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The Pulsating Automobile e-Magazine **VIKATAN**


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ALL NEW HYUNDAI VENUE
BOLD & CHARISMATIC

BHARGAV SRIDHARAN

 **KARTHICK N**



2022 ALL NEW HYUNDAI VENUE Bold & Charismatic

The Korean automaker Hyundai entered the sub-4-metre compact SUV segment in India with its Venue in 2019. When it was launched, it was India's first fully connected SUV and also featured a 'clutchless manual' gearbox, called iMT (Intelligent Manual Transmission). Due to its versatility and connected features, Venue won many accolades including the 'Car of the Year' and within a year of launch, Hyundai sold over 1 lakh units of Venue. Now Venue contributes around 40% of all Hyundai sales in India. To keep the momentum going Hyundai has brought in its first facelift of the Venue. According to the carmaker, the 2022 Venue gets lots of segment-first features and new technologies.

While looking at the car Hyundai has retained all the bold character that is required for an SUV. While looking at the front design of the new Venue, the large cascading chrome-lined grille is now replaced with the dark chrome grille with its multiple layered cells on the front which looks similar to other Hyundai SUVs. The bumper also gets a refreshed design too and the Venue now gets fully LED projector headlights and a faux skid plate.

The side profile looks similar with a solid and full volume wheel arch and strong character line. The change to the sides is the redesigned alloy wheels and the ORVMs get welcome and auto-folding functions along with the puddle lamps underneath.



The rear end features a more squarish tailgate and redesigned LED tail lamps with a connecting light bar. Tail-lamp clusters get a complete change. From a boxy, rectangular design, they are now staggered across layers. The rear bumper has also gone for a complete make-over with new rectangular black inserts, sleeker reversing lights, reflectors and a restyled skid plate. With these exterior changes, the new Venue now looks more young and sporty than the first-gen, especially the elegant rear design.

While looking at the interiors, the changes are not seen as evident compared to the exteriors. But there is a host of updates like the ‘greige’ theme – a combination of beige and grey which is carried everywhere including the seats and door pads. The steering wheel of the new Venue has been borrowed from the Creta and it also gets a segment-first four-way adjustable electric seat for the driver. The rear seat comforts have been improved as the seats come with a two-step recline for the backrest and to have extra leg room the rear of the front seats are scooped out.

The 8-inch touchscreen infotainment system looks the same, but the Bluelink technology has been updated to its latest generation, which has a unique sound of nature mode. The new Venue also comes with 60+ connected car features in 10 different regional languages.



It also gets remote “home-to-car” features using Amazon Alexa and Google connectivity. Hyundai has also provided you with a Type-C USB port along with a redesigned wireless charging pad, while a Type-A USB port and 12V power outlet have been retained. The new Venue now comes with ambient lighting on the inside to accentuate the interiors of the Venue.

In terms of the powertrain, the new Venue gets the same set of three engines and transmissions from the previous generation. The 1.2-litre naturally-aspirated MPFi petrol engine which produces 83 bhp of power and 114 Nm of torque is mated to the 5-speed MT, and a 1.0-litre GDi turbo petrol motor producing 120 bhp and 172 Nm torque comes with 6-speed iMT and a 7-speed DCT, as well as a 1.5-litre U2 CRDi diesel engine that produces 100 PS power and 240 Nm torque coupled with 6-speed MT.

The driving position is superb, as is the outside visibility, thanks to the high seating position. There is no change in the engine mapping and the 1.0-litre petrol is a nicely balanced idle, with hardly any of the rocking motion that is characteristic of a three-cylinder unit. In fact, this all-aluminium engine with balancer shafts is smooth and free-revving and doesn’t feel like a three-pot mill, except for a faint thrum at high revs. The 6-speed manual has a delightfully light and short throw, which eggs you on to rev the socks off this motor.

The second-gen 7-speed DCT is quick to respond, relatively jerk-free and works well with the engine. The inclusion of paddle shifters in the DCT allows drivers to take manual control over the transmission. The DCT now comes in three drive modes – Eco is the most frugal, Sport is the most fun and Normal is the mid-setting. There is no change in the driving

dynamics and overall feedback of the 2022 Venue. It feels the same as before, with it offering decent steering feedback, which helps manoeuvre the Venue in tight spaces quite easily.

Like the powertrain, there are no changes in the suspension setup. The Venue’s suspension is tuned to be on the stiffer side, at low speeds, the Venue feels quite stiff-kneed and thuds through ruts and potholes, but not in a jarring sort of way. The high-profile 215/60 R16 tyres do their bit in cushioning the shocks.

Hyundai is known to load its cars with maximum features, and the Venue isn’t an exception. It’s attractive on the outside, beautifully built on the inside, festooned with tech and features, and delivers a very impressive all-round performance. It rides well, the petrol-automatic drives nicely, and then the connected car tech just makes it quite unique.



The French carmaker Citroen entered the Indian car market last year with its global flagship SUV C5. The C5 was the best-looking premium SUV in the country along with its fun and super comfortable drive. The company also announced that it will roll out its mass-market car in 2022. As promised, Citroen unwrapped the covers of its second car C3 in Goa for the media drive.

According to Citroen the C3 has been tested for almost several hundred thousand km and tweaked to suit the Indian conditions. Citroen C3 is a 90% 'Make in India' product. By its looks, we feel it should definitely

give tough competition to the cars that are in the segment. I flew all the way to Goa to drive the C3 which was beautiful both the car and the beach city.

What about the Citroen C3? Outlook? Crossover SUV? hatchback?

Citroen doesn't like being called a hatchback. Citroen calls it a hatchback with an SUV twist. The reality is; Rumors of the SUV are everywhere... no.. the car is all over the place. Adapted from Citroen's C5 Aircross, it's ready in a C Cubed program.

In that slim chrome grill that runs the length of the car, the triangular logo of Citroen is awesome! They have integrated

the headlight in a slim way. These are halogen lamps. Above the headlight is a split LED DRL. It is not available in the low variant. Underneath the grille, there is also a similar rectangular grill pattern. Air dam below. There were orange accents throughout the car.

Ditto for snow lights; There was an orange-coloured housing. Likewise, orange housing for the fake air vent on the side of the car. Rear side and bottom lights; The orange effect on the wing mirrors and the roof of the car was good. They had given a flip-type model for the doors. Pull type is the choice of many people.

CITROEN C3 FRENCH FLAIR FOR THE INDIAN NEEDS



Generally, there are many things that make an SUV stand out. They had a diffuser under the bumper and plastic cladding around the car. The bonnet is slightly raised, giving the driver a better view of the exit so you can drive with confidence. I mean, like driving an SUV! It also has a ground clearance of 180 mm.

I have done a small offroad. A sub-compact SUV, the Citroen is longer than the Tata Punch. It is 3.98 meters long. It is slightly less

in height and width dimensions. Its wheel sizes were 15 inches. But no alloy wheels. The C3 looks like the older sibling of the C5 Aircross in Outlook.

How about the interior?

Upon entering the car, the impact of the C5 was felt. The split AC vents, the semi-square-half-rounded flat-bottomed steering wheels, and the orange-spotted texture that travels across the dashboard are all premium.

(Low variant, only grey.) Most impressive is the 10-inch touch screen infotainment system. This is called infotainment system. There are 10 types of features. Android Auto and Apple Car Play can be connected. But, there are no connected car features in C3. The AC dials were in the rotary knob style. The digital display was small and beautiful. But there is no tachometer.





There is no difference between the turbo and the naturally aspirated engine except for the gear lever in the interior. NA comes with a 5-speed, turbo with 6-speed!. The wing mirrors were able to be adjusted from the inside. But, the whole inside did not adjust. Those who are shorter will sit with the seat well tilted forward. Visibility to them will be low. The quality of the plastic was excellent.

The Citroen is designed to be a practical car. Accumulated storage space and space in each door pocket to keep the water bottle was nice. There was a driveway alone to hold the phone. I first thought it was wireless charging. The front-side seating position is super! Its cushioning is excellent. Will be super for Long Drive!

Rear look

Citroen officials call Citroen's backspace a pet. That is true; It has the highest wheelbase of 2,540mm in this segment. It's

about 40mm taller than any other hatchback. Legroom is not generous; Plenty. Headroom pucks! I searched the back side AC vents, but there are no vents eventually. There was a charging port in that tunnel. It also had a button for power windows. (Bend down and open the door!)

There is no centre armrest in the back seat; No adjustable headrest. If 3 people are seated, space can be a bit of a crisis. However, 2 people can travel freely.

Its boot facility - 315 litres. (Significantly less than all other competitors.) Punch, Magnite - 366 litres; Kiger - 405 litres). If the C3 seats of the Citroen are folded with a strap, the floor becomes as flat as possible. This will increase the space.

C3 Engine Performance

Turbo & Manual?

The C3 is offered with two engine options. Two engines are Turbo and Naturally Aspirated

(NA). Both have a 1.2-litre, 3-cylinder engine. There was only a slight vibration. I drove the NA C3 first. Its power is 82 bhp. Torque is 115 Nm. It is okay for this segment. 4bhp less than the Punch. Driving in the city is fine. But I think the turbo lag is noticeable on hilly roads. Only the mid-range seemed to need more power delivery. Top-end is OK! But while revving a 3-cylinder makes a slight noise as if to see and step on it. Though overall, this is superb for a car that weighs 1,374 kg.

It is only in overtaking that you have to think a little bit about reducing the gear and revving. The clutch was also lite weight. This NA engine's gear lever isn't exactly silky smooth; It was a bit notchy. Had a bit of a hard time getting into neutral. However, I flew about 135 km on highways.

I got on the turbo. This is kind of wow! Eventually, you will understand why. Its power is 115bhp and torque is 190 Nm.



The C3 has the best power and torque in this segment. Weighing in at 1,035 kg, the turbo has plenty of power and torque to match the C3. From the moment I set off, I drove with enthusiasm. I expected an automatic gearbox when it came to Turbo. But Citroen had said '6-speed'. Its 6-speed gearbox is not like a regular engine gearbox; Sounds amazing. The bottom and mid-range are well balanced. The refinement of both the engines is amazing!

Its 115 bhp power is also available at 5,500rpm. What I missed this time – is the tachometer. I don't know what rpm it is going. But the engine was clearly pulled. 3 cylinder vibration is slightly noticeable but not much to worry about. Turbo lag seems to be visible in this too. It has a bit of overtaking power which is better than the regular one. That means the drive was entertaining. Citroen claims it's 0-100km/h in 10 seconds. The clutch is also light weight. It's good. For those looking for fun to drive, please go for the Turbo.

Ride and handling

It features the usual McPherson strut and multi-link suspension setup. But, they have tweaked for rough roads as well. It felt good. I deliberately travelled with 5 people, at low speeds, it is like climbing up and down ridges!. Thanks to its 180mm ground clearance. Braking was also good.

Despite being a longer car than the Punch, its U-turn at the curves was superb as its turning radius was less than 10 meters. Its electric power steering is wow. It turns out to be tight on the highways and light within the city. Its tires are 15 inches, But its section is wider than the Honda City. So, Super Grip!

The C5 Air Cross is called the Flying Carpet Ride when it comes to Ride and Handling. It's almost like that with C3 as well! Not to say great luxury, But its ride and quality did not disappoint. Smooth and Bump Free Ride available.

Can I buy a C3?

The features packed are quite sophisticated, to say the least. Cost-cutting jobs are visible in many places. Mainly reverse camera, tachometer, powered wing mirror, rear AC vent, day and night interior mirror, and adjustable headrest are not integrated.

Otherwise a compact hatchback. C3 has all the necessary features. Its engine refinement and performance are superb. If you like to have a fun drive then go for turbo. There is no need to worry about buying mileage. Citroen claims 19.8km (NA) and 19.4km (turbo) respectively.

Citroen says there are many interesting things about its service as well. Roadside Assistance, Home Delivery Service, Good Warranty. Its ride quality is on another level! If the C3 is priced competitively say around Rs 7-8 lakh, you can take the C3 and travel happily on any road!



TATA SHOWCASED THE FUTURE OF EVS THROUGH AVINYA CONCEPT



Tata Motors took the wraps off the Avinya electric concept, based on its brand new third-generation Pure EV architecture. Tata Avinya, showcases the future of Tata design, both in terms of the exterior and the interior, with a new focus on lifestyle. This new platform has been designed to be flexible and it will underpin a range of future Tata EV products.

The word 'Avinya' in Sanskrit stands for innovation and Tata Motors certainly hasn't held back on that when it comes to the design of the Avinya Concept. The Avinya is a prime example of a car maker utilising the efficiencies of an electric powertrain, leading to a very futuristic design.



There is also a new DRL signature upfront which is reminiscent of that on the Tata Concept Curvv that was showcased recently.

The pure EV platform is the third phase of the automaker's electrification plans. Gen 1 offers a driving range of 250 km with Tigor EV on the XO platform and

Nexon EV on the X1 platform. On the Gen 2, with a claimed driving range of 400 km, it will offer the electric SUV Curvv, which is scheduled to launch in 2024. The advantage of the Gen 3 platform over Gen 2 is that unlike the latter, which will accommodate ICE powertrains, the former will be a dedicated

EV platform. That allows for more flexibility in packaging. For instance, the Avinya concept measures 4.3 metres in length, but Tata hinted they are aiming to go bigger. So expect a variety of body styles for models under this platform. One can do a front-wheel drive, rear-wheel drive, or



all-wheel drive with this and such configurations can exist. Connectivity is also a high element on this platform and it meets all the safety regulations for autonomous driving.

The design was led by the team in Europe, and engineering work was done in India its interiors specifically grab eyeballs with its unique swivelling seat design, and the feature could also make it to the production version of the product. The new identity of the car is the front and rear of the wheel. The latest identity comes as a part of the DRL that is mainly a subtle nod to our commitment that increasing the quality of life and taking a great step toward the EV revolution. It is mainly the manifesto and emphasis on the Horizon and the Infinite possibilities in this Gen3 electrification also offer.

According to Tata, the concept is a blend of utilities between a hatchback, an MPV and a crossover SUV, and the design might also remind you of that on a shooting brake. With a swooping front windscreen and A-pillar coupled with the greenhouse that also extends almost to the bonnet, it looks more like a one-box hatchback, something that is now possible with the rise of electric cars. Even the wheels are placed at the absolute corners of the car, maximising the space inside and to accommodate more batteries on the floor.

The interior has a very minimalist and open-air design, maximising the space as well as the feeling of space. The party trick has to be the butterfly doors which should make for very easy ingress and egress, coupled with the swivelling seats. The concept also features digital screens for the rearview cameras, instead of traditional ORVMs, and the dashboard includes a soundbar with voice activation technology.

The focus on lifestyle extends with interesting features such as the aroma diffuser inside the centre console, which essentially acts like a scented candle to enhance the liveability of the interior. In an age where a plethora of screens with complicated tech are taking up most of the cabin real estate in modern cars, it's refreshing to see Tata keep things simple. In the Avinya, aside from a sleek screen below the dashboard, and mirror camera displays, the main



digital screen is on the steering wheel which controls all in-car functions via voice commands.

With eco-friendly being the trend everywhere, including in the automotive industry, Tata Motors will also be going 'green' by using sustainable materials for its Gen 3 models. Models under Avinya concept's Gen 3 platform will benefit from the fact that they will boast advanced driver assists. While the specifics aren't revealed, some common bits should include autonomous emergency braking, adaptive cruise control and lane-keep assist.

The cars under Gen 3 platform will underpin a range of new Tata EVs and Tata Motors claims that the architecture will be a better match for their future products, allowing the carmaker to take full advantage of the possibilities that electric powertrains represent. The biggest hurdles for an EV are range and charging time. Well,



the Avinya is showing some positive signs for models under the Gen 3 platform, as it will be capable of more than 500km of range.

The battery used in the Avinya Concept will also be a beefed-up unit as compared to the existing electric products on sale and it

will support ultra-fast charging, allowing you to pump up 500km worth of range in less than 30 minutes. Tata Motors expects to introduce production cars under this concept by 2025 and it really seems like an ambitious project for the company.



BHARGAV SRIDHARAN

 KARTHICK N

VOLKSWAGEN VIRTUS

A Sedan to Go For



Currently, SUVs are dominating the Indian automotive market due to their versatility and therefore the sedans are on the back foot. If you wanted to make a mark in the SUV dominated market, it needs to strike that perfect balance between styling, features, comfort and capable drive traits. In spite of the SUV craze, still, there is a demand for sedans. Therefore, the German auto major Volkswagen under its India 2.0 project has developed its latest mid-size compact sedan Volkswagen Virtus to compete with the market leaders like Honda City, Hyundai Verna and Maruti Suzuki Ciaz. VW has been in India for a long time with its global products like Polo, Jetta etc. In spite of the well-built quality and driving dynamics, these cars didn't perform well in India.

Considering the market potential, Volkswagen is continuously working on developing new products to suit the Indian customers. As a result of it, Volkswagen Virtus is born and is set to hit the Indian market, which is based on the MQB-Ao-IN platform. While looking at the Virtus, it is bigger than Vento and in fact,





in almost every dimension, this is the largest car in the class. It's easy, of course, to draw parallels to the Skoda Slavia but much like with the Tiguan, Volkswagen has gone for a bolder, more Chrome heavy look.

The front design looks classy with striking crease lines in the bonnet. The huge air dam in the front bumper is lined with glossy stuff and makes a big impression. The downside of this is that the small 16 inch wheels look even smaller. The big gaps in the wheel arches only emphasize this, but it does give the Virtus an SUV like 179 mm of ground clearance. There's more chrome in the rear bumper and this along with the large blacked-out tail lamps do a good job of distracting you from what is quite a bulky rear end. Virtus comes in two trims, the

GT Line and Dynamic Line. The GT trim is exclusive to the 1.5 TSI engine and gets a few differences too, like gloss black alloy wheels, a subtle lip spoiler on the boot and GT badging.

When it comes to the interiors Volkswagen has done quite a bit to distinguish it from the Slavia. The VW Virtus will be familiar if you've seen the interior of a VW Tiguan. In the GT line, there are red accents on the dashboard and it's similar to the Taigun, but they've done a slightly different treatment for this gloss black trim on the Virtus. It looks classy, the plastic quality is generally good, build quality is solid, but there are a few bits that give away the cost-cutting that's gone into this car.

The GT version gets black leather upholstery with red

contrast stitching. The entire cabin is not black, there are still beige bits at the bottom of the doors and the roof lining, and therefore the cabin doesn't seem too dark. Something that does return, is the lovely new Volkswagen steering wheel. It's well built and handsome, in my opinion. And it has all the controls that you need. In terms of features, Virtus like its SUV counterpart is well equipped. The top-spec variants, get a 10-inch touch screen, eight-inch digital dials, wireless CarPlay and Android Auto, ventilated front seats, wireless phone charging, and a sunroof.

The digital instrument cluster is a well laid out unit that provides information clearly and logically. You can shift the screens, one

with a speedo, one with a tachometer and one which is more minimal. It gives you loads of information and looks cool at the same time. We don't have the variant wise split yet, VW seems to have learned from the Tiguan and improved the features in low-end versions too. For example, you get LED headlamps, even in the base model.

VW Vento or Polo had less space for the rear passengers, now in Virtus, this has been addressed and offers ample space. Volkswagen says this is the largest car in this class and it's got a pretty long wheelbase too. It's no surprise that in the back seat, there is plenty of space. For taller passengers, there is a lot of space in terms of knee room and headroom.

The seats are comfortable and supportive, but they are contoured more for two, a third passenger can fit but it's a little on the uncomfortable side because of the race cushioning and the backrest. You will like that there are three individual headrests and three individual three-point seatbelts for all the passengers. Rear passengers also get AC vents and Type C USB ports.

A massive highlight of this car is the boot, which at a class-leading 521 litres same as Skoda Slavia that can really swallow up a lot of luggage. And if you need more space, you can even fold the split seats. It's a good looking practical and well-equipped car.

The Virtus is being offered with two turbo-petrol engines - a 114 BHP, 1.0 TSI with 6-speed automatic transmission (torque converter) and a 148 BHP, 1.5 TSI with a 7-speed DSG. Volkswagen has coined the trim lines based on the engines on offer. The 1.0 TSI is offered on 'Dynamic Line' and the 1.5 TSI is offered on 'Performance Line'. The 1.5 TSI will not be available with a 6-speed manual transmission, which could be a big miss and additionally, there is no diesel engine on offer.

The visual differentiation between the 1.5 GT and the 1.0 L variant. The 1.5 GT has been given some touches that give it a bit more sportiness. It's got 16-inch blacked-out alloys with red callipers, a lip spoiler on the boot lid and a GT badge. All of these elements on the 1.5 GT make the car look a little bit sportier. While the 1.0 L variant looks clean with a fair amount of chrome on the grill and bumper. The car also gets 16-inch dual-tone machine cut alloy wheels, which makes the car look premium.

The 1.5 GT performs really well, especially due to its seven-speed DSG. Though Volkswagen is the pioneer of the double-clutch, automatic gearbox, the initial versions of it did have some issues and they've come a long way and this one feels smoother and quicker to respond. The





gear shifts are instantaneous and helps things along. Of course, if you want to take manual control, the paddle shifters sit behind the steering wheel. We have seen this 1.5L TSI engine from Volkswagen not just in Taigun, but also in a T-Rock.

The power outputs are healthy of course. It also has clever tech like cylinder deactivation, which means, when you are on a light foot with the engine it will deactivate two of its four cylinders and help you save fuel. This powertrain also has an engine stop-start. If you can bear with the AC cutting out a bit, when you are in traffic, you will save a lot of fuel that way too. The engine drives quite freely for a turbocharged engine and VW says this 1.5 GT will do 0 to 100 kmph in nine seconds and go to a top speed of 190 kph.

With the relatively light curb weight of just 1,275 kg along with stop-start and the cylinder deactivation tech, it is expected that the Virtus should deliver better fuel economy. On the dynamics front, Volkswagen always does a good job. They did a tremendous job in the Taigun and this has translated to the sedan as well. The steering feels confident at low speed. At high speed, it requires a bit of feedback. The suspension set-up has a little bit of underlying firmness just as you'd expect from a European car,

but it hasn't come at the cost of low speed.

The top-end variants are equipped with 16" alloy wheels with 205/55 section Goodyear Assurance tyres. The Performance line gets all-black alloys and the Dynamic Line gets the diamond cut dual-tone alloys. The wheels look a little bit small, frankly, but the upshot is that it allows this car to ride over bumps. Slight fullness and the suspension have allowed this car to behave really well, especially at high speeds on the highways.



A bonus is that the engine doesn't sound coarse at high revs, in fact, it sounds sporty. Even beyond 5,500 rpm, the top-end isn't flat and the engine keeps pulling all the way to 6,600 rpm. Highway cruising is a comfortable affair too in the Virtus and it can do triple-digit speeds easily.



Even through the corners, Virtus performed well. The suspension setup combined with the steering makes it agile, and fun and makes it very well controlled.

The brakes do feel strong, though there aren't disk brakes at the rear. Stomp on the pedal hard, and it will hold confidently. The absolutely tremendous 1.5 TSI is undoubtedly the driver's choice, but hold on because the lesser 1.0 TSI might actually end up being the one you'd want to buy.

The 1.0-litre TSI version and much like in the Tiguan produces 115 horsepower, 178 Nm of torque. And here it is mated to a six-speed torque converter automatic. You can have this engine with a six-speed manual as well, but we don't know when VW will launch it. The torque converter isn't quite as quick or responsive to your inputs as the DSG.

The throttle response is satisfactory and the Virtus moves off the line with ease. The engine is tractable and isn't dead at low rpm. But there is turbo lag. If you really want, you can pull from under 1,000 rpm, but it's only when you cross 1,500 rpm that the motor starts feeling comfortable. The turbo kicks in at 2,000 rpm and if you're used to a strong turbo kick, you will be slightly disappointed by the soft power delivery of this unit. Overall, the city driveability is good and the power delivery is nice and linear. Combined with a light electric power steering, good ergonomics and excellent all-round visibility, the Virtus is city-friendly.

Out on the highway is where you will appreciate the mid-range and the top-end of the engine.




Past the 2,000 rpm mark, the engine pulls nice and clean all the way to 5,500. If you're pushing hard, this is where you would want to be. A bonus is that the engine doesn't sound coarse at high revs, in fact, it sounds sporty. Even beyond 5,500 rpm, the top-end isn't flat and the engine keeps pulling all the way to 6,600 rpm. Highway cruising is a comfortable affair too in the Virtus and it can do triple-digit speeds easily. All in all, while this engine may not be lightning quick, it is definitely fast and smooth.

The Virtus comes equipped with 40+ safety features including six airbags, ESC, multi-collision brakes, Tyre Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS), Hill hold assist, ABS, rear parking sensors and many more. When launched, the Volkswagen Virtus will compete with its sibling Slavia, Honda City, Maruti Suzuki Ciaz and Hyundai Verna. The car looks classy, the built quality is good, loaded with features and it's fun to drive. If the Virtus is priced aggressively Volkswagen can create an impact in the mid-size sedan segment.



THULASIDHARAN TJ

 MUTHUKUMAR A

XL6 - UPGRADED PEOPLE MOVER





In the current market environment, competitors are adding a lot of features to their cars. While Maruti customers have been waiting for Maruti Suzuki to update as well, Maruti has meticulously looked at it all and added a lot of advanced features to the car.

Maruti Suzuki XL6 has been launched with a new look. Maruti called us to 'drive and see'. Let's see what new changes have taken place in the car and how the car's performance is.

Exterior and Design

There are no major changes in exteriors for the old XL6 and the new XL6. That is not to say that there is no change. Some things have changed. The front grille has been redesigned. Maruti says this is to enhance the quality of the SUV. The LED headlight and DRLs are all the same as they were in the old XL6. The indicator alone does not have LEDs. The company should have added that too.

Looking at the difference in the side profile, they have raised the tyre size by an inch to get a more SUV look. Machine cut alloy wheel design is awesome. It is stylish to look at in dual-tone. The silver lining adds a premium look.

Damn, 360-degree camera! It's nice to see a 360-degree camera in a budget car. The black coating on the B pillar and C pillar looks appropriate. The car is available

in three dual-tone colours. The highlight is that this black finish is suitable for all colours. The shoulder line is perfect. The cladding on the top of the tyres is just a little too big to see. Since the car given to us was blue, the cladding did not seem to stand alone. But in other colours, it may look different. Its size may have been reduced only slightly.

The rear of the car has undergone a lot of changes. The spoiler, the shark fin antenna, premium look of the silver line is perfect. The important change you can say is the tail light. The area around the red light is given a smoky colour.

Interior Design

The interior is sporty in black as usual. Only the middle has been given a stone finish grey line. 7-inch touch screen, a smart feature that can be integrated with the Maruti Connect app. The AC control buttons are as usual. 12-volt power socket, USB socket for charging facilities. The instrument cluster is decent to look at. The RPM meter and the auto meter are set in analogue. They have given a digital stripe in the middle. You can get the required information in it. The steering module had cruise control as well.

The highlight is ventilated seats. The driver and co-driver get cooled seats. The button is available in three modes. Water



You can check AC start, stop, notification when fuel is low and many more. Not just inside the car; You can operate the car's facilities from the outside as well.



bottle storage, cup holder, and armrest are convenient.

Seat accommodation

The big difference between the Ertiga and the XL6 is the mid-row seats. This has been given two captain seats. Accommodation is super. Provided with power socket too for charging phones. The AC vent is located at the top. And hence, this car does not have a sunroof.



The last row seat will give a little duff in the 7 seats. Usually, the third row does not sit comfortably. This seat is able to move a little. The headrest is super. There is a power socket. Boot space is generous. If the third-row split seat is folded, there will be enough space for one person to lie down.

Engine & Performance

The K-Series 1.5-liter petrol engine, dual VVT engine and hybrid technology add to the mileage. This hybrid technology will have an internal battery. Instead of running on petrol when going for a long drive, it runs on battery power. Thus, the mileage will be better. 20.97 km in manual mode; Maruti claims that the automatic will give a mileage of 20.27 km.



Apart from the manual gearbox, the XL6 is powered by a 6-speed automatic transmission. It has a torque converter gearbox, which runs smoothly. It doesn't seem to change immediately. Sounds like running a little slow. So, peppy drivers may not enjoy this automatic XL6 in totality. Otherwise, the suspension and braking were great.



Safety

A total of 4 airbags along the front side. The XL6 has integrated security features such as a Tyre Pressure Monitor System (TPMS), electronic stability program, EBD with ABS, and Hill Hold Assist. Beyond all this, the expectation of many is how many ratings it will get in GlobalNCAP. On the Maruti side, they say, 'Bharat NCAP is coming as soon as possible. We are working on getting a good rating on it.'

Suzuki Connect App

With the app you can see how much petrol is there, where we have gone, how far, how much average speed, maximum speed, mileage everything. You can check AC start, stop, notification when fuel is low and many more. Not inside the car; You can operate the car's facilities from the outside as well. This app also has a map feature. They have teamed up with MapmyIndia to create this feature. Maruti says

that more than 40 features can be availed through this app.

The XL6 is priced between Rs 11.29 lakh and Rs 14.55 lakh ex-showroom. It seems that people will definitely welcome Maruti advancing towards luxury with an automatic gearbox, 360-degree camera and ventilated seats. A perfect match for Kia Carens is here indeed!



MERIDIAN BROTHER OF THE COMPASS!

A Real Off-Roader?

The iconic Jeep brand is back in action with its new 7-seater Jeep Meridian. As many OEMs tasted their success in India with their 7-seater cars, Jeep is also replicating the same mantra. This large premium SUV is based on the same platform as the Compass but is unique enough to set it, leagues, apart. The Jeep Meridian comes in a 4x4 version but it is built on a monocoque chassis. Due to the absence of Ford Endeavour, it has given way to the Jeep Meridian to occupy the space along with Toyota Fortuner. The success of Jeep Meridian will be decided by its driving dynamics and the performance that was missing in most of the 4x4 cars.





Plus:	Construction, ride and handling, can-do-anything off-road character
Minus:	Price, third-row cramped, no petrol engine option, power could have been more.





A more pronounced Jeep Grille, Sleeker headlamps (when compared with Compass), and a dash of chrome, all help the Meridian to look different from the Compass, however, the Jeep DNA is very clearly visible. The bumper is new, re-profiled for a better approach angle and the full-width chrome bar bisects the front bumper and there is a large air dam to embolden the face.

The increased length makes the car look long and powerful while its slick-looking 18-inch alloys add to its oomph quotient. The sides of the SUV are dominated by a strong character line, running at the top of the door, and Meridian badging on the front doors. The 18-inch wheels are particularly good-looking and fill the wheel arches very well.

The Meridian stands on 18-inch wheels with a nice alloy design. The square-ish wheel arches are mammoth but that was expected because this vehicle also needs to go beyond conventional roads. At the rear, the slim tail lamps are distinctive, even polarising, and are connected by a slab of chrome, while at the bottom of the bumper there's more chrome trim. The increase in length and width clearly separate it from the Compass. Measuring 4769mm the Meridian is just 26mm shorter than the Fortuner and it definitely looks big.

The interior of the Meridian looks similar to Compass, but because it's bigger, Meridian gets an upgrade by having a bigger dashboard. Though the instrument cluster has grown to 10.2 inches and it looks the same



as Compass. Meridian gets the two-tone upholstery and looks premium and the front seats are now ventilated. There's also ample room in both the first and the second row of seating, and five full-size adults will have no trouble fitting in.

But, the third row of the Meridian is a bit of a squeeze. Though the car is tagged as 7-seater the third row can accommodate only kids. The one-touch operation enables the middle row seats to tumble down and provides easy access to the third row. The floor of the third row is a bit high, the seating is not really comfortable for big adults.

In terms of boot space, you get 170 litres with the third row up to where you can accommodate one cabin bag, if the third row is folded you get a boot space of 418

litres. Meridian offers a host of creature comfort features, which include auto-headlamps, driver seat height adjust, push-button start/stop, 10.2-inch semi-digital instrument cluster, powered mirrors, wireless charging, keyless-entry, panoramic sunroof, 360-degree camera, a powered tailgate and much more! Safety features include TPMS, ABS, EBD, ESC, Traction control, six airbags and an electronic parking brake. The cabin gets liberal use of high-quality leather and soft-touch materials, all of which add to Meridian's premium quotient.

When it comes to powertrain, the Meridian comes with a variety of options, but the engine will be the same 2.0-litre turbo diesel that also powers the Compass. The various options will include a 2WD version with a manual

gearbox, a 2WD version with an automatic gearbox, and a full-fat 4WD version with an automatic gearbox. The AWD is an on-demand system that sends drive to the rear when slip is detected, but you can lock it in 4x4 mode, and there are three drive modes to choose from depending on the terrain you're tackling.

The Meridian also comes with the Koni Frequency Selective Dampers as seen on the Compass along with the independent rear suspension. The system has been fine-tuned in the Meridian to accommodate additional size and weight. You also get rear disc brakes and in keeping with the focus on the rear seat, the setup is softer and tuned to deliver a better ride quality.

The Meridian moved effortlessly on the road. The main



SLOPES,
SLIPPERY
ROADS, MUDDY
DITCHES, AND
MANY DEGREES
OF DESCENT
WERE ALL THAT
CHALLENGED
THE 4-WHEEL
DRIVE MERIDIAN.
AFTER DRIVING
IT THROUGH ALL
OF THIS, I CALL
IT A REAL OFF-
ROADER.

highlight of the Meridian is its ride quality, which is superb and deals with broken roads very well. During the media drive, we were given the car to do various off-roading challenges like one wheel up in the air, clambering up steps, axle twisters, rock trails, side-slopes, and steep drops to test hill-descent control. I should say Meridian is amazing and simply effortless to drive after going through all the off-roading conditions.

Ride quality is impressive too, and the Meridian feels much

like the Compass, solid and built to take a beating with an added dash of plushness. With its off-road capability, it performs on surfaces where you never thought this vehicle could go. Except for the third-row space, Meridian ticks all the boxes, so now the fate of the Meridian will be decided based on how Jeep is going to price it. When compared with its competition, the Meridian is easily one of the best SUVs when it comes to the unique combination of luxury and off-roading capability.



PRESENTING

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Movement that inspires

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Xclusive Crystal Cut
Matte Alloy Wheels



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Xclusive Piano Black
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A SMALL BITE OF ADVENTURE...

Suzuki Motorcycle India, recently launched an exciting new motorcycle to their portfolio.

The Suzuki V- Strom SX is the latest entrant in the small capacity adventure motorcycle segment of the country. After meeting with considerable success in the western markets with the big ADV bikes, manufacturers are now focussing attention on developing markets like India for the smaller capacity siblings.





Using this similar successful formula, is the V-Strom SX. A 250cc adventure motorcycle, which hopes to capture the imagination of the Indian market, with its light and nimble offering. The company states, that this bike will be convenient for touring, a little bit of dirt riding and commuting. All while being easy on the pocket.

We are yet to throw a leg over this bike and bring to you a detailed review. But this is our first thoughts about the baby V-Strom after checking it out.

Why the SX?

The V-Strom sold in India has the SX suffix, which is missing on the motorcycle sold abroad. This is because the SX is based on the Gixxer 250 platform, while the bike abroad is based on the Inazuma platform. Seeing how the Inazuma fared in India, it is no surprise, that Suzuki chose not to ride down that same path again!

Visuals

The most pronounced element of this adventure motorcycle is the beak, which is derived from the Suzuki DR-Z racer and DR-BIG off-road models. That doesn't mean, the dirt capabilities of this motorcycle will be similar to those bikes!

Overall, from a distance, the motorcycle looks well balanced. The adventure silhouette is immediately recognisable and the stance is purposeful. At no point, do you feel, that some parts have been slapped on as an afterthought. All the sections of the bike blend in together seamlessly.

A tall windscreen, handguards and wide handlebar add to its adventure demeanour. The LED headlight gives it a contemporary appearance, without taking away the rugged character. The wide plastic shrouds merge into the 12-litre fuel tank, which the company claims has a range of



around 350 km. Decent for most of your touring needs.

The two-piece seat looks comfortable for rider and pillion, but that is something we want to surely put to test. Alloy wheels look good on the bike, while the rear doesn't quite match up to the front in appearance. There is nothing wrong with it, but it rather forgettable.

Change in Parts

This SX gets a 19-inch front wheel and a 17-inch rear, as you would expect on an ADV bike. This should add to its dirt capabilities, while taking away some of its high-speed manoeuvrability. Engineering is always about compromise! This also translates into roughly 205 mm of ground clearance.

As compared to the Gixxer, the bike gets a new subframe and swingarm. This adds 100 mm to the wheelbase, making for better straight-line riding. With all the added bits and bobs on the



V-Strom, it gains 11 kg over its naked sibling.

At the Heart of Things

26.5 hp, 22.2 Nm is what this Suzuki V-Strom SX gets. Is that enough for cruising on Indian highways and powering through rock and rubble in the dirt?

The engine is a straight-out heart transplant from the Gixxer. Using the same oil-cooled 249cc engine, in the same configuration. So, it should ride similar to the naked bike.

Bells & Whistles

The bike also gets features which are now essential to a

dedicated touring motorcycle. It has the Suzuki Easy Start System, where you start the bike with one touch of the starter. The ECU takes care of the rest. You needn't keep the starter button pinned like you would do with the throttle!

It also has a USB outlet which is conveniently placed and glows blue. Making it easier to find in the dark.

Finally, the bike also gets the Suzuki Ride Connect feature, which allows you to pair your phone to your motorcycle through Bluetooth and get notifications while on the go.

This is quite useful when you are spending long hours in the saddle while touring long distance.

Price

The Suzuki V-Strom SX is available in 3 colours, Yellow, Orange and Black. It is priced at INR 2,11,600/- (ex-showroom Delhi) .

Is that price worth the motorcycle on offer? We wait to find out, as we will be soon riding this motorcycle! Stay tuned for the full road review in the next issue of Motor Vikatan.



THULASIDHARAN TJ

KARTHICK N

LEVEL UP FOR THE KTM RC 390



KTM came to India ten years ago. Back then it was a premium bike that gave a high performance at a low price. Thus, KTM bikes became more popular with good reception from the market. The KTM bikes that initially came with the BS4 later became the BS6. The KTM RC 390 is now introduced with new upgrades for the year 2022.

KTM has been using the same design patterns since the release of KTM's RC model. But this 2022 KTM RC 390 model that has just been released has a completely different design. We have already seen this design in the 2022 KTM RC 200. Some liked it; others don't like it. Some said the old design was just fine. But as times change, we must change too; the design also has to change. So KTM says we came up with this new design inspired by their MotoGP racing motorcycle.



In fact, its design was a little different when viewed in the photo and on the website. But when I came face to face, I really liked it. It seemed so premium.

What is the difference between the old model and the new model?

The first thing to feel when sitting on the bike is its weight. This new KTM RC 390 (without fuel) weighs 3.7 kg less than the old model. Filling with petrol will make only a one-kilogram difference in weight. This is because the previous petrol tank was 11 litres, now it has increased to 13.7 litres.

Excess weight is reduced, mainly on the lower parts of the bike. In particular, its alloy wheel has been reduced in weight to 1.1 kg. And also in its disc brakes. To

reduce the unsprung mass the overall weight in the lower parts of the bike is reduced, thus the bike is going fast on the track, and it is easier to turn the bike from left to right easily than before. It is also equipped with a TFT-Multi Functional Display. This allows you to connect your smartphone. The seats are much softer than the previous model. This is the apparent difference between the old model and the new model.

Engine

No major changes were made to its 373cc engine. Although it is a single-cylinder, it produces 43.5 bhp of power. Its torque is 36 Nm. They also say that its performance has increased slightly as its airbox has increased by 40%. And the exhaust design is different.

Riding Position

As for the riding position, its handlebar position is slightly higher than before. It was like lying down and riding a bike before. You felt like superman flying! Now it is a bit like sitting and riding. Thus, it is suitable not only for race tracks but also for long rides and a little city riding too. Not only that, the handlebar can be adjusted 14 mm up and down for convenience.

Electronics

The main thing to look for is electronics. A lot of advanced technologies have been used in this.

The first thing to look for is the 'IMU Sensor'. It controls the vibrations that occur when the brakes are applied by the ABS.



Also helps to measure the angular rates of the motorcycle to enable cornering ABS perfectly.

The second is 'Traction Control Technology'. This reduces the wheel spinning that occurs when the bike's throttle is suddenly twisted. What makes it special is that it has two sensors. One is mounted on the front wheel and the other on the rear wheel. The sensor detects the rotation speed of the wheel and helps to control traction. Thus, the handling of the bike is well controlled.

There is a third - 'Quick shifter'. This allows the gear to become smoother. This allows you to easily shift gears no matter how fast you go without using a clutch.

Fourth is the 'Slipper Clutch'. Suppose we are going at a speed of 160 km per hour. If you lower the gear at that time and release the clutch, the wheel will suddenly skid and an accident will occur! This slipper clutch controls it electronically. Such integrated technologies are used in this new KTM RC 390.

Conclusion

Overall the engine refinement is much better than the previous model. Its suspension is tailored

to suit our Indian roads. 'Race Bike in the Street' is as real as KTM's new slogan for this 2022 RC. It's not only for a race bike but also for a little city ride.

Its ex-showroom price is Rs 3.14 lakh and its on-road price in Chennai would be around Rs 3.7 lakh. There is a significant hike in price between the previous KTM RC 390 and this new KTM RC 390. Street commuters will love this race bike if only a little compromise on price.



MOTOGP

In the last issue of Motor Vikatan, we had written about the MotoGP 2022 season after the second race held in Indonesia.

A lot of time and racing action has happened since then! It is time to delve into the adrenaline packed world of top-class motorcycle racing once again.

We are now close to the halfway mark of the championship, as we enter the summer break. With 8 races having been held since the race at Mandalika. Race action resumed in Argentina, USA, Portugal, Jerez, France, Italy, Catalunya and the latest in Germany.

In the opening part of the season, it was all topsy turvy, with one rider up one week and down the next. It was difficult to see a pattern emerging from the race results. There seemed to be many contenders for the championship, but nobody stamping their authority.

Let us start with Argentina. The race held at the spectacular Termas de Rio Hondo circuit, which sees little action throughout the year and therefore a dirty surface. One of the fastest racetracks on the calendar saw Aprilia take their first win since their comeback, with Aleix Espargaro. That win has been coming for sometime now, with Aprilia gradually going from strength to strength. Compatriots of his, Jorge Martin for Ducati and Alex Rins for Suzuki rounded off the podium, as they gave close chase till the finish line.

Next up we went to Texas, a roost ruled by Marc Marquez. But with Marquez still suffering badly from his injuries, the race was for once open for others to try their luck at winning! Enea Bastianini took the win in style on his satellite Ducati, scything through the field. Followed by Alex Rins, who was starting to show consistency, something which he lacked in previous seasons and Jack Miller on his Factory Ducati in third place. The





BEFORE THE SUMMER BREAK



Texan rodeo rewarded the riders who could manage the bumpy track the best.

The first race in Europe, was in Portugal at the Autodromo Internacional do Algarve. A track which is most commonly described as a rollercoaster, because of the constant undulations and change of directions. The return to Europe saw a return of the reigning MotoGP champion, Fabio Quartararo, as he took the win on his Yamaha. Fellow Frenchman, Johann Zarco took second, while Aleix Espargaro finished third, showing that the Aprilia was a beast to reckon with.

Jerez was next. It is a track which every rider has ridden many laps of. Across multiple categories. This track has no secrets for the riders to exploit.

We saw a clinical display of metronomic consistency from Francesco Bagnaia for the Factory Ducati to keep at bay Quartararo. These two pre-season favourites for the championship were joined by Aleix, as he was putting in a consistent charge for the podium places.

France was the next race with its festival like atmosphere. It had a record number of attendees post the pandemic, but the racing was mostly processional. Bastianini took the third win of the season for him, with Miller and Aleix rounding up the podium. Though the week was remembered for another reason. Suzuki announced that they will be quitting MotoGP at the end of the season, that didn't go well with the riders as both ended up in the gravel during the race.

Mugello in Italy was the opposite of France. Without star attraction Valentino Rossi, a once packed Mugello was largely empty. The racing was fortunately good, with the results a copy of Jerez. As Bagnaia took the win, followed by Quartararo and Aleix. The Suzukis continued having a dismal run of form as both riders didn't finish the race. It was also where Marc announced that he will be having another surgery to fix his long-standing injuries, we hope he recovers and returns to the battlefield of MotoGP.

The first lap of Catalunya saw the most action. As Takaaki Nakagami of Honda got the first corner all wrong and wiped out Rins and Bagnaia. Quartararo rode unhindered to take the chequered flag for the win. Drama ensued behind, as Aleix celebrated a lap too early and



went from 2nd to 5th in one lap. His costly and somewhat amusing mistake saw Martin take second place ahead of teammate Zarco.

Sachsenring in Germany is a tight twisty track, with lots of left handers. It is a treat to watch the rider wrestling their MotoGP monsters around the track. But with the riders almost always being leaned over through a turn, it doesn't offer a lot of opportunities for overtaking. Quartararo took the holeshot and led the race from start to finish, eventually taking the win. He was joined on the podium by a consistent Zarco and Miller, who had to take a long lap penalty. The Suzukis continued to have another miserable weekend. While, it was the first time in 44 years, that Honda finished a race without any of their riders scoring a single point.

The talking points this season has been the lack of overtaking in comparison to previous years. With riders mostly blaming it on advanced aerodynamics and ride height devices. The former throw dirty air for the rider in the wake, while the latter has made everyone brake even later into the corner. Together it isn't allowing riders to overtake by braking into a corner or drafting down the straight.

With 9 races done, Fabio Quartararo seems to have a firm grip on proceedings. He is the man in form, has the consistency and confidence, while leading the championship by 34 points. Aleix Espargaro has a strong package in the form of the sweet handling Aprilia and has been showing the potential of the bike. But the rider does not have the experience of fighting for championships. It will

be interesting to see how does he perform in the latter half of the season as the pressure builds up.

A consistent Johann Zarco is in 3rd currently, but last year as well, we saw him fade in the second half of the season. Bagnaia, one of the pre-season favourites, has a massive mountain to climb, as he is almost 100 points adrift of the leader. Enea Bastianini who seemed such a strong contender in the beginning seems to be running out of steam on his one-year-old bike. There does not appear to be another rider in the paddock who has any answer for the tough questions being asked by Quartararo.

We cannot wait for the summer break to end and the championship to get lit up once again!





MOTOGP UNLIMITED

It all started off with one man, Valentino Rossi. A racer is bigger than a sport. As the years ticked on, it became a matter of time before Rossi retired from the sport. The fear was, that his massive fanbase will retire with him

Dorna, the company which promotes MotoGP, has been preparing for this eventuality for the better part of the last decade. Changing rules and regulations to make the racing more intriguing. The goal is to retain and grow the audience.

MotoGP Unlimited (MU) is another step in that direction. Inspired by the success of Drive to Survive, a series based on Formula 1, Dorna hoped to follow suit. D2S brought in a host of new fans to the sport, people who were unaware of the sport suddenly started following it. Audience numbers went up on TV and in race attendance.

Surely, motorcycle racing, which is far more entertaining, would be easier to sell right?

MU was released in 2022 at the start of the season, with 8 episodes of around 45 minutes each. The series was to showcase the human side of motorcycle racing, behind the scenes, which fans don't get to see during



a race weekend and make it easy consumption for non-race fans.

Here are the hits and misses of this racing series which is aired on Amazon Prime:

Hits

The first episode gradually unravels a typical MotoGP weekend. An endeavour to explain to a first-time viewer, what is happening. While this is boring for old fans, it does make life easier for someone who has never heard of MotoGP. It is at the end of the day a niche sport.

The series captures a lot of emotion, the human element,

Which leads to more authenticity for the show. Because the nuance and passion of the rider cannot come across if it were dubbed or if all the riders were forced to speak in English.

Misses

The biggest problem with the show is that most people couldn't even see it. In many countries around the globe, the show was never even released. Shooting themselves in the foot, when it came to growing the audience and fanbase!

If you try to please everyone, you will end up pleasing nobody.

In stark contrast, the deadpan monologue from the English commentators kills the buzz of the show's flow.

While the Europeans in the show speak their native language, the Asians speak English. As with any human, they cannot be as eloquent in a second language as in their first. As such, it comes across as a European-biased series. Not surprising, since it is a European-biased sport. This is where they miss out on the opportunity to grow the audience by giving the sport a global flavour.

SERIES REVIEW

which is mostly missing during a race weekend. It shows riders as they are, just normal humans, with superhuman talent at riding a motorcycle. You get to see the fears, triumphs, and failures which a rider encounters. It shows the pain of injuries, it starkly reminds you that is a 365-day-a-year job for these racers. They can't ever stop racing in their head, even when they are at home.

Set in the 2021 MotoGP season, it chronologically follows the races and shows you much of the drama which happens behind closed garage shutters. At the same time, it doesn't unnecessarily dramatize things for the sake of eyeballs.

The riders speak in their native language, so you are bombarded with French, Spanish and Italian.

The series tries to capture the attention of new fans and old fans alike. In its attempt to straddle a wide spectrum of audiences, it falls flat in the middle. After the first episode, things go too fast for a new fan to keep up with. While for the diehard fan, there is just too much explaining happening. Like teaching the alphabet to a graduate! It would have been better if it focused on its target group.

The show uses a few MotoGP commentators to narrate the tale of 2021. There are many English-speaking commentators, alongside Spanish and Italian commentators. The former find it difficult to gel with the sport. MotoGP is filled with passion, and you can hear it dripping from the voice of the riders and the Latin commentators.

Verdict

If you are a MotoGP fan, then MU is a must-watch. It offers some wonderful insights into the sport. Though there are sections, you would just want to fast forward.

If you aren't familiar with MotoGP, but ride motorcycles, you will probably enjoy it considerably.

If you enjoy other forms of motorsports, you should watch it. You might just become a new fan!

If you are browsing through Amazon Prime and stumble upon it and watch it like any other documentary, then chances are you will not be able to go through the first episode itself. There isn't all that much drama, since the action happens on the track, on a regular race weekend!



AVINASH NORONHA

 RAMESH BALAJI

TVS TAKES INDIAN MOTORSPORTS UP A NOTCH





Home hero, TVS Motor Company, has partnered with global petroleum behemoth, Petronas to build a motorsports partnership in India.

TVS has a long and rich legacy of being involved and committed to the Indian Motorsport scene for decades now. The brand has developed not just machines, but also athletes, who are at the top of the sport in India. They have also taken the best of India to go race on the international stage. It is therefore safe to say, that there is nobody quite like TVS on the Indian motorsports stage.

Petronas has been involved in motorsports on the global stage for more than a quarter of a century. The Malaysian company first signed up in 1995 in Formula

1. In 2019, it started its own team in MotoGP, named the Petronas Sepang Racing Team. With that entry, they took the Best Independent Team and Rookie of the Year titles. The next year, they also became official fuel supplier for Moto2 and Moto3. This Malaysian giant has all the pedigree required in global motorsports.

It is to our great joy to see Petronas enter India and team up with TVS to race as the Petronas TVS Racing Team. With these two forces together, we can only expect something special as an outcome. Truly taking Indian motorsports up a notch.

At the announcement of this partnership, the new racing livery was unveiled as well. And boy, does it look gorgeous and

purposeful. The team will be using Petronas Sprinta, a high-performance engine oil for racing. This team will be visible in the Indian National Motorcycle Racing Championship (INMRC), Indian National Supercross Championship (INSC), and Indian National Rally Championship (INRC).

The action will not be limited to the race track. The companies will also be rolling out a co-branded engine oil, the Petronas TVS TRU4 RacePro. This oil should be available across India by the time this magazine is in your hands.

We are incredibly excited to see how this partnership blossoms for the Indian Two-Wheeler Racing scene...



PRADEEP KRISHNA M

FORMULA 1 A SEASON POLES APART!



It has taken us just 3 months to reach the South Pole from the North! In the last issue, I wrote about how Red Bull Racing's new engine program failed them and how the teams with Ferrari engines were galloping like horses. Now, we're on the complete opposite end of the spectrum and Ferrari has failed massively to capitalise on the five podiums they scored in the first three races.

After the Australian Grand Prix, everyone was talking about how this season was turning out to be Ferrari's and Charles Leclerc's! The Monégasque driver had won 2 races, came second in one, registered two poles & two fastest laps all in the span of three races. 71 points in the races could be the dream start he could've asked for.

The driver who followed him in the points table was George Russell (with 37 points) who was driving a struggling Mercedes and the closest Red Bull driver in the points table was Sergio Perez, not Max Verstappen! The defending champion was having the worst possible start to his season. Two retirements in three races meant, the Dutch driver was 46 points off of leader Leclerc.

With such a start, Ferrari enjoyed a lead of 49 points over Red Bull and the next race was in their home, Italy! Everything was falling in place for them. But the sad irony was that the dream was shattered into pieces in front of the home crowd. Ferrari failed to take the podium in Imola as Carlos

Sainz failed to complete the second straight race in a row, and leader Leclerc finished sixth.

The rain before the race made it difficult for the Ferrari drivers and they both suffered bad fortune even before turn 1. Sainz was hit by Ricciardo and forced to retire, meanwhile Leclerc's poor start evaporated all the expectations of the Tifosi. To rub salt into the wounds, Red Bull piled up 58 points in Emilia Romagna GP, 3 more than they managed in the three previous races combined.

Miami was not bad for Ferrari, but two podium places weren't sufficient to maintain the



difference from their title rivals. Leclerc and Carlos Sainz scored a combined 33 points, whereas Max Verstappen's brilliant victory, coupled with Sergio Perez's fourth place finish gave Red Bull 38 points. With that Ferrari's lead at the top is reduced to just 6 points.

Since Verstappen won all three of the races he completed, the narratives started to change. With 17 races remaining, the odds turned towards the defending champion to pip Leclerc in the title race and in the Constructors battle, Red Bull looks pretty confident. Who added fuel to that fire, it was Ferrari's own power unit!

In Spain, Leclerc's power unit failed and he has to concede the race in which he was supposed to win! It was repeated in Baku along with Sainz's hydraulic failure thus making it their first double retirement for the season. If that's not enough for Ferrari's struggle, a bad pit call in Monaco robbed Leclerc of his first ever home win. To put an end to this, Ferrari opted to go with a new power unit for Leclerc in Montreal and he did an incredible job to finish fifth, starting from 19th.

With everything going wrong for the Prancing Horse, the Red Bulls were raging and piled up points for fun. As a constructor, they are enjoying their best run since 2013 by winning 6 straight races. In the last 6 races, they've managed ten podiums too! Now the difference between them and Ferrari is 76 points and this time the Bull's nose is edging.

The driver's championship on the other hand has gone from Verstappen vs Leclerc to





Constructor's Championship	
Red Bull Racing	304
Ferrari	228
Mercedes	188
McLaren	65
Alpine	57
Alfa Romeo	51
Alfa Tauri	27
Aston Martin	16
Haas	15
Williams	3
Retirements so far	
Mercedes	0
Alpine	2
McLaren	2
AlphaTauri	3
Aston Martin	3
Williams	3
Red Bull	4
Alfa Romeo	4
Haas	5
Ferrari	5

Verstappen vs Perez in no time. Perez's brilliance on Saturdays, his consistency on the race days and a scintillating victory in Monaco made him one of the protagonists in the title race. The

Driver's Championship	
Max Verstappen	175
Sergio Perez	129
Charles Leclerc	126
George Russell	111
Carlos Sainz Jr.	102
Lewis Hamilton	77
Lando Norris	50
Valtteri Bottas	46
Esteban Ocon	39
Fernando Alonso	18
Pierre Gasly	16
Kevin Magnussen	15
Daniel Ricciardo	15
Sebastian Vettel	13
Yuki Tsunoda	11
Zhou Guanyu	5
Alexander Albon	3
Lance Stroll	3
Mick Schumacher	0
Nico Hulkenberg	0
Nicholas Latifi	0

Mexican is now sitting behind Max and Charles and if not for his own power unit failure in Montreal, the difference to Verstappen would have been less than 46.

After 3 races, the Ferrari was flying high like a unicorn. But in the span of 3 months, the raging bull has broken its horn and made it realise that it is not going to be special this time either. Also, the problem doesn't end with Mattia Binotto's team. Haas who had a flying start to their campaign, failed to score in the last 5 races and the American based team has seen at least one retirement since Monaco. The same can be said for Alfa Romeo, who have seen three retirements in the last 5 races. If we consider the total number of retirements after these 9 races, the teams with Ferrari engines have the worst record.

If there is something that we learned in the past 3 months, that is we should not come to any conclusion. We are not even halfway through the season and we can move to the other pole again three months later. Who knows, Mercedes who are pacing up slowly could overpower the other two teams. Who knows?!



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Innovative Convenience
**Augmented Reality
Head-up Display**

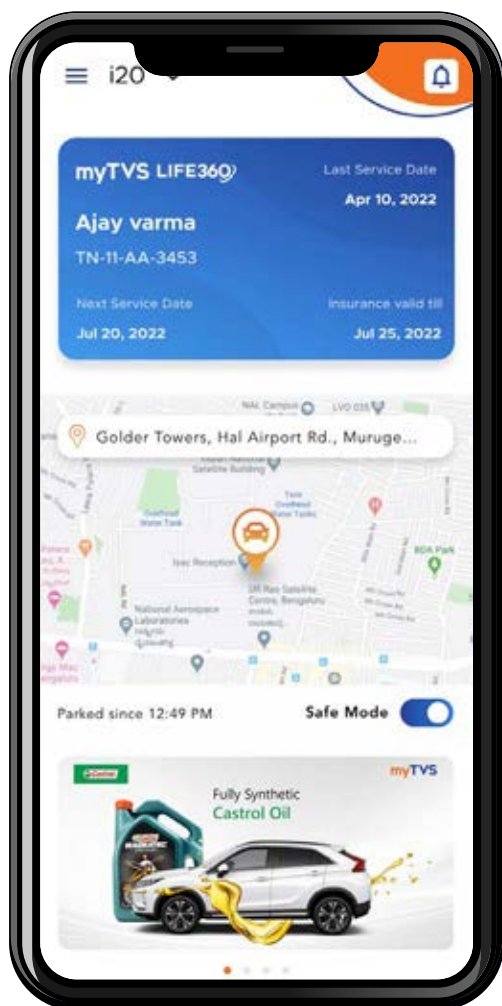
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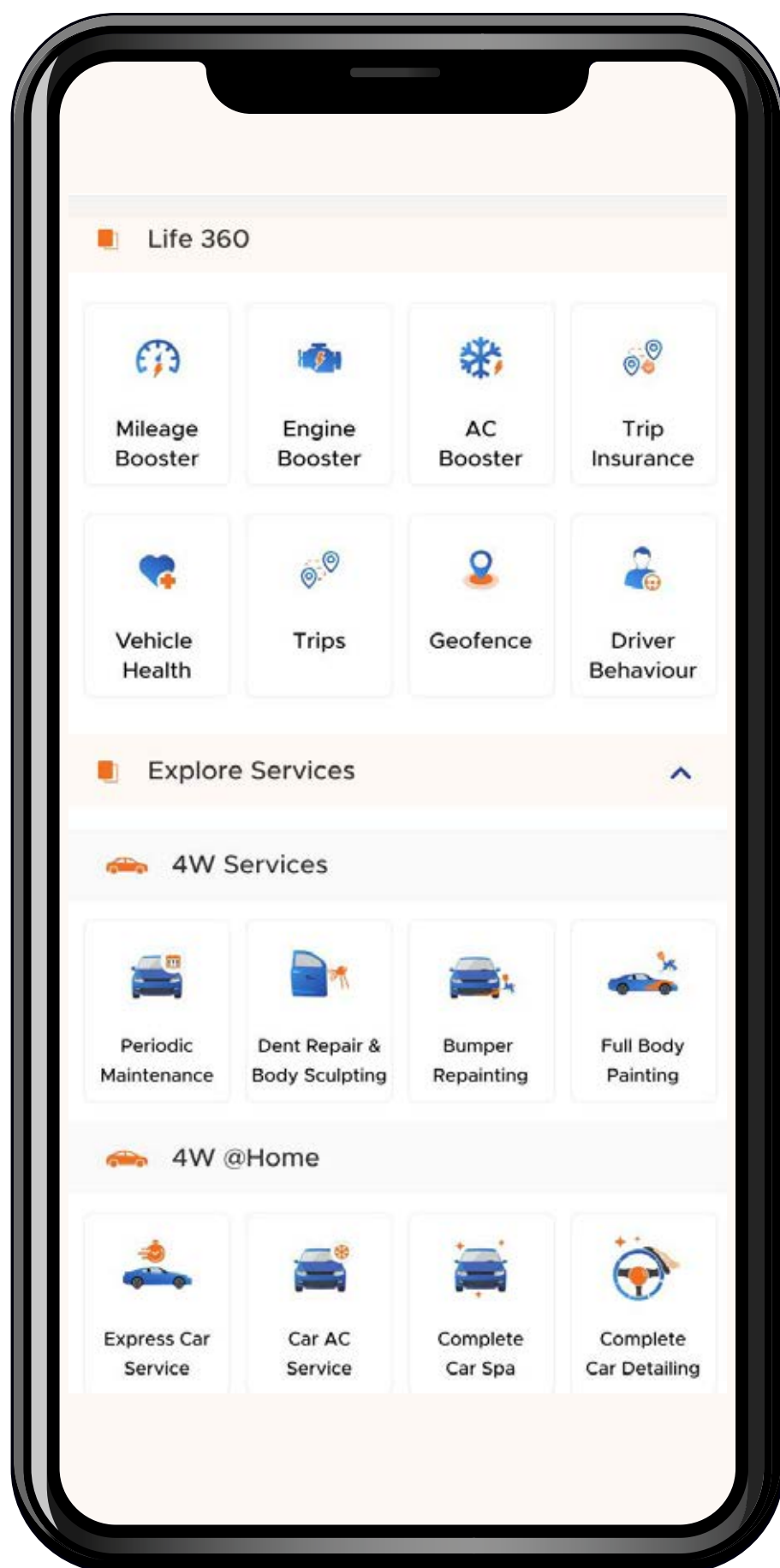
AFTERMARKET NEEDS

myTVS, the largest independent integrated multi-brand car service provider has launched a connected car platform, 'myTVS Life360' for all the post-warranty passenger cars. myTVS Life360 is the first 'Super app' in the India aftermarket space that gives access to end-to-end service requirements like vehicle service, emergency assistance, parts, insurance, payment platform, accessories,

along with a wide range of service products. The 'myTVS Life360' will provide an entire range of services for the aftermarket with complete transparency and value for money to its customers. The services will be available based on a subscription model and it is priced at Rs 4,999 for a three-year subscription.

The Super app is connected to a personalised device provided by myTVS and will enable safe,

personalised experiences for the car owners, which includes driving behaviour, geo-fencing, personalised recommendation to improve mileage, engine performance and safety alarm and notification for the user. This also comes with a personalised travel map to give access to the myTVS network, fuel stations, nearest police stations, and hospitals, thereby making it a complete lifestyle product.



myTVS has integrated telematics with artificial intelligence algorithms so that the customer can reduce the overall cost of maintenance through predictive maintenance and enhance the performance of the car including mileage by changing driving behaviours thereby increasing the quality and resale value of the car. “For the first time, that car service has become a lifestyle product that integrates telematics of the car with a host of travel needs like pre-and post-travel check-ups for long and weekend travel. It includes trip-based insurance, trip-based Roadside Assistance, a personalised travel map with location information on the nearest myTVS network, etc.,” said G Srinivasa Raghavan, Managing Director, Ki Mobility Solutions.


myTVS Life360 is an end-to-end car care product that connects the customer with his vehicle, a customer with myTVS network and its partners thereby enabling him to enjoy hassle-free ownership and usage of his car. myTVS Life360 customers can also access the widest range of services at myTVS with an attractive cashback program thereby helping to reduce the cost of maintenance. The super app also has the facility to pay all utility payments through myTVS Pay with cashback and reward points. The app will also feature myTVS Vault, which allows customers to store important documents like insurance copies, driver’s license, registration certificate etc. for easy access.



AVINASH NORONHA



SPITI THE MIDDLE



Spiti, translated means the middle land. It is a mountain desert valley, nestled between the mountains of India and Tibet.

For centuries, it has been a trading route for goods passing between the Indian Himalayas and the Tibetan plateau. With modern political boundaries, such movement of people, cultures and produce might have stopped. But the rugged charm remains.

This middle land, lies on the northeast side of the Himalayan range, as such the South West Monsoons, which make India green every year, are entirely missed out in the Spiti Valley. As a result, in stark contrast to the neighbouring green Himalayas, this valley is surrounded by barren brown desolate mountains.

Vistas are not to the liking of every traveller. Yet, the alluring landscape is an adventurer's

dream. Especially for the simple bicycle.

Spiti Valley is accessible from two sides, Manali and Shimla. While the former is shorter, it has far more hostile conditions, it is closed in winter and gains altitude rapidly. The latter is longer, gains altitude gradually has decent roads and is open throughout the year. For cyclists coming from the plains, the gradual ascent from Shimla is the preferred route, which ends in Manali.

There were two of us who rode the Spiti circuit on our bicycles. Starting from Shimla, we climbed almost constantly to the village of Kufri. A quaint village which is filled with an abundance of apple orchards. The scent of fruit trees mixed with the fumes of diesel trucks leaves you perplexed!

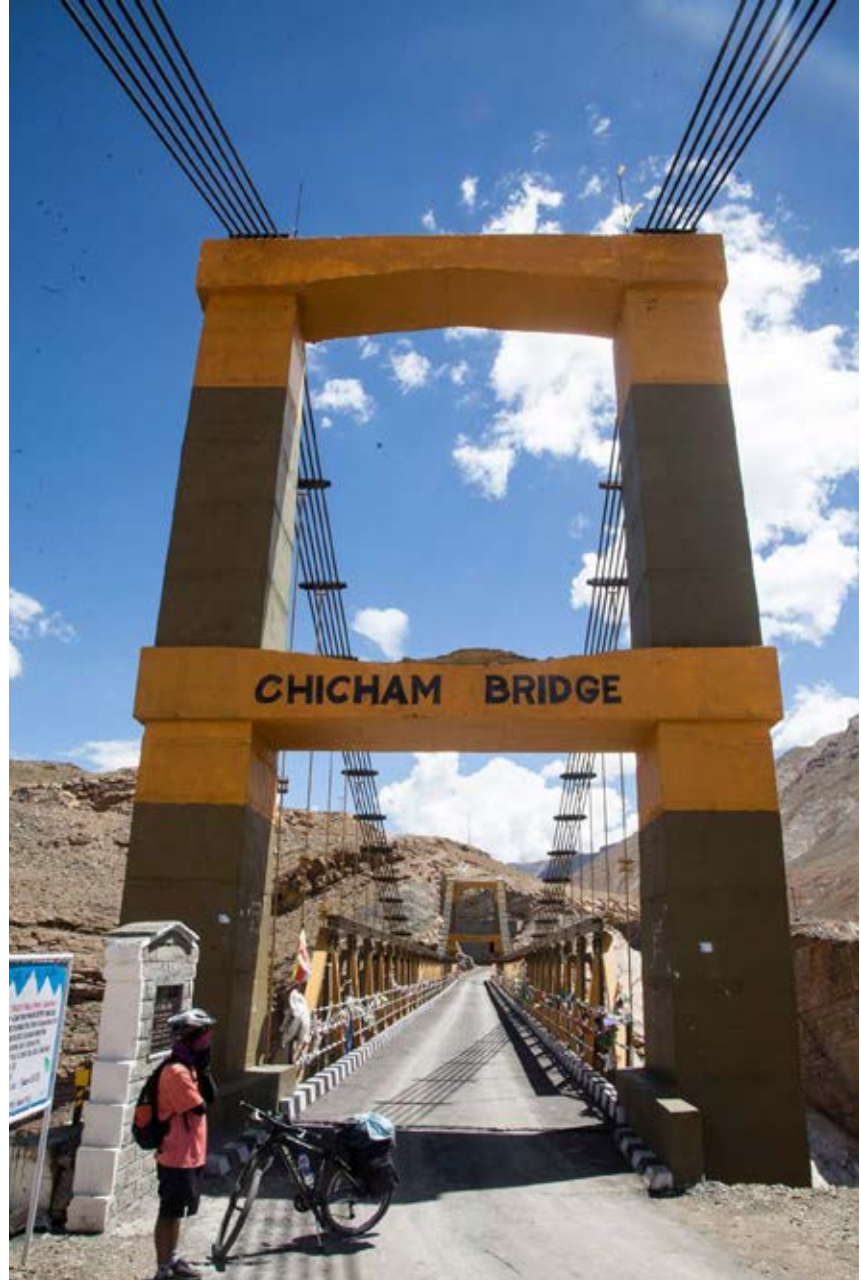
The first day of riding ended in Narkanda, a village at the top of the mountain. From there you have to make a decision. Either descend to the Sutlej River and

LAND

ride along the National Highway or take the Old Hindustan Tibet Road. We chose the latter and found that nobody in the village knew about it. After much humdrum, we found an old gentleman who could direct us on our way to an incredible adventure.

Where the road ends, the adventure starts. The Old Hindustan-Tibet Road was less of a road and more of a broken path. We barely saw any other sign of humanity once we made up some distance from Narkanda. After a day filled with mud, slush and intermittent rain, we wound up in a non-descript, one-shop village of Nankhari. The locals stopped us from proceeding beyond in the evening since it was a path known to be filled with leopards. Fortunately, we found dwellings in a Forest Guest House. The caretaker told us, that no government official ever bothered visiting the village because it was so far from anywhere!

The third day of riding from Nankhari to Taklech saw me losing one buddy and gaining another. We were riding on a rocky path with dense forest cover. A steep climb with not a human being in sight. The only living being we met was a dog, who befriended us and jogged alongside us for 30 km. While the doggy joined us on the ride, my riding buddy had a mechanical. His luggage rack broke and he was unable to continue the ride. We had to bundle him up onto the roof of a passing roadways bus, after walking to the nearest village. From thereon, it was a solo ride for me.



The fourth day saw me riding solo from Taklech to Dharanghati. It was a mind-boggling route, with the first part of the day riding up a mountain in direct harsh sunlight. It was depressingly dehydrating. I was riding to the top of a small mountain pass called Dharanghati, it was a full day of continuous climbing. As I neared the top, it started raining and I went from dehydrated to shivering in a matter of minutes! But it was all worth it, as I got to stay in a century-old bungalow all alone, with nothing but forest lands on either side. Money can't buy you experiences such as this!

From Dharanghati, I

descended all the way to a town called Jeori, on the banks of the Sutlej River. From thick forest in heavy rain to bright sunshine by the riverside, the day constantly changed, as did the flora. By evening my fellow rider had caught up, after having repaired his bike in a nearby town. We spent the evening there gorging on a hill staple food of Maggi and momos!

Post-Jeori, we entered the green hills of Kinnaur, the gateway to Spiti Valley. We just needed to climb another mountain range before we could feast our senses in the middle land. We rode along the main

highway for a few kilometres, before cutting off and climbing a big hill to reach another unheard-of village called Urni. We reached there after dark didn't get any food and ended up spending the night in a government resthouse.

The route from Urni to Kalpa was to die for. And risky enough, that if we made a mistake, we would be dead. Literally! We were back on the Old HT Road, on a narrow path with no habitation or traffic. This route hasn't been used for many years and is completely overgrown, blocked by falling rocks and trees and filled with adventure and trepidation. At the top of the hill, we found one small secluded temple. We enjoyed the serenity there before moving on to the popular tourist town of Kalpa.

The day started with heavy rain, punctures and upset tummies, as we had our fair share of adventure. We left the trail and once again got back onto the national highway. Riding along the mountainside to the village of Spillo. An uneventful day which was much needed after the jangling of nerves from the previous few days.

From Spillo, it was a descent all the way to Khab, the confluence of the rivers Spiti and Sutlej. From thereon, the unbridled magnificence of Spiti would shine upon us in all its glory. We were headed to the picturesque village of Nako. But to get there we had to navigate the mighty Ka Zigs. A bunch of switchbacks, which you need to climb under the burning sun. There is no food or water available along the way to alleviate your suffering!

Nako was so good, that we stayed a day there. Absorbing the food, culture, language and vibe of the place. It was a day of recharging our mental and physical batteries before moving on to Tabo.

Tabo is one of the most well-known villages of Spiti. It is home to one of the oldest Buddhist Monasteries in that area and tourists flock there. We stayed in the monastery guest house, to enjoy the full feel of the place. Because the place caters so much to tourists,





it loses out on its serenity. It has more of a hipster vibe to the place rather than the tranquillity you would expect in a monastery.

From Tabo, we went to the famous Dhankar Monastery. A monastery sits perched at the tip of a cliff and nobody knows when it will all come crashing down. The monastery has incredible views of the Spiti River, the Spiti Valley, and the road winding its way to Pin National Park. It is a must-visit just for this view.

After leaving Dhankar Monastery the next day, we rode to the district headquarters of Kaza. The only town in the entire area and the only place which could lay claim to the title of 'town'. The rest are proper villages. As such, Kaza feels weird. It is much bigger than the places we had been through and is much smaller than the cities we belong to. It is a great place to replenish

your supplies. If you can't get it in Kaza, chances are you aren't getting it anywhere!

Two weeks of pedalling later, we left Kaza for Losar. There are two routes which you can take. We of course took the adventurous route! This route climbs past Key Monastery, which is the most iconic monastery in Spiti. It then goes up to Kibber and then to Chicham. The latter is home to the highest bridge in Asia. It is a sight to behold, both for its natural beauty and its engineering marvel. From Chicham we descended all the way to Losar, the last halt before you start making your exit from Spiti Valley.

From Losar, you climb almost immediately towards Kunzum La, the highest point in this entire trip. The top of this pass is the end of Spiti and where Lahaul starts. But not without a visit to

the magnificent Chandra Tal or Moon Lake. Not as big as the more famous Pangong Tso in Ladakh, it is far more charming.

After spending a night by the side of this holy lake, it was time to finish our ride as we rode from Chandra Tal to Batal and then onwards to Manali. The route from Batal to Rohtang La is treacherous. Cars and motorcycles struggle the most in those raging streams. To make matters worse, the water is frigid, since it is literally melted snow. As the rain beats down on you, it takes a mental and physical toll on the rider.

The ride might have ended in Manali. But you lose a part of yourself to Spiti and take a tiny morsel of Spiti with you for the rest of your life. Experiences, which we will take to our graves...



SETTING UP YOUR CAR FOR THE MONSOONS

By the time you get this issue of Motor Vikatan in your hands, the monsoons would have swept across large swathes of the Indian peninsula.

For us automobile enthusiasts, the rains bring a host of driving pleasures and challenges alike. The hills and nature around us turn green, inviting us to go out on a long drive. Leaving the city behind. Yet, most of us live in cities and caring for our vehicles requires being extra vigilant.

Here's a list of things to keep in mind this monsoon to keep your car safe!

Tyre Wear

Rain makes roads slippery. There is a much higher risk of aquaplaning at speed on tyres which are worn out. Check your tyres before the monsoons. Replace old and bald tyres, as this is your contact point with the road. Use newer tyres at the front, since the front wheels steer the vehicle. You need more grip at the front for steering and braking.

Brake Check

Brakes are another important element to be checked on your vehicle. Check not just the brake pads, but also the brake fluid. Replace if necessary. Having optimum braking is helpful when you are driving on wet roads with reduced grip.

Lights and Battery

When it rains, not just the road grip, but visibility is also severely reduced. Check all your lights, hi-beam, lo-beam, fog lamps, and tail lights, for any fused bulbs. Check the wiring to make sure no rodent has gnawed at it and thus increasing the chance of a short circuit in the rain.



With the increased load of using all the lights on the battery, it is constantly under strain. Make sure your battery isn't so old that it dies on you.

Wipers

Wipers get hard and dirty through the heat of the summer. And that first rain of the season could see you using these wiper blades on your windscreen. As a result, scratching up the windscreen. It is a good idea to change the wipers before the onset of the monsoon season, especially if there is any doubt about their durability of it.

Wipers which don't clear the screen for you in heavy rain can be hazardous.

Rubber Mats

Place rubber foot mats on the floor of the car. In the rain, you are going to be getting in and out of the vehicle with wet shoes. Any fabric in your car will take a long time to dry out and the damp smell lingers, leading to an unpleasant driving experience.

Park in a covered area if possible

In urban dwellings, covered parking spots are a luxury. But if you do have access to covered areas for parking, then do so. Protecting your vehicle from taking battering from the elements will increase the overall longevity.

Avoid parking under big trees. Monsoon winds and storms uproot trees and break branches frequently. You wouldn't want your vehicle to get damaged because of a falling branch.

Check Air-Con

Not something you



would expect to be doing. Air conditioners are for the summer, right? Yes, but with your windows rolled up, your windscreen will fog up fast. The windscreen vents need to be cleaned and working properly to have a clear vision from the inside.

Avoid driving through flooded areas

This is easier said than done. But, as much as possible, avoid driving through any flooded areas. Water getting into your car, can be a nuisance at best and very expensive at worst.

If you are forced to drive through a flooded street, choose the correct gear before plunging in. Keep the throttle open steadily. Plough through the water at a constant speed.

Avoid driving through, if you see an oncoming vehicle, as they will push more water into your vehicle.

Central Locking and Windows

If you have decided to drive through a flooded stretch. Make sure your windows are slightly rolled down. And your central locking is not engaged. There have been multiple incidents where people's cars got stuck in water, and the passengers are unable to get out, because of short-circuiting of electricals.

If your vehicle does get submerged, get out fast and call for help to tow your vehicle out.

Engine submerged in water

If you misjudge the depth and your engine gets submerged and stalls in a flooded area, don't try

to start it up again. That will lead to more water entering the engine internals. This will not just have a negative impact on the engine, but could also end up being a costly affair.

Insurance

Even after taking all precautions, it is possible that your vehicle might get damaged due to the monsoons creating havoc in cities.

Ensure your vehicle is insured, so the burden on your pocket is minimised.

Keep these points in mind and you should be able to enjoy the monsoons to the fullest. The pleasure of driving in the rain is unmatched.



THULASIDHARAN TJ

📷 PRIYAN, RAMESH BALAJI



HOW A CAR IS DEVELOPED

A VISIT TO MAHINDRA R&D WITH 100 STUDENTS





Motor Vikatan, in association with Mahindra & Mahindra, had organized a workshop 'One Day at the Mahindra Research Centre' to fill the huge gap between the students and the factory where they will be working in the future. A large number of students from all over India had applied. However, since it is a research centre, only about a hundred students were admitted. At 7 AM, students gathered at the Motor Vikatan office in Chennai to go to this research centre, which is located near the Chengalpattu tollgate. The workshop started at 10 AM, with the rest of the students arriving directly at the Mahindra Research Centre.

The R&D sector, that is, the research centre of an automobile company, is like a centre of military secrecy. Outsiders are generally not allowed in this. However, for students' quest for knowledge and interest, Mahindra welcomed to its

research centre with special permission only for students who are automobile enthusiasts and studying that discipline.

Mahindra's HR Joshua outlined the rules to be followed at the research centre and the work to be done at the research centre.

The students came from different colleges and were unfamiliar with each other. Thus, Joshua divided the students into 4 teams, kept them conversing well with each other and made them familiar. His plan is to make learning easier through this.

Engine Development Centre

The first laboratory we visited was the Engine Development Centre. This is where students learn how to make an engine. All of Mahindra's engines that we can see are being built on a trial basis at an early stage. This is where the power and mileage of an engine come into play. The engines of cars like the Bolero, Scorpio,

Thar and XUV 700 are all made here. Only after being produced here and finishing testing, will everything go to the production plant in Pune.

Powertrain Development

The second is Powertrain Development. Starting with the engine and transmission, the axle and tyre will be inspected at this location. Going inside was like going to the operation theatre in a hospital. Because they had one engine, with about twenty to thirty wires plugged in, and had 90 sensors inspecting how that engine was performing. It was awesome to watch.

Instrumentation Lab

Next, is the Instrumentation Lab. This is where the research is done to reduce the noise and vibrations in the car. The students saw research being done to reduce all kinds of noise, such as the noise caused by vibrations, the noise when the car opens, the noise when the seatbelt is put on etc.



Technical Academy Laboratory

The body system of the car was clearly explained here. This is a place where you can explore many subtleties, starting with where and what type of metal should be used in the car and how it can save passengers from an accident.

Testing Track

They finally took us to the testing track. This is the track where the first phase of testing will take place once a car is built. They also showed how it happens.

Students were given the opportunity to speak with their respective specialists in each laboratory. The students used this to resolve their doubts. That day they learnt first-hand what they read in a book, and how it is practically implemented.

Meanwhile, Shankar Venugopal, Deputy Director, M&M, addressed and engaged with the students via video conference. He also discussed the future of mobility. Challenges involved, opportunities ahead.

At the end of the session, I heard some of the students were saying, "This day should not come to an end!" I replied with a smile, "Don't worry students, this is just the beginning" many more interesting visits await.



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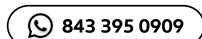
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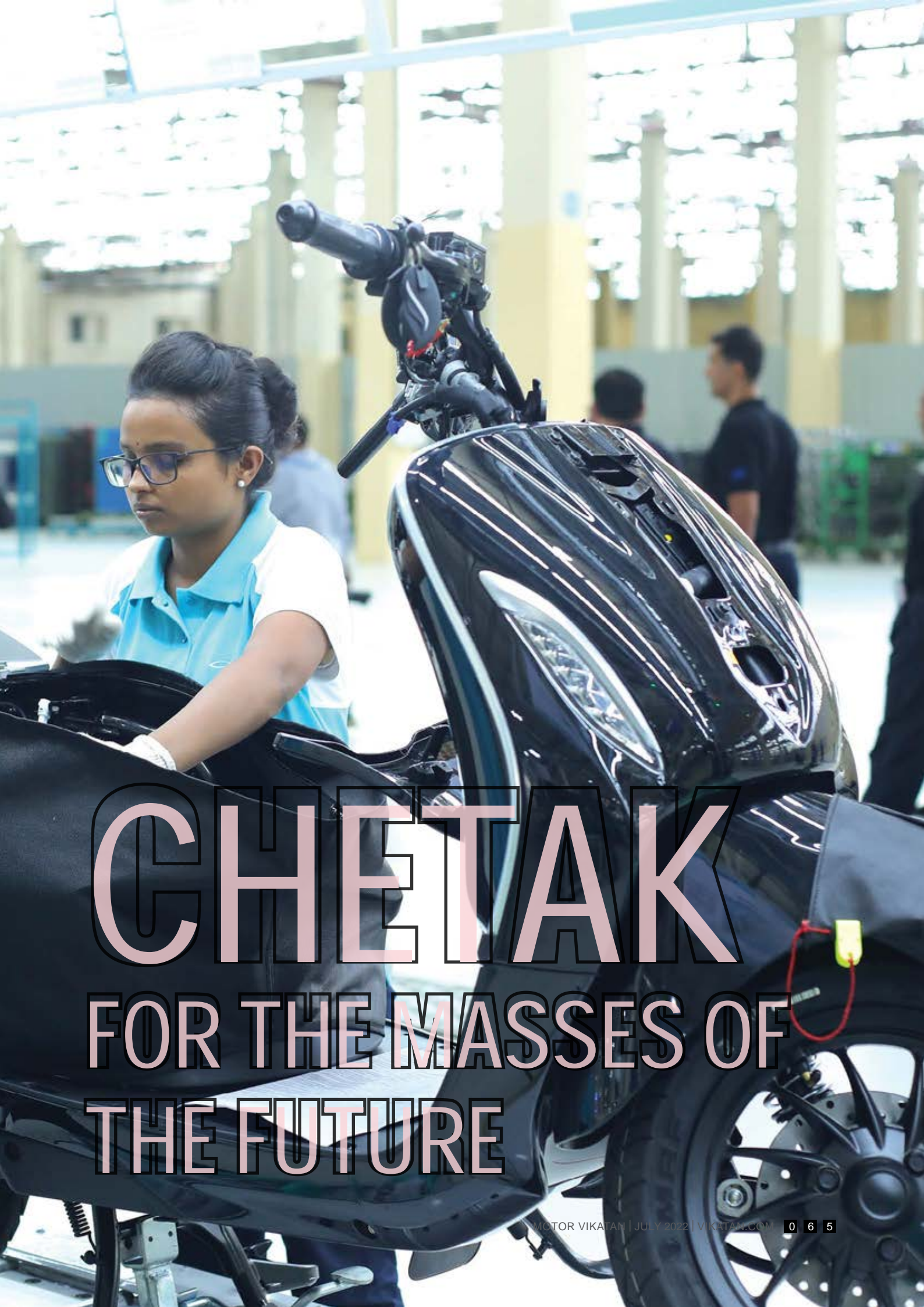
Bajaj's Chetak scooter, which came out in the 1970s, was hugely popular all over India. Bajaj introduced the electric scooter in 2020 under the name 'Chetak' once again. On the occasion of the 84th birthday of former Bajaj Chairman Rahul Bajaj, Bajaj inaugurated the Chetak Technology Limited manufacturing plant for electric scooters and upcoming EV bikes.

The opening ceremony of the Chetak Technology Electric Scooter Plant was held at Akurdi, Pune. The plant will produce 800 units a day. Bajaj will invest another Rs 750 crore in this brand-new plant. Bajaj plans to increase its production by about 500,000 scooters a year.

Electric vehicles account for 2% of total automobile sales by 2022. Bajaj has set up a separate plant for electric scooters as it is expected to change to 5% or 10% within the next 5 years. It currently employs 800 people. 11,000 jobs are available in future, Bajaj says.

Bajaj plans to launch one new electric scooter and bike every year for the next 5 years. The Chetak currently on sale comes in two variants. One is urban and the other is a premium model. It has an electric motor with a





CHETAK

FOR THE MASSES OF THE FUTURE



maximum power of 4.2kw, the lithium-ion battery comes with an IP67 rating, with a 3-year or 50,000 km warranty. 100% fully charged in 5 hours. Bajaj said it has sold 14,000 electric scooters so far and bookings for another 16,000 scooters are pending delivery.

At the opening ceremony, all the journalists who came were given the opportunity to see first-hand all the experiments and technical activities that take place at the R&D Centre. Explained the methods of testing the maximum endurance of the suspension, body and battery of electric vehicles. Cart-mounted batteries are kept in a separate room and tested at temperatures ranging from 5 degrees Celsius to 50 degrees Celsius. Bajaj proudly claims that Chetak batteries are ready only after various precision tests.

When Rajiv Bajaj was asked about electric scooters catching fire, he said: "There are two types of electric scooters in the world. One caught fire. The other has not yet caught fire. IC engines are no exception. We also know that IC engines catch fire! However, with good research and technology, such mishaps can be avoided. Electric vehicles on sale without high R&D testing are at a higher risk of fire. The government must ensure that all-electric scooter manufacturers follow proper regulations!"





TATA ACE EV

ELECTRIFYING
DELIVERY
SERVICES!

Tata Motors has launched its electric commercial vehicle Tata Ace EV with a range of 154 km for a single charge. Tata had launched the Ace brand around 17 years earlier and it continues to be one of the most popular small commercial vehicles in the country. It is the preferred choice for e-commerce shipments and has more than 70% penetration. Considering the needs the company has been upgrading the Ace over the period of time and now to catch up with the EV trend it has launched the Ace EV to create a revolution, just as Ace diesel had achieved over the years.

Ace electric utilizes Tata Motors' EVOGEN powertrain which has a certified range of 154 km. It has a 21.3 kWh lithium-ion iron phosphate (LEP) battery pack with an IP67 rating. This makes this commercial vehicle water and dust resistant. Power is supplied to an AC induction motor that generates 36 bhp of max power and 130 Nm of peak torque. Tata Ace EV has 1,840 kg of gross vehicle weight and can carry a payload of 600 kg. Gradeability is 22%, which should be sufficient for most inclines.





The vehicle supports a regular and fast charging system. The EV can be charged via a standard 15A socket in a home environment. When a regular charger is used, 20% to 100% charging can be achieved in 6-7 hours. Whereas the Ace EV can be charged up to 10% to 80% charging in 105 minutes with a fast charger.

The new model is claimed to offer a safe, all-weather operation with an advanced battery cooling system and regenerative braking system. The regenerative braking recharges the battery during the application of brakes and while coasting and moving downhill. The EV has an aero deflector that helps to improve range by reducing drag resistance. It also has a 7-inch infotainment system with Bluetooth connectivity, tyre pressure monitoring system and a rear parking camera.

The company has claimed that the Tata Ace EV have a cargo space of 208 cubic feet or 3332.16 kilograms/cubic meters. It has a payload capacity is up to 600 kg. It has a grade-ability of 22% allowing easy ascent in fully loaded conditions. The Tata Ace EV price is expected to be priced around Rs 6.50 lakhs (ex-showroom). In comparison, the standard Tata Ace price starts from Rs 4 lakh and goes up to Rs 5.5 lakh. The company claims that it has received 39,000 bookings for the new Tata Ace EV. The company also signed an MoU with several e-commerce and logistics companies like Flipkart under which the electric Ace will be employed in their respective fleets.

N Chandrasekaran, Chairman, Tata Sons and Tata Motors, said, "E-mobility is an idea whose time has come. At Tata Motors, we are

moving with speed and scale to lead this change – in passenger cars, commercial vehicles and Jaguar Land Rover. I am delighted today that with the launch of the Ace EV, we are entering a new era of e-cargo mobility. Tata Ace is India's most successful commercial vehicle ever. It has revolutionised transportation and created millions of successful entrepreneurs over the years. It will further build on this legacy by providing a technologically advanced, clean and smart mobility solution. I am excited about the electrification of commercial vehicles."

Tata Motors is also setting up dedicated Electric Vehicle Support Centres for maximum fleet uptime; deployment of Tata Fleet Edge – the optimal fleet management solution enabling the EV eco-system of relevant Tata Group companies.



HOW TO CHOOSE THE CORRECT

The first thing we buy after getting ourselves a nice motorcycle is a helmet. That is the best decision a rider can make for themselves. And as time progresses, we gradually build up our list of riding gear. Jackets, gloves, pants and boots. More often than not, we buy riding boots last. Waiting to get everything else before turning our attention downwards!

Boots are an incredibly important, but often overlooked, piece of kit for a motorcyclist. One can often see riders with premium motorcycles, wearing decent riding gear and sneakers to save their feet.

Before we delve into choosing a pair of boots, let us first see why we need boots in the first place!

How Do Boots Help?

We need to rewind a bit to the time humans were hunter-gathers roaming the plains of the earth on foot.

Barefoot.

Somewhere along the line, somebody thought it would be a good idea to cover the foot from the elements and along came shoes. Humans now had some sort of protection from cuts, bruises, heat and cold. And this continued for millennia. We didn't need to change the status quo, as the requirement of our lifestyle didn't change.

On foot, the human anatomy was designed to survive at speeds of 20 kmph or so. Fast forward to the industrial revolution and we suddenly invented cars and bikes which went significantly faster. Nowadays, superbikes are electronically restricted to 300 kmph. All premium Indian bikes easily cross the triple-digit barrier.

S i m p l y
speaking, our
bodies aren't





built to cope with those speeds. Or more accurately, the sudden deceleration from those speeds in the event of a crash.

Motorcycling boots play a dual role. Unlike helmets which are built for safety and comfort only. Boots factor in these two qualities and at the same time need to be easy to use. As motorcyclists, we are constantly using our feet to change gears and operate the rear brake lever. We need dexterity without sacrificing protection.

Investing in a good pair of boots is highly recommended if

you plan to ride for many years to come.

What motorcycle boot suits you?

Boots like motorcycles vary drastically. Your choice of motorcycle varies, depending on whether you want to spend more time on the track, in the dirt, commuting or touring. So does your choice of motorcycle boots.

Commuters would look for boots which are comfortable and blend in with regular office and leisure clothes. Speeds are

expected to be relatively slower, and as such safety is not your only priority. Ease of use and comfort are up there on your list.

For tourers who are looking to spend long hours in the saddle, you need comfort, ventilation, protection and ease of walking. Being waterproof is an added bonus for tourers as they traverse a variety of terrains and weather conditions.

Off-road riders need extreme protection as hyper-extension of the foot is a frequent reality.

MOTORCYCLE BOOTS?

Dirt riding boots are built to face a tsunami, in a manner of speaking of course! On the other hand, these over-engineered boots are a pain to walk in and look outlandish.

Track boots are sleek, lightweight, offer a lot of protection and are stiff. Similar to dirt riding boots, it is a pain to walk in boots built for track use.

You need to choose a boot which is closest to your riding style.

Anatomy of a Motorcycling Boot

A motorcycling boot is made up of multiple parts, and before you go buy a pair, it is prudent to check out what the manufacturer is offering for your needs.

Sole

The sole of a boot is possibly the most important ingredient. Depending on your riding usage, it needs to be more flexible for walking or less flexible for additional safety. Soles can add considerable weight to the boot,

so lightweight soles made of PU are more desirable. Anti-skid soles are a good addition to have. Walking on wet surfaces becomes easier and there is less chance of your feet slipping off the foot pegs of your motorcycle.

Upper

The upper of the boot is literally the upper half of the boot. The material is affixed to the sole. Most good-quality boots will use leather for the upper. Leather breathes, has natural flexibility, breaks into the rider's foot with use, and works in both hot and cold conditions. Leather is also abrasion-resistant, which makes it an ideal material for boot uppers.

Protection

Check the manufacturer-provided specifications of where all the boots have protective inserts. Generally, the ankle and toe areas get additional protection. This is to avoid damage to the foot because of the ankle-twisting at awkward angles and to protect the digits on your foot.

Fitting

A motorcycling boot like any other shoe is useful only if it fits you well. A boot which works perfectly for your friend, might not be great for you. You can only know by trying it on. Different brands vary in their sizing as well as shape. Some brands work better for people with broad feet and other brands work better for people with narrow feet. You need to try it before you buy.

Fastening Mechanism

Boots can be fastened by laces, zippers, Velcro or twist knobs. Laced-up boots are the least desirable because they can open at any time and get entangled in moving parts of your motorcycle. The other mechanisms of fastening vary depending on the budget range you are looking at.

Feel

Last and surely not the least is 'feel'. Some boots might seem perfect when you read the specifications, but don't work out in real life. Other boots feel perfect the moment you slip your foot in. As with sizing, for this as well, it is better that you try before you buy.

Buy Now!

If you don't own a pair of motorcycling boots, then start saving up and get yourself a pair. Your feet will thank you. Keep these points in mind about usage and boot construction, and you should be able to get a pair of motorcycling boots which work out to be excellent value for money.



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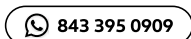
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