

AUTOGUIDE

India's Automotive Industry & Trade Journal

56
YEARS
SINCE 1966

REWIND

**2021
OUTLOOK
2022**

**Chip crisis
is here to stay
Industry explores
solutions, taps
alternatives**

An industry perspective



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7400+

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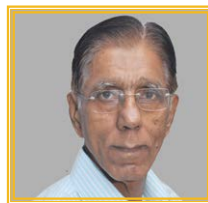
- Committed for development of society
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Editor's Viewpoint



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Founder



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SHILPA MALHOTRA
Executive Editor

**WE
APPROACHED
SOME KEY
PLAYERS OF THE
INDUSTRY AND
HAVE REPORTED
THEIR VIEWS ON
THE SUBJECT, IN
THEIR WORDS.**

Voices from across the industry

December is the time to do some kind of stock-taking of the year that we are about to leave behind and chalk out plans for the year ahead. And that's what we have attempted to do in the Cover Story of Autoguide this month. We approached some key players of the industry and have reported their views on the subject, in their words. What emerges is a uniformity of opinion on how 2021 has been a year of mixed fortunes; with initial setback caused by the second wave of the pandemic, followed by the recovery phase and then another jolt in the form of production losses as a result of the global shortage of semiconductors. Having seen it all in a roller-coaster year, as one of the contributors put it, the auto industry is geared up to enter 2022 with hopes of a robust, and interrupted, recovery on the back of a rising consumer demand. Let's keep our fingers crossed and wish for a healthy and successful 2022!

The semiconductor shortage and its impact on the production of vehicles and, consequently, the sales volumes of automobile companies is the other major story of this issue. There doesn't seem to be an early, and easy, way out of the crisis as most projections suggest that it is unlikely to be over before the second quarter of the next year. That, surely, is a discouraging scenario as there has been a spurt in the demand of late and waiting time for various models is perpetually on the increase. The good thing, however, is that majority of the brands have come up with alternative strategies to keep their producing lines running. That certainly is no solution and one only hopes that the entire issue gets resolved at the earliest.

A feel-good story we carry in this issue is about the KPMG survey which says that global auto executives are confident that the auto industry will see more profitable growth in the next five years and that the market share of electric vehicles will grow dramatically by 2030. It is not all rosy though, as the survey also talks about concerns over supply chain issues and labour shortages.

Read all this and much more in the final issue of the outgoing year.

Happy reading!

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The year that was... & ...The year ahead

VOICES FROM THE INDUSTRY

As we head towards 2022, it's time to reminisce about the year we are about to leave behind. Beyond doubt, 2021 was a year of mixed fortunes for the automobile industry and it is looking forward to the year ahead with lots of hopes. While the early part of 2021 struck a major blow in the wake of the second wave of the pandemic, the later months saw the revival process being impacted by production losses caused by global

shortage of semiconductors. Notwithstanding the double whammy, the industry has kept the morale high and is marching ahead confidently on its road to recovery. While it is expecting to see an end to the chip crisis in the next few months, it is also hopeful that the New Year 2022 will turn out to be a year of unhindered, and robust, growth. We reproduce below the industry perspective in the words of some key players.





MR SHASHANK SRIVASTAVA

Sr. Executive Director, Marketing & Sales, Maruti Suzuki India

THE year 2021 has been quite a roller-coaster year for the auto industry. From overcoming the devastating impact of the COVID 19 second wave to battling the crippling global semiconductor shortage, I believe, the auto industry has seen it all and, hopefully, is now on its road to recovery. As per the SIAM Automotive Mission Plan, the industry has set a target of increasing contribution to the GDP by 12-15 pc in the next few years. So, the coming year will be critical for the growth of the auto industry and the economy at large.

As more and more Indians get vaccinated and restrictions ease, the auto industry is looking forward to leverage the pent-up demand in the market and starting the New Year on a positive note. While the supply chain crisis of electronic components seems to be getting over, uncertainty due to global linkages still looms. The only long-term solution to this

problem is maximising local automotive component manufacturing. Now more than ever, the auto industry must come together to further strengthen the 'Make in India' imperative and work on diversifying automotive supply chain.

At Maruti Suzuki, we are noticing an increasing customer preference for personal mobility as the number of first-time buyers increased by 45 to 50 per cent this year. The pandemic has unlocked new avenues of growth with a rise in demand for small cars and two-wheeler segments in rural areas. Digitisation post pandemic has become one of the biggest driving force and at Maruti, we have already digitised 24 out of 26 touch-points of a customer's purchase journey.

The auto industry has braved incredible odds and while the future is still largely uncertain, I believe that the sector's undying spirit of innovation and resilience will lead it to good growth in the coming year.



MR SATYAKAM ARYA

MD & CEO, Daimler India Commercial Vehicles

IN FY21, the economic slowdown and the pandemic pushed commercial vehicle sales to their lowest level in 11 years. However, in the past few months, the commercial vehicle segment witnessed better recovery trends fueled by government measures to reboot the economy. Last year, M&HCV had a total volume of about 1,06,00 units. This year, the industry sold about 1,07,000 units by the end of July 2021. We are expecting total volumes to be in the range of 1,80,000-2,00,000 units by the end of 2021. If the current growth momentum continues, 2022 should be a strong year for the CV Industry.

Moreover, construction activities, especially affordable housing, and deregulation of the mining sector, and proactive private participation is reviving demand for the tippers segment. We are also seeing demand revival from the long-haul sectors like cement and steel. There is 30 per cent growth in the e-commerce business and

that leads to a strong demand pull for the CV industry.

The supply chain continues to be a challenge and from here on matching demand with supply would be the main purpose. Additionally, the semiconductor crisis is an issue that affects everyone and will remain a challenge for at least a year longer. India offers a huge potential for growth as economic revival happens and the CV market matures in its dynamics, efficiency, and business models. We strongly believe the challenges we are seeing lately are short to medium-term challenges.

At DICV, we are uniquely positioned to weather the challenges being faced as we are making DICV even more resilient and using this crisis as an opportunity to emerge stronger.

The CV industry is expected to bounce back with healthy growth in FY22, driven by additional demand for commercial vehicles in the fields of vaccine distribution, fuel container, and cold chain segments.



DR. ALKA KAUL

Director, Horizon Industrial Products / Bluepeter Group

THE story of the Indian automotive industry is a complete blockbuster. In spite of all the trials, hurdles and deterrents, it has yet again proved its strength.

The auto industry in the country was going through a tough phase when the pandemic struck in 2020, leading to its further decline. But it was amazing to note that it was one of the first one to open the doors of its manufacturing units. The auto ancillary companies resumed their operations and the pandemic changed how the manufacturing units did their work.

I take pride in saying that the automotive industry and its ancillary companies were quick to adapt to new technologies and redefine flexi-work to ensure productivity and efficiency to meet the demand, both domestic and international.

The pandemic brought in changes to end-customers' perceptions and requirements, which increased the mobility demands. The Government played a pivotal role in ensuring that the industries, especially the MSMEs,

got all the financial support to maintain continuity.

In spite of the hurdles like increased prices of raw material and fuel and shortage of semi-conductors, the automotive industry along with the ancillary sector stood tall and worked together to mitigate the risk and provide quality products to end-customers. This is evident in the new launches, including electrification growth.

The auto ancillary Industry is expected to grow 10-15 per cent in this financial year on the back of increase in exports. The capex cycle of component makers is also back, especially investment in newer technologies and electric vehicles.

The future holds lot of challenges. But as an Industry we are quite hopeful that based on the statistical data, industry efforts and Government interventions, the revival story of the Indian automotive and ancillary industry will be a morale-booster and trendsetter, a ray of sunshine to the globe.



MR ROHIT SABOO

President & CEO, National Engineering Industries

WHILE India could recover fairly from the first wave, the second wave hit the country the hardest in terms of fatalities. This led to further slowdown in labor-intensive industries where impact was mainly on account of supply chain disruption, raw material, labour shortage, decrease in demand, and other regulatory restrictions. The auto component industry was also hugely affected by the second wave with shutdowns and reduction in sales.

This period, though difficult, gave us a chance to develop more local suppliers to reduce our dependency on imports. We were also able to gather a pool of ideas to cope up with the situation and work on some massive cost-reduction strategies as well. When things opened, we picked up rapidly and did better than the industry average.

To fight against COVID-19, we organised vaccination camps for our employees and their immediate family members and introduced several other initiatives.

We also extended our support to the state Government by funding setting up an oxygen generation plant for SMS Hospital and donated over 100 oxygen concentrators to Rajasthan Government and Indian Railways that were imported to support the efforts against the COVID-19 battle.

While demand for automobile has been on an upswing in the past few months, supply has been one of the major concerns owing to the global shortage of semiconductor chips. Additionally high raw material prices continue to be a challenge.

The introduction of EVs will be a big step for the auto industry towards supporting the green mission. We are already part of this emerging electric mobility sector with our range of smart and high-speed bearings. We are also further expanding our manufacturing footprint by setting up new lines with focus on investing in improving quality of products, people and technology. We have aggressive growth plans both organically and inorganically.



MR K SARAVANASUNDARAM

Joint MD, Roots Industries India

THE year 2021 was a challenging year with price hikes, higher lead times and scarcity of various commodities for automotive industries along with the impact of COVID-19 in the country. The lockdown announced in many countries resulted in shortages of manpower and raw material and logistics issues globally, thereby, becoming the major cause of semiconductor shortage.

Also, the demand of telecommunication network increased rapidly which resulted in the shortage of semiconductor component for automotive industries. Requirements of automotive and telecom industries increased due to new additional requirements in vehicles, like Bluetooth connectivity, driver-assist, navigation tools and hybrid-electric systems. The demand for vehicles also increased post COVID-19, which resulted in capacity issues at semiconductor and component assembly industries. The launch of EVs is another major factor for the huge consumption of semiconductors.

The semiconductor industry was facing various problems due to the above factors from January 2021. Particularly, ICs (integrated circuits) and MOSFET

(metal-oxide-semiconductor field-effect transistor) were critical shortages across the globe and lead time increased to more than 52 weeks from 12 weeks.

Automotive requirements in our sector had gone up and we had huge demands for our products with shorter lead time. Since, semiconductor components have been in huge demand globally, we faced severe shortages and lead times were on higher side. We could sense the problem in early 2021 and to meet the higher demand from customers, forecast were given to our semiconductor component suppliers well in advance. Certain parts were procured at a premium price to meet the demand.

We have ensured that no customer is impacted due to challenges like COVID-19, semiconductors shortages, long lead times and transportation delays. To meet the demand of 2022, we have improved our planning according to the current situation. We have improved our supplies and stock position of semiconductor components.



MR KRISHNAKUMAR SRINIVASAN

MD & CEO, Shriram Pistons & Rings

THE Year 2020 – 2021 was severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which not only impacted individuals but companies and businesses also. After the first wave of the pandemic, we saw positive consumer sentiments and a rise in demand in Q3 and Q4 of 2020. Subsequently the second wave in Q2 hit the industry badly.

The auto industry got heavily impacted by the shortage of skilled manpower due to frequent lockdowns and rising COVID-19 cases. This resulted in slowdown of production in OEMs and component industry and created a disruption in the entire value chain.

Alongside, due to environmental regulations, geopolitical situation, and other natural calamities, the commodity prices started increasing in Q1 and Q2 of this year. This got further coupled with the semiconductor shortage, shortage of containers, and higher freight costs, thereby, affecting the entire supply chain.

During this year we saw a slowdown in demand, especially in the two-wheelers segment. Demand in the passenger vehicle segment continued to be very strong but production was largely impacted due to

supply chain and logistic constraints. Tractors sales were buoyant in H1 and commercial vehicles sales also improved due to the Infrastructure push by the Government.

The Government took several initiatives to boost the automotive sector. The PLI scheme for and the scrappage policy are likely to give an impetus to the auto industry in the next financial year. With the efforts from the Government and the global supply chain/logistic issues getting resolved, we expect the auto industry to bounce back in the coming year.

Shriram Pistons & Rings Ltd is the technology leader, well poised to grow with a diversified portfolio across various customer segments. We firmly believe that these transformations and Government initiatives will open new doors of opportunities for companies like us, which have been winning the hearts of customers through our quality, investment in technology and R&D.

Another important aspect is the investment in human capital, which is the driving force and one of the most valuable components of any business. The future will belong to those companies which pay most attention to effective management of human resources.



MR NAVEEN MUNJAL

MD, Hero Electric Vehicles

AT the recently held climate change conference (COP26 Summit) in Glasgow, country and business leaders committed to a net-zero emission target by 2070, and to achieve it, 'now' is the start point. There was a continuous push for sustainable solutions without any defined timeline, whereas the 2070 announcement will urge all entities to work backward starting today.

It brings us to a point where we stand as a sector with immense potential to promote cleaner mobility and contribute to the larger goal. The segment has witnessed upward growth momentum pertaining to the revised policy, bettering infrastructure, and awareness this year to lead the long-term growth. It is getting mainstream and is actively considered by conscientious customers. It is on course to fulfill its promise as a game-changer for the automobile industry, with 2W and 3W vehicles likely to lead the adoption curve. However, it is time to raise the bar for EV growth.

The country needs to significantly scale up its EV ambitions to reduce dependence on fuel to power passenger road mobility. In a recent announcement, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said the Government intends to have EV sales penetration of 30 pc for private

cars, 70 pc for commercial vehicles, 40 pc for buses, and 80 pc for two and three-wheelers by 2030. To achieve this, it will require aggressive EV policies to capitalise on India's competitive advantage and eliminate barriers to EV uptake. It has given a tremendous push via FAME and other schemes; however, there is always room for improvement.

We are witnessing an inequality in the PLI scheme between bigwigs and the medium/smaller players, and we feel that it needs revision to further the growth of innovators and startups. Lack of visibility, nascent infrastructure, and range anxiety continue to influence EV purchase decisions. A greater frequency of EV charging or battery swapping, or fast-charging stations can ensure better visibility and help build consumer confidence.

We have been in the EV 2W segment for over 14 years, building the category via in-depth R&D and creating the widest product portfolio. We have been frontrunner in pioneering newer technologies and strengthening infrastructure to promote the electrification drive. In the upcoming year, we are looking at expanding our manufacturing, enhancing technology, and investing further towards developing a robust EV infrastructure.



MR PRADEEP GS

Managing Director, Jost World.

THE automotive and CV industry weathered a rough storm in the form of COVID last year and is on the path to recovery. However, we remain cautiously optimistic since the new COVID variants make it difficult to predict the events which could unfold in 2022.

Since the turn of the calendar year, market sentiments have improved and demand has picked up considerably, leading to more optimism in the next financial year. We are engaging constantly with our key OEMs, supplier partners, dealers and fleet operators to take into account their views/sentiments on how the upcoming financial year is expected to pan out.

As industry experts have reiterated, the year 2020 was one of survival. Our meticulous planning and implementation of a clear strategy steered us out of the adversity. Our company did very well initially, focussing on employees' morale. Upon restarting, we were supported by intercompany orders and we could

clock decent sales to stay well afloat. Starting December 2020, it has been a big ramp-up.

The CV industry faced a multitude of hurdles since 2019 itself and, as if all these were not enough, the onset of the pandemic was a crippling blow. The truck segment in the CV domain saw significant de-growth in the last couple of years, but there would be a significant uptick in the figures for 2021.

We firmly believe in having clear strategies for both organic and inorganic growth. We are cashing in on the rise in demand for fifth wheels and have also increased the added value in the existing product range in the form of more chassis parts. Focus on the trailer segment has been intensified. We have seen good traction in sale of our trailer products in recent months. To specific segments, we are also offering products through imports from Germany.

Chip woes continue to impact sales

Maruti, Hyundai take the biggest hit in November

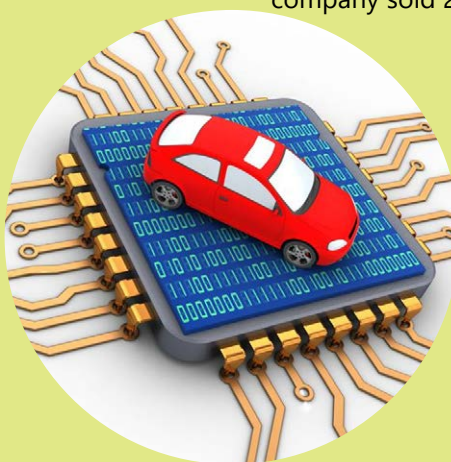
AUTOMOBILE sales largely remained in the negative territory in November thanks to the semiconductor shortage, which continued to force production cuts. Several OEMs reported negative numbers, with the two largest players, Maruti Suzuki and Hyundai Motor, posting the steepest decline during the month. Tata Motors, Toyota Nissan and Mahindra witnessed positive sales growth.

Maruti Suzuki India reported 9 pc decline in total sales at 1,39,184 units as against 1,53,223 units sold in the same month last year. Total domestic sales were down 18 per cent at 1,17,791 units as compared to 1,44,219 units in CPLY. The company's exports however, witnessed positive growth, standing at 21,393 units as against 9,004 units in November 2020.

"The shortage of electronic components had a minor impact on the production of vehicles during the month. The shortage primarily affected the production of vehicles sold in the domestic market. The company took all possible measures to minimise the impact," the company said in a statement.

Hyundai Motor India reported a 21 per cent decline in total sales to 46,910 units. The company had sold 59,200 units in November last year. Domestic sales were down 24 per cent at 37,001 units, as against 48,800 units in November 2020. Exports, too, declined 5 per cent. The November sales were affected by the ongoing semiconductor shortage situation, the company stated.

Tata Motors saw 25 per cent increase in sales to 62,192 units as compared to 49,650 units in November last year. The automaker posted a 21 per cent increase in its domestic wholesales at 58,073 as compared to 47,859 units in the year-ago period.



Mahindra & Mahindra sold 19,458 passenger vehicles as against 18,212 units in the same month last year, recording a year-on-year growth of 6.84 per cent.

Toyota recorded a y-o-y growth of 52.83 pc, selling 13,033 units during the month as against 8,508 units in November last year. Another company that witnessed sales growth in November was Nissan India. The company sold 2,651 units, recording a massive y-o-y sales growth 160 per cent. Skoda, too, witnessed 108 per cent sales growth, dispatching 2,196 units as against 1,056 in November last year.

MG Motor India sold 2,481 units during the month as against 4,163 units in November last year, recording negative sales growth of 40 pc. In a statement, the company said, "Enduring the industry challenges of global semiconductor chip shortage, which has severely constrained the production

levels, MG Motor is continuously working towards delivering to customers their much-awaited MG cars on time."

Honda reported domestic sales of 5,457 units as against 9,990 units in the same month last year, a y-o-y decline of 45.38 pc. It exported a total of 1,447 units last month. While Kia India saw its sales dropping over 32 per cent y-o-y, Renault sold 5,052 units during the month, as compared to 10,181 units in November last year.

In the CV segment, Tata Motors' volumes climbed 15 pc to 32,245 units while Ashok Leyland saw a 4 pc dip in volumes to 9,364 units. Mahindra & Mahindra reported a 15 pc decline in tractor sales at 27,681 units. The company had sold 32,726 units in the same month last year. Escorts, too, witnessed a 30 pc decline in tractor sales at 7,116 units. VE Commercial Vehicles posted a 10.1 pc increase in sales at 4,085 units.

Chip crisis is here to stay

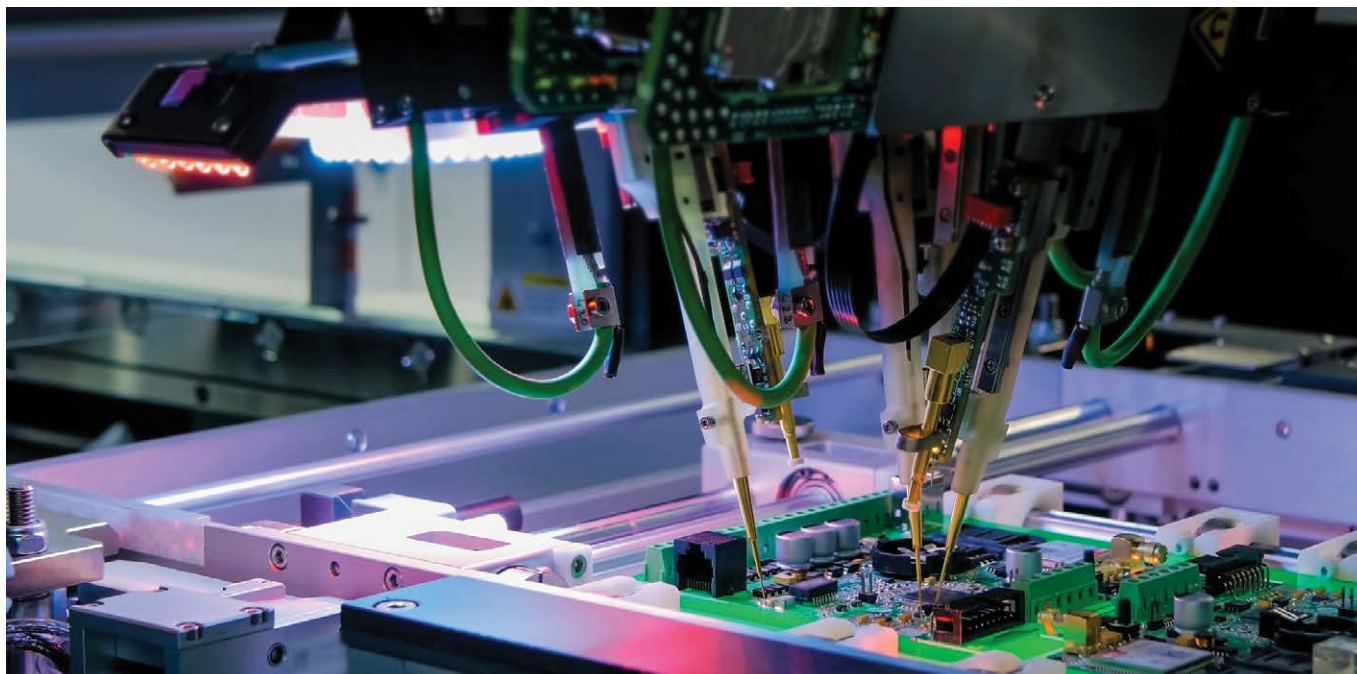
Industry explores solutions, taps alternatives

EVER since the beginning of this year, the shortage of semiconductors (or chips, as they are commonly called) has been hitting the automobile production worldwide; and India has been no exception. The gravity of the problem got further highlighted when the vehicular production in the country could not cope up with the surge in demand during the festive season. Though the automobile industry has been trying its best to find a way out, no easy, and early, solution seems to be in sight.

With the transition into connected and electric mobility catching pace, the sector's dependence on semiconductors has been on the increase. Since these silicon-made objects propel most of the smart features, like infotainment systems, touchscreens, power windows, music systems and remote keys, which are an intrinsic part of modern-day vehicles, their shortage was bound hit production. The prolonged chip shortage has led to curtailed production of automobiles worldwide; and the problem is here to stay, for the next few quarters at least.

According to a latest projection by New York-based consulting firm AlixPartners, the semiconductor shortage is expected to cost the global automotive industry \$210 billion in revenue in 2021. The forecast is almost double its previous projection of \$110 billion, made in May. The firm had released an initial forecast of \$60.6 billion in January when the problem started forcing automakers to cut production. AlixPartners is now forecasting that 7.7 million units of production will be lost this year, up from 3.9 million it had forecast in May, and it expects the problem to continue into, at least, the second quarter of the next year.

Not much different is the forecast by the information services company IHS Markit, which said the global auto industry may produce 6.3-7.1 million fewer vehicles this year due to the chip shortage. In its report, the London-headquartered firm said the crisis will not be over before the second quarter of next year. A Gartner report also estimated that the chip shortage could continue well into the second quarter of 2022.



With the problem unlikely to end anytime soon, vehicle makers are coming up with alternative strategies. To keep their producing lines running, some car manufacturers have decided to cut down chip usage to the bare minimum. Many have decided to manufacture variants without additional features as the waiting period for several top models has been growing constantly. According to a report in The Economic Times, some vehicles manufacturers are launching their top-end vehicles with simpler infotainment systems and giving customers only one remote key at the time of purchase.



Mr Kenichi Ayukawa
President, SIAM

"While the semiconductor shortage appears to be a challenge, it also brings in an opportunity."

All these measures have been necessitated as manufacturing of chips cannot be increased on short notice. It's a long process and requires large investments. A Bloomberg report said, "Manufacturing a chip typically takes more than three months and involves giant factories, dust-free rooms, multi-million-dollar machines, molten tin and lasers."

That, undoubtedly, is a huge challenge but the auto industry in the country is also seeing it as an opportunity. A PTI report quoted Mr Kenichi Ayukawa, President of the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), as saying: "While the semiconductor shortage appears to be a challenge, it also brings in an opportunity. Of course, semiconductor manufacturing requires very huge investments. The Indian automobile industry alone cannot assure the full viability of such an investment in semiconductor projects. Hence, there is a need for consolidation across sectors."



Mr. Girish Kamala
Senior Director, Infineon Technologies India

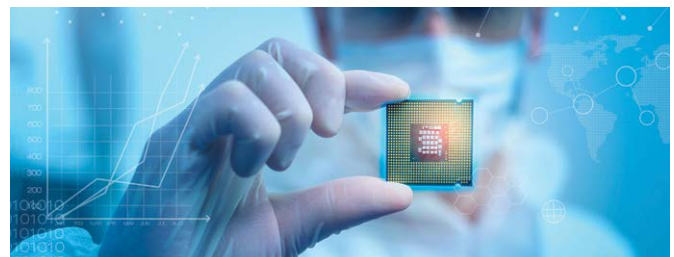
"From India's perspective, it makes more sense to invest in backend manufacturing."

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IHS Markit says the global auto industry may produce 6.3-7.1 million fewer vehicles this year due to the chip shortage and the crisis will not be over before the second quarter of next year

About setting up new semiconductor plants in India, Mr. Girish Kamala, Senior Director & Country Head Sales – Automotive, Infineon Technologies India, said, to set up a new such plant would take about 18 months to two years. "More than the investment, what's even more relevant is to be able to create an ecosystem that includes the front-end (manufacturing of wafers) and the backend (the packaging). From India's perspective, it makes more sense to invest in backend manufacturing", he said at the Connected Mobility Summit organised by Express Mobility in the first week of October.

With the dawn of the New Year almost near, it is abundantly clear that while the automobile industry is gradually learning to live with the issues arising out of the semiconductor shortage, it is also confident of ensuring the problem doesn't prolong much further.



Skoda launches Slavia

Its second India-specific model after Kushaq



SKODA Auto launched its midsize sedan Slavia on November 18, marking the start of the next stage in its India 2.0 project. Following Kushaq, Slavia is the Czech carmaker's second India-specific model.

The new sedan has been launched in five colour options and in three trims, Active, Ambition and Style.

According to the company, Slavia is based on the locally developed and produced MQB-A0-IN platform, designed to meet new, stricter safety and emissions specifications.

Mr. Thomas Schäfer, CEO, Skoda Auto, said, "With the new Slavia, we are igniting the next stage of our India 2.0 product campaign.

Following the successful launch of the Kushaq, we are now entering another popular segment with our brand-new premium midsize sedan."

Slavia, he said, was perfectly tailored to the needs of customers in India and is built with up to 95 per cent localisation. "We are confident that both the Kushaq and the Slavia will allow us to leverage the full potential in this promising, growing market," he added.

Mr. Gurpratap Boparai, Managing Director of Skoda Auto Volkswagen India, said, "The sophisticated Slavia stands for prestige and style. It also represents a new growth area for Skoda Auto. With its sophistication,

capable engines and numerous simply clever features, the Slavia will appeal to discerning customers in India, and it will also be appreciated in markets around the world."

Skoda Slavia comes in two engine formats 1.0 TSI and 1.5 TSI with six air bags. The one litre three-cylinder petrol engine generates 113 bhp of power and 175 Nm of torque. It comes available with a six-speed manual and a six-speed automatic gearbox options.

The car's low front section highlights a hexagonal Skoda grille, extending all the way to slender, sharply defined headlights that feature an L-shaped daytime running light strip. Also visible are the coupé-style silhouette and long wheelbase, as well as a distinctive badge with the Skoda wordmark on the front wings.

The sedan's roofline slopes towards the rear, where it merges into the boot lid. Adding further touches to the model's distinctive looks are the Skoda word-mark in block letters and a rear apron with a chrome strip. Reflectors on either side emphasise the vehicle's width. Featuring the signature C-shaped Skoda lights design, the taillights are divided into two parts and extend into the boot lid.



Audi Q5 launched in a striking new avatar

'A perfect amalgamation of luxury, sportiness and comfort'



GERMAN luxury car manufacturer Audi on November 23 launched Audi Q5 in India. The car combines a sporty character with excellent everyday usability, and comes with a wide array of infotainment and assistance options.

It is powered by a 2.0-litre TFSI engine that produces 249 HP of power and 370Nm torque. The Audi Q5 is being offered in two variants – Premium Plus and Technology.

Commenting on the launch, Mr. Balbir Singh Dhillon, Head of Audi India, said, "Today, we have launched our ninth product for 2021 and couldn't be happier. Historically, the Audi Q5 has been amongst our bestsellers and we are confident that this new model is going to be no different. With more enhancements, the Audi Q5 offers a perfect amalgamation of luxury, sportiness, comfort and everyday use."



With Audi Drive Select, the driver can choose between six modes, ranging from comfort, dynamic, individual, auto, efficiency and off-road. The quattro four-wheel-drive system enables optimal grip in challenging terrains.

The front of Audi Q5 comes with the trademark single-frame grille with an octagon outline, which has sharper and better-defined edges.

While the grille and the slats have chrome garnishes, the skid plates, roof rails, and the new fog-lamp casing get silver accents.

The look is enhanced by 48.26 cms (R19) alloy wheels, wraparound shoulder line, LED Combination Lamps, Panoramic Sunroof, and aluminium roof rails.

The car is available in five colour options – Navarra Blue, Ibis White, Mythos Black, Floret Silver and Manhattan Gray.



Mr. Balbir Singh Dhillon,
Head Audi India

VW launches Tiguan facelift



Mr. Gurpratap Boparai,
Managing Director, Skoda Auto Volkswagen
India Pvt. Ltd

Ashish Gupta,
Volkswagen Passenger Cars India

VOLKSWAGEN Passenger Cars India launched the face-lifted Tiguan SUV in the country on December 7. The deliveries of the vehicle will start in mid-January.

This is the fourth SUV the company has introduced in India this year, having brought in additional units of T-Roc and Tiguan Allspace earlier this year and Taigun midsize SUV a few months ago.

Tiguan facelift is locally assembled at the VW Group facility in Aurangabad, and will be available in a single, fully-loaded 'Elegance' variant.

This is the midlife update for the second-gen Tiguan, which made its global debut back in 2015 and was subsequently launched in the country in 2017.

Among key changes in the new version on the outside are the inclusion of swept-back, adaptive LED Matrix headlights with the 'IQ Light' system comprising 24 individual LEDs, a four-slat chrome grille, revised LED tail-lights with a new light signature and 18-inch 'Frankfurt' alloy wheels.

Inside, there's a 10-inch, full-digital instruments display, an 8.0-inch touchscreen infotainment system with gesture controls, a panoramic sunroof, three-zone

automatic climate control, leather seats, USB-C ports and a flat-bottom steering wheel.

The safety kit includes six airbags, front and rear disc brakes, ABS, electronic stability control and anti-slip regulation.

The SUV is available with a sole petrol engine option – the 2.0-litre, four-cylinder TSI turbo-petrol, which makes 190 HP and 320 Nm of torque.

At the start of production of Tiguan on November 25, Mr. Gurpratap Boparai, Managing Director, Skoda Auto Volkswagen India Pvt. Ltd, had said, "We are committed to continuously providing our customers with the best of technology and exciting products from Volkswagen Group and the introduction of new Tiguan is a testament to the same."



Volvo launches the new petrol mild-hybrid XC90

Completes transition to petrol portfolio



Volvo Car India on November 11 launched its flagship luxury SUV, the new XC90 with a completely new petrol mild-hybrid engine.

Coming close on the heels of the October launch of petrol mild-hybrids Volvo S90 and Volvo XC60, the launch completes the company's commitment of transition from diesel to petrol cars, said a press release.

The new petrol mild-hybrid Volvo XC90, a seven-seat SUV, is priced at Rs. 89,90,000 (ex-showroom).

The XC90 was the first car to be launched on the Scalable Product Architecture (SPA), Volvo's advanced modular and state-of-the-art product platform that features in all Volvo cars in the 90 and 60 Series.

"With the launch of the New XC90, we have launched three new petrol mild-hybrid models this quarter. The confidence reposed by the customer in our brand has given us the conviction to offer them technology loaded new models," said Mr. Jyoti Malhotra, Managing Director, Volvo Car India.

The advanced technology in XC90 enables the driver to have personalised comfort and mobility setting. Head-up display allows the driver to watch speed, follow turn-by-turn navigation, answer phone calls and more. All come without losing focus on the road, said the company release.

The XC90 has an intuitive touch screen interface that combines car functions, navigation, connected services and in-car entertainment applications.

It comes with a latest Advanced Air Cleaner technology that has a sensor to measure PM 2.5 levels inside the cabin.

In the cabin, XC90 provides a luxury mobility environment with a blend of high-end material such as wood, crystal and metal in a sophisticated Scandinavian design.



Mr. Jyoti Malhotra,
Managing Director, Volvo Car India.

BMW 220i 'Black Shadow' edition launched in India



BMW Group India launched the new BMW 220i 'Black Shadow' edition in the country on November 16.

Mr. Vikram Pawah, President, BMW Group India, said, "The limited edition of the BMW 2 Series Gran Coupé takes forward the celebrations this festive season. The successful 'Black Shadow' edition now gets even more irresistible in its petrol avatar."

Enhanced exterior of the new BMW 2 Series Gran Coupé 'Black Shadow' edition provides a distinctive visual appeal with its BMW Individual high-gloss shadow line package along with BMW 'M' Performance parts, said a press release.

The high-gloss black mesh-style M front grille lends a highly dynamic front look. The black exterior mirror caps add discreet yet distinctive details to the side view with an impressive depth effect. The BMW 'M' Performance rear spoiler in high-gloss black adds an attractive touch of visual flair.

The interior is designed to accentuate cabin spaciousness with the driver-focused cockpit with exquisite materials and a large panorama glass sunroof. The sport seats with electrical memory function and generous cabin space offer rear passengers an ample knee-room for greater long-distance comfort.

According to the release, the two-litre four-cylinder petrol engine produces an output of 190 hp and a maximum torque of 280 Nm at 1350-4600 rpm. The car accelerates from 0 -100 km / hr in just 7.1 seconds.

Modern cockpit concept BMW Live Cockpit Professional includes 3D Navigation, a 10.25-inch digital instrument display and a 10.25-inch Control Display.

BMW Safety technologies include six airbags, Attentiveness Assistance, Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) with Brake Assist, ARB technology (actuator contiguous wheel slip limitation system), Dynamic Stability Control and Electronic Differential Lock Control.



Euler bags 1k-HiLoad EV order from MoEVing

EULER Motors has received an order of 1,000 vehicles from MoEVing, for its recently-launched three-wheeler cargo vehicle HiLoad EV.

MoEVing, a Gurugram-based technology player, will deploy these vehicles across India, according to a press release.

With this, the post-launch order line-up for HiLoad has crossed 3,500 vehicles, including orders from Flipkart, BigBasket and Udaan, said the release.

Mr Vikas Mishra, Founder and CEO, MoEVing, said, "Working towards a future where there are no urban



transport emissions, especially due to last-mile logistics, we are excited to deploy HiLoad in our fleet."

Mr Saurav Kumar, Founder and CEO, Euler Motors, said, "Euler Motors and MoEVing share a synergy of vision in the EV space, and we are delighted to be partnering with them and further our mission to achieve zero-emission logistics, with unparalleled product, technology and ecosystem solutions."

ElectricPe raises \$3 million

EV charging platform ElectricPe on November 11 announced that it has raised a Seed Round funding of \$3 million.

Led by Blume Ventures and Micelio Fund, the company will utilise the capital to develop its deep-tech platform further to enable easy access to affordable charging points via ElectricPe app.

Founded in May this year, the company makes accessing and using charging points simple, seamless, and efficient. It has created a B2C EV charging and demand-generation app that offers EV users a one-stop platform to access EV charging points and also track real-time usage.

It partners with a nationwide network of EV charging points and independent charge-point operators and on-boards them onto the ElectricPe platform.

"Using our proprietary technology and platform approach, we aim to solve for 'trust', which an EV user requires when looking for charging services," said Mr Avinash Sharma, Co-Founder & CEO, ElectricPe.



ElectricPe



Avinash Sharma, (left), Raghav Rohila,
Co-Founders of ElectricPe



KPMG survey of global auto executives

Optimism on growth, EVs; concerns over supply chain and labour issues

GLOBAL auto executives are confident that the auto industry will see more profitable growth in the next five years and that the market share of electric vehicles will grow dramatically by 2030, according to a new survey by KPMG.

At the same time, supply chain issues and labour shortages are of great concern, said the survey.

KPMG's 22nd Annual Global Automotive Executive Survey of 1,118 executives across automotive and adjacent industries found that 53 pc are confident that the industry will see more profitable growth, compared to just 38 pc who are concerned about profit prospects.

The survey, which included 372 CEOs, found that executives' confidence extends to other areas as well, including the industry's ability to withstand the next great disruption.

The news, however, is not all rosy. Executives are worried about a range of issues affecting the supply chain, including the price and availability of

semiconductors, steel, rare earth elements and other scarce materials.

Over 50 per cent of respondents were "extremely" or "very worried" about the supply of these materials. Furthermore, 55 pc of executives are very or extremely concerned about labour shortages.

Executives expect the market share of EVs to grow dramatically, though there is no consensus about what market share it will capture. EVs' popularity may depend partly on significant investments in DC fast-charging infrastructure; 77 pc of executives expect consumers to require charge times under 30 minutes when travelling. Most charging stations in service today take more than three hours.

The survey also found that expectations for the EV market are based on when EVs will reach cost parity with internal combustion engines. Most believe EVs can be widely adopted without Government subsidies (77 pc), but the majority still support such programmes (91 pc).

The technology and automotive industries are converging, leading to new alliances and new entrants. Start-ups are raising billions, and executives believe tech companies will enter the market.

Furthermore, 78 pc of executives agree that there will be a fundamental change in how vehicles are purchased in the coming years, saying that most will be sold online by 2030. And about three-quarters predict that more than 40 pc of vehicles will be sold directly by automakers to consumers, bypassing dealers.

With the move to digital commerce, executives expect that automakers will monetise the vast amount of data they will collect; 43 pc expect that automakers will sell data to auto insurance companies.

"It's encouraging to see such widespread optimism about the growth prospects for the auto industry," said Mr Gary Silberg, Global Head of Automotive at KPMG. "Car manufacturers have rarely faced such an array of technological and business-model changes since

the dawn of the automotive industry 130 years ago. Flying taxis, cars by subscription, ubiquitous and fast EV charging stations, big-tech car entrants—these are some of the developments we can expect in the next 10 years," he said.

Mr Vinodkumar Ramachandran, Partner, KPMG in India, said, "To become the custodians of automotive data, automakers will need to ensure that consumers' trust in data privacy won't be abused. This is an opportunity to create a new relationship with customers based on trust, by being careful guardians of their data."



SPREADING WINGS

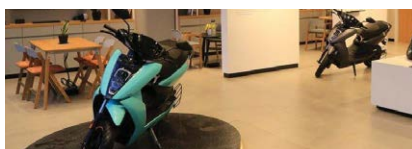


Ather opens retail outlet in Hubli; its fourth in Karnataka

A THER Energy on November 10 inaugurated its retail outlet at Bhairidevarkoppa, Hubli, in association with Bellad Group.

The Ather Space in Hubli is the company's fourth retail outlet in Karnataka, after two in Bengaluru and one in Mysore.

The latest opening, said a press release, is driven by the strong consumer demand from the city since the launch of Ather 450X and 450 Plus in January 2020. Deliveries in Hubli had already commenced earlier this year, it said.



Mercedes workshop in Bengaluru

LUXURY carmaker Mercedes-Benz on November 10 inaugurated a state-of-art workshop facility of Akshaya Motors, at Bengaluru's prime location of Hosur Road.

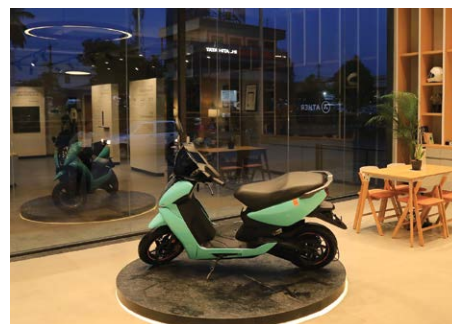
Spread across an area of approx. 20,000 sq. ft., the new facility has a professionally trained staff of 50. It has 11 bays and can service over 4,500 cars per year.



Ather commissions its second facility at Hosur

A THER Energy has commissioned its second manufacturing facility at Hosur to cater to the growing demand of its electric scooters. The company plans to manufacture 4,00,000 units per annum, a significant jump from its current capacity of 1,20,000 units, said a press release.

Ather had set up its first manufacturing facility earlier this year.



Carandbike.com opens first used car retail superstore

A UTO content and commercial portal carandbike.com forayed in to the used car market by opening its first superstore in Noida. It was inaugurated by Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Member of Parliament from Gautam Budh Nagar.

According to a press release, the store is the largest retail store in the NCR region for any used car brand. With 20,000-sqft area, the store can hold 125 cars at any given point.

The store, said the release, will offer an inclusive car-buying experience through digital as well as brick



Greaves opens its largest EV production facility in TN

GREAVES Electric Mobility on November 23 said the company's largest EV production facility in Tamil Nadu was formally inaugurated by the state Chief Minister, Mr. MK Stalin.

The Chief Minister, along with the Industries Minister Mr. Thangam Thenarasu, inaugurated the factory at Ranipet through virtual platform.

The 35-acre plant, built to preserve the green terrain surrounding the site, is located in the industrial centre of Tamil Nadu and will serve as an electric mobility hub for both domestic and export markets, said a press release issued by the e-mobility arm of Greaves Cotton Limited.

The plant, said the release, is part of the Rs 700-crore investment roadmap announced by the company to expand its growing share in the electric vehicle market.

It will have the capacity to produce 1,20,000 units by end of this fiscal year which will be gradually ramped up to 1 million units.

On the occasion, Mr Nagesh A Basavanhalli, MD and Group CEO, Greaves Cotton Limited, said, "This EV mega-site will help us meet the rising needs of discerning customers and fleet purchasers in the last-mile mobility market as we expand our capacities to produce a million EVs a year in future."

BYD expands its dealer network to eight cities

BYD India, a subsidiary of Warren Buffett-backed new energy vehicle manufacturer BYD, on November 29 announced the expansion of its dealer network across key strategic EV markets in the country.

The dealerships will be run by six dealers across eight cities including Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kochi, Mumbai, New Delhi, and Vijayawada.

All the dealerships will provide customers a holistic experience and offer sales and services for premium pure electric MPV, the all-new e6 in the B2B segment, according to a press release.

Hero MotoCorp expands operations in Argentina Opens flagship store in Buenos Aires

HERO MotoCorp, along with Gilera Motors Argentina, expanded its operations and inaugurated a flagship dealership in Buenos Aires on December 3.

The global leader had recently announced its partnering with Gilera Motors, one of the leading companies in the motor vehicle sector in Argentina and one of the most experienced motorcycle manufacturers in Latin America.

Gilera will make new investments to expand all business operations for Hero MotoCorp's products. This is expected to generate nearly 500 new jobs in the region, said a press release.

It has also expanded its plant in Carlos Spegazzini province of Buenos Aires to renovate its infrastructure and adapt the latest automotive technologies that are incorporated in Hero MotoCorp products.

Boom signs up 60 dealers

COIMBATORE-BASED EV firm Boom Motors has signed on 60 dealerships across the country.

According to a press release, the dealerships are spread across Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, and Odisha. Most of the dealerships are planned to open between January and March next year, said the release.

Boom Motors and eBikeGo Rugged, which have entered into a cross-badging agreement, will also be sharing the distribution network with each other, it added.

Mr Anirudh Ravi Narayanan, CEO & Co-Founder, Boom Motors, said "Between us and our partner eBikeGo, we have signed on 60 dealerships so far across 17 states in India. Apart from these, we have received over 3k+ dealership enquiries and are in the process of selecting dealers to onboard in new areas."



Bajaj begins Pulsar 250 deliveries

Bajaj Auto has commenced deliveries of its sports motorcycle Pulsar 250. The first delivery was done in Pune on November 15 2021 from Shourya Bajaj showroom at Chinchwad, said a press release.

Celebrating its 20 years of leadership in the segment, Bajaj launched the all-new Pulsar 250 last month, bringing the next generation of power, performance, and style to the quarter litre sports segment, added the release



Unibody seat variant of YZF-R15 V3.0 bike from Yamaha Motor

INDIA Yamaha Motor on November 17 announced the launch of an all-new 'unibody seat' variant for its YZF-R15 V3.0 super-sport motorcycle.

The new variant will be sold alongside the YZF-R15 V4 model and is priced at Rs. 1,57,600 (ex-showroom, Delhi).

Mr. Motofumi Shitara, Chairman, Yamaha Motor India Group, said, "While the YZF-R15 V4 is being highly appreciated by customers across India, our research has shown that customers are also looking for a more viable option to commute with a pillion, without having to compromise on the Racing DNA of the R15. At Yamaha we are always listening to what our customers' demand and make every possible attempt to meet those demands. Hence, the R15S V3 with a unibody seat was evident."



Hero gears up to launch EV

HERO MotoCorp is accelerating its focus on producing electric vehicles as an integral part of its product portfolio.

The company's EV project is in the advanced stages and the product will be launched in March next year. It will be manufactured at its plant in Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh.

The announcement was made by the company while reporting its financial performance for the second quarter (July-September 2021) of the FY2022.

The plant, called Garden Factory for its eco-friendly and sustainable manufacturing practices, will provide an integrated ecosystem for battery pack manufacturing and testing,



Nexzu e-cycle with 100-km range

NEXZU Mobility has come up with an e-cycle, called Roadlark, which it said offers 100 km mileage and a top speed of 25 km/hr.

The Roadlark is equipped with 2 powerful batteries – in-frame (5.2AH) and detachable (8.7AH). A BLDC 250w 36v motor gives life to the EV while Dual Disc brakes with EABS ensure a safe ride. The e-cycle in peddle assist mode offers an unparalleled 100 km range, said a company press release.

Mr. Pankaj Tiwari, Chief Marketing Officer, Nexzu Mobility, said, "We are thrilled that Roadlark is the breakthrough product in the e-cycle space. We are elevating above the rest with an e-cycle that offers 100 km range. This product is sure to boost e-cycle adoption, and is a promising innovation that can replace petrol scooters and mopeds in the years to come."



Mr. Pankaj Tiwari,
Chief Marketing Officer,
Nexzu Mobility

Bounce unveils Infinity E1

Electric scooter with swappable battery



SMART mobility solution company Bounce unveiled its first consumer electric scooter, Infinity E1, on December 2. It will be offered with a 'Battery-as-a-Service' option.

The scooter with battery and charger is priced at Rs 68,999 (Delhi ex-showroom) and the price for scooters with 'Battery-as-a-Service' is Rs 45,099 (Delhi ex-showroom).

According to a company press release, Infinity E1 achieves elegance and simplicity while ensuring maximum performance. Convenience and safety have been kept in mind while delivering a thrilling ride for the commuter.

It has a torque of 83 Nm and top speed of 65 km/h and goes from 0 to 40 km in eight seconds.

Infinity E1 comes in five colour options: Sporty Red, Sparkle Black, Pearl White, Desat Silver and Comed Grey. Pre-bookings for the vehicle have started and the deliveries are slated for March next year.

Bounce has been setting up a wide battery-swapping network through prominent partnerships, which will serve both its retail customers and ride-sharing business.

Mr. Vivekananda Hallekere, CEO & Co-Founder, Bounce, said, "The Bounce Infinity E1 is designed and engineered to cater to the evolving needs of electric scooter customers in India. Our advanced 'Made in India' scooter will come equipped with enhanced state-of-the-art equipment and intelligent features."

Honda sets up its battery sharing service subsidiary

HONDA Power Pack Energy India Private Limited, Honda's new subsidiary for battery sharing service, has been established in India.

It will offer battery sharing service for small mobility, which will accelerate the penetration of electric vehicles by solving three issues of electric vehicles: limited range, long charging time, and high cost of batteries.

The company plans to start battery sharing service for electric auto rickshaws (e-auto) from the first half of 2022 in Bengaluru and expand the operations to other cities in phased manner.



In addition to offering battery sharing service, the new company will closely work with multiple vehicle OEMs who wish to integrate Honda's battery into their vehicles, by providing necessary technical information for interface.

Matter MoU with ARAI for next-gen mobility solutions

MATTER, a technology start up focusing on electric mobility solutions, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with The Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI), Pune.

The MoU aims at collaborating in the areas of functional safety, electronics reliability and cyber security for next-generation mobility solutions.

The MoU was signed and handed over to Mr Mohal Rajiv Lalbhai, Founder and CEO of Matter, in the presence of the Union Minister of Heavy Industries, Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey.



Emphasising the need for such collaborations, Mr Lalbhai said, "We at Matter believe in redefining the present and reimagining the future. We are very proud of our association with ARAI and are looking forward to mutually explore new areas of collaboration to strengthen the EV ecosystem in the country."

Mr Lalbhai further said, "We are extremely confident the association with ARAI, which is the leading automotive R&D organisation in India, coupled with Matter's technology development capabilities will widen the horizons of growth for EVs and energy storage solutions in India."

Echoing similar sentiments, Dr. Reji Mathai, Director, ARAI, said, "The collaboration will open new opportunities in the field of electric vehicles and energy storage solutions by leveraging ARAI's experience, expertise, and equipment. With ARAI's rich resource pool, and Matter's capabilities, we can achieve scalable growth in the next generation mobility solutions through this association".

Boom enters EV space with the launch of Corbett bike

BOOM Motors, a new high-tech EV brand from Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu, on November 11 unveiled Corbett, which it claimed to be "India's most durable and long-lasting bike."

The bike features a 2.3 kWh battery – which can optionally be doubled to 4.6 kWh – giving the vehicle a best-in-class range of up to 200 km, said a press release. The batteries are swappable and they come with a portable charger that can plug into any household socket thereby removing the requirement for charging infrastructure.

The vehicle, said the release, can hit a top speed of 75 kmph with the two-battery option, can support 200 kg loading, and can climb the steepest gradients in cities.



Mr Anirudh Ravi Narayanan, CEO, Boom Motors, said, "In order to fuel the transition to EVs, Boom Motors believes that vehicles should offer value, convenience and peace of mind to the customer – only then they will switch en masse. To demonstrate our best-in-class value, Boom Motors is the first EV company to offer customers to purchase our vehicles for five-year EMI."

Boom Corbett, he said, "is unlike any other bike in the world. It is beauty, beast, and brains combined. It's an absolute stunner."



MyGate, Revos partner for EV charging infra for RWAs

COMMUNITY management app MyGate and Revos, an EV Infrastructure provider, have partnered to provide sustainable electric vehicle charging solutions to resident welfare associations (RWAs) and gated societies.

The MyGate-BOLT partnership will offer various affordable and seamless charging infrastructure options to gated societies enabling residents and associations to plan for a hassle-free and cost-effective solution, said a press release.

It will also help RWAs generate passive income by opening it up for both residents and visitors. Together, the companies plan to install the BOLT EV charging solution in thousands of gated communities in the next 12 months, according to the release.

Residents will be able to see available EV charging options within the MyGate app, book slots to charge their EVs and also pay as per usage. They will also have an option to request for the installation of a charging station in their private parking lots from the MyGate app, post the approval from their RWA.

BOLT, said the release, is the world's largest peer-to-peer charging network, comprising universal BOLT charging point and BOLT operating system.

Mr. Jyotiranjana, Co-Founder, Revos, said, "We are excited to partner with MyGate to support the adoption of electric vehicles in India by providing fast, cost-effective, easy and simple charging infrastructure solutions for RWAs."

Mr. Abhishek Kumar, COO & Co-Founder, MyGate, said, "We are happy to partner with Revos to bring affordable and easy EV charging solutions to our customers."

Nexzu begins online sales

NEXZU Mobility has commenced the sale of its e-cycles and scooters from its e-commerce portal.

The platform offers complete online solutions right from purchasing an e-cycle to warranty registration to the service request, said a press release.

Mr. Pankaj Tiwari, CMO, Nexzu Mobility, said, "The world is gradually embracing the idea of electric vehicles not only because of affordable costs but also for healthier lives and a sustainable future. With our ground-breaking products, we are on a quest to provide customers a better, more efficient riding experience while also ushering in a green and clean revolution."



Switch launches EV bike

SVITCH Bike on November 20 launched its two-wheeler EV superbike CSR 762 with new design language, technology and packaging.

Mr. Raj Patel, Founder & MD of Svitch Bike, launched the bike at an event at Taj Skyline Hotel in Ahmedabad.

A press release by the company said, the bike offers 30L boot space for the consumer where one can put helmet, riding gears, cell phone chargers, and groceries.

The CSR 762, it said, offers long-lasting performance with specifications like 3KW motor and 3.6KW swappable batteries. It can reach up to 120 km with top speed of 110 km/h.



Mr. Raj Patel,
Founder & MD of Svitch
Bike,

DPGC enters EV sector; launches Darwin 2Ws



DARWIN Platform Group of Companies (DPGC) has entered the battery-powered two-wheelers electric vehicles (EVs) sector.

Darwin EVAT, a green venture of DPGC, on November 21 announced the launch of three models of Darwin electric 2Ws – D-5, D- 7 and D-14. The range was introduced by world amateur boxing champion Mary Kom.

Darwin EVs, said a press release, come with Japanese tech standards and have the highest mileage efficiency

at an affordable price. With the 'Charge and Go' maxim, these two-wheeler EVs- Darwin- D-5, D- 7 and D-14 provide the young generation a new experience with several exciting features.

Speaking at the launch, DPGC Group CEO Dr Raja Roy Choudhury said, "Global automotive industry is in a transition phase and shifting towards electric mobility and in India, this transition has started to pick up pace. Darwin EVAT aims to contribute more to this electric revolution."

He further said: "With the launch of three models, DPGC has taken a big leap forward to carbon neutrality and sustainability."





Hyundai unveils SEVEN, its new SUEV concept, at AutoMobility in LA

HYUNDAI Motor Company revealed SEVEN, a new sport utility electric vehicle concept at AutoMobility, in Los Angeles on November 18.

Following the 45 concept in 2019 and the Prophecy concept in 2020, the SEVEN concept opens a new

chapter for IONIQ brand, Hyundai's dedicated battery electric vehicle (BEV) showcase, said a press release.

These differentiated design and technology innovations prioritize customer values over industry norms, it said. SEVEN is also a clear representation of Hyundai's commitment to carbon neutrality by 2045.

"The SEVEN concept demonstrates Hyundai's creative vision and advanced technological development for our electrified mobility future," said Mr. José Muñoz, President and CEO, Hyundai Motor North America.

"Its innovative interior space, eco-friendly powertrain and cutting-edge safety and convenience technologies reveal an exciting future for Hyundai SUV customers."

The SEVEN concept is the perfect example of IONIQ, with its space innovation and hygienic features transforming the vehicle as an innovative living space on wheels, according to the release.



José Muñoz,
President and CEO, Hyundai Motor
North America.

Hyundai drive expedition for its SUV customers

HYUNDAI Motor has commenced 'Hyundai Explorers', a unique drive expedition for its SUV customers across India.

The first chapter of 'Hyundai Explorers' witnessed customers undertaking a picturesque expedition from Delhi to Rishikesh on November 26.

Covering at total distance of 272 km, 48 customers travelled in a convoy of Hyundai SUVs to Rishikesh. The three days-two nights expedition witnessed the participants creating memorable experiences as they engaged in activities like river rafting, riverside yoga, barbecues, and karaoke nights.

Mr. Tarun Garg, Director (Sales, Marketing & Service), Hyundai Motor India Ltd., said, "With Hyundai Explorers,



we are offering our customers the chance to experience an exclusive expedition. We understand that customers today are looking at brands that provide personalized experiences and create memories for a happy life. 'Hyundai Explorer' is a reaffirmation towards HMI's brand campaign 'Beyond Mobility' that encapsulates the company's commitment and aspirations for the India of tomorrow."

HMIF initiatives on road safety, pond restoration



S.S. Kim,
Managing Director,
Hyundai Motors India Ltd.

Dr. Yash Garg, IAS,
Deputy Commissioner,
Gurugram

HYUNDAI Motor India Foundation (HMIF), the philanthropic arm of Hyundai Motor India, on November 26 announced an ambitious project on road safety.

The unique project with campaign message, 'Dhyan Do', will emphasise on road safety and self-healthcare of public/private transport drivers, said a press release.

With an attempt to cover more than 34,000 drivers every year, the programme will offer free preliminary health check-up of public transport drivers with curative and preventive counselling by qualified doctors at various touch-points with a sustained follow-up plan.

In addition to this, HMIF will also conduct cluster awareness clinics for sensitising about road safety and health implications on drivers.

Two days earlier, HMIF announced the third edition of 'H-Social Creator', a youth contact CSR programme.

It will encourage young minds to deliver innovation in areas of road safety, environment, Clean India, and healthcare.

The Foundation aims to reach over three lakh students across 150 colleges and will award a seed capital of Rs. 15 lakh to the winning idea with the aim to create sustainable and meaningful change.

In yet another initiative, the philanthropic arm of Hyundai Motor announced eco-restoration of three ponds, one each in Hariahera in Sohna, Palasoli in Pataudi and Tajnagar in Farrukhnagar blocks of Gurugram, in collaboration with GuruJal Society.

GuruJal is a multi-stakeholder body, headed by the Deputy Commissioner of Gurugram. It is aimed to address water scarcity, ground water depletion, flooding and stagnation in Gurugram.

MG Motor opens first residential community charger in Gurugram

MG Motor India has inaugurated its first residential community charger in Gurugram with chargers installed at The WorldSpa condominiums.

To enable this, MG has collaborated with Electreefi and the RWA of the condominium to offer charger access to all EV owners and drivers, including WorldSpa residents and visitors.

The chargers were inaugurated by Mr Sumit Ahuja, Co-Founder, Electreefi, at a ceremony held on November 10.



With the launch of residential community chargers, MG Motor India is adding another step to its comprehensive charging infrastructure, said a press release. The six-step charging ecosystem will promote the adoption of cleaner and greener mobility in the country, it added.

Autoliv and SSAB team up to make fossil-free steel components for auto safety products

AUTOLIV, the worldwide leader in automotive safety systems, and global steel company SSAB, have collaborated to research and develop fossil-free steel components for automotive safety products, such as airbags and seatbelts.

The collaboration enables Autoliv to be in the forefront in producing automotive safety products with fossil-free steel from SSAB.

A new process aims to replace coking coal, traditionally needed for ore-based steelmaking, with hydrogen.



The result will be unique: the world's first fossil-free steelmaking technology, with no carbon footprint. "Gradually switching to fossil-free steel in our products is an important step towards achieving our climate targets", said Mr Mikael Bratt, President and CEO of Autoliv.

"We are looking forward to working with Autoliv and to start the process of research and development of innovative fossil-free steel components for their automotive safety products," said Mr Martin Lindqvist, President and CEO of SSAB.



TKM partners with IndusInd

TOYOTA Kirloskar Motor (TKM) on November 18 announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IndusInd Bank, to enable retail finance for its customers.

With this tie-up, IndusInd Bank becomes one of the preferred financiers for the complete range of vehicles sold by Toyota Kirloskar Motor in the country, said a press release.

Mr. SV Parthasarathy, Head – Consumer Finance Division, IndusInd Bank, said, "With this partnership, we aim to reach new customers in Tier-I, II & III cities and towns with our huge network of over 2,000 branches across the country."

Mr. V. Wiseline Sigamani, Associate General Manager, Sales & Strategic Marketing, TKM, said, "Given our partner, IndusInd Bank's wide network, we hope to build on our respective strengths to create the best solutions for our customers".



Mahindra Finance launches Quiklyz

A platform for vehicle leasing and subscription

MAHINDRA & Mahindra Financial Services Limited on November 17 announced the official launch of its leasing and subscription business 'Quiklyz'.

The venture is a new-age digital platform for vehicle leasing and subscription that aims to provide great convenience, flexibility and choice to customers across cities, said a press release by the company.

Quiklyz, it said, is the first-of-its-kind digital journey on car usership with which the customer can access a brand-new car without all the hassles of car ownership. Quiklyz will take care of registration, insurance, scheduled and unscheduled maintenance, road-side assistance etc.

In the initial phase, Quiklyz will launch its services in metro cities and will further expand it to other cities across the country.

Quiklyz will be available for both corporate (B2B) and retail (B2C) customers. Under the B2B segment, the company aims to offer services to corporates and fleet operators while in B2C segment, it will target customers with millennial mindset, said the release.

It will cover vehicles across all major auto OEMs, with wide range of choice in terms of vehicle models, variants and colors, added the release.

Mr. Ramesh Iyer, Vice-Chairman & Managing Director, Mahindra Finance, said, "Car leasing and subscription is a lucrative and fast-growing business in India. We aim to achieve a book size of Rs 10,000 crore in a span of three-five years."



Mr. Ramesh Iyer,
Vice-Chairman & Managing Director,
Mahindra Finance

Nissan Magnite achieves 30k-delivery milestone



NISSAN'S compact SUV Magnite has achieved the milestone of 30,000th delivery. Mr Guillaume Cartier, Nissan AMIEO Chairperson, for Africa, Middle East, India, Europe and Oceania, handed over the keys of the 30,000th Magnite to a customer in a ceremony at a dealership in Gurugram.

The Chairperson also presented Nissan Global President's Award to the Nissan India team for the launch of Magnite.

He said "I am pleased to handover the Nissan Global President Award to the Nissan India Operations for the successful launch of Nissan Magnite under the Nissan NEXT transformation plan. With this car we wanted to shake up the highly competitive compact SUV segment in India. The Nissan Magnite symbolises Nissan's commitment to driving innovation in India through daring design, technology and world class Indian manufacturing."

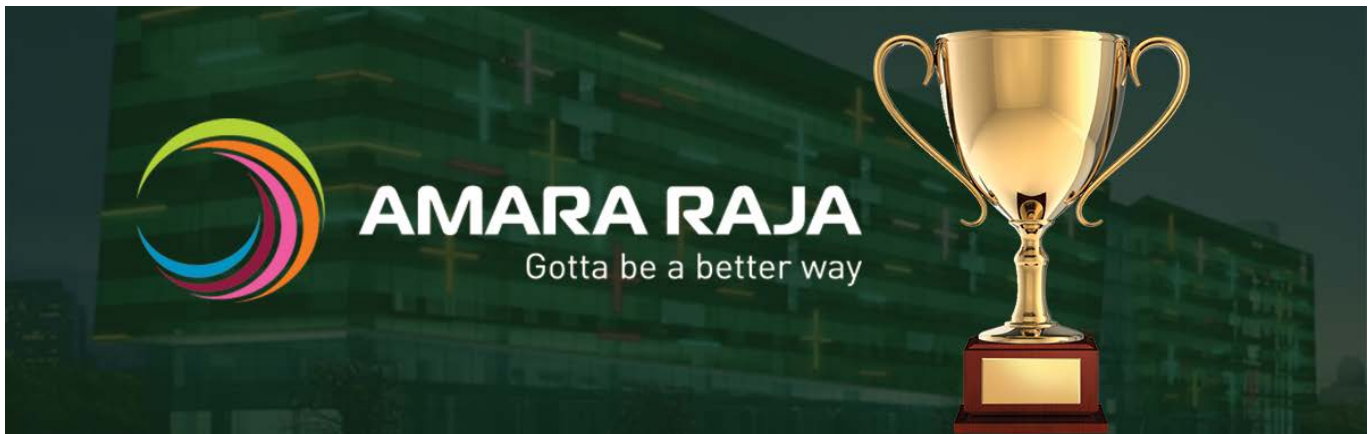
commented: "Nissan Magnite is a core model under the company's global transformation strategy, and is playing a key role in strengthening Nissan's presence in India and overseas under 'Make in India, Make for the world'."

Mr Sinan Ozkok, President, Nissan Motor India, Mr Rakesh Srivastava, Managing Director, Nissan Motor India, added: "Launch of the all-new Nissan Magnite has proven itself to be a game-changer, redefining value in the SUV segment. Multiple awards from media and now this very special recognition of Global Nissan President Award is a proud moment for the Nissan India family."



Mr Guillaume Cartier,
Nissan AMIEO Chairperson

Sinan Ozkok,
President,
Nissan Motor India



Amara Raja wins eight ICQCC awards

THE Amara Raja Group on December 2 announced that it has won eight Par Excellence awards at the 46th International Convention on Quality Control Circles, held in Hyderabad from November 24 to 27.

The Indian conglomerate had entered eight teams in the international level competition. Up against over 900 teams comprised nearly 5,000 participants from 13 countries, they each won the Par Excellence award.

Mr C Narashimulu Naidu, Chief Operations Officer said: "I am incredibly proud of the success our teams have achieved on such a prestigious global stage. Their achievements are certainly testament to the exacting

quality control standards we aspire to at the Amara Raja Group."

Quality Control Circles (QCC) are a participative approach to problem solving in which groups of operatives from the shop floor area identify, analyse and devise solutions to problems, driving a continuous improvement in business and quality standards.

Amara Raja began incorporating QCCs in 2004, initially starting out with just five circles. Today, nearly 1300 quality control circles comprising 8,000 employees are deployed throughout the Group.

TVS Eurogrip becomes Principal Sponsor of Chennai Super Kings

TVS Eurogrip has joined hands with four-time IPL champions Chennai Super Kings as the Principal Sponsor for the next three years (2022-2024).

Chennai Super Kings and TVS Eurogrip will launch a series of initiatives to engage the large fan base of CSK across the country. The partnership will give TVS Eurogrip visibility on the front of Chennai Super Kings' yellow jersey.



Mr. KS Viswanathan,
CEO, Chennai Super
Kings Cricket Limited

Mr. P. Madhavan,
EVP – Sales & Marketing,
TVS Srichakra Limited

M&M enters DJSI World Index

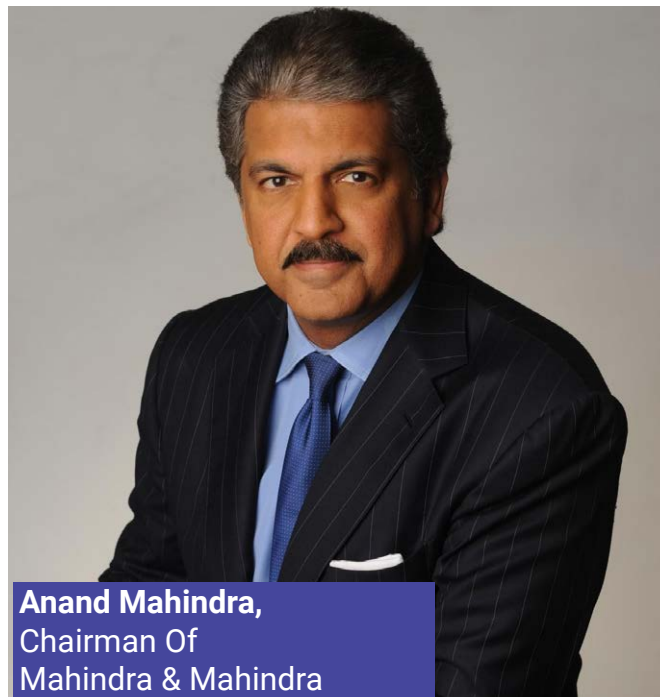
MAHINDRA & Mahindra Ltd (M&M) has entered the World Index list of companies in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) 2021.

Out of the five Indian companies featuring in the World Index this year, two are Mahindra Group companies - M&M and Tech Mahindra.

M&M is the first Indian automobile and components' company to enter the World Index of DJSI.

While M&M also features in the Emerging Market Index of DJSI for the 12th time in a row, Tech Mahindra has been a member of both the World Index and the Emerging Market Index for the last seven years. This year, there are only 13 other Indian companies in the Emerging Market Index.

Commenting on the achievement, Dr. Anish Shah, Managing Director & CEO, M&M Ltd, said, "This recognition comes at a time when all of us are fresh from COP26 discussions and revitalising our sustainability agenda. We believe that we have crossed the threshold on technology readiness in many industries including auto – this is a major shift from past years."



Anand Mahindra,
Chairman Of
Mahindra & Mahindra

Being a part of the World Index "is a validation of the path taken by M&M to build a sustainable business," he said.



Goodyear in Forbes list of World's Best Employers

THE Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company has found a slot on the Forbes list of the World's Best Employers 2021.

This prestigious award is presented by Forbes and Statista Inc., the world-leading statistics portal and industry ranking provider, said a press release.

Forbes and Statista selected the World's Best Employers 2021 through an independent survey applied to a vast sample of approximately 1,50,000 employees from 58 countries working full or part time.

The evaluation was based on direct and indirect recommendations from employees that were asked to rate their willingness to recommend their own employers to friends and family. Employee evaluations also included other employers in their respective industries that stood out either positively or negatively.

"We are very honoured to be recognised by Forbes as one of the world's best employers," said Mr. Damien Schrobiltgen, HR Vice-President, Goodyear Asia Pacific.

MG adopts wind-solar hybrid power at Halol

MG Motor India has partnered with Clean Max Enviro Energy Solutions for the supply of 4.85 MW of wind-solar hybrid power to MG's manufacturing facility in Halol.

With this partnership, MG will abate approximately 2 lakh MT of CO₂ over 15 years which is equal to planting more than 13 lakh trees, said a press release by the company.

CleanMax, it said, is the first renewable energy company to set up a wind solar hybrid power park in Gujarat to sell clean energy to private consumers and corporates.



Mr Rajeev Chaba, President and Managing Director, MG Motor India, said, "Our association with CleanMax is another step towards developing a clean manufacturing ecosystem."

Mr Kuldeep Jain, Founder and MD of CleanMax, said: "We are honoured that MG Motor India has chosen CleanMax as its sustainability partner."

Hyundai platform for budding artists in tie-up with UMI

HYUNDAI Motor India on December 3 launched 'Hyundai Spotlight' in collaboration with Universal Music India (UMI).

Hyundai Spotlight is a platform for budding artists across India to showcase their talent. The collaboration is set forth for release of first song 'Dhoonde Sitaare' featuring renowned singers Aastha Gill & King.

The platform will be featuring six original songs in its first year with multiple surround content programmed to represent different regions and languages across the country.

Hyundai Spotlight aims at helping emerging talents with the best artists and repertoire advice with international video production quality and promotions by leveraging UMI's partner relations and their efforts.



Mr Tarun Garg, Director (Sales, Marketing and Service) said, "A one-of-a-kind enabler platform, Hyundai Spotlight intends to discover, incubate and promote emerging musical talent in India, reaffirming our brand thought 'Beyond Mobility'."

Mr Devraj Sanyal, MD & CEO of UMG, India & South Asia, said, "We have created Spotlight in partnership with our friends at Hyundai India, who are known to innovate and go where few marketers dare to."

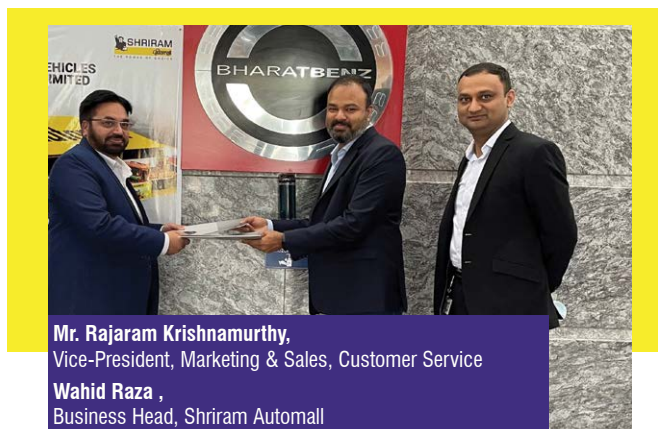
DICV ties up with SAMIL

DAIMLER India Commercial Vehicles (DICV) on November 25 announced a strategic tie-up with Shriram Automall India Limited (SAMIL) to bring used commercial vehicles to the CV market in the country.

The collaboration, said a press release, will provide a platform for customers to exchange their used vehicle of any brand for new or used BharatBenz vehicles across India.

SAMIL is a marketplace for connecting pre-owned vehicles buyers and sellers; making them the go-to platform for many logistics firms for procuring top-class, reliable, and certified commercial vehicles.

Mr. Rajaram Krishnamurthy, Vice-President, Marketing & Sales, Customer Service, Daimler India Commercial Vehicles, said, "Our tie-up with Sriram Automall, a leader in the exchange business will provide ease of



accessibility to pre-owned BharatBenz vehicles for customers."

Mr Sameer Malhotra, CEO, Shriram Automall, said, "We are thrilled to get the opportunity to partner with Daimler India Commercial Vehicles, to power their exchange programme. We look forward to delivering BharatBenz's superior quality and TCO to a larger customer base."



DICV sets its sustainability goals for 2025 and beyond

DAIMLER India Commercial Vehicles (DICV) on November 12 announced its 'Seven Statements for Sustainability', a series of goals aimed at reducing its carbon footprint and protecting the local environment.

With the aim of making its Chennai plant operations 100 per cent CO₂-neutral by 2025, DICV leads the carbon neutrality commitment in the CV industry, said a press release by the company.

The initial set of goals is a part of DICV's long-term sustainability plan that will be unveiled in multiple phases, setting a new benchmark for the industry, it added.

Mr. Satyakam Arya, CEO & MD of DICV, said, "Driving sustainability in our production and operations has been a key focus for DICV since our inception. Our efforts so far have already helped us reach 72 pc CO₂-neutrality in our plant, and we plan to push this to 100 pc by 2025. We will work continuously towards a sustainable future for our stakeholders and society as a whole."

DICV's 'Seven Statements for Sustainability' are: making its operations 100 pc CO₂ neutral by 2025; aiming to make entire value chain CO₂ neutral by 2047; increasing green cover density of Chennai plant by at least 10 per cent by 2025; reducing energy consumption of production shop by at least 8 pc by 2025; reducing water consumption by 30 pc, aiming for 100 pc water self-reliance at the plant by 2025; continuously reducing waste generated from operations and contributing to betterment of nearby villages and societies.

Ashok Leyland MD & CEO Vipin Sondhi to step down

MR Vipin Sondhi, MD and Chief Executive Officer of Ashok Leyland, will step down from his position on December 31.

A statement from the Hinduja Group flagship company said, "Sondhi has expressed his intention to devote more time to take care of certain personal and family commitments in the post-COVID pandemic situation, that require his extended presence in New Delhi."

Prior to occupying the top position at Ashok Leyland, Mr Sondhi was the MD & CEO of the Indian arm of construction equipment manufacturer JCB.



Amish Bhargava appointed, CEO of Myles Auto Tech



MYLES Automotive Technologies on November 30 announced the appointment of Mr. Amish Bhargava as its Chief Executive Officer.

According to a press release, he will be responsible for overseeing the partnerships, customer acquisitions, and product enhancements along with working with the founders on the overall business strategy.

Mr. Bhargava brings in over two decades of experience in the auto finance and leasing industry. Prior to starting his journey with Myles, he was heading the auto division at Poonawalla Fincorp.

Mr Sakshi Vij, Founder and MD, Mylescars, said, "We are thrilled to welcome Amish onboard at this stage of our journey. His energy and experience will be integral to our growth moving forward."

Rajesh Goel quits Honda

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

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



Klein is CEO of Next.e.GO Mobile



NEXT.e.GO Mobile SE, the independent German manufacturer of innovative and sustainable urban electric vehicles, on December 1 announced the appointment of Mr Martin C. Klein as the new Chief Executive Officer.

Mr Klein is an automotive industry veteran with over three decades of international experience, both on the OEM side as well as on the components supplier eco-system. He has spent over 25 years with Daimler AG.

Mr Ali Vezvaei, Chairman of the Board of Next e.GO Mobile SE, said: "Martin brings a wealth of execution experience to help the team accelerate progress and growth. I look forward to working with Martin and the leadership team as we embark upon the next chapter in Next.e.GO's journey."



Bridgestone tyre for construction vehicles

BRIDGESTONE India on November 29 announced the launch of its new tyre for construction vehicles segment, which is meant specifically for tipper/dumper owners who operate in high load segment.

Designed using proprietary software to optimise the tyre design, it is made of special tread compound for excellent cut-chip resistance on off road. The L370HL tyre is suitable for heavy load segment and will be available in the size 295/90R20.

The tyre is in block and shoulder lug design for heat radiation and block tear resistance respectively. The enforced bead structure improved the bead durability on the off road. This tyre will not only boost longevity but will also enhance robust performance, said a press release.

Dual Nylon Chafer is another special feature of the product which will protect the highly stressed body ply turn up, and spread the stresses over a larger area to reduce cracking.

Mr Parag Satpute, MD, Bridgestone India, said, "Cost-efficient logistics are key to the economics of the construction and mining sector. Downtime because of tyre malfunction can negatively impact the bottom line. Our L370HL is designed to weather the roughs of these sectors giving operators smooth logistics and thereby increasing productivity and efficiencies of these core sectors."

BRIDGESTONE



Gadkari inaugurates MSTI vehicle scrapping facility

JV between Maruti Suzuki and Toyota Tsusho

THE Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Mr. Nitin Gadkari, on November 23 inaugurated Maruti Suzuki and Toyota Tsusho Group's first Government-approved scrapping and recycling facility for end-of-life vehicles (ELVs), at Noida.

The facility, spread across 10,993 square metres, is operated by Maruti Suzuki Toyotsu India (MSTI), a joint venture between Maruti Suzuki and Toyota Tsusho Group.

Present on the occasion were Mr. Satoshi Suzuki, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of Japan, dignitaries from the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways and Delhi and Uttar Pradesh governments.

The facility has a capacity to scrap and recycle over 24,000 ELVs annually. Built with an investment of over Rs 44 crore, it uses modern and technologically-advanced machines to dismantle and scrap ELVs in a scientific manner.

Inaugurating the facility, Mr. Gadkari said, "I would like to congratulate Maruti Suzuki and Toyota Tsusho Group for setting up this modern facility as per

global standards. I would request Maruti and other stakeholders to build and create an ecosystem of similar scrapping and recycling units across the country. This would make the roads safer, air cleaner and the raw material cheaper for their cars."

At the inauguration, Mr. Kenichi Ayukawa, Chairman, MSTI and Managing Director & CEO, Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said, "Till now there was no scientific, clean and healthy way to dispose a car at its end-of-life. MSTI uses global process methodology to address this gap. This is just the beginning. With our partners we are committed to set up more such modern ELV scrap and recycle centers in India."

Mr. Naoji Saito, CEO for Metal Division of Toyota Tsusho Corporation, said, "The Toyota Tsusho group has engaged in the ELV recycling business since 1970 in Japan. Recently we have run the environmental friendly ELV dismantling and recycling business in several major countries of the world. Our experience of over 50 years in Japan helped in these projects. Now we will achieve the best practice for ELV recycling and contribute to the circular economy in India by combining our experience and equipment made in India."

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Mohan Narayanan on his stint at Auto Ignition

'Stressful, but satisfying'

An automobile industry veteran, Mr. Mohan Narayanan is set to retire as the President & CEO of Auto Ignition Ltd, in December this year. In an interview to Autoguide, Mr Narayanan talked about his illustrious journey of almost five decades, reminisced about the highs and lows of his career, shared his insight about the industry and disclosed his future options. The following is the text of the interview:

How does it feel hanging up your boots after putting in almost 50 years in the auto industry?

Life will be very strange after I hang up my boots as I have known only this life for the bulk of my stay on this planet. Having said that, I will pursue my other passions, like playing golf, travelling, writing and dabbling in stocks.

What are some of your major achievements, or pioneering initiatives, of which you feel proud of?

I would like to name the following:

- Within six years of my joining the division of Escorts Ltd, which had tie-ups with Mahle and Goetze, I was entrusted with the responsibility of setting up a green-field project in Bengaluru to create a piston and ring plant, which was the largest in the country at that time.
- I was instrumental in drawing up five technology collaborations/joint ventures with leading global players.
- I have been the profit-centre head of four different companies.
- I always pursued the path of developing a culture of out-of-the-box thinking, understanding the know-why by applying first principles and coming up with products and processes for others to benchmark.

- I have had mutually beneficial exchanges with industry captains and industry bodies, some of which translated to policy decisions at a generic level.

How satisfying was your eight-year stint at Auto Ignition?

It has been a testing time as I took over the reins of the company when the promoter, who interviewed and selected me, passed away unexpectedly. The company was undergoing serious transition issues, lack of appropriate products to address newer technologies and loss of business share.

While the journey has been extremely stressful, it was also very satisfying as the turnover of the company doubled in this period and the profits multiplied several times. This was possible by changing the approach, from doing reverse engineering to doing pioneering and ground-breaking work. We were not only able to regain lost businesses, but also add several new OE customers overseas. In more than 40 years of its existence, Auto Ignition had only one vendor award, which in the space of eight years after I joined multiplied to nine.

What have been the major highs and lows of your career?

The high was when my interview got published in Wall Street Journal along with Mr Ratan Tata's at the launch of the Rs. 1 lakh-car, in which most of the engine parts were developed by my former company, Federal Mogul.

The low was in 2008, when due to global economic crisis, Federal Mogul went into Chapter XI and could not make investments to support the transition to Euro 4 for which it had won business from most of the car and truck manufacturers. This was a big blow as I was the front-man making commitments on behalf of Federal Mogul to all the OEMs. This derailed their projects and I decided to take premature retirement on the ground of principles.

How do you look at the domestic auto industry at the present juncture? What is your outlook for the future?

The domestic auto industry is at a critical stage of transition. While on the one hand, the IC engines will have to accommodate multiple-fuel regime, by 2025 the inflexion point will come for shift to electric vehicles with drop in the prices of lithium ion batteries.

What message would you like to impart to the younger players?

Change is a constant. Be prepared for speedier changes and constantly equip yourselves with new skills to stay relevant. Never rest on your laurels!

What are your post-retirement plans?

There are several options. I have been asked to continue as an advisor to the company, which I may consider. I like writing on various matters and I would pursue this passion. I have also been approached by educational institutions for guest lectures. Some companies have also asked me to join them as advisor. I need time to reflect.

GLOBAL EYE



Automechanika Frankfurt to continue APRA Europe tie-up

FOLLOWING the success of its collaboration with the Automotive Parts Remanufacturers Association (APRA) and excellent results of the first Remanufacturing Day at this year's Automechanika, the trade fair management and APRA association have decided to continue their partnership in the coming years as well.

APRA is the only global association that represents the interests of automotive remanufacturing companies. It plays a key role in ongoing efforts to achieve a circular economy, because remanufacturing offers tremendous ecological benefits and delivers good value as an alternative to new products in the aftermarket.

Remanufacturing saves millions of tonnes of CO2 equivalent emissions each year, enables CO2 savings of up to 90% and material savings of up to 85%.



BYD to supply 25 e-buses to TMB in Barcelona

BYD, the world's leading eBus manufacturer, has been awarded its first order from Transportes Metropolitanos de Barcelona for 25 new-generation 12-metre BYD e-buses.

The order has additional significance as BYD pure-electric buses will operate in the city of Barcelona for the first time ever.

It will be equipped with roof-mounted pantograph providing the convenience of opportunity charging at the bus depot for greater operational efficiencies.

The e-buses on order will be built in BYD's high-tech European production facility in Hungary which opened in 2017 to exclusively support the needs of its expanding customer base in Europe.



Hyundai wins highest honours at Top Gear annual awards

HYUNDAI Motor took highest honours at the Top Gear annual awards 2021, winning Car of the Year with i20 N and being named overall Manufacturer of the Year in recognition of the brand's class leading model line-up.

The i20 N recently triumphed at the Top Gear Speed Week test to claim coveted Performance Car of the Year title from a group of 26 contenders during a series of thorough tests.

THE judging panel, comprising Top Gear's expert editorial team, crowned the i20 N overall winner after a series of gruelling tests.

Mr Thomas Schemera, Executive Vice-President, Global Chief Marketing Officer at Hyundai Motor Company, said: "We are truly honoured to receive two prestigious awards from one of the world's most influential and enjoyable automotive publications, especially at a time when Hyundai's global brand has never been stronger."

Hyundai IONIQ 5 is 2022 'German Car of the Year'

JUST half a year after its launch in the German market, Hyundai's IONIQ 5 was named 2022 'German Car of the Year' (GCOTY).

At the GCOTY awards, the top car model launches of the year compete against one another in five categories. An internationally networked jury of 20 automotive journalists tests and evaluates each product in terms of product features, relevance, and future viability. As the class winner in the 'New Energy' category, IONIQ 5 automatically took place – and consequently won – in the final round

"The Hyundai IONIQ 5 is not just a standout electric car. To us, it's this year's top model," said Mr Jens Meiners, initiator and jury member of the 'German Car of the Year'.

"IONIQ 5 receiving this award in such a highly competitive environment proves that we have succeeded in creating an exceptional vehicle that stands out among its competitors in the European automotive market," said Mr Michael Cole, President and CEO at Hyundai Motor Europe.



Kia commits to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045

KIA Corporation has set out its vision to become a truly sustainable, responsible, and innovative mobility solutions leader, announcing a commitment to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045.

The company announced its corporate vision at 'Kia Sustainability Movement' virtual presentation on November 11.

The vision to become a 'sustainable mobility solutions provider' reflects the company's approach to sustainability, which is to create sustainable mobility solutions for consumers, communities, and global society, said a press release.

In the first meaningful step in line with its corporate vision, Kia announced its plan to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045, based on three key pillars – 'Sustainable Mobility', 'Sustainable Planet' and 'Sustainable Energy'.



Kia releases images of its Concept EV9, an all-electric SUV

KIA on November 11 released first official images of Concept EV9, an all-electric SUV concept.

Kia Concept EV9 is an intriguing glimpse into the future direction of the all-electric SUV, combining progressive design, state-of-the-art tech, and an advanced all-electric powertrain in one pioneering package, said a press release issued by Kia Corporation.

The first visuals of the concept SUV show an ultramodern exterior design, the schematics of which hint at a contemporary recreational treatment that's brought to the fore by an upright and capable stylistic stance, said the release.

The renderings illustrate a highly conceptual cabin that has been honed to give the driver and passengers a light, flexible and adaptive interior space as the experience of the journey evolves.

A stunning interactive ultra-wide display and a radical new take on the traditional steering wheel are just two of the standout interior features.

SIAM hosts lecture session on sustainable roadmap for fuels

THE Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) on November 13 organised a virtual lecture session on 'Sustainable Roadmap for Fuels in Automotive Sector' and other related issues.

The discussions veered around 'imperatives of decarbonisation' in the automotive sector with national and international perspectives, said a press release issued by the apex automotive industry body,

Segmented into two sessions, the lecture session witnessed industry stalwarts and experts discussing the policy, regulatory and legislative framework around sustainable and alternative fuels in the automotive sector.

In his welcome address, Mr Prashant K Banerjee, Executive Director, SIAM, underlined the importance of renewable fuels and stated current technological innovations for minimising emissions. He highlighted the following for sustainable roadmap for fuels: (i) usage of low carbon and renewable fuels, (ii) promotion of ethanol, gaseous fuels and electricity, and (iii)

integrating Environmental Sustainable Goals to lead way towards decarbonisation.

The Guest of Honor, Mr. Sunil Kumar, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, said it was the decade of decarbonisation and the key challenge of decarbonising fuel mix needs the commitment from both the Government as well as the industry.

In his special address, Dr Anjan Ray, Director, Indian Institute of Petroleum, said, "The discourses in the last few days have changed from simply implementing alternative and renewable fuels to ensuring that we are heading towards net zero commitments."

In his presentation, Mr Neeraj Sinha, Advisor, NITI Aayog, said concerns are currently being raised about rising carbon emissions around the world and "we should have very ambitious policies to achieve our goals."

Mr Harjeet Singh, Chairman, SIAM Two-Wheeler Group and Executive Advisor, Hero MotoCorp, explained the status of sustainable clean fuels in the country while underlining the challenges and opportunities.

ACMA tech summit on Feb 25

THE seventh ACMA Technology Summit & ACMA Atmanirbhar Excellence Awards 2021 will be held in New Delhi on February 25 next year.

The event will be held in hybrid mode (virtual + physical), according to the organisers. .

The summit is aimed at creating a platform to gain insights on advanced technologies and capabilities that

will catapult the industry into the league of globally competitive industries. It has been themed as 'Advanced Automotive Technologies for Creating a Globally Competitive Automotive Value Chain in India'.

The prestigious ACMA Awards will also be bestowed on the winners at the summit.

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