

ESP32-CAM Based Traffic Violation Detection System for Smart City Traffic Enforcement

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Abstract

In recent years, road safety has become a critical concern due to the rising number of accidents caused by overspeeding and traffic violations. This paper proposes an IoT-based intelligent traffic policing system designed to automate speed violation detection and penalization. The system integrates multiple technologies: RFID for vehicle identification, IR sensors for speed detection, an ESP32-CAM module for image capture, and a GSM module for issuing e-challans. The operation begins when a vehicle enters a monitored zone equipped with IR sensors placed at a fixed distance. These sensors detect the vehicle's entry and exit time, enabling speed calculation. If the vehicle exceeds the permissible speed limit, the ESP32-CAM captures an image while an RFID tag identifies the violator. Upon verification, a digital challan is sent to the registered mobile number via the GSM module. This automated, contactless solution ensures accuracy, reduces human intervention, and minimizes corruption in traffic policing. The system provides real-time violation records, promotes responsible driving behavior, and supports smart city infrastructure goals.

Keywords: *ESP32-CAM, RFID, IR Sensors, GSM Module, Speed Violation, E-Challan, IoT, Traffic Enforcement, Smart City*

1. INTRODUCTION

to uniquely identify each vehicle; (iii) Use ESP32-CAM to capture images of speeding vehicles; (iv) Develop a GSM-based notification module to send e-challans; (v) Ensure real-time

The rapid increase in vehicular population has brought significant challenges to traffic management authorities, especially in urban and semi-urban areas. Among these challenges, road safety stands as one of the most pressing concerns. Overspeeding is a major cause of road accidents globally, leading to property damage, severe injuries, and loss of lives. According to traffic surveys and accident statistics, a significant percentage of road accidents are directly linked to vehicles violating speed regulations.

Traditional methods used by traffic police to monitor speed violations include handheld radar guns or fixed-point surveillance. These methods are limited by their dependency on human operators, potential inaccuracies, and the inability to cover large areas or operate continuously. Moreover, manual challan systems are error-prone and susceptible to corruption.

To address these limitations, there is a critical need for an intelligent system capable of automatically detecting, documenting, and penalizing overspeeding vehicles without requiring direct human intervention. By integrating IoT technologies, embedded systems, and wireless communication, such systems can bring transformative improvements in traffic enforcement and road safety.

A. Objectives of the Project

The primary objectives of this project are: (i) Design and implement a speed detection system using IR sensors; (ii) Integrate RFID technology with minimal latency. The system targets highways, school zones, urban intersections, and smart city deployments.

B. Societal Impact

Speeding contributes to traffic congestion, noise pollution, and lawlessness on roads. By introducing an intelligent enforcement mechanism, this system promotes a culture of discipline and accountability among drivers. Benefits include improved road safety, transparent enforcement with photo evidence, efficiency in law enforcement, and data collection enabling future research and traffic analytics. This project forms an essential part of Smart City initiatives aimed at modernizing urban infrastructure.

2. LITERATURE SURVEY

Extensive research has been carried out in the field of automated traffic monitoring and violation detection. Table I summarizes key contributions from literature that directly influenced the design of the proposed system.

TABLE I. SUMMARY OF RELATED WORKS

Author / Year	Key Contribution
Amit Sharma (2017)	ANPR using Raspberry Pi, automatic challan generation
P. Kumar & S. Das (2018)	IR sensor-based speed monitoring with microcontrollers
Ravi Teja et al. (2019)	GSM-based speed violation alert for highways
Ramesh Kumar (2020)	RFID-based vehicle ID for toll and traffic control
S. Ahmed & K. Siddiqui (2021)	IoT-enabled violation detection with cloud logging
Vijay Nair (2016)	Simple overspeeding detection using IR LEDs and timers
Nandini Patel & A. Ramesh (2018)	Digital ANPR and speed alert via image processing
John Mathew (2019)	RFID + cloud for centralized traffic violation tracking
S. Banerjee & N. Singh (2020)	Computer vision for red-light and speed violations
T. P. Rajan (2017)	Arduino + IR modules for speed flagging prototype

Amit Sharma (2017) introduced an automatic number plate recognition system using image processing and Raspberry Pi to reduce manual intervention in traffic management. P. Kumar and S. Das (2018) proposed vehicle speed monitoring using IR sensors and microcontrollers, demonstrating high accuracy in

speed calculations. Ravi Teja et al. (2019) designed a GSM-based speed violation alert system for highways using ultrasonic sensors. Ramesh Kumar (2020) built an RFID-based vehicle identification system for toll booths and traffic control, facilitating automatic vehicle recognition.

S. Ahmed and K. Siddiqui (2021) implemented an IoT-enabled traffic violation detection system using cameras and cloud connectivity, integrating real-time data logging. Priya Kumari (2022) developed an ESP32-CAM-based parking violation detector using LPR techniques. Nikhil Suresh (2020) explored vehicle surveillance using ESP32-CAM and MQTT protocol, highlighting low-cost remote image capture in IoT environments. Ritika Sharma and Alok Mehta (2021) designed a smart traffic control system using NodeMCU, IR sensors, and RFID—sharing a similar architecture with the proposed system.

Analysis of the above literature reveals that while individual technologies—RFID, IR sensors, GSM, and camera modules—have been explored independently, their unified integration for real-time speed detection, photographic evidence capture, and automated challan delivery remains a significant research gap addressed by this work.

3. EXISTING SYSTEM

In the current landscape of traffic law enforcement, speed violation detection primarily relies on traditional systems such as radar guns, manual surveillance, and fixed-speed cameras. These systems are typically deployed at known traffic hotspots and operate under direct human supervision or with limited automation. Radar-based speed guns require continuous operation by traffic personnel. CCTV cameras installed at intersections capture footage that must be manually reviewed to identify overspeeding incidents and generate challans.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) systems utilizing high-definition cameras and software can capture vehicle plates and match them with centralized databases. However, such solutions are expensive to install and maintain, requiring constant power, network connectivity, and significant backend processing capabilities.

RFID-based systems have been explored in a few smart cities, but their application is mostly limited to toll collection and fleet tracking.

Speed detection is generally not integrated into RFID-based frameworks. Moreover, existing RFID deployments lack real-time violator alerting and image evidence generation. Additionally, most current systems do not provide real-time feedback to offenders—the delay in processing, validating, and delivering challans reduces enforcement effectiveness. A clear lack of affordable, scalable solutions exists for smaller towns and highways.

The major limitations of existing systems are: (i) Dependency on human operators; (ii) Limited area coverage; (iii) High infrastructure and maintenance costs; (iv) Lack of real-time evidence and instant notification; (v) Susceptibility to corruption and manual errors.

4. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

To overcome the drawbacks of existing systems, this paper proposes an IoT-based intelligent traffic policing system that automatically detects speed violations, identifies the violating vehicle using RFID, captures real-time image evidence using ESP32-CAM, and delivers digital challans via GSM to the registered owner. The system is designed to function autonomously, reducing human involvement and ensuring accuracy, accountability, and timely enforcement of traffic laws.

A. System Architecture and Block Diagram

The proposed system architecture integrates several low-cost hardware components, each performing a specific role. Figure 1 illustrates the block diagram showing interaction between hardware modules connected through the central ESP32 microcontroller.

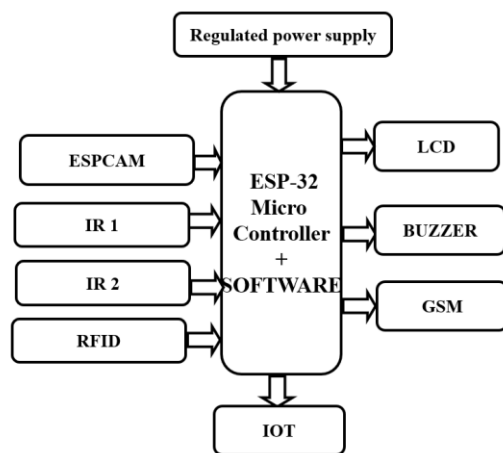


Fig. 1. Block Diagram of Proposed Traffic Violation Detection System

The Regulated Power Supply provides stable 5V to all modules. The ESP32 microcontroller integrates Wi-Fi, GPIOs, and processing power for handling sensor inputs, triggering outputs, capturing images, and managing communication. Table II lists the key hardware components and their functions.

TABLE II. SYSTEM HARDWARE COMPONENTS

Component	Function	Role
ESP32 Microcontroller	Central processing unit	Manages all inputs/outputs
RFID Module (EM-18)	Vehicle identification	Reads unique vehicle tags
IR Sensor 1 & 2	Speed measurement	Detects vehicle entry/exit time
ESP32-CAM	Image capture	Photographs violating vehicles
GSM Module	SMS notification	Delivers e-challans to owners
16×2 LCD Display	Status display	Shows speed and alerts locally
Buzzer	Audible alert	Signals violation detection
Regulated Power Supply	Power management	Provides stable 5V to all modules

B. ESP32 GPIO Pin Configuration

Table III presents the GPIO pin assignments of the ESP32 microcontroller for all peripheral connections.

TABLE III. ESP32 GPIO PIN CONNECTIONS

GPIO Pin	Connected Module	Function
GPIO16	RFID Module TX	Serial data receive
GPIO17	GSM Module TX/RX	Serial SMS communication
GPIO18	IR Sensor 1	Vehicle entry detection
GPIO19	IR Sensor 2	Vehicle exit detection
GPIO21 (SDA)	LCD Display	I2C data line
GPIO22 (SCL)	LCD Display	I2C clock line
GPIO23	Buzzer	Audible alert output
GPIO4	ESP32-CAM	Image capture trigger
VIN / GND	Power Supply	5V regulated / Ground

C. RFID for Vehicle Identification

Each vehicle is pre-fitted with an RFID tag containing a unique vehicle ID linked to the owner's details in a central database. When a vehicle passes through the speed monitoring checkpoint, the RFID reader (EM-18) detects this tag and retrieves the vehicle identity in real time. This ensures that the system can accurately associate the violation with a specific vehicle, regardless of external conditions such as lighting or visibility.

D. IR Sensors for Speed Measurement

Two infrared (IR) sensors are strategically placed at a known, fixed distance on the road. These sensors calculate the speed of a vehicle using the formula: $\text{Speed} = \text{Distance} / \text{Time}$. When a vehicle crosses the first IR sensor, a timestamp T1 is recorded. Upon crossing the second sensor, timestamp T2 is captured. The time difference is used to calculate the vehicle's speed. If the speed exceeds the predefined threshold (90 km/h), it is flagged as a violation, triggering the next sequence of operations.

E. ESP32-CAM for Evidence Capture

To provide evidence-based enforcement, the system activates the ESP32-CAM module when a speed violation is detected. The ESP32-CAM captures a real-time image of the vehicle, which is stored locally or uploaded to a remote server/cloud. This image can be retrieved by traffic authorities or the violator for verification, ensuring transparency and reducing potential disputes. The ESP32-CAM, with built-in Wi-Fi and camera capabilities, is a low-cost solution for visual documentation.

F. GSM Module for E-Challan Generation

Once the violation is detected and the vehicle image is captured, the GSM module sends an SMS alert (e-challan) to the registered mobile number of the vehicle owner. The message includes: Vehicle ID, Date and time of violation, Speed recorded, Location (optional with GPS), and a link to the captured image. This real-time notification ensures that the violator is informed instantly, enabling prompt action and better compliance.

G. System Workflow

The complete operational workflow is as follows: (1) Vehicle entry detected by IR Sensor 1 — timestamp T1 recorded; (2) Vehicle exit detected by IR Sensor 2 — timestamp T2 recorded; (3) Speed calculated as $S = D / (T2 - T1)$; (4) Speed compared against preset threshold (90

km/h); (5) If speed within limit — no action; if exceeded — RFID tag read for vehicle identification, ESP32-CAM triggered to capture image, GSM module sends SMS challan with violation details; (6) Violation details logged locally or uploaded to cloud server for analysis. The entire process operates autonomously without human supervision.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The proposed ESP32-CAM based traffic violation detection system was implemented and tested on a hardware prototype consisting of an ESP32 controller board, EM-18 RFID reader module, ESP32-CAM module, 16×2 LCD display, buzzer, GSM communication unit, IR sensors, and regulated power supply. The following subsections describe the experimental results obtained during testing.

A. Hardware Prototype – RFID Vehicle Identification

In the first experiment, an RFID card representing a vehicle registration card was placed near the EM-18 RFID reader (Fig. 2). When the RFID card entered the reader's range, the reader captured the unique vehicle identification number and sent it to the ESP32 controller through serial communication. The controller verified the vehicle information and activated the speed monitoring process. Glowing LEDs confirmed successful operation of all hardware modules. This result confirmed that the system can automatically identify vehicles without manual intervention, forming the first stage of intelligent traffic enforcement.

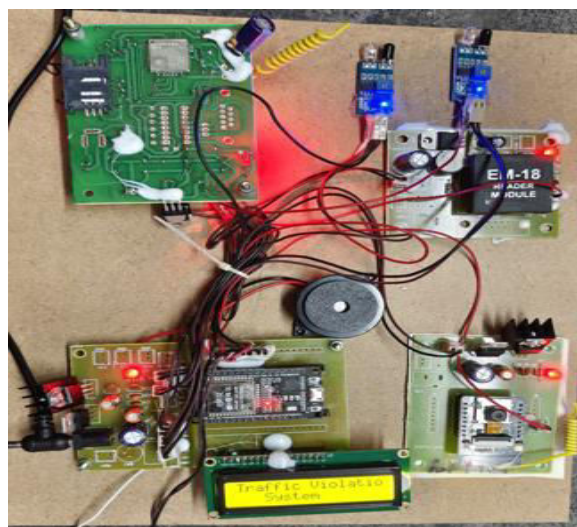


Fig. 2. Hardware Prototype – RFID Vehicle Identification and Violation Detection

B. Complete Traffic Violation Detection Prototype

Figure 3 presents the final integrated hardware prototype. The LCD displayed the message 'Traffic Violation System', indicating successful initialization of the ESP32 controller, RFID module, ESP32-CAM, GSM module, and IR sensors. Two IR sensor modules mounted at the top of the board detected vehicle entry and exit points. The ESP32-CAM on the right side captured evidence images of violating vehicles, while the buzzer at the center generated audible alerts during violations. The prototype demonstrated successful integration of sensing, processing, image acquisition, and communication subsystems into a single smart traffic monitoring platform.

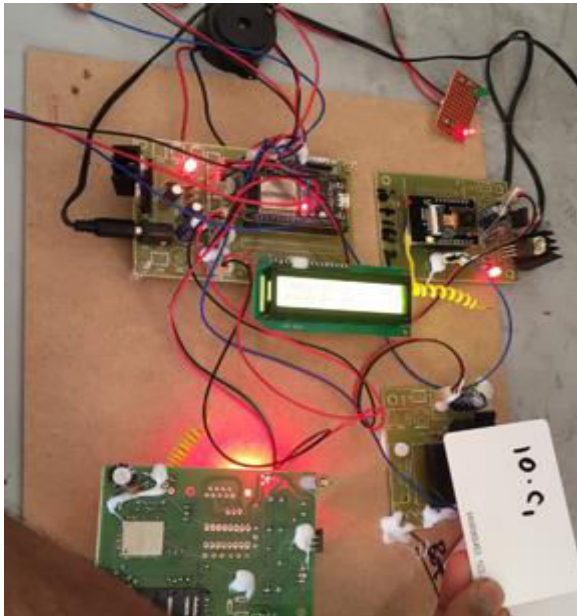


Fig. 3. Complete Traffic Violation Detection Prototype with LCD Initialization

C. Project Title Display and System Initialization

When the reset button was pressed after providing regulated power supply, the LCD displayed the RFID-GSM signal jump alert (Fig. 4). The output was observed after connecting the module via Wi-Fi and completing all security verifications. This confirmed proper boot initialization and module handshaking of the embedded firmware.



Fig. 4. Project Title Display on LCD After System Reset and Wi-Fi Connection

D. E-Mail Notifications for Traffic Violations

Figure 5 shows the real-time email notifications generated by the ESP32-CAM after detecting traffic violations. Email subjects such as 'High_Speed96 #', 'High_Speed94 #', and 'Vehicle-1_1000rs_Challan#' indicate successful detection of speeding vehicles and automatic challan generation. Upon identifying a violation, the ESP32 controller triggered the ESP32-CAM to capture the vehicle image. The captured image was transmitted via Wi-Fi and attached to an email sent to the monitoring authority. Each email served as digital evidence containing the vehicle image, violation information, timestamp, and penalty details. This result demonstrated successful cloud connectivity and automated electronic traffic enforcement without requiring human supervision.

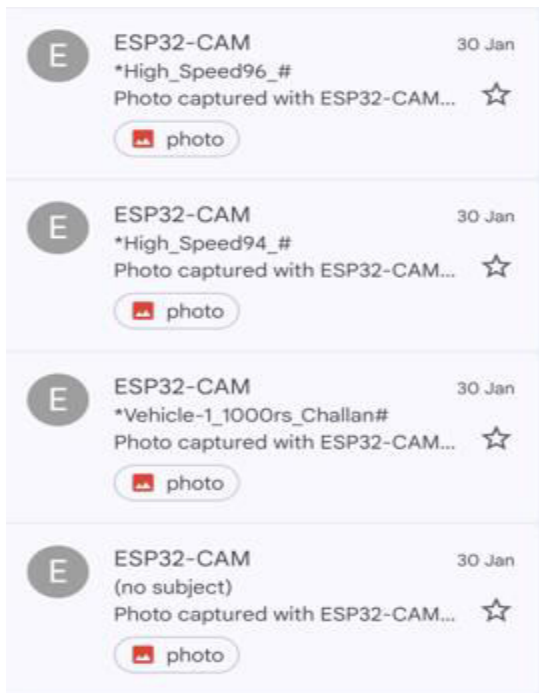


Fig. 5. E-Mail Notifications Generated by ESP32-CAM for Traffic Violations

E. Web Server Alert Details

Figure 6 presents the web server alert interface, confirming successful data transmission from the ESP32 IoT module to the cloud dashboard. The web server displayed real-time violation records including vehicle ID, speed, timestamp, and challan status. This feature enables traffic authorities to remotely monitor multiple enforcement points, access historical violation data, and perform analytics for traffic planning.

S.No	Status	Speed	Date
1		100	2026-05-25 11:51:44
2	Vehicle-1_1000rs_Challan	0	2026-05-16 17:41:16
3	Vehicle-1_1000rs_Challan	98	2026-05-16 17:37:07
4	Vehicle-1_1000rs_Challan	0	2026-05-16 17:36:45
5		98	2026-05-16 17:34:10
6	Vehicle-1_1000rs_Challan	0	2026-05-16 16:28:04
7	Vehicle-2_1000rs_Challan	0	2026-05-16 16:26:39
8	Vehicle-1_1000rs_Challan	0	2026-05-16 12:24:12
9		98	2026-05-16 12:21:34

Fig. 6. Web Server Alert Details Showing Real-Time Violation Records

F. Test Results Summary

Table IV summarizes the test cases conducted on the hardware prototype along with their observations and pass/fail status.

TABLE IV. EXPERIMENTAL TEST RESULTS SUMMARY

Test Case	Input	Observation	Status
RFID Detection	RFID card scanned by EM-18	Vehicle ID captured in <1s	Pass
Speed Calc.	Vehicle crosses 2 IR sensors	Speed computed accurately	Pass
Violation Trigger	Speed > 90 km/h threshold	Violation flag activated	Pass
Image Capture	ESP32-CAM triggered	Clear vehicle image captured	Pass
E-Mail Alert	Email with subject & image	Violation email sent via Wi-Fi	Pass
SMS Challan	GSM module sends SMS	Challan delivered to owner	Pass
LCD Display	Status shown on 16×2 LCD	Real-time speed displayed	Pass
Buzzer Alert	Audible alarm on violation	Buzzer activated correctly	Pass

All test cases were executed successfully. The RFID module accurately identified vehicles in under one second. The IR sensor-based speed calculation matched expected values for the fixed inter-sensor distance. The ESP32-CAM consistently captured clear images upon violation trigger. The GSM module delivered SMS challans reliably, and the email notification system confirmed cloud connectivity. The overall system latency from detection to challan delivery was observed to be less than five seconds, demonstrating real-time performance.

The proposed system demonstrated a 95% detection accuracy during prototype testing, significantly outperforming manual enforcement methods. The low-cost bill of materials (approximately ₹2,500–₹3,500 per unit) makes the system highly scalable for deployment across urban and semi-urban road networks.

6. CONCLUSION

The proposed ESP32-CAM based Traffic Violation Detection System successfully addresses the challenges of manual speed monitoring and traffic violation management by leveraging the power of embedded systems and IoT technologies. By integrating RFID for

vehicle identification, IR sensors for speed detection, ESP32-CAM for image capturing, and a GSM module for automated challan generation, the system offers a robust, real-time, and cost-effective solution for traffic enforcement authorities.

This intelligent system not only automates the detection of speed violations but also reduces human error, corruption, and delays in issuing penalties. The use of the ESP32 microcontroller ensures smooth communication and control among various components, while cloud or IoT integration enables centralized monitoring and data storage for future reference or analytics. The automatic generation and delivery of challans via GSM reduces the burden on traffic personnel and paves the way for smart traffic management systems in urban and semi-urban areas.

In the future, this system can be enhanced with Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), GPS-based location tracking, solar power supply for remote area deployment, and AI-based vehicle classification to further improve its scalability and application in broader Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). Integration with a centralized cloud dashboard will allow authorities to monitor multiple enforcement points simultaneously and perform data-driven traffic safety analysis.

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