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## GARAGE COLLECTIONS



# Grand Tourer

## 2010 BMW 3 Series Coupe

It's a rare sight to see a thoroughbred German coupe in Dhaka, but it is the rarity that pushes people to purchase these semi-exotics in most cases.

While our feature car today is not the M3, the top dog sports coupe from BMW's stable of high end machinery, it still comes close. The 325i comes equipped with a 2.5 liter 6 cylinder unit which provides a smooth, creamy power range to play with, with max power figures standing at 218 hp. There's loads of low end torque to get you moving nicely, and what the power figures may lack next to those the M3 offers, this 3 series coupe makes up for with pure visual drama.

The front and rear bumpers are lifted off the M-division catalog of high end customization parts, which offer the atypical German build quality and finesse. The fit and finish, as expected, is top notch, they'd have to be for the price the customer pays for them. The finely sculpted forged M wheels look the part next to the flame surfaced bodylines and carbon fiber lips. They all work together to give the 3 series a more poised and ready to prowl look.

The highlight of the exterior is not from an M division catalog, however. That would be the crown jewel of most modern BMWs: the angel eye headlights. It might be clichéd, but those projection headlamps and built-in DRLs never

seem to get old, and a discerning enthusiast can spend hours scrutinizing every last detail of the intricate light cluster up-front. Same goes for the LED overdose in the rear lights.

The interior still has the new car smell, an attribute of most well maintained garage queens. It is a superb place to be in, with stitched bucket seats which pamper your behind, glossy carbon fiber accents, and a general absence of any untoward plastics anywhere. It's all properly posh.

This car woos you over with its noise. The thick grunt from the engine when the accelerator is pressed, the rapid expulsion of exhaust gasses from the quad outlet system out back, it makes the car feel much faster than it really is. Not that it isn't fast, the coupe builds speed quite well without being an obnoxious speed freak. You can almost imagine some German guy in a lab coat, unimpressed by the inefficient and crass hunt for horsepower that other manufacturers seem obsessed with, while developing this gem of a car.

For efficient GT motoring, the old 3 series coupe set a very high precedent, and till we get to experience the brand new replacement 4 series coupe, the first impression of this efficient grand tourer will stay with us for a while.

WORDS: SHAER REAZ  
PHOTOS: TASDID HOSSAIN



## SHIFT ZONE

We all dream of owning a piece of exotica someday. Ferraris, Maseratis, Porsches. When you're in Bangladesh, though, owning a piece of exotica becomes exponentially expensive, and you have to settle for a little less. Not that the "little less" we feature today is anything to scoff at. The outgoing 3 series is a gorgeous car, and in coupe form, even so. For a dash of sensible motoring, we also have a review of the Mazda Axela hatchback.

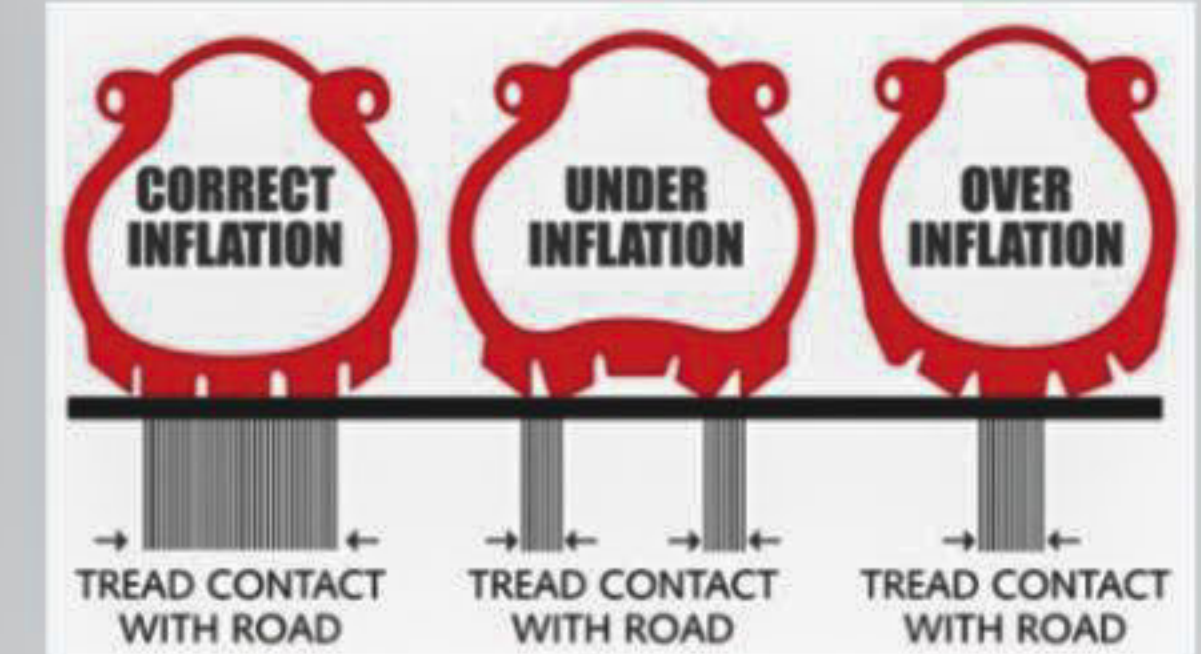
- Shaer Reaz, Sub-editor, Shift.

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Email: shift@thedailystar.net

## Haojue Biker Tips

### Tyre pressure: Too much or too little?

The easiest and cheapest way to improve the handling and performance of a bike (and car) is to make sure tyres are properly inflated. So what's improper inflation? Under-inflation is when there is less than enough air. The tyre wall becomes weak and flabby. It is prone to buckling and can even come off the rim during hard cornering. Over-inflation is when there is too much air. It makes the tyre bulge in the centre like the belly of a man who has had too many plates of free biriyani all three days of Eid. This reduces the contact patch with the road, which means less grip, especially under



braking.

What to do? Get your own quality tyre pressure gauge if possible. Check weekly. In our country, we have passing pedestrians occasionally helping let out some air back into the environment because it's fun. Check pressure when the tyre is cold to get an accurate reading. If you're using stock size tyres, refer to user manual or Google. If you've gotten wider, hot looking aftermarket tyres, then that's another issue for next week. And the same principle applies for cars too. Happy riding.

NUTBOLTU

## TEST DRIVE



# the Sensible choice

## 2011 Mazda Axela hatch

This is the second time we're writing about the second generation Mazda Axela because we liked it that much the last time, which wasn't very long ago. We're now testing it in the form of a hatchback, a 2011 1.5 liter model equipped with sporty 5 spoke 17 inch wheels and an eye catching coat of blazing red. Despite the lack of resale value compared to Toyotas, can the bargain 21 lakh taka price convince you to put a dent in the overpopulated Premio-Allion regime? Or would you still go boring and mainstream to save a few coins? We find out.

First and foremost, we must deal with the elephant in the room that is the crack-cocaine infused happy face doodled across all of the models of this Axela gen. It looks anything but pleasing, rather annoying, but the rest of the liberated styling cues across the exterior does well to cover up for it's irritating fascia. Au contraire, the rear end is quite the view, following suit the old Mazda spirit of unorthodox triangular edges along the sloping tailgate. If you're thinking of a new Stancenation show car on a budget, this must be somewhere along the top of your list.

Mazdas, even in their fastest form, are not the kind of cars that you would take to a drag strip. The Axela follows protocol with its small 1.5 liter engine and pinpoint handling. On the road, the engine is a mere eight ponies more than Toyota's 110 hp for a 1500cc engine, but the Mazda is paired with a less boring, conventional 5 speed box that facilitates a more engaging driving experience at the cost of extraordinary fuel economy. Then comes the handling etiquette. It excels and buries the competition in this sector, for the car will sling itself in any direction you

throw it at with the added grip of 225 wide low profile tires. Semi bolstered seats provide great support at this point. If you're one who enjoys driving cars, this Japanese cracker is on an entirely different level from its boring competitors.

In other overshadowed aspects, the Axela does well with its practicality, durability and running costs. Comfort and space is ample in the interior with reasonable trunk space and a generously equipped dashboard featuring modern styling, multiple infotainment screens, Bluetooth connectivity, etc. Additional points to the folks at Mazda for placing the handbrake mechanism where it should be, just behind the gearlever.

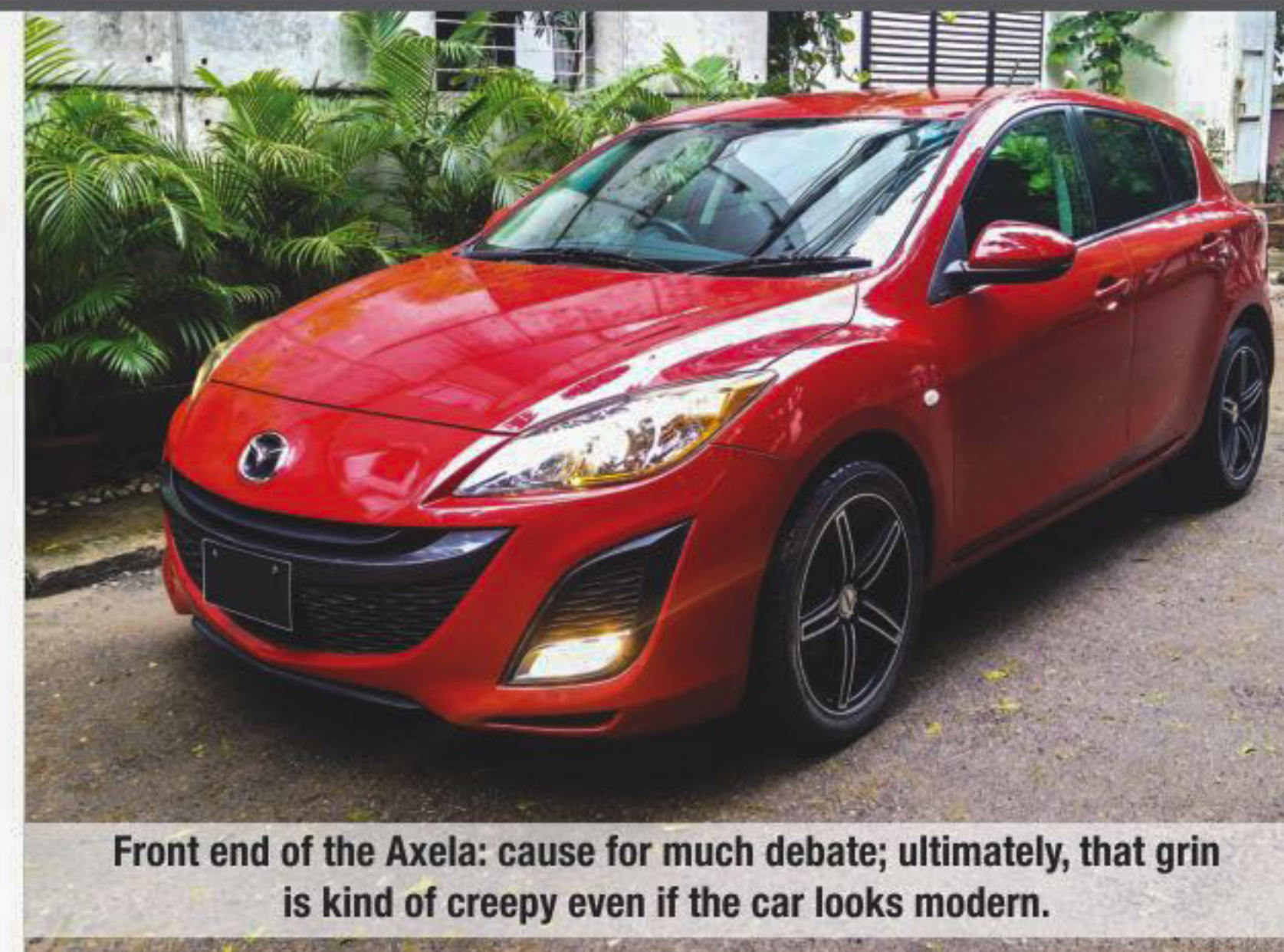
**Verdict:** The Axela is a great alternative to the sea of mainstream cars in this city, giving much more expensive competitors a run for their money with its head turning looks and crisp performance on a budget. The load of cash you save purchasing it can be spent on countless aesthetic and performance modifications.

**Cons:** Poor resale Value, Allergic to CNG conversions.

Available on special pricing of 21 lakh taka at Car House Limited, Gulshan.

This car was photographed using the hyped up mid-range smartphone, OnePlus One. Look for a review of it in our sister publication, **BYTES**

WORDS AND PHOTOS:  
AADNAN ZAMAN



Front end of the Axela: cause for much debate; ultimately, that grin is kind of creepy even if the car looks modern.



Hatchback model makes more sense than sedan, offers good amount of space in the interior and back.



**Haojue** cool 150 CC

Haojue has been consistently ranked number one in sales and customer satisfaction for past twelve years in China.  
Haojue bikes are being exported to 70 countries including Japan.

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