

AUTOGUIDE

India's Automotive Industry & Trade Journal

56
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SINCE 1966



CHALLENGES PERSIST

Auto industry all geared up



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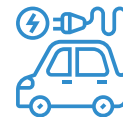
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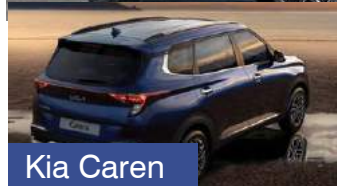
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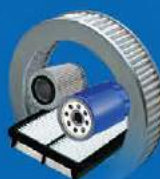
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Editor's Viewpoint



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SHILPA MALHOTRA
Executive Editor

A confident industry enters 2022

ENTERING another challenging year, a confident automobile industry is cautiously optimistic. Having weathered manifold odds in 2021 and emerged successfully, it has kept its morale high and geared itself to tackle fresh challenges that are in store in 2022. And it knows there will be aplenty. Our Cover Story encapsulates all this based on the viewpoints of the captains of the industry.

A spurt in the number of COVID cases across the country has led to various levels of restrictions and there is uncertainty as to how the situation will pan out in the coming days. This is a major worry expressed by most of the stakeholders. They are also conscious of the fact that the problems like semiconductor shortage, supply-chain bottlenecks, rising input costs and spiraling fuel prices, are far from over. But they are confident that the automobile industry in the country has the grit and the resolve to tackle all these, as it has always done in the past. The annual growth numbers of 2021, a year of several upheavals, are a case in point. The industry, particularly the passenger vehicles segment, staged a smart comeback last year despite odds. PV sales grew 27 pc and crossed the 30 lakh-mark during the year. It was only the third time in the history that such a feat was achieved; the earlier ones in the years 2017 and 2018. The other factor which has bolstered the industry's hopes is that the consumer demand remained robust throughout last year, overstepping supply during the festival months. It is hoping that the positive sentiments will carry on and the other issues will also be ironed out during the course of the year. All these are valid enough reasons for the industry to march into 2022 on a confident note.

The issue also covers the remarkable achievement of homegrown automotive brand Tata Motors, which displaced Hyundai Motor to acquire the No. 2 slot in the passenger vehicles market in the country. The company also posted its highest-ever monthly sales in December last year. In fact, 2021 was the year of the highest annual sales for Tata Motors since inception.

Apart from these feel-good stories, Autoguide's first issue of the New Year covers all the major news developments of the past month.

Happy reading!

**THE INDUSTRY
HAS KEPT ITS
MORALE HIGH
AND GEARED
ITSELF TO
TACKLE FRESH
CHALLENGES
THAT ARE IN
STORE.**

CHALLENGES 2022

Auto sector exudes hope, confidence

As the year 2021 was drawing to a close, the rising number of COVID cases dampened spirits all around; the domestic automobile industry was no exception. The good thing, however, is that having successfully withstood a plethora of challenges during the past year and a year before that, it is entering the New Year 2022 full of hope and confidence.

The upbeat stance of the industry has been reflected in the views expressed by some of its prominent stakeholders in various media platforms. Although fully conscious of the fact that most of the challenges that it was confronted with in 2021 are going to persist and may create bottlenecks in its growth trajectory in 2022 as well, the positive outlook of the industry emerges from a variety of factors.

The year gone by had been witness to a whole lot

of problems, from COVID-related restrictions in the early months to supply-chain issues all along and production losses resulting from the global shortage of semiconductors in the closing months. Alongside, the industry had to grapple with challenges like the soaring commodity and fuel prices and rising vehicular costs all through 2021.

Despite that, the year ended on a buoyant note with most segments, particularly passenger vehicles, staging a healthy recovery. In fact, PV sales during the year crossed the psychological 30-lakh mark, a feat achieved only twice before. According to recently-released numbers, car companies sent 30.82 lakh units to dealerships during 2021 as against 24.33 lakh units in the pandemic-hit 2020, registering a growth of 27 per cent.





"We are hopeful that once the semiconductor crisis eases out, the industry can continue to witness strong demand and do better in 2022."

Mr. Rajesh Menon
Director General, SIAM

A strong consumer demand was primarily behind these numbers and the industry is expecting that the sentiment will continue in 2022 as well. Besides, it is pinning hopes on fresh positive initiatives from the Government, like the PLI scheme and FAME-II extension introduced last year. It is also confident that the semiconductor shortage would ease somewhat during the course of the year. Most importantly, the industry is hopeful that the Omicron spread won't be too serious and it won't lead to any major disruptions.

"Auto industry is hopeful that the new variant Omicron of COVID-19 will not play a major spoilsport. We are hopeful that once the semiconductor crisis eases out, the industry can continue to witness strong demand and do better in 2022," said Mr. Rajesh Menon, Director General of the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM).

"The industry is hopeful that the favourable policies of the Government for instance the PLI schemes for auto and auto component sector, advanced chemistry cell, extension of FAME-II scheme till 2024 and the announcement of a PLI scheme of Rs 76,000 crore for semiconductor manufacturing will provide the much-needed fillip," Mr. Menon was quoted as saying in a news agency report.



"We see year 2022 as a neutral year as the rise of Omicron has once again created fear globally."

Mr. Vinkesh Gulati
President, FADA



"In 2022 all segments of the vehicle industry, especially the two-wheeler sector, are expected to demonstrate robust performance."

Mr. Sunjay Kapur
President, ACMA

Speaking for auto component makers, ACMA President Mr. Sunjay Kapur said in 2022 all segments of the vehicle industry, especially the two-wheeler sector, are expected to demonstrate robust performance. "That apart, strong global demand for India-made components and the thrust on EVs have given rise to several opportunities that the component manufacturers can harness," he said.

Mr. Kapur noted that after two consecutive years of decline, India's Rs 3.4 lakh-crore automotive components industry is estimated to grow 10-15 per cent in this financial year.

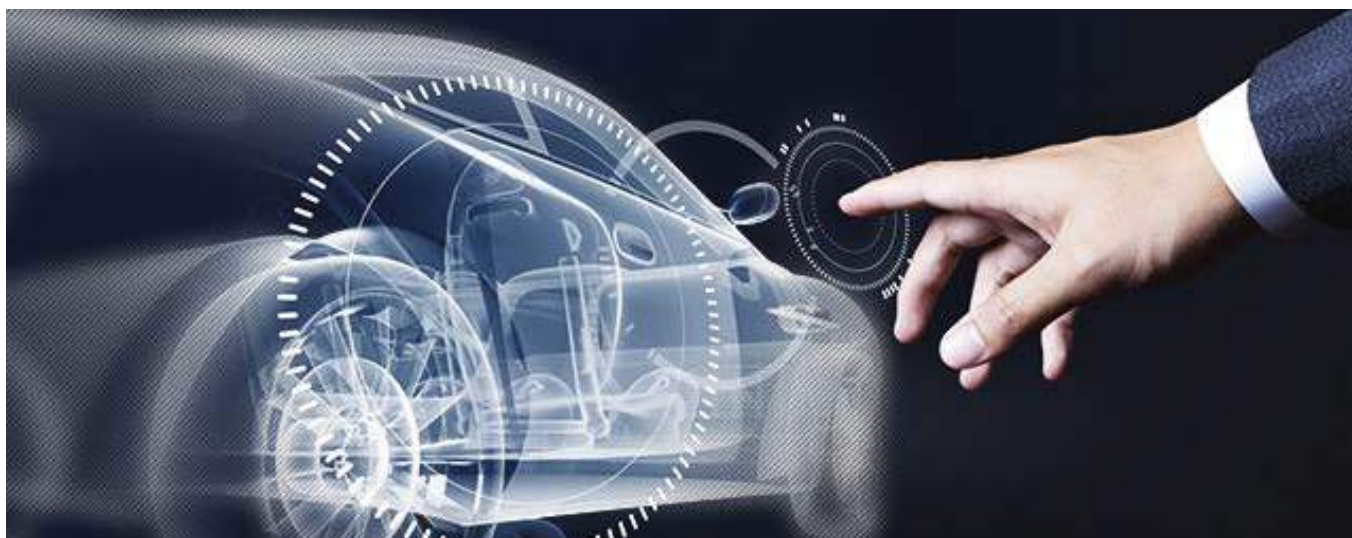
On a slightly different note, Mr. Vinkesh Gulati, President of the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA), said, "We see year 2022 as a neutral year as the rise of Omicron has once again created fear globally." This, he said, "may further impact the supply in passenger vehicles if chip making countries go under lockdown or prioritise chip-making for electronics used for 'work from home'."

Besides, Mr. Gulati said the two-wheeler market which continues to face demand headwinds may further go into slump, if the third wave becomes a reality.



"This year, we had a lot of production loss due to shortage of semiconductors. I think the situation will be much better in 2022."

Mr. RC Bhargava
Chairman, Maruti Suzuki India Limited



In an interaction with news agency PTI, Maruti Suzuki India Chairman Mr. RC Bhargava expressed the hope that 2022 would pan out to be better for the industry as compared to 2021. "This year, we had a lot of production loss due to shortage of semiconductors. I think the situation will be much better in 2022," he said, adding the economy is going to grow faster, which is again a positive factor.

"So all these put together, except for the uncertainty related to the Omicron variant, I think it indicates that 2022 would be a much better year," he stated.

Sharing the optimism, Mr. Shailesh Chandra, President, PVBU, Tata Motors, said, "Looking ahead, we expect the demand for passenger ICE and electric vehicles to remain strong even as concerns about the supply of semiconductors and high input costs continue alongside the uncertainties connected with the Omicron variant."

Mahindra & Mahindra Executive Director (Auto and Farm Sectors) Mr. Rajesh Jejurikar noted that overall, the

industry has been through a tremendous learning curve, be it in terms of managing resources, supply chains, adopting technology and digitisation to improving customer experiences and innovating quickly to respond to changing dynamics.

"I feel these learnings will stand us in good stead as we move forward. We are already seeing a strong demand curve and with the improvements in the overall economic environment, I remain optimistic that 2022 will be a much better year for the PV industry as compared to 2021," he told the news agency.

Representatives of some other automotive brands and domain experts quoted in these media reports were also upbeat, though in varying degrees, about the industry's prospects in the year ahead. Given the prevailing uncertainty about the severity of the pandemic, one would tend to share the cautious optimism that the automobile industry is displaying overall at the present juncture.



"We expect the demand for passenger ICE and electric vehicles to remain strong even as concerns about the supply of semiconductors continue."

Mr. Shailesh Chandra
President, PVBU, Tata Motors



"I remain optimistic that 2022 will be a much better year for the PV industry as compared to 2021."

Mr. Rajesh Jejurikar
ED (Auto and Farm Sectors), Mahindra & Mahindra

December sales a mixed bag

Tata Motors displaces Hyundai at No. 2 slot

DECEMBER 2021 proved to be a lackluster month, bringing mixed tidings for the auto companies in terms of sales. Though many carmakers reported decline as compared to November, the sales were better than December 2020 for most PV manufacturers. Two wheelers and tractors remained in the red while CV wholesales witnessed improvement.

The highlight of the month was Tata Motors overtaking Hyundai Motor India to become the second-largest seller of passenger vehicles in the domestic market for the first time in close to a decade.

Tata Motors also earned the distinction of posting its highest-ever monthly sales in the last month of 2021, highest ever quarterly sales in October to December of 2021 and the highest annual sales since its inception in 2021.

The company sold 35,299 vehicles last month as opposed to 23,545 units in December 2020, registering a 50 per cent sales growth. The homegrown car brand posted 43 per cent growth in the sales of petrol and diesel vehicles while EV sales increased by 439 per cent as compared to December 2020.

Mr. Shailesh Chandra, President, Passenger Vehicles Business Unit, Tata Motors, said, "The PV business growth journey of Tata Motors continued and set several new milestones during the third quarter of FY22 despite witnessing a shortfall in production due to the ongoing semiconductor crisis. Decade-high quarterly (Q3) and monthly sales of 99,002 units and 35,299 units respectively were recorded."

The country's largest carmaker, Maruti Suzuki, registered a 12.57 per cent sales drop in passenger

vehicle sales during the last month. It sold 1,23,016 vehicles in India in December 2021 as opposed to 1,40,754 units in December 2020. The company witnessed sales drop in every vehicle segment last month except for the utility vehicles (SUV and MPV) segment where it reported a marginal 4.98 per cent sales growth.

Hyundai, the second-largest carmaker, also reported a 31.8 per cent sales decline; from 47,400 units in December 2020 to 32,312 units last month. The

South Korean carmaker, however, registered 19.2 per cent sales growth in 2021 as compared to 2020.

Apart from Tata Motor, another company that recorded growth in sales during December was Skoda Auto. The Czech brand sold 3,234 units as compared to 1,303 units sold in December 2020, marking a 148 per cent sales growth. On the whole, the company sold 23,858 units in 2021 as compared to 10,387 in 2020.

MG Motor India also remained in the positive territory, reporting 43 per cent sales growth last month as

compared to December 2020.

In the two-wheeler segment, Hero MotoCorp reported a decline in its domestic sales in December, and said it continues to monitor the on-ground situation. Commercial vehicle OEMs witnessed a growth in Y-o-Y sales volumes during the month although this could also be attributed to the low base of last year.

Regarding de-growth in tractors, Mr. Hemant Sikka, President - Farm Equipment Sector, Mahindra & Mahindra, said, it has been on account of a combination of factors, including high base of last year and both delayed and very heavy rainfall in some geographies.



BMW iX debuts in India

Deliveries of electric all-wheel drive vehicle start in April 2022



BMW iX, an electric all-wheel drive vehicle from the German luxury carmaker, made its debut in India on December 13.

The BMW iX is the BMW Group's new technology flagship. It is the first BMW without any numerals in its designation. The sports activity vehicle (SAV) combines premium mobility with zero-emissions, sporting agility and a long operating range with luxurious spaciousness, according to the company.

The car will be available as a completely-built-up unit (CBU) and its deliveries will start by the beginning of April 2022.

Mr. Vikram Pawah, President, BMW Group India, said, "In a rapidly changing world, the first-ever BMW iX is the 'Ultimate Driving Machine' for a new generation.

Latest BMW eDrive technology, combined with the functionality of X5, dynamics of X6 and striking appearance of X7, has given birth to the symbol of a new age. Born Electric, the BMW iX imbibes the principles of sustainability throughout its lifecycle, right from production to usage to end-of-life, making comprehensive use of natural and recyclable materials. It is so much more than a car - it's a modern way of life. It is Joy, born again!"

The first-ever BMW iX has been launched at an introductory price of Rs 1,15,90,000 (ex-showroom).

It is available in exciting metallic paintworks Mineral White, Phytonic Blue, Black Sapphire and Sophisto Grey. It is also optionally available in BMW Individual Aventurine Red metallic paint finish.

BMW iX was completely sold-out on the day of launch itself, said a company press release.

The first phase of bookings saw an overwhelming response by the customers online and at BMW India dealerships across the country, according to the release. The company will open the second phase of bookings in Q1 2022.

Mr. Vikram Pawah, President, BMW Group India, said, "We are very excited to receive such a phenomenal response to the first-ever BMW iX. We were confident that the first-ever BMW iX will be a sought-after product, but it has truly surpassed all expectations."



Mr. Vikram Pawah,
President, BMW Group India

Characterised by sculptural and monolithic design, the iX represents a new face that makes mobility easier and comfortable while creating powerful presence and dynamics rarely seen in a vehicle.

The most striking features include the longest ever single-piece BMW Curved Glass Display angled towards the driver, race car inspired hexagonal steering wheel making entry/exit easier, electro-chromic BMW Sky

The car's features include intelligent BMW kidney grille with sensors, camera and radar tech, proximity sensors in body edging, flush door openers, washer under front logo, camera with washer in rear logo and integrated speakers. Lounge Panorama Glass Roof, multi-functional seats with integral head restraints and massage function, bespoke leather upholstery, ambient lighting for every mood and luggage capacity of up to 1,750 litres.

The fifth-generation BMW eDrive technology features a highly integrated drive unit within a single housing that is powered by two electric motors (for front and rear axles), single-speed transmission and power electronics. The iX accelerates from 0 to 100 km/hour in 6.1 seconds with an output of 326 hp.

Two high-voltage batteries integrated in the floor have a combined capacity of 76.6 kWh and provide a range of up to 425 km.

As an introductory offer, the BMW iX will come with a complimentary smart BMW Wallbox charger. It can be integrated at home to enable safe and convenient charging up to 11kW.

A host of BMW ConnectedDrive technologies continue to break the innovation barrier. BMW Live Cockpit Professional includes the freestanding BMW Curved Display with Navigation, a 12.3-inch digital information display behind the steering wheel, a 14.9-inch Control Display and BMW Head-up Display.

BMW iX comes with two-year warranty for unlimited kilometres. The batteries are covered by a warranty valid for eight years or up to 1,60,000 km.





Hyundai to launch six EVs by 2028

Introduce E-GMP, its dedicated BEV platform

HYUNDAI Motor India on December 8 announced its roadmap to drive the electric mobility revolution in the country with the expansion of its line-up to six battery electric vehicles for the Indian market by 2028. Further, the company will also introduce its dedicated BEV platform – E-GMP in India, showcasing its commitment towards smart Indian customers.

Commenting on the corporate announcement, Mr. SS Kim, MD & CEO, Hyundai Motor India Ltd., said, "As we continue to redefine the mobility space, today we are yet again showcasing our commitment towards Indian customers with the announcement of expanding our BEV line-up to six vehicles for the Indian Market by 2028. At Hyundai, we are taking experiences Beyond Mobility and are strongly focusing on Intelligent Technology, Sustainability and Innovation.

With an innovative interior packaging vehicles developed on E-GMP will feature a flat floor, slim

cockpit and a flexible and spacious cabin. E-GMP has been developed on four key pillars of:

Modularity – With one platform that can facilitate many body types, feature a modularised battery system and create greater synergies with BEV component sharing.

Reliability – Featuring a low center of gravity, use of ultra-high strength steel and eight-point battery mounting, E-GMP will pave the way to highly reliable BEVs of the future.

Usability – With a flat floor and flexible seating layout as well as an innovative interior space that offers sliding console and sliding second row seats, E-GMP will usher in a new dimension of usability

Performance – Featuring a large battery capacity up to 77.4 kWh, 2WD/ 4WD capabilities, improved handling and capability to achieve a top speed of 260 km/h, E-GMP will drive in a new age of electric vehicles



Kia's recreational vehicle **Carens** debuts in India

KIA Corporation on December 16 launched Carens at a world premiere event in India. It will be available in selected markets in the country starting from the first quarter of 2022.

The recreational vehicle (RV) is another made-in-India global product from Kia that brings the sophistication of a family mover and the sportiness of an SUV in one compelling package.

Designed for modern Indian families, Kia Carens is a comfortable and spacious three-row seater with the longest wheelbase in its class, said a press release. The

car comes with a first in India Hi-Secure Safety Package as standard across all trims, which includes six airbags, making it one of the safest vehicles in India.

The Kia Carens is also a connected car that comes with many class-leading features, setting new benchmarks in the industry, added the release.

"With its bold design, high-tech features, and industry-leading safety systems, the Kia Carens is set to create a completely new segment and industry benchmark for family vehicles," said Mr. Ho Sung Song, President and CEO at Kia Corporation.

Audi introduces A4 Premium to celebrate a successful '21

AUDI on December 6 announced a new variant of Audi A4 – the Audi A4 Premium – to celebrate a successful 2021.

The Audi A4, in its fifth generation, boasts a new design and a powerful 2.0-litre petrol engine that generates 140 kW (190 HP) of power and 320 Nm of torque, said a press release by the German luxury car manufacturer.

The Audi A4 Premium is an addition to the existing line-up, including the A4 Premium Plus and A4 Technology variants. It is priced at Rs 39,99,000 (ex-showroom).

Mr. Balbir Singh Dhillon, Head of Audi India, said: "The Audi A4 since its launch in January has garnered great response – this is a car that has historically been a volume seller for the brand. Today, we are happy to introduce a new variant – the Audi A4 Premium to mark the success of our brand in 2021. This is a time to celebrate and we couldn't be happier that we are able to give our customers a choice of three trim levels to choose from."



TKM ties up with Karnataka Bank

TOYOTA Kirloskar Motor (TKM) on December 6 announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Karnataka Bank to enable easy finance options for its customers.

Following the tie-up, Karnataka Bank will be one of the preferred financiers for the entire range of vehicles sold by TKM. The finance options at competitive interest rates will be available to customers, including those covered under priority sector schemes, for purchasing Toyota vehicles for both private and commercial use.

Mr Mahabaleshwara MS, Managing Director & CEO, Karnataka Bank, said, "This is a collaborative effort of two great brands, Karnataka Bank and Toyota Kirloskar Motor, to provide the best-in-class service to our customers. We are delighted to be collaborating with TKM and this partnership will offer quick and seamless experience of our digital car loan product to the customers, who desire to own world-class products from TKM."



Mr. R Venkatakrishnan, Vice-President, Strategic Business Unit, TKM, said, "TKM always strives to enhance & aid customer convenience by introducing timely and relevant schemes for easy finance options. This tie-up is one such endeavour, enabled to establish new-age banking and finance solutions for a hassle-free and seamless buying experience for our customers."

Tata Motors ties up with Bandhan Bank for PV finance

TATA Motors has signed a MoU with Bandhan Bank to offer finance options to its PV customers. As part of the MoU, the bank will provide loans to Tata Motors' customers at an interest rate starting from 7.5 per cent, said a press release.

The bank will offer a maximum of 90 pc financing on the total on-road cost of the vehicle. Customers can also enjoy a benefit of special EMI options with a repayment tenor of up to seven years. The bank has also designed certain exclusive features, which includes zero charges on foreclosure and part payment.

Mr. Rajan Amba, Vice-President, Sales, Marketing & Customer Care, PVB, Tata Motors, said, "We are

delighted to join hands with Bandhan Bank and this partnership is a part of our #FinanceEasy Festival, wherein we are collaborating with multiple finance partners across India to make ownership of cars accessible, as well as a hassle-free process for the customers."

Mr. Kamal Batra, Head – Assets, Bandhan Bank, said, "We are pleased to partner with Tata Motors as preferred financier for car loans. With this association, we are hopeful to leverage on the extensive reach of both brands in rural, semi-urban and urban markets and enable many Indians fulfill their dreams of owning their personal vehicles."





Baleno hits 1-mn milestone

MARUTI Suzuki's premium hatchback Baleno has achieved the milestone of over 1 million customers.

According to a press release, Baleno leads the way with its bold design, advanced features and superior technology. Specifically curated and designed for the Nexa customers who have a penchant for boldness, the car offers signature liquid flow design, it said.

Speaking on the milestone, Mr. Shashank Srivastava, Senior Executive Director (Marketing & Sales), Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said, "Since its launch, Baleno has enjoyed unparalleled leadership in the premium hatchback segment. It has set new benchmarks in design, safety, and innovation."

With a staggering market share of over 25 pc, Baleno has led and redefined the premium hatchback segment. Inspiring over a million customers and bagging numerous awards, Baleno has truly won the hearts of both customers and auto experts across the country."



Mr. Shashank Srivastava,
Senior Executive Director
(Marketing & Sales),
Maruti Suzuki India Limited

Hyundai signs golfer Aditi Ashok

HYUNDAI Motor India on December 22 signed a MoU with Aditi Ashok, the 2020 Arjuna awardee and the world's only golfer who has made cut in every major golf format.

Through this association, HMIL aims to strengthen the brand's voice, spirit and innovative approach to further prioritise customer interests and create newer opportunities for the brand, said a press release.

As part of the two-year association, Hyundai will work closely with Aditi representing HMIL's young and progressive imagery, it said further.

The partnership will be leveraged through a series of initiatives such as creating digital

bytes and stills capturing her winning stories that will help consumers enjoy golf more.

Hyundai, said the release, is celebrating the spirit of Indian women sportspersons who are challenging the stereotypes and setting new benchmarks becoming inspiration for millions of women.



Spinny partners with Sachin

SPINNY, a full-stack online-to-offline user car retail platform, has partnered with sporting legend Sachin Tendulkar. He is a strategic investor in the company as well as a lead brand endorser, said a press release by Spinny.

Speaking about the association, Sachin said, "Our country is becoming younger and our ambitions bigger. Entrepreneurs of today are creating solutions that cater to this ambition. I am very happy to be associated with Spinny – a team which aspires to create solutions the right way."

Welcoming Sachin Tendulkar onboard as the captain of #SquadSpinny and as an investor, Mr. Niraj Singh, Founder & CEO, Spinny, said, "His life and journey stand as a beacon for the values of tenacity and determination in the face of challenges. We strive to instill these abilities in everything we do and Spinny's outlook to solve real customer problems. Having him onboard with Spinny is absolutely heart-warming, and we are proud to welcome our newest captain of Squad Spinny, Sachin Ramesh Tendulkar."



Hyundai signs MoU with four women cricketers



HYUNDAI Motor India on December 15 kicked off 'The Drive Within' campaign and signed a MoU with four Indian women cricketers.

The company has entered into one-year association with Smriti Mandhana, Jemima Rodrigues, Taniya Bhatia and Shafali Verma as Brand Ambassadors to highlight and celebrate their contribution to the Indian cricket.

Mr. Seon Seob Kim, MD & CEO, Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL), said, "Hyundai has a long standing association with sports, our players as well as audiences. Continuing our promise to go beyond mobility, we are glad to announce an association with truly inspiring players in Indian women cricket. The grit and spirit shown by these sportswomen will become a role model for the entire nation."

India's first AIoT-powered autonomous hatchback car to hit roads by March

MUMBAI-based Autonomous Intelligence Motors (AIMPL) is all set to hit the roads with its Artificial Intelligence-of-Things (AIoT)-powered autonomous hatchback car.

The company will launch its ultramodern crewless or driverless petrol and diesel hatchback variants in March 2022, said a press release.

Founded in 2020 by IIT-Bombay alumnus Kushal Tanaji Shilimkar, AIMPL is a full-stack driverless automobile company that aims to unlock the future of India's AIoT-powered autonomous mobility.

The launch of AIMPL's driverless hatchback car will mark a significant milestone for India's autonomous driving industry, said the release. It will be a symbol of the country's first-ever product-ready AI-powered variant fitted with BS8-compliant engines (for both petrol and diesel variants), besides electric vehicles (EVs), it added.

The fully autonomous cars will have highly optimised cutting-edge hardware platforms with integrated custom sensors, cameras and radars. Its perception system will use data sensed from multiple sensors and algorithms fitted in the car, which will indicate road curvatures, potholes, routes, lanes.

"It was in 2019 when my entrepreneurial journey took a turn for the better. I was gobsmacked to encounter a



media report one morning, in which American entrepreneur Elon Musk was quoted with his tall claims that Tesla is the only company in the world to launch autonomous vehicles capable of L5 autonomy by the end of 2021. It was quite absurd and ironical to read such exaggerated assertions as I had proved it way back in 2014 that I was ahead of the game and successfully tested my AIoT powered autonomous car prototype in 2014 in IIT-B. This was the defining moment in my career, and I decided to go in for robust backward integration and indigenize my product to suit Indian road conditions," said Mr Shilimkar.

"It's a matter of a couple of months before our driverless cars take everyone to work. I am confident that we'll see a broad acceptance for fully autonomous vehicles, he said.



SPREADING WINGS



Ampere Experience Centre at Ranipet

GREAVES Electric Mobility began the New Year 2022 with its two-wheeler arm, Ampere, inaugurating an Experience Centre at Ranipet in Tamil Nadu.

The new centre is designed with digital interventions that can enable the customer to understand and experience smart new-age Ampere electric vehicles, said a press release.

Mr. Nagesh A Basavanhalli, MD and Group CEO, Greaves Cotton Limited, said, "With our EV megasite in Ranipet and the newly-opened Experience Centre, we hereby strengthen our resolve to provide Clean Mobility for All. We are also committed to elevate overall customers experience with best-in-class products and other ecosystem support requirements."



DICV opens dealership in J&K

DAIMLER India Commercial Vehicles, in association with PAL Trucking, inaugurated a new BharatBenz dealership in Jammu recently.

The opening of the new touch-point in Jammu, a growing construction hub, reflects the increasing demand for BharatBenz products in the Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh, said a press release by the company..

The BharatBenz network in J&K now has an installed capacity to service over 600 vehicles in a month, it added.

Mr. Rajaram Krishnamurthy, Vice-President, Marketing, Sales and Customer Service, DICV, said: "With the recent infrastructure boost in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, there is a massive influx of construction projects being undertaken. We thereby anticipate a strong demand of commercial vehicles in the upcoming months from these regions. Capitalising on this opportunity, we aim to ensure 100 per cent presence in the region and add our touch-points to have a total of seven service centres in the UT".

Mr. Nishant Luthra, Dealer Principal & Managing Director, PAL Trucking, said, We are delighted at the launch of our new BharatBenz dealership in Jammu & Kashmir. We are committed to serve our customers with the best of our products and services."



Raasta plans to expand operations to 30 cities

RAASTA Autotech, a car & bike service aggregator, on December 14 announced its plan to expand its services to 30 cities by next year.

In the first phase, the company aims to strengthen its presence in seven cities – Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kanpur, Ludhiana, Jaipur, and Bhopal – with high-quality standardised vehicle services, said a press release.

One of India's leading vehicle maintenance service providers, Raasta, has already established its position in Delhi NCR with its one-stop solution for vehicle-users, said the release.

Mr Karn Nagpal, CEO & Founder, Raasta Autotech, said, "We are working extensively on our plans to magnify the reach of vehicle services across nooks and corners of the country. The market size for the organised vehicle service industry currently stands at \$2-3 billion. There are regional players in the fray, and our intent is to build an integrated vehicle services platform and emerge number one in the space."



Mr Karn Nagpal,
CEO & Founder, Raasta Autotech



Tata Motors opens third showroom in Hyderabad

TATA Motors, in partnership with Orange Auto, inaugurated a new dealership at Attapur in Hyderabad city.

The new dealership facility will provide access to world-class Tata Motors passenger and electric vehicles to customers in the region, said a press release.

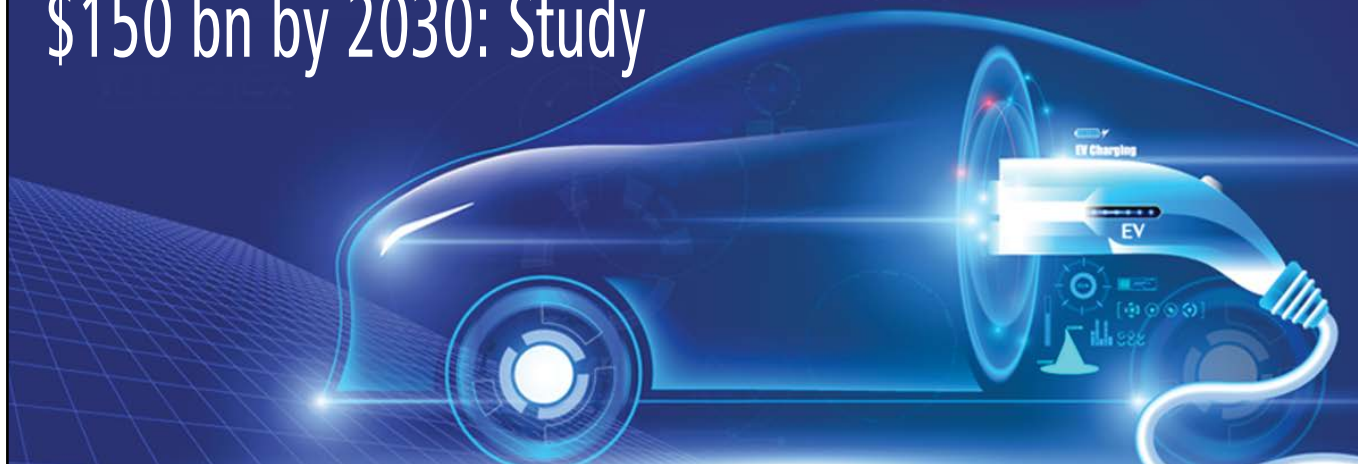
Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Ramesh Dorairajan, Head - Network Management & Head – Electric Vehicles (Sales, Marketing and Customer Service), Tata Motors, said, "We are extremely happy to partner with Orange Group as our authorised dealer. This is the third showroom from Orange Tata in Hyderabad, which adds to our customer-centric approach and our constant efforts to get closer to them."

Mr. Yalamanchili Ramu, MD, Orange Group, said, "We are very proud to represent Tata Motors in Telangana. We have a long association with the company with two dealership sales showrooms at Erragadda, Karkhana, and Attapur has been inaugurated today with spread area of sq. ft 7000 at Hyderabad, and services centre at Hafeezpet."



Mr. Yalamanchili Ramu,
Managing Director – Orange Group,

EV industry to grow to \$150 bn by 2030: Study



EV financing will become the biggest enabler for EV adoption in the next few years. Attractive economics and push by governments has already increased the demand for EVs substantially, and the industry is set to grow to \$150 billion by 2030, according to estimates by RevFin Services, a financial technology digital lending platform focused on EV adoption.

“Commercial EV segment, expected to be a key growth vertical is faced with lack of financing options, hence remains the biggest challenge in this journey,” as per the study.

The Centre for Energy Finance at Council on Energy, Environment and Water at Centre for Energy Finance (CEEW-CEF) shows that the 57,043 registrations recorded during April to September 2021 for high-speed EV have surpassed total registrations recorded in FY21 (40,837 units).

Further, the electric two-wheeler (e-2W) industry is expected to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of 75-80 pc over FY22-FY25. This would result in e-2Ws contributing 7-10 pc of the overall 2W sales by FY25 from contributing below 1 pc as of FY21, according to India Ratings & Research (Ind-Ra) study.

New model launches over the next few years with better specifications and performance of e-scooters at par with ICE vehicles are entering this space.

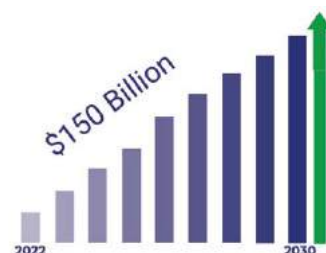
Here's a look at a few brand launches expected in the calendar year 2022:

Ultraviolette: Funded by TVS Motor Company, among other investors, it is readying itself for the commercial launch of its electric motorcycle F77. The Ultraviolette F77 will be available from the first half of 2022.

Prevail Electric: The EV manufacturer start-up is gearing up to launch three premium-model scooters -- Elite, Finesse, and Wolfury. The electric scooter Elite can offer a top speed of 80 km per hour with a maximum load of 200 kg while Finesse can offer a top speed of 60 km per hour. The electric scooter Wolfury can offer a top speed of 50 km per hour.

Nexzu Mobility: This homegrown e-mobility brand is set to launch a new environment-friendly e-cycle called 'Bazinga'. The bike will offer an easy-to-use hop-on-hop-off frame that has rarely been seen on electric bicycles available in the country.

Emflux Motors: Founded in 2016 to harness the potential of electric technology to change the landscape of mobility, the company's electric sports bike Emflux One, will be launched in 2022. The bike will have a top speed of 200 kmph with an acceleration of 0-100 kmph in three seconds.



SunFuel partners with Radisson Hotel Group

To provide EV charging stations across its hotels



Ms. Gul Panag,
Co-Founder & Head of Partnerships &
Community, Sunfuel Electric

Mr. Zubin Saxena,
Managing Director & Vice-President
Operations, South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group,

SUNFUEL Electric, an EV charging player focused on providing Destination Charging to hotels, has joined hands with Radisson Hotel Group to provide captive EV charging stations across the latter's hotels in the country.

The MoU-signing ceremony, which took place on December 21 at Radisson Blu Plaza in New Delhi, saw attendance from industry stalwarts.

Mr. Zubin Saxena, Managing Director & Vice-President Operations, South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group, and Ms. Gul Panag, Co-Founder & Head of Partnerships and Community, Sunfuel Electric signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organisations.

After the signing, Mr. Saxena said, "We are delighted to partner with SunFuel and provide EV charging facility to guests across our hotels in India. Through this partnership, we are furthering our vision of a sustainable tomorrow and boosting our commitment to help shape the future of responsible travel."

Mr. Sudhir Nayak, Founder & CEO of Sunfuel Electric, said, "Destination Charging is the key to catalyse the adoption of high-end EVs in India. At SunFuel we are enabling hotels in all popular destinations in India with seamless EV charging. We believe this will encourage adoption of electric cars amongst people and make electric mobility cool and aspirational."

Ms. Panag added: "if you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, go together. We have just started our march/drive towards our environmental goals, and we have a long way to go. We are building and empowering a warm community of planet conscious adventurers to create some happy memories."



Ultraviolette raises fresh funding from TVS, Zoho

ULTRAVIOLETTE Automotive on December 13 announced that it has raised a new round of capital in its Series C funding, led by TVS Motor Company.

Zoho Corporation has joined this round to support Ultraviolette's vision of developing high performance mobility solutions for India and global markets, said a press release.

Ultraviolette, which is setting-up its manufacturing and assembling facility in Bengaluru, will utilise this investment towards the production and commercial launch of its electric motorcycle F77, it said further. The company will roll out the first batch of motorcycles in the first half of 2022, added the release.

Mr. Sudarshan Venu, Joint Managing Director, TVS Motor Company, said, "EVs are a huge focus area



for us and we have invested in this area for over a decade. TVS is committed to developing exciting and aspirational products and we have always believed that EV development has to be ground-up for us to make that quantum leap into the global EV revolution. Ultraviolette brings these values to life in a unique way in the F77, and we are excited to support this."

TII to make EV foray under Montra brand

TII Cycles of India (TII), part of the Murugappa Group, on December 18 announced Montra brand to lead its electric vehicle business.

Montra, an existing brand under TII, has stood for achievement, strength, fearlessness and an ambitious spirit, said a press release. With the rapidly- evolving mobility landscape, the brand too is evolving while retaining its values, it added.

To begin with the Montra brand will enter EVs business in three segments - last-mile commute, last-mile delivery and personal mobility. Under last-mile commute TII's first venture will be in the three-wheel electric autos, which is expected to be launched in Q1 of FY22-23. In last-mile delivery segment, 3W electric



cargo vehicles will be introduced. TII has already launched e-bicycles in the personal mobility segment. Mr. Vellayan Subbiah, MD, Tube Investments of India, said, "We have been an integral part of the mobility industry through our bicycle, automotive body/ components and manufacturing businesses. Our foray into electric vehicle is a step forward in line with our long-term vision, to be an integral part of electric mobility and revolutionise the automotive segment through product and creating an ecosystem for the segment to flourish. The Montra logo is designed to symbolise our brand value and long-term ambition."



MG, Fortum deploy 50 kW EV charging station at Surat

IN line with its commitment to encourage EV adoption in India MG Motor India and Fortum Charge & Drive India (Fortum) have deployed a 50 kW Superfast public EV charging station in Surat, Gujarat.

The inauguration ceremony was held at MG Dealership recently, in the presence of Mr. KK Panchal (ARTO Surat) as the Chief Guest.

The deployment underlines MG Motor's mission to enhance the national charging ecosystem with 25kW, 30 kW, 50 kW and 60 kW DC superfast charging stations. Till now, the carmaker with partnership of Charge Point Operators like Fortum Charge & Drive India has installed 44 superfast charging stations across 41 cities in India across its dealer networks, the highest by any Auto OEM.

Compatible with all CCS fast-charging standard vehicles, the Surat charging station will offer a seamless charging experience to all compatible EV customers. MG's electric vehicle ZS can be charged from 0 to 80 per cent in 40 minutes with the superfast charging station.

Mr. Awadhesh Kumar Jha, Executive Director, Fortum Charge & Drive India, said, "We are happy to extend our partnership with one of the leading automotive companies to further bolster the super-fast charging network in the country. With this charger on Fortum Charge & Drive network, an EV user can travel between Ahmedabad and Surat without any range anxiety as both the cities have Fortum chargers."



Mr. Awadhesh Kumar Jha,
Executive Director,
Fortum Charge & Drive India

Jio-bp, Mahindra sign MoU for EV, low-carbon solutions

RELIANCE BP Mobility Limited (RBML), operating under the brand name Jio-bp and Mahindra Group, on December 8 announced a non-binding MoU for exploring creation of EV products and services, alongside identifying synergies in low-carbon and conventional fuels.

The MoU also covers evaluating charging solutions by Jio-bp for Mahindra vehicles including electric three- and four-wheelers, quadricycles and e-SCV (small commercial vehicles – sub four-tonne). This would include captive fleets and last-mile mobility vehicles of Mahindra Group.

The partnership aims to leverage the strengths of both companies in the areas of EV products and services. Mahindra Group and its channel partner locations will be evaluated for setting up of Jio-bp mobility stations



and EV charging and swapping points apart from utilising existing Jio-bp stations.

Jio-bp recently launched its first Mobility Station in Maharashtra, offering multiple fueling choices, including EV charging infrastructure, while providing a world-class retailing experience.

Additionally, business models like Mobility as a Service (MaaS) and Battery as a Service (BaaS) will be explored wherein Jio-bp could provide charging solutions to vehicles made by Mahindra Group.

Plug Mobility and Fortum join hands for charging infra



Mr Sanjay Aggarwal,
President, Fortum India Pvt. Ltd

Mr. Rajiv Kumar Vij,
Managing Director Carzonrent
India Private Limited

PLAG Mobility from Carzonrent India, the country's first electric vehicle mobility as a service brand, has partnered with Fortum Charge & Drive India, a leading Nordic EV charging service provider, to provide charging infrastructure for Carzonrent fleet of 19,000 cars to be inducted over the next five years across India.

Fortum C&D will set up 3,200 charging points for

plug mobility during this period to support energy requirement of the fleet.

As part of the agreement, a total of 3,200 DC001 and CCS charging point chargers will be deployed in 79 cities and towns. The charging infrastructure will be used for Carzonrent's recently-launched EV fleet brand 'Plug' and it will also be available for general public.

Mr. Rajiv Kumar Vij, MD, Carzonrent India, said, "Carzonrent will provide a chauffeur-driven EV fleet through its initiative Plug for different ground mobility needs and our aim is on saving 4 lakh tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions in the next five years by introducing 19000 EVs across India. We are happy to partner with a pioneer such as Fortum to bolster our efforts towards this."

Mr Sanjay Aggarwal, President, Fortum India, said, "We are happy to collaborate with Carzonrent to set up charging infrastructure for four-wheelers across the country as a step towards decarbonisation."

Tata delivers 60 e-buses to Ahmedabad Janmarg



Shri Bhupendra Patel and Shri Kiritkumar Parmar, Hon'ble Mayor of Ahmedabad, in the presence of dignitaries from the Gujarat State Government, AJL and Tata Motors.

TATA Motors on December 3 delivered 60 electric buses to Ahmedabad Janmarg Limited (AJL).

The ultra-urban 9/9 AC buses were flagged off at Sabarmati River Front Event Centre, Ahmedabad, by Gujarat Chief Minister, Mr Bhupendra Patel, and Mr Kiritkumar Parmar, Mayor of Ahmedabad, in the presence of dignitaries from Gujarat Government, AJL and Tata Motors.

The 24-seater zero-emission buses have been supplied under the FAME-II initiative by means of a Gross Cost Contract (GCC) with AJL and will run on Ahmedabad's Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS) corridor.

Tata Motors will also be setting up required charging infrastructure and support systems to ensure smooth functioning of the buses.

According to AJL, the new buses will cater to the new developing areas of Ahmedabad city and the new airport route.

Mr. Rohit Srivastava, Vice-President, Product Line – Buses, Tata Motors, said, "The delivery of these buses will further cement our fruitful association with AJL and foster eco-friendly mass mobility in Ahmedabad."





Tata Motors joins hands with Government of Maharashtra to support setting up of RVSF

TATA Motors on December 17 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Maharashtra with the intent to support setting up a Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facility (RVSF) in Maharashtra.

The MoU was signed at the Conference on Investment Opportunities in Highway, Transport and Logistics in Mumbai, in the presence of Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Mr. Nitin Gadkari and other delegates.

The proposed scrappage centre will have the capacity of recycling up to 35,000 vehicles a year for end-of-life passenger and commercial vehicles, said a press release issued by Tata Motors.

It said the Industries, Energy and Labour Department of Maharashtra will support in facilitating the necessary approvals for setting up of the RVSF and address the intent of all the stakeholders and Tata Motors will set

up the scrapping centre in association with a partner.

Tata Motors had earlier signed a MoU with the Government of Gujarat for setting up a Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facility (RVSF) in Ahmedabad.

Commenting on the partnership, Mr. Girish Wagh, Executive Director, Tata Motors, said, "We are happy to partner with the Government of Maharashtra to support in setting up a scrapping facility in Maharashtra." He added: "We are proud to partner with the policymakers on this initiative of setting up scrapping facilities across the country. It is the beginning of a new chapter and a step in the right direction for India's transportation sector."



Maharashtra signs MoU with Mahindra Cero for vehicle scrapping centres



THE Government of Maharashtra, through its Industries, Energy and Labour Department, has signed a MoU with Cero (Mahindra MSTC Recycling Pvt. Ltd.), the country's first Government-authorised vehicle recycler, to set up additional world-class vehicle scrapping centres in Maharashtra.

The proposed scrappage centres will have the capacity of recycling end-of-life 2/ 3-wheelers, passenger/ commercial vehicles in accordance with all the legal and environmental norms prescribed by CPCB and guidelines provided by MoRTH, said a press release.

The MoU was signed on the background of the Conference on Investment Opportunities in Highway, Transport and Logistics, in Mumbai, in the presence of the Union Minister for Road, Transport & Highways, Mr Nitin Gadkari.

Cero already has a state-of-the-art recycling facility at Pune and is looking to set up four additional facilities in the cities of Mumbai, Nagpur, Aurangabad and Nashik.

The Industries, Energy and Labour Department will facilitate necessary approvals as per the rules and

regulations of Maharashtra Government and the draft vehicle scrappage policy released by MoRTH for setting up of the RVSF.

Cero's recycling centres, said the release, will provide a hassle-free option for customers to scrap their vehicles.

Speaking on the MoU, Mr. Sumit Issar, Managing Director of Mahindra Accelo, said, "We are delighted to sign a MoU with Government of Maharashtra and would like to acknowledge the proactive efforts being taken by the Government. Cero aims to create a network of world-class facilities across Maharashtra and India. Our centres will provide a platform for customers to scrap their vehicles in environment-friendly manner and avail the benefits on purchase of newer vehicles which will be linked to Certificate of deposit – to be provided by Cero. From sustainability point of view, through recycling of old vehicle, we aim to reduce India's dependence on steel scrap imports and conservation of natural resources which go into production of steel."

Sonalika launches Tiger DI 75 4WD

Tractor with advanced CRDs technology

COMMEMORATING 'Kisan Diwas', Sonalika Tractors launched its most advanced Tiger DI 75 4WD tractor with superior CRDs (Common Rail Diesel System) technology, on December 23.

Designed to deliver industry-first dual benefit of power and economy, Tiger 75 4WD with CRDs technology complies with Trem IV emission norms and offers power of 75 HP & economy of 65 HP tractor just with a touch of a button, said a press release.

Alongside, Sonalika has also introduced Tiger DI 65 4WD tractor which has been customised with twin benefit to deliver 65 HP power and economy of 55-HP tractor.

Both the new models will be available in 4W and 2W drive versions and boast of premium technologies such as 12+12 shuttle tech transmission and 5G hydraulic control system. CRDs tractors built with legendary Sonalika power as well as intelligent features will drive farm mechanisation growth for next-gen customers.

Tiger DI 75 and Tiger DI 65 tractors will be equipped with 'Sky Smart' telematics – that brings in unique features such as engine immobilizer, real-time support for reduced breakdown time, vehicle geo-fencing and tracking along with others.

Mr Raman Mittal, Executive Director, Sonalika Tractors, said, "Our latest Tiger 75 4WD tractor complies with Trem IV emission norms and offers the power of 75HP tractor and fuel-efficiency of 65HP tractor. Equipped with segment-defining features such as highest torque and speed, the new Tiger DI 75 and Tiger DI 65 launch is a mark of honour by Sonalika Tractors towards farmers for their hard work and passion."



TVS launches Spider-Man and Thor-Inspired NTORQ 125



TVS Motor Company launched Marvel Spider-Man and Thor-inspired scooters under the NTORQ 125 SuperSquad Edition.

The new scooters will join the SuperSquad Edition inspired by Marvel Super Heroes – Iron Man, Black Panther, and Captain America launched last year.

The company has been associated with Disney India's consumer products business for the SuperSquad edition of TVS NTORQ 125.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Aniruddha Halder, Senior Vice-President (Marketing) – Commuters, Corporate Brand & Dealer Transformation, TVS Motor

Company, said, "We are thrilled to launch two new additions inspired by the Marvel Super Heroes - Spider-Man and Thor. These are two very popular Marvel characters with a sizeable and loyal fan following whom we aim to delight and serve with these exciting offerings."

The new Marvel Spider-Man and Thor versions come with a design sensibility that embodies the key characteristics of both the Super Heroes on the scooters. It also encapsulates the finer nuances of the Marvel Super Heroes with subtle design elements both on the scooter and the TVS Connect App, said a company press release.

Bajaj to invest Rs 300 cr for EV facility in Akrudi

BAJAJ Auto on December 29 announced an investment of Rs 300 crore and commenced work at a new unit at Akurdi, Pune, for manufacturing electric vehicles.

The unit will have a production capacity of 5,00,000 EVs per annum, said a press release by the company. Akurdi, it said, is also the site of the original Chetak scooter factory that made Bajaj Auto a household name.

The new unit will have cutting-edge robotic and automated manufacturing systems for everything including logistics and material handling, fabrication and painting, assembly and quality assurance. These systems have been designed for flexible product mix, ergonomics and maximum process

It is spread over half a million sq. feet investments made by Bajaj Auto will be who will invest a further Rs 250 crore. The roll out by June 2022, said the release.

Mr Rajiv Bajaj, Managing Director, Bajaj off on the roaring Pulsar, in 2021 Bajaj 3.0 forward, for the Bajaj portfolio, except for platform that is currently under development, all our R&D drive train resources are now laser-focused on creating EV solutions for the future. This alignment reflects our belief that light electric vehicles for sustainable urban mobility are an idea whose time may finally have come."



while keeping in mind the best worker efficiency.

and will employ about 800 personnel. The supplemented by a number of vendors, first vehicle from this unit is expected to

Auto Ltd, said, "In 2001 Bajaj 2.0 took arrives on the charming Chetak. Going implementing one state-of-the-art ICE

Tesla Power 'gearing up' to install 5k charging points

WE are gearing up for installing 5,000 two-wheeler EV charging points pan-India in the near future at our franchise-owned Tesla Power Shops", said Mr. Kavinder Khurana, Managing Director, India, Tesla Power.

He was speaking at the 'India Business Meet' hosted by Tesla Power USA, in New Delhi. The programme was also attended by Mr. John H. Vratsinas, MD & Global CEO, and Mr. Sandeep Avasthi, Business Head, India.

Mr. Khurana further said, "This is our commitment to encourage the use of EVs and contribute to as much sustainability of the environment as we can. Our support to power these vehicles is 100 per cent and we look forward to offer them charging points support to increase the acceptance of EV two-wheelers."

Speaking at the meet, Mr. Avasthi said, "The major



Mr. John H. Vratsinas,
MD & Global CEO,

Mr. Kavinder Khurana,
Managing Director, India,
Tesla Power.

Mr. Sandeep Avasthi,
Business Head, India.

factor that's helping us to spread our horizon pan-India is the longest warranty with the largest service network."

Mr. Vratsinas said, "This is the first time in modern Indian history that India is leading the world in new technologies and infrastructure for the growth of e-vehicles. I believe India will create the best model of EV charging infrastructure that the West will follow."

Tesla Power USA Inc. is among the fastest growing brand of batteries in India. It has 200+ distributors and 250+ Tesla Power Shops in over 20 states in the country.

TVS, BMW Motorrad extend their cooperation agreement



TVS Motor Company and BMW Motorrad on December 16 announced that they are extending and expanding their long-term partnership with the joint development of new platforms and future technologies, including electric vehicles.

Based on this decision, TVS' scope will include design and development of future BMW Motorrad products and delivering world-class quality, supply chain management and industrialization, said a press release.

Under this enhanced cooperation, both companies have identified a range of products and technologies to deliver significant business benefits, added the release.

BMW Motorrad and TVS Motor Company will develop common platforms by mutually tapping the emerging technologies in the future mobility space keeping in mind the global requirements of customer segments in various markets. Exclusive products for both companies will be developed on these common platforms, and the companies will retail their products globally.

TVS Motor Company will continue to bring on board engineering prowess in design, manufacturing and supply chain capabilities and provide best-in-class quality and economic advantage. The first product through this cooperation will be showcased in the next 24 months.

Mr. Sudarshan Venu, Joint Managing Director, TVS Motor Company, said, "In the nine years of our long-term strategic partnership, we have always cherished the common core values we share with BMW Motorrad: focus on quality, engineering prowess, innovation and customer satisfaction. Expanding this successful partnership to EVs and other newer platforms will create opportunities to deliver advanced technology and aspirational products to global markets and bring valuable synergies to both companies."

Dr Markus Schramm, Head of BMW Motorrad, said, "In light of our fruitful association with TVS Motor Company, we are delighted to extend and expand our cooperation agreement to include long-term partnership and joint development of new platforms and technologies, including electric vehicles."



Yamaha Aerox 155

now comes in a new shade



INDIA Yamaha Motor on December 6 announced the launch of its maxi-sports scooter Aerox 150 in a new shade of metallic black.

Adding to the appeal of the Aerox 155, the new metallic black colour is sure to give the maxi-sports scooter an even more aggressive look as it showcases

sharp and aerodynamic body lines that are inspired by 'R-Series' motorcycle range, said a press release.

The metallic black colour version of Aerox 155 is priced at Rs. 1,29,000 (ex-showroom, Delhi).

With the addition of the new colour, the scooter is now available in three colours – Racing Blue, Grey Grey Vermillion and Metallic Black.

Yamaha launches FZS-Fi models with refreshed styling for 2022

INDIA Yamaha Motor on January 3 launched the FZS-Fi model with refreshed styling along with a new variant, FZS-Fi Dlx.

According to a press release, FZS-Fi continues to retain the masculine design proportions seen on the third-generation of the FZ-Fi model range, and is powered by the same Blue Core, 149 cc engine producing 12.4 PS of peak power @ 7,250 rpm and 13.3 Nm of peak torque @ 5500 rpm.

For 2022, both the FZS-Fi models showcase LED tail lights, with the addition of LED flashers on the FZS-Fi Dlx variant. The FZS-Fi Dlx variant also features three new colours, with rich graphics, coloured alloy wheels, a two-level single seat with dual tone colours. Mr. Eishin Chihana, Chairman, Yamaha Motor India Group of Companies, said, "Under the Call of the Blue initiative, we will continue to reach out to

our customers and upgrade our product range to meet their evolving needs. One such upgrade is the launch of FZS-Fi Dlx model which is based on our customers' feedback."



Bajaj Maxima C becomes leader in 3W cargo segment



BAJAJ Auto has acquired a leadership position in the three-wheeler cargo segment with Maxima C reaching a 45 per cent market share in April 21-November 21 period. This has been achieved in six years from launch, said a press release by the company.

According to the release, this competitive gain has accelerated post- Bajaj Auto launched innovatively designed BS-VI products, meeting emission norms. These products, it said, are simple to maintain while retaining their advantages of best-in-class reliability, power packed performance and fuel-efficiency. Maxima C has gained traction in both urban and rural markets, thanks to these strong product attributes.

The transition from diesel to CNG products has also helped Bajaj achieve this leadership position, added the release.

Mr. Samardeep Subandh, President, Intra-City Business, said, "Bajaj Maxima C's unmatched product strengths of reliability, power and frugality coupled with Bajaj Auto's strong financing strength, dealer network and manufacturing ability have ensured quick scale up of the proposition even during the tough pandemic time. First-time buyers across the country have also chosen Maxima C because of the trust that the Bajaj name has established over the period."

Daimler Truck spins off as an independent company

DECEMBER 10, the first day of trading on the Frankfurt Stock Exchange, marked the start of a new era for Daimler Truck. Following a spin-off from Daimler AG, the first day of listing symbolised Daimler Truck's embarkment into unrestricted entrepreneurial independence, said a press release.

In preparation for the spin-off, Daimler Truck specified its financial ambitions to increase the performance and profitability of the segments. The company is consistently and continuously focusing on improving profitability in order to lead the industry on the road to CO2-neutral transport.



"Today is a historic day for Daimler Truck: For 125 years, our truck and bus business was part of the Daimler Group - now we are becoming an independent, listed company. Making this possible organizationally was a tour de force. My thanks therefore go to our entire team for their unparalleled commitment over the past weeks and months", said Mr Martin Daum, Chairman of the Board of Management.

Mobility Outlook Survey

Auto customers willing to stretch budget for safety

MOBILITY Outlook, a brand of CarTrade Tech, recently released a survey that explores customers' automobile purchase habits as well as their attitudes towards safety, security, and associated technology.

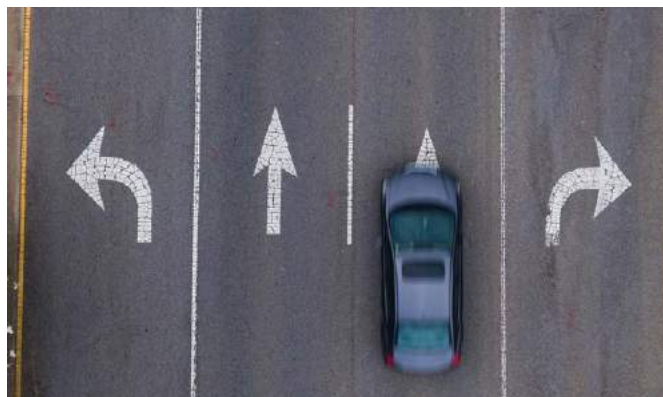
Nearly 2,70,000 responses from all across the country were gathered and analysed for the survey, titled 'Indian Consumers' Safety Behaviour and Perception of Vehicle Security'. Frost & Sullivan, Mobility Outlook's validation partner, subsequently conducted a comprehensive analysis.

Making safety features mandatory has had a positive impact on their awareness as most of the respondents were acquainted with these. ABS, airbags, roll-over mitigation, and other safety features were familiar to the responders, according to the survey.

The survey's finding that one-third of respondents were uncertain about safety features in their current vehicle demonstrates a dearth of effective marketing and awareness campaigns, said a press release issued by Mobility Outlook.

When asked about safety features they would consider for their next purchase, the vast majority picked critical safety features, with only 16 per cent stating 'not particular'.

According to the findings, the majority of the respondents were aware of vehicle safety ratings. The fact that 27 pc of respondents were unaware of safety ratings is grounds for serious concern. When asked what a higher safety rating means to them, most of the respondents said it means more safety features on vehicles and better occupant protection. Forty-five per cent of respondents felt new vehicles would be safer than used vehicles, regardless of safety ratings, highlighting the need for better communication. One of the survey's significant outcomes was that three-fourth of respondents preferred to explore 4 or 5-star rated safety vehicles for their future vehicle purchases,



and were willing to extend their budget for safety. This finding indicates a rising feeling of responsibility among the customers.

Many of the respondents appeared to have a good and clear understanding of all of the security features in their existing and new automobiles. Respondents showed a strong inclination to pay extra for improved security features. Improved security features were believed to increase the resale value of vehicles by 17 pc of respondents.

Nearly one-third of respondents mentioned they would be willing to spend more than Rs 30,000 on upgraded security features. According to 30% of respondents, security features should be standard in all automobiles.

One of the survey's major takeaways was that respondents ranked Tata Motors, Maruti Suzuki, and Honda Cars as the vehicles with the most security features.

Commenting on the survey, Mr. Banwari Lal Sharma, CEO - Consumer Business, CarTrade Tech, said, "The automotive industry is experiencing an industry transformation, with new security and safety features being introduced and incorporated. At the same time, this may bring a significant amount of complexity to the customers' experiences. Hence, the automotive industry and its stakeholders need to understand how customers perceive such advancements."

ACMA aftermarket expo organised in Guwahati



Mr. Pradeep Singhanian,
President, Guwahati Motor Parts
Traders Association

Mr. Vinnie Mehta,
Director General, ACMA,

THE Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India organised the 4th ACMA Aftermarket Expo – North East, in Guwahati on December 10 and 11.

Held under the aegis of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, the event was supported by the Guwahati Motor Parts Traders Association.

The expo serves as an ideal platform for business development and collaboration between the exhibitors and the dealers from the seven northeastern states. Fifty leading auto component manufacturers showcased genuine aftermarket and safety critical products in this edition of the expo.

Inaugurating the expo, Mr. Vinnie Mehta, Director General, ACMA, said "ACMA is delighted to organise the 4th edition of its Aftermarket Expo in Guwahati. Roadways are the primary mode of transportation in

northeast. The hilly terrain, rains and poor roads in remote areas lead to wear and tear of the vehicles because of which auto spare parts are always in high demand, thereby providing a great opportunity for aftermarket business. We are confident that this expo will help the local dealers and distributors in gaining access to genuine parts of superior quality ensuring vehicular safety and better user experience."

Sharing his views, Mr. Pradeep Singhanian, President, Guwahati Motor Parts Traders Association, said, "The 4th ACMA Aftermarket Expo in Guwahati is happening at an opportune time as the aftermarket gains momentum post the pandemic. The dealers and distributors' community in the northeast is excited as the show provides a perfect platform for them and the genuine independent aftermarket players to network and focus on business development."

Unsoo Kim is the new MD of Hyundai

HYUNDAI Motor India on December 17 announced the appointment of Mr. Unsoo Kim as the Managing Director of the company with effect from January 1, 2022.

Mr. SS Kim took the position of CEO & Managing Director at Hyundai India on November 30, 2018, after Mr. YK Koo stepped down from his position to take up new role at the headquarters in Korea. He kick-started the company's electric mobility journey in India with the launch of Kona all-electric SUV. He also played a key role in the launch of the company's mid-sized SUV Creta and compact SUV Venue, apart from the launches of hatchbacks Grand i10 Nios and New i20.



Unsoo Kim

Skoda Auto VW India MD Boparai resigns



Gurpratap Boparai

SKODA Auto Volkswagen India said its Managing Director Mr. Gurpratap Boparai has resigned from the company with effect from January 1, 2022. Mr. Christian Cahn von Seelen will take interim charge of the VW Group's Indian operations, in his capacity as the Chairman of Skoda Auto Volkswagen India, the automaker said in a statement.

Mr. Boparai had joined the company in April 2018 as Managing Director of Skoda Auto India. He was entrusted with the responsibility to lead the merger of three VW Group entities namely Volkswagen India, Skoda Auto India and Volkswagen Group Sales India as the Managing Director of the merged entity SAVWIPL.

Chihana heads Yamaha Motor India

INDIA Yamaha Motor announced on December 23 that Mr. Eishin Chihana has taken charge of the Group's India operations as its new Chairman.

Mr. Chihana has been associated with Yamaha Motor Company and its group companies across the globe since 1991. He holds strong expertise across different verticals like Sales, Marketing and Business Management, according to a press release.

"I am very excited to lead Yamaha Motor in the world's largest two-wheeler market. India is a diverse country with a huge customer base and immense potential. Also, with the majority of its population comprising of the youth, it gives us the opportunity to penetrate the market by meeting their evolving expectations through Yamaha's leading technological advancements and engineering prowess," said Mr. Chihana about his new role.



Eishin Chihana

Goel quits Honda, replaced by Murata

MR. Rajesh Goel, Senior Vice-President and Director, Sales and Marketing, Honda Cars India, has resigned from his position "citing personal reasons". Mr. Yuichi Murata will replace him. The development comes a year after the shutting down of Honda's Greater Noida plant.

"It is true that Mr Rajesh Goel has tendered his resignation for personal reasons and decided to pursue other interests outside the organisation. Mr Goel has been a part of HCIL ever since its inception and has made an invaluable contribution to our business while leading several critical functions in the company. We wish him the very best in his future endeavours," the company said in a statement.



Rajesh Goel



Amrish Bhargava

Amrish Bhargava named Myles CEO

MYLES Automotive Technologies has appointed Mr. Amrish Bhargava as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO). He will be responsible for overseeing the partnerships, customer acquisitions, and product enhancements along with working with the founders on the overall business strategy, said a press release. .

Ms. Sakshi Vij, Founder and MD, Mylescars, said, "As we embark on the next phase of growth at Myles, it is crucial that we are able to do so with a healthy mix of innovation, experience, and collaboration. We are thrilled to welcome Amrish onboard at this stage of our journey. His energy and experience will be integral to our growth moving forward."

Mr. Bhargava said, "I am delighted to be a part of the trailblazing company as I strongly believe in its potential growth."

Ather inducts ex-Ola execs into core team

ELECTRIC two-wheeler maker Ather Energy has announced the expansion of its senior management team, with the induction of Ola former executives Mr Gurinder Singh Sukhija as head of ownership management and Mr Murali Sashidharan as head of communications and Government relations.

The appointments to the key positions are aimed at strengthening the leadership team as the company embarks on its next phase of growth, Ather Energy said in a statement.

"Gurinder will lead the customer service, vehicle service and ownership products verticals," said Mr Ravneet Singh Phokela, Chief Business Officer at Ather Energy. About Mr Sashidharan, he said, "Murali, with his extensive experience in corporate communication, will head the public relations function, leading media relations, influencer marketing and public affairs."


ATHER


Bridgestone makes organisational changes

BRIDGESTONE India on December 21 announced organisational changes as per which Mr. Rajarshi Moitra, who has played a key role in transforming its consumer business, will take over as the Chief Commercial Officer. Mr. Sunil Puri will be the new Head of Sustainability.

"These organizational changes are aimed at consolidating our corporate position in the Indian tyre industry. The clubbing of our business units under one leadership will result in greater market penetration along with optimizing of resources," said Mr. Parag Satpute, Managing Director, Bridgestone India

SIAM elects Vinod Aggarwal as new V-P

THE Executive Committee of Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), on December 17 elected Mr Vinod Aggarwal, MD & CEO, VE Commercial Vehicles Limited (VECV) as its new Vice-President for 2021-22.

Mr Vipin Sondhi, MD & CEO, Ashok Leyland, served as the Vice-President of SIAM from September 2020 till date. The change in vice presidentship has been done due to the resignation of Mr Sondhi from his position at Ashok Leyland.

Mr Kenichi Ayukawa, President, SIAM, said: "We thank Mr Vipin Sondhi for his valuable and active contribution and leadership as Vice-President of SIAM, and wish him all the best for his future endeavours. We welcome Mr Vinod Aggarwal as the Vice-President. He is an old hand at SIAM and has led as the Treasurer."



Vinod Aggarwal

ZF acquires majority stake in its JV with Rane Group

FRIEDRICHSHAFEN (Germany)- ZF has increased its shares to become the majority shareholder with 51 per cent in the Rane TRW Steering Systems joint venture from the Rane Group.

Till date, both partners held equal shares in the company, which employs around 3,400 people. In the future, the joint venture will operate on the market under the name ZF Rane Automotive India.



"India is a very important market for ZF, and we want to grow sustainably here," said **Dr. Holger Klein**, Member of the Board of Management (BOM), ZF Group. "By acquiring a majority stake from our long-standing partner

Rane, we aim to further expand both our passenger car and commercial vehicle business for our customers in the India region," he added.



Mr. Harish Lakshman, Vice-Chairman, Rane Group & Managing Director, Rane TRW Steering Systems, said, "Our relationship with ZF has gone from strength-to-strength over the past 35 years and the transfer of 1 per cent to ZF is a major step in taking the relationship to the next level."



Mr. Suresh KV, President, ZF India, said, "The complementary nature of the partners has been the hallmark of this JV which has resulted in the organisation performing consistently over the years. Supporting the Indian customer base with ZF engineering and technology along with the customer connect and operations excellence of Rane will continue to be the goal of this JV in future."



Raasta partners BookMyHSRP

RAASTA Autotech, a car and bike service aggregator, has entered into a partnership with BookMyHSRP to deliver high-security registration plates for vehicles at the customer's doorstep.

The alliance will help users from Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, and Himachal Pradesh to book their registered number plates through the application with a single click.

Mr. Karn Nagpal, Founder & MD, Raasta Autotech Pvt Ltd, said, "We're extremely delighted to announce our

alliance with HSRP, ideating our company to ease the process of number plate registration for users. This would enable us to further bridge the gap in the industry by providing hassle-free services to the customers at their doorsteps."

Mr. Mukesh Malhotra from HSRP, said, "We are excited to collaborate with one of the best vehicle service aggregators, together digitising and transforming the vehicle registration process for lakhs of customers.

Goodyear India Great Place to Work -certified



GOODYEAr India has been Great Place to Work-certified, from December 2021 to December 2022.

The certification marks the exceptional work that Goodyear has been doing to foster a culture that places employee wellbeing and safety at its core, said a press release. The organisation believes people are its

greatest assets and has amply displayed this through the support extended to the workforce and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic, it added.

Mr. Sandeep Mahajan, Chairman & Managing Director of Goodyear India Ltd, said, "We are delighted to have been recognised as a Great Place to Work in 2021. This is a big step validating our thrust on building a culture of trust, transparency and meritocracy."

Great Place to Work is the global authority on workplace culture. Since 1992, it has surveyed more than 100 million employees worldwide and used those deep insights to define what makes a great workplace: trust. Their employee survey platform empowers leaders with the feedback, real-time reporting and insights they need to make strategic people decisions.

The institute serves businesses, non-profits and Government agencies in more than 60 countries and has conducted pioneering research on the characteristics of great workplaces for over three decades.

In India, the Great Place to Work institute partners with more than 1,100 organisations annually across over 22 industries.

Greaves bags ACEF Gold Award



GREAVES Cotton Limited won the CSR Award at the Asian Customer Engagement Forum and Awards (ACEF) 2021 for its CSR campaign DEEP.

Under the DEEP reskilling project, through its local NGO partner Yuvashakti Foundation, Greaves ensures Development, Education, Empowerment and Progress of underprivileged families in various villages of Aurangabad district along with Ranipet and Coimbatore areas.

Till date, the company has trained over 422 candidates as part of the DEEP reskilling project and they are working in different organisations at various capacities. Currently, Greaves has enrolled more than 130 aspirants.



Ms Shefali Suri,
Chief Human Resource Officer (CHRO),
Greaves Cotton,

Ms Shefali Suri, Chief Human Resource Officer (CHRO), Greaves Cotton, said, "We are delighted to receive this award in the CSR category and happy to see our efforts in contributing towards society are being recognised. This only motivates us to do more and better."

Goodyear collaborates with Monolith on carbon black

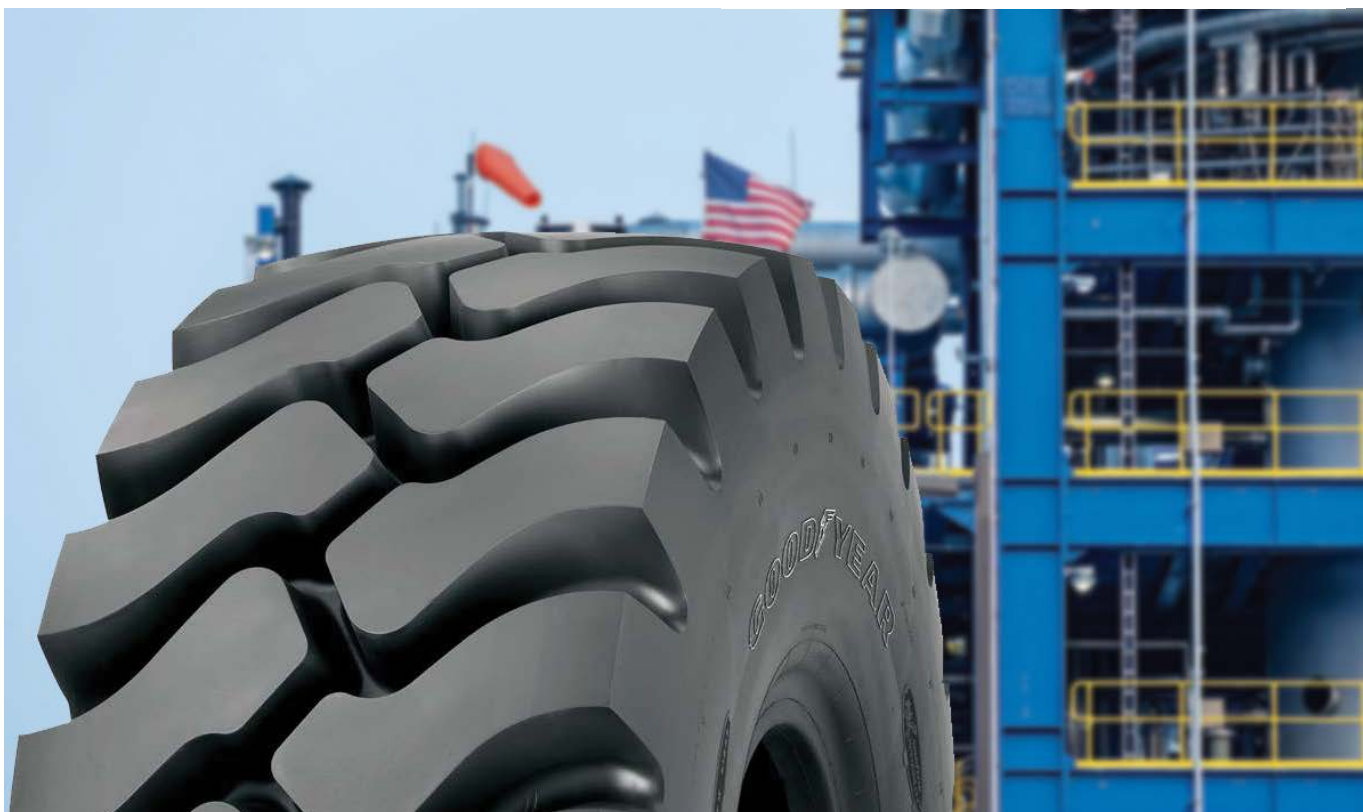
THE Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company on December 10 announced that it has signed a collaboration agreement and letter of intent with Monolith for the development and potential use of carbon black produced from methane and/or bio-methane for tires.

A press release by the company said Goodyear is a leader in the industry in embracing this form of carbon black produced through a plasma-based methane pyrolysis process, which will help advance Goodyear's work to identify and use more sustainable materials.

"At Goodyear, we're committed to sustainability and making a positive impact by our choice of the materials we use," said Mr Chris Helsel, Senior Vice-President, Global Operations and Chief Technology Officer. "Our collaboration with Monolith is one example of how we are using sustainable materials in quality products that deliver a better future."

Carbon black is a key ingredient in tyres, providing compounds in the tires with strength, improved tear resistance, and increased abrasion resistance. A typical consumer tyre is made of 15-20% carbon black by weight. Traditional carbon black comes from the combustion of residual oil or coal tar oil.

"We're proud to collaborate with Goodyear on high-quality, clean carbon black for Goodyear and support their ongoing mission to make their tyres more sustainable," said Mr Rob Hanson, Co-Founder and CEO, Monolith.



Hyundai launches fifth edition of its road safety campaign

HYUNDAI Motor India on December 21 launched the fifth edition of its #BeTheBetterGuy road-safety campaign.

The campaign aims to drive home the importance of safe driving habits, bringing about a positive change and making Indian roads safer for all users through innovative and engaging content across platforms, said a press release by the company.

It sends across a social message to every Indian, to 'Be the Better Guy' on the road and draws attention to critical issues pertaining to road safety. In addition, the

campaign advocates maintaining hygiene and social distancing and cultivating the habit of wearing masks when driving or riding in the car along with periodic car sanitisation.

Launched nationwide, #BeTheBetterGuy is a holistic road safety campaign designed to create two-way communication along with registering strongly in mind of the customers and other motorists.

The campaign plans to utilise a variety of platforms such as TV, radio, print, magazine and social media.



MoRTH, IIT Madras and MapmyIndia launch a navigation app service

THE Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, IIT Madras and MapmyIndia on December 17 signed a MoU for collaboration on driver and road safety technologies, and jointly launched a navigation app service.

By using this app, users will get voice and visual alerts about upcoming accident-prone zones, speed breakers, sharp curves and potholes etc. Further through the app, users and authorities can also report and broadcast accidents, unsafe areas, road and traffic issues on the map to help benefit other users. The info will be



analysed by IIT Madras and MapmyIndia and will then be used by the Government to improve road conditions in future, said press release.

The MapmyIndia, which won the Government's Attmanirbhar App Innovation Challenge in 2020, additionally offers a myriad of mapping, navigation, safety and hyper-local features to help users in their day to day lives as they move around their city or across the country, added the release.

Spinny announces ESOP buyback

SPINNY, a full-stack used car buying and selling platform, on December 21 announced completion of \$12-million ESOP buyback. The buyback, said a company press release, was open for both current and ex-team members.

Recently, the company announced the closure of \$283-million Series E funding round from global investors - Abu Dhabi based ADQ, Tiger Global, Avenir Growth, Feroz Dewan's Arena Holdings - and strategic investor, Sachin Tendulkar. The company, said the release, is now valued at \$1.8 billion.

Mr. Niraj Singh, Founder & CEO, Spinny, said, "The ESOP pool was constituted to ensure that our team members are rewarded for their belief in Spinny's vision and relentless hard work that goes in turning that vision into reality."



Hyundai shortlists 25 under 'Art for Hope' programme

HYUNDAI Motor India Foundation (HMIF), the CSR arm of Hyundai Motor India Ltd., announced the names of 25 shortlisted artists under the 2021 Art for Hope programme.

These 25 artists belong to diverse fields such as digital art, crafts, multi-disciplinary art, performance arts and visual arts. Each winner will be awarded a grant of Rs 1 lakh which will be used for commissioning community art projects bearing the themes of hope, solidarity and gratitude.

HMIF received a total of 163 applications from 17 states, in five categories. Out of these, 50 artists were shortlisted and after three rounds of evaluation, the jury arrived on the final list of 25 winners.



Mr. SS Kim, MD & CEO, Hyundai Motor India Ltd, said, "The Art for Hope programme is a one-of-its kind project taken up by the Hyundai Motor India Foundation. Inspired by Hyundai's global vision of 'Progress for Humanity', the Art for Hope programme aims to showcase India's rich heritage in art, craft and culture and help elevate the lives of artisans and craftspeople who were affected by the pandemic. We congratulate all the 25 winners."

Amara Raja celebrates 36th Foundation Day

AMARA Raja Group celebrated its 36th Foundation Day, in Tirupati on December 20. Based on the theme 'Transforming Lives, Transforming World', the occasion was graced by the Group Founder, Dr. Ramachandra N. Galla, Co-founder and Chairman, Mr. Jayadev Galla, and the entire leadership team.

Organised in a hybrid fashion, the ceremony witnessed the in-person presence of around 300 select employees who were long service award recipients and various performance award-winners. All other employees and their families across the Group were digitally connected.

An award presentation ceremony, held as part of the celebration, recognised the contribution of employees who had served 25 and 30 years with the organisation. The 'Long Service Awards' were conferred to 97 employees of the Group amidst much cheer and adulation.

In his special address, Mr. Jayadev Galla said, "Transformation is the mantra that drives us constantly. Our choices have always been guided by a commitment



to society," This year, he said, "brought us coveted external recognitions, where Amara Raja Group entered Forbes 500 best employers list second time in a row."

Mr. Galla further said, "We are also proud to have opened the country's maiden technology hub to develop lithium ion cells, at Tirupati. This is a very important step in our effort to explore advanced and futuristic energy storage technologies."

Speaking next, Dr. Ramachandra N Galla said, "While the world was grappling with the fallout of the pandemic, we at Amara Raja Group have ensured that we strengthen our multiple stakeholder sensitisation effort focusing on upskilling, healthcare, rural education and environment."

Okinawa crosses 1L- milestone

OKINAWA Autotech surpassed the 1,00,000-sales mark of its electric two-wheeler scooter models in 2021.

According to a press release, the sales momentum was primarily driven by iPraise+ and Praise Pro models, which commanded nearly 60-70 per cent share of the yearly sales.

In order to meet the growing demand for its scooters, the



company expanded its dealerships to over 400 catering to metro cities as well as Tier-2, Tier-3 and rural markets in India, said the release.

Mr. Jeetender Sharma, MD and Founder of Okinawa Autotech, said, "We are glad and appreciative to those who expressed their belief in Okinawa and, therefore, helped us achieve this milestone."

Bajaj Auto bats for CNG



BAJAJ Auto has reiterated its support towards a cleaner environment but said the move towards cleaner fuels most also include CNG, in addition to EVs.

Sharing his perspective on this issue, Mr. Rakesh Sharma, Executive Director, Bajaj Auto, said, "CNG-powered three-wheelers have been built with cleaner technology and have low emissions, meeting stringent BS-VI emission norms. In addition, they have many inherent strengths like lower total cost of operation, proven and reliable technology, and high range in each fill. Therefore, it is not a surprise that lakhs of customers have adopted this technology already."

Consistent with the above, Bajaj Auto had appealed to the Supreme Court to allow the recently released additional 3W permits in Delhi for CNG-powered three-wheelers which was the practice till now.

As per CMVR guidelines, battery-operated electric vehicles do not require permits and close to one lakh e-rickshaws are operating without permits in Delhi already. Hence, Bajaj Auto had contended that new three-wheeler permits be utilised for CNG vehicles.

Bajaj Auto said it respects the court's decision but hopes that in future, CNG will also be considered as an alternate fuel at par with electric vehicles.

MG Motor to begin Hector exports to Nepal

MG Motor India on December 10 announced the commencement of exports from its manufacturing facility in Halol, Gujarat. The company will begin with exporting its SUV Hector to Nepal as a first step towards its expansion plan for other South Asian countries.

The company began commercial production in India on May 6, 2019, launching its first car Hector in June that year.

Mr Rajeev Chaba, President, and Managing Director, MG Motor India, said, "MG Motor India is constantly progressing its operations, expanding the market reach, stakeholder base, and adding new customers and partners to the MG family. Taking this spirit forward, MG



is geared up to expand its footprint across the other South Asian countries starting with Nepal. Hector" has played a vital role in establishing our prowess in an auto industry as dynamic and aggressive as the Indian auto space, and we are looking forward to driving interest in Nepal with the launch of MG Hector.

MG Motor presents a personalised Hector to Paralympics winner

MG Motor India, in association with Vadodara Marathon, on December 13 presented a customised Hector to Tokyo Paralympics 2020 silver medal-winner Bhavina Patel.

It was handed over to Patel by Jayanta Deb, Chief Technical Officer, MG Motor India.

The vehicle has been redesigned to facilitate a pleasurable driving experience with safety measures like a hand-controlled lever to operate the accelerator and brakes, along with meticulously engineered wheelchair attachments. It also features super-smart DCT transmission and start/stop button for an effortless drive.



Bhavina Patel

"I truly appreciate this thoughtful gesture by MG Motor and the Vadodara Marathon. It gives me immense joy to call this completely customised Hector my own," said Patel.

Mr. Rajeev Chaba, President and Managing Director, MG Motor India, said, "It is a privilege for us to customise our MG Hector for Bhavina, who brought laurels to the country in Tokyo. With this, we humbly salute her exemplary grit and determination as she defies the odds and makes the entire nation proud."

GLOBAL EYE



BSA unveils Gold Star, a 'modern classic motorcycle'

BSA Motorcycles unveiled its first new model at Motorcycle Live, NEC Birmingham, on December 4.

The new BSA Gold Star, said a press release, is classified as a modern classic motorcycle and its form is instantly recognisable as a BSA. A design icon of its era redefined to reclaim its glory in the current times, the new BSA Gold Star's design is a befitting evolution of the brand's most successful motorcycle, it added.

Mr Anupam Thareja, Co-Founder – Classic Legends, commented: "The new BSA Gold Star was designed in the UK, engineered in the UK, industrialised in the UK but most importantly, imagined in the UK. We have envisioned this bike as an ode from UK to the world."

Set to rekindle memories of the past, the new Gold Star is pure and retains the essence of its predecessor, such as the round headlamp sitting neatly below the signature twin-pod instruments – keeping the same proportions intact.



GWM's Haval Dargo displayed at Jeddah show

GREAT Wall Motor Company, a world-renowned SUV and pickup manufacturer, unveiled its new model, Haval Dargo, at the Jeddah Motor Show in Saudi Arabia.

The Jeddah Motor Show is one of the largest motor shows in the Middle East market and it is also the largest and most influential motor show in Saudi Arabia.

As the bright star of the show, Haval Dargo not only attracted many spectators with its hardcore and stylish exterior design and tech-savvy interior configurations but also won the prize of Best Car launched in Jeddah Motor Show, said a press release.

The global name of Dargo is based on the Chinese name which literally means "big dog" representing the faithful companion of mankind.

The new advanced model is defined as the 3/4 scale car which combines the advantages of the city SUV and off-road SUV aiming to create a brand new category.

Haval Dargo will start presale in Saudi Arabia and in the near future, it will also be available in Iraq, Chile, Russia, and other countries.



Hyundai reveals MobED, a new mobility platform



HYUNDAI Motor Group on December 16 revealed Mobile Eccentric Droid (MobED), an all-new and pioneering small mobility platform using cutting-edge robotics technologies.

According to a press release, MobED has an innovative design arrangement. Its flat, rectangular body rides on four large wheels, with an independent suspension that enables optimal body posture and stable movement even on inclined and uneven roads. This suspension allows the platform to move through complex urban environments by freely adjusting its wheelbase and steering angles.

"We have developed the MobED platform to overcome the limitations of existing indoor guide and service robots while maximising its usability in cities by dramatically improving the platform's overall mobility," said Mr. Dong Jin Hyun, Head of Hyundai Motor Group Robotics Lab.

"We are also looking ahead to assess how potential users of MobED will further expand their needs and use for this type of technology," he added.

Designed for full versatility and modularity, MobED can be utilised for various applications, depending on the mounted device. The Group expects the platform's wheel adjustability, compact body size and low vibration capabilities to make it an optimal technology solution for delivery, guiding and filming equipment. Thanks to its outstanding maneuverability, the platform can also be used for service robots that can operate both indoors and outdoors.

Radar critical for the future of mobility: IDTechEx report



RADAR is fundamental to automotive safety and critical to achieving emerging level 4 autonomy. While today more than 50 pc of new cars are shipped with one or more radars, by 2042 all new vehicles will come with multiple radars as they become a key enabler for future mobility modes, according to IDTechEx's latest report, 'Automotive Radar 2022-2042'.

Today, front-mounted radars are critical for enabling common ADAS features (Advanced Driver Assistance System), automatic emergency braking, and adaptive cruise control. Radar is the go-to sensor solution as it precisely measures the range and velocity of vehicles, while also being robust to darkness, poor weather, and fog, says the report.

Active safety features have already proven effective, reducing rear-end collisions by 45 pc (European Transport Safety Council). The safety benefits are leading to a push from regulators and safety bodies, such as Euro NCAP, to get automatic emergency braking fitted to all new vehicles. IDTechEx has considered these regulatory pushes in its report and predicts strong growth in radar adoption as a result.

Another driver of radar sales will be the emergence of higher levels of autonomous vehicles. Level 3 vehicles have already hit the roads of Japan and are expected to enter the European market in 2022. Level 3 vehicles and beyond are expected to have at least five radars per vehicle. Each of these radars will also need to have higher performance than ever before.

Indo Kordsa signs up Total Energies for solar system

PT Indo Kordsa Tbk (Indo Kordsa), a subsidiary of Kordsa Group and a major supplier of tyre reinforcement material for the automotive sector in South East Asia, has signed an agreement with TotalEnergies to provide a rooftop-mounted solar system for the company's production buildings, warehouse and office buildings in Citeureup, Bogor, Indonesia.

The PV system will have a total capacity of 5 megawatt-peak (MWp) involving 8,830 PV panels to be mounted onto the rooftops of the company's five facilities. Once completed, the system is expected to generate 6,645 megawatt-hours (MWh) of solar energy annually to power Indo Kordsa's daily operations.

With this new systems, Indo Kordsa can reduce around 5,250 tons of CO2 emissions annually, equivalent to removing more than 1,100 cars from the roads or planting more than 87,000 trees, said a press release.

Mr. Gavin Adda, Head of TotalEnergies Renewables Distributed Generation Asia, said, "As a leading solar service provider for commercial and industrial businesses, we look forward to supporting manufacturing companies, such as Indo Kordsa, in driving down their carbon footprint, and use our global experts of tailor-made solar solutions for any business energy needs."



Nissan to build battery recycling factories in US and Europe by '25

Nissan Motor Co plans to build new battery recycling factories in the United States and Europe by the end of fiscal 2025, financial daily Nikkei reported recently.

Nissan hopes that recycling batteries and re-using them in electric vehicles would help lower production costs as the price of rare metals rise, Nikkei said.

KYMCO launches AK 550 at EICMA Milan Show

KYMCO, a global power-sport group with presence in over 100 countries, recently announced the launch of its newly upgraded flagship maxi scooter, AK 550, at the 2021 EICMA Milan Show.

According to a press release, the updated AK550 is designed to deliver breakthroughs that excite the riders who crave to travel beyond boundaries. Since its launch in 2016, the AK 550 has been the attention of the global two-wheeler industry and the most desired model of maxi-scooter riders.

Today, with the new vehicle design and the upgraded electric control features, AK 550 marks another meaningful milestone after its first introduction to the world, said the release.



The factories would be the company's first battery-recycling facility built outside of Japan, the report added, without specifying the country in Europe where the factory would be built.

In November, the company announced its electrification push, committing to spending 2 trillion yen (\$17.53 billion) over five years to increase vehicle electrification to catch up with rivals in one of the fastest growing segments for car makers.

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