



PROJECT CARS

# AMERICAN STYLE, JAPANESE POWER

## 1988 Toyota Mark II X71

There are a few distinct differences between large 80s American sedans and large 80s Japanese sedans. While the Americans preferred big torquey V8s in powering their truly gargantuan sedans—whether their live axle rear ends could handle that torque or not—the Japanese preferred smaller, more efficient six cylinder motors and suspension setups that would pamper you over bumps but tighten up in the twisty bits. The Japs definitely took inspiration from the Americans in the styling department though, a fact that shines through in the Toyota Crown and Mark II models starting from the late 60s, all the way through to the late 00s. It's no coincidence that large Japanese cars look and feel American—for the longest time, the concept of luxury for the Japanese was defined by the spacious over-consumption of the West. In a way, the Mark II is a best-of-both-worlds vehicle, combining the grace and style of America's large sedans with the efficiency, reliability and handling afforded by Japan's engineering ingenuity.

Ziyaad Rahman's restored Toyota X71 Mark II has a long history behind it—from family road trips to countless years of family bonding with the Mark II as a suitably large family sedan. Bought by Ziyaad's father for around TK 8

lakh in 1989, the X71 has been in the family for a total of 30 years. To ArifbneZillur Rahman, the X71 is more like a son than a car—having spent the best and the worst of times in the spacious, comfortable cabin, this is a family heirloom that might never see another owner.

That's not to say it always received the pampering it gets now. For about 8 years, the Mark II sat in a garage in Uttara, neglected but not forgotten, waiting for someone to pick it up and restore it to its former glory. Ziyaad, with the help of close family friend Chowdhury Fahim-uz-Zaman, took the Mark II to Anwar's garage—one of the most reputed body shops in Dhaka—and worked on removing nearly a decade's worth of rust from the panels. It was painted in a deep glossy black that took the Mark II above and beyond its original factory colour. A CKD of a pristine X71 Mark II was brought in from Japan and donated its interior, engine and a couple of body panels to the patient car in Dhaka. Nearly TK 10 lakhs were spent in updating the car's papers so it could be driven legally. With a new set of wheels on, Ziyaad drove it daily for about two years.

Eventually, Ziyaad's father, a dignified car enthusiast, decided the original 1G-GE motor needed to be replaced. While the era specific

option called for a 1G-GTE, it's an option that's not entirely viable considering how old and rare these motors are. Ziyaad and Fahim chose the 1JZGTE to be a suitably robust and powerful enough replacement. The newer 1JZGTE puts out 276 HP and 268 lb-ft torque in stock form, while the rare R154 5 speed manual gearbox makes the power delivery lively and addictive. The swap posed a few major problems—the narrow tunnel just wouldn't accept the diff, so a compromise was reached and a Toyota Hilux rear differential was shoehorned in. Ziyaad didn't want to let go of the car's incredible capacity to pamper occupants, so the X71 carries the stock suspension setup, leading to a strange feeling akin to being strapped to a waterbed as it hurtles down the road at break neck speeds.

It wasn't built for speed or style though. Even though it's capable of eye-watering performance and it turns heads everywhere it goes, this gorgeous X71 Mark II was built for one reason—to give it the respect it deserves as an important part of the family.

Words : Shaer r eaz  
Photos : ahbaar MohaMMad



AUTO NEWS



# Alfa's new baby - Giulietta

Amid Alfa Romeo's newfound mojo in building stellar products like the Giulia and the Stelvio, their smaller, city-friendly options have been crying out for a revamp. Starting with the brilliant Alfasud and onto more modern offerings like the Brera, the Italian heartthrob manufacturer has

a brilliant past record with hot-hatches that get automotive enthusiasts all hot and bothered.

In an attempt to keep that spirit alive comes the Giulietta, the latest hatch from Turin. The warmest motor has 170 HP from 2.0 litres, while a 120 HP 1.4

turbodiesel and 1.6 litre 120 HP petrol motor rounds up the lesser models. There's option of specifying a manual gearbox as well.

It's not exactly a hot hatch meant to set your pants on fire, but it's still a looker with some decent powertrains on offer.

COLLECTIBLES

# 1:12 Aoshima Honda CB750F

I am not a bike person. I don't really know how to ride one, I was never very well versed on things on four wheels, plus every ride on a motorbike was an intensely scary experience for me up until about a year ago, when I started using Pathao and Uber Moto. However, a part of me always wanted to indulge in the two wheeled fantasy of riding through an open road, especially with a burbling four cylinder underneath. That made the four cylinder motorbike—more specifically, classic upright Hondas from the late 80s and early 90s—part of a special fantasy. Unable to ride one, I figured buying a scale model of the ultimate motorbike in my head was the next best option.

Presenting the Honda CB750F—the original universal four cylinder Honda.

**Pros:** Detail is fantastic. Each exhaust header has a striking appearance, while the candy blue paint makes it stand out from whatever else you have on the shelf. 1:12 size is good too—lets you get right in there and take in its beauty from all angles.

**Cons:** Not the best chrome you'll see. Most bits like the mirrors and service stand are fiddly and feels fragile.

**Verdict:** Gorgeous bike, great model. Yours for around 2k. Just don't try to ride it.

Shaer r eaz

