



PHOTOS: AHBAAR MILKY

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If you're not already familiar with Toyota's semi latest concoction, the GR Yaris, a quick Google search will immediately fill you in about its importance in the world of cars. Toyota has always been predominantly fixated on the world rally championship since the early noughties while their road car offerings dwindled both in numbers and appeal as the rise of the Prius race took over their factory floors. After a few unfruitful launches of some lukewarm Yaris here and there, they finally figured out the winning formula - a modern homologation special Yaris built as an excuse to go racing again. To sum it up, it's a really big deal, so much



so that Akio Toyoda, the CEO of Toyota himself, was extensively involved in its development stages. Even collectors can't get enough of it, for this is probably the only Yaris one would find sitting beside a Porsche in some millionaire collector's garage.

Having the chance to go on a trip to Chittagong with a GR Yaris was something we couldn't miss. Day 1 consisted of catching a red-eye flight to Chittagong from Dhaka through one of US Bangla's countless noisy ATRs on rotation, which was thankfully on schedule. The Radisson Blu Chattogram Bay View, however, was not. Our personal chariot awaited us in the parking lot, and it was a sight for sore eyes. We took our sweet time checking the all-wheel-drive hoonicorn out and meeting its owner Raidur. We all unanimously agreed that pictures and videos on the internet never did the GR Yaris and its stance, stature and road presence any justice.



The very first lasting impressions were just how wide the fenders and the haunches of its tracks really were. And with a face like a Dementor, it's hauntingly beautiful all around; It sounds as angry as it looks. The tiny 1.6-litre three-cylinder definitely punches way above its weight, extracting just shy of

300 horsepower and 370 nm of torque through a wonderfully weighted and notch 6-speed manual. What surprised me most was the legroom in the rear and the fact that four average-sized individuals could comfortably sit inside.

Being a post-2020 car, the GR Yaris does suffer from the complicated OPF particulate filters because of emission regulations like all recent performance cars, which is why the car sounds so angry all the time from the inside, through the speakers, while the best way to describe how it sounds from the outside is to compare it to a vacuum. Although it does seem to tear through the air, leaving behind an empty vacuum in its trail; it goes like a distressed gecko abandoning its tail.

The FOUR in GR-FOUR makes sure it pulls like a freight train all the time. The Michelin Pilot Sport 4s are standard with the special wheels in Circuit Pack, and they mean business, offering a whole



full tank of petrol, we started for Kaptai, following the river Karnaphuli as we made our way to the outskirts of the city. Onto the two-lane highway, we finally encountered check-posts which meant we were getting nearer to the Kaptai Lake. The construction and conception of the Kaptai dam and valley are rooted in tragic ramifications, but the views were well worth it, for you would have to take my word for it since we left our cameras in the car amid concerns of heavy policing by the BGB in and around the lake. As golden hour was nearing its end, we stopped by the side of the road for what felt like our 400th photo op for the day.

Sombre melancholy and a sense of profound sadness were written on our faces on our last night in the port city. We woke up the following day, setting out for rolling shots of the UFO by the sea, on our way to the airport, back to boring old Dhaka, bidding adieu to a whirlwind of a weekend with Bangladesh's only GR Yaris.

world of traction only possible with racing slicks. The GR Yaris still feels potent under maximum load, sticking to the road akin to super glue on the skin as we found out on the twisties around Kaptai the day after.

Day 2 contained an impromptu two-hour road trip to Kaptai Lake. With a

Top skills for staying competitive in the job market

NUSAIBA NOOHIN

In today's ever-changing job market, options are more diversified than ever before for people seeking to secure a steady place in the industry. Workers in all professions must acquire a unique set of skills if they hope to stand out in the highly demanding job market. Whether you are a student looking for an internship or a fresher looking for a full-time job, having a contemporary skillset sets you apart from your competitors and pays off in the long run.

HARD SKILLS:

Relying solely on soft skills can only get you so far in the competition. Hard skills are what will make you stand out as a candidate among your competitors. While mastering these skills is not strictly mandatory, they will undeniably give you a head-start in the ever-competitive job market.

MS Office

Having a better grasp and understanding of Microsoft Office tools than the average candidate ensures a stable position in the industry for any job seeker. Among its three tools, the most essential one is, without a doubt, Microsoft Excel.

With the job market becoming more data-oriented, you need an above-average grasp of Excel to get among your competitors. "Excel is not a skill you should have, it's a skill that you need to have," says Ashraful Shabab, Management Trainee in HR at a world-renowned multinational company. "No matter what role you'll be getting into, you'll be working with data. And to sort and work with data, the best tool out there is Excel," he adds.

Microsoft Word and PowerPoint are no less significant either. In Word, you can create professional reports by incorporating your designs, graphs, pictures and symbols. With PowerPoint, you have the freedom to visualise and present your ideas professionally to leave a lasting impression on the audience. Microsoft apps will help you work more efficiently, becoming a better coworker and a more effective leader in your office.

Google Analytics

Google Analytics comes in handy for any job that you plan to apply for. It provides a vast quantity of information about who visits your website, what they are looking

starting in the field. Learning Python as part of a broader data analytics skill set will make you a more competitive candidate. Having a computer science background is not necessary to master Python, nor do you have to be a professional at it, as many people start to learn coding simply to learn a new skill.

"Python is better for business grads because it gives you easy access to data science," says Mursalin Kabir, Analytics Engineer Trainee at Intelligent Machines, who completed his undergrad from IBA, Dhaka University. "When it comes to jobs, recruiters prefer someone who can solve problems methodically and programming teaches you exactly that," he adds. There is an abundance of affordable courses on Udemy and Coursera that will help you start your journey with Python, as well as free videos on YouTube.

SEO

Search Engine Optimization is a vital skill in marketing, content writing, website building and branding. Having an up-to-the-mark grasp of SEO shows that you know what kind of keywords will gain the most traction for a website.

Data analytics

Data analytics not only helps you stand apart from your competitors but also opens up a wider range of job opportunities that you can explore. With the demand for data analysts skyrocketing every day, an employer tends to single you out as a better fit when they notice your expertise in this field.

Organisational tools

Organisational tools are resources, approaches, and applications that facilitate the optimisation of your workflow. Apps such as Microsoft To-Do, TaskIt, and nTask help you organise, track, and schedule your tasks according to their importance and help you become more efficient and productive.

SOFT SKILLS:

While hard skills help you gain more technical knowledge, soft skills help you to properly implement and utilise your skills as an individual. They help you develop relationships and solve difficulties so that you can make the most out of your hard skills.

Communication skills

Having the ability to communicate well is something that almost every employer looks out for in candidates. Every job requires human interaction, be it with managers, coworkers, clients, or customers. Developing good communication skills can facilitate these interactions, allowing you to accomplish your job more effectively and efficiently. While some communication abilities are innate, you must develop other abilities to create a lasting impression on the people with whom you interact.

Teamwork

Being a team player is crucial for any role out there. No matter what industry you target, team chemistry has more impact and significance than an individual. Working in a team builds resources

because it makes employees better equipped to deal with challenges and conflicts. Being a good team player lets you work with others to reach the same goal seamlessly.

Stakeholder management

Stakeholder management includes maintaining a good relationship with stakeholders and making sure their work contributes to the success of the project. A company's performance is directly connected to its employees' ability to interact, speak to, and, if necessary, dissipate the negative impressions of its stakeholders. Even during job recruitments, you might be given hypothetical situations where you will be asked to solve the given situation with a stakeholder, be it a bank, an NGO, or an MNC.

Decision making

A competent employee must be unbiased and have a strong ability to make sound judgments. Decisions are at the heart of every step of the management process. A competent employee must be unbiased and have a strong ability to make sound judgments. Taking advantage of opportunities and solving challenges necessitates making decisions. How quick and effective you are at decision making is reflected in your working style.

Adaptability

It is also essential to have a high level of adaptability because this demonstrates your leadership abilities, determination, and analytical skills. These are all highly desirable characteristics that a prospective employer looks for in an employee. "You will have to learn to work and cooperate with a vast range of different people, from all over the world, at your workplace," says Monwar Hossain Rokon, Assistant Manager of Finance at Standard Chartered Bangladesh.

Crisis Quotient

Crisis Quotient (CQ) is a key skill in the volatile job market of today. A person with sufficient CQ can handle any crisis thrown their way by sorting priorities and making important decisions, says Sakshi Handa, Human Resources Director at Unilever Bangladesh Ltd, "Other components of CQ include vulnerability - having the courage to say that we don't necessarily have all the data and information, and psychological stamina that is needed to face ambiguities."

According to Sakshi, CQ translates into sharp prioritisation and the ability to focus intently on the greatest areas of leverage. This also means being able to find deeper levels of connection, prioritising self-care and leading others with compassion and empathy.

In the end, soft skills allow organisations to use technical skills and knowledge efficiently without being slowed down by incoming challenges and conflicts, while hard skills help pave the path to becoming a more qualified individual. You can always stay one step ahead of the game by obtaining a unique set of skills that reflects your authenticity as a worthy candidate in the ever-changing job market.



ILLUSTRATION: TANZID SAMAD CHOUHDURY

for, and how they arrived there. Excelling at this tool is a must for any company and individual that wishes to extend and grow their job-market presence.

Python

Since Python is widely used in data science, it is a crucial tool for anyone