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Stunt Riding in Karnataka: A Growing Threat to Road Safety

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, dangerous stunt riding has become a growing concern on the roads of Karnataka, particularly in Bengaluru and other urban areas. Young riders often perform risky acts such as wheelies, stoppies, street racing, and riding without proper control, frequently influenced by videos shared on social media platforms. While these stunts may appear exciting or entertaining, they pose a serious threat to the safety of riders, pedestrians, passengers, and other road users, and the increasing number of accidents and injuries linked to such activities highlights the urgent need for stronger preventive measures. Although existing laws such as the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 provide penalties for rash and negligent driving, they do not specifically address stunt riding as a separate offence, which creates challenges for law enforcement agencies in effectively dealing with the problem. This paper examines the rise of stunt riding in Karnataka, its impact on public safety, the role of social media in encouraging such behaviour, and the shortcomings of the current legal framework. It also studies international approaches adopted in countries such as Australia and Canada to address similar issues. The study concludes that a dedicated law is necessary to promote responsible road use, strengthen road safety, and protect human life; by addressing both the physical and digital aspects of stunt riding, the proposed legislation has the potential to create safer roads and serve as a model for other states in India.

Keywords: *stunt riding, road safety, Karnataka, Bengaluru, Motor Vehicles Act, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, dangerous driving, social media, wheelies, public safety*

I. INTRODUCTION

Stunt riding refers to performing dangerous manoeuvres on motorcycles or scooters, such as wheelies, stoppies, burnouts, zigzag racing, and riding without proper control. Although these stunts are often showcased in movies and social media, performing them on public roads is illegal and extremely hazardous. In Karnataka, especially in Bengaluru, stunt riding has become a significant road safety concern.

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Young riders frequently imitate online videos and attempt risky stunts on highways, flyovers, and urban roads. This behaviour endangers not only the rider but also pedestrians, passengers, and other motorists. As a result, law enforcement agencies and courts in Karnataka have intensified efforts to curb this menace.

The legal prohibition of stunt riding finds its philosophical roots in the 'Social Contract' theory of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke.¹ According to the Harm Principle articulated by John Stuart Mill in 'On Liberty' (1859), the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others.² In the context of modern urban spaces, the street is a 'commons'. Stunt riding represents a 'Tragedy of the Commons', where individual thrill-seeking depletes the shared resource of safety.³ The 'Right to Life' under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution encompasses the right to safe roads, as affirmed by the Supreme Court in *Save Life Foundation v. Union of India*.⁴

Stunt riding includes acts such as performing wheelies by lifting the front wheel off the road, riding at excessive speeds, racing on public roads, standing on the motorcycle while riding, riding with hands off the handlebars, carrying multiple passengers while performing stunts, and recording videos for social media while driving. These actions require specialised environments and safety equipment. When attempted on ordinary roads, they create a serious risk of collisions and fatalities.⁵

II. INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

A. Australia: The 'Hoon' Laws

Victoria's Road Safety Amendment (Hoon Driving) Act serves as a global benchmark. It allows for immediate vehicle impoundment and forfeiture. Traffic law enforcement is based on deterrence principles, whereby drivers control their behaviour in order to avoid an undesirable sanction. For 'hooning'-related driving behaviours in Queensland, the driver's vehicle can be impounded for 48 hours, three months, or permanently depending on the number of previous hooning offences. It is assumed that the threat of losing something of value, their vehicle, will discourage drivers from hooning. While official data shows that the rate of repeat offending is

¹ *Social Contract*, ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/social-contract>.

² JOHN STUART MILL, *ON LIBERTY* (John W. Parker & Son 1859).

³ *Tragedy of the Commons*, WIKIPEDIA, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tragedy_of_the_commons.

⁴ *Save Life Foundation v. Union of India*, AIR 2016 SC 1617.

⁵ *Motorcycle Stunt Riding*, WIKIPEDIA, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motorcycle_stunt_riding.

low, an in-depth understanding of the deterrent effects of these laws should involve qualitative research with targeted drivers.⁶

B. North America

In September 2007, the province of Ontario introduced Bill 203 to target street racing and stunt driving. In Ontario, stunt driving was defined by the following activities: causing some or all tyres to lose traction with the surface of the highway while turning (drifting); spinning tyres or causing a vehicle to circle (burnouts, doughnuts); lifting some or all tyres from the surface of the highway (wheelies); driving while the driver is not sitting in the driver's seat (ghost riding); preventing another vehicle from passing; driving two or more motor vehicles side by side where one of them occupies a lane for oncoming traffic (playing chicken); driving as close as possible to another vehicle, pedestrian or object without reason; and driving 50 km per hour over the speed limit (Highway Traffic Act, 2009). The penalties include seven-day vehicle impoundment, driver's licence suspension for up to two years, and a fine from \$2,000 to \$10,000.

III. LEGISLATIVE SAGA IN INDIA: FROM THE MV ACT, 1988 TO THE BNS, 2023

Traditionally, stunt riding was prosecuted under Section 184 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988⁷ (dangerous driving) and Section 281⁸ of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (rash driving). However, these provisions lacked specificity regarding 'stunts' as a distinct category of criminal behaviour.

⁶ Nerida Leal et al., *'There's No Way in Hell I Would Pull Up': Deterrent and Other Effects of Vehicle Impoundment Laws for Hooning* (2009).

⁷ The Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, s.184: 'Whoever drives a motor vehicle at a speed or in a manner which is dangerous to the public, or which causes a sense of alarm or distress to the occupants of the vehicle, other road users, and persons near roads, having regard to all the circumstances of the case including the nature, condition and use of the place where the vehicle is driven and the amount of traffic which actually is at the time or which might reasonably be expected to be in the place, shall be punishable for the first offence with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year but shall not be less than six months or with fine which shall not be less than one thousand rupees but may extend to five thousand rupees, or with both, and for any second or subsequent offence, if committed within three years of the commission of a previous similar offence, with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine of ten thousand rupees, or with both.' Explanation: for the purpose of this section, (a) jumping a red light; (b) violating a stop sign; (c) use of handheld communication devices while driving; (d) passing or overtaking other vehicles in a manner contrary to law; (e) driving against the authorised flow of traffic; or (f) driving in any manner that falls far below what would be expected of a competent and careful driver and where it would be obvious to a competent and careful driver that driving in that manner would be dangerous, shall amount to driving in such manner which is dangerous to the public.

⁸ The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, s.281: 'Whoever drives any vehicle, or rides, on any public way in a manner so rash or negligent as to endanger human life, or to be likely to cause hurt or injury to any other person, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees, or with both.'

The transition to the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 maintains provisions against negligence; however, the Karnataka Bill of 2025 seeks to go further by:

- defining specific acts (wheelies, stoppies);
- targeting the digital dissemination of such acts;
- holding vehicle owners and parents accountable; and
- effecting a shift toward vicarious liability in traffic torts.

A. Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023

The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 also penalises rash and negligent driving that endangers human life, allowing police to register criminal cases where stunt riding poses a public threat.⁹

IV. INFLUENCE OF MEDIA AND THE DIGITAL PANOPTICON

The advent of Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts has created a 'Performative Recklessness.' Sociologist Jean Baudrillard's concept of 'Hyperreality'¹⁰ is relevant here: for many riders, the digital representation of the stunt (the 'Like' and the 'Share') is more real and rewarding than the physical danger.¹¹

Social media is a major driver: approximately three-fourths of cases involved videos posted online or found on offenders' mobile phones. Police routinely monitor hashtags and track accounts related to Karnataka-based stunt communities.¹²

V. ROAD FATALITIES: STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Karnataka has witnessed tremendous economic growth in the past two decades, and Bengaluru in particular. This has been accompanied by infrastructure changes, including an expanded road network, and nearly 1.4 crore vehicles added on the roads until January 2024. Unfortunately, these changes have come at an unacceptable cost to human life. Bengaluru ranked second in road fatalities with 7.5% of Karnataka's share and lost 921 precious lives in 2023, the highest in the last decade. This translates to three lives lost per day in the city. Road traffic deaths are a silent pandemic. In 2023, there was a 19% increase in deaths in the city as compared to 2022. Speeding is the leading killer, with unclashed helmets also a cause of concern, since motorcyclists are the most vulnerable road users after pedestrians. These injuries and deaths put a strain on the healthcare infrastructure and socio-economy of the city as well as the State of

⁹ *Supra* note 8.

¹⁰ *Hyperreality*, WIKIPEDIA, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyperreality>.

¹¹ JEAN BAUDRILLARD, *SIMULACRA AND SIMULATION* (Univ. of Michigan Press 1994) (1981).

¹² *Police Scan Social Media Posts to Curb Wheelie Menace on Roads*, STAR OF MYSORE, <https://starofmysore.com/police-scan-social-media-posts-to-curb-wheelie-menace-on-roads/>.

Karnataka. It is not just vehicle owners but other road users too who have had to bear the brunt of crashes for life. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists account for over half of road-related deaths and injuries. In Bengaluru, close to 90% of the fatalities were among motorcyclists and pedestrians, which is worrying.¹³

According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) 'Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India' (ADSI) reports, two-wheelers consistently account for the highest share of road accident fatalities (approximately 44-45% annually).¹⁴ In Karnataka specifically, Bengaluru has emerged as a hotspot. Data from 2023-2024 indicates:

- Juvenile involvement: arrests of minors for stunting doubled from 74 in 2023 to 121 in early 2024.
- Enforcement: a 230% spike in driving licence suspensions was noted in 2024, primarily targeting wheelie incidents.
- The 'Viral' factor: NIMHANS research (2024) suggests 60% of apprehended riders were imitating stunts seen on social media.¹⁵

In an anticipatory application filed by the accused under Section 482 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, the Single Judge Bench of the Punjab and Haryana High Court held that when a dangerous public stunt causes death, it would come under the ambit of culpable homicide, since there was the requisite knowledge that such an act would likely cause death, and it would not be considered death by negligence. Holding this, the Court rejected the anticipatory bail application.¹⁶

A. Detailed Statistics and Analysis: Stunt Riding and Its Impact in Karnataka (Bengaluru)

i. Enforcement and Incident Data

Number of incidents and arrests: in 2023, Bengaluru recorded over 130-133 official cases of bike stunts till August, but a subsequent crackdown saw a sharp rise, with cases exceeding 450 in the year, including special operations during festivals.¹⁷

¹³ BENGALURU TRAFFIC POLICE, *Road Safety Report 2023*, <https://data.opencity.in/dataset/81336158-a834-4e79-a866-8196ea8b75d3/resource/2261ce08-a0cb-46e1-a1a1-1025ae1f0b72/download/6c425f17-b19b-402f-a638-6b9cae856025.pdf>.

¹⁴ NATIONAL CRIME RECORDS BUREAU, *Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India* (Ministry of Home Affairs 2022).

¹⁵ *4-Fold Rise in Minors Booked for Wheelie Stunts in 2 Years*, TIMES OF INDIA, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/4-fold-rise-in-minors-booked-for-wheelie-stunts-in-2-years/articleshow/117405561.cms>.

¹⁶ *Lakhbir Singh v. State of Punjab*, 2024 SCC OnLine P&H 14354 (neutral citation 2024:PHHC:172012).

¹⁷ *Police Measures Bear Fruit, Bike Stunt Cases Dip in Bengaluru*, THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS (13 Sept. 2023), <https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/bengaluru/2023/Sep/13/police-measures-bear-fruit-bike-stunt-cases-dip-in-bengaluru-2614319.html>.

Arrests of juveniles show a marked increase, with more than 70 minors detained. Data also indicates that 23 minors were booked in 2022, 74 in 2023, and preliminary figures for 2024 show this more than doubled to 121.

Adults handing vehicles to minors were also prosecuted: 22 in 2022, 71 in 2023, and 79 in 2024. Over 200 motorcycles fitted with illegal modifications were seized in 2023 due to their involvement in dangerous activity and lack of RTO clearance.¹⁸

It has been brought to notice that the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), in its December 2011 publication captioned 'Road Accidents in India 2010', has stated as follows:

Road accidents are a human tragedy. They involve high human suffering and monetary costs in terms of untimely deaths, injuries and loss of potential income. Although we have undertaken many initiatives and are implementing various road safety improvement programmes, the overall situation as revealed by data is far from satisfactory ... The Government alone cannot tackle road safety problems. There is a need for active involvement of all stakeholders to promote policy reform and implementation of road safety measures. Addressing road safety in a comprehensive manner underscores the need to involve multiple agencies/sectors like health, transport and police. The data and analysis on road accidents presented in the document is expected to create awareness and assist in informed decision making on road safety.¹⁹

VI. HEALTH IMPACT

Road traffic accidents were one of the major causes of paediatric head injury, accounting for 470 children being admitted to or observed by a neurosurgeon in the Trauma Centre of a medical university of Lucknow. On further analysis, we found there were 303 patients between 14 and 18 years, which accounted for approximately 65%. Out of these 303, there were 243 patients who were travelling by two-wheelers, accounting for about 80% of injury in the paediatric population between 14 and 18 years. We noticed 172 (56%) patients were those who were driving, and out of these 165 were not wearing a helmet.²⁰

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ *S. Rajasekaran v. Union of India*, Writ Petition (Civil) No. 295 of 2012 (SC).

²⁰ *Motorised Two-Wheeler Traumatic Head Injury: A Profile of Patients*, <https://www.thefreelibrary.com/MOTORISED+TWO-WHEELER+TRAUMATIC+HEAD+INJURY--A+PROFILE+OF+PATIENTS...-a0581622020>.

VII. STUNT RIDING IN KARNATAKA

Karnataka has witnessed numerous incidents of dangerous motorcycle stunts, particularly in Bengaluru and other urban centres. The popularity of social media platforms has contributed to the glamorisation of stunt riding, encouraging many young riders to seek attention online.

The Bengaluru Traffic Police regularly conducts special drives against wheelies and street racing. Authorities seize vehicles, suspend driving licences, and initiate criminal proceedings against offenders. The police have also used preventive measures such as requiring offenders to execute bonds promising not to repeat the conduct.²¹

Dangerous stunt riding has emerged as a significant public safety issue in Karnataka, gaining visibility and notoriety through acts such as wheelies, reckless zig-zagging, riding without hands, and participation in organised street races. These activities, once the province of controlled spaces and legitimate sporting events, are increasingly being performed illegally on public roads. This phenomenon not only places the stunt riders themselves at great risk but also endangers pedestrians and other motorists, and undermines public order across urban and rural areas of the State.

Moreover, these issues are not restricted to the riders alone; innocent bystanders, children walking home from school, and elderly citizens crossing streets have tragically fallen victim to accidents caused by stunt riders. The resultant loss of public trust in law enforcement and transport safety measures undermines broader efforts towards community policing and coordinated urban management.

Recognising the growing threat posed by dangerous stunt riding on public roads and its adverse impact on road safety, public order, and the protection of life and property, the Karnataka Dangerous Stunt Riding (Prohibition and Penalties) Bill, 2025 was proposed and submitted to the Karnataka Institute for Law and Parliamentary Reforms (KILPAR) by the author, pursuant to an initiative undertaken on the advice of Sri H.K. Patil, Hon'ble Minister for Law, Government of Karnataka. The Bill seeks to establish a comprehensive legislative framework specifically tailored to the unique road conditions, enforcement challenges, and public safety requirements of the State of Karnataka.

With the passage of this Bill, Karnataka endeavours to set a benchmark for other states in India wrestling with similar challenges. The legislation balances the freedom and popularity of

²¹ *Caught Performing Bike Stunts? Sign Rs 2L Bond*, TIMES OF INDIA, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/caught-performing-bike-stunts-sign-rs-2l-bond/articleshow/78879874.cms>.

motorcycling as a legitimate sport with the non-negotiable imperative of public safety and the rule of law. If implemented robustly, it promises to curtail the rise of dangerous stunt riding in public spaces, restore a sense of order and accountability, and deter those tempted to seek fleeting digital fame at the expense of lives and well-being.

Ultimately, this proactive legislative approach underscores the principle that recreation and sport must never come at the cost of human safety, and that society's collective responsibility includes reining in dangerous behaviours wherever they threaten the public good.

VIII. LEGAL VACUUM IN THE REGULATION OF STUNT RIDING

A. Legislative Gaps

The current legal framework, including the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 and the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, contains general provisions against rash or negligent driving but fails to specifically define or criminalise 'stunt riding' as a distinct offence. This omission creates a loophole that prevents law enforcement from effectively prosecuting those who engage in dangerous and organised stunt riding. Furthermore, the law does not address the widespread digital promotion of such acts through platforms like YouTube and Instagram. There are no legal requirements for these platforms or individuals to remove or restrict stunt-related content, allowing such behaviours to be glorified and normalised among youth and the general public.

B. Escalation of Risk

Dangerous stunt riding is increasingly prevalent in high-density urban areas, highways, and near colleges, putting both participants and innocent pedestrians or commuters at grave risk. These stunts often occur in public spaces with significant vehicle and foot traffic, leading to life-threatening situations and property damage. Digital platforms amplify the risk, as young people are further motivated to perform and share such acts due to peer influence and the desire for online popularity.

C. Failure of Deterrence

Existing penalties under the current law are insufficient to deter offenders, given the relatively low fines or minor punishments compared to the fame and economic benefits some receive from viral stunt content. Even recent amendments increasing traffic fines have not specifically addressed the organised or digital dimension of stunt riding. Additionally, those who modify vehicles for risky stunts, and influencers who create or promote stunt content, often evade legal accountability due to ambiguities in the law and lack of enforcement mechanisms.

IX. JUDICIAL INTERPRETATION

Declining bail to the 29-year-old rider, the High Court's Dharwad bench noted that the Court has called for stringent laws to deter and punish bikers performing life-threatening stunts on roads, while hearing a petition of a rider from Koppal district's Gangavati Taluk. Echoing the concerns, legal experts have welcomed the court's observation.²²

It is the duty of the State and its law-enforcement agencies to legislate legal provisions and take stringent measures to suppress this perilous activity. The legislature has to take into consideration that existing statutory provisions are hardly sufficient to curb the menace. To fill this vacuum, suitable and stringent provisions are to be incorporated by amending the Indian Penal Code and Motor Vehicles Act to complement each other.

The Hon'ble Justice noted that increasing fatal accidents caused by wheelie incidents have shaken the citizens' confidence. The prosecution agencies are facing difficulties in charging offenders with severe penalties that would effectively prevent such incidents, the court added.²³

X. CHALLENGES AND CRITICISMS

A. Overcriminalisation of Youth

A significant concern is that stringent provisions may disproportionately penalise young people, especially minors, whose stunt participation is often more an outcome of peer influence, online trends, or thrill-seeking behaviour than criminal intent. Overzealous prosecution could inadvertently criminalise a broad segment of the youth population, undermine rehabilitative possibilities, and potentially conflict with established child rights protections. Although reformatory options are mentioned in the law, their real-world delivery must dovetail with the legal and ethical standards set by child welfare frameworks, such as those found in the Juvenile Justice Act.²⁴

B. Enforcement Gaps

Achieving meaningful deterrence will demand robust, technology-driven enforcement: expanding CCTV coverage, deploying drone surveillance, enhancing cyber-policing, and ensuring real-time data integration. Currently, such resources are concentrated in urban areas

²² *Karnataka High Court for Stricter Laws to Put Brakes on Wheelie Menace*, TIMES OF INDIA, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/karnataka-high-court-for-stricter-laws-to-put-brakes-on-wheelie-menace-legal-experts-stress-need-for-harsher-laws/articleshow/121145640.cms>.

²³ Criminal Petition No. 101267 of 2025 (Karnataka High Court, Dharwad Bench).

²⁴ See <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11081441/>.

like Bengaluru, creating a digital divide that can lead to uneven application and loopholes, particularly in rural districts. This infrastructure gap risks fostering selective enforcement and compromising the credibility of the law.²⁵

C. Digital Jurisdiction and Free Speech

Provisions aiming to regulate or penalise digital promotion of stunts, such as posting or sharing related videos, risk inviting constitutional scrutiny. Article 19(1)(a) of the Indian Constitution guarantees the freedom of speech and expression, and any broad restriction may be challenged as overreach. Furthermore, obligations placed on online intermediaries (like social media platforms) under the IT Rules, 2021 could raise complex questions of national jurisdiction, intermediary liability, and the balance between curbing harmful content and protecting fundamental freedoms.²⁶

D. Ambiguity in 'Authorised' Exceptions

While the Bill contemplates exceptions for training, licensed events, and cinematic productions, the lack of standardised approval pathways and transparent oversight mechanisms may open the door to abuse. Unclear guidelines could allow commercial organisers or content creators to circumvent regulations under the guise of 'authorised' activity, diluting the intended impact of the law and potentially introducing new enforcement ambiguities.

E. Legal Overlap

Effective regulation will require seamless integration with existing central statutes such as the Motor Vehicles Act, the Juvenile Justice Act, and the Information Technology Act. Poorly defined or redundant provisions may create jurisdictional confusion, procedural delays, or even legal challenges. Clear boundaries and coordination protocols are needed to ensure the new law complements, rather than conflicts with, central legislation.

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Create Designated Safe Zones

Establish legally sanctioned 'stunt zones' in urban centres (e.g., Bengaluru, Mysuru), where riders can perform under supervision, following strict safety protocols. This provides an outlet for enthusiasts, reduces illegal activity on public roads, and enables a controlled environment for skill development.

B. Mandatory Licensing and Training

²⁵ See <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10630732.2025.2583882>.

²⁶ See <https://www.lawjournals.org/assets/archives/2026/vol12issue1/12010.pdf>.

Introduce a specialised licensing system for stunt riders, requiring completion of accredited training programmes modelled on motorsport certification frameworks. This ensures that only trained individuals can legally participate in public displays, raising overall safety standards.

C. Parental Awareness Campaigns

Partner with educational authorities and parent-teacher organisations to deliver targeted messaging on the risks and legal consequences of illegal stunting. This harnesses family influence as a preventive tool, especially for minors.

D. Public-Private Collaboration

Engage bike manufacturers, workshops, service centres, and prominent social media influencers in awareness campaigns. This spreads preventive messaging through channels that young riders trust and offers opportunities for positive role modelling.

E. Strengthen Juvenile Reform Infrastructure

Expand capacity in observation homes and rehabilitation centres, ensuring that minors who offend are met with reformatory, not merely punitive, measures. Vocational, psychological, and behavioural interventions should be prioritised to minimise recidivism.

F. Technology-Enabled Enforcement

Invest in advanced surveillance CCTV networks with analytics, drone monitoring, and AI-powered recognition platforms to identify offenders and deter dangerous acts in real time, particularly at high-risk locations.

G. Periodic Review Mechanism

Create a State Advisory Committee including policymakers, law enforcement, legal experts, child rights advocates, and civil society, tasked with regularly reviewing the law's effectiveness, recording unintended consequences, and recommending timely amendments.

XII. CONCLUSION

Stunt riding represents far more than a traffic violation; it is a multidimensional legal, constitutional, social, and technological challenge that directly threatens the right to life and public safety. What may appear to some as an expression of youthful adventure or digital creativity is, in reality, conduct that transforms public roads into zones of unpredictable danger. Wheelies, stoppies, street racing, and other hazardous manoeuvres undermine the collective right of citizens to travel safely and erode public confidence in the State's ability to maintain order.

From a constitutional standpoint, the State is not only empowered but duty-bound under Article 21 of the Constitution of India to protect the lives of all road users. The freedoms guaranteed under Article 19 do not extend to actions that jeopardise others.

The proposed Karnataka Dangerous Stunt Riding (Prohibition and Penalties) Bill, 2025 is therefore constitutionally justified as a proportionate and necessary response to an escalating public hazard.

The need for such legislation is reinforced by alarming empirical evidence. Rising juvenile involvement, increasing trauma admissions, widespread social media glorification, and limitations in existing statutory provisions demonstrate that traditional laws alone are insufficient. By specifically defining stunt riding, addressing digital dissemination, imposing owner and parental responsibility, and strengthening enforcement mechanisms, the proposed legislation fills a critical legal vacuum. It reflects a modern regulatory approach that recognises how technology, psychology, and social influence intersect to shape dangerous behaviour.

Ultimately, the issue of stunt riding is a test of how society reconciles individual excitement with collective security. Public roads are a shared constitutional space intended for safe mobility, not for reckless displays in pursuit of fleeting online fame. Karnataka's legislative initiative signals a commitment to preserving this shared space and protecting the dignity, safety, and lives of its citizens. If implemented thoughtfully and consistently, the law can serve as a national model, reaffirming the principle that personal freedom ends where public danger begins.
