

## PERSPECTIVE

## Dear fuel, where art thou?



FUEL prices are about to increase once more. Ministers would like to show you how neighbouring countries have high fuel costs so we should as well. Unfortunately neighbouring countries have higher income rates than us so it is easier for them to afford it. Somehow ministers find that part of the fact sheet written in an alien language they cannot comprehend.

Whatever the case we have to pay through our noses for every litre of petrol- that too adulterated. To save money the cars can be converted to CNG which robs a lot of power and is only feasible if your daily travel is more than 40-50 kilometers. Traveling a lot is the only way to recover the high CNG conversion cost. Others should lobby for tax free horses. Here are a few tips though to squeeze out the last bit of extra distance from your last drop of petrol. A lot of this applies for bikes too.

**Tires make the car go round**

The tires can affect your fuel consumption to a big extent. Wider, bigger tires may look cool but they require more effort from the engine to go round. These have what you can call a big 'foot-print'. That is why Indian bikes and cars always come with the skinniest tires possible to save up on fuel.

Also having tires inflated to the maximum recommended pressure can improve gas mileage by as much as six percent. Having under inflated tires will give you a smoother cushioned ride at the expense of fuel mileage. This creates an unnecessary drag on the wheel similar to a person walking around with oversized shoes. You will find the rating

printed on the side of the tire. Be careful not to over inflate though as that will make the center of the tire wear out.

**Number one of to-do list**

Regular servicing keeps your vehicle operating at peak efficiency, which maximizes fuel efficiency. An inefficient engine with fouled spark plugs, for example won't make optimum use of fuel. Be sure the air filter and the fuel filter are clean. In our country fuel filters become clogged in a short time because of all the sneaky practices. According to many online automotive publications a new oxygen sensor alone can improve gas mileage by as much as 15 percent. Of course in Bangladesh most of the 'haaturi mistris' won't even know what an oxygen sensor is. They will end up recommending that your entire engine be overhauled.

**Clean out the trunk/boot**

What we lovingly call the 'diki' is elsewhere known as the trunk or boot. Clean it out and do not leave heavy equipment like tools, boxes, huge 40 pound subwoofers, dead bodies lying around in there. Take out unneeded items that only add weight to your vehicle because extra weight decreases gas mileage.

**The nut behind the wheel**

In movies like 'Dukes of Hazzard' and 'Starsky and Hutch' there is a lot of adrenaline pumping cool and crazy driving. However, at the end of the movie you get to see just a few of the stunt accidents that destroyed a whole lot of cars. Leave stunt driving to those who can.

Accelerate gradually, drive smoothly and with care and you can see as much as

a 20 percent gain in fuel economy compared with what you'd get with an aggressive driving style. Skip those jackrabbit starts because contrary to what men believe, women are not impressed. Anticipate stops so you avoid sudden braking by taking a long view of the road ahead, coasting safely to where you see traffic stopped.

Also a car moving at 60 kilometers an hour get about 15 percent better fuel economy than the same car going 100 kmph.

**An idling car is the gas guzzling devil's workshop**

Don't be idle for too long but that does not mean you turn off the engine whenever you stop like a CNG scooter driver. If you are going to stop for more than a minute it will save more to turn the engine off and restarting later.

**Walk**

Sometimes even the obvious is not so obvious. We Bangladeshis tend to be a bit too pampered and hate to walk even short distances. So keeping that pampered feeling in mind, at least take a rickshaw when you have to go just a few steps instead of taking the car. Considering the jams, it is much more appropriate in some case to go by rickshaw or walk the short distances.

**Don't believe the dealers**

When you shop for a new vehicle, compare fuel economy but bear in mind how bigger vehicles, bigger engines, four-wheel drives and lots of optional equipment can add to a vehicle's weight and, as a result, reduce its fuel efficiency. Also manufacturers or dealer claims of fuel efficiency are always higher than the reality.

Also try to opt for a manual transmission equipped car with more than four forward gears. It might mean more work on the roads considering the delightful jams we have. However, the same car equipped with an automatic transmission will cost you roughly 1.5-2 kilometers per liter of fuel. Reconditioned car dealers will tell you otherwise.

Think about how your fuel conservation efforts benefit the Earth and future generations. If that does not matter think of how it will help your wallet retain some of its fatness after a trip to the pump.

By Ehsanur Raza Ronny

## What's in a name?

QUITE a lot, actually, when it comes to identity. You are, after all, identified first by your name. That is the first thing you write on your CV when applying for a job or on the form when you want to register for a class or apply for membership at a club.

Then, why is it that women are so often expected to change part of their names to that of their husbands when they get married?

I've heard the arguments over and over it's a manageable way to deal with the couple; one common name will cause less confusion for the children, assuming, of course, there will be children to carry on that name.

Then why is the man not asked to change his?

This is not a feministic standpoint. Let's look at the issue objectively.

Babies are given their father's name at birth and most girls grow up without bothering to change that, until they get married. Then they usually opt to adopt their husbands' last names. Some

feminists shout that the woman is simply going from being one man's possession to another's. Others state that the woman had a man's name (her father's) in the first place, so that doesn't solve anything. I'd like to simply point out that we live in a patriarchal society. You can either go along with tradition and change that name now or you can decide not to. It should be your choice, really.

I've thought long and hard about changing my last name, Nasser, (which, incidentally, was my father's first name) to something else, something more neutral. I wanted a name that transcends gender and race and religion. I settled on "Sunshine" and I tried sounding it out. But then I started to miss my name, the one I was given at birth, the name I have always been called. This is no longer my father's name, but my own and I just couldn't bring myself to change it.

If even the idea of a communal

sounding name was not enough for me to want to change my name, how then can a husband come along and expect me to give it up?

My sister, on the other hand, found it convenient to add her husband's name to her full name thereby becoming Nasser-Aspenes. Many women do that these days, and like I said it really is the woman's choice. I do, however, wonder what the children should be called in such cases. Do they take both the mother's plus the father's name? And when they in turn marry, should they keep adding on names till the one name takes up an entire sentence?

Isn't it just a whole lot easier for everyone to just stick to the names they have?

I guess I am simply not very keen on the whole passing on and immortalizing my name. I am, and will remain Kawshiki Nasser. My future generation can decide for themselves what name they want to carry.

By Kawshiki Nasser

## HOROSCOPE



ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 19)

Use your quick wit to win points with friends. You'll be able to break bad habits if you put your mind to it. Try not to donate to organizations if you can hardly afford to take care of yourself. Your lack of interest in your partner is a problem. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



TAURUS (Apr 20 - May 20)

Don't expect anyone else to pay your bills for you. Your ability to put things together will be appreciated by your comrades. You will have to be careful not to let infatuations with colleagues get out of hand. Over spending or unexpected bills could set you back. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



GEMINI (May 21 - June 21)

Hide your cards and learn to say no. You haven't been watching your spending habits and you may have been neglecting your duties. You could be tempted to overspend on unnecessary items. Promotions will be yours if you have acted professionally in times of crisis. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



CANCER (June 22 - July 22)

Not the best day for business trips. Uncertain get rich quick schemes will not be as lucrative as you anticipate. You can meet new friends who will let you know just how valuable you are. You should not get involved in joint ventures. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



LEO (July 23 - Aug 22)

Emotional upset may prevail on the domestic scene if you have neglected your duties or your mate. Speak of your future goals, intentions, and commitments. You are best to get out of the house this week. You won't have to look for the action. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



VRGO (Aug 23 - Sept 22)

You need some excitement in your life, and meeting new people in exotic destinations will certainly satisfy your desires. Think twice before you volunteer information. There might be one who is quite willing to take the credit for your work. You will have a childlike approach this week, big hearted and full of spunk. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



LIBRA (Sept 23 - Oct 23)

You may find that you can be the recipient of valuable information if you're willing to be a good listener. Your loved ones could set you off. Your lover may not understand your needs so you must figure out a way to communicate them. They will jump at the chance to do something without you if it sounds like more fun. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 21)

Problems with in-laws may cause friction in your personal relationship. Look into intellectual and physical games that will test your abilities. A little rest will do wonders. Don't let any money slip through your fingers this week. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

Your questions will help you ferret out secret information. Deception will play an important factor in relationships. You could be cornered, so be prepared to tell the truth. You can win if you're open and up front with your boss. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



CAPRICORN (Dec 22 - Jan 20)

You need to do more things that you enjoy. Involvement in fitness clubs will be conducive to engaging romantic connections. Travel will be on your mind, but you should be sure that you've got all your work up-to-date. Reevaluate your situation. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

Investments concerning your residence will be profitable. You will find that unfinished projects at home will be most satisfying. Communication will be the source of your knowledge and you must be sure to spend time with those who have more experience. Your boss may be pushy. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



PISCES (Feb 20 - March 20)

Someone you live with is ready to play emotional games. Situations could easily get blown out of proportion if you have made unreasonable promises. Let your lover know what your personal intentions are. You could be tempted to overspend on unnecessary items. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.