



The underground Kanjozoku street car culture and racers of Osaka, Japan, is mysterious yet so legendary. The word 'Kanjo' means 'small to the most'; this may reflect the cars themselves, specifically Honda Civics, being pushed to the limit. The origins of the Kanjozoku remain relatively unknown but it is believed to have started around three decades ago.

Inside the infamous KANJOZOKU CAR CULTURE

ITMAM BASHAR



Honda enthusiasts have been racing on elevated highways in Osaka, Japan for a long time. The most famous of these highways was the 'Kanjo Loop': an infamous expressway where the roadways connected in a looping clockwise position. After hours, after the night had settled, the racers came to play.

Nowadays, the Kanjozoku exclusively uses Civics for races on the Kanjo Loop. They gather at random, undetermined locations to race and test their skills to the limit. Keep in mind that the roads are not empty in these eerie hours, nor is it closed for them, so there are civilians and cops on the street when they race. The goal of the 'Kanjo Racers', or rather 'the Kanjozoku', is not to let anything stand in their way; dodge anything that is thrown at them.

This, as you might guess, is entirely illegal and extremely dangerous.

The Kanjozoku is often compared to the world's most notorious 'Midnight Club' and can be compared to the Wangan. However, where the Wangan has wide, straight, and long roads, the Kanjo has tight, shorter routes than the Wangan. Kanjo has narrow corners. The Wangan is home to ridiculously high-powered cars geared towards top speed, while the Kanjo is perfect for vehicles with mind-blowing 0-60 times and outstanding handling and agility. Now their choice of automobile is exclusively one of the best front-wheel-drive cars of all time, the Honda Civic.

In an interview with Car Throttle, an anonymous member of Kanjozoku was asked, "Why only EF9, EG6, and EK4 Honda Civics from the 80s and 90s?"

"The Kanjo is full of ordinary drivers,

so to weave through the traffic, a Civic gets the job done," he answered,

The Kanjozoku have always derived inspiration from the professional motorsport world. During the 80s-90s, the Civic found immense popularity in the Japanese Group-A racing scene. The loop runners were utilizing the same tricks in their cars, starting from styling, engine setup, tuning, etc. The engine mods and tuning are usually not heavy, and in most scenarios, it is a moderately tuned NA B-series VTEC motor. The interiors are generally stripped bare, and things like engine bay presentation don't mean anything to these guys as long as the car is perfectly functional.

The same goes for the tyre and wheel set up; wheels will often be mismatched, and they'll mostly use tires like Advan AO48s or high grip racing tires. The cars may not shine like show cars, mainly because it's designed to show the car owners' intentions or just for racing. The vehicles' cars and owners' identities are often left anonymous with a hinge or dummy license plate and usually with window nets

or owners wearing a mask.

At one point, Kanjo racing became such a massive issue for the Japanese people that law enforcement began crackdowns on illegal racing, members of Kanjozoku were arrested, some had their beloved car's taken away, and the Kanjo loop was locked down. Many racers left the hobby, some moved to the racetrack, and others just left the group or retired because they didn't find that thrill anymore; the rivalry between the Kanjo car clubs died down and what's left of Kanjozoku stood united, battling law enforcement while keeping their JDM traditions alive. But even for those who have moved their racing to the racetrack, the distinct Kanjo vibe can still be felt in their cars and driving style.

These days, racing on the Kanjo is unusually rare, and people who have stayed loyal to their traditional JDM activity only do so to keep up a longstanding tradition. Any information on Kanjo racing that exists is unbelievably hard to find and skeptical at best. A lot of it is hearsay and rumors perpetrated by those that wish they were running the loop.

Meet 'Bachao', an app to prevent sexual violence against women

JINAT JAHAN KHAN

The incidents of rape and sexual violence against women in Bangladesh are on the rise over the years. This number has bizarrely increased during the Covid-19 pandemic.

'Bachao', a platform designed to connect victims with people who are nearby and can help, is a P2P (people-to-people) app, launched on October 2, 2021, that aims to prevent sexual assault by making nearby people aware before such terrible incidents can take place.

With a determination to save women from the heinous crime

About 20 years ago, the sister of Jalal Ahmed, the CEO and founder of the 'Bachao' app, went through a horrific experience of sexual assault. This incident fuelled Jalal to start working on a platform that can prevent such assaults to other women.

Jalal said, "80% of rapes occur in the victim's own neighbourhood. However, there is just one police officer for every 800 people. So local neighbourhoods must act to prevent such incidents. But the problem is getting in contact with the victims. For example, Uber connects the neighbouring taxi drivers to a passenger in need of transport, and Foodpanda connects neighbourhood restaurants to a customer who wants to order food. We have launched the 'Bachao' app to connect neighbourhood volunteers to people in need of help."

The team of Bachao also has plans to store, analyse and research data to profile rapists, victims and environments.

How to install and use Bachao App

One can easily install and register the 'Bachao' app within a few minutes. This app is available to download from bachao.com.bd or Google Play Store. After installing it, provide your mobile number to get a verification code, and select 3 emergency contacts from your contact list for future purposes. Remember to keep your location turned on so that your emergency contacts or volunteers may know where you are in any kind of danger.

If you feel any threat of rape and need urgent assistance, open the app and click on the 'Rape Alert' button. This instantly sends an alert to your selected emergency contacts and nearby volunteers. Both victims and volunteers can see the Live GPS Map Location of each other. They can directly message and call through the app if needed. After clicking the 'Rape Alert' option, the app continues to notify others until the victim presses the 'Safe Now' button. If it is not selected within 20 minutes, that particular case with GPS Data is forwarded to the local police station for further action. A 'Bachao' helpline is also available on the app to call.

For volunteers, keeping the location turned on is a must. You will receive a notification or a red alert from the app if someone around you is asking for

help. Call or message the victim through the app or just directly go to the victim following the GPS Map Location to provide assistance.

Latest updates on the Bachao app

'Bachao' has already been downloaded over 68,000 times, and 165 incidents of such kind have been taken care of by the volunteers. Since its launch, Dhaka has topped among all the divisions based on the number of downloads.

Divisional cities have contributed to 74% of the total downloads. 62% of the users are aged between 18-25 years, while 30% are between 25-35 years. Among the users, 54% are male and 46% of them

are female.

Till now, 14,000 people have signed up as volunteers, along with 6,500 police stations and a national delivery company's human network.

More features to introduce in future

The team of 'Bachao' is planning to add a BTRC shortcode and SMS-only feature for rural illiterate people who have no smartphones. A voice activation feature where the user just needs to shout 'Bachao' is also planned for December 2021.

Moreover, they are working with BTRC to enable this app to run without data or wifi-free during emergencies. The 'Bachao'

team is also working with Bangladesh Police and MoH to engage Ansar or VDP and highway police in their vigilance and volunteer network.

'Bachao' is a non-profit initiative. The founder, Jalal Ahmed says, he spent BDT 82 lakh from his own savings to support this project. However, according to him, the project requires more financial assistance to expand it and add more features.

"Rape is a social disease, and we all together in the society need to overcome it. The police or just one agency cannot solve this issue. Everyone in the society, in every neighbourhood, every village, every union must come forward against rape", further stated Jalal.

