

# Four Accidents Daily On Killer Road That Has No Median 3 killed as cars collide on ECR, protest blocks traffic

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Chennai: East Coast Road witnessed a gory accident around 6pm on Friday evening as a Maruti Esteem and a Chevrolet Tavera collided head on in Thiruvaidanthai, 45 km south of Chennai, near Mamallapuram. The occupants of the Esteem, S Gopi Nakkesh (30), a cinematographer from T Nagar, and his girlfriend C Beula Mary (22) from K K Nagar, died on the spot. The driver of the Tavera, V Saravanan (28), died on the way to hospital.

So strong was the impact of the collision that Gopi broke through the windshield and land on the mangled bonnet. He was returning to Chennai with his girlfriend after a trip to Mamallapuram. The Tavera was carrying a five-member catering team of GRT Raddison hotel which was returning to Mamallapuram after serving food at the Chettinad Hospital in Kelambakkam, where the state government had organised a seminar on health. The catering students were injured and admitted to the same hospital they were returning from.

Policemen found it very difficult to extricate the bodies



A Prathap

**GHASTLY:** The car involved in the collision on the ECR on Friday

from the Esteem, and to add to their woes, local residents staged an impromptu demonstration against the lack of safety on the road. This led to a traffic jam for about two hours, with vehicles piling up to 5 km on either side. The situation was brought under control after Mamallapuram DSP B Sammanthamurthy came to the spot. A case under 304A of IPC has been registered.

"There is no median, nor speedbreakers or traffic signals. Vehicles tend to overspeed and today's accident also looks like a case of rash driving," a

police officer said. According to local policemen, at least four accidents are reported each day on the stretch near Mamallapuram. Unlike the GST Road where accidents have come down after the construction of a median, ECR continues to be a killer road as it does not have a median right from Sholinganallur to Pudukcherry, a distance of over 140 km. Moreover, the laying of pipelines for the Rs 1,000-crore desalination plant at Nemeli village along ECR has also reduced the road width, with vehicles competing for space.

## 5 of family killed near Coimbatore

Coimbatore: Five members of a family, which was returning from a pilgrimage to Tirupati, were killed as their car was smashed by a speeding truck on a highway near Coimbatore early on Friday.

Traffic came to a halt on the busy Bangalore-Kochi highway at Navakkarai in the suburban Coimbatore in the morning following the ghastly accident. Police said family members of K Harshan from Ernakulam in Kerala were heading back home from Tirupati in three cars on Monday.

The car driven by Harshan's son H Nishanth, a 29-year-old employee of an infotech company, rammed into a lorry loaded with tiles, headed for Chennai from Thrissur in Kerala. The front portion of the car was completely smashed and all the passengers including Nishanth and his mother Kamalaveni (59) were crushed to death. TNN

# Killer roads claimed 13,764 lives in 2009

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: The safety of road users in Tamil Nadu appears to be increasingly in danger with 1,000 more people dying in road accidents in 2009 as compared to 2008. The state government told the Assembly on Friday that 12,784 people died in road accidents in 2008 and this increased to 13,746 last year.

The government said strict action was being taken against traffic violations but road safety experts and activists say this isn't enough. "Presently, there is no proper mechanism to catch overspeeding vehicles. CCTV cameras should be installed on highways. Authorities should concentrate on curve correction on highways,"

## Death On The Highway

No of accidents



Govt says strict action was taken against traffic violators but experts says that's not enough

▶ In 2009, 13,746 people died in accidents, compared to 12,784 in 2008

▶ Activists feel more number of gov buses will reduce accidents

Fatal accidents



No of fatalities



R Mohana Krishnan, a road safety campaigner, said: "The problem begins from the issue

written test for learners' licence and many don't have the place for driving tests. The licence-

road transport ministry officials, 77% of accidents were due to drivers' fault, 1.29% due to pedestrians' fault, 18.34% because of bad weather conditions and other factors, 2.01% due to vehicle defects and 1.39% due to bad roads. Last year, the Chennai traffic police brought many vehicles damaged in accidents and displayed them at important intersections to create awareness. The campaign, however, did not continue.

Many activists say the number of government buses should increase so that the number of private vehicles will come down, to an extent.

Transport department officials said the increase in vehicle population and poor ad-