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TEST DRIVE

LEXUS RX200T

WHAT'S UNDER THE HOOD?

For starters, it's more fun than I expected a mid-size luxury SUV to be. The 2.0 turbo makes 235bhp and 258lb ft of torque with all-wheel drive. All that is coupled to a proper smooth 6-speed automatic that is a little reluctant to shift down but is always at the right gear when you need it. Which from an auto is usually rare. But avoid using the manual option because it doesn't feel any quicker. Just leave it in drive. The RX optimally resides in a gear that will provide you the majority of the torque curve so that whenever you push down, the car surges forward belying the fact that it's 'only' a two litre. The 9.5 second sprint to 100kmph stacks up well against other SUVs.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

The design team for the current Lexus range started with an origami kit and plenty of RedBull. They folded paper over many sleepless sugar-high nights and created the entire new lineup. And then they brought in a samurai and asked him to take a few sword swipes at the body. The RX and the NX especially ended up with sharp creases and intriguing curves.

HOW DOES IT RIDE?

The interior is properly 'Lexus-y' with plenty of wood, leather and the quintessential analogue clock in the middle of the dash. Nice touch that. Seats are super comfortable with the front getting cooling and heating to bring your but-tocks to the right comfort zone. Lexus may have gotten this gimmick right because my photographer went ga-ga over the bottom caressing airflow. He wants his Premio and office chair to have the same features. Despite the thick pillars the interior is airy thanks to that massive sunroof. And it is quiet as a meeting where the boss asks someone to take lead of a dubious, unpaid new task.

That is till you hit a bump. Those 20 inch alloys look great but they thump loudly in Dhaka's massive potholes. Which bring us to the fact that you drive slowly in these. Take the bumps gently, cruise judiciously and this is a supremely comfortable car. Find a good smooth curvy road like those Sylhet tea estate winding bits and this will be fun. The moderately stiff suspension provide stable, crisp turns crisp with body roll better managed than most low riding new cars I've been in.

IS IT JUST A CITY BASED PRETTY BOY?

We know these things in Dhaka will likely spend all their time in the city travelling from Gloria Jean's to Gloria's jeans. So we took them offroad and introduced the car to much mud. It's composed, quiet and handles the goo and grit with aplomb. Fantastic grip with the AWD kicking in



when needed. You probably won't ever take it there but you can.

FEATURES

It comes loaded with all the right stuff. A Pre-Collision Safety System (PCS) detects movement in front of the car according to speeds and prepares the braking force to be applied before the driver can react: something we weren't too keen on testing. The reverse camera with blind spot sensors and sonar work even while moving ahead at higher speeds. Those fat rear pillars weren't a problem when we were parking among some erratic bamboo structures with things poking out at different angles and heights.

WHY SHOULD ONE GET IT?

Right up to 2013, Lexus and Toyota had parallel models offering basically the same things glued under differently priced badges. That didn't stop the Lexus badged version being one of the highest selling luxury SUVs in the US (quite possibly also its biggest market). Then boom, Lexus RX becomes its very own car. It's better to drive than the hybrid and so far everyone who looked at it loved it.

Do you want a boring SUV capable of climbing hills but never will? Get a big, bloated, boat like Lexus LX or a Toyota Landcruiser. Do you want style, decent power and comfort? You know where we are headed now.

Just don't stand under the automated tailgate when closing. Yes, the warning stickers are all there. But we still insisted our sub-editor Mahbub to willingly put his head underneath. Found out the gate won't stop unless you press a button. He lives to drive another day.

SPECS

2016 LEXUS RX200T

UNDER THE HOOD:

2.0 turbo 4 cylinder (235bhp and 258lb ft of torque), 6-speed automatic, AWD.

SAFETY:

10 SRS airbags, all-speed radar active cruise control, lane keep assist, pre-collision safety, blind spot monitor, clearance and back sonar

BLING AND BRAGGING RIGHTS:

20 inch wheels, LED foglamps, daytime running lights, 12 speaker premium audio 10-way power/heated/ventilated front seats, Stop/Start system, panoramic roof, heads-up display.

Available from Rancon Imports for a price of 1 crore 35 lakh taka.

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AUTO NEWS

BMW 1 SERIES SEDAN



Small just got big for BMW – the 1 series sub-compact now not only has a boot, but a redesigned body too. With a growing premium compact segment in China, BMW just extended its range into the compact sports sedan with the new 1 series sedan. Engineers from BMW China played surmount role in deciding the features of the car, tuning it to the specifications of Chinese demand. No inference of drivetrain has been given out yet, but we do know that it will have BMW Connected-drive tech bits in it.

KOENIGSEGG ONE:1 CRASHES AT NURBURGRING



Nürburgring, the notoriously hungry race track, eats up cars all the time. Yesterday, it wrecked a Koenigsegg One:1 – which has to be the most pricey road car prey for the notorious track. The driver was unharmed, and witnesses claimed that the car entered the Adenauer Forst section with too much power and speed, resulting in hard braking and sliding off the track. The \$3.1 million car crashed through a steel barrier and into an embankment. There are only seven One:1's in the world, with the prototype being sold off last year as well. Good thing is, Koenigsegg assured that the car will be rebuilt.

COLLECTIBLES



DRASTIC PLASTIC R32

Let's talk about plastic. It causes ecological headaches because it never degrades. But it is also supremely workable to take any shape. And for model car collectors, especially builders, there is little else that can be better. Plastic kits offer excellent detail especially newer castings that have even the finest creases, emblems and grooves crisply displayed.

But kits are a pain in the nether regions to build if you don't get the right kits, or it is the first time. Plastic model kits are also fragile but then, do we really let people play with our best model cars? No.

I'll get to more about kits later. Today I highlight this Tamiya 1:24 R32 Skyline. This comes with a fully detailed RB26DETT engine. The kit had all the stock parts but over time minor tweaks gave it a lowered stance. Its also been recently fitted with scratch-built dish wheels and a custom hood and spoiler. The details are exquisite and you can build one for yourself. You can get one through Backpack for a little under 1900 taka. It's cheaper if you can buy it from source and carry it yourself. I bought mine for about 1100 taka a few years ago.

There is also a Nismo edition of the same kit. Has special 5 spoke wheels, metal decals, race buckets and a bigger intercooler up front.



WORDS & PHOTO: E. R. RONNY



It might not do proper off-roading, but you'll still make it to scenic locations like these. Works well if you like photography. Check out those gorgeousss taillights and chrome bits. It's safe to say that the rear end of the RX, with its funky-cool C-pillar treatment and sleek tail-spoiler, is miles better looking than the competition.



Everybody may want this RX. You can convert your non-Lexus car into this just simply based on that opinion dividing grill. Now, spot the Lexus.