

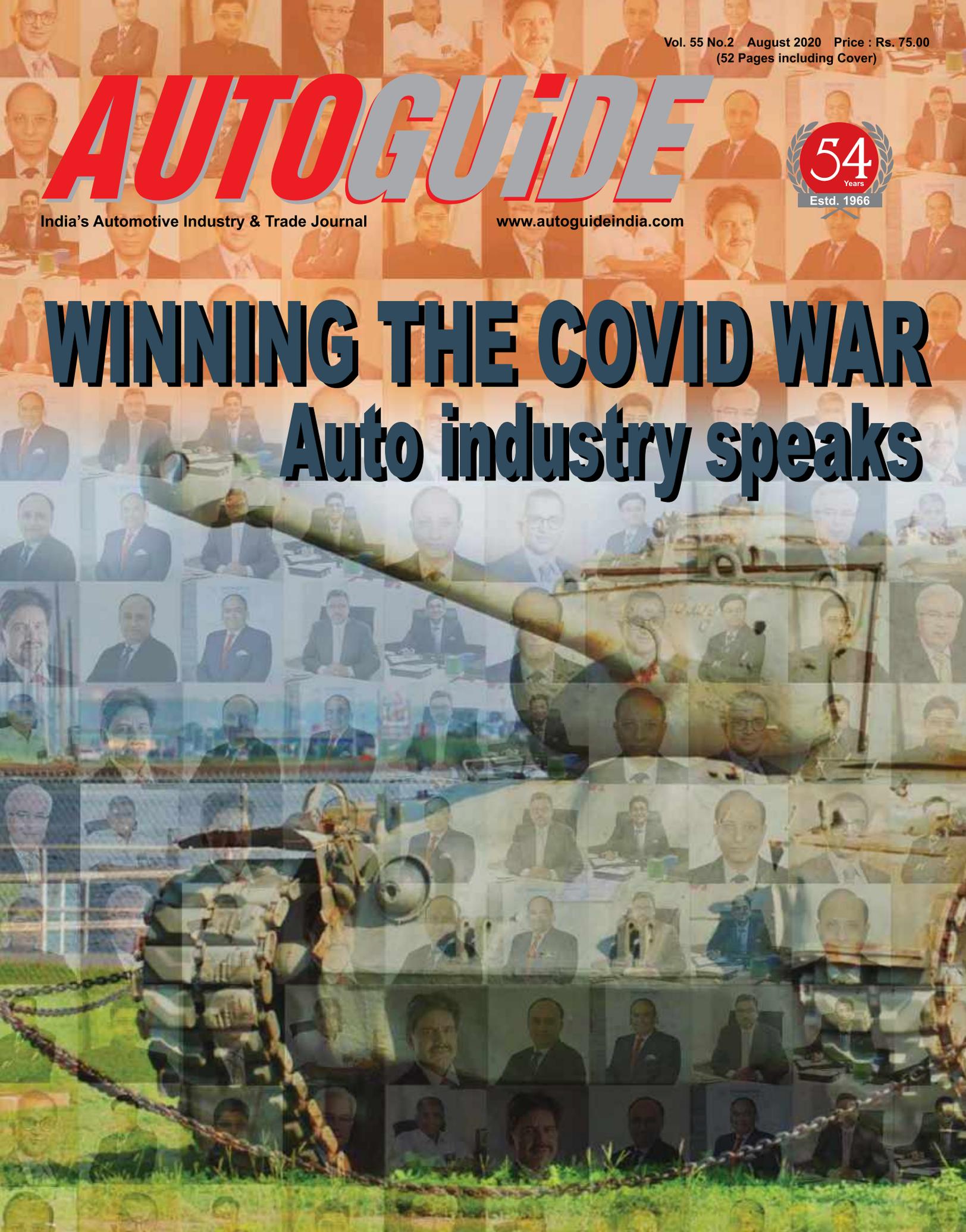
AUTOGUIDE

India's Automotive Industry & Trade Journal

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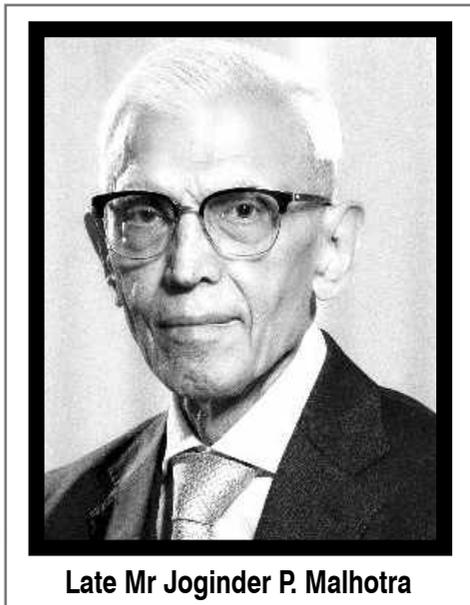
NOVEMBER 19, 1935 - APRIL 18, 2020

A true Karmayogi. A pioneer in auto journalism.
A man of discipline, principle, knowledge and humility.
Your perseverance made Autoguide a guidebook
for the industry for the past 54 yrs.

Team Autoguide

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Editor's viewpoint



Chairman - Editorial Board
M.P. MALHOTRA



Executive Editor
SHILPA MALHOTRA

Positive signals emanate from all across

It really feels nice to get happy tidings from across the industry when we are only into the second issue of *Autoguide* post-lockdowns. Although the threat of pandemic still looms, business sentiment seems to be picking up. A complete normalcy may still be far away but the road towards that is getting smoother.

A firm indication of this comes from the July automobile sales figures released by various manufacturers. The numbers show resurgence across the segments with some manufacturers nearing year-ago levels while others reporting a meager drop Y-o-Y. On M-o-M basis, there is a uniform surge compared to June 2020. That's a healthy development and with the festival season around the corner, there are expectations of higher sales in the coming weeks.

Another positive development is that the two top industry bodies, SIAM and ACMA, are going ahead with their mega annual meetings on schedule. Though these will be virtual events, the fact that they are being held on time is encouraging. While SIAM meeting on September 4 will have 'Rebuilding the Nation – Responsibly' as its theme, ACMA has appropriately chosen 'Shaping the New Normal' as the subject for its annual meet the next day. The deliberations at the two meetings coupled with some likely policy announcements by Government functionaries are set to prove big morale-boosters.

The most important, and what is bound to gladden many hearts, is the feedback we received from prominent industry players to our questionnaire on 'Winning the COVID War' that makes the Cover Story for this issue. We are happy to report that almost all the respondents have gone back to 60-70 pc of production levels and there are also companies where the production has been restored to 100 pc or even beyond the pre-corona levels. Moreover, everyone is upbeat about full recovery with a majority of them foresee it to happen as early as next March. Besides, there is sufficient enthusiasm among all about a self-reliant India and they have come out with constructive suggestions towards that goal. What is most significant is there is no trace of despondency in any of the responses which itself signifies that the war is half won.

Besides the feel-good Cover Story and rising sales data, the August issue comprises two incisive research reports, developments across the sector, top-level appointments and a passionate tribute to our Founder Editor Mr Joginder P. Malhotra. Once again seeking his blessings, I hereby present the August issue of *Autoguide*.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Shilpa Malhotra'. Below the signature are two horizontal lines, the first being a solid line and the second being a dashed line.

Sales crawl back to normalcy

Approach 2019-levels for some; tractors stand out

WITH the gradual easing of coronavirus-induced lockdowns, automobile sales have started witnessing resurgence. Data furnished by various manufactures and culled out from other media platforms suggests significant recovery in the month of July.

While sales numbers of market leader Maruti Suzuki neared the year-ago levels, most manufacturers witnessed major improvement MoM. Tractors turned out to be outlier with major player Mahindra & Mahindra reporting an impressive growth of 28 per cent over last year.

The country's largest player by volume, **Maruti Suzuki India Limited**, posted total sales of 1,08,064 units in July 2020, which is a growth of 88.2 per cent over June 2020 and a fall of 1.1 per cent over July 2019. The numbers include domestic sales of 1,00,000 units and 1,307 units for other OEMs in the domestic market. In addition, the company exported 6,757 units during the last month.

With domestic sales of 38,200 units, **Hyundai Motor India** recovered most of its momentum from last year by reporting a mere 2.1 per cent drop YoY. According to the company, its connected SUV *Venue* along with 2020 *Verna*, *Elite i20* and *Grand i10 Nios* fuelled the comeback while it was the new *Creta* which led the charge.

Toyota Kirloskar Motor announced that the company sold a total of 5,386 units in the month of July, as against 3,866 it sold in June 2020.



MANUFACTURERS	July 20 ACT	July-19 ACT	% Change VS LY	July-20 ACT MS
Maruti Suzuki	97,700	96,478	1%	49.4%
Hyundai	38,200	39,010	-2%	19.3%
Mahindra	11,025	16,830	-34%	5.6%
KIA	8,502			
Tata	15,000	10,485	43%	7.6%
Toyota	5,386	10,422	-48%	2.7%
Renault	6,426	3,660	76%	3.3%
Ford	3,937	6,284	-37%	2.0%
Honda	5,300	10,250	-48%	2.7%
MG	2,105	1,508	40%	1.1%
Nissan + Datsun	784	1,304	-40%	0.4%
Skoda	922	1,076	-14%	0.5%
VW	1,887	2,521	-25%	1.0%
Fiat	400	511	-22%	0.2%
PV TOTAL	1,97,574	2,02,474	-2%	100.0%

The company, however, fell short of last year's numbers by 48.3 pc. Commenting on the performance, Mr. Naveen Soni, Senior V-P, Sales & Service- TKM, said, "Despite various challenges, the month of July witnessed better sales in terms of both retail and wholesale when compared to June."

Mahindra & Mahindra sold 11,025 vehicles in the Passenger Vehicles segment (which includes UVs, cars and cans) in July as compared to 16,831 vehicles in the corresponding month last year. In the CV segment, the company sold 13,103 vehicles as against 15,969 in CPLY. Exports for the month were at 1,467 vehicles. Mr Veejay Nakra, Chief Executive Officer, Automotive Division, M&M Ltd, said, "At Mahindra, we are happy to see a growing trend in our overall vehicle sales, buoyed by the continuing revival in demand, primarily in rural and semi urban India."

M&M's Farm Equipment Sector announced that domestic sales of its tractors in July 2020 were at 24,463 units, as against 19,174 units during July 2019. The total tractor sales (domestic + exports) during the month were at 25,402 units, as against 19,992 units for the same period last year. Mr Hemant Sikka, President - Farm Equipment Sector, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd, said, "We have sold 24,463 tractors in the domestic market during July 2020, a growth of 28 pc over last year. These are our highest-ever July sales."

According to reports carried by a reputed media platform, the following is the July sales performance of the other major auto-makers:

Tata Motors shipped 15,000 units in July, which



translates into a strong 43.1 per cent YoY increase.

The company's strong performance, said the report, is helped by its thoroughly refreshed product line-up.

With domestic sales of 5,383 units, **Honda Cars India** sales were down 47.5 per cent YoY. However, the figure marks a sharp 285 per cent recovery over the previous month, which saw just 1,398 sales.

Despite trailing behind 2019 numbers, 3,937 units sold last month marked a 49.2 per cent MoM gain for American automaker **Ford**.

French automaker **Renault** recorded the biggest YoY jump (75.5 per cent) amongst all its rivals, albeit from a smaller base, with sales of 6,422 units in July 2020.

Volkswagen continued to face headwinds with a 25.1 per cent YoY decline in sales, though its monthly performance did pick up. Czech automaker Skoda saw its sales dropping to 922 units, slightly lower figures from the previous year.

With model lines like *Micra* and *Sunny* discontinued in the wake of BS-VI, **Nissan** sales plunged almost 40 per cent YoY to 784 units in July.

MG Motors India pegged its July sales at 2,105 units, which translates into a significant YoY gain of 39.6 per cent. The company also reported that consistent component supplies continue to be a challenge, with regional lockdowns being reinstated in certain places.

The **Kia Seltos** and *Carnival* registered combined sales 8,502 units in July – an 18.1 per cent improvement over the previous month.

Emkay Global Financial Services report

Despite lockdowns, July volumes improve on sequential basis

DESPITE lockdowns in several states, July wholesales improved on a sequential basis, supported by pent-up demand, better rural sentiment and improved dispatches due to higher plant utilisation levels, said a research report by Emkay Global Financial Services.

However, it said, the volumes were lower than last year's levels across segments, except for tractors.

According to the report, domestic tractor volumes grew in double-digits in July owing to positive customer sentiment. Retails were higher than wholesales due to lower production levels resulting from supply constraints for fuel injection components.

As per Emkay Global checks, states with strong growth were Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan and Punjab,

while states with muted performance were West Bengal and Chhattisgarh.

Domestic 2W wholesales, said the report, were better MoM mom due to higher production levels. However, volumes were lower YoY. Retails were lower MoM, as June volumes were supported by the marriage season.

Domestic PV industry volumes improved MoM, mainly due to higher production levels. Domestic CV industry volumes remained in the slow lane due to surplus capacity available with fleet operators.

August wholesales, concluded the report, are expected to be better MoM due to the ramp-up in production levels. Volume trajectory to improve in the coming quarters on: low base and pent-up demand; better rural sentiment; and gradual improvement in economic activity.



BCG report

Digital platforms are the future

AUTO customers today are digitally native, time-starved and expect a high degree of personalisation. Nine out of ten customers look through several options for vehicles and related services online before making a purchase, according to a recent report by Boston Consulting Group.

The report, titled 'Auto: Business Platforms are the Future', reflects on how a platform approach can generate exponential value and customer loyalty in an industry faced with evolving expectations, data explosion and rapid innovation. It outlines the value of platforms to OEMs and its various partners that will work together to meet customer needs across discovery, purchase and ownership.

The report also highlights the urgency for OEMs to act now, or risk being outmoded by other OEM-driven and third-party platforms. Today, OEMs capture only 25-35 per cent of the lifecycle spend of the auto customer; adopting a platform approach will help them participate in the remaining spend even in domains beyond their traditional areas of expertise, said the report.

While this doesn't diminish the need for the OEM's core products to be more competitive and appealing to their targets, delivering a comprehensive set of



services that cater to every need of the customer throughout the lifecycle will open up new revenue streams and help the OEMs deeply entrench themselves in the customers' lives, it added.

If done well, said the report, this will create a one stop-shop for customers and lead to network effects – success will attract more partners, innovators and customers to the platform – and happy customers will refer it to their friends and families driving faster adoption and growth.

Mr Vikram Janakiraman, Managing Director and Partner & India Lead for Auto Sector, said, "It is critical for OEMs, regardless of their size, to adopt the platform approach and participate in a larger part of the lifecycle spend of customer. While this is no sure-shot panacea to continued or greater success, doing nothing is a risky option."

The authors have outlined the elements which need to be carefully designed and executed to build a successful platform. The value proposition will have to be designed (and refined over time) to suit the target customer segments being addressed. Personalised offers, fulfillment, monetisation, and partnerships will all need to be carefully engineered.



Winning the COVID War

A confident industry gauges arena, draws roadmap

Team Autoguide

WITH the country unlocking in phases, the business and trade across sectors is also trying to find its feet. No different is the case with the automobile industry which, having resumed operations after nearly four months of partial or complete shutdown, is gathering all arsenal at its command to win the COVID-19 war. With a whole lot of health and safety guidelines hampering full-scale operations and plenty of new regulations in place, the challenge before it is daunting indeed, but all stakeholders are putting in their best to emerge victorious. That is the positive feedback *Autoguide* received in its interaction with a cross-section of players in the automobile and component industry.

With a view to getting a first-hand account of how the industry is coping up with the new scenario and what are its strategies, we sent an exhaustive questionnaire to some prominent members of the industry. The questions ranged from company-specific to macro-level issues as also about the Government policies and their likely impact.

Besides asking them about the production level their companies have achieved, we also inquired about their expectations of full recovery timelines. Acknowledging that the havoc caused by the coronavirus pandemic has impacted the employees' morale negatively invoking fears of salary-cuts and job-losses, we asked the industry players about the steps taken to motivate their workforce and leadership teams. There was also the obvious question about the health and safety steps being taken by various companies and their impact, if at all, on the revenues.

Since most of the promoters and senior executives approached by *Autoguide* were experienced and well-respected members of the industry, we also sought their opinion on how the sectoral divide is going to pan out. Did they foresee faster recovery in two-wheelers? And also, what trajectory the commercial vehicles and tractors are likely to follow?

For several months before the dreaded pandemic struck the world, the domestic auto industry had been abuzz with push towards e-mobility and BS-VI adoption. Hence, it became pertinent to find out if any brakes will be applied to these or if there will be speeding up of such efforts. Our respondents were posed with this critical question. They were also asked about the challenges they are confronted with post-disruption of supply chain as a result of lockouts and global travel ban.

And lastly, we tried to find out what specific measures the industry was required to take to become more self-reliant, particularly keeping in mind the Prime Minister's vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. A related, and rather contentious, question was about the anti-China sentiment that abounds post-COVID and how it is going to play out in Indian context.

Autoguide is happy to note that in the midst of a tough battle the industry is engaged with, many of its members have shown patience and spent time to respond at length to our full set of questions. We owe them our gratitude.

In the following pages, we reproduce the first-person account by prominent industry players on 'Winning the COVID War'. (Please note that some write-ups have been edited for space constraints.)



Mr Shashank Srivastava
ED, Mktg & Sales, Maruti Suzuki India

Improvement is rapid; H2 may bring some semblance of normalcy in biz environment

PRODUCTION LEVELS In the lockdown period, starting last week of March and in the month of April, there was absolutely no retails or production. In May, after the lifting of the lockdown, the production and retail activity started getting better and back towards some normalcy. On demand side like enquiries, bookings and retails, we are now about 90 per cent of pre-COVID levels. On the supply side also there is rapid improvement and we have reached similar levels of production. In July, for example, our production was more than one lakh vehicles.

HOPES ON RECOVERY That's a very tough question to answer! Part of the demand recovery that we have seen post-lockdown obviously has an element of pent up demand. The steady state long-term demand obviously depends on the fundamental parameters of the economy. There is a very high co-relation between GDP per capita growth rates and the auto demand. In addition, being

a discretionary purchase, car demand also depends a lot on the sentiment in the market which actually has a highly disproportionate effect. Going forward much will depend on the COVID-related sentiments. It is very difficult to predict when the normalcy will return. Having said that, we do hope that H2 will bring some semblance of normalcy in the business environment.

MORALE-BOOSTERS Our company has taken several measures to make sure that the team is motivated and the employees' morale is high. First of all, the safety of employees has been given top priority and we have gone beyond Government-mandated measures to make sure that employees are safe. Then, obviously, is the constant engagement and communication with the employees. Our MD, vertical heads and divisional heads are in constant communication with the employees to make sure that they feel cared for. Not only the employees, we made sure that their



family members are also communicated with.

SAFETY MEASURES We have made sure that all the guidelines that the Government has prescribed are being followed completely. So whether it is social distancing or sanitisation or contactless temperature measurement, we have gone beyond the mandated norms. Not only in the company premises but also at our dealerships we have very stringent SOP. Obviously there is a cost to all this but we believe that when it comes to safety of employees, customers and associates there cannot be any compromise.

SECTORAL GROWTH There are some clear indicators on consumer behaviour that come out from research which give us clues on the sectoral-wise recovery. The consumers will avoid shared mobility and public transport and that will push up the requirement for personal transport. Also, the expected lower income levels will lead to telescoping of demand downwards to the lower segments. Replacement buying will reduce as customers will hold on to their vehicles longer before upgrading and functional buying will increase inciting that first-time buyers will increase. Demand for used cars and two-wheelers will go up therefore. Luxury buyers are mostly replacement and additional car-buyers and so may see a slower recovery. Geographically speaking, the demand in rural areas may bounce back faster due to record Rabi crops, good monsoons and the better Kharif sowing thus pushing up rural incomes faster.

CVs AND TRACTORS As pointed out above, the rural bounce-back of demand looks better on back of good agricultural conditions and the Government outlays in rural areas. Thus it will be no surprise that tractor sales should do better. Commercial activity is expected to pick up slowly as business activity comes back especially in urban areas. Hence commercial vehicle segment may face a more uphill task at recovery.

MARUTI SUZUKI



BS-VI AND EV PUSH It's true that the adoption of BS-VI and the other safety norms, as also the Insurance and road taxes etc., has resulted in increased cost of acquisition and that has resulted in the stress on volumes that we witnessed in the industry last financial year. India is a price-sensitive market with high elasticity of demand and therefore affordability is a key factor in demand. This is the main reason why electric vehicles have not become popular because the current battery technology makes electric vehicles very expensive.

Moreover, the charging infrastructure is not yet well developed and that is also a hurdle for wide adoption of electric vehicles. But, of course, both ICE and electric vehicles will co-exist for a long time to come and the need for reduction in emissions will become more important as the market grows. A good intermediate solution is the expected better adoption of alternative fuel vehicles like CNG and hybrid vehicles.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT Localisation obviously comes readily to the mind in this aspect. But for that we have to be competitive not only in costs but in technology as well. In a globalised world there will always be mutual cooperation but certain aspects like manpower development, skills development and training will make us more competitive to be Atmanirbhar.

(Mr Srivastava did not respond to our questions on supply chain constraints and anti-China rant as he said, "they are not in my domain".)



Mr Nirmal K. Minda
Chairman & MD, Uno Minda

Our dependence on imports is minimal; Localisation key theme of our whole story

PRODUCTION LEVELS Starting July, we have attained 60-70 per cent production levels which we expect to reach 80 pc in August and improve progressively thereafter in the upcoming festive season, in 2W and 4W passenger vehicles specifically.

HOPES ON RECOVERY With a caveat of no further lockdowns, the outlook for the coming month is positive in comparison to previous three-four months. As outlined by FADA, the full year outlook continues to remain negative with a projected de-growth in retail sales in the range of 15 pc-35 pc across various segments except tractors which looks set to clock a positive annual growth. Two-wheelers and tractors would see an early recovery followed by passenger vehicles. Commercial Vehicles may take some more time.

MORALE-BOOSTERS Safety of our employees and their wellbeing has

always been paramount to us. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the company has taken several measures to ensure their wellbeing. Most of our staff has been working from home. Employees have been provided with appropriate infrastructure to facilitate work from home. Digital medium of communication has been used extensively and the organisation as a whole has evolved to work under the new normal. The organisation had utilised this time productively by providing extensive online professional training and development programmes, which have been well received.

SAFETY MEASURES An exclusive app, 'MINDA CARE', has been developed for employees to ensure that there is timely communication in the time of crisis. The app also enables employees to file self-declaration on personal health status on a regular basis. Guidelines on safe work guide



have also been shared with all employees. In addition, it has been made mandatory for all employees to download the Aarogya Setu app.

SECTORAL GROWTH May exit was around 30 pc production, June capacity utilisation climbed up to 40 per cent. For July also it was 60-80 pc for 2W, 50 -60 pc for 4W. August seems to be in line of July. With upcoming festive season, we expect demand going up for 2W and passenger vehicles in particular

CVs AND TRACTORS Commercial vehicle will take some more time. We will start seeing green shoots in CV segment after the festival season, while tractors will do well given good monsoon and increased DBT to farmers.

BS-VI AND EV PUSH We do not anticipate any delay in BS-VI. However, there could be some delay in EV investments overall.

SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES As earlier mentioned, the Government has assured of no further lockdown and as of now there are no challenges pertaining to raw material and sub-contractors. We have a normal working ecosystem where all are supporting operations of one another.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' is an initiative which should have come long back. Automotive segment can be a classic case of success of Aatmanirbhar Bharat but we have to be mindful since it requires consistent perseverance to build a competitive edge while leading towards this. As for our organisation, considerable capex has been committed in 2W alloy wheel as well as sensors. Both the products are import substitution and subsequent localisation. As an organization, we are 'atmanirbhar'. Our dependence on imports is very limited. Localisation has been a key theme of our whole story. From time to time we have partnered with technology leaders (through joint venture) in localising the components. Two-third of our turnover is through the products whose technology is

owned by us.

ANTI-CHINA RANT Automobile sector has a trend of self-reliance because of its commitment to localisation to a large extent. All the firms, including OEMs and ancillaries, have created an ecosystem by which all products are now locally developed with composition suiting the Indian cost structure thereby making the vehicle more affordable and suitable for the Indian market. But still there is a dependence on China for lot of child parts and different types of semiconductors. China is one of the largest exporters of auto components to India and they have incentivised their producers by giving them subsidy. However, the reliance on China is around 20 -25 pc, the remaining has already been localised

In terms of MIL or UNO Minda Group as a whole, we are focussed on developing local suppliers. We have created a supplier base which is completely dedicated to us and some are more diversified Tier-2 suppliers , so the entire ecosystem is in place. Our dependence on Chinese imports is between 10 and 15 pc and this is too for the two components, semiconductors and a special grade of plastic material and certain specific alloys of aluminium. We think in the near term while dependence on China is there, our management is clearly focussed on developing alternate markets to China or localise them as per the opportunities.





Mr Rajesh Jain
MD, Neolite Industries

It will take several years for India to become self-reliant; hard steps needed

PRODUCTION LEVELS The recovery level of our company, in terms of past dues, is very good and we have been able to attain almost complete dues from our business accounts. On the production front, we are still grappling with severe effects of lockdown and low demand as many markets are still not fully operational. OEMs are working partially and many world markets are in still in full state of lockdown. All these factors have impacted our production drastically but we are fortunate to be operating at 50-60 per cent levels.

HOPES ON RECOVERY The world economy, as well the Indian economy, is going through one of the worst periods known to mankind and we are in deepest economic recession. However, there are signs of some markets moving northwards and with the festive season coming up in India we expect the demand to rise during next few months

though it will be highly volatile and erratic. We do not expect the demand to recover completely for next 8-12 months in India. However, the world economy may take up to two years to recover to pre-corona levels.

MORALE-BOOSTERS Neolite being a self-driven and financed company has always been a very tightly held and managed company. We have taken several steps like optimisation of manpower, salary restructuring and hiring freeze. Employees have been instilled with confidence of long-term job safety and safety protocols are being strictly followed with periodic testing for virus on company premises.

SAFETY MEASURES Safety protocols are our topmost priority and we are ensuring the well-being of our employees and workers. We have introduced a universal health insurance policy for all the employees



and work-from-home facility for any employee being impacted due to COVID-19. The company has been able to manage well till now.

SECTORAL GROWTH Two-wheeler sector is already witnessing significant increase in demand due to safety being of paramount importance. Passenger Vehicle demand is gradually gaining momentum as people realise the necessity of safety and travelling in one's own vehicle. Commercial vehicle segment will pick up slowly as confidence starts getting back and cases start to decline. Luxury segment, in our opinion, will be least affected as the buyers here make up top 5 per cent of the population and this segment is largely un-impacted by economic downturns.

CVs AND TRACTORS Surprisingly, we are witnessing a good demand for commercial vehicles and tractors and expect this segment to grow in the coming months.

BS-VI AND EV PUSH Both, the industry players as well the Government, will have to take initiatives to support the growth in electric vehicles in coming years and we expect the EV demand to grow. However, the Government should incentivise this segment to support the industry efforts. Infrastructure for electric vehicles has to be developed nationwide so that the common man feels the ease of using EVs.

SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES India, like the rest of economies, is severely affected by supply chain disruption. India is more so as we are heavily dependent on raw material and components from China. With the escalation of border row with China, the focus is now on self-dependent India. But it will take several years before India can become self-reliant. For now we will have to meet our supply chain requirements mainly from China. However, we are exploring localisation avenues also but the cost impact is a major factor.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT: The Indian Government has woken up late but taken the right step in 'Atmanirbhar



Bharat'. However, as stated above, India is heavily reliant on China on various sectors including the pharmaceuticals, automotive and defence being some of them. Nonetheless, it is easily said than done. India will need to take hard decisions at a cost to become self-reliant in the long run and support from the Government in major industries is required.

ANTI-CHINA RANT Monopoly of China in various fields, including automotive as well as digital, technological, supply chain, raw materials is not good for world as a whole and many developed and developing countries have already realised the same and have started taking steps to reduce China's dependence on their countries. Countries have realised and started looking at alternatives sources to ensure they keep their business running going forward and India being a very stable country has already started benefitting from the shift.

India has to cut red tapeism and bring in more reforms thus creating very positive atmosphere for flow of investment from biggest companies in the world, in the field of automotive, technology, space, privatise public investment, tax breaks for setting up new industries for foreign companies, banking sector and this will lead to employment generation and ultimately turning the wheel.

Future years belong to India and 2021 should see India becoming a superpower and lead world towards economic recovery and become engine of growth.



Mr Satyakam Arya
 MD & CEO, Daimler India Commercial Vehicles

CV industry to be 50-60 per cent lower, economic reforms offer some hope

PRODUCTION LEVELS DICV is in a relatively strong position. Thanks to early analysis and a proactive approach, we will soon be starting our second shift at our plant in Oragadam.

HOPES ON RECOVERY In the current situation, it is expected that the economy will return to its growth trajectory around 2022. The MHCV segment will rebound in line with that. If the Government introduces measures like a scrappage policy, reduces taxes or gives a big boost to infrastructure spending, the recovery could be faster.

MORALE-BOOSTERS As a part of a global organisation, we have had access to many favourable tried and tested HR policies. We have been practicing work-from-home for a while now. Thankfully, our IT team was incredibly quick to respond to the situation after assessing what was happening globally with the lockdown. Overnight, our team

worked tirelessly to provide critical functions such as R&D, with high-spec laptops that have secure remote connections to our company network. DICV has also been steadily increasing its bandwidth and has rolled out a new video conferencing software.

Our leadership team also continues to interact with members virtually, maintaining their productivity and ensuring everyone stays safe, healthy and connected. We also have digital training seminars in order to keep our employees updated and re-skilled. We also continue to have our internal dialogue session with employees and the leadership team in our 'Samvaad' sessions.

SAFETY MEASURES Even before the lockdown, we initiated a Crisis Management Team (CMT) which holds virtual meetings with DICV's top executives on a daily basis. The CMT has initiated hundreds of health,

DAIMLER

safety and sanitization measures over the last few months, ranging from mass cleaning of Oragadam plant to renovations of facilities



purchases online, we see a demand for e-commerce trucks as well. Overall, there should be a sharp rebound in 2021.

designed to ensure social distancing norms are followed. The CMT has also taken charge of tracking the health and safety of the company's 4000+ employees, plus overseeing the company's extensive CSR contributions.

Currently we are working on a variety of digital and analog methods to maintain social distancing norms on the factory floor for the safety of our employees. Once we move out of the developmental stage, we will share the workings and implementation strategy of these innovations with our stakeholders.

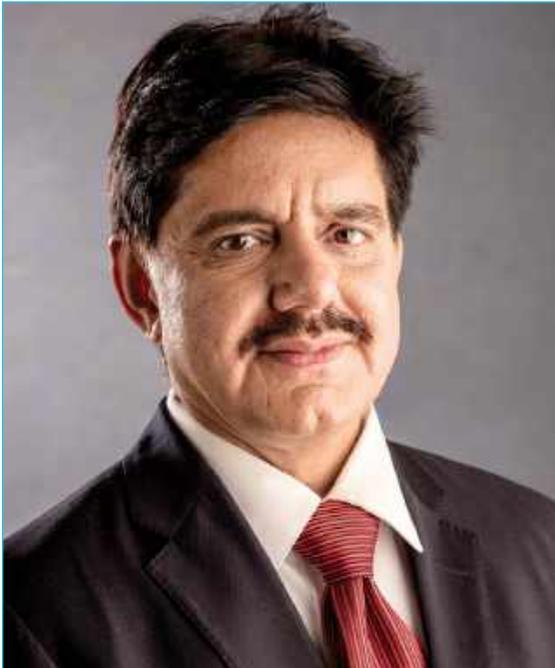
CVs AND TRACTORS For the CV industry, the slowdown had already started in the end of 2018 (CY). The MHCV segment was lower than 35 per cent, so there was a severe contraction even in 2019. At the start of 2020, people thought the market will be 10 per cent lower than 2019 as India switched to BS-VI norms from April 1. But now there is a new situation of COVID and that number is gone. There are 3 storms the industry is facing altogether 1) cyclic storm 2) structural storm 3) transformational storm. COVID comes on top of all that. Cyclical storms last around eight-nine quarters. Structural storms are related to how customers are changing their buying decisions and transformational storms are related to how the entire automotive industry needs to move towards a more sustainable way. With COVID, these storms are even more severe.

This year the industry will be 50-60 per cent lower than in 2019. Economic activity remains subdued, while we see unlocking happening in some areas, lockdown continues in others. GDP is expected to contract by 5 per cent and the CV industry is closely linked to the GDP. The economic reforms by the Government offer some hope. If infrastructure and mining sectors continue to see momentum, we will see an uptick for BharatBenz products in these segments. With consumers making most of their

BS-VI AND EV PUSH As part of the global powerhouse of Daimler Truck, DICV has full access to Daimler's vast array of state-of-the-art technologies. This means we are in a position to cater to emerging new business opportunities in a very fast and focused manner, as evidenced by our quick localisation and rollout of an all-new, BSVI-compliant portfolio earlier this year. Similarly, Daimler globally is working with partners such as Volvo and Rolls-Royce plc to develop sustainable transport and next-generation solutions such as fuel-cell technology. This indicates that the move towards next-generation vehicles is speeding up rather than slowing down.

SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES COVID-19 situation continues to affect supply chain and hence stability in the entire value chain will take time. Robust supply chain infrastructure is a crucial element for growth in the manufacturing sector and, as a country, we must concentrate on improving overall efficiency in the sector while trying to accelerate demand for logistics services. We currently source more than 80 per cent of our parts locally and are actively looking for viable local suppliers to increase this further. Having a wide network of reliable partners is the key to a resilient supply chain.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT Following the Government's 'Self-reliant India' initiative to localise auto components manufacturing, it will take a long time to develop alternates that are fit to challenge in cost, quality and capacity. Especially components that predominantly depend on imports will require concerted efforts from the Government to improve the manufacturing infrastructure. Tightening of import quality standards would prevent low quality, cheap goods from flooding the market and also help promote local manufacturing.



Mr Vineet Sahni
Group CEO, Lumax Industries

Localisation has many advantages; it's time India becomes world manufacturing hub

PRODUCTION LEVELS We restarted operations in all our 30 plants since the last two months now. The recovery in May was at 5-10 per cent, in June about 35-40 per cent and in July it was at 70 per cent of pre-COVID levels. We anticipate that in September we will be able to reach pre-COVID levels.

HOPES ON RECOVERY We are hopeful that the festive season will bring cheer and we will be able recover to pre-COVID levels.

MORALE-BOOSTERS People are our biggest assets and we recognise the efforts they have made during these tough and challenging times. It was imperative that we stood by them and continued to have

clear communication and stay connected. Our focus has been to ensure no job loss due to the COVID19 crisis. Our employees voluntarily contributed towards salary cuts and worked diligently towards cash conservation. The important thing is to ensure our bonds remain strong, we continue to engage with our people and help them navigate the uncertainty with the assurance that we are all in this together. We have organised virtual meetings, virtual town halls, addressed our teams and stayed connected through various platforms.

SAFETY MEASURES As mentioned before, safety is undoubtedly most important especially, in today's situation. We have



taken all the necessary measures from sanitization of vehicles, deep sanitisation of premises, regular check of employee at the plant gates and maintaining all social distancing protocols at the facilities. We have also created an in-house quarantine facility with seven beds, equipped with necessary medical support required under a doctor's supervision in NCR and Pune. We have maintained all the obligatory protocols laid down by the Government.

SECTORAL GROWTH We had embarked on our journey towards self-reliance and we have made efforts to localise and build our own competence with the support of our partners. However, there is need to build competence for electronics as most of the electronic buying is imported. We as the auto component fraternity need to put thrust on electronics manufacturing locally.

CVs AND TRACTORS The tractors have been on the recovery path; the good monsoon has led to improvement in farm equipment demand. However, we can't say the same for the commercial vehicles. We are hopeful that in the coming months we see some green shoots of growth and recovery.

BS-VI AND EV PUSH No, there won't be any brakes being applied to this. With Supreme Court and the Government directing the BS-VI transition, it will be implemented. Also, EVs are the future and we are moving in the right direction. Although, for the import of some components we are dependent on China, it is an opportune time for the auto component industry to focus on alternatives and put thrust on developing domestic local capabilities and make - Atmanirbhar Bharat.

SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES Yes, imports have been a challenge for the industry. It is also not very different for us. We are working on it and ensuring that supply chain is not disrupted. At Lumax we have a design office in Taiwan and have strong import linkages with other countries so our dependency on China is not so high, however, we are exploring alternatives to reduce dependency on one particular country such as China but it can't happen overnight.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT We have been focusing on localisation for the last five years, there are lot of advantages associated with localisation and we encourage everyone to align with the vision of the Prime Minister and make in India and therefore, make for the world. It is time that India becomes the world's manufacturing hub. One major example of this is the components such as on-board antennas which will be first time manufactured in India. Before Lumax partnered with Yokowo, Japan it was being imported. So, things are changing.

ANTI-CHINA RANT It is actually good. It is an opportune time for India to showcase its manufacturing capability and innovativeness, we have everything in our favour, the Government is supporting with policy changes, abundance of skilled labour, demographic dividend. All major economies are looking for an alternative to China.





We've been able to win and sustain the trust of our people with multiple steps

Mr K Ramasamy,
Chairman, Roots Industries

PRODUCTION LEVELS We started with zero in the month of April and May, we have gradually achieved close to 70 per cent of last year's overall monthly average. Our OEM sales have reached only around 55 per cent while our exports are around 65 per cent.

HOPES ON RECOVERY We expect the demand to recover fully before the end of the fourth quarter or beginning of April 2021.

MORALE-BOOSTERS During this time, we have not retrenched anyone: temporary or permanent. We have always had a very good relationship with our employees. They know that we will always do what is best for them. We have agreed on a formula that the salary of all the staff executives, including the Managing Director will be proportionate to the sales made. To the shop floor workers, we paid full salary for days worked and 50 per cent for non-working days.

Everybody works for the required number of days in order to fulfill the orders. Once

the orders are fulfilled, nobody works. This understanding has helped us to retain every worker, including temporary workers. This has been a real morale-booster for people. Our communication with the entire team has always been open. Thus, we have been able to win and sustain the trust of all our people.

SAFETY MEASURES We have taken health and safety of our Roots members very seriously and instituted several SOPs, just to quote a few:

- Roots COVID-19 Task Force Team was formed at each of our facility/locations. Through this, every employee was sensitised on the importance of social distancing, hand sanitisation and wearing of masks.
- Banners and posters were displayed at all vantage locations of our factories in order to bring awareness on COVID-19.
- We provide freshly-prepared Kabhasura Kudineer, a Siddha preparation suggested by a revered saint of our region, to every employee. Kabhasura Kudineer has proved



its effectiveness in Siddha COVID hospitals.

- Temperature scanning of all employees is carried out both during entry and exit, and recorded.
- Pulse Oximeter reading is taken once daily for all employees with proper sanitisation before and after use.
- Arsenic Album 30 homeo pills were distributed to all employees and their families.

SECTORAL GROWTH In the near future, small vehicles will catch on quite quickly and two-wheelers will certainly maintain a steady pace in growth. The luxury segment, I am certain it will come back to normalcy from the next financial year.

CVs AND TRACTORS Commercial vehicles are facing a real challenge due to two reasons. One is BS-VI changeover and more importantly, the COVID impact. In my opinion, it may take at least another six months for the truck Industry to pick up. The tractor sector would pick up soon due to expected good monsoon.

BS-VI AND EV PUSH BS-VI changeover has really put a lot of strain on OEMs. This has been accentuated by COVID-19. The automobile industry has come to a very difficult situation. However, I am positive that economy will pick up from the next financial year and things will start to improve. Regarding electric vehicles, I am certain that the Government will maintain their targets and continue the incentives. In that case, electric vehicles will certainly pick up. But it will mostly centre around the two-wheelers, three-wheelers and short-distance commute and goods carriers. I do not foresee growth in vehicles plying interstate or long distance routes in this segment.

SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES Lockouts and global travel ban has really posed many challenges in the supply chain. We have been able to overcome all these difficulties and



meet customer requirements. The main problem is getting supplies from our vendors who are in the small-scale sector. Our team was engaged with our suppliers to help them in every possible way. Regarding our imports from China, even before COVID-19 we have taken lots of measures to develop local suppliers. That has helped us overcome the supply problem to a great extent.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT I am very positive that the Prime Minister's vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' will fructify quickly. The timing and the efforts being taken by both Central and state Governments in inviting foreign Investors and encouraging the local industries to come out with import substitute products is certainly going to be a great success. Imposing higher tariff on certain goods is a welcome move which will promote local industry.

In order to achieve complete success, the National Education Policy must be implemented in a phased manner, as quickly as possible. Only then we'll be able to become a global supplier like China. Labour laws need to be amended in line with global standards for the PM's vision to see complete success.

ANTI-CHINA RANT Certainly, China has earned a bad reputation from every quarter. As a result, Chinese products are looked into with different glasses. This is certainly a great advantage for India and for the world, because the entire world currently depends on one source, China, and that is not healthy. We, being a transparent and democratic nation, have a great chance of becoming a world manufacturing hub, next to China. I am certain, Central and state governments will continue to give the necessary policy thrust and procedure simplifications and continue the drive to improve infrastructure, which would help our nation become a sizable and trusted player in the world markets.



Mr Rahul Jain
Director, Fiem Industries

Two-wheelers to see faster recovery; luxury segment will be struggling

PRODUCTION LEVELS Our production has already resumed to 60 to 70 per cent-levels post the gradual opening of the lockdown.

HOPES ON RECOVERY We expect the demand to recover completely and volumes to return to pre-corona levels somewhere around October onwards.

MORALE-BOOSTERS We are following all the safety measures and norms as laid down by the Government. The people in distress were supported by the company where it was possible, by providing them with the lodging facility and proper medical care and essential household items being provided to the migratory labour. Arrangements were made for the safe return of the migratory labour to their hometowns. Wages for the

period under locked down were timely paid.

SAFETY MEASURES The company has taken major steps to avoid spread of COVID-19. These include:

- Providing masks to everyone
- Manufacturing and distribution of face shields
- Sanitisation stations were created at all the entry points and common touch-point areas
- Social distancing was ensured through demarcation and partition created between workstations.
- Body temperature mapping is being done for all persons entering our factory/office premises.
- Vehicle and other common touch-points are being disinfected regularly.



- Transportation is being provided to the people keeping in mind the social distancing.
- All the manufacturing activities are being carried out with social distancing being maintained.
- COVID-19 tests are being conducted regularly at the company's cost.
- Any labour that is coming from their hometowns, are being providing quarantine facilities for a week before entering the factory premises.

All the activities above have impacted the revenue adversely.

SECTORAL GROWTH I see faster recovery in two-wheelers compared to other segments because of social distancing. Our estimate is two-wheeler sector would be achieving approx. 70-80 per cent sales as compared to FY2019-2020. Luxury segment would be struggling for revival during the COVID-19 period.

CVs AND TRACTORS We expect commercial vehicles and tractors to be growing post-August 2020. Overall, the segment might achieve 50-60 per cent growth compared to FY2019-20.

BS-VI AND EV PUSH Certainly, the adoption of BS-VI would take place as per schedule, but introduction of electric vehicles will be taking a backseat. The main reason for slowdown in electric vehicles programme will be non-availability of parts which were planned to be procured from China. Now new sourcing plan and

development of parts/Vendors outside China would be done, which will take a little longer time.

SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES: Majority of electronic components and other semiconductors were being imported. Due to the travel ban, the supply chain has squeezed and supply is delayed. The lead time of procurement increased thus necessitating the higher inventory and increased part cost.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT Our Prime Minister's vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' to make the automotive sector self-reliant will be possible with the following:-

1. Providing incentives with easy and simple rules towards establishment of new Industries.
2. To make labour laws easy to avoid red-tapism.
3. To attract big foreign giants to join hands with Indian Industrialists to bring latest technology for the production of parts locally.

In my opinion, these are some of the suggestions to make the automotive sector self-reliant.

ANTI-CHINA RANT India has also become wary about importing Chinese products. The Indian Government has to initiate local manufacturers in a proper way by giving them huge incentives for putting up new industries under JVs with foreign giants in order to become 'atmanirbhar'. The auto industry has already started to develop alternate sources for the parts that were imported from China.





Mr Mohan Narayanan
President & CEO, Auto Ignition

We're operating at higher than pre-corona levels; staff morale upbeat

PRODUCTION LEVELS We have recovered 60 per cent of the lost sale and are currently working at full capacity and hope to fully recover in another two to three months.

HOPES ON RECOVERY For us the demand is very strong. We have enough orders. We are operating at levels higher than pre-corona levels.

MORALE-BOOSTERS We kept the morale of our people positive during the lockdown period through conference calls and asked them to look at this idle period as an opportunity to examine those areas of distress and come up with actionable solutions which normally one does not have time to address when the plant is working at full capacity. Besides, our MD, Mr. Ishaan

Sarine, taking cognizance of strong rebound in performance in all areas including safety, decided to restore some of the salary-cuts which were imposed during the lockdown as and when sales exceeded expectations. This also helped us to boost the morale, as the employees could see the reward of perseverance.

SAFETY MEASURES We do not look at health and safety as an impact on our revenue. We look at it as a hygiene factor and primarily to assure all our stakeholders and their families that we put health and safety and welfare of our staff and workmen above all else.

SECTORAL GROWTH In the automotive segment commuting necessity will drive

demand. As a consequence, two-wheelers will recover faster, then the base entry passenger car segment and then the commercial segment when overall economic activity returns to normal. The aspirational vehicle segment which includes luxury segment will be the last to recover.



CVs AND TRACTORS

The pandemic has had little or no impact on rural economy. Besides, monsoon has been very favourable and the area under cultivation for all crops barring jute, has increased. Hence, tractor business is on the upswing. As regards the commercial vehicle segment, there is a rebound from a very poor 2019-20 sale levels. It will revive further when the economy returns to normal within the next three months.

BS-VI AND EV PUSH I don't see any brakes being applied on this. The Supreme Court has made it very clear that barring the ten days of stocks accumulated in March, 2020 and lying at dealer's end which could not be liquidated because of the lockdown, no relaxation will be given. As regards the electric vehicle segment, in order not to be dependent on China for rare earth magnets, companies may alter their trajectory from brushless DC motors to traction motors. This will make the controllers a bit more complex, but it will reduce the dependence on China.

SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES There is going to be a shift in sourcing from China which has been a major source of imported inputs to the automotive industry. Companies are trying to indigenise or look at alternative countries to import from. There are no major hiccups regarding imports from other regions-except for disruption in flights.

As regards the domestic supply chain, there have

been and continue to be challenges as different parts of the country are enforcing partial lockdowns and placing other restrictions due to the COVID-19 situation not coming under control. Besides, the migrant workers who went to their villages in the aftermath of the pandemic have not yet returned in full force. Hence there is also a scarcity of labour.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT Increased investment in R&D, collaboration with research institutes and even with technology owners overseas is a must. Besides that, the most important thing is to revamp our education system from rote learning into critical thinking and application, which the new education policy is striving to do. However, for the results to show in a big way, it will take another twenty years. China reformed its education system thirty years ago and the results are there for everybody to see.

ANTI-CHINA RANT has only accelerated the need for being self-sufficient globally. If one were to study the pattern in Trump-era and also in Europe, countries are placing nationalistic aspirations above everything else. There is no doubt that China poses a geopolitical threat to everybody not only because of its economic and military might but also because of the belief that several subversive activities are being carried out by them through electronic surveillance and other means.



Mr Manav Kapur
ED, Steelbird International

Two-wheelers will reach pre-corona levels by Diwali; CVs to take time

PRODUCTION LEVELS We have attained 100 per cent recovery and we are back to pre-COVID volumes. In fact, we are at a higher level as compared to last month.

HOPES ON RECOVERY The market has recovered 80 per cent and by the time we reach the festive season, that's around Diwali, the vehicle sales will be back to its normal. I think that the two-wheeler and the fast-car segment will reach the pre-corona levels by Diwali but not the commercial segment.

MORALE-BOOSTERS Communication was the key. We kept in touch with the entire team, kept communicating with them. From my level also, there was communication going almost every week, via WhatsApp, via video conferencing etc. There were some employee-involvement activities as well. We tried to make them understand that

this phase will pass, we tried to keep them off negative news that was going around and focus on positive things. That kept up the morale of the colleagues and the team members.

SAFETY MEASURES The first thing what we have done is that in all our premises whoever is entering should go for a temperature check and after that the person is given a mask and a sanitiser. Proper sanitisation is done at every shift change; the entire premises is re-sanitised. Social distancing is maintained and we have marked places so that workers are aware how much distance is to be maintained in the assembly line. Apart from this, the HR and Security departments are conducting safety audits on an hourly basis.

SECTORAL GROWTH Two-wheelers sale is very obvious now and it has recovered very quickly. The comeback is much faster.

Steelbird

The luxury segment will also recover in a month or two, that's my understanding, because people would be back to normal. The only sector which should take longer to recover is commercial segment because prior to COVID-19 also, there were lots of challenges.

CVs AND TRACTORS The tractors have recovered already, they are doing far better and they would continue going that way. Commercial vehicles would take a bit longer as the sector was already facing some challenges. Earlier also, there were lot of stopovers at the borders and so the efficiency of the CVs had gone down.

BS-VI AND EV PUSH Because of the low residue value of the vehicles, the finance is not available from the banks and the infrastructure for charging is not good. It will not happen overnight. I think 30 per cent conversion to electric vehicles would happen in 10 years or so. That's my understanding.

SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES Most of our material was sourced locally, so by and large we do not face any supply issues because the material now is easily available in the market. The only issue that we see right now is the manpower issue and my assumption is by the end of September it would be far better and pretty much back to normal.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT Lots of people are looking at 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' scheme and at times people are even willing to pay a bit extra when the manufacturing is done in India rather than imported from China. In terms of specific measures, we are a huge country with huge market. The moment the customers start giving an opportunity to the Indian entrepreneurs and decide to pick up material from the Indian manufacturers and not made-in-China that would give a lot of confidence and support to Indian entrepreneurs to come up with much better and higher levels as compared to Chinese-manufactured products. Once we have this homegrown support and people really start taking it seriously, that'll be the biggest push that we would get.

ANTI-CHINA RANT I am not sure if it would be easy to migrate from Chinese products to Indian-manufactured products because China has been the factory to the world for almost more than 20 years. It is not that easy to scale up to that level because it needs time to build up that kind of infrastructure in India and I am sure it cannot happen overnight. There is lot of support required from the Government to nurture the Indian entrepreneurs as it is not only the responsibility and the duty of the entrepreneurs but it is the duty and responsibility of the Government also to help the Indian entrepreneurs.





Mr Jasvinder Singh
Joint MD, GNA Axles

There'll be a gradual shift and industry will find ways to cope with China monopoly threat



PRODUCTION LEVELS Business recovery attained so far ranges approximately between 45 and 50 per cent of our normal business. However, OEM customers are in a progressive mode since our company deals in agriculture and off-highway segments.

HOPES ON RECOVERY Pre-corona volumes will be possible when the virus gets cleared off the globe and suitable vaccination is found and applied to safeguard the public from infectious disease.

MORALE-BOOSTERS Apart from the SOP as advised by the concerned authority, extra care has been taken like provision of soap, hand gloves, sanitiser and safe travel arrangements in staff buses. There have been no layoffs of workforce and no reduction in wages. Special care was taken for retention of workforce employed from outside Punjab.

SAFETY MEASURES Health and safety have been our prime concerns Proper and regular checkup of workforce has

GNA



been a daily routine. An awareness programme has been put in order. We have put in all efforts to ensure better productivity and revenue-generation.

SECTORAL GROWTH No comment, as our company does not deal in two/three-wheelers and luxury segments.

CVs AND TRACTORS Commercial vehicle segment is down but tractor segment is normal with repeat supply orders. CV segment may come back when normalcy returns. Let us be optimistic since nothing stops in this world.

BS-VI AND EV PUSH Both are trend-setting and markets will move in to that arena of business. Although GNA is not in Internal Combustion (IC) engines but technology up-gradation and light weighting has been a regular practice. Markets will adapt to the required changing trends.

SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES Procurement and supply of raw material in our industry is normal. Similarly, sub-contractors are also getting responsive to accomplish common goals. The advancement in communication technology has made it possible to be in contact with customers.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT It's a workable idea and much needed in the present scenario. It has to be a strong combination of nation's willpower, industry-friendly policies and excellent business leadership. We must 'think local and act global' to accomplish its goals.

ANTI-CHINA RANT The success of business depends much on public sentiments. There will be a gradual shift and the industry world over will find ways to cope with the ever-threatening monopoly of China.



Mr Neeraj Mahajan
Group President, Mktg, Spark Minda

Pre-COVID level won't be reached in FY21 for most segments, other than tractors

PRODUCTION LEVELS We are witnessing month-on-month improvement in production level at which we are operating. In June'20 we reached close to 60 per cent of our production as compares to last year and July is much better than that. We are hopeful that in Q2 FY21 we should achieve revenue closer to what we did last year in similar period. This will be possible due to our aftermarket and export.

HOPES ON RECOVERY Preference for personal transport, pent-up demand and inventory filling at dealership of BS-VI is resulting in good ramp-up on production especially for two-wheeler and passenger vehicles. Tractor sales are showing growth post opening of lockdown as rural economy looks to be doing well. Three-wheeler and commercial vehicle are lagging. Though there might be a spike in demand in the run-up to the festive season, steady growth depends on economic recovery, consumer sentiment, finance availability and how the situation related to COVID-19 evolves. There are so many moving pieces at this moment and thus it becomes difficult to forecast but, for sure, the pre-COVID

level will not be reached in FY21 for most of the segments, other than tractors.

MORALE-BOOSTERS The role of HR has expanded in recent times as now they have to take into account the challenges of mental well-being of employees, and physical well-being. This is in addition to regular employee communication to minimise panic, creation of employee engagement calendar to uplift the spirits, and continuous assurance of job security. It also has an established mechanism that fosters a positive work environment that is free from harassment of any nature.

SAFETY MEASURES The Response Team which was created worked relentlessly to ensure seamless start of the operations. They also ensured the safety of our employees and adherence to the Government directions. We also created a Standard Operating Process (SOP) which will help us to be efficient and consistent across the Group. Some of the measures taken by us include: thermal screening of employees at the Entry Gate; no physical meeting – encouraging use of MS team and VC; bus transport is being



used with 50 pc capacity; social distancing at all times; regular sanitising and availability of hand sanitiser/wash soap solutions in common area and wearing of mask all the time. None of the measures taken by us has impacted the revenue but it only gave confidence to our employees to work without being worried about safety and health thus enhancing their productivity at work place.

SECTORAL GROWTH If we talk about Minda Corporation, we rank No. 2 in the two-wheeler segment globally due to our strong associations with leading two-wheeler OEMs. The recovery of the two-wheeler segment will be faster as compared to commercial vehicles or any other sector due to two- major reasons: the customer preference is shifting from aspirational to need-based and people are preferring personal transport over public transport. We feel luxury carmakers expect sales to remain subdued in FY21 due to lower discretionary spend.

CVs AND TRACTORS The commercial vehicle sales is totally linked to economic activity i.e. availability of freight. The GDP growth in FY20 which come at 11 year low of 4.2 pc indicates the business sentiment has been worsening. In FY21 due to COVID-19 pandemic, the GDP rate will be negative and thus the trajectory of commercial vehicle will further slide downward. But the possibility of recovery can be foreseen subject to introduction of vehicle scrapping policy. In case of tractors, it is dependent on agriculture. Agriculture is the only sector which will grow this year.

BS-VI AND EV PUSH We hope the Government gives some time before pushing for electric vehicles as the industry has invested good amount to transit from BS-IV to BS-VI in four years which most of the developing or developed nations have done in eight to ten years. Time is required so that the return on the investment can be generated which will allow the industry to invest back into other regulatory aspects like electric vehicles.

SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES Making our supplier chain ready before the start of the production during lockdown was a major activity which our team worked on. Some of the action taken by us to have minimum impact on



our supply chain was: prioritising payments to MSMEs, handholding with them for following SOP regarding restart after COVID and providing them backend support in resolution of logistics issue.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT Our Prime minister's vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' is both opportune and essential. It has struck an emotional chord among consumers and suppliers alike. The recent pandemic has seen a huge shift in the business dynamics with global companies shifting their base from China to nearby countries that offer the same kind of infrastructure, human skillset and ecosystem to make it a viable business proposition. The Government is proactive and offering special packages that will help various global companies shift their manufacturing from China to India thus benefitting the manufacturing sector.

ANTI-CHINA RANT In the post-COVID world there will be a huge opportunity for OEMs and auto component manufacturing companies in Europe and the US to shift some of the production from China to India. This will help us in increasing our export options. The recent shift of policies will also benefit the manufactures that are present in India to strengthen their presence more. They can invest more in R&D in order to establish new technology locally and become more self-reliant in developing products which are high in electronic content. Let us not forget that India is likely to become the fourth largest producer and consumer of automobiles in the world. Global companies are observing this and they will certainly venture in coming time in India.



Mr Sanjay Malhotra
MD, Jumps Auto Industries

Recovery to be quite sharp; demand levels likely to stabilise around March 2021

PRODUCTION LEVELS We started in May 2020 with 60 per cent production and now we are back to 100 per cent of planned levels.

HOPES ON RECOVERY I expect the recovery to be quite sharp and feel that the demand will also pick up sharply when the people see a certainty in their income. I estimate that demand levels should stabilise around March 2021.

MORALE-BOOSTERS We went for cost reduction including salary cuts when we restarted operations, but transparency in communication and leading from the front kept people motivated and they have achieved good results.

SAFETY MEASURES We took the Government guidelines as a basis and created an internal SOP that is strictly being followed.

SECTORAL GROWTH Two-wheelers have already shown a smart recovery as people shun public transport, though the luxury segment will probably be the last to recover.

CVs AND TRACTORS Tractors are booming, driven by rising rural incomes and commercial vehicle recovery will have to wait until the GDP numbers start picking up.

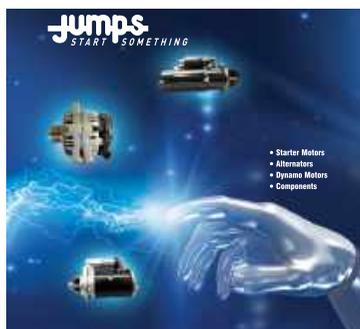
BS-VI AND EV PUSH I do not see any change in these activities due to the pandemic.

SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES The second and third tiers are the most vulnerable and are facing a huge cash crunch. We have fast-tracked payments to smaller supplier to help them restart.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT It is a good vision to be independent, but it is necessary to create the infrastructure to develop an efficient manufacturing ecosystem that operates at various levels. This requires a spate of reforms and easy access to credit so that

entrepreneurs feel confident about making investments.

ANTI-CHINA RANT There is an anti-China sentiment prevailing at this time, but it remains to be seen whether it will actually lead to more patriotism, or if it is just a passing fad.



Hero MotoCorp's July sales cross 5-lakh mark

Posts growth for third consecutive month

HERO MotoCorp has continued the resurgence of the domestic two-wheeler sector, with month-on-month sales growth for the third consecutive month since operations resumed.

In a market environment that continues to be volatile, Hero MotoCorp sold 5,14,509 units of motorcycles and scooters in July 2020, said a press release issued by the company.

Despite the prevailing economic slowdown on account of the COVID-19 pandemic, the company registered a sequential growth of 14 per cent over the previous month (June 2020) and reached more than 95 per cent of wholesale dispatch numbers of the corresponding month in the previous year (July 2019).

The robust volumes, said the report, have been driven by strong retail sales due to the positive market demand. While there is cautious optimism on the demand trajectory going forward, sales continue to be impacted by the micro-lockdowns in several parts of the country, it added.



Following stringent protocols for safety and wellbeing of its employees, Hero MotoCorp made significant progress in ramping-up the production across all of its eight manufacturing facilities - six in India and two at global locations. More than 95 per cent of Hero MotoCorp customer touch-points are currently operational, with strict safety measures and protocols in place, said the release.

WITH the objective of driving growth in the emerging business climate, Hero MotoCorp has strengthened its leadership team.

As part of this effort, Mr Rajat Bhargava has been appointed as the Chief of Staff in the office of Chairman and CEO, Dr. Pawan Munjal. Mr Malo Le Masson has been appointed as Head of Strategy and Mr Ravi

Strengthens leadership team

Pisipaty as the Head of Plant Operations, while Mr Mahesh Kaikini, has been appointed Chief Quality Officer. Mr Ashutosh Varma has been appointed the new Head of National Sales.

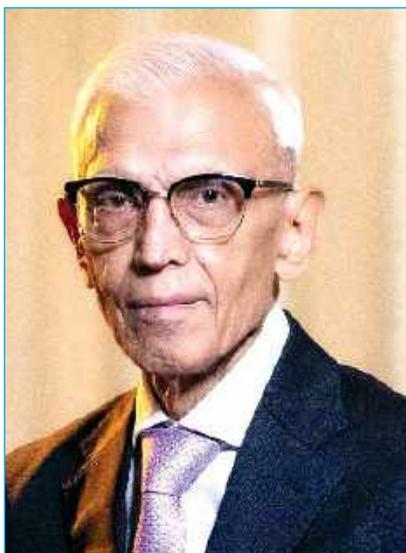
JOGINDER P. MALHOTRA

A journey without a halt

HE travelled over 60 km daily to and from office, but never found it taxing. He seldom missed an auto industry event because that was his bounden duty. He was there at this year's Auto Expo, as he had always been at its earlier avatars and had plans to attend the next Automechanka, as he always did. Work-without-rest was Mr Joginder P. Malhotra's motto and when he was made to rest without work during the early phase of lockout, he called it a day.

A pioneer of auto journalism, Mr Malhotra was a well-rounded personality who lived a rich life, raised a happy, cohesive family and achieved the pinnacle of glory by sheer hard work, perseverance and a steadfast moral code. His refusal to waver on ethical conduct, both at home and work, evoked immense awe and won him the love and respect of everyone around him.

Born on November 19, 1935 in Mumbai (then Bombay) to Mr. Bodhraj Malhotra and Mrs Bimlavati, Mr Malhotra completed his studies in Delhi and earned his BA (Honours) Economics degree from the prestigious Hindu College. He kicked off his professional career by setting up an advertising agency but soon took up a job in the marketing department of an automobile journal. He put himself assiduously into his new role and mastered the entire



Late Mr Joginder P. Malhotra



gamut of publishing in no time. The entrepreneurial spirit in him couldn't wait any longer and Mr Malhotra decided to venture out on his own.

The idea of Autoguide was born but turning it into reality was no mean task. The never-say-no spirit in him won't let him give up either. After days of discussions with some close friends (including journalists) and digging into his meagre savings, Mr Malhotra was now ready for the challenge.

The first issue of Autoguide came out in July 1966 evoking widespread appreciation from all stakeholders of the automobile industry. Soon, it became one of the most authentic and balanced chronicles of industry developments across the country. Mr Malhotra's penchant for instilling feel-good factor by focusing on positive developments and his insistence on balanced and unbiased reportage made Autoguide a leading magazine and earned him the reputation of a friend and well-wisher of the automobile industry.

His gentle and noble demeanour, his in-depth knowledge of the automobile industry and his sharp insight into sector-specific issues made Mr Malhotra one of the most respectable figures in this domain. It was time

to expand further. He was joined by his brother, Mr MP Malhotra, at this stage and the two launched another



PILLAR OF STRENGTH: With brother, Mr M.P Malhotra

magazine, Scooter Guide.

With the passage of time, both the magazines gained tremendous popularity and all-round respect. This was evident at the Golden Jubilee celebrations of Autoguide in 2016. A gala function was held at a posh hotel in Delhi to mark the milestone and stalwarts of the automotive and components industry made it a point to be present there in large number.

Yet another milestone came in the life of Mr Joginder P. Malhotra in 1990 when he and his son, Mr Sanjay Malhotra, launched Jumps (India) Impex as an auto component exporting unit. The company transformed into manufacturing in the year 2000 under the name Jumps Auto Industries Ltd. As the Founder Chairman of Jumps Auto, Mr. Malhotra spearheaded the acquisition of overseas manufacturing plants in Germany and Poland under the banner of Honasco.

A highly successful professional career, however, did not deter Mr Malhotra from leading a warm and happy family life. He was also a family man to the core. A doting husband to his wife Urmil, the two had the best of time in each other's company and also ensured that their children were provided with the best of education and imbued with the highest moral values. Today all three are

happily married, have grown-up children and successful professional careers as well.

His son, Mr Sanjay Malhotra, is ably holding the reins of Jumps Auto while simultaneously making efforts to ensure that the rich legacy of Autoguide continues unhindered. Infused with the entrepreneurial spirit of their father, the two daughters, Mrs. Alka Kohli and Mrs. Deepa Sachdev, are successfully running their own businesses of Human Resources. With the guidance of Mr M.P. Malhotra the responsibility of running Autoguide has fallen upon daughter-in-law, Mrs Shilpa Malhotra, who has assumed the editorship of the magazine.

Being the eldest amongst the siblings, Mr Malhotra had a parental attitude towards his sisters, Mrs Sushma Jhanjee, Mrs Kiran Mehra and Mrs Shashi Khanna. His brother, Mr MP Malhotra, besides providing able assistance to him in running the two magazines, was always a pillar of strength to him at all times.

Besides his immediate and extended family, Mr Malhotra also nurtured a close-knit family in the form of Team *Autoguide*. He had a fatherly attitude towards the staff and took utmost interest in their wellbeing.

The life of Mr Joginder P. Malhotra touched many hearts and his passing away on April 18, 2020 has left a deep void. He will always be remembered with utmost reverence by his family, friends, associates and colleagues in the automobile industry.

RIP Mr Joginder P. Malhotra!



HAPPY FAMILY: With wife Urmil and children

Thierry Bolloré is CEO of Jaguar Land Rover

MR Thierry Bolloré has been appointed Chief Executive Officer of Jaguar Land Rover, effective September 10.

An announcement in this regard was made by Mr Chandrasekaran, Chairman of Tata Sons, Tata Motors and Jaguar Land Rover, on July 28.

He said: "I am delighted to welcome Thierry to Jaguar Land Rover. An established global business leader with a proven track record of implementing complex transformations, Thierry will bring a wealth of experience to one of the most revered positions in the



Mr Thierry Bolloré

industry."

Mr Bolloré has extensive expertise in the automotive business, most recently as CEO of Groupe Renault

and previously in senior positions at global automotive supplier Faurecia.

Commenting on his appointment, Mr Bolloré said: "Jaguar Land Rover is known around the world for its peerless brand heritage, exquisite design and deep engineering integrity. It will be my privilege to lead this fantastic company through what continues to be the most testing time of our generation."

Mr Bolloré succeeds Prof Sir Ralf Speth, who will take up the previously announced position of non-executive Vice-Chairman of Jaguar Land Rover plc.

Thomas Schäfer takes over as Chairman at Skoda Auto

MR Thomas Schäfer took over as the Chairman of the Board at Skoda Auto on August 3. In this position, he succeeded Mr Bernhard Maier, who handed over the office to his successor after almost five years at the helm.

A qualified mechanical engineer, Mr Schäfer began his career in the automotive industry at Daimler AG in 1991. He held various management positions in the areas of production and quality



Mr Thomas Schäfer

management in Germany, the USA and South Africa until 2002. From 2002 to 2005, he was a founding

member of DaimlerChrysler Malaysia as Board Member for Technology.

At Daimler AG in Germany, Mr Schäfer was responsible for vehicle deliveries, customer centres and the global xKD business in emerging markets between 2005 and 2012. In May 2012, he moved to Volkswagen AG, where he initially headed the Group's International Production.

Since 2015, he has served as Chairman and Managing Director of Volkswagen Group South Africa.

Hyundai salutes India Spirit

Releases corporate brand anthem 'Haq Hai Humara'



HYUNDAI Motor India Ltd. (HMIL) on July 10 released an anthem as a tribute to the "indomitable spirit of India".

The corporate brand anthem '*Haq Hai Humara*' aims to bring together the people of the country and salute their resolve to stand united and stay strong in this unprecedented adverse situation, said a press release issued by the carmaker.

'*Haq Hai Humara*' features Hyundai corporate brand ambassador Shah Rukh Khan and depicts gratitude to all frontline workers and the citizens of the country who have risen up to this challenge with their steadfast spirit and for their invaluable contribution in the fight against the COVID -19 pandemic.

The anthem in association with Universal Music Group & Brands (UMGB) has been composed and sung by music composer and singer Vishal Mishra

and written by Manoj Muntashir.

Despite all challenges, the team put this song together shooting from distant locations over virtual platforms. The

Mr. SS Kim, MD & CEO,
Hyundai Motor India



anthem encourages and motivates each and every Individual to keep their spirit high, hoping for better times ahead.

Speaking at the release of the anthem, Mr. SS Kim, MD & CEO, Hyundai Motor India Ltd, said: "*Haq Hai Humara* is our humble tribute to the country's solidarity, relentless spirit and never give-up attitude in these testing times. We truly believe Together We Can and Together We Will build a 'New India'.

Commenting on the spirit of the song, Shah Rukh Khan said, "I am proud to be a part of Hyundai's '*Haq Hai Humara*' anthem which is a salute to the spirit of humanity, the ceaseless commitment from the frontline heroes and the small acts of kindness all around us which are the pivots for rebuilding the nation."

Talking about the thought behind the lyrics, Mishra and Muntashir said, "*Haq Hai Humara* is an expression of infinite gratitude that we all feel towards the COVID warriors. Through this song we wanted to convey that '*aazadiyaan, manmarziyaan, oonchaaiyaan*,' (freedom, free-will and the spirit to soar higher) is our right and no matter what the circumstances may be, it is our tough resolute that will get us back on our feet and help us to keep moving forward. The song is an articulation of the New India."

GNCAP's six-year safety rankings

Mahindra XUV300 on top

MAHINDRA & Mahindra on July 14 announced that its compact SUV, the *XUV300*, has topped Global NCAP's six-year safety rankings.

This makes the *XUV300* the safest among all the vehicles tested by Global NCAP between 2014 and 2020, said a press release issued by the company.

Global NCAP (GNCAP) completed safety assessments on more than 38 vehicles during this period and the *XUV300* scored the highest safety rating among all the models tested. The *XUV300* achieved the highest combined occupant safety rating, with a 5-Star Global NCAP rating for adult occupant protection and a 4-Star rating for

child occupant protection, the latter being a first in India, added the release.

Mr Veejay Nakra, CEO - Automotive Division, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd, said, "This is a proud moment for us at Mahindra. Earlier this year, the *XUV300* was rated by GNCAP as the safest vehicle in India and now it has been recognised as the safest vehicle over the last six years. This demonstrates our strong commitment towards vehicle safety and is a big leap forward for the Indian automotive industry, as a homegrown brand takes the lead on safety. At Mahindra, safety is at the very heart of all our vehicles, and we will continue to raise the bar on safety with our future vehicles."

The Mahindra *XUV300* offers 50 safety features, including some segment-firsts such as seven airbags, disc brakes on all four wheels, front parking sensors and heated ORVMs, giving fortress-like safety that is unmatched, said the release.

The *XUV300* has now established a new benchmark in terms of vehicle safety in India having been awarded a 5-star rating by Global NCAP, the umbrella body of consumer car safety testing bodies.



TKM's compact SUV foray

Toyota *Urban Cruiser* to be launched this festival season



TOYOTA Kirloskar Motor (TKM) on August 4 announced its entry into the compact SUV segment in India with the all new Toyota *Urban Cruiser*- Toyota's youngest SUV.

A unique offering from Toyota in the country, the new *Urban Cruiser* exudes an 'Urban Standout Appeal' for those who love to 'Travel in Style', said a press release by the company. The *Urban Cruiser* would endear itself to the discerning customers who are seeking more from a compact SUV, it added.

The company will launch the compact

SUV in its India line-up during the festive season to cater to the growing demand for compact SUVs.

Commenting on the foray into the compact SUV segment, Mr. Naveen Soni, Senior Vice-President, Sales and Services, TKM, said, "We are very excited to announce our plans to launch the Toyota *Urban Cruiser* this festive season. With a customer-first approach, TKM has always endeavoured to fulfill the aspirations of its customers with timely introduction of new products and the Toyota *Urban Cruiser* is another such effort to satisfy the evolving customer needs."

EESL signs agreement with Noida Authority for EV charging stations

THE Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), a joint venture of PSUs under the Ministry of Power, has signed an agreement with Noida Authority to promote electric vehicles and install public EV charging stations and related infrastructure in Noida city.

The partnership will also facilitate the creation of an infrastructural ecosystem to accelerate e-mobility uptake as the nation emerges from the lockdown post COVID-19 pandemic.

The agreement was signed by Mr AK Tyagi, General Manager, Noida Authority and Mr Amit Kaushik, Executive Director (Growth), EESL, in the presence of Ms Ritu Maheshwari, CEO, Noida Authority.

Speaking at the agreement-signing ceremony, Ms Maheshwari said, "Developing a sustainable landscape with strong supporting EV infrastructure is the key to cultivating consumer confidence in electric vehicles. This

will significantly enhance consumer convenience as well. With increasing penetration of EVs, the local pollutants emission levels are also expected to reduce, leading to cleaner air and several public health benefits."

Mr Kaushik said, "EVs are at the forefront of the world's agenda to move towards a sustainable future and EESL is proud to be progressively leading initiatives to promote EV adoption in India under its national e-mobility programme. We are pleased to partner with Noida Authority to co-create synergies to set up public EV charging Infrastructure in Noida."

EESL will make an upfront investment on services pertaining to the agreement along with the operation and maintenance of public charging infrastructure by qualified manpower. Noida Authority will be responsible for the provision of space for the charging infrastructure.

The initiative is estimated to save over 3.7 tonnes of CO2 emissions per e-car per year.

Noida Authority has been sanctioned 162 public EV charging stations under the FAME India Scheme Phase-II of the Department of Heavy Industry. EESL is the selected organisation for deployment of public charging stations in Noida city.

So far, EESL has installed 20 EV chargers, 13 are commissioned and seven are under commissioning. These EV chargers have been installed around the prominent places of Noida.



Mr A K Tyagi, General Manager, Noida Authority and Mr Amit Kaushik, Executive Director (Growth), EESL, exchanging agreement documents in the presence of Ms Ritu Maheshwari, CEO, Noida Authority

First public EV charging plaza opened in New Delhi

WITH a focus on enhancing energy efficiency and promoting e-mobility, the Minister for Power, New & Renewable Energy, Mr RK Singh, on July 20 inaugurated the country's first public electric vehicle (EV) charging plaza at Chelmsford Club in New Delhi.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr Singh said, "The EV charging plaza is a new avenue for making e-mobility ubiquitous and convenient in India. Such innovative initiatives are imperative for the creation of a robust e-mobility ecosystem in the country."

Mr Sanjiv Nandan Sahai, Secretary, Ministry of Power, said, "The charging plaza, with its compatibility with a wide range of electric vehicles will greatly spur e-mobility adoption. This would make EV charging hassle free and convenient for the consumers".

EESL is spearheading the EV ecosystem development in the country by undertaking demand aggregation for procuring EVs and identifying



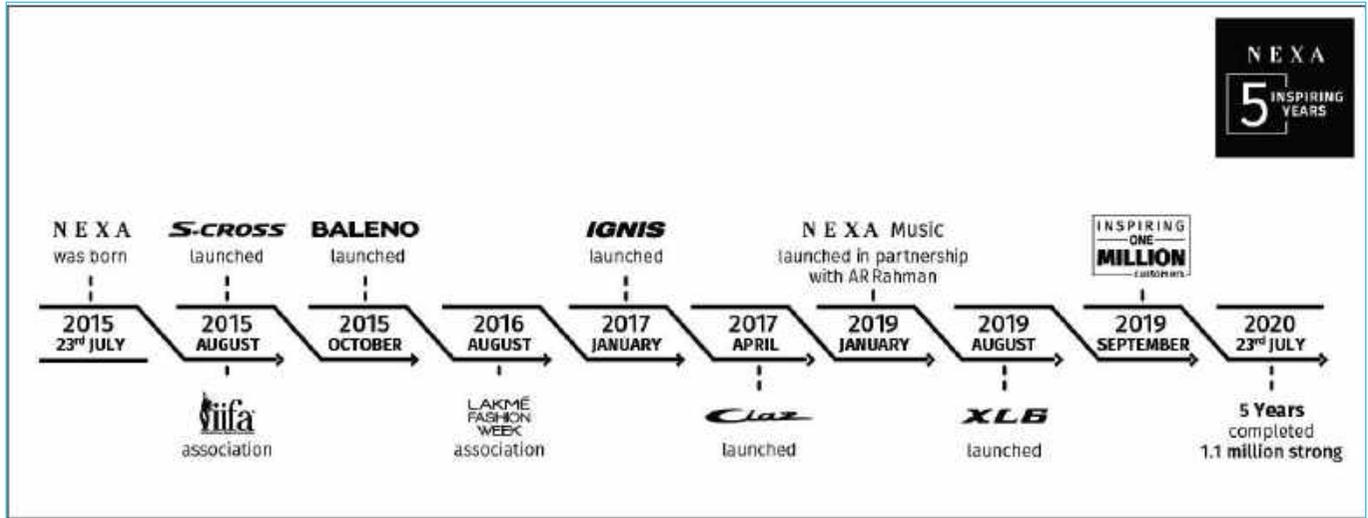
innovative business models for implementation of Public Charging Station (PCS). EESL in collaboration with NDMC has established India's first-of-its-kind public EV charging plaza in Central Delhi. This plaza will host five EV chargers of different specifications.

The minister also launched 'Retrofit of Air-conditioning to improve Indoor Air Quality for Safety and Efficiency' (RAISE) national programme. At the launch, he stated, "I believe the RAISE initiative can potentially alleviate the issue of bad air quality in workspaces across the nation and pioneer ways to make them healthier and greener. I look forward to the success of their programme and wish both EESL and USAID best of luck for their future endeavours.

At the launch of RAISE, Mr Javier Piedra, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Asia Bureau, USAID, said, "We just concluded the US-India Strategic Energy Partnership Ministerial last week with a very engaging dialogue and a forward-looking action plan. I'm happy that one of its key deliverables i.e. RAISE is being launched here."

EESL has undertaken a retrofit of its office air-conditioning and ventilation system. This is a part of the larger initiative to 'Retrofit of Air-conditioning to improve Indoor air quality for Safety and Efficiency' developed for healthy and energy-efficient buildings, in partnership with USAID's MAITREE programme.

Nexa celebrates Fabulous Five



NEXA, the premium retail network from Maruti Suzuki, is celebrating five years of providing services to over 1.1 million customers.

Designed to offer a global car-buying experience to customers, every Nexa experience is a testimony to unmatched hospitality, innovative technology and global lifestyle, said a press release.

With over 370 showrooms across 200+ cities, Nexa is the third largest retail automobile brand (in terms of volume).

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Shashank Srivastava, Executive Director, Marketing and Sales, Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said, "Nexa marks the first initiative by an automobile company in India to go beyond

selling cars and create a new format of retail experience for its customer. In these five years, Nexa, with its diverse range of products, intelligent brand associations and unique customer experiences, has delighted over 1.1 million customers. NEXA is the third largest retail automobile retail channel in India."

Driven by innovation and the desire to go beyond everyday retail experience, the launch of Nexa in 2015 set a new

benchmark in automotive retail.

Nexa, said the press release, has touched the imagination of young, urban and aspirational customers. Nearly half of Nexa customers are under 35 years and are well travelled and technologically savvy, it added.



Mr. Shashank Srivastava, ED, Marketing and Sales

SUV offensive by Volkswagen

Launches *T-Roc* and *Tiguan Allspace* in Hyderabad

VOLKSWAGEN Passenger Cars India launched its 'born-confident' SUV *T-Roc* and globally-acclaimed seven-seater SUV *Tiguan Allspace*, in Hyderabad.

At an introductory price of ₹19.99 lakh (ex-showroom) for *T-Roc* and ₹33.12 lakh (ex-showroom) for *Tiguan Allspace*, both the SUVs will now be available across Volkswagen sales touch-points in Hyderabad.

Crafted with progressive design, *T-Roc* offers performance, comfort and superior driving experience to appeal to the urban lifestyle of an Indian customer. The stylish SUV is built on Volkswagen's modular transverse matrix (MQB) platform and is powered by a 1.5l EVO TSI engine that is mated to a seven-speed DSG transmission. The SUV comes in six different eclectic body colours with a



Telugu celebrity Lakshmi posing along with Volkswagen India's all-new *Tiguan Allspace*, in Hyderabad

Bridgestone brings in ENLITEN tech for Volkswagen's ID.3



BRIDGESTONE has collaborated with Volkswagen to bring ground-breaking ENLITEN technology, a lightweight tyre technology, to the car manufacturer's new all-electric ID.3 vehicle.

According to a press release, the environmentally-friendly ENLITEN technology, which enables tyres to have a super-low rolling resistance while requiring less material

to be created, is being applied by Bridgestone for the first time on Turanza Eco tyres specially engineered for ID.3.

Created to bring the benefits of e-mobility to more everyday drivers, ID.3 is Volkswagen's first all-electric vehicle launched in the market.

ENLITEN technology tyres, said the release, demonstrate a rolling resistance that is up to 30 per cent lower than a standard premium summer tyre. This contributes, in a combustion engine vehicle, to a reduction of fuel consumption and CO2 emissions, and significantly extends battery life in an electric vehicle.

Mr Karsten Schebsdat, Head of Chassis Development, Volkswagen, said, "The ID.3 is our biggest launch since the Golf. We knew that the tyres had to be perfect if drivers were going to realise all of the vehicle's performance and environmental benefits. So we selected Bridgestone and its ENLITEN technology for the ID.3."

Mr Mark Tejedor, V-P Original Equipment at Bridgestone, said, "We are very proud at Bridgestone to have helped bring the performance and environmental benefits of ENLITEN technology to the roads for the first time on Volkswagen's new all-electric ID.3 vehicle."

VW T-Roc and Tiguan Allspace...

dual-tone rooftop that enhances the sporty look of the vehicle.

The T-Roc is equipped with the intelligent Active Cylinder Technology (ACT), which senses the driving pattern and accordingly activates or deactivates two out of the four cylinders of the engine to manage the fuel consumption.

Tiguan Allspace, said a company press release, is designed for customers with a larger than life outlook; and who are adventurous in nature. The SUV comes equipped with a power-mill of 2.0l TSI engine mated to a seven-speed DSG 4MOTION transmission to enhance the driving comfort while being fuel-efficient

in nature.

Packed with ergonomic design, roomy interiors, safety features and exceptional build quality, the Tiguan Allspace is a true space giant that fits well with the needs of the Indian customer. The carline is offered in seven different body colours.

Both the carlines comply with Euro-6 or BS-VI norms as applicable in India.



Ashok Bhasin joins BluSmart Mobility's Advisory Board

BLUSMART Mobility on July 21 announced the appointment of global brand-building wizard Mr Ashok Bhasin to its Advisory Board.

A press release issued by the electric mobility platform said Mr Bhasin, a digital evangelist, has great experience as a CEO with accomplishments in diverse C-suite roles while leading large teams. As a champion of profitable growth and balanced value creation, he brings critical strategic thinking and operational expertise to BluSmart Mobility, added the release.

"Mr. Bhasin's stellar business acumen and impressive track record of successfully starting, building and turning around diverse businesses across consumer, retail and auto sectors is of vital importance to our company's future", said Mr Anmol Jaggi, Co-Founder, BluSmart Mobility.

Commenting on the new journey, Mr Bhasin said, "I am very excited to mentor and work with Anmol and his talented BluSmart Mobility Team to help them build a viable business model and to build an organisation with the right ethos. My vision is to help build BluSmart Mobility as a 'best-in-class' mobility platform with a powerful and profitable brand that consumers trust and love".



Mr Ashok Bhasin

Spark Minda strengthens senior leadership team



Mr Neeraj Mahajan
Group President, Mktg,
Spark Minda

LEADING auto ancillary manufacturer Spark Minda has announced the appointment of Mr. Neeraj Mahajan as Group President - Marketing and Mr. Arvind Chandra as the CEO - Business Vertical 1 (Mechatronics).

Mr. Ashok Minda, Chairman & Group CEO, Minda Corporation Limited, said, "I am very excited to have on board such accomplished business leaders having rich industry experience of 25 to 30 years and strong relationships with eminent Indian and global customers. I am very sure, with their rich experience and customer-centric approach; they will strengthen our

relationships and continue to delight our customers with best of our offerings to be recognised as a leading innovative system solution provider. We have enhanced our focus on operational excellence, customer centricity and speedy market responsiveness."

A company press release said the Spark Minda senior leadership team is now geared up to enhance the trust, faith and confidence of its stakeholders. It will continue to create new benchmarks, innovative and technologically advanced products and be the supplier of choice in the auto industry, added the release.

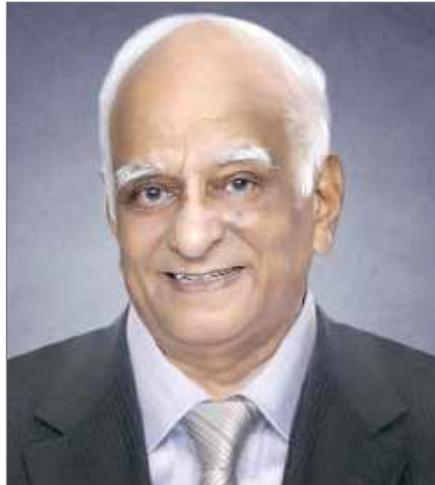
Pioneer of auto parts sector N. Venkataramani passes away

MR N Venkataramani, Chairman & Managing Director of India Pistons, part of the Amalgamations Group, passed away on August 8 at the age of 80.

A person of integrity, compassion, and empathy; someone with lots of humility, that's how peers, friends and well-wishers remember Mr Venkataramani, who was the son-in-law of Amalgamations Group's Founder Mr S Anantharamakrishnan.

For over five decades, Mr Venkataramani helmed the affairs at India Pistons and during this time he was instrumental in creating several new ventures, including some with foreign collaboration. He also served as the Chairman of IP Rings and George Oakes and was on the board of Group companies such as Bimetal Bearings, Amalgamations VALEO and Stanadyne.

Mr Venkataramani was also acknowledged for his contribution as President of MCCI, ACMA, Employers Federation of India, and his support to professional bodies such as SAE, NIQR, etc. He was a keen sportsman



Mr N. Venkataramani

and lover of sports. India Pistons is known for its cricket team as much as for its engineered products.

Mr Venkataramani was a Fellow of The Institute of Mechanical Engineers having completed his Masters from Imperial College, London.

In his condolence message, Mr A Krishnamoorthy, Group Chairman, Amalgamations Group, said, "Mr Venkataramani respected the legacy and values of the Amalgamations Group. He was

always keen to address the opportunities and challenges of the evolving future. He was a person of integrity and fairness in all his approaches. He had an excellent relationship with colleagues and employees. We deeply value his immense contribution to the Group."

"A compassionate and empathetic leader, he drew people to him in an embracing style. He was hugely popular with management teams and labour alike. His open-mindedness defined him. Ever encouraging of younger generations, he was a mentor to many," said Ms Mallika Srinivasan, Chairman & MD, TAFE.



Mr P. Vijayaraghavan

Vijayaraghavan passes away

TVS Group veteran Mr P Vijayaraghavan passed away in Chennai on July 8. He served the Group for over five glorious decades.

Mr Vijayaraghavan played a pre-eminent role in the growth of TVS Srichakra right from its founding, where he continued to be actively involved till his passing away, as a Director on the Board.

As a veteran of the rubber and tyre industry, and as an active member of several industry bodies, he played a pivotal role in the growth of the sector in the country.

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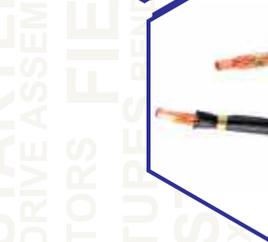
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SPARK PLUG CABLES



CARBON BRUSHES



*Environment friendly
material
*Long lasting product
*Extends life of commutator

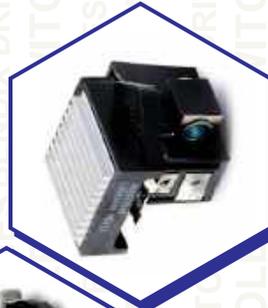


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VOLTAGE REGULATORS & RECTIFIERS



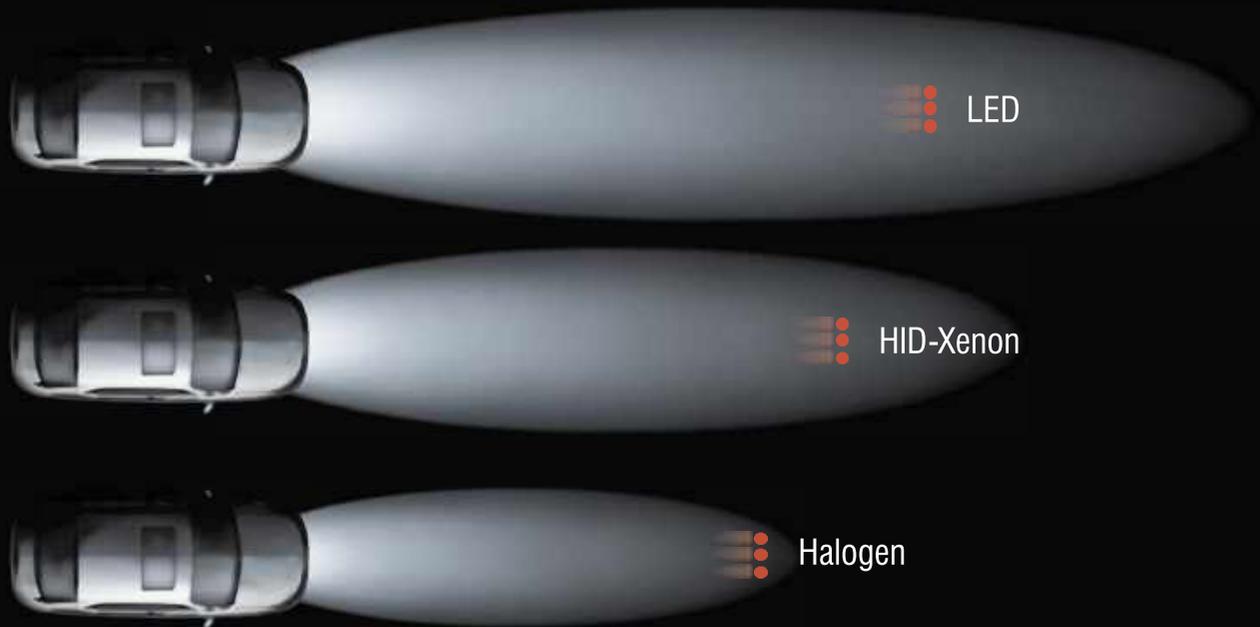
*Well engineered product
for high performance
at Competitive prices



Maximizing Safety, Minimizing Fatalities. MAKING IT POSSIBLE.

In India, 1.37 lakh people die in road accidents every year;
70% fatal accidents occur at night.

Through advancements in Auto Lighting Technology with LED's,
we are lighting the road ahead, bringing safety to the fore-front.



NEOLITE

advantage:

- One of the largest OEM suppliers in India.
- Customer-base of over 30 prestigious OEM's.
- Exporting to over 80 countries worldwide.
- State-of-the-art infrastructure with modern facilities.
- Experienced work-force and dedicated R&D team.

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