



# SHIFT

AUTOMOTIVE PUBLICATION OF The Daily Star

## WHEN HATCHBACKS GET PLASTIC SURGERY

Recently, there was an attempt to break the internet with a bare bum. Kim Kardashian's bum. Kim Kardashian, Nicki Minaj and Jennifer Lopez are all celebrities having one thing in common- ample rear cushioning; besides a tiny waist and a fan following cult. Girls frolic around wanting to be like these luminaries. Boys jump around to take a sneak peak of their bountiful behinds. On a separate note, 'taking her out for a drive' and 'giving her a bath' are apparent idioms used by guys. Car manufacturers hence relate their subject to the female origin, as we very well know. Therefore, if cars have XX chromosomes, then they must have plump buttocks too. Without badonkalicious booty, people might question their hotness.

**FROM THE JAPANESE MARKET:**  
Automobile designers took the above bit too seriously apparently. Take the 1999 Toyota Yaris- fantastic hot hatch to compete in the Asian market that came with the new VVTi motor and an interior full of grey plastic. The wheels almost seemed too tiny for the bulgy round physique, but the playful rear quarter with the beefy shoulder line made up for other flaws. It won the hearts of many due to its compact size and funny gear lever. But do not be fooled with tantalizing appetizers. Toyota decided to facelift the Yaris with oval lamps, a revolting grille and gave the hatch an backside; which was out of proportion like the one you would expect on a happily fed llama. Unfortunately Dhaka has had a fair dose of these tiny wheeled hideous llama Toyotas, badged as Platz/ Echo. This car's back is raised enough for truck drivers to see what is underneath- worn out knickers in muddy coil springs form. We reckon they act as wake up slaps in traffic after hours of seeing Premallions. We do not know what madness would drive someone to buy this car.

Around 2004, Nissan could not let its home competitor get away with the 'repulsive car of the decade' award and cooked up something, to our horror. They massacred their mid-range Tiida hatchback (which earned decent popularity in both the European and South East Asian market due to its availability in 1.5, 1.6 and 1.8L motors). The tall Tiida looked rather tidy with simple straight lines, but the sedan version named Latio was quite abhorrent thanks to a small yet high trunk, festooned with big rear brake lamps. It is not the added length of the car or the height that killed the Latio, but the way its rear windshield drops, aided by a fat C pillar. Even cosmetic additions found in Bangla Motor or BD-Kitz are of no use in making the thing bearable to look at.

More Japanese car manufacturers tried to join in the repugnant revolution. Mazda tried with the Mazda 2/ Demio hatch in 2007 and continued till 2014. However, it wasn't uglier than the other hatch to sedan conversions we are talking about here. Despite having a small

### GYM OR PLASTIC SURGERY ?

**Suzuki Swift (normal edition)**

**-the awesome, best-selling everywhere bits**

**Suzuki Swift Dzire(!?) (more boot(y) edition)**

**- the unnecessary, offensive bits**

**Ford Fiesta (normal edition)**

**-the awesome, best-selling in the UK bits**

**Ford Fiesta (more boot(y) edition)**

**- the unnecessary, offensive bits**

body-high roof line configuration, the 2015 Mazda 2 has been spared the brutality as it has been endowed with a beautifully slanted A and B pillars. The front and rear both gets dune shaped hunches on which sits the subtly bulged wheel arches. These shoulder lines give the on-lookers a visual break from the usual plain paddy field like gaps between the window line and wheel arches. Bangladesh is yet to receive any of these little sedans.

Unlike Mazda, Honda trashed its little car. It did it with the cute little Brio in the Indian market, calling it the Brio Amaze. However, Honeywell Turbo Technologies has developed the turbo for the first ever i-DTEC diesel motor for an Indian market Honda model and that might be just one of the reasons why the Amaze is selling pretty amazingly not only in India but also in the Philippines since its

launch in 2013. Mitsubishi held on for a while, but ultimately succumbed. Mitsubishi's Colt is a first car favorite amongst many across the globe. Mirage was the coupe version that sold well and looked good back in the day- well, until 2013. The three cylinder 1.2 liter motor powered Colt was taken into the drawing room and a rear trunk was added. The strange looking car now sits high up from the ground with thin tyres and with a rear quarter panel which has a fender-window line length as long as the butt of a late 90s hip-hop gangster's baggy trousers.

**FROM THE SUB CONTINENTAL INDIA:**  
Whereas most Japanese car development often focused first on the needs of Japanese motorists, the designers and engineers of Suzuki

assigned to the new Swift hatchback focused first and foremost on Europe. So, the new Swift was to be a Japanese car developed in Europe for today's global market. They stayed in Europe for six months, continuously refining the design as they drew inspiration from the European landscape and people. The result was an innovative, sporty, and elegant design that had genuine international appeal. While Swift Sport was winning several international rally-cross awards, I was toying with a friend's M/T Swift whose smooth short shifter was winning my heart. Suzuki, with Maruti's joint venture learnt a great deal of marketing in the Indian market too. Because Maruti was at liberty to manufacture Swifts in India from

ensured it made cars for everyone- even for the ones who like ugly cars. They took the Sonata's streamline shape and squashed it to form Accent. They also made a compressed version of the squashed car, badging it as Xcent. Confucianism is a popular belief in Korea, but we did not know they went by it so adamantly. A Shift desk top tip would be to discard the Xcent and just keep the lovable i10 hatch on which the Xcent is based on.

**FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION:**  
Ford has been selling the Fiesta, a fierce looking hot hatch since a while now. In the name of concept development, Ford blended in with the Eastern auto makers and started

**Mitsubishi Colt (normal edition)**

**- the awesome, rally inspired hot-hatch named after a gun**

**Mitsubishi Attrage (more boot(y) edition)**

**- the unnecessary, offensive bits**

2005, it could not hold back to ruin a perfect sporty hatchback. Why? Cos apparently it sold well. Maruti claims they seamlessly integrated a boot into the Swift hatchback through some minor changes in overall styling, calling it the Swift Dzire. We call it crap. The three-box notchback version of the rather muscular hatch did not need to happen. If only the designers at Suzuki knew that their Swift brand would be subjected to such humility in India, they probably would have insisted the JV with Maruti never materialized.

**FROM KOREA:**  
Korea is a neighboring country to Japan. The aura of eccentricity crept on to the fast developing nation too. Finding global success with the flagship Hyundai Sonata model, it

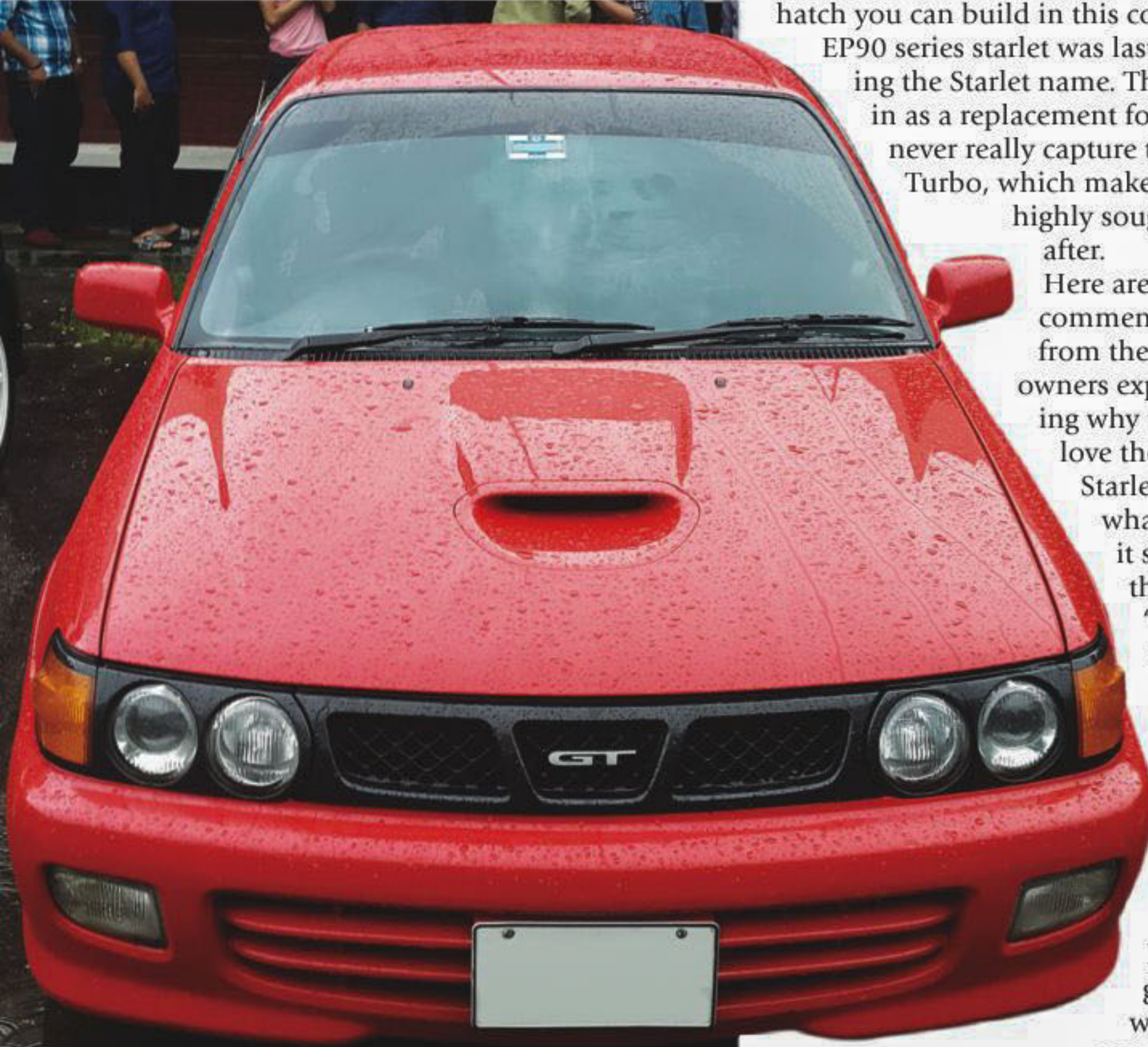
adding buttocks to their hatches. The Fiesta has a cat fish resembling snout with long squinted headlamps, which, when added with flared wheel arches and spoilers, make the hatch look aggressive. It is only when you change the rear windshield lines to give a deformed opera window and a high poised bum that things start to look very messy. From behind, it almost seems like another set of rear lamps could fit in between the existing lamps and rear bumper.

If we want a van, we would get a van; not a hatch turned sedan. Car designers- please for the sake of our eye sight, stop diluting your hatch brands into adding a bum to them. Unlike Jennifer Lopez, it does not get hotter.

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## WET Starlets

The Toyota Starlet was launched in 1973, back then it was called the "Publica Starlet", was offered in a small displacement engine and was essentially a shortened Corolla. We don't see the older KP series rear wheel drive starlets here anymore, but we do see a lot of the front-wheel propelled EP series. What Toyota intended to do with the Starlet was to replace the Publica with a small displacement compact family car. Fast forward 10 years and you will find the first front-wheel drive starlet, and generations to follow, the EP70 series which also happens to be the first Starlet to feature a turbo-charged 1.3L engine called the 2E-TELU

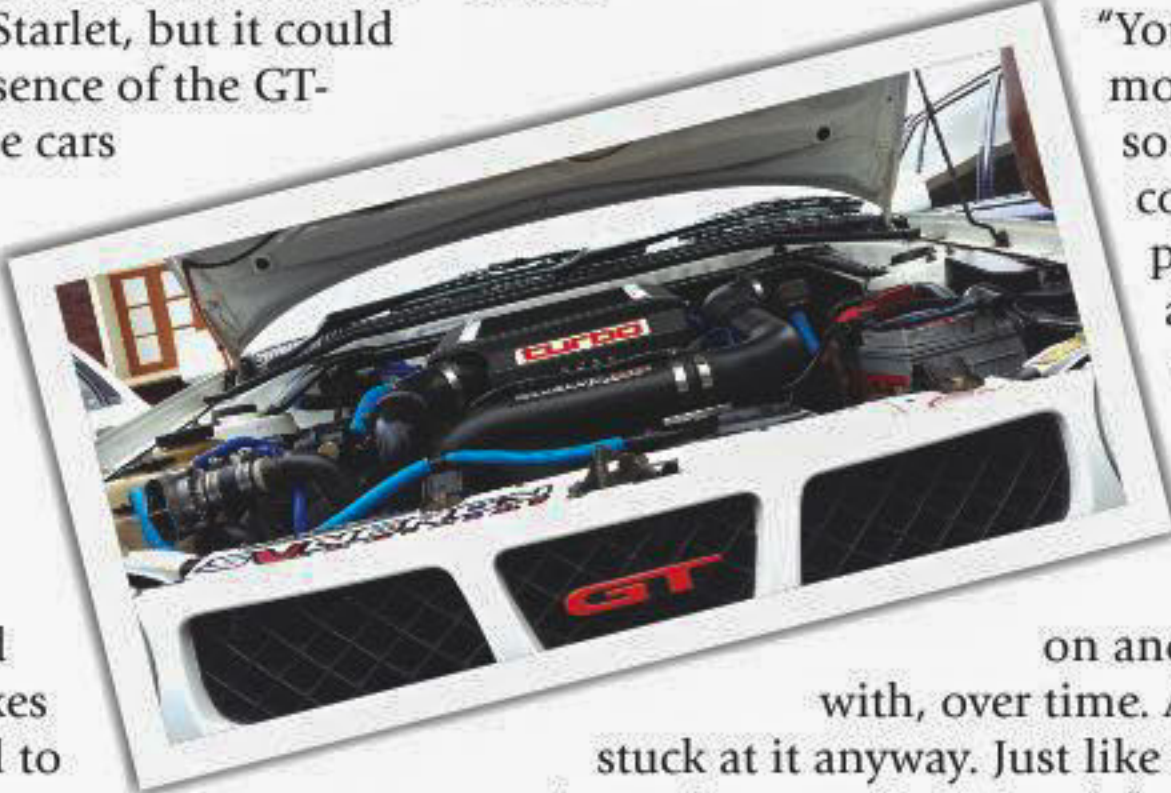


producing 110hp. From then onwards, Toyota moved to the fuel-injected 4E-FTE for the EP82 GT-Turbo and Glanza V. The EPs are the closest thing to a budget hot-hatch you can build in this country. The Glanza or EP90 series starlet was last produced in 1999 ending the Starlet name. The Toyota Yaris was called in as a replacement for the Starlet, but it could never really capture the essence of the GT-Turbo, which makes these cars

highly sought after. Here are comments from the owners explaining why they love their Starlets and what makes it special to them:

"I've always loved hatchbacks. A starlet is light weight, and also renowned for its CT9 powered 4E-FTE engine, which can achieve good power with minimal tuning. Some good projects can be done on this little pocket rocket and getting a good power to weight ratio than other cars with same performance

modifications." –Adeeb Chowdhury  
"Affordable, agile, a small hatch yet it makes enough power to make you smile when you put your foot down. With little effort and a slight push to the right direction instantly makes it a powerhouse." – Nasif Rashid



"You don't need a ton of money to drive around something you love. Of course you'll meet people with more money and faster cars who will try and convince you otherwise. But the ultimate driving experience is in a car that you've worked on and grown a relationship with, over time. Accepted its faults and stuck at it anyway. Just like any relationship you work together to make it work." – Tahsin Masud  
"For me it was my family owned first car. It's been with us for 21 years. So my first car ride was also in my EP. And last but not the least it is a cute little hatch." – Rabib Shouky Ratul  
"The Starlet has to be one of Toyota Motor Corp.'s best creation. It is a dream come true owning a Starlet. I chose the EP71 Starlet because it weighs relatively less than the newer EPs. As a result, my car with an EP91 sourced 4E-FTE is probably faster than most other stock GT-Turbos and GlazaVs." – Mohon Sharif

WORDS: ZAER ZUBAB AHMED  
PHOTOS: ADEEB CHOWDHURY

### COLLECTIBLES

## Ferrari week

Die Cast Collectors Club Bangladesh celebrate the prancing horse

Last week, members of Die Cast Collectors Club Bangladesh showed off the Ferraris in their collections. A brilliant collection of classic and modern Ferraris were on display, everything from old-school Formula 1 machines to the latest LaFerraris. A few stood out because of their detail and exquisite paintjobs/liveries. One of our favourites? Taimur Ali's liveried Daytona.

The group is warming up for a six-cylinder themed weekend this Friday, so watch this space.



25 year old Matchbox Testarossa, owned by Ridwan Azim Choudhury.



Ferrari LaFerrari by Rubab Momen.



Ferrary Daytona by Taimur Ali.