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MOTOR VIKATAN VOLUME: 2 ISSUE: 4



JANUARY 2023

MOTOR

The Pulsating Automobile e-Magazine **VIKATAN**

MOTOR VIKATAN AWARDS
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BIKE OF THE YEAR 2023



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AWARDS 2023



MAHINDRA SCORPIO N CAR OF THE YEAR 2023



When Mahindra announced the booking of this car, there were 25,000 bookings in a minute and it crossed 1 lakh in half an hour. The success of the car is known from this. The Scorpio N comes with an all-new suspension, double wishbones up front and a five-link set-up at the rear, the latter using a Watt's Link set-up. While other SUVs were fuel-consuming, Scorpio N came up with mStallion and mHawk turbo diesel/petrol engines. The features list has gotten a big upgrade on the Scorpio N, and the biggest news is the 8-inch touchscreen, wireless phone charger, a sunroof, dual-zone climate control, engine stop/start, keyless entry and go, auto headlamps and wipers, powered adjustment for the driver's seat, drive modes in the diesel versions, and off-road drive modes in the 4WD versions. The Scorpio N gets front and rear parking sensors, and though not quite the full 360-degree system, front and rear cameras. The move upmarket has brought with it the expected suite of features and creature comforts, and there's really not much you could say was missing from the package. The biggest advancements, however, have been made in the cabin and under the skin. The cabin genuinely feels like it could give SUVs from a segment above a run for their money when it comes to fit, finish and material quality and the suspension, handling and overall dynamic package feels far more sophisticated now. Like luxury, SUV and so many dimensions of this car make it the best car of the year.



MARUTI SUZUKI ALTO K10 BEST ENTRY LEVEL HATCHBACK OF THE YEAR 2023



Consumers are happy with Maruti for its service and maintenance. Really speaking, the service expense for a hatchback car (K10) in Maruti is cheaper than the RE bikes. This K10 has a peppy 1.0-litre 3-cylinder petrol engine with good smoothness. The manual and also the AGS (Auto Gear Shift) are the favourite of lady drivers. With much less vibration of a 3-cylinder, 67bhp engine, a 5-speed, smooth gearbox gives a peppy ride. This is not a highway or a mountain car. The appeal of this small car for the city and easy parking skills and good headroom/legroom for a big ride, 214-litre boot space is really great. Claimed mileage is 24.09 kmpl and the real-time mileage is 17 kmpl. What more is required for a budget and entry-level car? So, this is the best entry-level hatchback of the year.

MARUTI SUZUKI BALENO

BEST PREMIUM HATCHBACK OF THE YEAR 2023



Toyota Glanza also competed in this segment. But the readers voted for this Baleno. The spacious cabin is a big plus. It is often thought that the safety features are less in Maruti. But the top variant of this Baleno comes with 6 airbags, ESP, AMT variant, hill hold assists, and disc brakes, which is the big wow factor. The K12N engine is very new. For better mileage output than CVT, the AMT has been given. Premium means comfort. LED headlights, DRL lights as in XL6, Smart play pro+ 9.0-inch touchscreen infotainment system (7.0inch in lower variant), Alexa, voice command system, 6 speaker Arkamys surround system, auto headlamp, cruise control are the key features of this car. The heads-up display and the 360-degree camera make this a premium car.



CITROEN C3

BEST COMPACT SUV OF THE YEAR 2023



A big challenge car. Readers have voted for this car as an SUV, hatchback or crossover. Citroen is a hatchback with a twist from a French company. It does the job of big SUVs with ease. With 6-speed manual, 1.2-litre turbo petrol is the big hit. It gives pleasure to drive this car with a 180mm ground clearance. It also gives the feel of a mini off-roader. The 15-inch wheel, driving position, good cushion everything gives satisfaction to the drivers for just Rs. 8 lacs. The 315-litre boot space and 10.2-inch screen android auto/ apple car play are also a plus. Hope to see an automatic gearbox in C3 facelift.



VOLKSWAGEN VIRTUS

BEST MIDSIZE SEDAN OF THE YEAR 2023



If you want a fun-to-drive car, then it is obvious you have to go for Volkswagen. Virtus, the 4th car developed under the India 2.0 project also has a fun-to-drive character. This car is the rebirth of the Volkswagen Jetta. Readers voted in a lot of numbers for Virtus in spite of cousin Skoda Slavia due to its well-built and classy-looking interior, driving dynamics and, of course, plenty of performance, whether you choose the 1.0 or 1.5 TSI. Built on the MQB AO IN platform it's very comfortable and well equipped, it feels solidly built and it importantly has all the essential safety features. The 1.5 TSI gets loads more power – a very strong 150hp, and a huge 250Nm; the automatic gearbox here is a seven-speed DSG twin-clutch unit. The 179 mm ground clearance gave a little off-roader feel. The fit and finish on the dash impress, even more, is that almost everything you touch is made of high-quality materials. It also comes with a host of features that are practically useful. It is definitely a good mid-size sedan at the right price. The Virtus is a car that Volkswagen has got right. Congratulations Virtus.



HONDA CITY

TECHNOLOGY OF THE YEAR 2023



The hybrid technology of this car is really a wow factor. With 26.5 kmpl as claimed mileage, Honda has kept its promise to give more than 23 kmpl on city roads. The swap between electric and petrol mode makes us feel surprised with this hybrid technology. Its refinement is like an electric vehicle and the low carbon emission (89.5km/km CO₂) is really super. The flaw is its boot space (306 litres). Seat comfort, ground clearance (165mm), and driving comfort make this car amazing. A mid-size sedan with hybrid technology at Rs. 21 lakhs, make this Honda City e:HEV the best technology car of the year.



TOYOTA URBAN CRUISER HRYDER MID SIZE SUV OF THE YEAR 2023



Though their entry is delayed, Toyota has come out with a bang with Hyryder. It has all the requirements of an SUV. With a ground clearance of 210mm, Maruti K15C engine, and its own hybrid technology the car has great overall experience. The manual gearbox and all-wheel drive set-up in this Hyryder meet all the needs of an off-roader. The 0.76kWh lithium-ion battery pack along with the 80bhp electric motor works brilliantly. This makes the wheel rotate and charges itself during the drive. It has a strong hybrid so you can drive in the electric mode to save fuel. People who don't want hybrid mode can opt for a mild hybrid version. Since Toyota Hyryder is cheaper by rupees one lakh compared to the Honda City e:HEV, Hyryder has earned good customer feedback and it is also our best mid-size SUV of the year.



KIA CARENS

BEST MPV OF THE YEAR 2023



An MPV needs more cabin space, third-row seating, safety, engine options, and necessary comforts. All these are definitely satisfied by Kia Carens. This is the big wheelbase car in this segment with 2780mm. Kia has called this as a 'Recreation Vehicle'. With a ground clearance of 195 mm it doesn't hit the speed breakers even when 6 people travel. The third row needs to be really spacious and Kia has satisfied this. In a single touch, we can reach the 3rd row which is a big plus for the ingress and egress in an MPV. Kia Carens is a well-rounded package which offers all the features of a high-end car at a price point that is easy on the pocket. It makes for a very smooth drive and offers the space and comfort that one needs from a family car. The Carens fares very high on the safety scale with airbags and other safety features in all the variants. The 7-seater version makes for a comfortable ride for large Indian families with its roomy cabin and added features. With the availability of diesel and petrol engines, and manual and automatic options to choose from, Kia Carens priced between Rs 17-20 lakhs on-road with a 7-seater capacity, made a small revolution in the MPV segment and it takes the best MPV of the year award.



MAHINDRA SCORPIO N SUV OF THE YEAR 2023



None imagined that an SUV would receive the car of the year 2023 award. This SUV shines as a car also. What makes a success of a car is its many variants and customer options. From Z2 to Z8L, 6-seater and 7-seaters this Scorpio N can be bought from Rs. 12 lakhs to Rs. 19.19 lakhs ex-showroom price. It has solid build quality, off-road capability due to four-wheel drive, a smooth engine, and premium interiors makes this car even qualify for a premium SUV award. Instead of searching for features, it has surprised us with a lot of features. Engine/gearbox options, technology, driving quality, suspension setup, and colour options (especially the deep forest colour) have made the customers very happy. This Scorpio N is the Big Daddy of SUVs and has received the best SUV of the year award.



HYUNDAI TUCSON PREMIUM SUV OF THE YEAR 2023



Premium means not comfort. Hyundai has come with Level – 2 ADAS with great premium in this Tucson. Seating space and luxury are the main pluses of this car. The steering is much improved when compared to Creta with a 10.25-inch digital screen, instrument odos cluster safety features give the feel of driving a Mercedes-Benz S-class. The front look is like building up a gold jewellery rack that makes the grill look premium. Note the indicators and the wiper, it gives the look of a fine-cut diamond with a Knurled finish. A big 540-litre boot space, petrol/diesel, 6-speed torque converter/8-speed torque converter automatic gearboxes, and an all-wheel drive option in the top-end model are the special features of Tucson. When you come across a Tucson on a road it gives the look of a Lamborghini Urus. Congratulations to Hyundai for such an amazing design.



TATA TIAGO EV ELECTRIC CAR OF THE YEAR 2023



As a customer, we are mainly focused on the budget. An EV car at a price between Rs 10-13 lakhs means then it is Tata Tiago EV. In this affordable hatchback like in the costly Nexon SUV and in Tigor there is a Ziptron high voltage architecture, and permanent synchronised electric motor technology has been infused. With two 24kWh and 19.2 kWh batteries, Tigor gives a maximum of 74bhp power and 114Nm torque. There is also an option for people who wish to have less power in the low variant with a 19.2 kWh battery and a 61bhp power and 110 Nm torque. The claimed range as per MIDC (Modifies Indian Driving Cycle) is 250km as said by Tata but the real range is around 180km as per the customers. With the extra money spent on Tigor, if we buy a 50kW fast charger, it can be charged up to 10-80% in 57 minutes. It is Rs 5 lakhs less than Nexon EV Max. so Tiago EV has won the electric car of the year.



MERCEDES-BENZ EQS 580 4MATIC LUXURY ELECTRIC CAR OF THE YEAR 2023



Mercedes-Benz EQS 580 4matic is one of the most aerodynamic cars in the world. The CD value (Drag Coefficient) is 0.20cd. It is designed in such a way that it tears through the air while driving and the door handle is also not protruding. There is another cool factor about this car is that it has back-wheel steering controls. The back wheels turn 10 degrees when the steering is moved. Mercedes-Benz has given an option of quick charging at 31 minutes for the 107.8 kWh battery. Benz EQS has also got fame as India's first car with a maximum km range of 857 km. The captain seats, MBUX tablet, cooled seat at the rear, and bigger wheelbase (3210 mm) gives the best feel for a luxury car. Cooled seat for drivers, massage seat and ADAS Level 2 system gives a lot of hope. Apart from small ground clearance, this EQS 4 Matic is the peak of luxury and it is the best Luxury electric car of the year.



BMW M4 COMPETITION COUPE PERFORMANCE CAR OF THE YEAR 2023



In performance, when it comes to AMG in Benz, it's M for BMW. When AMG and M compete for their performance, the final will be thrilling. The real competitor of the Audi Q5 Sportback car is this M4 Competition launched this year, with 150bhp power, 650Nm torque, and the 3.0 litre, six-cylinder petrol engine. BMW moved to an 8-speed torque converter from a 7-speed to match the Porsche Cayenne and Mercedes-Benz AMG GT Black. BMW also brought in the all-wheel drive as a standard option for the Indian market at a price of Rs. 1.44 crores ex-showroom. This M4 reaches 0-100 km speed in just 3.4 secs and 250 kmph and this is the performance car of the year.



KIA EV6 DESIGN OF THE YEAR 2023



When we step into this KIA EV6, it gave a feel of a cockpit in the aeroplane. It is called the driver-oriented cockpit. Built on the firm's Electric Global Modular Platform (E-GMP) – that's shared with the Hyundai Ioniq 5 – the EV6 is a born-electric vehicle. Due to its smooth and flowing profile and at the top, the roofline blends into a spoiler that channels air above and below its surface while sprouting mini wings on each side aiding EV6 has a 0.28 coefficient of drag which is lower than the i-Pace's 0.29. The interiors get a good dose of innovation. Starting from the curved screen and driver-oriented dash give the EV6 a cockpit-like feel. The interior has a lot of handy and innovative storage spaces, like the floor console. The dark theme works well and the dashboard and centre console have a nice black and grey patterned finish to them, and in a nod to sustainability, the floor mats and door pads are made of recycled materials. The EV6 comes in rear-wheel-drive and all-wheel-drive options, both will be powered by a 77.4kWh lithium-ion battery unit. The EV6 can accept a very fast 350kW DC charge, which will see the battery go from 10 to 80 per cent in just 18 minutes. EV6 offers all the innovation of a born-electric car.



ROYAL ENFIELD HUNTER BIKE OF THE YEAR 2023



Suggested for a long ride, no vibration and it suits the needs of lady riders too. Less power (20bhp, 27Nm), less weight compared to Classic by 14kgs. Many features like tripper navigation, dual channel ABS, broad tyres which have good grip and 790mm seat height satisfy even non-RE fans and customers. The Hunter is meant for buyers who want to enter the Royal Enfield fold and don't want a motorcycle that's intimidating or cumbersome to ride. Priced from Rs 1.50 lakh-1.69 lakh, the Royal Enfield Hunter 350 offers great value proposition. Hunter is attractive and affordable motorcycle and it has hunted many hearts in the competitive world and it is the bike of the year 2023.

OLA S1 ELECTRIC SCOOTER OF THE YEAR 2023



Ola S1, the cheaper version of Ola S1 Pro debuted with a price tag of Rs. 99,000/- (ex-showroom) received a good response from the customers. While the Pro model has a 4kWh battery, the S1 has a 3kWh battery. S1 Pro takes 6 hours of charging with a top speed of 115 kmph, the hyper mode in S1 takes 5 hours to charge and has a top speed of 90kmph in the sport mode. As both have a 5.5W motor and 8.5kW peak output, their performance is the same. It comes with features like cruise control, navigation, a 7-inch TFT touch screen, Bluetooth connectivity, music and reverse mode. The weight is 4kg less (121 kg) when compared to Pro. Customers don't need to be shy with the S1 model as there are 220/180mm discs, 12-inch wheels, CBS braking system like in the S1 Pro. It gives the feel of a top-end model. Congratulations Ola S1.

BAJAJ CT 125X
COMMUTER BIKE OF THE YEAR 2023



The Bajaj CT 125X is a great deal in the price and mileage of a 100 CC bike and has 150 CC riding capability. The 8000 rpm @10.9bhp power and 5500rpm @11Nm torque (CT 110X–2.3bhp, 1.2 Nm more) give pleasure riding in the city. No special features are experienced as it is not a premium bike. The USB port in the handlebar shows Bajaj's generosity. Though it doesn't have a smooth start, the engine kill switch still has not failed to attract the villagers. The longer seat and the price (Rs. 93,000/- for 125CC) should have impressed them a lot. This Bajaj CT 125X bike is a piece of evidence for good mileage and value for money. It is the commuter bike of the year.

BAJAJ PULSAR N160
EXECUTIVE BIKE OF THE YEAR 2023



This bike is for a person who wishes to buy a 250CC motorcycle at a cheaper price. The engine of the N250 has been replaced with a smaller one and Bajaj has presented this executive bike to the customers. Its power-to-weight ratio is heavy in this segment (154kg) still it is best in real-time performance. This engine is smooth and has a light clutch. Handling at high-speed is also good. Even in the lower variant bike, it has a 37mm fork, single-channel ABS gives you a safe ride. It is the executive bike that one wishes to ride in style and comfort.

TVS RONIN 225
RETRO BIKE OF THE YEAR 2023



TVS Ronin looks like a mix between a scrambler and cruiser and bit of an enigma, as it doesn't really fit into any particular category. Riders were surprised to see a cruiser from TVS. This Retro is inspired by Scrambler and Neo retro bikes and has attracted riders. This retro bike is not a high-speed cruiser. Easy to ride and its performance in the city and short gear shift are the plus of this bike. Compared to RE 350 Classic the peak torque output is faster. Apart from retro style, Ronin has good acceleration and 181mm ground clearance adds more flavour to it. The golden-coloured USD fork, big chain drive cover, high swept-back handlebars, alloy wheels, and the 14-litre tank, gives a look of a mini Harley Davidson to this TVS Ronin and it is the retro bike of this year.

YEZDI ADVENTURE ADVENTURE BIKE OF THE YEAR 2023



This part was tough for the readers as there are so many people who are using this segment of bikes like Suzuki V-Strom, RE Scram 411, Hero Xpulse 200 Rally, and Yezdi Scrambler. Comfort plays the number one role in this Yezdi Adventure. Compared to Himalayan it has a full digital display screen. The display gives the feel of a car with full LED. ABS on this Yezdi are a wow factor. This off-roader has a great suspension. The 200/180mm tyres give a good adventure with nil back pain. Due to 220mm ground clearance, it aptly suits off-roading. It weighs 11 kg less than the Himalayan. The performance of Yezdi is 30.2bhp when compared to Himalayan (24.3bhp). With 6-speed, 1 extra gear and half a litre of extra capacity in the petrol tank compared with the Himalayan, this Yezdi Adventure is really an adventure bike of the year.

JAWA 42 BOBBER DESIGN OF THE YEAR 2023



This bike looks like an American bike when we look in the ads. The single scooped-out seat and chopped fender are superb. The exhaust gets a chrome treatment, the tank pads, and the LED from the Yezdi Roaster are the main attraction for the riders. The tubular cradle frame accommodates the rear shock absorber which can be adjusted up to 7-steps. The 280/240 mm disc with dual-channel ABS is an added advantage. The 750mm seat height is a big gift. Full LED lighting, LCD instrument cluster, two-way adjustable seats, small luggage rack in the rear, hanging mirrors in the handlebars are classy features. This Rs 2.30 lakh motorcycle has captured the market of single-seater bikes. With dual channel ABS and practicality, this neo-retro roadster bike is the coolest design of the year!



The New Volkswagen Taigun Give your hustle an automatic advantage



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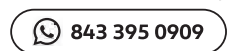
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Authorised Dealers: Volkswagen Mount Road: 9500091000, 8754440908, Volkswagen Arcot Road (Opp. Passport Office): 9789998476, Volkswagen Chennai: Nandanam 9840036789, 9940057890, Ambattur: 7708033325, Volkswagen Madras: Anna Nagar: 9840911716, 8056099499, Alandur: 9940057890, OMR: 7708033322, Volkswagen Coimbatore: 9566444442, Volkswagen Digital (Coimbatore): 9500967834, Volkswagen Tirupur: 9952555223, Volkswagen Madurai: 9677444448, Volkswagen Sivakasi: 9500944504, Volkswagen Salem: 9677444446, Volkswagen Hosur: 9629531777, Volkswagen Vellore: 9344721666, Volkswagen Kancheepuram: 9344721666, Volkswagen Pondicherry: 9840911716, Volkswagen Trichy: 9500707711, Volkswagen Thanjavur: 9047305777, Volkswagen Erode: 9629833777, Volkswagen Karur: 9629611444, Volkswagen Tirunelveli: 9500967864, Volkswagen Nagercoil: 8489912181

BYD ATTO

While many around the world have already made the shift to environment-friendly vehicles, Indians are just starting to appreciate the potential and usefulness of electric cars. In 2019-20, electric vehicle sales were up by 20%. Owing to this sudden interest, car manufacturers are coming up with new battery-operated vehicles almost every year. The choice of new electric cars on sale to consumers will continue to expand, as more manufacturers get on board with the technology in preparation for tightening emissions regulations.

The Indian and global OEMs have started rolling out their EVs in India considering the potential of the market. BYD (Build Your Dreams) is not a household name in India, but globally, it is a huge player in the areas of tech, electronics, and EVs. In India, the company is present since 2017 by offering its electric buses. To enter the passenger car market and to bring its expertise in commercial and consumer EVs to the mass market, BYD launched its e6 MPV at the beginning of 2022. The all-electric MPV is designed to seat five in comfort, have plenty of space for their luggage and have

3



A PURE PREMIUM EV



a range of over 500km (claimed). To test the waters and also due to its sheer size, BYD offered e6 only to commercial fleet operators.

As the slice of the electric car pie is growing year after year, now BYD has brought its second product to the Indian market, the Atto 3, and this car will go into the hands of consumers, unlike the

e6. In terms of design, BYD calls its design language 'Dragon Face 3.0'. The front profile looks sharp with the sloping roofline, while the raked rear windscreen looks sporty. The design looks quirky with the LED daytime running lamps. In order to place it between a sporty SUV and a crossover there are a lot of plastic claddings

in the wheel arches and belt line. The 'C' pillar gets an interesting metallic fish-scale-like effect and the rear gets LED taillights that are sharply styled and give a distinctive appearance to the SUV. In terms of size, Atto 3 is longer and wider than the Hyundai Creta but visually looks smaller.

The cabin design is subjective, and it certainly stands out, though I am quite sure it'll polarise. The blue, cream and red colour scheme bring a real point of difference that stands apart from the drab grey and black cabins we are used to seeing. There's almost none of the in-vogue piano black trimming either, which is certainly a positive. There are plenty of interesting design elements, including the twanging elastic strings over the door pockets, oddly designed air vents, foamy, cream-coloured, and muscular-looking dashboard, and door handles mounted atop the speaker pods.

In place of a traditional instrument cluster is a 5.0-inch screen perched atop the column





which I found perfectly legible. It shows your speed digitally, remaining range, tyre pressures, current power usage or rate of recuperation, lane-assist function, active cruise control settings, and front and rear collision warning. The centre tunnel features a gear shifter that looks to be inspired by a plane's thrust lever. Behind this are a stylish starter button, knurled roller dial for audio volume, and a bank of Audi-aping, sturdy buttons assisted by rocker switches.

The real standout feature here is the Android-backed rotating touchscreen, which measures 12.8 inches and offered fantastic clarity and quick processing of inputs with almost no lag. As a party trick, it also spins 90 degrees with a button on the wheel, so you can view maps in portrait. The built-in dash cam, for one, is a feature all cars should get, it's a great addition, and the 360-degree camera is clear and even gives you a ghost image of the vehicle you can peer through.

Along with a standard-

fit wireless charging pad, the Atto 3 has USB-A, USB-C and 12V power up front. This is all located underneath the centre console. Storage options include the concealed section below the gear shifter which is helpfully backlit at night, a centre console deep enough for a big water bottle, and a decent glovebox. There's also a rubbery wireless charger pad below the vents. The front seats are well-bolstered and electrically adjustable as well.

While the rear seats are quite good, with the good material mix maintained, ample legroom, and a totally flat floor enabled by the EV-only platform. The headroom is good enough at the rear despite the receding roofline, while the massive panoramic sunroof also takes away from the headroom.

The tailgate is powered at the press of a button and reveals a 440-litre boot which expands to 1340L when you fold the back seats. However, the boot floor is





quite high, which will be difficult when placing bigger pieces of luggage. Overall build quality seems to be quite good and solid, without any loose bits of trim or rattles to note. The BYD Atto 3 has been built using high-strength steel and was recently awarded a five-star safety rating by Euro NCAP. In Atto 3 there is the option to lock and unlock the vehicle using an NFC keycard with RFID technology, in addition to the key fob. The car comes with a Level 2 autonomous driving assistance system (ADAS) that brings features like autonomous emergency braking, adaptive cruise control, blindspot detection and lane departure warning.

In terms of driving, once you press the accelerator you can feel the power delivery is smooth and instantaneous, as are all EVs, although urgent take-offs in which you stab the throttle might elicit a bit of front wheel spin. With 150kW and 310Nm going through the front wheels, the Atto 3 gets along well enough for the application. The power for the motor comes from the 'BYD Blade' in-house battery using lithium iron phosphate chemistry – the same as a Tesla Model 3 – with a distinct cell arrangement. According to BYD, the Blade battery aced the tough nail penetration test without overheating and it also passed other extreme tests when it was burnt, crushed, bent and even heated in a 300degC furnace. The battery was even overcharged by 260%. None of these tests resulted in a fire or explosion.

It's nicely tuned overall, with the suspension set up to absorb the sort of imperfections that you regularly come across.



The power for the motor comes from the 'BYD Blade' in-house battery using lithium iron phosphate chemistry – the same as a Tesla Model 3 – with a distinct cell arrangement.

The Atto 3 uses conventional MacPherson strut front, and multi-link independent rear suspension, and it's tuned to be very soft and pliant, offering decent levels of isolation from expansion joints and cobblestones. But with larger hits and wallows, the weight can also get a little bit out of control at times. The degree of refinement is quite impressive, with minor wind noise from the side mirrors.

The Atto 3 has a 60.48kWh battery pack that, according to ARAI, delivers a healthy driving range of 521km. On an 80kW DC fast charger, the Atto 3 can go from 0 to 80% in 50 minutes. BYD for a limited time will provide customers with a 7kW AC home charger, along with a 3kW AC portable charging box for charging external electrical appliances. The battery,

motor and controller all have an 8 years / 150,000 km warranty, which keeps things trouble-free on the ownership side.

BYD is huge and well-established, and you get a sense of that expertise and experience from spending time with the car. The build quality feels good, the ride quality is also solid, and there's a good level of space and comfort on offer inside. Atto 3 currently comes as an SKD (semi-knocked down) and it is priced at Rs 34 lakh (ex-showroom). Compared to its competitors it is priced on the higher side, however, it will be one of the best-value electric offerings currently in India and going forward if the demand picks up, the company may consider local assembly in the future.



MERCEDES-BENZ REINTRODUCES ITS SAFE ROADS INITIATIVE IN INDIA

Recently Mercedes-Benz revealed its plans for Vision ZERO 2050, United Nations goal to reduce road fatalities to zero by 2050. And halve the number of fatalities from 2020 to 2030. The German manufacturer also showcased their research prototype, the Vision EQXX. An electric car, which shows the future direction the company is taking in regards of green energy and safety.

The 3rd Safe Roads India Summit was hosted at the Mercedes-Benz Research and Development India (MBRDI) centre in Bengaluru. The premises on which a lot of engineers work on this project, for making roads safer, not just for the passengers of Mercedes cars, but for all road users.

Mercedes has always been known for building some of the safest cars in the world and they also have their Accident Research unit, which has been working on accident data for 50 years now. Since 2015, the Safe Roads program has been conducted in India, to help make the roads of the country safer.

This Safe Roads initiative promotes road safety through physical demonstrations, visual aids, and research reports.



All this in a road show format, which is conducted in different cities of India.

The theme for the 3rd edition was announced to be 'Leading Safety with Sustainability at the Core'. Speaking at the occasion, Manu Saale, MD and CEO, MBRDI said, "We launched 'Safe Roads' to create awareness about the significance of road safety, share best practices with future road users, with an aim to reduce India's alarmingly high road accident fatality rate. Our journey of promoting road safety across the country, first, through road shows in eight cities and now with the SAFE ROADS India Summit, has been very fulfilling."

Towards this end, the company also showed an 'EQS Body in

White (BiW)'. It is a passenger car from the company's stable which highlights all the safety features in the vehicle. It shows off the various different materials employed in the structure to keep the passengers safe from impact on all sides. It also showed the safety sensors and restraint system components.

The safety campaign of the company was overshadowed by the gorgeous machine on display at the MBRDI centre. The Vision EQXX unsurprisingly captivated the vision and all other senses of the spectators. Engineers of MBRDI have greatly contributed to the development of the Vision EQXX, as such it was an even sweeter sensation to view it in that spatial setting.

Mercedes-Benz intends to 'lead in electric' and 'lead in car software', and this product was their attempt at showcasing the potential to covet both those epithets. The Vision EQXX boasts a 1000+ km range in real world driving conditions, as the company had driven the car from Stuttgart in Germany to Silverstone in England, covering more than 1200 kilometres, while averaging 80+ kmph. All of this was done on a single battery charge!

This brilliance in technology has not just come from the improvement in battery and motor, but also a large part is played by the aerodynamics of the machine. It proudly boasts a drag coefficient of just 0.17, which is incredible for a road going machine. This goal was aided by the Mercedes Formula 1 engineers who worked on it as well. It of course has a

better battery and efficiency, but it also has a solar roof, which gives the car an extra 25 km, when the sun is burning bright!

When you are standing by the side of the Vision EQXX, you feel like you are taking a step into the future. Whether this is what the future will look like, is something we will get to know, as more R&D goes into electric vehicles, along with newer technologies being developed.

About the EQXX Manu Saale added, "VISION EQXX is a testament to our development approach. It underlines our pioneering spirit, technological leadership and expertise in electric cars, and positions Mercedes-Benz as a leading tech brand. I am proud to share that MBRDI has contributed extensively towards the development of VISION EQXX. Over the years, we have established ourselves as an innovation powerhouse with some aspects of every Mercedes-Benz car touched, modified, developed, and supported by India. In line with the plan to go all-electric by 2030 and achieving Vision Zero by 2050, our engineers are playing a major role in the development of the electric architecture and innovating for the future of safe, sustainable, and smart mobility".

We wish Mercedes-Benz Safe Roads initiative is successful, as we are desperately in need of safer roads in the country. It is good to know that this German brand with a rich history of safety, are investing deeply into making India's roads safer for all of us.



TOYOTA INNOVA HyCross A COMPLETELY NEW PACKAGE

The Toyota Innova is a case study for the strength of a brand. It has been a tried-and-tested option for families and cab operators who are looking for a three-row MPV for years. In 2016, to up the premium quotient of the Innova, Toyota launched Innova Crysta in 7- and 8-seat configurations. As we all know Innova's biggest strength is its comfort and safety. Crysta came up with more features, and premiumness to attract individual customers. As predicted, Crysta too fared well in the market and met expectations. Toyota doesn't want to stop there and now they have come up with a hybrid crossover in the form of Innova HyCross. This shows the hunger for the company to bring technology, comfort, safety, and





features, all under one package.

In terms of design, HyCross looks impressive and it looks more like an SUV now with a bigger look than the current Crysta. The upright front end of the new Innova sports a new hexagonal grille with chrome surrounds that is flanked on either side by a set of sleek sweptback LED headlamps. The lower section of the front bumper feature triangular sections on both sides that play host to the LED DRLs that also act as indicators. Overall, the front has a premium look. The side profile looks completely new with its neatly sculpted body lines, subtly defined squared-out wheel arches, and plastic body cladding. The twin five-spoke 18-inch alloys seem small for the size but are well designed nevertheless. The designers have worked extensively to give it a crossover like look. The rear too has a crossover look and goes away from being an MPV. The sloping rear windscreen, integrated spoiler element on the

roof that houses the third brake light along with sleek wraparound LED taillights looks more like a crossover.

Innova HyCross is built on Toyota's global TNGA-C 'High' platform. This platform being monocoque is good news because it makes the Innova HyCross more spacious, efficient, and importantly easier to drive along with a car-like driving experience. Keeping this in mind, we stepped inside the cabin and it was a big surprise for us. The cabin is not only spacious, but it also has drastic changes, you won't believe that it is an Innova. It comes with a host of new features that Indians would love. The first thing to notice is the massive panoramic sunroof, ambient lighting and reclining seats with leg support.

It comes with a new layered dashboard design with a floating 10-inch infotainment system as well as the air vents accentuate

The electric power steering in Hycross makes manoeuvring and parking this large MPV a breeze. And besides being light and easy, its tight turning radius is very impressive.

the width of the dashboard. The dual brown and black colour tones add to the aesthetic appeal. There is a new steering wheel that looks mature and the instrument cluster gets a 7-inch digital display. Interestingly the gear console is an extension of the dashboard, so it sits below the HVAC controls, and the lever operates with a rather solid, satisfying click. This further aided to have two cup holders between the front seats and a large armrest-cum-storage box.

The 9-speaker audio system is powered by a JBL sound system, acoustic and tinted windscreen,

a set of part-electric chairs with ottomans, extensions on which you can rest your legs when you really want to stretch out, thus taking comfort to the next level. There are dedicated climate control unit and a foldable tray with cup holders between the captain seats. In Hycross the rear AC vents have been moved to the sides of the roof to accommodate the sunroof. The third row offers a good amount of space and comfort, in fact, even adults will be comfortable even for long drives, but for taller people the headroom is insufficient. Like in the Crysta the third row gets air

during the compression stroke for a lean air-fuel mixture therefore the petrol unit makes merely 188Nm of torque by itself, compared to the non-hybrid's 205Nm of torque. In the hybrid model, an electric motor is aiding the petrol engine for which the power is drawn from the 1.6kWh nickel metal hydride (NiMH) battery, which is placed under the front seats.

Like all the hybrid cars, the Hycross also start in EV mode, as speeds increase, it is the petrol engine that takes charge. With the battery motor lending its electrical assistance, the car feels quite



The suspension itself is softly sprung and soaks up most of it comfortably and good damping keeps body movement in check. The monocoque construction begins showing its prowess almost immediately.

electric tailgate, paddle shifters and tyre pressure monitoring system. Hycross also comes with ADAS features like adaptive cruise control, Lane Keep assist, blind-spot monitor, auto high beam, 360-degree camera and more.

The front two seats are electrically operable with two memory functions and add more comfort due to the ventilated seats. Due to the extended wheelbase, the knee, leg and foot room for middle passengers is plenty. In the captain seat variant, you get

vents, as well as cubbies and cup holders although there is a single 12V charge outlet unlike the USB ports for the front two rows.

Toyota will be offering HyCross in two engine options – a 2.0-litre hybrid paired with an e-CVT and a 2.0-litre naturally aspirated petrol engine. As we have mentioned a lot of times, there won't be any diesel engine on offer with this car. Both the engines are 1,987cc, four-cylinder direct-injection engines, however, the hybrid model runs on the Atkinson cycle. Here the intake valves remain open for longer

responsive and the hybrid makes light work of small increments in speed. The e-CVT is at ease when driven sedately and feels in complete sync with this hybrid system. The Hycross is a fairly brisk machine, the 0 to 100 kmph claim of 9.5s but post that the performance tappers. The MPV could have had a better high-speed overtaking ability, at part-throttle, there isn't enough torque to make quick passes as say a similarly powerful diesel engine.

The Hycross is more refined than the Crysta it feels planted



at high speeds, with little float or slack. The ride smoothens out very well here too, so again long-distance comfort will be a big positive. Body roll is kept in check and the long wide car does a good job of hiding its mass here as well as if not better than similarly sized SUVs. The steering tune further enhances this sense. It's not overtly light at city speeds but feels precise. There are paddle shifters on offer, so drivers can manually select six predefined ratios, and then there are drive modes too – Power, Normal and Eco.

Hycross feels more sophisticated in the way it goes down the road, that's the overwhelming sensation you get when you drive it. The suspension itself is softly sprung and soaks up most of it

comfortably and good damping keeps body movement in check. The monocoque construction begins showing its prowess almost immediately. Body movements are far better controlled, and even though the suspension feels a touch firmer than the Crysta's, it drives with a lot more confidence this time around, due to its longer wheelbase, offering a planted highway ride. The electric power steering in Hycross makes manoeuvring and parking this large MPV a breeze. And besides being light and easy, its tight turning radius is very impressive. What's nice is that the steering feels consistent, and it doesn't kick back aggressively like Crysta's hydraulic steering.

The new Hycross is the true


option for families looking for a proper three-row MPV with great fuel economy. The price of the regular petrol engine starts from Rs. 18.30 lakh for the base G seven-seater variant and goes all the way up to Rs. 19.20 lakh for the GX eight-seater variant. The self-charging hybrid model price starts at Rs. 24.01 lakhs and the top of the line ZX (O) comes at Rs. 28.97 lakhs (all prices are ex-showroom, pan India). In this segment, the main competitor for Hycross will be Kia Carnival. With this price, design, interior quality, hybrid drivetrain and better ride quality Hycross scores well but at the same time, it has big shoes to fill since it follows Innova, which has been dominating Indian roads for decades.



AVINASH NORONHA

BAJAJ CT 125X REVIEW: LOOKING TOWARDS RURAL INDIA...





Bajaj as a brand has never been known to toe the line of current trends. They always had the disruptor attitude, which is these days associated with start-ups. Bajaj is no start-up or upstart, but they have often been trendsetters. With one of their biggest strengths being their risk-taking appetite in terms of introducing new products. With risk comes reward, but also failure. And in the commuter scheme of things, the last couple of decades has seen Bajaj bring in a bunch of small capacity motorcycles, which disappeared without a trace. Will the CT 125X shake up proceedings or sink? We try to find out...



Unlike the competition, Bajaj hasn't tried to bring a cool snazzy looking motorcycle, laden with a host of 'features'. Instead, they have gone the other way and brought a simple bike, where the product's biggest USP is the price.

Styling

In terms of styling there are minimal elements to be observed or absorbed. If this bike were launched 3 decades ago, it would have looked contemporary! That is no bad thing of course, it is aimed at rural and semi-urban India, where a machine needs to 'look' practical and economical. In our opinion, it has hit the bullseye with its physical

appearance. It exudes a no-nonsense workhorse attitude, which is immediately reassuring.

You can have any colour you want as long as it is black, is what Henry Ford suggested and Bajaj have taken to heart with the CT 125X. The colour variants of the motorcycle are an oxymoron, since it is all black with only the highlight colours varying. Needless to say, the paint scheme isn't the most intriguing aspect of this motorcycle.

The 125X uses many of the parts which are found on its smaller sibling the 110X, which is no

surprise, considering the price this bike is being offered at. Production scales allow the manufacturer to keep costs within the requisite parameters.

To sum up, we like the purposeful looks of this bike and think it will be well received by the target audience.

Engine

The engine is the big upgrade over its smaller sibling. It has the same basis as the urban commuter, the Discover 125, which isn't part of the Bajaj line-up anymore. The 124.4 cc engine produces 11 PS of power and 11 Nm of torque. These numbers aren't meant to impress, but the ride capability is.

The engine is smooth, with only slight vibrations felt, giving it a distinct Bajaj flavour! The beauty of this motor lies in its tractability. Even in 5th gear we could pull from speeds as low as 30 kmph. It is a boon to ride in traffic. Oh yes, this bike comes with a 5-speed gearbox!

We found the bike to be most comfortable ridden between 50-60 kmph. It leaves you with a little throttle in hand, to make overtakes, without at any point of time, overriding the motor.

Suspension & Handling

As one would expect, the handling on this commuter is well, commuterish! The suspension is setup to be soft and plush. It easily soaks up all the road undulations without drama. The upright riding stance means, that you at no point of time are inclined towards riding the CT 125X hard. Though it is flickable thanks to its weight, it isn't happy being thrown deep into a corner. Easy riding will leave you





a happy camper.

The saddle on this Bajaj is soft and comfortable for short rides, but I don't look forward to spending many hours on this saddle! It could have done with some improved support.

Another big plus is the use of tubeless tyres, which gives you peace of mind. Tube type tyres should be banished to the dustbins of history on commuter motorcycles. There is no reason for commuters to still be seen pushing their motorcycles in search of a puncture shop. Bajaj does well to incorporate this, while building the 125X to a cost.

As an option, you get a front disc, which we think is worth the extra money. At the same time, we think most cost-conscious buyers will forego this safety element. You

get a 240 mm disc at the front and a 130 mm drum at the rear, which is decent to get the bike stopped at city speeds.

Surprisingly the Bajaj CT 125X has an 810 mm saddle height, which might be inconvenient for short riders. Though it is compensated by the narrow saddle and tank design. It might be a deciding factor for some buyers.

Features

This is the shortest list of this Bajaj! Its list of features begins and ends with a USB charging socket. If you really want to stretch your imagination, you can include the LED DRL above the round headlight. And that is about all the fanciness you get!

Buy or Not?

The question is whether you

should buy this new Bajaj CT 125X or not? If you are looking for a 125 cc with some sporty characteristics, looks and features, then you are better off with other motorcycles in the market.

If you are looking for a no-frills, dyed in the wool commuter, which will take all the beating of rural and semi-urban India, then this might just be the bike for you.

At INR 74,554/- ex-showroom Delhi, it is giving the competition some serious reasons for introspection. Will this plain jane commuter capture the imagination of the Indian junta, or are buyers now enamoured with tech laden features? We wait to find out, as we watch the sales figures of this workhorse...



HERO VIDA V1 FIRST LOOK



This had been long coming to the Indian e-bike market. Most of us were sitting with bated breath when Hero MotoCorp invested INR 420 crore in Ather Energy, the manufacturer of premium electric scooter, the 450X. It made perfect sense that the largest 2-wheeler manufacturer in the world would want to leverage their investment to bring out their own e-bike. Especially as the segment is heating up.

Along came the Hero Vida V1, noiselessly entering the market. Currently only Bajaj and TVS, from the big manufacturers, have electric offerings. Now Hero is the third giant to join the party. Hero has an image of producing low cost, efficient and low maintenance vehicles for the masses to commute. With the Vida, the company has thrown all that baggage out of the window. And they have brought a product which is decidedly upmarket.



The Vida V1 comes equipped with three cool ways of charging the batteries. The first is through their fast-charging mechanism, which is built on the same open standards as Ather. The second way of charging is through a regular domestic plug point in your

garage. And the third and pretty cool way of charging is to remove the batteries and charge it inside your house. This third method is useful for those who do not have a dedicated parking spot where they can charge their bikes. That utility comes with a caveat, that the batteries are heavy (11 kg approx. per battery) and require a bit of effort to remove and carry around for the sake of charging on a regular basis.

Hero claims that the fast charger can take you from 0-80% in just 65 minutes. While the portable charger takes about 6 hours to get you to 80%. Both these numbers we feel are satisfactory, but we would like to test it out in real world conditions before giving our final verdict.

Interestingly, Hero has designed the Vida in such a way, that you can operate the scooter with just one battery. It gives you a lot of flexibility in usage, as you can charge one battery at home,





while cruising around on a single battery. This will of course not give you full power and range, but it does give you another option in a crunch situation.

The Vida V1 is available in two variants, as the Plus and Pro. The Plus gets a 1.72 kWh battery with a claimed 143 km range. While the Pro gets a 1.97 kWh battery with a claimed 165 km range. We can't wait to get our hands on this scooter to test out the range!

In the braking area, it gets a 190 mm disc at the front and a 130 mm drum at the rear.

In terms of design the Vida V1

looks good. It has taken the more conventional ICE scooter form, rather than trying to go excessively futuristic. It looks proportional from all angles and overall feels solid. But we cannot help but thinking, that as a late entrant to the market, it needed a bit more chutzpah to draw attention towards itself. Especially at the price point it is being offered. On the features front, you get a 7-inch touchscreen TFT console which looks good and feels premium.

What is a bit of a surprise is the price, especially coming from Hero. But the biggest shocker is that the largest manufacturer of

2-wheelers has launched the Vida only in 3 cities of India, New Delhi, Jaipur and Bengaluru. We believe that this is a missed opportunity for the company to have made big inroads in this segment, with their massive dealer network. The Vida Vi Pro costs INR 1,39,000 ex-showroom New Delhi, after taking into account the FAME II Incentive of the central government and state subsidy by the Delhi government. This is unlikely to become a ubiquitous product from Hero, as we have grown to expect from the manufacturer of the Splendor...



If you want to buy any scooter in India, with the current prevailing prices, you are destined to cross above 1 lakh rupees in your budget. Call it fate or design, name it how you want. But that's the fact. This includes electric scooters as well! Except for some less-powered battery-pack scooters like the Hero, Okinawa etc., where you can't expect great performance, good dealer network, range and amenities.

Ola is changing this game and trying to keep this generation

of buyers happy. Ola released a teaser as such and it was not just to build up hype. Yes! Ola launched a low-cost electric scooter for under Rs 80,000. As a base variant of its previous variant S1 Pro, Ola has launched it under the name S1 Air.

Even though the price has come down, there is no need to worry about cost-cutting in the features. You get the same premium feel as the S1 Pro, almost the same features, adequate performance, and the required range, which is seen in the S1 Air.

Being an entry-level electric scooter. First of all, the main focus has been on its weight so that it can be easily handled by women and lightweight people. It weighs just 99 kg. Since it is around 25 kg less than the other variant, anyone can easily handle it. Ola says that it has not compromised the build quality.

Inspired by the S1 Pro. That is because it is designed on the same platform that the S1 is built on. If you look at the air scooter, the design is the same as the original S1 Pro. So, no one is likely to ask at



first sight that 'have you bought a budget scooter'? That cutting-edge design is the glamour of Ola!

Same rectangular headlight design! Being an affordable scooter, no compromise has been made on LEDs. The touchscreen on the Air variant is the same at 7.0 inches, that too on a TFT display, and its digital touchscreen is premium. Customers are now raving about its response. The S1 Air also comes with Ola's new technology, MoveOs3 update.

OLA S1 Air





There's a lot going on in this MoveOS3 update. It has a proximity sensor so you can do many things. OLA has added many features such as automatic unlocking of the scooter, locking the scooter if it is pushed away, tracking the scooter, hill hold function for safety on hilly roads, light themes changing according to the songs playing on the scooter, and other widgets.

The S1 Air comes in a total of 5 colours. Otherwise, a closer look reveals a number of changes to the Ola S1 Pro. Its flat footboard area, (slightly curved like a banana on the S1 and S1 Pro scooters), is comfortable for shorter riders and makes for easy loading and unloading. Its seat height of 792 mm is a bit high!

There are many differences like the swing arm, hub motor, conventional front side telescopic suspension found in normal scooters, rear side dual spring setup, re-designed grab rail, dual tone colours and mainly weight.

Its single-piece tubular grab handle gives the scooter a sporty look. It has 34 litres of space under the seat. This is just 2 litres less than the more expensive counterpart.

On the Ola S1 Pro, its rear suspension is a mono-shock and that too is bedridden. The S1 Air can be found with a dual spring. It has drum brakes and alloy wheels. Otherwise, Ola is making sure that its premium-ness and design are not wasted. Very good Ola!

Ola has given a lithium-ion battery pack with a power of 2.47

kW which is less than the S1 variant. But it claims to deliver around 101 km on a single charge as reported by IDC. There are customers who have ridden the S1 Pro beyond its claimed range of 181 km, achieving 200 km and own the Ola scooter free in the long-range challenge. If so, whispers are out that this too can go more than the claimed mileage. However, a range of around 90 km is a boom for commuters. Try it in Eco mode and you will get good results.

Its top speed is said to be 85 kmph. We haven't checked it yet. In this, they have given 3 riding modes namely Eco, Normal and Sport. So, this S1 Air can be exciting to ride as well.

Its rear-mounted rear hub motor has a power output of 4.5kW. That is, its peak power is 6bhp. It claims to take around 9.8 seconds for 0-100 kmph. 0-40 kmph takes just 4.3 seconds. It is okay for a normal commuter electric scooter.

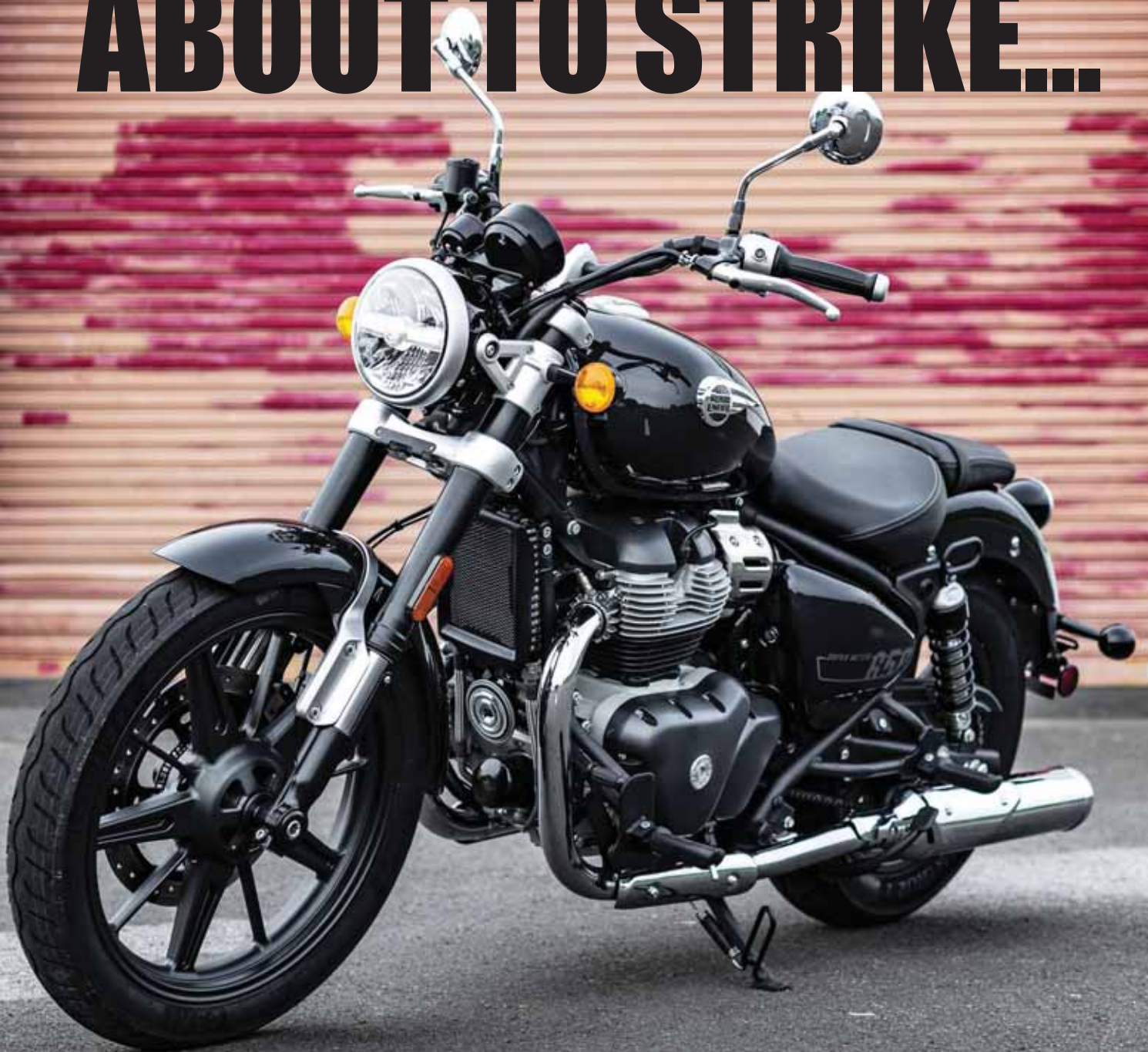
As far as charging is concerned, it takes 4.5 hours to 4.7 hours to charge it from 0-100%. This is the time it takes on a normal regular charger. What is special about this is that Ola has also given it a hyper charging facility. They say that if you charge it in just 5 minutes on Ola's dedicated hyper charging network, you can go up to 15 km.

Generally, Ola scooters hit the news for their quick bookings. Bookings for this S1 Air have accumulated rapidly. Ola, as usual, has managed a trick here too. That Rs 79,999 price is only for those who booked it before Diwali. When you read this and book it, the ex-showroom price will be around Rs 84,999. Awww...



THULASIDHARAN TJ

ROYAL ENFIELD'S NEXT METEOR IS ABOUT TO STRIKE...



A meteor means a shooting star. RE already got one shooting star with a 350cc engine, it is also a star in sales for Royal Enfield. Now a bigger meteor is coming to hit with a 650cc engine. At the EICMA 2022 in Milan, Italy, Royal Enfield upgraded it to its international market level and introduced it. RE has introduced this motorcycle to India on November 18. Let's take

a look at some important features of Royal Enfield's Meteor 650 that everyone is looking forward to.

RE's third bike 650 cc motorcycle!

This super meteor is Royal Enfield's 3rd bike with a 648cc, parallel twin-cylinder engine setup. Continental GT 650 and Interceptor were the first two bikes. The Meteor produces 47bhp of

power at 7,250rpm and 52Nm of torque at 5,650rpm. According to Royal Enfield, it has been tuned to deliver around 80% of its peak torque at 2,500 rpm through mapping and gearing set-up.

Harley Davidson Design!

They were already calling the Meteor 350 a small Harley. Now just like the original Harley Davidson bike... in a stunning



superbike design... this cruiser bike blends in. Some even say it looks like a Triumph.

It is also the first RE bike with LED headlights!

The LED headlights are new! The bike with full LED headlights in this segment is the Super Meteor 650cc.

Stylish tubeless alloy wheels!

There are 19-inch wheels at the front and 16-inch wheels at the rear. Like the Meteor 350, they

have given an alloy setup here. It has Ceat Zoom tyres. Tube tires are prone to punctures. Since this Meteor 650 is tubeless, there is no need to fear a puncture.

Dual channel Meteor!

The Meteor 650 has discs front and rear. Front 320 mm disc; with a 300 mm disc at the rear are impressive. The reason is that dual-channel ABS comes with Meteor 650. These large brake sizes have been designed to give a solid performance for the weight

of this cruiser bike.

RE's First USD Fork Bike!

This is the first Royal Enfield bike to have an upside-down fork suspension setup. It has a 43mm thick fork at the front. Likewise, the teardrop-shaped petrol tank has a capacity of 15.7 litres.

This is the heaviest RE!

This is going to be the company's heaviest bike. Its weight is 241 kg. Its ground clearance is 135 mm. It is not quite generous for our road conditions. But, it's good





enough for cruising. But off-road, no chance.

Easy to manoeuvre in the city!

In general, the exhaust pipes of Royal Enfield bikes are very wide. Since the silencer on this Meteor doesn't take up extra space... it's possible to get in and out of small alleys and traffic without banging the silencers.

Variant and Price

The Super Meteor 650 comes in two variants. The Standard variant is the base model. The Tourer variant is the more expensive top end. It comes in Astral, Interstellar and Celestial colours. There are 2 variants in the Tourer model, the Solo Tourer with a single seat and the Grand Tourer with

a split seat. It also has exclusive accessories options. The Super Meteor 650 also comes with a backrest, handlebar end mirrors, luggage rack, deluxe foot pegs and a large windscreen over the top-end Grand Tourer. Price is yet unknown; but it can cost around 3.75 – 4 lakhs.

Split Seats; The riding position is superb!

They have given split seats in this. Being a cruiser bike, the wide handlebar and forward footpegs make the riding position fun for long rides in cruiser style. Its seat height is only 740 mm, making it easy to ride even for short people. But be aware that the weight is high! Its indicators are placed near the number plate.

Features which are not available in Interceptor & Continental!

The bike has a typical circular centre console. It features a tripper navigation pod, full LED headlights, cast aluminium switch cubes, tubeless tires, and alloy wheels, which are not found in other 650 cc bikes from the RE stable.

Competition with what?

For now, this super meteor has few competitors. It is set to be a bit more expensive than other Royal Enfield 650cc bikes and in this segment, it competes directly with the Benelli 502C. It is expected that Royal Enfield Meteor 650 is going to be a tough competitor to high-priced cruisers and even modern motorcycles.



Exciting meets Exclusive

The Tiguan Exclusive Edition

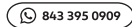


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9047305777, **Volkswagen Erode:** 9629833777, **Volkswagen Karur:** 9629611444,
Volkswagen Tirunelveli: 9500967864, **Volkswagen Nagercoil:** 8489912181

The second most important motorcycle gear after purchasing a helmet is a riding jacket. It not just covers and protects half your body, but that half of the body also houses your organs and spine. Injuries to the upper body can be life threatening, even at relatively slow speeds. It is therefore recommended, that after you have bought yourself a quality crash helmet, then the next item on your list should be a proper motorcycle jacket.

Motorcycle jackets have long since moved on from a few decades ago, when the best jackets were leather and everything else was considered substandard. Nowadays, biker jackets come in as many varieties as there are motorcycle types out there in the

market. Choosing the perfect riding jacket depends on a host of factors. Keep these things in mind when buying your first biking jacket, and you will be one happy rider!

Materials

Look for a jacket made from a durable, high-quality material like leather or high-quality textile. Leather is still considered the best for abrasion protection, but textile these days provides incredible protection. Textile jackets also come with more pockets, accessories, zippers and liners, making it easier to live with. What kind of riding you do, the place you will spend most time in, are conditions which will alter your material choice.

Fit

Makesurethejacketfitsproperly and is comfortable to wear. A jacket that is too tight or loose can be uncomfortable and may not provide adequate protection. Your jacket should have a 'snug' fit. Any movement in the fitting means that the armour will not be in place when you crash. So don't oversize or undersize, buy the size which is appropriate for you. Different brands have varying fits, so check it out before choosing a jacket. Some are roomy, while others have a slimmer fit. It therefore makes more sense to buy from a physical store rather than buying online.

Safety Features

Look for a jacket that has built-in safety features like reflective

BUYER'S GUIDE HOW TO BUY A MOTORCYCLE RIDING JACKET





panels, padding, and armour to protect your body in the event of a crash. Different styles of jackets have differing safety features depending on where the rider is expected to spend most of their time, in an urban commute, highway, track or trail.

Ventilation

If you plan to ride in warm weather, look for a jacket with ventilation to keep you cool and comfortable. For us motorcyclists in India, most of our riding is done in summer conditions, therefore ventilation plays a crucial role in choosing a jacket. Which is why mesh jackets are so popular in the country. Well ventilated jackets can be zipped up, an inner liner inserted and a windcheater added on the outside to make it suitable for cold north Indian winters as well. Give preference to ventilation when buying a jacket in India, no matter where you live.

Style

Finally, choose a jacket that matches your personal style and preferences. There are many different styles of motorcycle jackets available, take your time and find one that you like. Most riders for obvious reason, buy jackets which have a similar style to their choice of motorcycle. If you own an adventure motorcycle, you would first want to check out the range of motorcycling gear that will be suitable for ADV bikes and rides. Your main jacket styles are, adventure jackets, cruiser jackets, café racer jackets, sports jackets and race/ track jackets.

Below are a variety of common jacket styles available in the Indian market:

Mesh Jackets

Mesh jackets have huge panels of mesh on the front and rear to increase airflow and help keep you cool in hot riding conditions. These are the defacto choice of jackets for most riders in India, who end up riding in warm conditions for the majority of the year. Mesh jackets generally employ better abrasion resistant materials on the shoulders, elbows and other areas of high impact. On the other hand, mesh jackets are a bit of a compromise in terms of safety, because the mesh areas of the jacket will not be as sturdy as a full textile or leather jacket. A mesh jacket is of course much better than no jacket, which riders tend to do in the summer. Highly recommended for people looking to spend most time commuting.

Full Textile Jackets

Full textile jackets, as the name suggests, uses textile materials all across the surface. These jackets are recommended for most riders and riding styles. You will find these to be waterproof and windproof for the most part, and often come shipped with thermal liners. You get much more protection with a full textile jacket in comparison to a mesh jacket. Buy these only with excellent ventilation for Indian summers, else it will become quite a steamy affair inside, when riding at slow city speeds. Adventure riders, tourers, and other recreational enthusiasts are recommended to buy full textile jackets.

Leather Jackets

Leather for many riders is still considered the ultimate material for biking jackets. This is especially true if you plan to enjoy your motorcycle on a race track, where



only leather is allowed. But keep in mind, that on track, mostly single piece leather suits are allowed, making your jacket useless for that purpose. Leather provides the best abrasion resistance compared to other materials, and can also withstand a slide or two. You also get perforated leather to help you stay cool in the summer. Leather repels water to some extent, but will eventually get destroyed if caught in frequent downpours. Sports bike riders favour leather jackets, as much for the protection, as for the aesthetics. On the other end of the spectrum, cruiser owners also love leather jackets, but in the old school styling.

Which Jacket to Buy?

Your eventual decision of

buying one motorcycling jacket or another depends largely on your riding style. Which part of the country you reside in also is a major contributing factor to your decision. Armour and materials used in the jacket construction is equally important in your list of priorities. Finally, budget plays a key role in deciding on a jacket. At times it could be better to save up and buy a superior jacket. Or on other occasions, it makes sense to buy whatever is in your budget, rather than delaying the purpose.

Keep one thing firmly in mind when buying a riding jacket, any motorcycle jacket is better than no riding jacket in case of a crash!



TECH TALK: USD VS TELESCOPIC FORKS



For the longest time ever, Indian motorcyclists have been buying motorbikes with telescopic forks. While the global market made this switch to USD forks on performance bikes a long time ago, we were still left wanting. Price sensitive, developing markets like India, were not considered receptive to costlier technologies, which were the norm in the western world.

Gradually we are seeing this change now, as more manufacturers are bringing USD forks to their premium motorcycles in India. Be it TVS with their Apache RR310 or KTM with all their bikes

or even Bajaj with the Dominar. USD forks are here to stay and will only penetrate the market deeper and trickle down to lower spec motorcycles with time.

Which brings us to the question of this article, what exactly are the differences between the upside down and telescopic forks, and is it a big deal to buy a motorcycle equipped with this?

Before we jump into the juicy (or in the case of suspension, oily!) details of the two fork types, here's a quick roundup of the various elements which constitute the fork. The front fork of a motorcycle is made up of oil, an inner stanchion,

springs, an outer slider and seals. These components are by and large the same on both forms of forks under discussion here. Telescopic forks have been around on motorcycle for almost a century now, while USD forks were invented on race tracks in the 1980s. As many engineering revolutions in motorcycles, it came from the rigours and stresses that only race bikes produce on a track. The learnings of the track then gradually found its way onto production motorcycles.

Main Differences

USD (upside-down) forks and telescopic forks are two different types of suspension forks used on motorcycles. They both serve the same purpose, which is to



provide a damping effect to absorb shocks from the road and improve the overall ride quality of the motorcycle. However, they differ in their design and construction.

USD forks, also known as inverted forks, are designed so that the stanchions are mounted below the slider. This design provides several advantages over traditional telescopic forks.

Telescopic forks, on the other hand, have the stanchions mounted above the slider. This design has been around for much longer and is still widely used on motorcycles. Telescopic forks consist of two tubes, the outer tube and the inner tube, that slide within each other to provide the suspension travel.

Advantages and Disadvantages

One of the main advantages of telescopic forks is their simplicity and ease of maintenance. They are also less expensive to produce than USD forks, which makes them more common on budget motorcycles. However, their design does not provide the same level of stiffness and precision as USD forks, which can result in a less refined ride quality.

In USD forks, the wider (outer slider) part of the fork assembly is connected to the triple clamp. When you brake super hard, the maximum stress is around the triple clamp. On conventional forks, the stanchion is what takes this deflection, which increases overall flex. But on the USD fork, the outer slider takes this excessive stress and flexes less. This allows the USD fork to be much stiffer, giving better control on the front end of the motorcycle. Increased

But for motorcycles which are never going to push the performance envelope and are largely going to be used for pottering around town or the country, conventional telescopic forks are still the more sensible and economical choice.

front end control results in better handling and braking dynamics of the motorcycle.

USD forks also generally have greater overlap between the stanchion and the outer slider, which helps increase the overall stiffness. These forks are lighter than their older counterparts, even though it visually doesn't appear to be the case. The stanchion is the component which makes up most of the weight of the entire fork assembly. USD forks have shorter stanchions which allow for a weight reduction.

But with everything engineering, it is never a perfect option. There are always trade-offs. And one of the main downsides of USD forks is gravity. On a conventional fork, when an oil seal breaks, you will see a minute amount of oil on the fork, which can be attended to at will. On a USD fork, a broken oil

seal, sees gravity pulling the oil down the stanchions at a much higher rate of flow. Worse still, this oil is leaking very close to your disc brake assembly and tyres. Having oil on either of these two components can lead to disaster in very little time.

Another disadvantage of USD forks, is that the stanchion is closer to the road. Debris flying from the road tends to nick and scratch up the stanchions faster than on conventional forks where the stanchions sit higher up. Nicked stanchions will then destroy the oil seals and you are back to the problem described above.

So, which is better!

A difficult question to answer in absolute terms. But broadly speaking, if you are looking at performance motorcycles in which the riding is going to be highly stressed, as seen on the race track, then USD forks are no-brainers. But for motorcycles which are never going to push the performance envelope and are largely going to be used for pottering around town or the country, conventional telescopic forks are still the more sensible and economical choice.

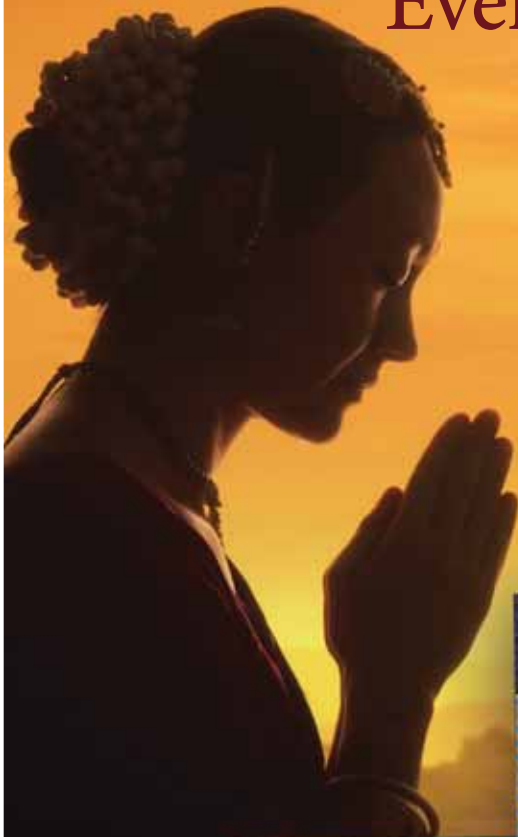
Should you base your decision on purchasing a motorcycle dependant on it having a USD fork or not? Not entirely, as USD forks greatly improve a motorcycle's braking and handling dynamics, but are still only one aspect of a motorcycle. You need to take a more holistic view of your usage, and other characteristics of the bike, before putting down your money for these metal steeds!





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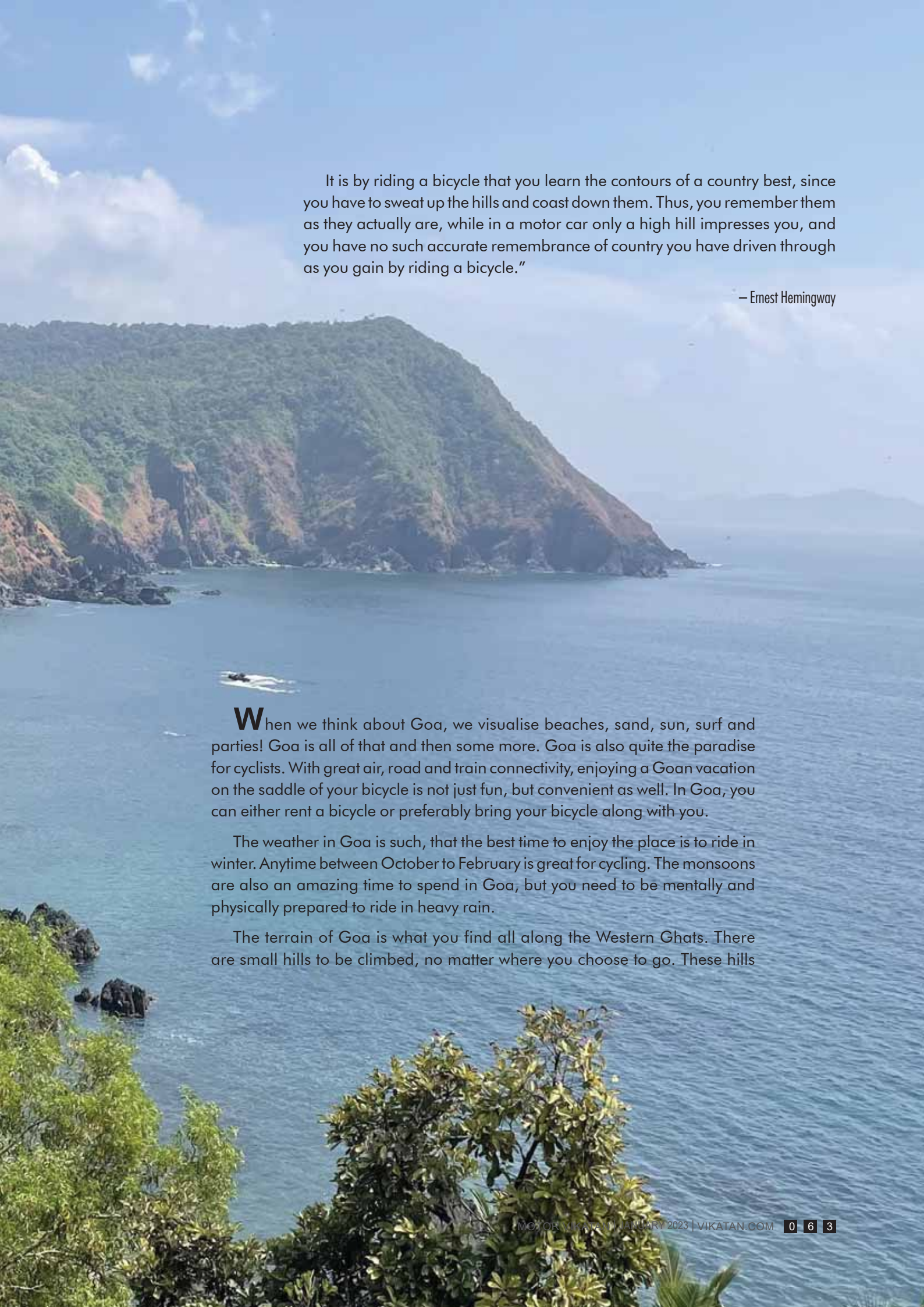
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AVINASH NORONHA

A GOAN CYCLING VACATION....



It is by riding a bicycle that you learn the contours of a country best, since you have to sweat up the hills and coast down them. Thus, you remember them as they actually are, while in a motor car only a high hill impresses you, and you have no such accurate remembrance of country you have driven through as you gain by riding a bicycle."

— Ernest Hemingway

When we think about Goa, we visualise beaches, sand, sun, surf and parties! Goa is all of that and then some more. Goa is also quite the paradise for cyclists. With great air, road and train connectivity, enjoying a Goan vacation on the saddle of your bicycle is not just fun, but convenient as well. In Goa, you can either rent a bicycle or preferably bring your bicycle along with you.

The weather in Goa is such, that the best time to enjoy the place is to ride in winter. Anytime between October to February is great for cycling. The monsoons are also an amazing time to spend in Goa, but you need to be mentally and physically prepared to ride in heavy rain.

The terrain of Goa is what you find all along the Western Ghats. There are small hills to be climbed, no matter where you choose to go. These hills



might be small, but the roads going up and down them are generally steep. Especially once you get off the main roads and take the village roads. Goa is best enjoyed on village roads, where you experience the real and rustic culture of the place.

You can choose to ride in North or South Goa, both places have

their own charm. The north has a lot more places to visit and explore, with many more options for restaurants, hotels etc. It is essentially more tourist friendly. The south on the other hand is better if you want to immerse yourself in nature's bliss and have a relaxed bicycle vacation.

Another big allure of Goa

for cyclists is the traffic and road culture of the place. Cars, buses and trucks are always polite when sharing the road with you, they don't needlessly honk behind and generally give you enough space when overtaking. It is a far cry from the aggression and unruly road users' that cyclists deal with in most cities of India.

Here are a few routes and places to explore on your bicycle, both in North and South Goa. In the north, these routes are assuming you are staying somewhere around Panjim or Mapusa and in the south, it assumes you are staying south of Margao.

Arambol Beach

Instead of taking the main road, I took the narrow serpentine route which hugs the coast. It is much slower and a bazillion times more scenic. The only downside is that you get chased by dogs far too often! You can continue all the way till Tiracol, which is on the Goa-Maharashtra border. And





as you ride, you will notice the change in local culture with every pedal stroke.

As I was riding during the monsoons there, I rode with one eye on the sky. And when it did rain, I hung around at a bus stop waiting for the rain to pass. But in Goan monsoons, the rain doesn't stop and so I rode in the rain. After spending fantastic five hours on the saddle, it was time to wrap up and head home. Hungry, thirst and ready to narrate all the stories and experiences!

Chorao Island

Rather than taking the highway to Panjim and then taking the arterial road, then the ferry to Chorao. We suggest going the roundabout way!

From Mapusa leave the highway behind, as you ride through the scenic villages of Paliem, Uccassaim and Nachinola. From there you can ride towards Carona and cross the Calvim bridge to enter Chorao Island.





The island isn't a tourist paradise, as there is nothing to 'do' there! It is a quaint little place with few people other than those who live there. Zero tourists ensure you get to see more of the 'real' Goa. Not the things you will find in your regular tourist brochure. In one corner of Chorao Island is the Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary. Quite the pretty place if you love nature.

From Chorao you can go towards Old Goa, via Divar Island or head back via Pomburpa and Porvorim. Along the way enjoying

the sights of the Houses of Goa Museum. The route is filled with ferry crossings, village roads, rolling terrain and more. A perfect relaxing bicycle ride.

Corjeum Fort, Mayem Lake, Aravelam Caves and Harvalem Waterfall

You can head inland from the coast and see a very different side of Goa. You take the village road towards Aldona, before crossing the river to Corjeum and visit the local fort. The Corjeum Fort had initially been used by various

Indian rulers before it went into the control of the Portuguese. Though it is supposedly looked after by state government bodies, it is in quite a shabby shape. Nonetheless, it gives you a good view of the surroundings and if you close your eyes, you can even imagine cannon fire!

From the fort I rode towards Mayem Lake. This is one of the few fresh water bodies of interest to tourists. You can go boating as well. In the monsoons, the place is beautifully green and

with no crowd. There is a Goa Tourism hotel on the lakefront which is perfect if you plan to spend a night or two. The lake isn't big, but it is pretty and worth a visit.

After Mayem Lake I rode towards Aravelam Caves and Harvelam Waterfall. The two are just a 5-minute ride from each other. There is still some confusion whether the Aravelam Caves are of Buddhist or Hindu origin, since currently there is Shivlinga in there, but a Gautam Buddha statue was excavated with a notably older vintage. The waterfall is nice, with a big temple by the side and in the monsoons, there was a guy selling roasted corn on the cob. Absolutely perfect for the weather!

From there you can take the road through Old Goa and ride to Panjim to end your ride.

Velha Goa

After exploring the backroads of Goa, a visit to a more touristy part was in order. Velha or Old Goa makes for an excellent day's visit.

In Old Goa, you have the Church of St. Augustine, which was completed in 1602 over a period of 5 years by the Augustinian friars. In 1835, the Portuguese rulers forced the church to be abandoned and 7 years later in 1942, the building started collapsing and by 1938, the structure had dilapidated to its present form.

There is also the Se Cathedral, which was built between 1562-1619. The architectural style of the church is said to be Portuguese-Manueline.

The Basilica of Bom Jesus is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. St.



Francis Xavier's mortal remains are placed within this basilica. The church was built between 1594-1605. This is the most iconic place in Old Goa. It also attracts the majority of tourists.

The St. Cajetan Church was completed in 1661. This church is different from the others in the area, since it was built under the supervision of Italian architects.

When you arrive at Old Goa via the waterways, currently the docking point for the ferry to Divar Island, you will enter through the Viceroy's Arch. Most people do not see it because they enter and exit Old Goa from the main highway.

If you want to make this ride really interesting, you can take the ferry from Pomburpa to Chorao, then the ferry from Chorao to Ribandar and to Velha Goa. For the return leg you can take the ferry from Velha Goa to Divar Island, then take the ferry from Divar Island to Chorao and back to Pomburpa. Making a fun route filled with ferry rides!

Cabo de Rama

Moving to the south of Goa, we have beautiful bicycle getaways.

You feel much closer to nature in the South, than you do in the north. There are also a bunch of incredible climbs through the ghats to be enjoyed.

The first destination of your travel in South Goa is Cabo de Rama fort. This hillfort overlooks the Canacona coast, and the views from there are spectacular. Even if the actual fort itself is rundown and has nothing much of it left.

The ride to the fort is incredible over steep rolling terrain. It will leave you breathless in minutes as you climb those ghats and breathless once you absorb the gorgeous views. You encounter some of the best climbs in Goa on this section, so eat well before you head there!

Polem Beach

Polem is a tiny beach at the southernmost tip of Goa. Immediately after that you reach the Goa-Karnataka border. The beach is difficult to find, even when you are at the entrance road to it! On some maps, it is even called the 'hidden' beach.

The route to Polem is relatively straightforward, you have to follow



the main highway towards Karwar on the Canacona bypass. Along the way, you will see a signboard towards the beach and from there it gets tricky to actually find the beach.

The beach itself is delightful. There is absolutely nothing there. No shack, no restaurant, no people. It is as serene a public space as you can find amongst the beaches of Goa.

Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary

The final route in this list takes you far away from the beaches in the opposite direction. Headed inland towards the greenery of the ghats and a wildlife sanctuary at Cotigao.

After riding for a bit along the old undivided highway towards Karwar, you enter Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary. Once you enter, you have options of a number of narrow forest roads to choose from. If you are adventurous then just follow whichever road looks good. Else, map your ride in advance and follow the GPX route so that you don't get lost.

It is a leisurely loop through the forest reserve and if you fancy a strenuous climb, then you can head towards Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary.

If you take enough time in hand and go exploring and enjoying all these different routes in north and south Goa. Your perspective of the state will change. You will still think of it as a party state, but a bicycle party on the saddle...





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Whenever we meet up with our close friends, we talk about going on a trip together. We will never stop talking about the trips. Starting with Kodaikanal and going to Goa, we will look for a location to go. Even director Shankar would not look for such locations. We will do all our planning well. But the trip ends there. Now, I am writing this article on the day I returned to office after a 45-day ride with friends. When xBhp asked me if I could go on an all-India trip, I knew this trip is an opportunity to understand India and meet bikers from all over the country. Yes, it was an All-India-Trip.

xBhp is a motorcycling community started in 2003. Today it is followed by many people all

over India. At least once in two years, they coordinate an all-India trip. This #roadtripunited2022 was the plan for 2022. xBhp extended a special invitation to Motor Vikatan to join in this trip. I just packed my bags and left for Delhi.

November 6: The trip started in Delhi and ended again in Delhi on December 16. We returned after travelling around India for 45 days. The distance travelled is more than 10,000 km. 12 people travelled alongside me.

Having stood in awe of the Taj Mahal in Agra, I felt the same experience as sunrise at Kanyakumari. We never stayed more than a day in any city. Sunrise happened in one state and sunset in another state. These

days introduced me to the different cultures, traditions, languages and people of India.

Meetups were organized in each city to meet bikers. Over 300 biking clubs in over 30 cities, meeting thousands of bikers. Whatever cultures, traditions, and languages divided us, motorcycles united us. Their bikes, models of cars, and journeys were full of stories to hear. From Kanyakumari to Ladakh on a TVS Excel moped, the youth who collected vintage vehicles and admired their beauty, and the youth who increased the engine capacity to 250cc on a scooter, we were able to meet and interact with all such incredible people.

We travelled on 6 bikes and 3 cars. Six different bikes ranging





AROUND INDIA ON TWO WHEELS!







from the 125cc scooter TVS Ntorq to the 1,340cc Suzuki Hayabusa and three Mahindra Thars. It is not like only these higher capacity motorcycles or these types of motorcycles can go around India. Our trip is proof that with any motorcycle we can go anywhere.

Starting from Delhi, we divided the trip into four parts, one part to Kolkata, one part from Kolkata to Kanyakumari, another part from Kanyakumari to Mumbai, and another part to Delhi. This is because servicing the bikes and cars we drive is important. Motorcycle condition, oil, and chain should be checked periodically. Only when there is no problem with them will there be no disruption in the journey.

Every city has a colour. There is a taste. Like idli sambar for us, Delhi has aloo paratha and sabji.

Even for lunch you get roti only. You have to eat what you get.

If you ask "Is it necessary to do a big trip to just meet bikers considering the price of petrol?" Well, this trip has a purpose. Most road accidents happen due to drinking and driving. We carried the slogan "Say No to Drugs, Say Yes to Motorcycle" to create awareness about this. We advised bikers in their respective cities about the consequences of taking drugs and to show their passion for motorcycles instead.

A young man we met in Krishnagiri shared with us that he had travelled all the way from Leh to Ladakh on a TVS 50. What is most important for travelling? Good vehicle? We understood that willingness and the right mindset are as important to travel, and not just to look for a good vehicle first.

I rode all six different motorcycles all over India alternatively. Safety gear is very important when travelling. Wearing the right gear like a helmet, gloves, jacket, and shoes is important.

From Taj Mahal to Kolkata Howrah Bridge, Hyderabad Charminar, Visakhapatnam Beach, Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple, Kanyakumari Thiruvalluvar Statue, Ooty Mountain Range, Karnataka Hills, Goa's culture, Mumbai's shopping streets, Rajasthan's colourful cities, 45 days is not enough time to see all India in its entirety. It was an unforgettable journey in life. Travel is a never-ending journey we all would like to do, so see you on another trip...

It didn't end as dramatically as 2021, but the 2022 Formula 1 season delivered many incredible moments. From Max Verstappen's record breaking 15 wins to Kevin Magnussen's historic pole; Ferrari's struggles to Mercedes' comeback; The retirement of a quadruple champion to the goodbye of an 8-time GP winner, it was a season that gave us everything. Let's go back into the racing lane...

The Regulations made an instant impact!

The regulation changes made ahead of the 2022 season, played a huge part in the title race and in the standings all through the table. Red Bull & Ferrari were the only teams to manage the 'Porpoising effect' and extract the performance out of the car. Defending Champions Mercedes struggled and they couldn't even get back to the title race midway

through the season. Teams like McLaren, Alpha Tauri had poor seasons compared to 2021.

In the 2021 Formula 1 World Championship, a total of 6 teams stood on the podium, whereas only 4 sides got that opportunity this time. Mercedes achieved the podium 9 times lesser than the championship winning 2021 season. McLaren's count came from 4 to 1, courtesy of Lando Norris' brilliant drive in Emilia



FORMULA ONE 2022 PROS & CONS





Romagna GP. The retirements of Max Verstappen & Carlos Sainz helped his cause too! Alpha Tauri endured a season to forget as they finished ninth with just 35 points. In 2021, they ended up sixth with a whopping 142 points.

Number of Podiums: 2021 & 2022	
Mercedes	28 & 17
Red Bull	23 & 28
Ferrari	5 & 20
McLaren	4 & 1
Alpine	2 & 0
Alpha Tauri	1 & 0

Verstappen's domination

The 2022 Formula 1 season wasn't hard for Max Verstappen who won the 2021 title in the very last lap of the last race. Right from the start, it was considered the battle between him and Charles Leclerc. The two title contenders

went neck to neck in the very first race making fans' expectations go sky high! But his unfortunate retirement at the end and that of his teammate Sergio Perez's raised questions about the reliability of the RBPT power unit.

Even though he won the second race in Saudi Arabia, the same power unit issue happened in Australia and he had to retire again. Leclerc on the other hand won in Bahrain & Australia to increase his lead from the Dutch driver to 46 points. When everyone thought that was going to be a competitive season, Verstappen raised the bar to a whole new level!

His incredible run of results started at the fourth race in Emilia Romagna. Starting from there, he won 5 of the next 6 races. He stood on the podium (3rd place) in the

other race too! When he started winning, Ferrari and Leclerc started losing the plot and the points. And by the end of race no 9, Verstappen went 49 points ahead of Leclerc. The 2021 champion finished 7th in the Great Britain GP, but went back to his winning spree. He won 5 of the next 6 races again and by the end of the Italian Grand Prix, he led Leclerc by 116 points. Even after that, he won 4 races and finished the season with a record breaking 15 victories!

Beyond his incredible driving, Max has shown better composure than in the previous seasons. He preferred saving his tyres instead of overtaking the frontrunner. That's the reason, this season became easy for him.

Max Verstappen 2022 season	
Races	22
Points	454
Wins	15
Podiums	17
Poles	7
Fastest Laps	5
Retirements	2

The Struggling Horse and the Prancing Bull

Ferrari started the season so well but managed to find different ways to screw things up. This season from Ferrari could be documented as the most messed up season. In France, Carlos Sainz was penalised 5 seconds for Unsafe Release. Because of that, he lost 5 positions and ended the race fifth. The mistake they made in Hungary was so juvenile. They fitted medium tyres to Charles Leclerc after the pit in a race where the Monegasque started with mediums. Since FIA rules state that a driver should use at least 2 tyre compounds in a dry complete race, Ferrari had to call him in for an extra pit stop. Because of that Leclerc finished sixth and clearly lost a podium place!

In Belgium, the Ferrari pit crew wasn't even ready with the tyres when Sainz came into the pits. Also, he got his second penalty of the season for Unsafe release. This time he lost 3 places. Ferrari stacked the two drivers in the pit back-to-back in Monaco and the home boy lost some valuable time there.

The entire season went on like this and even midway Leclerc has to concede the World Championship title to Max. If not for Max's reluctance to let his teammate Perez go past him in the last race, Leclerc would've lost even



second place in the overall driver standings!

Meanwhile, Red Bull was in complete control of their season. They were right with the majority of their calls from the pit timings to the tyre compounds. They knew what they were doing! That's why Verstappen could win races even when he was starting from P7, P10 and even P14. Their strategy calls were recognised by the entire Formula 1 World as their Senior Strategy Engineer Hannah Schmitz became an internet sensation overnight. Despite Verstappen being incredible on wheels, it's Red Bull's outstanding decision making that made life easy for the Dutchman!

Red Bull vs Ferrari	
Rank	1 & 2
Points	759 & 554
Wins	17 & 4
Podiums	28 & 20

Pole positions	8 & 12
Fastest Laps	8 & 5
Retirements	5 & 9

Mercedes was struggling to cope with the regulation changes at the start of the season. After starting the season as defending champions, they stood on the podium only thrice after 7 races. But once the season progressed, they were consistent with their performance and they started standing on the podium regularly. In back-to-back races in France & Hungary, both Hamilton & Russell stood on the podium. In the team's favourite circuit in Sao Paulo, they finished 1-2. The initial struggle meant Mercedes were the third best team all through the season and it was seen in a simple fact that their drivers came third in 10 of the 22 races!

George Russell started his first



season as a Mercedes driver very well. He was even outperforming Lewis Hamilton in some of the races. He finished in the top 5 in 19 of the 22 races. He won his first Formula 1 race in Sao Paolo and stood on the podium 7 other times. He also came fourth in the driver's championship after overtaking Carlos Sainz.

George Russell vs Lewis Hamilton	
Rank	4 & 6
Points	275 & 240
Wins	1 & 0
Podiums	8 & 9
Pole Positions	0 & 0
Fastest Laps	2 & 4
Retirements	1 & 2

The Departures & Changes

Four-time World Champion Sebastian Vettel brought an end to his Formula 1 career at the end of this season. He finished his last season as an Aston Martin driver in 12th place after collecting 37 points in 22 races. His very last race came to a dramatic end with a 10th place finish and a point. In his 300 Formula 1 race entries, Vettel registered 53 victories and snatched 3098 points. He stood on the podium a staggering 122 times.

This season ended being the last one for Williams' Nicholas Latifi too. The Canadian got

just 2 points in his last season and will be replaced by Logan Sargeant in 2023. Oscar Piastri will replace 8-time race winner Daniel Ricciardo in McLaren. Ricciardo, who didn't get a race seat for 2023 joined Red Bull as a reserve driver. Like him, Mick Schumacher who lost his Haas seat to Nick Hulkenburg, signed as Mercedes' reserve driver.

Aston Martin replaced Vettel's seat with another multiple World Champion Fernando Alonso. The Spaniard's seat in Alpine will be taken by Pierre Gasly and Nick de Vries will take over his Alpha Tauri duties.



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The 2023 MotoGP season is upon us! There are some big changes in the offing as we enter another year of enjoying the pinnacle of motorcycle racing. The biggest changes we are going to see in 2023, is the withdrawal of Suzuki from MotoGP, sprint races being added to every round, a new

reigning world champion and only 2 inline-4s on the grid.

Last year, in a shock announcement, Suzuki told the world and their employees that they will be quitting MotoGP and all other formats of motorcycle racing. This came as a whammy to everyone, since the team was

doing incredibly well in MotoGP. Suzuki were one of the only two teams to run inline-4s and now they have left. Yamaha the only other factory to go down the similar engine route lost its satellite team to Aprilia. Leaving just 2 Yamahas on the grid, easily the least powerful motorcycle amongst the



MOTOGP 2023: SEASON

5 remaining factories.

Dorna, the organisers of this sport, also announced that next year will see the addition of sprint races on Saturdays. This move was made to improve the spectacle for TV audiences and track attendance. Whether it will

work is difficult to say, but it will surely add to the pressure cooker atmosphere of the already stressed paddock. The 2023 season is set to be the longest ever, with the maximum number of races scheduled, including a race to be tentatively held in India. The

other big change by Dorna is the introduction of standardised tyre pressure monitoring systems for all teams, this is a result of some teams claiming that other teams were cheating in 2022. This small change has the potential of shaking up the grid in a major way.



PREVIEW

Francesco Bagnaia on his Ducati was the 4th different rider/factory combination to win the MotoGP World Championship in 4 consecutive years. Just showing how incredibly competitive the riders are currently. For this incredible record to continue, 2023 will have to be won either by KTM or Aprilia riders. Unlikely, but not completely impossible!

Bagnaia will have a hard time defending his title not just against the entire field, but first and foremost against his new teammate Enea Bastianini. The Beast as he is known, showed his mettle in 2022 by pushing Bagnaia

with him. He has the swagger and confidence of launching another measured attack for the big prize. The biggest challenge for him is if Yamaha are able to give him a competitive motorcycle. Else he ends up looking like a rider who has brought a knife to a gun fight! Quartararo will also be looking for assistance from his teammate Franco Morbidelli. Last year saw the Italian fade away into oblivion. With just 2 riders on the grid, it is essential for the team to see both performing to maximum potential.

Repsol Honda is the only team in 2023 with two former MotoGP Champions. Marc Marquez and

coming on the back of a lacklustre year, it will be interesting to see if he will perform or perish, as has been the case with all of Marquez' teammates.

Aprilia had a strong start to the year in 2022 till three quarters of the season. And in the last bit they lost their way, when MotoGP went racing in the flyaways. But the Italian manufacturer showed they had a competitive bike and two excellent riders in the form of Alex Espargaro and Maverick Vinales. The duo will have a season's more data with them and will also be joined by a satellite team. RNF shifted from Yamaha to Aprilia for 2023 and with two distinctive riders. Miguel Oliveira won two races in 2022 and has shown his professionalism and clinical ruthlessness in the past and should push the factory riders to new limits. His teammate, Raul Fernandez is considered to be extremely talented, but so far hasn't shown that in his rookie year. His temperament and professionalism have been questioned by his previous employers and it will be a make-or-break year for him.

Which brings us to the 5th and last of the factories, KTM. The Austrian brand showed a lot of promise early on in their MotoGP venture, but seem to have got a bit muddled in the last season. They suffer during qualifying and are left to make up places during the race. They have taken help from aerodynamics engineers from Formula 1, to help chase those last tenths to be competitive. If the bike does well, expect to see Brad Binder fighting for the podium on a regular basis in 2023 and maybe even for the championship. The factory will also learn a lot



to the line on multiple occasions, it is now time for him to shine and show that potential in 2023. A lot of Ducati management eyes will be on him, watching his every move. Everybody expects Bastianini to be a title contender in 2023.

The Ducati duo will have to contend with the lone Yamaha force of Fabio Quartararo. The Frenchman was the runner-up last season, but has two years of championship fighting experience

Joan Mir have both tasted success at this level and would surely want more. Marquez already showed that he has put his injuries behind him and can push to the limit like the Marc of old! With him back in the paddock, the entire racing dynamics will change. The Honda is a notoriously difficult bike to ride and master, and it will be a big task for Mir to adapt his riding style from the sweet handling Suzuki to the rowdy Honda. Mir is



from incoming rider, Jack Miller's experience on the Ducati. He might be able to give them direction to close the gap to the front.

Among the satellite squads, the most is expected out of the Pramac Ducati team. They have the experience, data, and support from Ducati, along with two great riders in Johann Zarco and Jorge Martin. The former has a wealth of experience and the latter is exceptionally quick over a single lap. Though the two are unlikely to be championship contenders, they qualifying and race positions will give direction to the final championship standings.

Gresini Ducati is another strong satellite team. Their rider finished third in the championship last year. But that rider has now moved on to the factory team. It is unlikely that they will be able to repeat those feats in 2023, but they do have two talented riders in the form of Fabio Di Giannantonio and new entrant Alex Marquez. The latter will be looking to show off his potential after his tumultuous years on the Honda.

Much is also expected from the satellite Honda team of LCR. But that depends on how improved the new motorcycle will be from the Japanese giant. The team has Takaaki Nakagami, a

temperamental rider who has had more downs than ups. He will be joined by Alex Rins, a rider who has bags of experience and race wins under his belt. Unfortunately for him, his experience is on the Suzuki, a very different beast in comparison to the Honda.

We can also expect to see flashes of brilliance from the Mooney VR46 Ducati team. They have been brilliant on occasion, with Marco Bezzecchi and Luca Marini, and we can expect more of the same from them in 2023.

The final satellite team is the Tech3 GasGas, essentially rebadged KTMs. This will see the return of Pol Espargaro in the KTM fold after two years of struggle on the Honda. He will be joined by the only rookie in the class, Augusto Fernandez. No great expectations sit on the shoulders of either of the two riders. But Tech3 will be hoping for a better 2023, as last year for them was miserable, as they sat at the bottom of the heap...

2023 will kickstart with two tests in Sepang in February, before heading to Europe for the third and final test. It will be followed by the first race, which is the first time since 2006, that MotoGP will start in Europe, with the first race planned in Portugal. The calendar is still tentative, with India and Kazakhstan added to the list. But with rising Covid-19 cases and a possible return of the pandemic, the calendar might yet change.

Irrespective of where the MotoGP circus heads in 2023, we can be rest assured of incredible racing once again. And for us MotoGP starved fans, it will be back to normalcy!





WHAT MAKES HIGHNESS A HIGHNESS?

IS IT LEGACY? IS IT THE VOICE? IS IT BEING HIGHLY SELECTIVE? IS IT MOVING
AROUND WITH THE NOBILITY? IS IT BEING IN TUNE WITH THE TIMES? IS IT JUST
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