

SHIFT

AUTOMOTIVE PUBLICATION OF The Daily Star

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3 YEARS OF TAMING HORSEPOWER AND SLAYING DOUBTS

I love cars so much I moved from a profitable agency job to one in a newspaper, planning an automotive supplement that nobody in the industry wanted or few understood. All because I wanted work that I loved. Bad idea?

See, auto publications have come and gone despite there being a healthy growth of enthusiasts. In the beginning I tried to convince my boss, Mahfuz Anam that this sector had latent demand that could generate revenue. He wondered if I was just trying to feed my hobby. Luckily he was convinced enough to let me have a go while everyone else thought I would run out of content, money and patience.

Three years on and it is amazing to see all the doubters wrong. It is easy to start something but difficult to thrive for an extended period of time. I started with one trusted and often trying cohort, Shaer Reaz. We headed out with my camera to shoot AND conduct test-drives. Navana and DHS Motors were most accommodating at the start. They pretty much gave us the keys, understanding how beneficial it was for both parties. Our friends at Car House provided us with the occasional fun stuff like an Integra DC5 to drive around.

First year was killer. By the second year we received a new marketing head and team and finally we were able to market our content. We now have multiple writers and photographers so I don't have to run around with a camera anymore. Shift has the highest amount of unique Bangladeshi automotive content. In retrospect, wasn't such a bad idea to do this.

Where do we go from here? Watch this space and thanks a million for staying with us.

- Ehsanur Raza Ronny, Editor of Shift

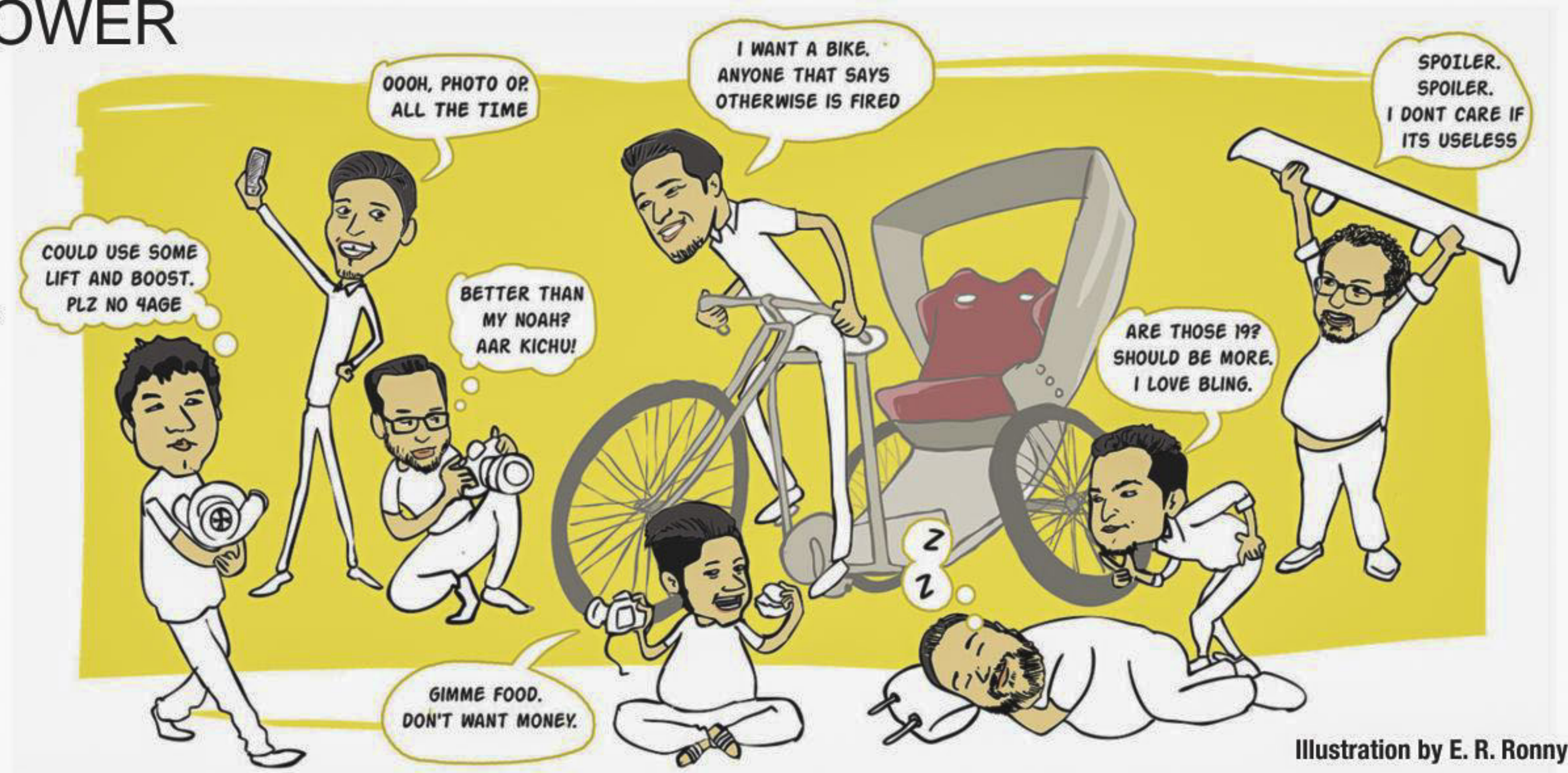


Illustration by E. R. Ronny

From left to right: Zaer Z. Ahmed, Mahbub Hussain, Rahin Sadman Islam, Tasdid H. Chowdhury, Ehsanur Raza Ronny, Shahriar Rahman, Mohammad Akib Nawaz, Shaer Reaz - the Shift team. Missing (on some roof somewhere): Shadman Al Samee aka the rooftop sniper.

THE MACHINES THAT MADE US

For three years, Shift has landed on the breakfast table of countless families around the country, only to be grabbed by the teens and the tweens, a momentous occasion since it's probably the only way to get them to pick up a pink page that would otherwise be filled with news of stocks and mergers. The main reason for that has to be the cars we've highlighted today - the loud ones, the ones that break down often and the ones that make their owners suffer the most. For each one, there's an interesting back story, and through each we came to know a bunch of people who think like us, talk like us but are thinner because once you own a performance car, you have to give up eating entirely. We're grateful to these machines and the people behind them, because without them we wouldn't be here, nor have a voice.



Probably the closest we've come to our expectations being met on a test drive. We expected the Mercedes CLA45 AMG to be a proper AMG - loud, fast, curvaceous and dripping with presence. We got the car all to ourselves thanks to Zaeem and Imran Aziz, and pushing it to almost 240 km/h (safely!) was a soulful experience.



It's difficult to find someone dedicated to automobiles and perfecting the art of restoring them in Bangladesh. If there's anyone who can, Motorwerks and it's leader, Asad Moyeen, can. When he calls and says he has a trio of Land Rover Defenders for us to shoot, you don't say no. Part of our tribute to the Defender and the discontinuation of the model, we took these hulking metal beasts off-road as Asad Moyeen recounted his tales of driving through the bush in Rangamati and construction sites in Baridhara.



Efaz Rahman's Nissan Skyline R32 was a build we followed closely. For about 8 months, we received pictures and updates as a messed up Skyline got a GTR facelift and turbo power, closely guarding the story till it hit the streets. It made us accessory to a secret build of a street weapon, and somehow we shared in the pride of a home-built Skyline.



Covering the now-annual Rallycross Championship was a bigger deal because of Joy Alam's insane, 800+ HP Subaru STI. The ride along was crazy, the car was more than the sum of its parts, the owner's driving skills were impressive.



Toyota Crown + twin turbo 2JZGTE + stock brakes = fighting for our lives on the road.



We went rallying in a Mitsubishi Lancer GSR and Noor Alam Ovi made our hearts stop, powersliding towards a tree at 120 km/h. We also ate a ton of dust and learned what it means to fly in a car.



One of the first unique cars we shot - a classic, 1977 Fiat X1/9 with a mid-mounted Toyota 4EFT 1.3 turbo engine. The tiny, yellow, duck-faced car showed us that custom cars in Bangladesh were about more than a spoiler on a Toyota Premio.



Akbar Sattar's other car is a yellow Fiat (left). His main call to fame is this restored Chevrolet Impala. It still had the original engine, which meant...it didn't start and we never got a ride in it. We didn't even need to.



Maqsood Ahmed's Corona RT40 was jaw-dropping, lovingly restored and introduced us to a man who loved classics as much as we did. In his possession: a mint 80's Sunny, Civic, classic Benz and two RT40s.



Does this restomodded Mercedes Benz W123 look like it can get into a car lift? It was an imposing task, getting this piece of precious, classic metal, belonging to Zaeem Aziz, into a cramped space to take it to a deserted 2nd floor of the Daily Star office, all in search of that perfect shot. Rahin delivered.

SO WHAT DO OUR PATRONS THINK OF SHIFT?

"With everyone convinced that the future of the car magazine is set to move entirely online, it's great to see that Daily Star has set the benchmark in this sector."
- Tanweer Zaman

"Shift has changed the way the common man approaches and makes the arduous decision of buying and owning a car in Dhaka. It has inspired youngsters to become enthusiastic about buying and restoring classic cult cars. I am glad Shift is recognizing and promoting this great culture in Bangladesh. All the best to team Shift from Team MotorWerks."
- Asad Moyeen

"A team of vibrant, passionate car enthusiasts, who set a benchmark for reviewing and showcasing the most desirable cars in the country. Look forward to our continued working relationship."
- Zaeem Aziz

"Shift is a game changer in the Bangladeshi automotive scenario. A common platform for car enthusiasts from where they can get to know about people who have done successful transformations to their cars as well as reviews on new cars in the market"
- Kazi Hamidur Rahman

"Shift is an enticing treat for car lovers and readers. So far the weekly insertions are contributing to the enthusiasts, hence, we would like to see more of an industry focused approach. We appreciate the neutral point of view of Shift and hope that continues and improves even further."
- Rafed R. Khan, Sr. Executive, Navana Limited