

# M A I N T A I N I N G T H E L O V E O F Y O U R L I F E

**M**OST guys and a few gals fall into the following category. You merrily spend your days with your current and sometimes cranky love of your life. You always want to do something for the one you adore. Your loved one, the car, can be any car whether it is a brand new Nissan 350Z or an old Toyota Corolla. There is always some gifts to be bought. So what did you think I was talking about?

## PAY FULL ATTENTION

Cars need attention just like your significant other. A full service requires replacing the oil filter and engine oil as well as checking brake, clutch and power steering fluid levels. Make sure that the transmission oil is also topped up because the level goes down very slowly over several years. With a car older than six years it would be a good idea to flush the fluid completely using a purpose built machine found in Nippon, Ace and similar workshops with the proper tools. It prevents your gearbox from malfunctioning due to buildup of sludge. Stay cool by filling up your radiator with coolant and not tap water. The latter works but it rusts your radiator leaving holes in the piping and bigger ones in your wallet some time later. Including the pricey transmission fluid at around 200taka per liter the damage to your wallet can be restricted to less than 2000 taka.

Making sure that all the different fluids and filters are in the proper order allow your engine to work at its peak. The fluids serve as lubrication and ignoring it could lead to cooked parts. That equates to lower fuel bills and a living a life happily ever after.

## FREE STYLIN'

You might want to customize or 'pimp' your ride and a couple of shops in Gulshan sell very pricey but high tech gadgets for both performance and looks. It's all a subjective matter of taste.

Bangla Motors offers a wider range of cosmetic parts. The choice is almost endless. Toyota Corollas and Honda Civics are the most easily modified because of the availability of parts. All kinds of light configurations are available such as the popular round taillights. These can be quite costly though. Speaking of lights avoid buying into the bluish white xenon bulbs. These will give you less light than your existing halogen bulbs. You need a totally different wiring system to create the kind of light that can be used to blind someone standing on the moon.

Also available are grills, bumpers (metal and plastic), spoilers including whale tails and funky big wheels. These can cost a fortune but in time your car will look out of the world. Of course it could look like a sexy female space invader or as weird as E.T.

The easiest way to alter the way a car looks is to give it a set of cool wheels. On a budget you can get a set of second hand alloy wheels within 5000-10000. Check the tire shops in Paltan. Of course you could get the brand new big diameter wheels costing as much as 40 thousand a pair. Just remember that bigger wheels compromise your fuel efficiency. Also these weigh more than the smaller wheels and put extra pressure on your suspension which wear out faster. The solution is to replace your stock suspension with heavy-duty sport ones but bad news is that these are not available here.

Another style factor is to use stick-on mate-

rial. There are full body stickers depicting flames, warriors, skulls etc. On the other hand you could ask someone good with spray paints to custom design something for your car. Avoid the shade-like stickers used for the front window to show that you have "no fear". These get in the way of the wipers. If you have to have one at least match the logo with the brand of the car. TRD is for Toyotas, Type R is for Hondas and RalliArt is for Mitsubishi's. You CANNOT mix and match.

Stickers on the sides depicting scenes like dolphins frolicking in water or horse running through a desert are a definite "NO". We have National Geographic for that.

## STAY COOL INSIDE

Window tinting might be a good idea if you want to stay fair and lovely by avoiding the sun. Unfortunately its mostly illegal and in time as you roll the windows up and down the paper starts to develop scratches leaving your windows looking hazy. A better alternative is to use removable blinds or shades that attach to the window using rubber suction cups. Prices are under 300 for a set of two.

Seat covers are available in multiple fabrics cut to your specs under 3000taka for a car. Avoid the leather wannabes as these start peeling off after a while.

## STOP

In a relation like this try not to hit on other cars. Make sure your brakes are the best available. Never ever skimp on these by buying standard inexpensive parts. Original brake pads can

cost about 1200-1500 with copies costing half as much.

## LISTEN

Listening is a vital part of all relationships. You could spend an entire years salary on a CD changer and big speakers or you could go the cheaper and more effective route. If you are content with playing your music for your self and not for the entire neighborhood then go for decent speakers found within the range of 2000-3500 taka. Have you thought of hooking up a USB MP3 player to your existing cassette player? It requires a cassette adapter that costs about 1200 taka. A 256 MB plus capacity USB MP3 player will cost under 4000 taka and you can simply hook it up with your computer and change the songs as much as you want. It's small and compact compared to a bag full of CDs.

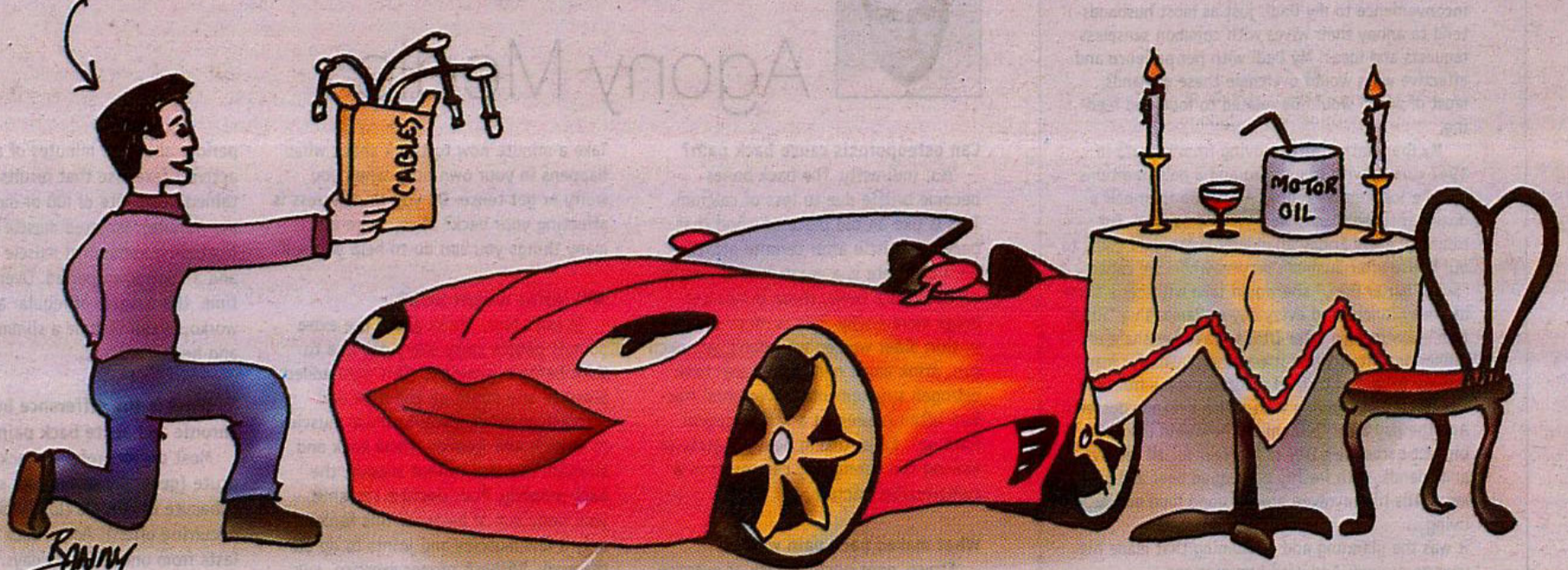
## GAS IS GOOD

Fuel consumption may be a headache and conversion to CNG might be preferable. It generally costs around 35000 taka and you can avail bank loans to pay it off. It hurts the wallet less when you are paying small amounts at a time. God follows the same concept in making us age slowly.

## A HEART TRANSPLANT

Your engine is dying so you decide to get a replacement from Dholaikhaal, the resting place of all car parts. You sell off your old one which also goes to the same place. There it undergoes a few surgeries with replaced parts and comes back

PLEASE BE MINE!

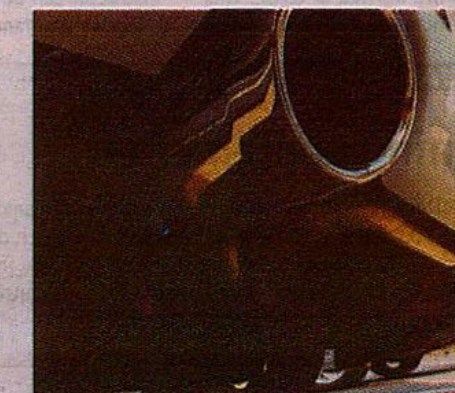
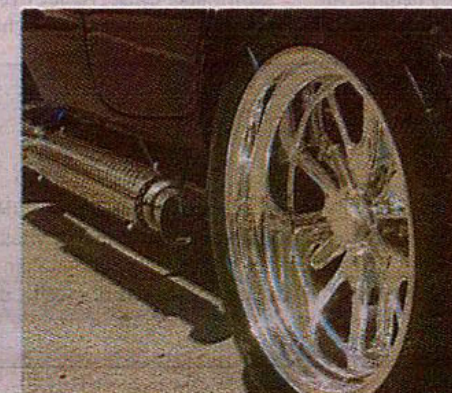
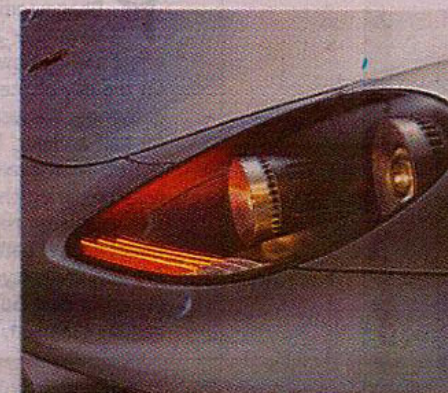


to life. Then someone else just like you buys it. So the engine you bought from Dholaikhaal most likely died like your original engine. What all this means is that buying an engine from Dholaikhaal becomes a game of chance. You would be better off overhauling the old heart with new and original manufacturer parts. So Dholaikhaal becomes not a resting place but more of a junc-

tion. You may be tempted to get a different type of engine but make sure you get the new one from abroad with proof that it has been properly reconditioned. Of course, that will cost almost double of what you will find in Dholaikhaal. This is only a hint of how you can spend or waste your money on a car. It's not about

impressing someone else but about how good your efforts make you feel. Heck, in the end it becomes all about impressing.

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