

The Ford Fiesta squeezes itself in because of two particular reasons. It is brilliant to drive with very tight handling and tops the charts on reliability reports. The interior has excellent quality plastics that does feel plasticky. Priced 27 lakhs\*.

The current Mitsubishi Lancer is also a great contender if looks are high on your list. It is aggressively designed and appears faster than it actually is. It helps with the image that the bigger brother is a fire breathing rally car. Which means the aftermarket is full of parts to make your stock Lancer look like an Evo. The 1.5 MIVEC VVT engine gives out 109bhp and 107lb/ft of torque coupled to a CVT transmission.

The BMW 3 Series will take you into the luxury segment offering 134bhp and 162lb/ft of torque delivered via an 8-speed automatic from that tiny engine. That means less weight and more efficiency benefits. The car has the right proportions of long front, short tail and overall low height.

It is a sleek machine with one of the quietest interiors compared to any of the other four-door sedans in this list. The standard options list is exhaustive with heated front power seats, ABS, EBD, stability control, traction control, leather, sunroof and 9-speaker audio. This is a driver's car meaning you do not give it to the chauffeur but drive yourself. All this under 80 lakhs

Lastly, you could opt for the Nissan Almera. It is a new model Sunny with a different name. 97bhp and 99lb/ft of torque puts it at the end of the performance figures on this list. It has more space than you will know what to do with, which is great when you are stuck in traffic and you suddenly want to play a bit of cricket but do not want to run. Except the car looks too tall, is a little sluggish and has tons of chrome which incidentally many people favour in our market. A price of under 30 lakhs will get you a fully loaded one with keyless entry.

## THE OFF-ROAD ENTHUSIAST BUT NOT REALLY

This person wants something that can tackle mud, dirt and hills but will mostly be fighting worse: the potholes of Dhaka.

We have two budget contenders in this compact crossover category. The Honda HRV (Luxury Line priced at 42.50 lakhs and Sport at 40.50) and the Ford Ecosport.

The Honda, known as Vezel in the grey market, has been selling like hot cakes. No wonder since it looks terrific and neatly merges car like handling with SUV looks and seating position. The 118bhp engine is smooth with slick thunk-free shifting from the CVT. One neat feature is the hold-brake that holds the brake. As the name suggests

it holds the car during frequent stopping in city traffic without you having to putting pressure on the brakes.

The Ford Ecosport on the other hand comes in two flavours. The loaded version is a petrol powered 1.5 with 108bhp and 103lb/ft of torque. You get leather, ABS and stability control. The other is a 1.5 diesel powered version with roughly 90bhp and 150lb/ft of torque. It is equipped with a manual transmission with a smooth, soft



parked in the garage, because we do not have racetracks.

There are so few cars sold new that could offer that dubious solution to the mid-life crisis: fast, sporty and preferably red. BMW brought in a couple of their two-door 2 Series cars, with one being a convertible.

Two doors, and a 1.5 litre 3-cylinder turbocharged engine gives you 134bhp. Now that might not seem a lot but the car is small-ish and the performance is zippy if not blisteringly fast. But then, in our country, fast gets you nowhere. This car will get you noticed though. And those rare occasions you get nice empty, twisty road, this shows off its capable handling prowess. Prices are 80 lakhs plus depending on spec and whether the roof goes down to let the crows admire you from above.

Of course, wait for the new 2016 Honda Civic to come in this fall. It is on the way and it promises to be a hoot. The 1.5 is a turbocharged unit developing at least 173bhp. Prices, specs and review coming soon.

## THE COMMON MAN HERO

The car that will serve every travel need for every man and woman and it will also bring world peace. Well, one out of two is not bad.

We nominate the Honda Jazz to be the winner of the subcompact segment. The 2016 model is brilliant. It looks sharp albeit

sensors and a pedestrian collision warning system. For that last one, we will need it because our pedestrians are always on the road confused why cars are running them over. Prices are from 77 lakhs and you can even opt for a 4WD option with the X-Drive range.

## THE WEEKEND RACER

This person wants that 'other' car for going out on weekends and feeling good seeing it

a bit like an egg. But an egg is the perfect balance of nutrition. As is this car for automobile needs. The handling is fun and power comes at 128bhp via an invisibly shifting CVT transmission with paddles for manual control. It has tons of space inside for four soft, large adults and comes loaded with kit such as USB, Bluetooth, 7-inch touchscreen. Priced at 26.50 lakhs.

## THE MAZE WARRIOR

A car small enough to fit everywhere and frugal enough to be left alone.

Cities like Dhaka, Sylhet and Chittagong are like those mazes in science experiments where mice get lost, give up and embrace death. For this you need small car like a Suzuki Swift. Mind you, in no way are suggesting the DZire. Although they have rounded out the trunk design, it still looks like an afterthought.

The Swift hatch, on the other hand, looks like a proper pocket rocket. The 1.2VVT engine pumps out 85 bhp. The Swift offers excellent handling and practicality. And the manual shifter is short and snippy feeling like a tight performance car. It is not fast but that sweet gearshift action and the smooth engine makes for a zippy fun drive when the roads are freed up. The DZire offers plenty of space for that eventual CNG addition.

## THE SOCCER TEAM

Something for fitting the entire family inside for a long trip. That would be going to Uttara from Mohammadpur because that takes three days now.

The Toyota Avanza happens to be a solitary player in the mini MPV segment. It also sells quite well. And why not? Spacious enough to be called a 7-seater although those rear seats are fit for children or adults you do not like but still have to give a ride to.

The 2016 model has had a facelift and a new engine update. The choppy ride of the previous generation is muted somewhat. It also comes with 1.3 and 1.5 options with dual VVTi. The update brings you a softer ride, better fuel efficiency and design changes that inch farther from a van and more toward a SUV appearance. Also, being a Toyota it holds its resale value better. And you can stretch your car club brags by saying your car is like a Supra: front engine, rear wheel drive. Priced at 31.5 lakhs.

And there you have it, all the cars you can buy for fun and/or practicality.

\*All prices are in takas

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*Most of the cars listed here have detailed test-drive reports in our automotive publication Shift. Check out their Facebook page facebook.com/thedailystar.shift for more!*

**Photo by Rahin Sadman Islam & Tasdid H Chowdhury**

