal & Parental Accountability

While infrastructure provides a safe outlet, strict enforcement of existing motor vehicle laws is necessary to prevent unauthorized key access at home:

1. **Parental Liability:** *Rigorous enforcement of Section 199A of the Motor Vehicles Act, holding vehicle owners and parents criminally responsible when a minor drives.*
2. **Speed Limiters & Telematics:** *Implementing parental controls or speed-governing electronics on high-horsepower family vehicles.*
3. **Targeted Night Patrols:** *Increasing automated speed cameras and mobile patrolling on major corridors between 1:00 AM and 5:00 AM*