

Mercedes-Benz Winter Meet 2020

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2020 is a weird year, things are not at all as they were. As the current situation affected public gatherings and cancelled sports and concerts worldwide, the same fate has also affected any and all car meets around the world. This year, we saw almost zero car meets in Dhaka, a stark contrast to 2019 where it seemed like every other weekend there was something going on. Now that the situation is easing up ever so slightly, the Mercedes Benz Owner's Club held their annual Mercedes Benz Heritage Meet, but this time with a selected roster and an even strictly regulated audience.

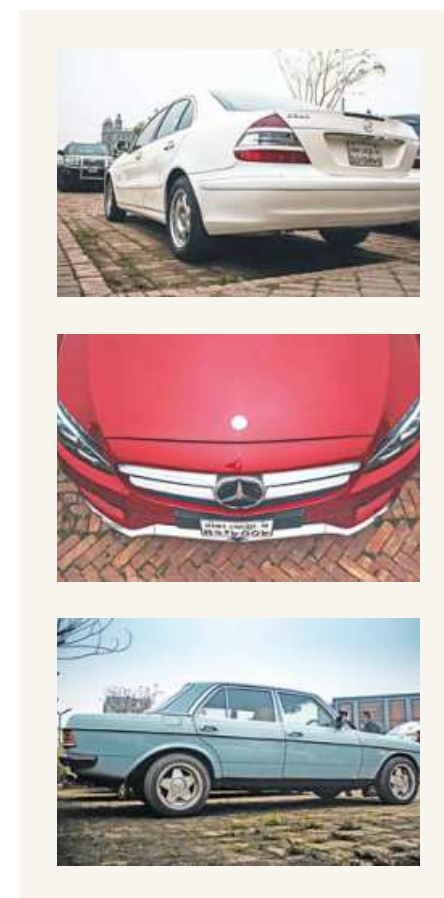
The meet was held in Chef's Table Courtside, the location being unchanged from the year prior. What did change is the manner of the meet. Whereas a car meet would boast at least 100 cars in a single parking lot, this time it was almost a fifth of that. Only the bravest—with proper precautions, of course—dared to bring their beloved Mercedes' to the meet.



According to the club supervisors, safety was always their first priority and thus their roster was selected carefully.

Only two classics showed up on the event, both of them being W123s. The blue W123 boasted a set of Mercedes Borbet alloy wheels and was in overall

great condition. The red W123 belongs to the president of the Mercedes Benz Owner's Club and was in almost immaculate condition. Photos do not do the car justice; the curves on the set of Ronal Pentas the car rides on can be fully appreciated only if seen in person.



The participants met first in Gulshan 2 and then rode together to the final destination. There they parked for an hour and shared their love for the brand, as young photographers and enthusiasts alike busied themselves taking pictures of the cars. For me, the highlight of the meet had to be a red 2019 C Class with a manual transmission. It is just different seeing one of these with a stick shift, as they are usually regarded as the standard for luxury automobiles, and a standard gearbox does not necessarily constitute as being luxurious.

There was also a current model year Mercedes GLE, the hottest pick among Bangladeshi luxury car buyers currently. This car accurately captures what captivates the people of Bangladesh, luxury and usability. Sitting beside the black GLE, was a 2019 Mercedes S Class S560e, which boasted fully-loaded interior and exterior package. Among that were a few other current generations C Classes and a few older generation E Classes.

This might not have been the most exciting meet of the year, but it was for the better as the priority had been to keep everything safe first and fun second. All in all, it was a great little gathering, a refreshing change for car enthusiasts after being stuck in their houses for so long. We look forward to bigger and more exciting get-togethers once the situation eases up.

Photos: Akif Hamid

Bangladeshis at Big Tech: What's it like to work at Google?

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The tech titan Google, providing various kinds of online-based services to the masses for decades, is one of the most well-known technology company in the world. Day by day, more and more people are becoming interested in joining the workforce of Google. Good news is, the number of Bangladeshis getting selected and working for such a great company is increasing. In an attempt to get a better understanding of this job sector, we talked to Anik Sarker, a Software Engineer at Google. He shared his valuable insights with us regarding the working environment of Google, the procedure to land the job, as well as, what the future candidates can expect on their way to the multinational company Google.

We asked Anik Sarker about the unique work culture of Google that attracts top talents and his experience of working for Google. According to him, he is finding Google's work culture to be very welcoming and inclusive. All the newly hired employees get called 'Noogler' there, and they have to go through a detailed and a long series of online training on accepting diversity, respecting coworkers and working as a team. He assured the prospective workers that, the company focuses on work-life balance very attentively where employees get two days off per week and more than one month of personal vacation. Google also takes care of medical insurance, immigration

hassles or any other emergency needs of their employees.

Anik Sarker is now continuing his work from home due to the current situation, and hence, he did not get the chance to experience the Google campus yet. However, he has heard all the praises for the Google canteens from his colleagues there. Google canteens are very famous for their foods with wonderful taste, and according to what he has learnt about it from others, perfect nutrition balance gets ensured there as well. He is looking forward to trying out the foods himself.

Moreover, while talking about his personal experience of working for such a big company, he said, "Well, to describe the feeling in a single word, working at Google is overwhelming! I am honestly perplexed by the scale, at which Google runs, as well as, the hugeness of its codebase and internal infrastructure. It is quite unbelievable how efficiently so many engineers are working together on building new products every day while keeping all the existing Google services up and running 24/7. It feels really good to watch something, which is helping billions of people every day, grow and become increasingly useful."

Meanwhile, Anik Sarker shared his journey of getting selected in the company with us, which began after his graduation when a "Googler", who knew him very well, referred him to Google. He dropped his

Curriculum Vitae at Google's career website in January 2020 and received an opportunity to participate in an interview afterwards.

"My CV strongly highlighted my programming contest achievements, which was a crucial factor behind me getting an interview call. At first, I had an online phone interview of 45 minutes, where I had to solve two Computer Science related problems. During the interview, we had a shared Google Doc, where I would write the code, and the interviewer could see what I was writing. I also had to continue to talk with him over Google Meet at the same time, and explain to him the logic behind my code," he remarked.

Then, Anik Sarker was informed about him passing the online round after 2-3 days, and his onsite round was scheduled for the next month. However, his onsite interview round also took place virtually because of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic of that time.

"There were five interviews in the onsite round, four of them were coding interviews, and the other one was about behavioural and leadership skills. The format of these interviews was also identical to that of the online phone interview. I was informed after one week that, I passed this round as well. Then my team matching round happened, where I and my Google team manager, talked about ourselves to check if we match each other's interests. After that, there were some internal Google meetings about approving my hiring, and subsequently, I got the offer letter in May 2020", he noted.

Anik Sarker, who is already trying to help many other Bangladeshis in achieving their dreams, recommended Computer Science students to focus on programming contests as programming contests can help them a lot in improving their problem-solving skill, which is very crucial to ace the coding interviews of tech giants. There are several online coding competitions organised by these companies, like Google Code Jam, Facebook Hacker Cup etc. Hence, having a good performance in these competitions will immensely increase their possibility of getting an interview call.

He also encouraged others, who are studying outside the Computer Science curriculum to be optimistic about getting a job at Google since applying to Google is open for non-CS graduates as well. Google only asks for a Bachelor's degree in a relevant field. There are a lot of Googlers who are from non-CS departments. So, if anyone from other departmental background has a strong passion for programming, he or she should also participate in programming contests and practice problem solving as much as possible. These can, to a great extent, help one secure their dream job at Google.

