

# THE 2016 BMW 7 SERIES

■ EHSANUR RAZA RONNY ■ PHOTOS BY RAHIN SADMAN ISLAM

*Has BMW gone mad? This 7 Series has a four cylinder, two litre engine. In a 7 series? Really? The sense of disbelief might be the reaction of most people but this is no ordinary 2.0 displacement. There is 258 hp and 295 lb-ft of torque delivered through an eight speed automatic. The 730i reaches 100kmph in 6.2 seconds. The long wheel-base (LWB) version we drove takes just a blink of an eye more. To answer the first question: BMW has gone mad in a very calculative and delicious manner.*

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

For starters, that horrid afterthought of a trunk known as the Bangle butt is gone. Now it's a beautifully sleek design with flowing curves leading out from those massive yet purposeful grills up front. Lighter than the current 5 Series, BMW has incorporated construction tech from the i3 and the i8 to chop off 130kg of weight compared to the previous car. Additional carbon fibre structural enhancements to make it stronger and stiffer which translate to driving enjoyment.

## HOW DOES IT DRIVE THEN?

Drives very quick. So much so you wonder if there are extra hidden cylinders BMW doesn't want us to know. 6.2ish seconds is nothing to be sneezed at. There is none of that frantic noisy 4-cylinder rush you unwillingly expect. Speed comes with grace and a slight burly exhaust note as you mash the throttle. Which I did often because the car kept on asking me to. Only the needle indicates you have reached warp speed.

I generally am not a fan of big cars. But this handles like a much smaller, tighter sedan. The adaptive dampers and air suspension soak in all of Dhaka's potholes without transferring anything inside. Sport mode stiffens up the ride. Even then, it is eerily quiet over bumps helping you to lock out all the noise and

chaos outside. The steering is super light albeit a little remote and detached from the road.

## ON THE INSIDE?

Tons and tons of space especially in the Li version we got. Cross your legs and sink into the soft leather. During our photoshoot I got to do my whole Silicon



Valley tech giant routine while my sub editor pattered around for the camera cars to keep up. There are more Wi-Fi hotspots and cup holders than you need. Business meeting? Bring it on.

You control all car settings and infotainment with the iDrive knob, voice command, 10.2 inch touch screen and a neat party trick where your hand gestures are seen by a camera to be interpreted as commands. Jab into the air, flick your finger, poke or rotate an imaginary dial to make things happen.

## WHAT TRICKS DOES IT DO?

We can't have it tie shoelaces for us... yet. Other than that, it manages everything else. The surround-view 3D parking feature projects surrounding images to look as if you have a butler out there with a video camera showing you where you are. Four cameras at each corner stitch together images to create a top-



down scene of the car to help maneuver in and out of tight spaces without needing to look out the window. Impressive feature that works perfectly. Proof is how we returned the car without any scratches.

There are a host of other features too long to list in this space. Suffice to say this is the most car you can have.

## VERDICT?

A big car that handles like a smaller performance oriented car. Seems to be the best of both worlds. The new engine gives

out dollops of power when needed making highway progress smooth and effortless. That is, if you can manage to get out of the city in Bangladesh. When you remain stuck in the city, the cosy comforts of the back seat will take care of all those hours of staring out at stranded humanity. Or you can watch a movie. Or sleep.

I've also driven the 740i when it was launched in Singapore last year. Difference lies in the 70 or so bhp. The rest of the experience remains the same. Excellent handling, superb ride comfort and good looks. It is good to see BMW has retained their driving appeal for a car that will mostly be used for chauffeuring. If you don't drive it, you will miss out on the actual fun.

Lightness, efficiency, performance. Is this the return of the 7 to being the Ultimate Driving Machine? Seems so.

## SPECS

### ENGINE:

2.0 litre 4 cylinder Turbo gasoline engine (258 HP, 295 lb-ft of torque).

### TRANSMISSION:

8 speed automatic, Rear Wheel Drive. Too many features and options to list. Take a day out to visit Executive Motors Ltd. to check out the new 7 Series in all its glory.

For details on pricing and availability, contact Executive Motors limited.

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## SAFETY

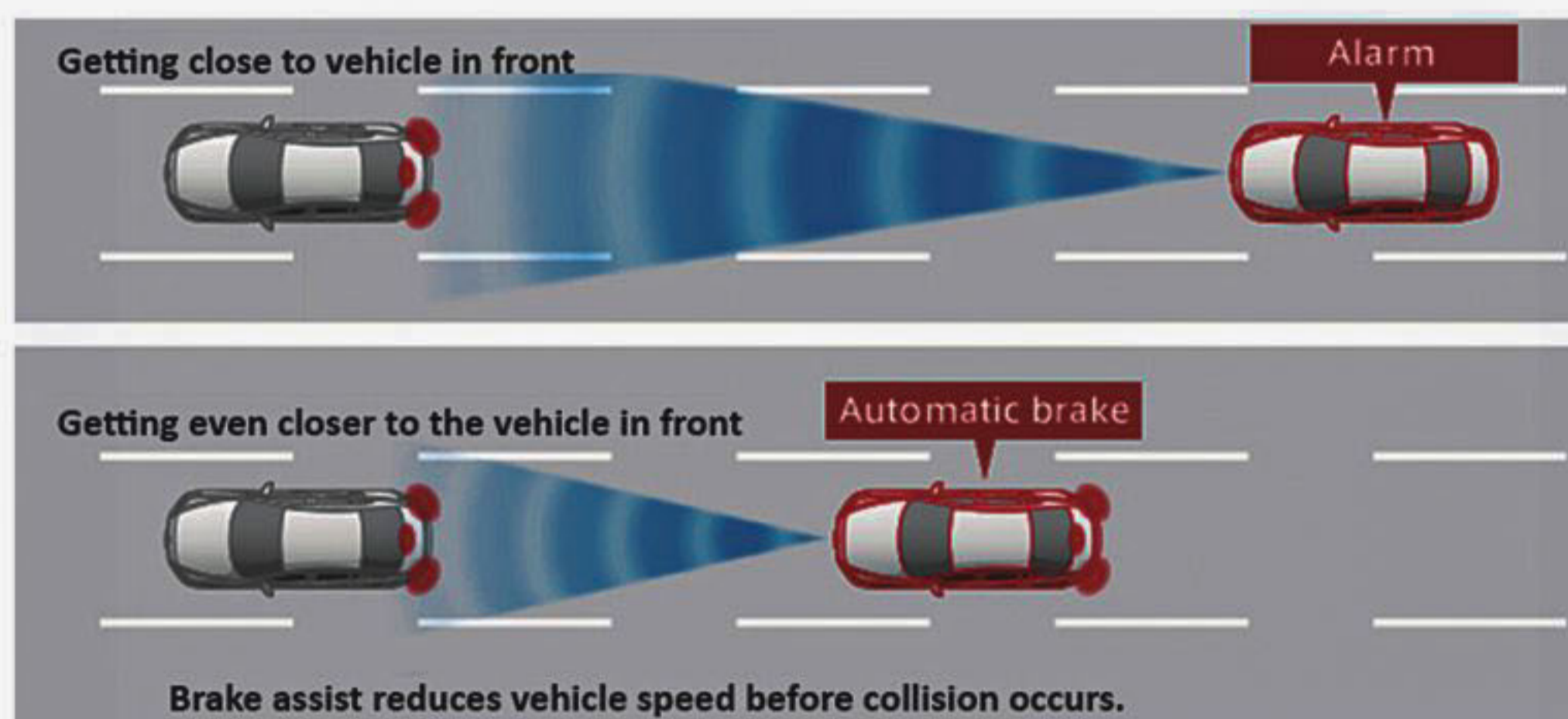
The average Toyota Premio imported in the grey market has about two airbags. In the same price range, a Hyundai Sonata comes with six - front driver-passenger, front right-left curtain airbags, rear right-left curtains. Higher up the range, even a basic entry level BMW X1 SUV comes with eight airbags. Setting aside the protection that modern vehicles offer in the event of a crash, there are a multitude of features that come standard. Anti-Lock Brakes, standard on almost all post-2000 cars, are now complemented with Electronic Brake-force Distribution, Brake Assist, Traction Control System, and more abbreviations than you can possibly know the full form of. As drivetrain and performance efficiency improves, stopping power needs to improve as well, especially on roads as congested as ours. Out on the highway, these modern electric systems and driving assists may just save your life.

## VISIBILITY

Illumination is as important to driving at night as getting a good night's sleep is for your body. Modern automotive illumination has leaped forward in recent years, jumping from halogen bulbs to projection units that focus the headlight beam for brighter and clearer illumination. The latest technology trickling down to regular passenger cars in Bangladesh has to be LED headlights though, which are the most energy efficient way of lighting up the nighttime that you can get, unless you can afford the Audi R8 and its laser headlights. The all-new 2016 Honda Civic, coming to Dhaka this month, features a full LED headlamp and part LED taillamp. On top of looking cool, LEDs will draw less power, illuminate brighter, and survive the test of time much better than projection units.

## DRIVING ASSISTS

The benefits of a proximity sensor in your car when traversing the rickshaw filled, narrow roads of Old Dhaka cannot be downplayed. It'll help you make tight turns on congested roads and keep an eye out for over-eager drivers who try to edge too close to you in their attempts at going nowhere in a traffic jam. It'll also help you park, reverse and do perfect three-point



turns without ramming into twenty things in between. The massive new BMW 7-series comes with an array of sensors that stitch together an image, providing a bird's eye view of the car and obstacles around it. The Chinese are pretty good at driving aids as well - the 2016 Great Wall Haval H6 comes with a blind spot monitor which allows you to detect and avoid stray kittens in your path.

## FUEL EFFICIENCY

Hybrid technology should be at the forefront of advancements toward more fuel efficient, environmentally friendly vehicles, but our government's restrictive taxes on hybrid vehicles are keeping them at bay. The Toyota Camry is currently one of the only hybrids for sale in the market - providing a fuel mileage that is scores better than what you'd expect from 2.5 litre four cylinder motor. Honda used to bring in hybrid versions of the Civic (which had stop-start technology to reduce fuel consumption even further) and Accord as well, but restrictive taxes, again, are making them a non-viable option. Since hybrids are being choked out of the market, other manufacturers are turning to the best option available: reducing the number of engine cylinders as well as displacement and slapping a turbocharger onto the engine to make up for the lost power. The 2016 BMW 3 series comes with a 1.5 litre 3 cylinder turbo motor that produces 136 horsepower, ironically more than what most 1.5 litre 4 cylinder motors are capable of producing. It's

powerful enough to power the X1 SUV, so it's clear that smaller displacement but highly efficient engines are the way forward from here, reducing both fuel consumption and the carbon footprint of these vehicles.

## INFOTAINMENT

From Bluetooth to Voice Recognition to dual displays and Apple Car Play, the new Honda Civic promises a lot of kit that other cars simply can't match up with in that price range. Even setting that aside, the availability of USB, HDMI, auxiliary ports and highly customisable user interfaces are all common now, with the range of options exploding to three-four pages of brochures when you look at the Mercedes and BMWs coming into the country. BMW's i-drive technology is groundbreaking, containing electronic owners' manual installed on-board for quick access, and the latest 7 series comes with gesture control so that passengers don't have to reach for fiddly buttons to turn down the volume.

Be it Toyota, Honda, Benz or BMW, almost all manufacturers are providing a huge level of kit for your money. Automotive technology has surpassed the idea of four wheels, a steering wheel, an engine and a gearbox, and has become so much more. A brand new automobile is now a place of safety, comfort, ease of use, and a source of entertainment, and it's clear that Karl Benz would've been completely clueless if he ever encountered the 2016 Mercedes E class up-front. Speaks volumes.

## Under the spotlight:

Shoeb Ahmed  
COO, Rangs Limited



What does your position as Chief Operating Officer entail in an organization such as Rangs? What aspects do you look after every day, on the job?

As a COO of Rangs Limited, I am responsible for managing the current operations of the business and at the same time strategically driving the organization to future growth. Our business is all about our customers - the convenience, products, and services we offer. To help us achieve our customer relevance goals, I always try to be on the cutting edge of customer service, technology, and innovation.

The new Pajero Sport is not yet assembled in Bangladesh. Is there any plan yet of local assembly for the new model?

You would be amazed to know that state-owned Pragati Industries Limited will be assembling the new Pajero Sport model here in Bangladesh from next year. We are selling the Pajero Sport on pre-order basis now, which is built at Mitsubishi's Thailand plant.

What are the highest selling models from the Rangs showroom at the moment, and why?

The Lancer EX sedan. The overarching design of the Lancer EX is attractive, bold, and practical. The best thing is you can own a Lancer EX only at 24 lakh, which even cheaper than some used reconconditioned cars. The new Outlander SUV is doing good as well and we are getting very positive responses from our customers.

What are the factors that a typical consumer considers before buying a brand new car in Bangladesh, in your opinion? How do you serve the consumers in this regard?

Most customers consider the brand, price, spare parts, reliability, maintenance, mileage, resale value etc. when buying a new car. At Rangs, we make sure our customers get the best treatment not only while buying the car but also in after sales service and in the availability of spare parts.

What sort of vehicle we are expecting to see in Bangladesh road from Mitsubishi Motors?

The new multi-purpose vehicle DELICA will arrive soon. It is an amazing MPV, extremely versatile, awesome to drive and great in comfort. On the same note, we are planning to bring some new models, which will help in the health care sector along with the service industry. At the moment, we are not in a position to disclose the names for obvious reasons.