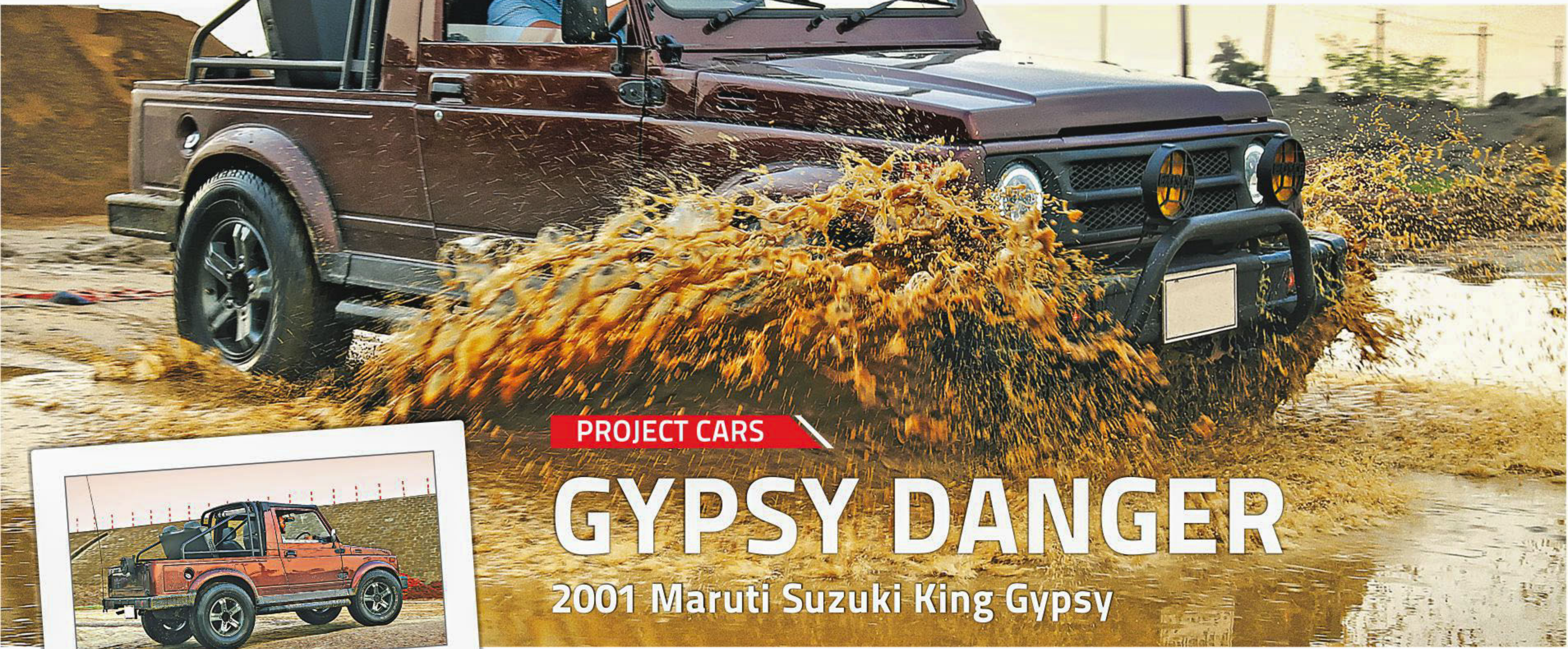


# SHIFT

AUTOMOTIVE PUBLICATION OF The Daily Star



PROJECT CARS

## GYPSY DANGER

2001 Maruti Suzuki King Gypsy



The Maruti Suzuki Gypsy is not a new car, even though you can have a brand new one within three months if you pay an advance and wait patiently in India. The Indian made off-roader, based on the Japanese designed Suzuki Jimny, was introduced first in 1985 with a tiny 970 cc F10A motor that only made 45 HP and sent power to all four wheels via a two speed, free-wheeling transfer case. For a decade, that initial model stayed largely the same and was whipped up by Indian law enforcement and public services, as well as offering an affordable option for car buyers wanting an SUV. In 1993, the track was widened and subsequent improvements saw the addition of a catalytic converter, a 1.3 litre motor from the Suzuki Esteem, as well as fuel injection and minor interior upgrades.

In the year 2000, the highest grade of the Gypsy was introduced—the Gypsy King, featuring the 1300 cc G13BB Multi Point Fuel Injection 16 valve all-aluminium motor. With all of 80 HP available from the motor, the Gypsy depended on two decades of public service in various guises—military truck, ambulance, police car—to sell to civilians without offering anything to offer

in terms of creature comfort. When the highlight features of a top-of-the-line model happens to be head-rests and brake boosters, you'd better hope it's an extremely durable and capable machine.

Abir Uddin Akash certainly thinks it is. He bought his Gypsy King at a government auction in Dinajpur—with only 50,000 km on the fuel-injected 1.3 motor, the tiny off-roader needed a bit of TLC on the outside to make it a more than presentable weekend car. Even though Abir currently has a restored Y60 Nissan Patrol and a clean 4AGE swapped AE111 Sprinter (among a myriad of other projects), his preference for the Gypsy is pretty high, especially when it comes to going out of Dhaka or for a spot of mudding.

"Bigger off-road cars aren't as fun as this when you're throwing it around in the mud. Because of the length of the wheelbase and how tiny it is, not to mention the good condition of the motor, it's very fun to go off-road with it," he says.

The engine might only have 80 HP, but the 76 lb-ft of torque is available at 4500 RPM, so the lightweight Gypsy can be described as sprightly. There's no air-con and you don't need it—the Gypsy is open on all sides other than the front

and part of the top. The wind-rush into the cabin adds to the drama, making the Gypsy feel much faster than it actually is. The wider, bigger wheels make the non-power assisted steering feel harder and tighter than stock, with a clear impact on the turning radius—Abir doesn't care, since he's used to it and it adds to the Gypsy's style.

"I went to high school in the US, in Utah. Every cool kid in school had an awesome truck that they personalised. After coming back to Bangladesh I saw that no one really builds trucks here, so I decided I want to build a cool truck I could go off-road in. The Gypsy was cheap and I only have to pay TK 45 per year for road tax, since it's a government auction car—it made sense to build it, so I did," says Abir.

This Gypsy King is proof that you don't need a fast car with lots of horsepower to have fun. It also shows that if it's built right, almost anything can be cool, without being a low slung coupe. Better watch out, *kaiju*.

WORDS: SHAER REAZ  
PHOTOS: SHADMAN AL SAMEE

### AUTO NEWS

## BMW launches iPerformance PHEV line in Bangladesh

Executive Motors Ltd, authorized importer and dealer of BMW vehicles in Bangladesh, launched three BMW iPerformance plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs)—the BMW 530e, BMW 740Le xDrive and BMW X5 xDrive40e—at their showroom in Dhaka's Tejgaon area on November 3rd, 2018. A press conference was held at the Executive Motors showroom at Tejgaon. Dewan Muhammad Sajid Afzal, Director of Operations, Executive Motors Ltd and Md. Bazlul Karim, Director of After Sales, Executive Motors Ltd, were present at the

press conference along with other top officials from BMW Asia.

"Sustainable mobility is the future of mobility. We've reached a milestone today in Bangladesh by offering customers a range of BMW iPerformance models with electrified drivetrains. We look forward to providing our customers the opportunity to better the environment while experiencing an entirely new dimension of pure driving pleasure with the power of electro-mobility," said Dewan Afzal.

The iPerformance model designation is given

to all BMW PHEVs. By combining an electric motor with a highly efficient and sporty engine, BMW iPerformance cars can achieve excellent fuel efficiency yet provide dynamic performance.

All iPerformance models will come with 5 years of free service, parts, maintenance and repair.

We'll have a review of the iPerformance line soon on Shift.

PHOTOS: FARHAN AHMED



## DODGE SUPER CHARGER

FCA has made a special restomod 1968 Dodge Charger, called the Super Charger Concept, as a show-case platform for their 1,000 HP "Hellephant" 426 Supercharged Mopar Crate HEMI engine and kit and to celebrate 50 years of the Charger name.

The Super Charger gets wider fenders for the 20-inch front and 21-inch rear Dodge SRT Hellcat rims, six-

piston Brembo brakes, racing suspension that lowers the car by 3.5 inches front and 2.5 inches rear, Demon headlights and LED taillights that fit around Alfa Romeo Stelvio quad exhausts that go in place of the original 1968 model's tails.

The special "De Grigio" Grey Metallic body color and custom body touches like the flush bumpers make this one mean machine.

