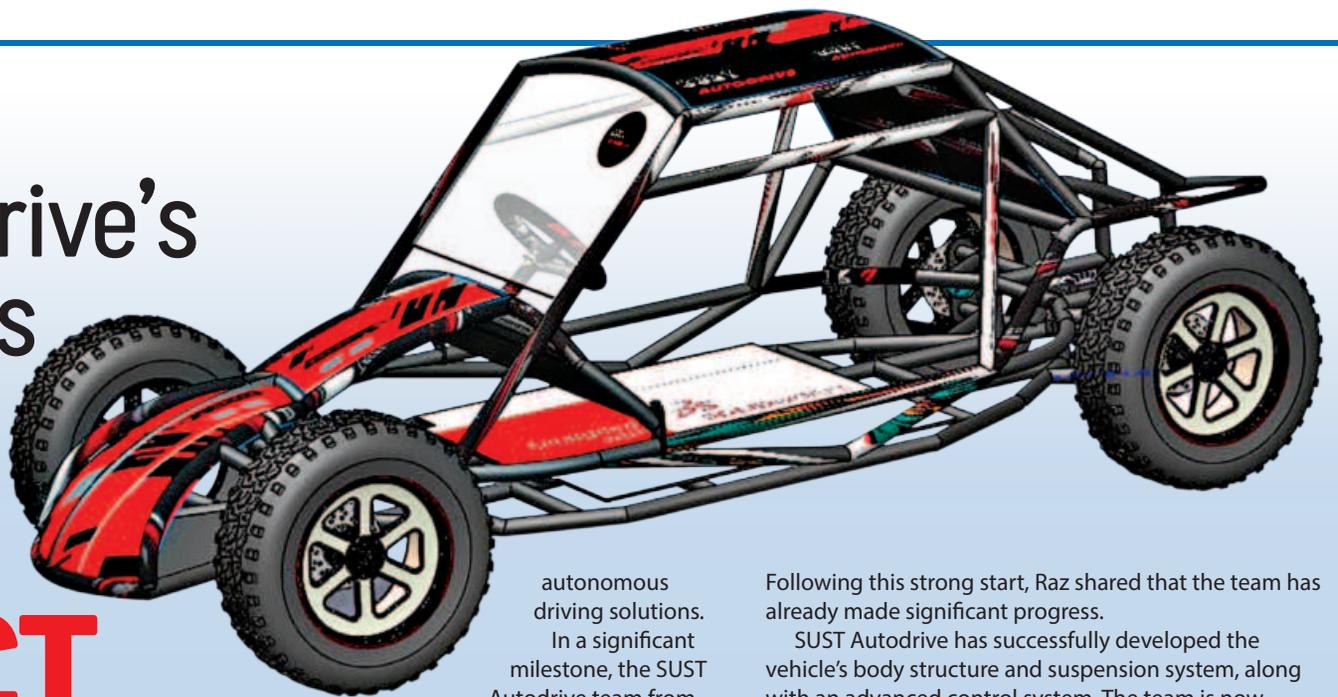


■ OFF CAMPUS ■

SUST Autodrive's autonomous CAR PROJECT



SAIMOON SAKI

Road safety remains a major concern in Bangladesh, with many accidents linked to driver error and poorly maintained vehicles. As countries around the world adopt autonomous technologies to improve transportation safety, it is time for Bangladesh to seriously invest in researching and developing

autonomous driving solutions.

In a significant milestone, the SUST Autodrive team from Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) has introduced one of the country's first self-driving car prototypes. The project began with the growing interest of Abul Bashar Raz, an undergraduate student of SUST's Mechanical Engineering department, in robotics and automation. Aware that Bangladesh is falling behind in the global shift toward autonomous systems – widely viewed as the future of transportation – he recognised the urgent need for innovation in areas such as autonomous port operations and factory automation.

That's when Raz started researching self-driving cars, which he found to be the most advanced and comprehensive form of autonomous technology. Raz believed that mastering self-driving technology would lay the foundation for developing other automation solutions, since many of its core technologies could be adapted and applied across multiple fields.

In his third year, Raz realised he needed a team, so he reached out to friends from different departments. They began their journey with no funding but plenty of ambition. In 2024, their dedication helped them raise BDT 2 lakh on their own, giving the project its first real boost and turning their vision into a working reality.

Following this strong start, Raz shared that the team has already made significant progress.

SUST Autodrive has successfully developed the vehicle's body structure and suspension system, along with an advanced control system. The team is now preparing to conduct manual testing of the car by July. Currently, they are focused on raising funds to complete the sensor setup and computing unit, which are critical components for testing the autonomous software on the roads of Sylhet city.

"Our team has been working tirelessly to optimise our software and algorithms for the complex and often unpredictable road conditions of Bangladesh," Raz noted. "We're hoping to make history by testing Bangladesh's first autonomous vehicle by June 2026."

Other than that, the SUST Autodrive team also managed to make their way to several local and international competitions, including the "Bosch Future Mobility Challenge 2026" and "Roboracer". They also had the chance to showcase their main prototype car model on behalf of their department at the International Conference on Engineering Research, Innovation and Education (ICERIE) 2025. Last November, SUST Autodrive also won the "Shaheed Tanvin Innovation Award" at Innoverse Bangladesh 2025 held at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET).

SUST Autodrive's autonomous car project is widely regarded as the first of its kind in Bangladesh. While Raz acknowledges that teams from other universities have worked on individual aspects of autonomous vehicle technology, he emphasised that SUST Autodrive is the first to develop a full-scale, multi-dimensional autonomous car project entirely from scratch.



PHOTOS: SUST AUTODRIVE