

PROJECT CARS

RESTORED AND RECOMMISSIONED

Md Shariful Islam Sunny is no stranger to being featured on Shift – his all-original and completely mint 1978 Mitsubishi Lancer with only 16,000 kilometres on the clock was the personal highlight of my four year long tenure as sub-editor for this automotive publication. That baby blue Lancer spoke volumes about the owner - Sunny is a certifiable automotive geek with an inclination towards classic metal, with his current garage consisting of the '78 Lancer, '94 Pajero and the 1984 KIA KM414 we're looking at today.

At first glance, you'd be forgiven for mistaking this bright red off-roader for a Jeep CJ5. While the original mechanicals are practically the same, this off-roader was a by-product of a joint venture between Shinjin Motors and American Motors in the years following the 1950-1953 Korean War, which left behind a huge cache of surplus military Jeeps in the Korean peninsula. Shinjin Motors would later be bought off and renamed as Ssangyong – a brand we're quite familiar with here. We're

also familiar with KIA, the second largest manufacturer in South Korea behind Hyundai, but what might not be common knowledge is the fact that a large portion of KIA's revenue comes from designing, building and selling defense and reconnaissance vehicles to armed forces all over the world. Initially, that started with making slightly redesigned and re-engineered Jeeps. Bangladesh recently replaced the long-running Toyota Land Cruiser with KIA models but our armed forces have used KIA Jeeps in the past. What you see here today is the KIA KM414, a recoil-less rifle carrying version of the KIA KM410 light reconnaissance vehicle, which explains why there seems to be an unnaturally large gap between the split front windshield. Yep, this is a completely restored and re-worked military vehicle.

It may have never seen active duty, but the KIA was driven hard for its entire life. Unlike Sunny's Lancer, this isn't a low-mileage example – it doesn't even have the original engine. Instead, it's running a 7K

engine sourced from a Toyota Noah, complete with its Rear Wheel Drive automatic gearbox, shifter, driveshafts, and gauge cluster. That means, unfortunately, the 4WD system doesn't work, although the ground clearance means it can go nearly anywhere, as long as the tyres can find traction. The steering is characteristically vague and barely seems to be connected to the wheels at speed, although the lack of power assistance means it gives you a ton of feedback when you take it slow. The fuel injected 7K is surprisingly torquy and the open top, open sided KIA feels punchy and exciting on the move as a result. Just make sure you don't fall out of it, or over-work the steering too much.

Shariful Islam Sunny's day job involves running two restaurants in Lalbagh, and a sizeable chunk of his earnings go into restoring and running rare, curious and classic cars. So the next time you're in Lalbagh in search of food, consider having a pizza opposite Lalbagh Fort – it might help save a classic car.



WORDS: SHAER REAZ
PHOTOS: RAHIN SADMAN ISLAM

TOYCON 2017 - FIRST OF ITS KIND

For the first time ever, scale model cars, comic books, collectibles and action figures gathered under one roof at Toycon. The convention, held at Drik Gallery on 23rd and 24th September, featured collections of veteran Diecast Car Collectors Club members like Rubab Momen and Taimur Ali, while Danny Siraji had some delectable models for sale. We definitely hope this convention is a regular thing.

PHOTOS: FARHAN AHMED



Sublime 1/43 scale Ferrari F40 with sublime engine detailing. There's a reason they say 1/43 is the best scale - you find the best cars with the best details.



While the rest of Toycon was largely devoted to people selling their wares (everything from posters to action figures and rubber toys), some sections were devoted to displaying personal collections. While Saadi Rahman's immense collection of action figures took centre stage, people like Rubab Momen still wowed the crowd with his 1/12 cars.



Is there anything cooler than working Legos? This pair of trucks have working arms that can grab and lift stuff onto their beds. Not really a toy then, but does it



More Lego goodness as this collector showed off his array of "realistic" Lego kits. That VW Bus, Ferrari F40 and Caterham racer steal the cake.



Few home-made dioramas were displayed - this parking garage is probably worth millions. Doesn't matter what you put in them - dioramas are cool.



Incredible collection of tin scale models hark back to old days, when your collection would literally "age".



Stormtrooper helmet from Star Wars only a small part of Saadi Rahman's immense collection.



Only at Toycon would you find a TIE Fighter from the Star Wars universe parked atop a Lego display.

AUTO NEWS



AUDI LAUNCHED OFFICIALLY IN BANGLADESH

Progress Motors Imports Limited, authorised dealers of Audi vehicles in Bangladesh, formally launched the German luxury brand at a Meet the Press event held at their new showroom in Tejgaon, Dhaka on 24th September 2017.

Managing Director of Progress Motors, Saad Nusrat Khan, presided over the event while Michael Kresten, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, attended the event as the Chief Guest. Christine Rudolph, Importer/Dealer Network and Business Development Manager for Audi AG in South East Asia, handed over a scale model of an Auto Union Type C race car to Saad Nusrat Khan and the Audi Bangladesh team as recognition of the outfit as an official dealer of Audi vehicles.

At the launching event, the initial models for sale were unveiled – among them, the Audi A4 and A6 sedans and the Q3 and Q7 SUVs. The A5 sedan and Q5 SUV will be sold officially as well, with additional models joining them soon.

PHOTO: SHAER REAZ



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