

Analysing the good and the bat among the 4 greatest Batmobiles

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As far as automotive royalties go, the Batmobile is right up there with K.I.T.T. and time-traveling DeLorean. The caped crusader's personal chariot has evolved through multiple models throughout the decade, each with their own strengths and weaknesses. Today we take a look at a few of those models and compare their advantage and limitations.

Doziervers Batmobile



Although unknown to many modern fans, but William Dozier's somewhat silly and over the top tv series was the first to give Batman his own personalized set of wheels. The producers used a concept car, the 1955 Lincoln Futura, as the base for the new vehicle. The end result was a one of a kind, sleek, black & red car that cemented itself in the Bat myths.

Strengths: The car was powered by an "Atomic turbine", effectively giving

the car virtually unlimited range. It was armed with explosive "Bat-zooka"s and featured various advance tracking and surveillance systems such as the Bat-deflector, Bat-dust, Odor Sensitometer Radar and many others. The car was also equipped with the versatile "Bat-ray", capable of accomplishing any task required to further the plot.

Weaknesses: As cool it is to have a convertible crime fighting machine, the open-topped nature of this Batmobile left the dynamic duo exposed to outside attack. Also, using nuclear energy to power a car is a risky concept, even for Batman.

Burtonverse Batmobile



From the cheesy TV series to the Movie that defined modern Batman, we have the iconic Batmobile from the Tim Burton movies. Unlike its processor, this was built from the ground up to represent the edgier, darker setting of the new movies. The result was a sleek but menacing vehicle, resembling an armored F1 car with bat wings sticking out from the rear.

Strengths: The car was powered by a jet turbine, which gave it a blistering top speed of 530 km/h. Protection was also top-notch, being capable of entering "Cocoon-mode" which protected it from all kinds of small arms fire. A pair of forward-mounted fixed .30 caliber machine guns gave it its teeth, while non-lethal options included oil slick dispensers and smoke emitters. Additionally, the car could enter an emergency "Batmissile" mode that basically shrunk down the car to half its

size by jettisoning the rest of the body panels.

Weaknesses: Remember I said the car was powered by a jet engine? That can't be good for the car's fuel economy. The car was also surprisingly light on the weapons department, with those .30 calibers being inadequate to handle anything other than soft targets.

The Animated Series

While the first golden screen appearance of the Batmobile was great, the successive iterations became less menacing and focused on being more flamboyant and "family-friendly". This changed with Batman: The Animated Series, which bought back the darker setting. With the change came a new Batmobile, complete with its own origin story. The new car was designed and created one Earl Cooper, a car designer kicked out of the auto industry for being a whistleblower. And unlike the neon light shows seen in the last two movies of the original quintology, the new car was not only nice to look at but also a formable fighting machine.



Strengths: To quote Cooper, the car had "Titanium construction, ablative skin cowlings and tri-nitro propulsion units." It also fixed the firepower problem incorporating a missile rack, while tire slashers were added to the wheel hub for vehicle takedowns. The car was also capable of stealth, disguising itself as an alley dumpster when left unattended.

Weaknesses: The car was long, really long. The turning radius was less than

ideal, something that put the car at a disadvantage when facing off against fast and nimble opponents. The issue caused the car to be eventually phased out in favor of a new sleeker coupe, with a much more manageable wheelbase.

Nolanverse Batmobile AKA "The Tumbler"



Moving from the classics to contemporary, we have the new Tumbler from the Christopher Nolan's Trilogy. Originally designed as a bridging vehicle for the military, the vehicle was rejected, likely because of its overengineered nature. Bruce Wayne later discovered the prototype, and after a quick coat of black paint, a new Batmobile was born.

Strengths: Unlike the previous Batmobiles, the Tumbler was less car and more tank. It was both heavily armed and armored, and could rampage through any obstacle put on its path. Amusingly, it also had a "stealth mode", switching to an electric motor to conceal its engine sound. The most impressive of the feature was the Vector-controlled jet engine, which allowed the car to make "rampless" jumps. Finally, it came equipped with a Batpod, which Batman could use as an escape vehicle in the event the car takes crippling damage.

Weaknesses: Of all the Batmobiles on this list, the Tumbler is undoubtedly the slowest. Moreover, the cumbersome nature of the vehicle means it is more inclined to go through obstacles than around it, racking up a massive collateral damage bill in the process.

Why relocation of stray dogs is not the right way to go about it

OROBI BAKHTIAR & NAHALY NAFISA KHAN

In mid-August, Dhaka South City Corporation declared to start a programme of relocating the 30,000 stray dogs of the city to other districts to contain the spreading of rabies, but primarily to selected areas from Nagar Bhaban, Dhanmondi and other VIP areas. However, DSCC started relocating the stray dogs before the official order came from the Mayor, and relocated 15 stray dogs on an experimental basis from the Nagar Bhaban and VIP areas of South Dhaka to the Matuail landfill in a 3-day long relocation process. This was followed by protests from animal rights activists and animal lovers in general, who were against this move since the beginning. A group of activists from six animal welfare organisations and some volunteers held a human chain in front of the Nagar Bhaban to protest this relocation process on September 2.

More than 2000 people and a large number of animals die of Rabies every year in Bangladesh, of which 98% of the human deaths are due to bites from rabid dogs. But only 6 percent of all dogs in Bangladesh have rabies. And 70 percent of the stray dogs of the city have already been vaccinated against rabies in the first round of a health ministry project to eradicate the disease within 2022. Some 48,000 dogs were vaccinated in 2019, of which 28,000 were from the DSCC area alone. The second round of vaccination has stopped due to the Coronavirus pandemic. If the dogs are relocated without vaccination, the risk of rabies infection in Dhaka South will rise, mostly because other dogs will occupy the areas if the old ones are relocated. Under these circumstances, is it the right move to relocate the stray dogs to other areas?

Rubaiya Ahmad, founder and chairman, Obhoyaronno- Bangladesh Animal Welfare Foundation said, "First of all, this relocation process cannot be the right way to deal with the issue because it is illegal. Most importantly, it is unscientific to relocate stray dogs from their habitat. Most of these dogs are vaccinated and vaccinated dogs act as soldiers against rabies. If we relocate them, other unvaccinated dogs will fill in their places, causing it to spread more widely. Relocation is also wrong from a humanitarian ground, we just cannot take their homes away from these animals."

Artist and Activist Saria Saguaro said, "Relocating the stray dogs is not going to solve anything. When we relocate them, they don't get enough food to go by, fight with other territorial dogs causing even more havoc. And as per the last update, the relocated dogs have started to come back to their previous habitat, so it's clearly not working."

How Bangladesh has been dealing with stray dogs: Animal laws and enactment The inhuman practise of dog culling had been a regular phenomenon in the country in an attempt to control

the stray dog population until January 2012, when the government declared Dhaka as the country's first "no-cull" city. The Parliament of Bangladesh enacted the new Animal Welfare Act of 2019, replacing the old Cruelty to Animals Act of 1920. This new act contains a more comprehensive reckoning of cruel and unjust treatment of animals and substantially raises the penalty for the same, while also keeping room for further elaboration through rules and gazettes. This law is a substantial leap forward in the recognition of the need to treat animals with kindness.

The new act prohibits anyone from killing or moving any stray animal from its habitat. According to section 7 of the Animal Welfare Act, 2019 the killing or removal of stray animals is not allowed unless they are proven to be causing harm. If a government body does it, then any aggrieved organisation and person can avail their constitutional right to file a writ petition with the High Court. This makes the relocation process of the DSCC stray dogs illegal as per the constitution of the country.



How other countries deal with stray dogs

The World Health Organisation estimates there are around 200 million stray dogs worldwide. Impressively, the Netherlands is not contributing to this statistic. It has become the first country in the world without any stray dogs. Owing dogs used to be a sign of status in the Netherlands. Upper-class people owned dogs for pets or sporting purposes, and the poorer masses owned mongrels (mutts) for working purposes. In 1864, the first animal protection agency was set up in The Hague. A century later, the Animal Protection Act came into force. Now, it is forbidden for an owner to abuse any animal. They implemented the CNVR programme (Collect, Neuter, Vaccinate, and Return), which is a nationwide, government-funded sterilisation programme. The World Animal Protection Agency believes it is the most effective way to combat a stray dog population. The Netherlands has also set up an animal

police force to monitor crimes against animals, including rescue animals in trouble.

In Bali alone, the number of stray dogs is estimated at 500,000 and a rabies epidemic underway since 2008 has already killed 78 people. Despite culling somewhere between 120,000 and 200,000 dogs, and vaccinating an estimated 262,000 dogs, the epidemic rages on. In the face of the continuing epidemic and shortages of human anti-rabies vaccines, the government had banned dogs from the streets altogether -- perhaps the first at-large law imposed in this part of the world. The stray dog-driven rabies crisis in Bali is hardly unique: India culls as many as 100,000 strays at a time, while attacks by marauding packs of dogs in Baghdad have led to a reinstatement of the same eradication program of culling over one million stray dogs.

At the same time, animal shelters and dog rescue groups are springing up throughout Asia, Eurasia, the Middle East, parts of Latin America and the Caribbean. Some jurisdictions, notably Shanghai and Singapore have built pounds to hold

dogs vaccinated and those left stray in a particular area. This will help reduce and maintain the population in the heavily populated areas, in a more effective manner than relocation or culling.

CNVR is a quick and efficient way to manage community dogs. When done using modern surgical techniques and materials, it does not require days of sheltering for recovery before the animals can be released safely back to their territories or their owners. Usually, the animals can be released the same day, with no further treatment required, and without requiring sheltering during recovery, which is the logistical weak link of non-same-day release methods.

"We need to take a more humane approach while dealing with this particular issue. We have to think of a long-term plan and do what the other countries are doing, like sterilising, neutering and vaccinating the strays. That is certainly the right way to go about this", said Saria Saguaro.

It's worth noting that, at present, Obhoyaronno already conducts its CNVR programs in partnership with DNCC in North Dhaka, which raises the question about the requirement of relocating or culling dogs even more strongly.

Latest update: Present-day situation in Dhaka

Meanwhile, Dhaka North City Corporation has decided on not following in the footsteps of DSCC. DNCC is going to control the number of stray dogs by sterilising stray dogs and reduce the rate of infection by strengthening the ongoing vaccination program. Brigadier General Mohammad Mominur Rahman Mamun, chief health officer of DNCC stated that as the High Court prohibited both killing and transferring the dogs, they are going to strengthen the ongoing sterilization and vaccination program with Obhoyaronno, an NGO and DGHS. If this is possible for one half of the city, why not the other half?

As for now, the final decision is yet to be taken by Barrister Sheikh Fazle Nur Taposh, Mayor of DSCC. Rubaiya Ahmad said, "As the Mayor is a man of law, we are hoping that he will not go against the laws of the country and implement such an illegal act of relocating the stray dogs."

"Deciding to relocate the stray dogs will be a step backwards when there are better alternatives, and it is also illegal in the country. We all want what's good for the city. The way forward will be to come to an understanding. I think initiating a conversation will also help the authorities understand the ethical and moral point that we're trying to make. Not relocating the stray dogs is certainly going to be a popular decision among the next generation of citizens, as they are better aware of the facts regarding the issue", said Saria Saguaro.

Photo by Zarif Faiaz



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