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# SHIFT

## PROJECT CARS

# Little ray of sunshine

## 1997 Toyota Starlet Glanza V

The first time I saw a Starlet Glanza V was in a showroom when they were first being sold. That's more than 12 years ago. I went with a friend to test drive a black V with a manual transmission, stiff lowered shocks and a tight-fitting driver's bucket seat. I fell in love with the car, although my friend didn't. It was zippy, lazy, initially, but damn it shot like a startled cat when the turbo spooled up.

All those years later and I try one again: a nearly mechanically mint 1997 Glanza V. This generation of

Starlet was the last of Toyota's affordable but supremely dull small cars, with the Glanza V adding spice among the rice. The small 1.3 engine was paired with a turbo, a two-stage offering allowing a max of 130-135bhp. That is more than enough for a tiny city car. This, the 90 series, and the previous 80 series Starlets have started to catch on with the enthusiast crowd in Bangladesh. Both the Starlet GT and the Glanza V are now hot items for people looking for an affordable yet fun car with handling to boot. The two doors meant they weren't that popular initially when they started trickling into the country. But now, everyone wants sporty, and two doors are sporty. So sporty in fact that some people are welding rear doors of a sedan shut. Prices have started rising with some people so determined they convert a regular 2-door Starlet into this.

Except this one is as original as it gets. Mahbub Hussain showed me around, and the only mods it had were the stereo and the gauges. It was kept stock as it was a daily driver. He and his brother Mahfuz love these little cars so much they not only have the V, but also an older 80 series Starlet GT with the much sought after quad headlight arrangement.

"Mahfuz watched The Italian Job and he went nuts wanting a hatchback," explained Mahbub on how he got hold of two such collectible pocket rockets. "So we looked through the classifieds and found not only the Glanza but also the GT." They ended up having both the cars in a short space of time. And it's been with them for the last few years, till the younger brother went off to Australia to study. One of the cars now needs to be sold. This one, specifically.



So where do I come in? I like little cars and I cannot lie. First impression after all these years is the design has aged well.

It's not a typical family car, it's not a boy racer either. The spoilers are just big enough without getting in the way.

How does it drive? It's an automatic so the acceleration is a little lazy in the first gear. As the revs rise, you can almost predict when the boost is about to kick in. The car has stock suspension, so the ride is comfortably pliant and yet, the turns are tight. The dimensions are like a comfortably creased jacket you wear. And then I realized this was the exact fun machine from all those years ago. Sure, a manual would help me stick through the optimum rev range a lot better. It's a tiny engine giving out quite a bit of grunt but it needs to be kept singing loudly to get all the horses to gallop.

I grinned. This is the car for people who want to have car that takes them to the office, and on the weekends when the roads are free, it takes them out of the office and into real fun zones. I get why people want it so much. It gives them the best of both worlds while maintaining a decent ratio of fuel bill to fun. Of course, the fuel efficiency goes down the drain if like me, you are standing in traffic and occasionally push the engine to hit 4000 rpm only to

hear the blow-off valve go whoosh. It's got a silly name – "Starlet". But you forget that when little hatch bolts forward every time.

This particular octane driven, no accident, no rust, no smoke Glanza is for sale. For contact details, check the Shift facebook page.

### Things to watch out for:

Turbo feed lines. Watch out for the pipes and clamps. These are rubber and plastic and might crack. When that happens, your engine heats up quick.

So quick tip? Maintain feed lines, replace coolant every summer in Bangladesh and use the best possible engine oil. Everything else on this car is your typical old Toyota; won't break unless you neglect it. Oh, and the interior plastic door trim is a little on the crappy side for this entire decade of Toyotas.

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## EVENT COVERAGE



# Dirt and fun

## First motorsport event in Bangladesh

There are those skeptics who will say there is no "proper" automobile culture in Bangladesh, and that we are an insignificant blip on the map of countries where car culture exists. They might have been right 5 years ago, but now, we're at a place where we are breaking new ground every day in terms of automotive culture.

Motorsport in Bangladesh is almost non-existent here. Other than late night top speed runs and trips outside the city, the thirst for speed and control over an automobile has never really been quenched for car enthusiasts in the country. Now, though, Bangladesh Motorsports, an organization aimed at bringing legal, organized motorsport events in Bangladesh to the automobile enthusiasts in the country, have entered the scene with a bang.

On Saturday, 19th April, with sponsorship from Nitol-Tata, the first motorsport event ever held in the country took place. Set up on the PDW field beside the BICC venue, where a Nitol-Tata organized Dhaka Motor Show 2014 was taking place, the one day event was a rally cross event, with participants doing timed laps of the makeshift course. Best time in each class took the win.

The day started with Group D, which featured all the corporate entrants having a go

at the track. One of the first few entrants, Md Ershadullah, set a blisteringly fast time of 88.550 seconds with Suzuki Swift Dzire. With a relatively flat and smooth dirt track and thus enjoying more traction than the other cars which did laps after it, the manual transmission and 1.3 liter 90 horsepower engine equipped Swift sedan held the record time for quite a while, till the more powerful cars made it onto the track.

Group C featured cars below and up to 1500 cc, and Bappy Rahman in his Toyota Allion NZT240 held the fastest time in this class, at 87.696 seconds. His time also benefitted from an early lap on a relatively flat dirt track, and he won the third place overall. More was expected from the supercharged, race ready Toyota Vitz RS, which was driven by Mohammed Tysir Khan, who managed a 91.409 seconds.

Group B featured modified cars above 1500 cc capacity, and everything from a Honda Civic EF with a K20A engine to a Toyota Mark II with a 1JZGTE Supra engine found their way onto the track. First place in Group B was held by HM Taufiq Anwar, driving an EP3 Honda Civic Type R (91.995 secs). Second place went to the aforementioned engine converted Honda Civic EF, driven by Dr. Sarwar Hossain Chowdhury to a time of 98.864 seconds. Despite the relatively



slow time, the Civic EF proved to be a crowd pleaser, powersliding around every corner with a loud exhaust burble. Salman Ali Khan's famous golden Civic Ferio came in third with a time of 101.887 seconds.

Group A had the biggest, baddest machines out there. Our last feature car, Joy Alam's 500 whp + Subaru Impreza STI, set one of the fastest laps of the first round, crossing the line after 87.586 seconds, which was the second fastest lap overall. Sourav Mahmud with his Lancer Evo VIII managed a time of 89.570 seconds. HM Tauhid Anwar Avik, founding member of R3V and director of Car House Limited, brought his Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution X to the track and secured fastest lap in Group A as well as overall, with a time of 87.455 seconds.

Overall, the event was quite successful, considering Bangladesh has seen very little in terms of actual organized motorsport events. We can only hope these will turn into regular events so that the automotive enthusiasts can get their fill of speed and horsepower in regular doses.

WORDS: SHAER REAZ  
PHOTOS: RAHIN SADMAN ISLAM,  
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# Under the lights

## 2014 Dhaka Motor Show



Go online and visit our Facebook page for exclusive hi-res photos of the 2014 Dhaka Motor Show.

Based on past experiences, autoshow in Bangladesh are not really up to the mark. However, perspectives change when one grows up from being a Coke addled, hormonal teenager to being an adult with the hooks of reality and practicality dug into the head and back of the person in question.

Those who went to the 2014 Dhaka Motor Show, held from 18th to 20th April at the BICC venue in Agargaon, were probably pretty disappointed by the lack of gleaming Lamborghinis and Ferraris on rotating platforms, flanked by beautiful women in silvery flowy dresses. The reality was much more sober, and honestly, why would you expect more from a third world country where less than 5% of the population has the ability to afford any form of personal transport?

The Nitol-Tata sponsored event featured Navana, who showcased the latest Toyota Yaris, which they are hoping will be a turning point for Toyota in Bangladesh, as they try to incite buyers away from the Corolla with their smaller, cheaper alternative. The latest Corolla was showcased as well, but with each passing generation the Corolla becomes more and more expensive and upscale, which is bad news for fans of the most popular sedan in Bangladesh. The newest Corolla has a 1.6 liter engine, and the tax structure has made sure it's a whole lot more expensive than it really is. Navana will bring in the new Corolla on an order basis only. The Camry Hybrid also got the

crowd's attention at the Navana booth.

Anwar Group, distributors of Ford, brought in their latest. The Dhaka car buying crowd has warmed up well to the Ford Ecosport, a KIA Sportage sized min-SUV/crossover. With loud colours and a funky, modern design, it's a hit already for the younger part of the car buying crowd. Other than the Ecosport, Ford had the all new Ranger, a brute-ish pickup truck with massive tires, lifted suspension and a stylish exterior.

Teenagers looking for an exotic fix got their hit at the R3V booth, which featured a myriad range of cars belonging to R3V members, during the course of the show. Techart Porsche Cayenne, Ranger Rover Overfinch, Audi A8L, Lexus IS, a Mitsubishi Evo VIII, and more found themselves on display for the enthralled audience. Special highlight of the show was the Autosmith booth, which featured the fastest Lancer Evolution in Bangladesh. Tuned at home by Autosmith's magicians, the muscular blue Evo VI develops more than 600 bhp, and at the show, it was hooked up to a dynamometer as part of the booth display.

Organized by event management firm CEMS-Bangladesh, the show featuring over 350 booths ran alongside the first motorsport event in Bangladesh, and drew a large crowd over all three days of the show. Hopefully the show will be back bigger and better over the next years.

PHOTOS: TASDID CHOWDHURY