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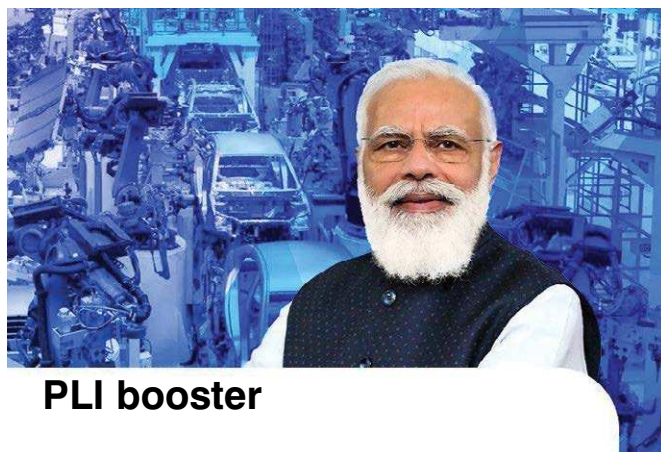
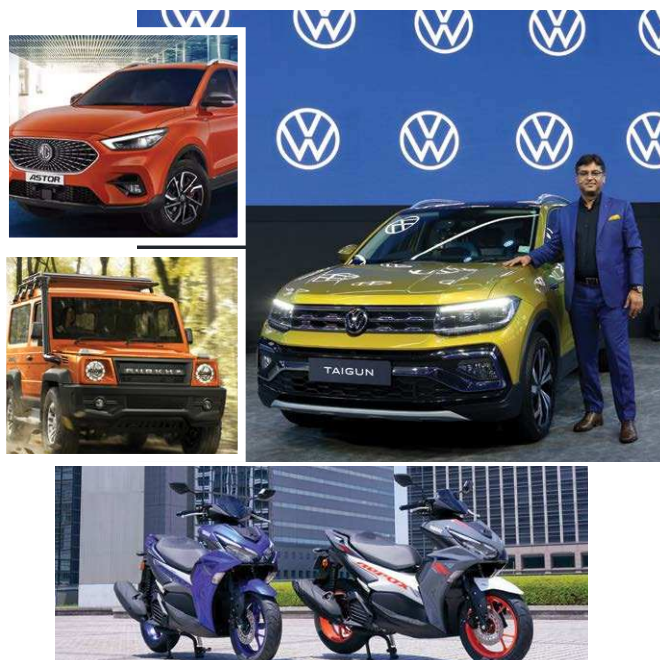
CONTENTS

October 2021

17 LAUNCHES

Volkswagen launches Taigun

- 19 BMW X5 Sports variants launched
- 20 MMG Motor unveils Astor
- 21 Tata Motors launches XPRES-T EV
- 33 Force Gurkha in new avatar
- 37 Ducati unleashes Monster in India
- 42 Yamaha carves a niche in premium scooter



PLI booster

9 COVER STORY

Industry lauds PLI booster

- 13 'Ford Says Goodbye India

48 ASSOCIATION NEWS

A SIAM initiative: SAFE annual convention puts 5Es in the spotlight



16 ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Tesla told to assemble in India

- 43 Stakeholders upbeat on World EV Day
- 44 Omega Seiki to source batteries from C4V
- Allison to acquire AVTEC's off-highway transmission
- 45 Okaya EV launches Freedom 2W
- 47 Greaves forays into multi-brand EV retail
- Greaves campaign to push demand for electric vehicles

24 CARS

Maruti celebrates three decades of leadership

- 25 Nissan Magnite is the Official Car of ICC T20 World Cup
- 29 Hyundai i20 N Line showcased in new dynamic concept
- 30 Hyundai introduces site safety robot at Kia plant in S Korea



23

MILESTONES

Maruti Suzuki Ciaz hits 3-lakh sales

Swift clocks cumulative sales of 2.5-million units

- 35 Tata Altroz crosses 1L-milestone
Celebrates the 10k-EV mark



26

INTERVIEW

Interview with I&PCL CMD Piyush Tamboli

- 27 Interview with Jainam Tamboli, GM – Marketing, I&PCL

36

INDUSTRY NEWS

Tata Motors' PPA with Tata Power for solar project at its Pune plant

38

TWO-WHEELERS

Ducati launches SuperSport 950

- 39 TVS acquires majority stake in EGO
- 40 Raider is TVS' feature-rich offering in 125cc segment
- 39 TVS acquires majority stake in EGO
- 41 Hero hands over 70 two-wheelers to Haryana Govt



22

COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

Tata 407 goes green

- 31 Furio 7 range of LCV trucks
- 32 Volvo delivers 10 coaches to Odisha road transport body



50

APPOINTMENTS

- Manish Thakore is CFO of DICV
- Revolt Motors appoints Janender Anand as CEO
- Castrol appoints Mayank Pandey to its Board
- Hyundai names Roberts as V-P, Head of Global PR

12

SALES

Chip shortage leads to blip



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Editor's Viewpoint



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SHILPA MALHOTRA
Executive Editor

A booster and a shocker of the month

THE last four weeks were a period of mixed tidings for the automobile industry with two major developments; one spreading cheer all around and the other causing gloom. While the new PLI scheme worth Rs 26,058-crore to usher in advanced technologies thrilled the sector, the quit decision of American carmaker Ford Motor came as a shocker.

The automobile sector is expected to attract fresh investments of over Rs 42,500 crore in the five years and incremental production of over Rs 2.3-lakh crore with the introduction of the new PLI scheme, said a statement by the Government. It will also create employment for over 7.6 lakh people. Lauding the all-inclusive nature of the PLI scheme, the industry saw it as having the potential to increase volumes and to provide an opportunity for exports to grow. It was also seen as a manifestation of the country's commitment to a sustainable future. We cover the key components of the scheme and the industry's response to it, in detail.

Ford's decision to cease manufacturing in the country, certainly, caused a dent to the 'Make in India' campaign, but the company has to largely blame itself for the unfortunate decision. Mounting losses, shrinking market-share and failure to withstand stiff competition from Japanese and Korean players forced Ford Motor India to call it a day. The primary concern now should be the fate of its dealers and employees. A concerned FADA has renewed its demand for the enactment of the Franchise Protection Act and we hope the Government responds favourably, and swiftly. Our story covers the entire development.

Another key decision by the Government put a spanner in the works of Tesla, which was planning to import cars in the country on duty concessions. The Ministry of Heavy Industries has reportedly told the US EV giant that the Government does not favour a reduction in duties based only on "intent to invest". Tesla has been suggested to begin its India business by starting with local assembly operations and thereafter scaling it up to full-fledged manufacturing.

Our regular story on automobile sales shows that September yielded a mixed bag and the industry's hopes are now pinned on the festive season. Let's keep our fingers crossed!

Read all this and much more in the issue that's before you.

**WHILE THE NEW
PLI SCHEME
THRILLED THE
SECTOR, THE
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OF AMERICAN
CARMAKER FORD
MOTOR CAME AS
A SHOCKER.**

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Govt incentives worth Rs 26,058-cr to promote advanced technologies

Industry lauds PLI booster

THE steadily-recovering automobile industry got a big booster from the Government in the form of a new production-linked incentive (PLI scheme worth Rs 26,058 crore, to be provided over five years. The Union Cabinet on September 15 approved the scheme to promote advanced technologies, including clean energy, in the industry.

The announcement spread cheer among the industry stakeholders and they lauded the Government for its commitment to support the automobile sector in the country.

A statement by the Government's said the sector is expected to attract fresh investments of over Rs 42,500 crore in the five years and incremental production of over Rs 2.3-lakh crore with the introduction of the scheme. It is likely to create additional employment for over 7.6 lakh people, the statement said.

"The PLI scheme for the automotive sector along with the already launched PLI for Advanced Chemistry Cell (₹18,100 crore) and Faster Adaption of Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME) Scheme (₹10,000 crore) will give a big boost to manufacture of electric vehicles," it added.

Thanking the Government for launching the scheme, the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) said it reinforces the

Government's focus on encouraging local investments and manufacturing, thereby, building an Atmanirbhar Bharat.

In a statement, SIAM President, Mr Kenichi Ayukawa, said, "The scheme will contribute towards reducing carbon emissions and oil imports with local manufacturing. SIAM will be happy to engage with the Ministry of Heavy Industries for detailing and fine-tuning, execution and further strengthening the scheme."

Mr Vipin Sondhi, Vice-President, SIAM and CEO & MD of Ashok Leyland, said, "The automotive PLI scheme of Rs 26,058 Crore launched by the Union Government is all-inclusive. It provides incentives for incremental performance by the OEMs, as manufacturers move towards making India a strong hub for electric mobility while also looking at harnessing the potential of hydrogen energy for automotive applications."



Mr Kenichi Ayukawa,
SIAM President



Mr Vipin Sondhi,
Vice-President, SIAM and
CEO & MD of Ashok Leyland,

The scheme, he further said, will also support other advanced automotive technologies. "PLI has the potential to substantially increase volumes and will provide a huge opportunity for exports to grow," he opined. According to Mr Sondhi, the scheme was being announced at an opportune time for India as the auto industry realigns its supply chain globally. "India can, therefore, capitalise on this changing scenario to become an integral manufacturing base for the world," he concluded.'

Mr Vinod Aggarwal, Treasurer, SIAM and MD & CEO, VECV, said the scheme will result in ushering in more advanced technologies for new vehicles in our country. Such technologies, he said, "will be now be introduced much faster than what we have been seeing in last several years."

According to Mr Aggarwal, the focus on next-generation sensor-based safety and collision avoidance systems would go a long way in making the vehicles and our roads one of the safest in the world. "PLI will also provide an opportunity for the auto industry to increase its electric portfolios, as it will supplement the existing incentives of FAME and lower GST for these vehicles," he said.

Mr Sohinder Gill, Director General, Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles (SMEV), said the scheme is especially beneficial for existing large players engaged in the automotive business and new entrants as it will renew the interest of traditional players and motivate them to invest in the sector. "The move will strengthen the manufacturing ecosystem and build a self-sustaining framework for the e-mobility industry", he said.

However, most of the existing small & medium OEMs engaged in the the EV automotive business and new startups may not be able to qualify for the scheme and will have to operate under the existing norms, said Mr Gill.



Mr Vinod Aggarwal,

Treasurer, SIAM and MD & CEO, VECV, Director General, Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles (SMEV),



Mr Sohinder Gill,

Director General, Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles (SMEV),



Mr Girish Wagh,

Executive Director, Tata Motors



Mr Shailesh Chandra,

President, PVBU, Tata Motors,

"Policies supported by fiscal and non-fiscal incentives are the pillars that drive consumer sentiment and accelerate the adoption of new products in the market. The ACC and amendments to FAME-II scheme in June have generated a positive consumer response; the same is envisioned on the rolling out of the PLI scheme", said the SMEV chief.

According to **Mr Girish Wagh, Executive Director, Tata Motors**, the new scheme is both progressive and transformational. "It reiterates India's holistic commitment to a sustainable future and accelerates the country's progress towards green mobility", he said.

Mr Wagh lauded the several meaningful incentives that have been offered across the entire value chain engaged in manufacturing of battery-powered electric vehicles and hydrogen fuel cell, as well as their supporting infrastructure and exports. "Encouraging production of auto components using advanced technologies will boost localisation, domestic manufacturing and also attract foreign investments. This will help component manufacturers strive for scale, which will require setting up of new facilities and create more jobs," he said.

Mr Shailesh Chandra, President, PVBU, Tata Motors, said, "As a homegrown leading automotive brand in India, we at Tata Motors are delighted to see the new Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme." The Government, he said, has taken a holistic approach to make India 'Aatmanirbhar', especially in technology areas, that will be relevant and important in future. "A progressive scheme which will help in accelerating transition to smart, environment-friendly, sustainable mobility solutions!" he summed up.



Mr. Vikram Kirloskar, Vice-Chairman, Toyota Kirloskar Motor, found the new PLI scheme "quite distinct" when compared to other sectoral schemes and said, "it addresses existing competitive gaps and aims to foster rapid tectonic technological shifts to leverage opportunities arising from the realignment of global supply chains." The scheme, he said, was also timely and "it will be able to revive the sectoral growth and lay the foundation for the country to become a global auto manufacturing hub."

"As a leading manufacturer and exporter of commercial vehicles, as well as a front runner in technology since inception, Daimler India Commercial Vehicles welcomes the opportunities offered by the newly announced PLI scheme," said Mr. Satyakam Arya, Managing Director & CEO, Daimler India Commercial Vehicles. This initiative, he said, "will encourage investment in vital technologies related to sustainability, carbon neutrality and more."

Mr Venu Srinivasan, Chairman, TVS Motor Company, said, "The revised focus of the PLI scheme on alternative fuels, electric vehicles and utilisation of advanced technological innovations, will help the industry move faster towards future technologies."



Mr. Vikram Kirloskar,
Vice-Chairman, Toyota Kirloskar Motor,

Calling the scheme "highly appreciable", Ms. Munira Loliwala, AVP - Diversified Engineering, TeamLease Digital, said: "It will increase the overall localisation, meet the chip shortage demand (semiconductors), boost the increasing PV segment demand and enhance the superior zero-emission technology thus creating more Jobs."

Mr Sachidanand Upadhyay, Founder, Lord's Mark Industries, said the scheme will lay the foundation for a zero-carbon economy by incentivising the production of electric and hydrogen-fuel vehicles. "Making Indian auto exports globally competitive, the scheme will be pivotal to providing a much-needed boost to localised manufacturing of automobiles," he said.



Mr Venu Srinivasan,
Chairman, TVS Motor Company



Mr Sachidanand Upadhyay
Founder, Lord's Mark Industries

Most OEMs register de-growth in September

Chip shortage leads to blip

SEPTEMBER turned out to be a discouraging month for the automotive industry with most OEMs registering de-growth in terms of sales. Reports suggested that issues like increase in input costs and semiconductor (chip) shortage hit production capacities of companies, which, in turn, led to lower sales. Hopes are now pinned on the festive season, which is almost here.

The de-growth in the industry was led by market leader Maruti Suzuki India, which posted a 39 per cent decline in sales in September as compared to the previous month. The Y-o-Y sales decline was even bigger – a whopping 57 per cent with wholesale numbers at 63,111 units against 1,47,912 units in the same month last year. However, exports for the company grew 124 pc during the month.

“Sales volume of the company in September 2021 was adversely impacted due to shortage of electronic components. The company took all possible measures to limit the adverse impact”, the company said. The carmaker also said it was expecting vehicle production at two of its plants to be only around 60 per cent of normal levels in the month of October due to a global chip shortage.

Number two player Hyundai Motor India reported 23.6 per cent decline in total sales at 45,791 units in September. The company had sold 59,913 units in the same month last year. Domestic sales were down 34.2 per cent to 33,087 units as against 50,313 units in September last year, the company added.

FADA vehicle retail data for Sep 2021

CATEGORY	SEP'21	SEP'20	YoY %
2W	9,14,621	10,33,895	-11.54%
3W	36,612	24,262	50.90%
PV	2,33,308	2,00,576	16.32%
TRAC	52,896	69,462	-23.85%
CV	58,820	40,112	46.64%
LCV	36,474	30,222	20.69%
MCV	3,766	1,595	136.11%
HCV	14,635	5,059	189.29%
Others	3,945	3,236	21.91%
Total	12,96,257	13,68,307	-5.27%



Homegrown auto major Tata Motors further cemented its position as the third largest OEM in the PV segment by witnessing an impressive 21 per cent growth in sales when compared to September last year. However, at 25,730 units sold during the month, the company saw de-growth of 8 per cent over August sales.

The market leader in the EV segment stated that the company for the second month in succession crossed the 1,000-unit milestone for EVs. Mr Shailesh Chandra, President, PVB, Tata Motors Ltd, said, “EV sales recorded nearly a three-fold growth with the rising acceptance and popularity of Nexon EV and Tigor EV. Looking ahead, the demand for cars and SUVs is expected to remain strong in the forthcoming festive season; however, the supply situation for electronic components may continue to witness challenging times.”

The other major manufacturers, including Kia, Mahindra, Toyota, Renault, Honda, MG, Nissan and Skoda, too, registered double-digit decline in their sales numbers when compared with August 2021, according to media reports.

Although two-wheeler OEMs witnessed growth on a sequential basis, the segment was mostly in the red on Y-Y basis. While Hero MotoCorp reported de-growth in domestic sales, its exports grew 35 per cent to 24,884 units as against 18,425 units in September 2020. Pune-based Bajaj Auto reported a 16 per cent decline in total domestic sales at 1,92,348 units, over the year-ago period. It had sold 2,28,731 vehicles in September last year.

Mahindra & Mahindra's Farm Equipment Sector said its tractor sales in September were at 39,053 units, as against 42,361 units during the same month last year, a decline of 8 per cent. Escorts reported a 25.6 per cent decline in total tractor sales at 8,816 units during the month.

American carmaker Ford stops manufacturing in the country; exports to go on, for now 'Shocking', says FADA; seeks Act for dealers' protection



IN a major blow, Ford Motor India called it quits after being present in the country for almost three decades. Massive losses and ever-thinning market share prompted the American carmaker to leave the Indian shores, becoming the fifth automobile manufacturing company in the process to do so during the last five years.

The sudden decision left the company's dealers and thousands of its employees in the lurch forcing the dealers' body, FADA, to reach out to the Government seeking enactment of the Franchisee Protection Act, which it has been pressing for long. The move also came as a setback to the country's 'Make in India'

ambitions and caused a dent on its image as the manufacturing hub for the world.

Ford India announced on September 9 that it will cease manufacturing vehicles for domestic sales with immediate effect while its export manufacturing will wind up at Sanand plant by Q4 2021 and the Chennai engine and vehicle plants will shut by Q2 2022.

Taking some stress off from the customers, however, the company said it will continue providing aftermarket services and support. It will work in tandem with the dealers to maintain the flow of spare parts. Since it still considers India as a large market, Ford said it will bring vehicles to the country through CBU and CKD routes.

“Despite investing significantly in India, Ford has accumulated more than \$2 billion of operating losses over the past 10 years and demand for new vehicles has been much weaker than forecast.”



Mr Jim Farley

President & CEO, Ford Motor Company



A release quoting Mr Jim Farley, President and CEO of Ford Motor Company, said, “Despite investing significantly in India, Ford has accumulated more than \$2 billion of operating losses over the past 10 years and demand for new vehicles has been much weaker than forecast.”

Ford was among the first global automotive companies to enter India, way back in 1994, and it now becomes the fifth to shut operations in the country during the last five years. The other four who stopped the local manufacturing in India were American Motown icons General motors and Harley Davidson; Munich-based MAN Trucks and another American manufacturer, UM Motorcycles.



In that sense, Ford's departure is certainly a bad PR for India; but the American company's downfall was largely of its own making. Despite being the first entrant, it could not stand up to the growing competition from Japanese and Korean carmakers, which continue to thrive in India. Its operations suffered hefty losses and its attempts at partnerships and collaborations, which could have been its only hope for survival, didn't really work out and the company was left with no option but to quit.

As Mr Bakar Sadik Agwan, a senior analyst at data and analytics firm GlobalData, put it: "While COVID-19, economic woes, hampered consumer sentiments and major regulatory reforms are to be blamed for Ford's decline, the company was also losing ground to newer competing automakers and slow product cycle."

According to Mr Agwan, the company's recent strategies such as price promotions, facelift upgrades, launching automatic variants failed to lure Indian customers. Ford was the pioneer in the sub-compact SUV segment and disrupted the market with its EcoSport; "however, despite being technically competent and 'deserving', the company's vehicles lost their charm in India," he said.

With Ford India's chapter finally closed, the primary matter of concern now is the fate of dealers

and thousands of employees associated directly or indirectly with the company's operations in the country. According to the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA), the move would severely impact almost 170 dealers, who have invested about ₹ 2,000 crore and employ 40,000 people.

Terming the announcement as "shocking", FADA President Mr Vinkesh Gulati said Ford India President & MD Mr Anurag Mehrotra had assured him that the company would adequately compensate dealers who continue to offer vehicle service to customers. "Though this is a good beginning, it is not enough," he said. According to him, there are about 170 dealers who, in turn, have about 391 outlets and have invested approximately ₹ 2,000 crore for setting up their dealerships. While Ford India employed 4,000 people, these dealerships employed about 40,000 people, he added.

The industry body has also renewed its demand for a 'Franchisee Protection Act' to help protect the interests of dealers and their employees in cases of future shocks like this. "FADA has been requesting the Government of India to roll out a 'Franchisee Protection Act'... due to its unavailability, auto dealers are not adequately compensated like their counterparts in Mexico, Brazil, Russia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan, Italy, Australia and Sweden, among others," it said.



Ford has assured that it would adequately compensate dealers who continue to offer vehicle service to customers.

"Though this is a good beginning, it is not enough."

Mr Vinkesh Gulati
President, FADA



Govt says no duty cuts on 'intent to invest'

Tesla told to assemble in India

THE Government has reportedly put a spanner in the works of US EV giant Tesla which was planning to import cars in the country on duty concessions.

According to a published report, the Ministry of Heavy Industries has told the Elon Musk-founded entity that the Government does not favour a reduction in duties based only on "intent to invest".

The report further said that the Government has suggested that Tesla should begin its India business by starting with local assembly operations, and thereafter scale it up to full-fledged manufacturing.

"Offering duty concessions when someone will consider investing after two-three years will be a reversal of a policy that we have followed for several years, and will be unfair to existing players," a Government source was quoted as saying in the newspaper report.

The Government fears that an industry-wide cut in customs duty will result in import of electric vehicles instead of companies setting up manufacturing facilities.

Tesla executives have been told that they should consider importing semi-knocked down (SKD) kits into the country and assemble them locally to attract lower duties, as opposed to importing completely built units.



Volkswagen launches Taigun

'A game-changer in mid-size SUV segment'

VOLKSWAGEN India on September 23 launched its SUVW *Taigun* at an introductory price of ₹ 10.49 lakh (ex-showroom, India).

Dressed to make head turns, *Taigun* imbibes the global lineage and language of a Volkswagen, said a press release by the company. It boasts a charismatic design language - the exterior exudes strength and the robust stance of an SUV, while the interiors offer a premium appeal, sense of spaciousness and a host of features for the comfort and convenience of the occupants, it said further



Mr Ashish Gupta, Brand Director, Volkswagen Passenger Cars India, at the launch of VW *Taigun*



Taigun is the first product offering by the brand in the mid-size SUV segment. It has the largest wheelbase in the segment of 2,651 mm that makes the interiors extremely roomy and spacious, according to the company release.

Speaking at the launch, Mr. Ashish Gupta, Brand Director, Volkswagen Passenger Cars India, said, "Today is a significant moment for all of us at Volkswagen, as we launch the new Volkswagen *Taigun*. The bold, dynamic, German-engineered SUVW *Taigun* will be a game-changer in India's mid-size SUV segment."

Powered by the globally acclaimed TSI technology, *Taigun* is available in two engine options - 1.0L TSI engine with a 6-speed manual and a 6-speed automatic transmission option that delivers peak power of 115PS (85 kW) ranging from 5,000 to 5,500 rpm and peak torque of 178 Nm@1750-4500 rpm.

The 1.5L TSI EVO engine is equipped with a 6-speed manual and a 7-speed DSG transmission option, delivering peak power of 150PS (110 kW) from 5,000 to 6,000 rpm range and peak torque of 250Nm@1600-3500 rpm. The 1.5L TSI EVO engine also comes equipped with Active Cylinder Technology (ACT) and idle start/stop technology.

A prominent front grille with a generous chrome applique, LED headlights and DRLs that greet the *Taigun* customer even before the drive starts - they are intelligently controlled and can illuminate the road as brightly as possible without dazzling the other road users. Providing a higher stance and on-road presence the R17 Manila alloy wheels contribute to the striking appearance of the *Taigun*.

Taigun has the most distinctive rear within its segment. The width spanning C-shaped Infinity LED tail lamps mark a strong rear-end design and further add a superior and sporty character to the overall aesthetics of the *Taigun*.

On entering the new Volkswagen *Taigun*, customers will experience the modern dashboard layout comprised with décor inserts, smart storage spaces for the young and active consumer, ambient lighting, ventilated leather front seats, electric sunroof and wireless charging putting the driver and occupant at ease.

Adding an element of modernity to *Taigun* interiors is the 20.32cm digital cockpit and smart touch Climatronic auto AC with pollen control. The 25.65 cm VW Play touchscreen Infotainment system comes embedded with Apple Carplay™ and Android Auto™, enabling customers to be connected and entertained.

Taigun also comes equipped with the locally developed MyVolkswagen Connect App that is a one stop application for customer convenience.

It comes with a full range of 40+ safety features such as Electronic Stability Control (ESC), Anti-Lock Braking System (ABS), up to six airbags, multi-collision brakes, three headrests at the rear, reverse camera, three-point seat belts, ISOFIX and an adjustable headrest for all and tyre pressure deflation warning system. *Taigun* will be available in five body colours: Curcuma Yellow, Wild Cherry Red, Candy White, Reflex Silver and Carbon Steel Grey.

BMW X5 Sports variants launched

'Celebrate adrenaline
gust with style,
self-confidence'



TWO new Sports variants of *BMW X5* were launched in India on September 13. While *BMW X5 xDrive30d SportX Plus* has been priced at ₹ 79,50,000, *BMW X5 xDrive40i SportX Plus* will cost ₹ 77,90,000.

Mr. Vikram Pawah, President, BMW Group India, said, "The *BMW X5* underlines a very strong appeal with its combined off-road abilities and dynamic driving pleasure. The most successful BMW sports activity vehicle (SAV) of all time now has a new, attractive addition to its line-up - *BMW X5 xDrive 'SportX Plus'*. *SportX Plus* celebrates the gust of adrenaline with style and self-confidence."

According to a press release, the design of the *BMW X5* makes a powerful statement. The enlarged one-piece hexagonal kidney grille paired with a sculptured bonnet and short overhangs gives the iconic front an imposing appearance. The front LED headlights and LED fog lamps makes a solid and dynamic impression on the road because of their muscular stance.

Thanks to the unrivalled BMW TwinPower Turbo technology, the petrol and diesel engines meld maximum power with exemplary efficiency and offer spontaneous responsiveness even at low engine speeds, said the release.

BMW xDrive, an intelligent all-wheel-drive system, monitors the driving situation constantly and is quick to respond. Electronically controlled 'Automatic Differential Brakes/Locks', extended 'Dynamic Traction Control', Hill Start Assist and Hill Descent Control help to conquer every terrain, it said.

BMW EfficientDynamics includes features such as 8-speed Steptronic Automatic Transmission, Auto Start-Stop, ECO PRO mode, Brake-Energy Regeneration, Electronic Power Steering, 50:50 Weight Distribution and Driving Experience Control switch. *BMW Safety* technologies includes six airbags, Attentiveness Assistance, Dynamic Stability Control (DSC) including Cornering Brake Control (CBC), electric parking brake with auto hold, side-impact protection, electronic vehicle immobilizer and crash sensor, ISOFIX child seat mounting and integrated emergency spare wheel under the load floor.

MG Motor unveils *Astor*

With personal AI assistant and Autonomous (Level 2) technology

MG Motor India has unveiled MG *Astor*, which it claims to be the country's first SUV with personal AI assistant and first-in-segment Autonomous (Level 2) technology.

Based on MG's design philosophy of Emotional Dynamism, *Astor's* contemporary style will connect with consumers, said a press release.

The personal AI assistant depicts human-like emotions and voice. Paralympic athlete Deepa Malik has lent her voice to the personal AI assistant, thereby humanising the experience.

The AI technology in *Astor* is developed around MG's vision of Car-as-a-Platform (CAAP) of possibilities, which will enable the users to personalise the services as per their requirements.

The SUV has a prominent bold celestial grille that makes a solid on-road impression. It poses an elegant and ready-for-action stance with a classic leopard jump shoulder line. *Astor's* nine crystal diamond elements in the LED headlamps make for a distinct hawk-eye expression with precise details, said the release.

The interiors are elegantly crafted with soft-touch and



premium material. It will be coming in two engine options – the Brit Dynamic 220 turbo petrol engine with a six-speed AT delivering 220Nm of torque and 140ps of power. The other is the VTi Tech petrol engine with a manual transmission and an eight-speed CVT, delivering 144Nm of torque and 110ps of power.

Speaking on the unveiling of *Astor*, Mr Rajeev Chaba, President and MD, MG Motor India, said, "We have introduced several industry-firsts with our SUVs to the Indian automotive market. This time we have Autonomous (Level 2), MG *Astor*, with a personal AI assistant. With its elegant exteriors, luxurious interiors, and futuristic technology, we believe that *Astor* is a desirable package that will strike a chord with the customers."

Tata Motors launches XPRES-T EV

Electric sedan exclusively for fleet customers

FOLLOWING the nationwide introduction of XPRES brand in July this year, Tata Motors on September 15 launched *XPRES-T EV*, its first electric sedan under the brand, exclusively for fleet customers.

The price of the new *XPRES-T* electric sedan starts at ₹ 9.54 lakh.

Targeted at mobility services, corporate and Government fleet customers, the *XPRES-T EV* will come with an optimal battery size and captive fast-charging solution, a press release by the company said.



XPRES-T

XPRES-T electric sedan, it said, packs a high-energy density battery of 21.5 kWh and 16.5 kWh with two range options – 213 km and 165 km. Available in two trim options, the electric sedan comes with zero tail-pipe emission, single speed automatic transmission, dual airbags and ABS with EBD as standard across variants.

The *XPRES-T EV* can be charged from 0- 80 pc in 90 minutes and 110 minutes (for 16.5 kWh and 21.5 kWh respectively), using fast charging or can also be normally charged from any 15 A plug point. The premium black theme interior with standard automatic climate control and Electric Blue accents across its interior and exterior will give it a differentiated presence from other Tata cars, according to the release.

Tata 407 goes green

CNG variant launched as 'non-stop profit machine'

TATA Motors on September 13 announced the launch of CNG variant of its iconic commercial vehicle, Tata 407. It offers profits of up to 35 per cent over the diesel variant, said a press release.

The all-new Tata 407 CNG has been designed to live up to its reputation as the 'non-stop profit machine', continuing to offer best-in-class performance and reliability, said the release.

The vehicle is available with a 10-foot load deck, offering a high load-carrying capacity. The all-new 407 CNG will further strengthen Tata Motors' extensive CNG portfolio, ranging from 5-tonne to 16-tonne gross vehicle weight (GVW), in the I&LCV segment.

The Tata 407 CNG is powered by a 3.8-litre CNG engine leveraging the fuel-efficient SGI engine technology and delivers maximum power of 85PS while also generating best-in-class torque of 285Nm at low rpm.

Commenting on the launch, Mr. Rudrarup Maitra, Vice-President, Product Line, I&LCV, Tata Motors, said, "We are thrilled to launch the all-new CNG variant of the legendary Tata 407. Arguably the most legendary commercial vehicle in India, with a 35+ year legacy, the vehicle has consistently remained a customer-favourite, selling over 1.2 million units to date – the highest ever in this segment."

Mr Maitra further said that with a steep increase in diesel prices, CNG vehicles have the potential to increase the profit potential significantly and expressed confidence that 407 CNG "will bring a lot of value to our customers."

Mr. Rudrarup Maitra,
V-P, Product Line, I&LCV, Tata Motors



Maruti Suzuki Ciaz hits 3-lakh sales milestone



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

MARUTI Suzuki Ciaz has attained sales milestone of 3,00,000 units, fastest in the premium sedan segment.

Ciaz comes packed with segment-leading space, plush interiors and a powerful 1.5-litre petrol engine with Smart Hybrid technology that offers best-in-class fuel-efficiency, said a press release issued by the carmaker.

Speaking on the milestone, Mr Shashank Srivastava, Senior Executive Director (Marketing & Sales), Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said, "Since its launch in 2014, Ciaz has redefined the segment with its class-leading space, design and sophistication and has witnessed a resounding success in the highly competitive premium sedan segment. The milestone of three lakh sales demonstrates customers' faith and confidence in the brand".

Swift clocks cumulative sales of 2.5-million units

MARUTI Suzuki's premium hatchback Swift has clocked cumulative sales of 2.5 million units.

According to a press release, Swift had created the premium hatchback segment in the country with its launch in 2005. Delivering unmatched driving experience, global styling, outstanding performance and immense customer fan following, Swift has successfully created a league of its own, it said.

Mr. Shashank Srivastava, Executive Director (Marketing & Sales), Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said, "Swift is not a car, it is a feeling, an emotion and a refreshing new thought process that challenged many notions around hatchbacks. This success is a testament to the love of customers and critics for Brand Swift."



'Kam se Kaam Banega'

Maruti celebrates three decades of leadership in fuel-efficient cars

MARUTI Suzuki India Limited has introduced 'Kam Se Kaam Banega', an integrated campaign to celebrate three decades of its leadership in fuel-efficient cars.

According to a press release, the campaign carries forward the narrative on 'fuel-efficiency', an extension of Maruti Suzuki's 'People Technology' campaign which celebrates innovations and technologies.

'Kam Se Kaam Banega' draws inspiration from the innate need of Indian consumer to expect maximum fuel-efficiency from cars without compromising on performance and safety. Maruti Suzuki over the years has offered country's most fuel-efficient cars across all segments, said the release.

Technological innovations like Smart Hybrid, S-CNG, K-Series engines and HEARTECT platform etc. have helped the company to offer fuel-efficient products along with meeting other changing consumer requirements. The company has recorded up to 30 per cent improvement in fuel-efficiency across its product range in the last one decade, added the release.

Mr. Shashank Srivastava, Senior Executive Director (Marketing & Sales), Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said, "Our latest campaign 'Kam se Kaam Banega' is a testimony of our leadership and commitment towards bringing fuel-efficient and environment friendly cars. It demonstrates our commitment to give more to our customers".

“Ab saving zyada aur fuel kam lagega
kyunki
KAM SE KAAM BANEGA”





Nissan *Magnite* is the Official Car of ICC T20 World Cup

NISSAN is the Official Sponsor of ICC Men's T20 World Cup and the Nissan *Magnite* is the Official Car of ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021. The tournament will be held from October 17 to November 14 in UAE and Oman.

"The ICC Men's T20 World Cup is one India looks forward to, Nissan India is proud that 'Make in India, Make for the World SUV - the Big Bold Beautiful Nissan *Magnite* is the Official car of ICC Men's T20 World Cup. In these challenging times, we are hopeful that the ICC Men's T20 World Cup will bring aspiration, excitement and entertainment for everyone." said Mr Sinan Ozkok, President, Nissan Motor India.

Mr Rakesh Srivastava, Managing Director, Nissan Motor India, said, "Nissan is the Official Sponsor of the ICC global events since 2016, we are pleased to sponsor ICC Men's T20 World Cup, a tournament that wins hearts of people by bringing them together with hope and happiness."



Sinan Ozkok,
president, Nissan Motor India,

Kapil Dev

Rakesh Srivastava
Managing Director,
Nissan Motor India Ltd.



Interview with I&PCL CMD Piyush Tamboli 'Things will soon be back on track'

I&PCL, a pioneer in the investment casting business in the country, is highly bullish about the economy. "Everything in India will be much better compared to other countries as many companies are looking at India instead of China," said Mr. Piyush Tamboli, Chairman & Managing Director of I&PCL. Autoguide conducted online interviews with Mr Tamboli and his son, Mr Jainam Tamboli, GM – Marketing for the company. The topics revolved around I&PCL, auto component industry, Gen-Y's role, post-pandemic marketing strategies and the overall economy.

Could you please give us a brief about your company?

Investment & Precision Castings Ltd (I&PCL) is a renowned and reliable supplier of investment castings (Air-Melt & Vacuum Induction Melted) in ready-to-assemble condition in India since its inception in 1975. In our state-of-the-art facility in Bhavnagar, Gujarat, we manufacture ferrous and non-ferrous precision investment castings of high complexity in several metal compositions for applications in various segments. Our primary market is automotive segment and we supply to almost every major OEMs in India. I&PCL has also started manufacturing vacuum investment casting which has applications in diverse fields. We are in the process of diversifying into segments like medical, aerospace, defence and power, besides focusing more on exports.

Tell us about I&PCL's market share in the investment casting industry. Which companies do you see as your main competitors?

I&PCL is a technology leader in this area and we do not find any competitor, specifically in aerospace, defence and some segments of auto industry. Still, we consider Uni Deritend as our competitor as it has the capacity similar to ours.

Could you elaborate on some of your global tech collaborations?

Until 1989, I&PCL had technical collaborations with three companies, Arwood Corporation, USA, Zollern, Germany, and Associated Foundries Engineering Company of Japan, and the same helped us to achieve technological leadership, which we still maintain.

What do you think is the USP, or the USPs, of I&PCL?

Early adoption of technology has been the key for I&PCL. Our company has been an early adopter of process innovation as well as quality standards and it was the first Investment casting company to get ISO 9000 certification in 1994. In 1995, we developed in-house ERP System which was something unheard of at that time. In 2006, we were the first to import robotic shell coating system. In 2014, our castings were used by ISRO in launch-pads and satellites. We installed vacuum casting facility in 2015 and 3D printing in 2017. This year, we got NABL accreditation for our testing facilities.

Which are the some top automotive companies for which I&PCL is the 'preferred supplier'?

Maruti Suzuki India, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, John Deere, Royal Enfield, Ashok Leyland, Daimler India, Kia Motors, Hyundai Motors and BorgWarner are some of the companies which consider us as their preferred supplier.

How did I&PCL cope with the prolonged lockdowns and is it back to normal now?

Lockdowns across the globe devastated businesses severely for quite a long time. We, too, had to halt our operations for two-three months on account of restrictions on movement of personnel. We also failed to achieve our target for 2019-20. From production point of view, there had not been many issues since majority of our workforce is local but disruption of supply chain was a major concern. Now, things are progressing well and we anticipate that 2021-22 would be a promising year.

On a macro-level, where do you think the auto component industry stands at this juncture?

The automotive segment is on a recovery path. Market has started picking up post-pandemic and the momentum will continue in view of the ensuing festive season. However, Ford decision is a big setback to domestic auto parts manufacturers. It will have an adverse impact on many players.

What is your take on the Government's recent initiatives, particularly the new PLI scheme and the scrapping policy?

The scrapping Policy is a welcome initiative. It will reduce volume of old and defective vehicles, Improve road and vehicular safety, reduce air pollution and boost availability of low-cost raw material for automotive, steel and electronics industry. It will also generate more employment.

Anything would you like to add? A veteran's perspective on the auto industry, in particular and economy, in general.

Currently, the supply chain is disturbed because of COVID-19. However, in the next few months, things will be improving and once again everything will be on track and everything in India will be much better compared to other countries as many companies are looking at India instead of China. So, the Indian economy is projected to bounce back in the coming months.

Interview with Jainam Tamboli, GM – Marketing, I&PCL

What motivated you to enter the family business?

Did you explore other options or was it a fait accompli?

Post-graduation, I had the option of taking up a job at an IT firm or joining the family business. The job, while providing a higher pay, was in Mumbai where the cost of living is also high. Having spoken with colleagues working in the company, I realised that the career growth potential was significantly limited compared to the family business. All things considered, joining the business made more sense for me.

How has your educational background helped in your job profile at I&PCL?

As a computer engineer, I had initial doubts regarding my decision. However, the analytical approach that I developed during my engineering programme, helped me grasp a lot of information and aided me in my training on the shop floor.

What new marketing strategies have you adopted in promoting the already-established business of I&PCL?

I&PCL has been using traditional B2B marketing strategies for decades. However, the advent of new social media platforms has transformed the market in new ways. In order to take advantage of these changes, we have begun correspondence via platforms such as LinkedIn which helps not only in finding sales leads for the company but also aids in recruitment as well as procurement.

Post-pandemic, what marketing tools do you think a company in this sector should primarily focus on?

The pandemic has dramatically accelerated the adoption of virtual meetings. While most negotiations can be done virtually these days, there is still a need for physical audits by customers. Several tools exist which allow for virtual tours of the facilities. Moving towards a fully virtual customer experience has a lot of potential to fast-track sales developments.

What are the major changes you have witnessed in I&PCL during the past six years that you have been with it?

Over the past six years, we have seen a shift in marketing strategy. We have been diversifying from automotive to non-automotive sectors such as aerospace, defence and medical Implants. The offset clause that was introduced by the Government which demands certain components to be mandatorily procured from India has boosted local development and I believe that Indian companies developing the know-how is a significant step towards achieving 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

What has been your role, specifically, in bringing about some of these changes? Can you elaborate upon your achievements?

After joining, I went through a training programme in every department of the company. Following that, I took up a research project where I was successfully able to formulate a new wax which could be machined using CNCs to create a cost-effective prototyping alternative to 3D printing.



Jainam Tamboli,
GM – Marketing,
Investment & Precision Castings Ltd

'Leverage digital platforms to the fullest'

From a young man's perspective, how do you look at the automotive industry in general?

The automotive industry in India produced around 3.4 million vehicles in 2020, making it the sixth-largest vehicle manufacturer worldwide. Despite being one of the largest contributors to GDP, our vehicle output is significantly smaller compared to countries like China, USA and Japan which had outputs of approx. 25.2 million, 8.8 million and 8 million respectively. Given the Government's push for indigenisation and the dreams of vast majority of Indians to own a vehicle, I expect the automotive sector to grow many-folds in the coming decade.

How do you look at the investment casting segment?

The lost-wax process is one of the oldest sectors in the world with the applications being in existence since several millennia. Having originated as a means of making artistic idols, the technology has now found application in various engineering fields such as automotive, pumps & valves, aerospace, defence, medical and several engineering applications. Such diverse application is possible as the technology is capable of making complex metal component with extremely high dimensional accuracy. As various technologies evolve, so will the complexity and dimensional accuracy required and the Investment casting process will be extremely useful in fulfilling these requirements.

Which way, do you think, can Gen-Y contribute to the growth of the automobile industry in the country?

Post-pandemic, the issues of having a globalised supply chain are becoming more evident and there is a strong push from several countries, including India, for self-reliance. As the automotive sector is expected to move towards electric vehicles and hybrids, Gen-Y has tremendous opportunity in indigenising these technologies not only to aid in the country's development but also to create companies of the future.

And lastly, anything you would like to add as the marketing head of a company which is the technology leader in the industry?

These are tough times for everyone; understanding the new trends in customer behaviour will be the key to developing sales in the new normal. Leverage the digital platforms to the fullest as these are going to be crucial in the near future.

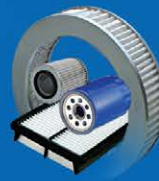
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Hyundai i20 N Line showcased in new dynamic concept, 'Creator Arena'

HYUNDAI Motor India on September 10 showcased *i20 N Line* in a dynamic new concept, the Creators Arena, at its corporate headquarters in Gurugram.

Combining sporty and exciting elements, the Creators Arena fuses to form the perfect depiction of a bold new playground for millennial audiences to immerse themselves in an exciting environment, said a press release.

Mr. Tarun Garg, Director (Sales, Marketing & Service), Hyundai Motor India Ltd., said, "Our latest launch, the *i20 N Line* is a standout example of products that excite the senses and rejuvenate driving pleasure. To showcase

the *i20 N Line* in its natural setting, we have developed a bespoke concept – the Creator's Arena where dynamic and renowned content creators from across India will experience and capture *i20 N Line* in all its glory."

The Creator's Arena, said the release, has been conceptualised to portray a raw and feel evoking look. With application of corrugated sheets and mesh walls, the Creator's Arena depicts the *i20 N Line* amidst a grungy look. The Creator's Arena will also showcase a digital music symphony composed out of *i20 N Line* car sounds, making it the instrument of a dynamic and sporty new melody, added the release.



Hyundai introduces site safety robot at Kia plant in S Korea

HYUNDAI Motor Group on September 17 introduced a robot for industrial site safety, and announced its pilot operation at Kia's plant in South Korea.

The robot, said a press release, is based on Boston Dynamics' quadruped robot, Spot, with applied artificial intelligence (AI), autonomous navigation, teleoperation technologies, and computing payload developed by the Group's Robotics Lab.

"The Factory Safety Service Robot is the first collaboration project with Boston Dynamics. The robot will help detect risks and secure people's safety in industrial sites," said Mr Dong Jin Hyun, Head of Hyundai Motor Group Robotics Lab.

With an integrated thermal camera and 3D LiDAR, the robot is able to detect persons around it, monitor high-temperature situations and potential fire hazards,



and perceive whether a door is open or closed. It can be remote-controlled through a secure webpage that provides a livestream of its movements around the plant, enabling office personnel to remotely observe industrial areas.

Vehicle intelligence firm Spireon expands to India

VEHICLE intelligence company Spireon, the provider of aftermarket telematics solutions in North America, on September 10 announced the launch of its Indian subsidiary.



Located in Bengaluru, Spireon Telematics India will be led by technology veteran Mr Pranab Das, who will oversee a growing team that currently comprises 40 engineers.

According to a press release, Mr Das is a seasoned leader with over two decades of experience in Industrial IoT, Enterprise & Mobile Applications, Embedded Systems, Wearables and Test Automation.

"Launching our operations in India represents a significant milestone for Spireon and reflects our commitment to leverage the highest caliber of engineering talent—both in the US and abroad—with telematics and cloud expertise," said Mr Kevin Weiss, CEO of Spireon.

Mr Das said, "The global connected vehicle market is expected to grow by over 20 per cent in the next few years and I'm thrilled to be joining Spireon at this pivotal time."

Mahindra launches Furio 7 range of LCV trucks



MAHINDRA's Truck and Bus Division, a part of the Mahindra Group, on September 17 announced the commercial launch of Furio 7, its latest, range of LCVs.

The company has extended its existing Furio, an Intermediate commercial vehicle brand launched in 2019, to an all-new light commercial vehicle range, the Mahindra Furio 7.

The range will be available across three product platforms: 4-Tyre Cargo, 6-Tyre Cargo HD and 6-Tyre Tipper. It will cover every application of business needs in LCV segments, said a press release.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Veejay Nakra, CEO, Automotive Sector, Mahindra & Mahindra Limited, said, "The launch of the new Furio 7 range of LCV trucks with an unprecedented customer value proposition of 'more mileage or return the truck and guaranteed resale value after five years' is a landmark in the industry. It will set new benchmarks of excellence and customer-centricity while reflecting our serious commitment to the segment and confidence in our products."



Mr Jalaj Gupta, Business Head, Commercial Vehicles and Mr.Veejay Nakra, CEO, Automotive Sector, M&M Ltd, at the launch of **FURIO 7** range of LCV trucks

Volvo delivers 10 coaches to Odisha road transport body



Mr Akash Passey (R), President, Bus Division, VECV

ODISHA Chief Minister, Mr Naveen Patnaik, dedicated 10 Volvo B8R 12-metre coaches to the state at a special event in Bhubaneswar on September 3.

Volvo Buses India, a part of VE Commercial Vehicles (VECV), had earlier delivered these buses to the Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC).

According to a press release, the fully-built Euro-VI compliant coach is powered by Volvo's 300HP, D8K six-cylinder, direct-injection diesel engine. Ride quality, said the release, is optimised through the electronically controlled suspension system while safety is bolstered by the electronic braking system.

"We look forward to deploying these premium buses on a range of long-haul inter-state routes radiating from Odisha to adjacent states. Our objective is to leverage Odisha's strategic location to provide connectivity to the whole region," said Mr Diptesh Kumar Pattanayak, CMD of OSRTC.

"The class-defining coach is proven performer on a diverse array of routes and duty cycles across the globe. We are confident that the bus will provide the highest levels of comfort and safety that Odisha's discerning passengers deserve," said Mr Akash Passey, President, Bus Division, VECV.

Force **Gurkha** in new avatar

Deliveries begin on Dusshera day



PUNE based automotive major Force Motors unveiled a new avatar of *Gurkha* on its social media platforms on September 15.

The vehicles are expected to reach the dealerships in the first week of October and the first deliveries to customers are planned on the day of Dussehra festival.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Prasan Firodia, Managing Director, Force Motors, said, "Aligning with the changing customer expectations and aspirations, we have designed and developed the All-New *Gurkha* on a ground up, modular architecture platform and are confident that we shall now be able to appeal to a much wider audience who wish to own a vehicle that is suitable for both daily commutes as well as adventure trips."

The *Gurkha 2021*, said a press release, is built on a ground-up modular architecture platform with an all new wider and longer body, full new interiors, a new crash compliant, high strength C-in-C chassis and new coil spring suspension on all four wheels. The only carry over from the previous generation *Gurkha* is the Mercedes G-Wagen inspired looks and imposing stance, it said.

The branding of the all-new *Gurkha* has also undergone a major change with *Gurkha* logo replacing the F-Logo on the front grill. On the sides a new mnemonic is added signifying its all-terrain and all-weather capability across mountains, rivers, deserts and jungles in all four seasons.

The khukri on the brand logo has been moved from the left to the right and aligned at the same angle as the air intake snorkel, in line with the new, more contemporary and aesthetic brand identity, said the release.

Gurkha 2021, said the release, is the only vehicle in its class that features full LED Force Pro Edge headlamps, broken circle DRLs and fender mounted LED indicators.

The vehicle comes with air bag for driver and co-passenger. It is the only vehicle in this category with full metal top, offering best-in-class security and safety.

The new 2.6 litre 91bhp Mercedes-derived common rail, direct injection, turbocharged diesel engine has ample power to cruise at triple digit figures on highways and sufficient low-end torque (250Nm @1400 – 2400 rpm) to negotiate slopes of 35 degrees in 4x4 low first gear in the crawl mode, and also wade through streams of up to 700mm depth.

According to the release, the longer and wider body enables *Gurkha 2021* to offer the roomiest cabin in its class with captain seats for all four occupants, best-in-class leg room, head room and elbow room plus over 500 litres of boot space.

Volkswagen rolls out subscription - based car ownership model in tie-up with ORIX



Mr Ashish Gupta, Brand Director, Volkswagen Passenger Cars India and Mr Sandeep Gambhir, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, ORIX Auto Infrastructure Services

VOLKSWAGEN Passenger Cars India on September 9 announced the rollout of its subscription-based car ownership model, in association with ORIX, an omni-channel mobility solutions provider.

Under Phase-I, the subscription-based service will be available at 30 outlets across Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru Chennai, and Hyderabad.

According to a press release, ORIX Auto Infrastructure Services (OAIS), in association with Volkswagen India, will provide its customers 100 per cent on-road financing, periodic maintenance, insurance cover and an option to upgrade or return the car at the convenience of the customer. Customers can opt for a *Polo*, *Vento* or *T-Roc*, which will be available in 24, 36 and 48 months tenure, said the release.

Commenting on the announcement, Mr. Ashish Gupta, Brand Director, Volkswagen Passenger Cars India, said, "Car subscription is gaining popularity, especially amongst the urban young middle class, looking for a convenient ownership experience. Catering to the needs of this customer segment, we are pleased to extend our partnership with ORIX, and enhance our leasing and subscription platform, that will focus on providing accessibility and a peace of mind ownership experience to our prospective customers."

Mr. Sandeep Gambhir, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, OAIS, said that "We are excited to partner with Volkswagen and bring newer options to prospective customers and offer them a whole new range of possibilities that would enable them to own, drive and experience premium products by Volkswagen."

Tata Altroz crosses 1L-milestone

TATA Motors rolled out the 1,00,000th unit of *Altroz* from its manufacturing facility in Pune, on September 28. The country's only hatchback with a 5-star Global NCAP Safety rating crossed the milestone within 20 months of its launch, said a press release issued by the automotive brand.

Altroz, said the release, stormed to the Top 2 position in the premium hatchback category in FY22 with a market share of more than 20 pc. It clocked its maximum sales of 7,550 units in March 2021, with an average monthly sale of around 6,000 units in FY22.

Mr. Rajan Amba, Vice-President, Sales, Marketing & Customer Care, PVBU, Tata Motors, said, "We are pleased to share that we have



crossed a major milestone during these challenging times and are grateful for the constant support and loyalty of our customers and

partners. The *Altroz* occupies a pride of place in our New Forever range offering a wide variety of options in the premium hatchback segment."



Tata Motors Celebrates the 10k-EV mark

TATA Motors on September 24 recorded a remarkable feat of on-boarding its 10,000th EV customer.

Leading the electric vehicle segment, the milestone signifies a growing number of delighted customers of a Tata EV, said a press release.

Mr. Shailesh Chandra, President, PVBU, Tata Motors, said, "The achievement of 10,000 EVs on road is a strong testament to how our innovative electric vehicles are resonating well with customers. We are proud to have lived up to the high expectations of the early EV adopters and are thankful to them for their continued trust in the brand."

Tata Motors launched *Nexon EV* in January 2020, and recently launched its second EV in the personal segment, the new *Tigor EV*.

Tata Motors' PPA with Tata Power for solar project at its Pune plant



TATA Motors has signed a solar power purchase agreement with Tata Power to install and operate a 3 MWp rooftop solar project at its Passenger Vehicle Business Unit (PVB) plant, in Pune.

The solar project is expected to generate nearly 45 lakh KWh per year, reducing carbon emissions by approximately 3,538 tonnes per year, said a press release.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Rajesh Khatri, Vice-President - Operations, PVB, Tata Motors, said, "After

the recent inauguration of India's largest solar carport at our car plant in Pune, this project marks a new milestone in our ongoing efforts to reduce our impact on the planet."

Mr. Ravinder Singh, Chief-Solar Rooftops Business, Tata Power, said, "As One Tata initiative, we are glad to partner with Tata Motors to help them transform their PVB Pune Unit. This partnership represents our collective effort to help Tata Motors lower their carbon footprint and achieve its net zero carbon goal."

Ducati unleashes **Monster** in India

LUXURY motorcycle brand Ducati on September 23 announced the launch of its all-new *Monster* range in India. While *Monster* is priced at ₹ 10.99 lakh (ex-showroom), *Monster Plus* will cost ₹ 11.24 lakh. Available in three colour option, *Monster Plus* comes with an aerodynamic windshield and the rear seat cover as standard fitment, said a press release.

The new *Monster* represents all the essence of Ducati in the lightest, most compact and essential form possible. The recipe is the same like it was in 1993: a sporty engine, that is perfect for road use, combined with a superbike-derived frame, said the release further.



The concept of the new *Monster* is similar to what the unforgettable *Monster 900* was, the first, true sports naked, but reimagined from ground up. The result is a bike with an advanced and easy chassis, capable of immediately establishing the perfect feeling with the rider. The riding position is less loaded on the wrists and the engine offers an excellent balance between power, torque, and ease of handling, added the release.

Mr. Bipul Chandra, Managing Director, Ducati India said, "The new *Monster* is a completely new bike, designed to be more sporty, light, and easy to ride, to make it accessible to new riders as well as to ones that are more experienced."

Ducati launches SuperSport 950



LUXURY motorcycle brand Ducati on September 9 announced the launch of its all-new *SuperSport 950* in two variants; *SuperSport 950* and *SuperSport 950 S*. While *SuperSport 950* is priced at ₹ 13.49 lakh, the prices for *SuperSport 950 S* start at ₹ 15.49 lakh.

With this new iteration, the Ducati road sports bike changes its name and becomes *SuperSport 950*, renewing its design aesthetics, electronic equipment and becoming compliant with the BS-VI emission standards.

Mr. Bipul Chandra, Managing Director of Ducati India, said, "The all-new *SuperSport 950* is here to bring the racing DNA of the Panigale series packed into a much more accessible package, with a promise of a true every day superbike."

According to a press release, the strengths of this Ducati road sports bike have always been the dynamic style, the visual compactness, and the elegance of the proportionate line, typical of the *Panigale* range. Four years since its launch, *SuperSport 950* has evolved with a new look that transforms the *SuperSport 950* into a Ducati for the younger riding audience, looking for their first sports bike, added the release.

The bike is powered by 937cc Ducati Testastretta 11 degree twin-cylinder engine, revised to meet the BS-VI emission standards.



Mr. Bipul Chandra, MD, Ducati India

TVS acquires majority stake in Swiss-based e-bike brand EGO



Mr. Sudarshan Venu, Joint Managing Director, TVS Motor Company

TVS Motor Company on September 17 announced a partnership with EGO Movement as a majority shareholder, in an all-cash deal through its Singapore Subsidiary TVS Motor (Singapore) Pte Ltd.

The partnership, said a press release, is in line with TVS Motor Company's commitment to building an aspirational product portfolio while nurturing sustainable and scalable brands.

It also reiterates the company's strategy to expand its global presence in developed markets, commencing with Europe, which serves as the heart of the e-bike mobility landscape, added the release.

Led by the co-founders Mr Daniel Meyer and Ms Marie So, EGO Movement is a Swiss technology company providing innovative mobility solutions through a portfolio of e-bikes, e-cargo bikes, and e-scooters.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Sudarshan Venu, Joint Managing Director, TVS Motor Company, said, "The partnership with EGO Movement reaffirms TVS Motor Company's commitment towards electrification and the broader sustainability agenda. We are building a strategic personal e-mobility ecosystem by scaling unique brands which share our vision of delivering compelling customer experience benchmarks through cutting-edge, aspirational products."

Raider is TVS' feature-rich offering in 125cc segment

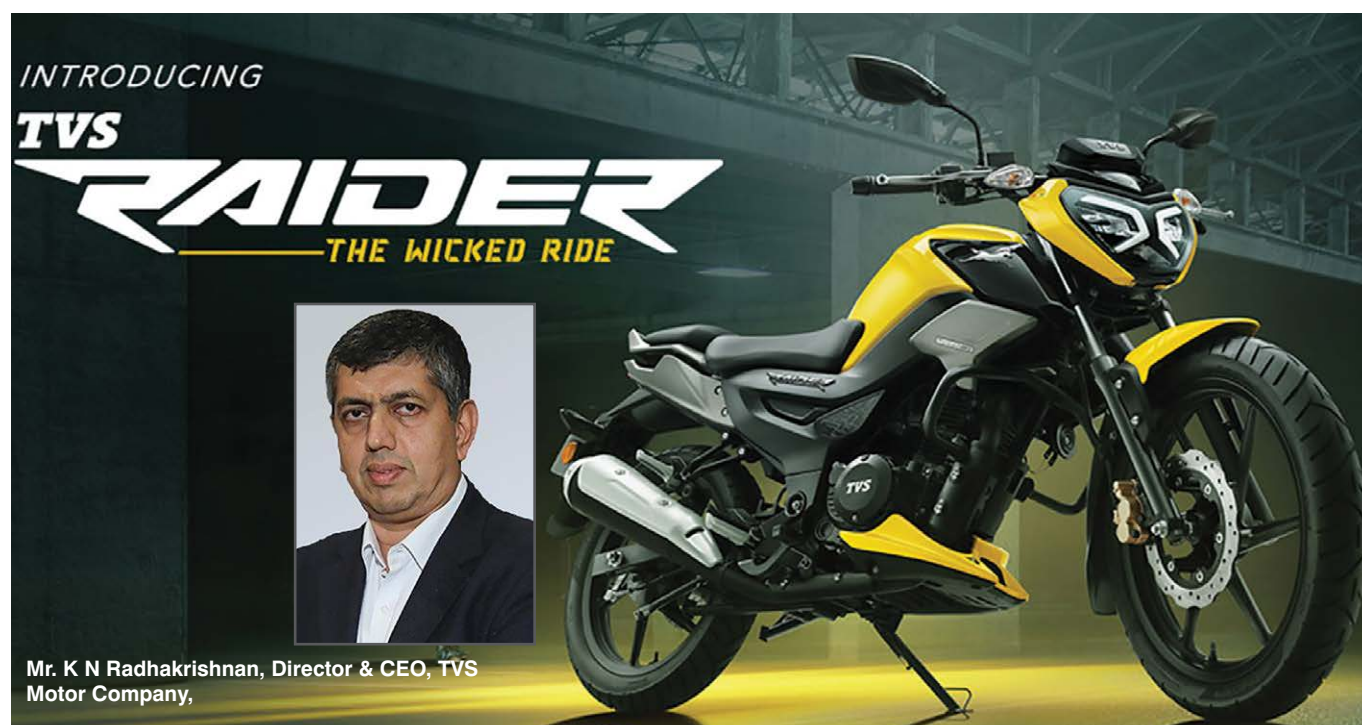
TVS Motor Company on September 16 launched *Raider*, its feature-rich offering in the 125cc segment, for aspirational young customers.

The young and sporty motorcycle comes with first-in-class features such as a reverse LCD digital speedometer, optional 5-inch TFT cluster with Voice Assist, multiple ride modes and first-in-segment under-seat storage, said a press release.

Commenting on the launch, Mr. K N Radhakrishnan, Director & CEO, TVS Motor Company, said, "TVS Motor Company caters to customers across almost every continent. We are happy to add a new global motorcycle platform to our portfolio with the TVS *Raider*, which is designed for the young, digitally native Gen Z."

According to the company release, TVS *Raider* embodies the TVS Motor Company design spirit of innovation with a unique and bold design theme. The motorcycle has a distinctive macho personality and a special logo to symbolise this theme.

The motorcycle is coupled to an advanced 124.8cc air and oil-cooled 3V engine that churns a maximum power of 8.37 kW @ 7,500 rpm and torque of 11.2 Nm @ 6,000 rpm. It boasts acceleration of 0-60 km/h in 5.9 seconds and top speed of 99 km/h. The exceptional fuel economy complements the superior performance of *Raider*, added the release.



Corona Warriors on Wheels

Hero hands over 70 two-wheelers to Haryana Govt for health workers

WITH a view to supporting COVID-19 relief efforts, Hero MotoCorp handed over 70 two-wheelers to Haryana Government at the launch of project 'Corona Warriors on Wheels', at Kurukshetra on September 3.

Under its CSR platform, the company handed over 50 units of Hero *Xtreme 160R* motorcycles and 20 units of Hero *Destini 125* scooters to the Director-General of Health Services, Haryana.

These vehicles, said a press release, will be allocated to health workers, including doctors and medical staff, for community service across the state.

The vehicles were flagged off by Dr. Veena Singh, MD, Director General Health Services, Haryana, and Mr. Subhas Sudha, MLA from Thanesar.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Singh said "These motorcycles and scooters will prove to be an advantage in our fight against COVID-19 and we are grateful to Hero MotoCorp for extending their support."

Bharatendu Kabi, Head – CSR & Corporate Communication, Hero MotoCorp, said, "As a responsible corporate citizen, Hero MotoCorp remains committed to contributing to the betterment of society. We are happy to be associated with the Project "Corona Warriors on Wheels" to support the vaccination drive as initiated by the Director General Health Services in the state."



(R) Mr Bharatendu Kabi, Head, Corporate Social Responsibility & Corporate Communication, Hero MotoCorp, handed over 70 Hero two-wheelers to Dr. Veena Singh, Director General Health Services, Haryana, and Subhas Sudha, MLA (Thanesar)



(R-L) Mr Bharatendu Kabi - Head, Corporate Social Responsibility & Corporate Communication, Hero MotoCorp, & Dr. Veena Singh, Director General Health Services (Haryana), flagged-off 70 Hero two-wheelers as part of Project 'Corona Warriors on Wheels'

Yamaha carves a niche in premium scooter space with **Aerox 155** launch

INDIA Yamaha Motor on September 21 launched its maxi sports scooter *Aerox 155*, to carve a niche in the premium scooter space. It has been launched at a starting price of ₹ 1,29,000 (ex-showroom, Delhi).

Aerox 155, said a press release, is powered by a new generation 155cc Blue Core engine equipped with Variable Valve Actuation (VVA). Mated to a CVT transmission, the liquid-cooled, 4-stroke, SOHC, 4-valve motor produces a max power output of 15 PS at 8,000rpm with 13.9 Nm of peak torque produced at 6,500rpm.

The engine gets a new cylinder head and a compact combustion chamber to achieve a higher compression ratio, boosting combustion efficiency, said the release.

On the Chassis front, the trail is 5 mm longer to bring excellent straight-line stability and a more motorcycle-like feel, while retaining the *Aerox 155*'s determined handling capabilities. The front is managed by 26mm telescopic suspension, while the rear gets dual pitch springs with the mounting angle increased by 2 degree for improved pillion seating.



At the front, the LED headlights give the rider excellent night-time visibility. The rear taillight consists of 12 compact LEDs that gives a 3D appearance and accentuates the machine's appeal.

The maxi sports Scooter also gets a large 5.8-inch LCD screen with multi information display (MID) that showcases a speedometer, RPM, VVA indicator and Y-Connect app phone notifications, maintenance recommendations, last parked location, fuel consumption and malfunction notification.

Commenting on the launch, Mr. Motofumi Shitara, Chairman, Yamaha Motor India group of companies said, "Under the umbrella of 'The Call of the Blue' Campaign, Yamaha has launched several exciting products in the Motorcycle and Scooter category. The *AEROX 155* is an important addition to this line-up as it has been developed on the lines of Yamaha's R DNA. The *AEROX 155* will provide a new and exciting riding experience with high performance, comfort & convenience to the Indian customers."

Stakeholders upbeat on World EV Day

ON the occasion of the World EV Day on September 9 this year, several electric mobility players announced ambitious plans and also expressed the hope that the EV ecosystem will be further strengthened in not-too-distant a future. They also lauded the Government's efforts in promoting the growth of electric vehicles in the country.



Autoguide reproduces below the comments by a few prominent stakeholders of the EV industry:



■ ■ ON this World EV day, I would like to acknowledge the efforts made by the Government of India in promoting faster adoption of EVs. The introduction of policies like FAME-II and additional subsidies by the state governments have helped EVs to go mainstream and encouraged the EV industry to introduce more innovative products for consumers. Several Indian automakers are now offering high-performance electric two-wheelers and are investing heavily in the development of the EV ecosystem. ■ ■

Mr Tarun Mehta CEO and Co-Founder, Ather Energy

■ ■ EVs in India have now become more relevant than ever and this is evident by the addition of new electric cars. To accelerate the uptake of EVs further, the Central Government must offer a subsidy to individual buyers of 4-W passenger electric vehicles, making EVs affordable and their manufacturing a viable business for automobile companies. The future of e-mobility in India lies at the convergence of robust charging infrastructure, increased participation by automakers, and successful consumer use cases. The shift to EV mobility is inevitable, and we should do all to hasten its adoption. ■ ■



Mr Awadhesh Jha, Vice-President, Fortum Charge & Drive India



■ ■ WITH growing CO2 emission and rising ownership cost of conventional vehicles following surging fuel cost, the adoption of EV vehicles is gaining in momentum. In fact, it is being seen as a viable and sustainable option in the mid to long term. With encouraging central policies like FAME II and state government level EV schemes, electric vehicles will be the future of mobility accessible by masses. ■ ■

Mr. Vikas Gupta, Founder, CEO & CFO, eAshwa Automotive

Omega Seiki to source batteries from C4V

C4V, the US-based technology provider, announced on September 15 that it has secured a contract from Omega Seiki Mobility to supply next-generation, high-performance lithium-ion batteries from its cell manufacturing joint ventures.

As a part of the contract, C4V will coordinate to supply 1.16 Gigawatt hours of lithium-ion batteries from its manufacturing joint ventures, said a press release.

Mr Clifford Olin, C4V Chief Business Development Officer, said, "We are proud of our association with Omega Seiki Mobility for this essential supply line project that will power their high quality electric vehicles for years to come."

Mr. Uday Narang, Founder, Omega Seiki Mobility, said "We are excited to enter into a long-term supply agreement with our partner C4V. With this association we will not only be able to deliver the latest battery technology but also help us in reducing the cost of battery thus our vehicles."



Mr Kuldeep Gupta, V-P, Strategic Partnership, C4V, Mr Deb Mukherjee, MD and Mr Uday Narang, Chairman, Omega Seiki Mobility

Allison to acquire AVTEC's off-highway transmission portfolio

ALLISON Transmission, manufacturer of conventional and electrified vehicle propulsion solutions, on September 16 announced the signing of an asset purchase agreement to acquire the transmission portfolio of India-based AVTEC Ltd.'s off-highway business and AVTEC's Madras Export Processing Zone (MEPZ) off-highway component machining business.

Headquartered in New Delhi and part of the CK Birla Group, AVTEC is one of India's largest independent manufacturers of powertrain and precision-engineered products for automotive, off-highway, defence, agriculture and railway industry.



"The acquisition of the transmission portfolio of AVTEC's off-highway business and associated IP will accelerate Allison's pursuit of additional opportunities in these segments in India and global markets with purpose-

built products that deliver performance and productivity to our customers" said Mr John Coll, Senior Vice-President, Global Marketing, Sales and Service at Allison Transmission.

With this acquisition, Allison will also integrate AVTEC's off-highway component

machining operations currently located at the MEPZ facility (Chennai) into Allison's Chennai manufacturing plant to continue producing housings for Allison's off-highway transmissions.

Okaya EV launches Freedom 2W

Third product launch within three months

OKAYA EV, the electric vehicle division of energy storage solutions provider Okaya Group, on September 16 launched its latest two-wheeler offering, *Freedom*.

The new e-scooter is Okaya's third product in the market ever since its formal launch in July this year. This 100 per cent made in India scooter will be manufactured at Okaya's plant in Baddi in Himachal Pradesh, said a press release.

Freedom, it said, will be launched in four variants starting with low-speed e-scooters for select markets, going up to high-speed, high-range scooters offering more than 250 km per charge capacity in the coming months.

The company plans to roll out 14 new products in the financial year, including a high-speed motorcycle and specialized B2B vehicles built from scratch and developed in accordance with the requirements of delivery-based businesses.

Speaking at the launch of *Freedom*, Mr. Anil Gupta, Managing Director, Okaya



Mr. Anshul Gupta, Director, Mr. Anil Gupta, MD, Okaya Power Group at the launch of Okaya Freedom 2W

Power Group, said, "Electric is the future and we find ourselves best placed to offer a high-quality, value-for-money proposition to every Indian. Owing to our allied business interests, it is only natural for us to have an advantage in the market space. Being very conscious of the quality and durability of our products, we have created a fully made in India proposition that gives fillip to the Government's aim to see one crore e-scooters, on road by 2025."

Mr. Anshul Gupta, Director, Okaya Power Group said, "Our product proposition not only focuses on delivering EV as a mobility tool but to create an ecosystem where electric is the most obvious and possibly the best choice for a customer. We are trying to ensure availability of good quality spares and services with proper infrastructure and financing. We recognise that an e-scooter is nothing without a battery, electronics, and proper software, and we already have an in-house advantage. We hope to continue to deliver customer delight in this endeavor too."

Ather opens outlets in Coimbatore and Goa

E-scooter manufacture Ather Energy inaugurated two retail outlets recently, one in Coimbatore and the other in Goa.

While Ather Space at Ramnagar in Coimbatore, was opened in association with Rajdurai's E-Vehicles on September 16, the Goa outlet came up the next day at Porvorim, Pilerne, in tie-up with Eever Auto

The Coimbatore outlet is the company's third in Tamil Nadu after Chennai and Trichy. Mr Ravneet Phokela, Chief Business Officer, Ather Energy, said, "Since we entered Chennai, we have been getting a lot of requests for test rides from other cities of Tamil Nadu, especially from Coimbatore. We began deliveries in the city a couple of months back and have received a tremendous response so far."

About the Goa facility, Mr Phokela said, "Given the influx of people visiting Goa from other states, it has



a lot of potential to lead India's EV revolution. We are delighted to be working with Eever Auto, who has been extremely supportive in establishing our new experience centre and in making everything possible with ease."

e-Ashwa opens 200th dealership



EV manufacturer e-Ashwa Automotive recently achieved a milestone of 200 multi-brand dealership stores in the country.

According to a press release, the company has been launching an average of 30 to 40 EV dealership stores every month. It has expanded its business into multiple categories and now sells a wide range of e-vehicles, from e-scooters, e-rickshaw and e-auto to e-loaders.

Mr Vikas Gupta, Founder & CEO, e-Ashwa Automotive, said, "While we reached our 100 dealership stores in close to two years, it took us just two months for the next 100 stores. We opened the first dealer store in August 2019, 100th store in June 2021 and 200th store in September 2021 on the eve of World EV Day 2021. This shows the significant demand shift towards electric vehicles due to favourable Government schemes towards eco-friendly and sustainable mobility solutions."

Greaves forays into multi-brand EV retail; launches AutoEVmart

GREAVES Cotton announced its foray into the multi-brand EV segment with the launch of its multi-brand EV retail store 'AutoEVmart' in Bengaluru.

The company plans to launch these stores in other cities and towns in a phased manner, said a press release.

The products at the store will include e-scooters, e-cycles, e-autos, e-loaders and e-rickshaws and retrofitted accessories for both personal and commercial use. The store will also provide an extensive aftersales EV care experience including roadside assistance, easy

finance options, comprehensive service packages and e-mobility spares parts.

Mr YVS Vijaykumar, CEO, Greaves Retail, said, "We are excited to announce our first AutoEVmart store in Bengaluru today. Bengaluru has

been at the forefront of technology innovation and has equally played a significant role in adopting and encouraging electric vehicles and setting an example for other cities to move forward with clean mobility solutions."



Greaves campaign to push demand for electric vehicles



#MovingBillionsWithGreaves



Possibilities with Electric Vehicles



DIVERSIFIED engineering company Greaves has launched a campaign, called #MovingBillionsWithGreaves, to accelerate the demand for electric vehicles and create safer mobility alternatives and livelihoods for a billion Indians.

Through the campaign, Greaves Electric Mobility will deploy activities to boost employment with significant expansion in installed capacity, awareness around benefits of EV for small businesses and improved accessibility as a way to achieving 100 per cent electric mobility in the near future.

A SIAM initiative SAFE annual convention puts 5Es in the spotlight



IN a bid to strengthen multiple stakeholder sensitisation effort towards environment and road/vehicular safety, the Society for Automotive Fitness & Environment (SAFE), a SIAM initiative, conducted the 22nd edition of its 'SAFE Annual Convention 2021' on September 17, on a virtual platform.

With the theme of 'Environment & Road Safety: Enforcement & Compliance', the convention witnessed the participation of policymakers and bureaucrats from the Central and state governments as well as the industry leaders, scholars and experts on the subject.

The inaugural session, led by Mr Rajesh Menon, Director General, SIAM, read out a message by the Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways, Mr Nitin Jairam Gadkari. The minister said that road safety and environment were the needs of the hour and every stakeholder should come forward to resolve it.

Mr Menon said, "Together SAFE and SIAM are working with the Government, transport departments, traffic polices NGOs, private sector, students & academicians, and other stakeholders towards the 5Es of education, enforcement, engineering, environment, and emergency care. We need to be consistently improvising the efforts."



Mr Rajesh Menon,
Director General, SIAM

In his opening remark, Mr Prashant K Banerjee, Executive Director, SIAM, said "While the road safety efforts have gain substantial momentum during Road Safety Week and Road Safety month, but considering the requirement it should become a daily affair. Hence, under the leadership of SAFE and SIAM the activities should continue around the year. We are also launching the SAFE Annual Report capturing all the efforts initiated and conducted by the SAFE in last one year."


Guest of Honour, Mr KC Gupta, Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, said, "We account for 11 pc of road deaths in the entire world although we have only 1 pc of world vehicles in India. The US has 4.6 times higher road accidents than India, but when it comes to number of deaths due to road accidents, their fatalities is 25 pc of India. However, India is on the top. This is a major concern for all of us and it needs immediate intervention of all stakeholders."


Mr Rajesh Kumar Singh, Principal Secretary - Transport, Government of Uttar Pradesh, said "The matter of road accidents and fatalities cannot be resolved by enforcement solely. There are many factors responsible for these avoidable deaths like, road qualities, safety measures in vehicles, etc. Every state has to device a specific policy to eradicate the problem. The most trusted policy to do so is to enhance awareness."

Elaborating upon impact of unsafe roads, Mr Anupam Shrivastava, President - SAFE, said, "Road accidents have direct impact on human capital. In 2019, India recorded 4,37,396 road accident cases with 1,54,732 fatalities. Apart from the enormous human toll, the road safety has a major economic impact."


Followed by the inaugural session, the first panel discussion on 'Strong Leadership by Enforcement Authority and improved Road

Road safety





Mr Prashant K Banerjee,
Executive Director, SIAM



Mr Anupam Shrivastava,
President, SAFE

Safety Management' was graced by Mr KC Gupta and Mr Rajesh Kumar Singh.

The second session on 'Contribution of Corporates & NGOs in Protecting Environment & Road Safety' had experts debate upon the role of companies and civil society in ensuring adherence to road safety measures.

The third panel discussion had experts discussing the 'Latest Development on Air Quality Improvement'. They mentioned how leapfrogging to BS-VI was a landmark step undertaken by the Government and the industry.



Mr Manish Thakore,
CFO, DICV

Manish Thakore is CFO of DICV

DAIMLER India Commercial Vehicles announced on September 1 that Mr Manish Thakore, currently the MD of Daimler Financial Services India, will be the Chief Financial Officer of the company.

He will succeed Mr Leonardo Piccinini and also be a key member of the Executive Board, said a press release

Mr Thakore started his career with Daimler in 2000 as a Fleet Analyst in the USA after which he took over several managerial roles within Truck Credit Management of Daimler's Financial Services business. From 2011 to 2018, he led credit operations as part of the management team in the newly established Daimler Financial Services entity in India. Between 2019 and 2020, he acted as Vice-President at its regional headquarters in Singapore.

Revolt Motors appoints Janender Anand as CEO

REVOLT Motors has announced the appointment of Mr. Jenender Anand as the Chief Executive Officer of the company with effect from September 1.

According to a press release, Mr. Anand brings in more than 30 years of experience in global companies across automotive and consumer sectors. Before joining Revolt, he led Shriram Pistons and Rings as an Executive Director. Prior to that, he has held leadership positions across leading companies such as ExxonMobil, MRF and Goodyear.

Mr. Anand is an MBA in Marketing from AIMA, Delhi and has a Bachelor's degree from Delhi University.



Mr. Jenender Anand,
CEO, Revolt Motors

Castrol appoints Mayank Pandey to its Board



Mr Mayank Pandey,
Whole-Time Director

CASTROL India on August 10 announced the appointment of Mr Mayank Pandey as whole-time Director of the company. Mr Pandey, currently the Vice President – Supply Chain for Castrol India, has over two decades of industry experience.

A management graduate from SP Jain Institute of Management and a mechanical engineer from Harcourt Butler Technological Institute, Mr Pandey is passionate about building high-performance teams and customer-centricity, said a press release. He has a professional experience spanning the lubricants, business consulting, paints and engineering industry, it added. Mr. R Gopalakrishnan, Chairman of the Board, said: "We look forward to benefit from his fresh perspective and diverse experience as we rethink supply chain strategies for the company in these disruptive and unprecedented times."

Hyundai names Roberts as V-P, Head of Global PR

HYUNDAI Motor Group on September 24 announced the appointment of Mr. Andrew Roberts as the Vice-President to lead Global PR for Hyundai Motor Company and Kia Corporation

According to a press release, Mr Roberts will report to Executive Vice-President Mr. Young Kyu Lee, Head of the Group's Communication Centre, and he will oversee Hyundai and Kia's global communications efforts to further highlight the transformation both companies are going through, in order to become innovative mobility solutions providers.



Mr Andrew Roberts,
V-P, Hyundai Motors

ENGINEERING-LED INTEGRATED MANUFACTURER OF PRECISION COMPONENT

Our Segments



2 Wheeler



Commercial
Vehicle



Passenger
Vehicle



Electric
Vehicle



Off Road



Aerospace



Agriculture



Industrial
Engines

STRONG ENGINEERING EXPERTISE



Product Design



Process Design



Fixture Design



Automation



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