ALL NEW
TATA NEXON
PETROL - DIESEL - ELECTRIC
TATA NEXON 2023
A COMPLETE MAKEOVER
It’s been six years since Tata launched the Nexon and since then they’ve always managed to come up with regular updates by adding some new features, some new trim levels, new paint shades, etc. However, customers expected the most radical design, the most feature-packed cabin, and a good amount of powertrain options. After listening to their voices, now Tata Motors has come up with the new 2023 Nexon, which has a completely different look, different interior, and some significant mechanical changes as well.

The new Nexon might not be a generational change since the platform and powertrains have been carried over, but it looks so much more than a facelift. At the front, you can see a lot of inspiration from the Curve concept shown at the Auto Expo. The face is heavily updated and it looks nothing like the previous generation Nexon. The sleek LED DRLs get sequential turn indicators. The headlamps are now LEDs and have been moved onto the bumper. The grill is a mix of mesh and slack patterns, and there are also air curtains on the side for better aerodynamics.

Over to the side, the sharp lines continue and the alloys also get a new look but they are still 16 inches and get the same tyre size as before. The classic Nexon look with the rising belt line and a sloping roofline along with the floating roof at the rear continues. There has been no change to the dimensions, so the length, wheelbase, and 208mm
ground clearance remain unchanged. At the rear, the connected LED tail lamps are sharp to look at, and the rear wiper is tucked away under the spoiler for a clean look.

The interior has been completely revamped for the new Nexon, and that was one gripe people had with the older one that it just felt too dated and old, not anymore. Let’s start from right to left. The steering is the big one because it is nice and large, quite chunky and good to grip as well. And you have this two-spoke design, I am not sure how many will appreciate this sort of glossy plate up here because it is extremely easy to smudge and get scratches. It already had a lot of marks on it. The logo on the steering is also backlit which dims as you turn on the lights.

A neatly organised 10.2-inch instrument cluster is a completely digital unit and it is customisable as well. You can get your maps on there, you can change the dials and you can have a lot of information on offer. A very detailed and nice to look at for a full view of the maps in the instrument cluster. If you are an Apple user, you will have to use Apple Maps via Carplay and Google maps will only work with Android Auto connected.

The 10.25-inch touchscreen centre console is very responsive and slick. You get wireless Apple Carplay and wireless Android Auto as well. And you have all the settings you need here. Lower down is a glossy panel that houses a climate control setting. You also have the option to choose the 360-degree camera and open the boot from down. To charge your devices, the Nexon comes with a type C port and a type A USB port along with a charging socket. There’s also a wireless charging pad.

A sunroof is on offer as well, and like the older Nexon, you get a drive mode selector as well. The other highlight of the new Nexon is the audio quality with the eight-speaker JBL unit and a subwoofer. It gets multiple modes to select, depending on the audio, and overall, it is a superb system.

With the incredibly crisp 360-degree camera, blind view monitor along dedicated SOS switch for emergencies, it is evident that this is a truly massive interior upgrade. So overall, it is an interior that will definitely appeal to a lot of buyers. However, what will split opinion is the upholstery because the purple on the outside doesn’t seem that brash and bold, but when you get inside this lavender mixed with the black and then you have grey accents as well. It’s not for everyone. And that I think will split opinion.

Now the seats have been redesigned, so they are a bit more comfortable, and a lot more supportive, however, cushioning is not as soft as the earlier Nexon. It has been firmed up slightly, but that also means a good amount of support. What’s nice is that the seats get height adjusters for the driver and passenger seats. Seat ventilation works effectively. There are some bits from
the older Nexon like the ORVM adjust switches and the power window switch gear.

Safety has always been a priority for the Nexon and with this one, it continues. You have six airbags, ABS with EBD, ESP, a tyre pressure monitor, three-point seatbelts for the rear passengers and the seats have pressure sensors as well, which means if you don’t wear it, the car will start chiming, and blind view monitor as well. But it does miss out on ADAS, which the Hyundai Venue now gets.

Since there has been no dimensional change to this updated Nexon, space in the backseat is the same as before, which means if you’re over six feet, you’re going to have barely enough room for your knees, footroom is decent, but again, headroom is going to be a problem for taller adults. The seat has also been redesigned, like the front slightly, so you have a bit better support, under thigh support is not bad either. For an average-sized adult, the space is more than enough, and the rear seat is a lot better compared to rivals such as the Hyundai Venue and the Kia Sonet. Rear passengers also get AC vents and get a Type C port and a USB A. Boot space is still a strong 382 litres, which can be upped by folding down the rear seats.

Powering this updated Nexon is the same as before, a 1.2 litre engine making 120 horsepower and a 1.5 litre diesel with 115 horsepower. Now the gearboxes are the same as well, six-speed manual and six-speed AMTs. However, what is different though is on the petrol version, you now have a seven-speed DCT.

Now since the engine is the same, let’s get to the big change, the DCT gearbox. So, the first thing right off is the smoothness during shifts. You never really feel the cogs swapping and it is really nice as long as you are moderate with the throttle. The response is more like a torque converter and a lot more linear. Even after changing the mode, the engine response is better. However, the shift speeds are still the same. Kick down is not that great either. It takes a bit of that hesitance before it gets going. But once it takes off, it is quite nice and it is smooth and very comfortable.

Now for a bit better control of the gearbox, you also have paddle shifters on offer. However, the shift speed again is a bit of an issue because they’re just not as responsive and you do miss that driver engagement. There is a fair bit of delay every time you change. The best way to work on this DCT is to have a moderate foot on the throttle and not expect hyper responses. If you rush, it’s not going to work in your favour.

Downshift too enthusiastically and the car will refuse
to shift down with a warning on the instrument screen. It’s a failsafe that protects the transmission from abuse. The transmission also has AI software that learns and adapts to your driving style for better performance. The engine is quite nice, especially once it crosses 2000 to 2500 RPM. The mid-range is nice and punchy, and at the top, you have this nice exhaust note as well. It’s not really a coarse sound, you don’t feel like it’s a three-cylinder struggling. In fact, the exhaust note is rather nice.

Tata also claimed that they have retuned the suspension, but it is broadly the same as before in character. At low speeds, the bumps come through the cabin, and sharp bumps at slow speeds are felt. However, as you gain speed, it all flattens out very nicely. It is confident and flat while cruising at triple-digit speeds and takes on undulations well. Where the Nexon really shines through is on a completely battered section of road. It has that toughness that you expect and it definitely feels a lot like an SUV. In corners, it is confident to manoeuvre, but you won’t find a lot for the enthusiasts. It is aimed at convenience with light steering, and that is what it does best.

The 1.5-litre turbo diesel now gets 115 horsepower, as opposed to the 130hp. To be honest, refinement is not its strong suit, because especially at low speeds, you do hear a lot of sounds, and if you step on the accelerator, the response is very good, that torque comes in immediately, but refinement and that diesel noise is something you just can’t avoid. Like the petrol version, this too gets a six-speed manual, but no option of a DCT, however, you have the AMT as the only automatic option.

The six-speed manual gearbox is slick to shift, nice and easy. The clutch is also light, but it is quite far up. That means a good workout for your left leg. You have to really dig in, and whenever you have to lift off, it is quite a long travel. So that is going to be quite cumbersome, especially in city traffic. That said, the engine feels adequate, especially when the road opens up.

Now a big advantage of the diesel is its strong cruising ability. Once it’s in 6th gear, and you are just ambling around 100, 110, it is absolutely at home. However, what you just can’t fail to appreciate is that torque, and how nicely smooth it is. If you are under 2000 RPM and if you just press on the accelerator in third, the response is immediate and it is quite strong. It does get loud, especially around 3500 RPMs, but you don’t really miss out on that strong overtaking ability.

So, on the whole, how much of an update is this? Well, to be honest, quite a significant one. Yes, it’s not a generational change, it still sits on the same platform, and it still gets the same engines and gearboxes as well, but the addition of a DCT has definitely widened its appeal, and then you have this massive change to the interior where the Nexon severely lacked and now Tata has fixed it. The exterior also is a lot more radical to look at and people will definitely like the modernism it brings. Tata has also revamped the variant breakup of the Nexon which now does away with the older terminology and gets new trim lines.

Smart, Pure, Creative, and Fearless are further classified into Plus, S, and Plus S. A wide array of options only means that there is a Nexon available for a wide range of budgets. The 2023 Tata Nexon prices start from Rs 8.10 lakh (ex-showroom) while the prices for the diesel-manual start from Rs 11 lakh (ex-showroom) and the diesel AMT is priced from Rs 13 lakh. The prices for the petrol-AMT and petrol DCA meanwhile start from Rs 11.70 lakh and Rs 12.20 lakh (ex-showroom) respectively.

Put everything together, the Nexon delivers an overall package that offers more for the money. And looking at its track record, that’s exactly what Indian car buyers seem to want. Suffice to say, if you liked the Nexon earlier, you’ll really love this one.
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Motor Vikatan | October 2023 | Vikatan.com
Mercedes-Benz has unveiled its latest masterpiece, the EQE 500 4MATIC electric vehicle, poised to challenge the realm of science fiction in the world of automobiles. This opulent creation finds its place nestled between its distinguished siblings, the EQS and EQB models, offering a tantalizing glimpse into the future of luxury electric SUVs. The allure doesn’t end there; the EQE 500 carries a price tag of Rs 1.39 crore ex-showroom, effortlessly harmonizing with its pricier EQS counterpart at Rs 1.60 crore.

Mercedes-Benz: Pioneering Electric Transformation

While Mercedes-Benz has committed to an ambitious goal of transitioning its entire product lineup to electric vehicles by the end of 2030 for European markets, the company has yet to
reveal similar plans for India. Despite the Indian government’s increasing emphasis on electric vehicles, a clear mandate dictating the cessation of petrol and diesel vehicle production has not materialized. Nevertheless, Mercedes-Benz remains undeterred, introducing its cutting-edge electric marvels in the Indian market as it does in Europe.

**Aesthetics Meets Innovation**

At the heart of the EQE 500’s appeal is the iconic three-pointed star gracing the front, surrounded by a constellation of smaller stars, symbolizing the vehicle’s extraordinary pedigree. This car effortlessly encapsulates the essence of the future with its fusion of advanced technology and visionary design, epitomized by its replacement of traditional LED headlamps with digital lamps. Stepping inside the EQE 500 is akin to entering the lobby of a five-star hotel. Every detail exudes opulence, technology, and futuristic design, all underscored by a generous wheelbase measuring 3,030 mm. The interior boasts an instrument cluster, MBUX hyperscreen, and a dedicated touchscreen for the co-driver, all seamlessly integrated within an expansive 56-inch panel that redefines automotive interiors. For audiophiles, a Burmester 3D sound system featuring 15 speakers transforms the car into a personal concert stage.

**Cutting-Edge Features**

The EQ 500 spares no expense in incorporating modern conveniences, including a HEPA filter to ensure pristine air quality, a head-up display for seamless navigation, and an Advanced Driver Assistance System (ADAS) at Level 2 for enhanced safety. Notably, the AIRMATIC suspension system takes centre stage, offering the unique ability to raise the car’s height by 25 mm, ensuring versatility in various driving conditions.

**Electric Powertrain**

Powering this marvel is a formidable 90.56 kWh lithium-ion battery nestled beneath the car, with an electric motor generating an impressive 402 bhp of power and a staggering 858 Nm of torque. On a single charge, the EQE 500 can traverse up to 550 kilometres, reaching...
a top speed of 210 kmph, and achieving a blistering 0-100 kmph sprint in just 4.9 seconds. Mercedes-Benz stands firmly behind its technology, offering a decade-long warranty on the battery and recommending servicing only once every two years. Remarkably, if you decide to part ways with your EQE 500 after five years, Mercedes-Benz is prepared to buy it back at fifty per cent of the original price.

**Conclusion**

In the ever-evolving landscape of luxury electric vehicles, the Mercedes-Benz EQE 500 4MATIC emerges as a beacon of opulence, innovation, and sustainability. As the automotive industry journeys towards an electrified future, this exquisite creation firmly cements Mercedes-Benz’s commitment to shaping the forefront of automotive excellence. The EQE 500 invites us to embrace a world where luxury and eco-consciousness coexist harmoniously, signalling a bright future for the discerning Indian automobile enthusiast.
Citroen is stepping up its game in the Indian market with the C3 Aircross, the company’s fourth model. It is a larger car than its hatchback sibling, measuring 4.3m in length. It boasts a remarkable 200mm ground clearance, decent approach and departure angles, and a choice of five or seven seats, allowing it to compete with both the Creta and the Carens.

C3 Aircross looks refreshingly different from other midsize SUVs, and if you see any similarities, you are correct because it is a derivative of the C3 hatchback, which has the same C-Cubed platform. The exterior looks clearly Citroen, with the two chevrons taking center stage, and while the fascia is similar to the C3, the Aircross appears more butch and premium. When you pull up in someone’s rearview mirror, they will notice a more intimidating face than the C3 hatch, and the flared wheel arches look particularly threatening when viewed from the front.

The C3 Aircross looks even better now that it has a new lower bumper with a noticeable skid plate and a pair of unique fake housings above. The air intake above the bumper is now bigger, emphasizing the car’s breadth, and the Chevron emblem is now completed in glossy black with a silver rim, making it look classier. The C3’s headlight and Daytime Running Lamp cluster are carried over, as are the halogen lights.

The C3 Aircross is wider, taller, and longer than the Creta; in the side profile, the upright C-pillar and flat rear end give it an MPV appearance. The upright stance, class-leading 2,671mm wheelbase, 4,323mm length, tight overhangs, and well-proportioned wheel arches and glass areas give the look of a large car. It gets 200mm of ground clearance, an approach angle of 20.5 degrees and a departure angle of 25 degrees will come in handy over rough terrains. Generous plastic cladding on the doors, a prominent wrinkle in the rear fender, a two-tone roof, and fantastic-looking 17-inch ‘Quadratic’ wheels add to the overall appeal. The
CITROEN C3 AIRCROSS

FAMILY CAR
C3 Aircross looks good from the back, thanks to the eye-catching C-shaped taillights, substantial roof spoiler, and chunky rear skid plate.

There are quite a lot of hard, scratchy plastics in the cabin, but generally, the C3 Aircross is pretty stylish on the inside. The dashboard and the console have the same layout as the C3 hatchback and share the majority of the components, except different textures and colors. The two variants share a 10.2-inch connected infotainment screen similar to the C3 hatch and new digital instrumentation inspired by the C5 Aircross, which has a simple, easy-to-read layout and three display modes, including the Minimal mode that I liked in the C5. You also get a total of five USB (Type B, not Type C) charging ports (including two for the third row of seats), a rearview camera with reverse parking sensors, and just two airbags as standard, which is a stingy feature list by class standards.

There is no sunroof, climate control, or ventilated seats available, so I am hoping Citroen will keep the price competitive. Despite the flared external measurements, I assume the cabin width is comparable. It’s still spacious, and the front seats are wide and comfortable and they are somewhat flat profile.

The rear seat is likewise a pleasant place to be, with enough head and legroom even for tall passengers. Though the under-thigh support is a little short, the general cushioning and high seat posture allow you to travel for a longer time in comfort. Citroen is an expert at assessing foam density for seats that are neither too hard nor too soft.

The third row is only for people in a pinch, which is why Citroen calls this a 5+2 and not a true seven-seater. Because the seats are narrow and immediately mounted on the floor, you’ll be sitting in an uncomfortable knees-up position that won’t be comfortable for rides more than 30-40km. Only children may find this area useful, although the high second-row seats and small windows may make them feel claustrophobic however you do get a seat back that reclines instead, which is great for long drives.

The third row has its cupholders and USB-A chargers, and this model has roof-mounted AC vents (which are pretty fragile). The five-seater model
lacks similar features, but its second row gains a center armrest with cup holders and a more spacious layout. The 5+2 gives the most adaptability in my opinion, and the added features make it a more tempting investment.

The C3 Aircross comes only with one engine and transmission option: the same three-cylinder 1.2-litre turbo-petrol engine linked to a six-speed manual that drives the C3’s higher models. There is also no diesel option, which is desired by 40% of midsize SUV customers. Citroen’s turbo-petrol is the best 1.2-litre engine in the market today. Updated to meet to the latest BS6 Phase-II regulations, the latest generation of Citroen’s ‘PureTech’ engine gets the latest software and ECU tweaks but produces the same 110 PS (108.4 hp) and 190 Nm of torque.

The car drives much better than on the papers, and even with a full house, the 1.2-liter engine never feels slow. The manual transmission is smooth, and the clutch is light enough for city driving. The clutch pedal travel and shifter throws are short, and the visibility and seating ergonomics are superb - so drivers of all sizes should feel at peace with the car.

The C3 Aircross may not be as powerful as its competitors, but you’re rarely left longing for more power, and we were very impressed with how quickly the C3 Aircross picked up speed. The engine has a willingness to rev, and a finely stacked set of ratios throws you into the meat of the powerband with every upshift. The engine’s mid-range is very robust, making overtaking and interstate travel a breeze, and while a larger and more powerful engine would be wonderful to have as an alternative, the 1.2 turbo does the job admirably.

The suspension provides outstanding ride comfort and will outperform its competitors on the majority of road conditions that India will throw at this group. What is unexpected, however, is how effectively the C3 Aircross handles the corners. Despite its length, it seems composed over curving roads and even during high-speed lane changes, and a light or heavy load doesn’t appear to disrupt that. Sure, it’s not as agile as the recently launched Honda Elevate, but those searching for the utility of a three-row SUV will love its poise. Its light at low speeds, gets heavier as you speed up, and has no slack around the straight-ahead position, allowing you to drive with precision and control. In fact, with the confidence it inspires, the C3 Aircross is a joy to drive at high speeds.

The unusual Citroen C3 Aircross has a lot to offer. The unusual design and revolutionary three-row layout set it apart from the crowd of midsize SUVs that all follow the same template. The engine is powerful, and the handling is good, but the lack of safety features and creature comforts leaves you wanting. Also, the lack of diesel or automatic options, as well as the paucity of features, demonstrates the sheer cost-cutting attempts. However, Citroen has launched the C3 Aircross at Rs 9.99 lakh (introductory, ex-showroom, India) for the base variant, which is quite aggressive. But we have to wait and watch for the cost of the top variant, which will be announced during the start of deliveries in the coming weeks.
In a groundbreaking move towards advancing the electric vehicle (EV) industry, Mahindra & Mahindra has unveiled its state-of-the-art Electric Power Train Development Center, a remarkable battery testing lab located near Chennai, India. In an exclusive interview with Velusamy, President of this visionary institute Mahindra Research Valley, Motor Vikadan takes its readers on an enlightening journey through the meticulous testing processes that shape the electric future.

From SUVs to the Future of Mobility

Mahindra, a renowned name in the automotive sector, has already made its mark with the electric XUV400 SUV. But the company doesn’t stop there. The unveiling of the Scorpio pick-up, the five-door Thar.e, and the upcoming XUV e8, built on the INGLO skateboard platform, are only the beginning. Notably, the XUV e9, a coupe version of the XUV e8, is poised to revolutionize the EV landscape.

The Heart of the Machine - Battery Packs

Before delving into the inner workings of Mahindra’s Electric Power Train Development Center, Velusamy Sir offers a glimpse of the crucial “battery pack” that powers these vehicles. This 600 kg powerhouse is composed of eight modules, each housing a tight stack of 16 battery cells, a configuration that accounts for a staggering 72% of the battery’s cells. This battery pack prototype assembly...
Electromagnetic Magic - The Power Conversion

Electricity is at the core of an EV, and the transformation from DC power generated by the battery to AC power that fuels the motor is nothing short of electrifying. Velusamy explains that when this conversion takes place through an inverter and feeds the motor coil, an electromagnetic field is born. This magnetic force drives the motor’s magnet to spin at an astonishing 10,000 to 14,000 RPM, ultimately propelling the drive shaft and, in turn, the vehicle’s wheels. It’s a symphony of science and engineering.

The Battery Test Bed - Where Innovation Meets Reality

The battery test bed is where the rubber meets the road, figuratively speaking. Here, real-world scenarios are put to the test. Can an 80 kWh battery be charged in just 30 minutes? What about 15 minutes or even a remarkable 7.5 minutes? The answer lies in the rigorous examination of the charging process, where the amount of electricity injected into the battery is meticulously calibrated. Beyond speed, the Mahindra team assesses the battery’s performance under extreme weather conditions, from freezing Kashmir terrains to sweltering deserts.

Built to Withstand the Rough Road

As any driver knows, the road can be unforgiving, with vibrations that can put any system to the test. Mahindra’s Electric Power Train Development Center is no exception. They subject their batteries to the roughest of terrains, ensuring that the technology is as robust as it is efficient.

Pushing the Boundaries of Science

Velusamy concludes with a profound statement: “If science quenches the thirst, that thirst can never be quenched.” The work undertaken in facilities like this exemplifies the relentless pursuit of excellence by scientists and engineers who continuously raise their own standards.

In summary, Mahindra’s Electric Power Train Development Center is not merely a “Battery Testing Lab” but a testament to the company’s commitment to pushing the boundaries of EV technology. Under the leadership of Velusamy, the future of electric mobility looks brighter than ever, with innovation and rigorous testing paving the way for a sustainable and electrifying future on the road.
WHAT IS BHARAT NCAP?

WHY IS IT SIGNIFICANT?
The much-awaited Bharat New Car Assessment Programme (Bharat NCAP) was recently launched by the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari. The program aims to improve road safety standards by implementing an authentic and objective rating system for vehicles. According to the Road Transport and Highways Department, Bharat NCAP is a significant step forward in the government’s commitment to improve road safety by raising the safety standards of motor vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes in India. India sees nearly 1.5 lakh road fatalities in a year, accounting for 10% of deaths due to road crashes globally with only 1% of the world’s vehicles.

The Ministry further added that the programme aims to provide a tool for car customers to make a comparative assessment of crash safety of motor vehicles available in the market. Under this programme, car manufacturers can voluntarily offer their cars tested as per Automotive Industry Standard (AIS) 197. Based on the performance of the car in the tests, the car will be awarded star ratings for Adult Occupants (AOP) and Child Occupant (COP). Potential car customers can refer to these star ratings to compare the safety standards of different vehicles and accordingly make their purchase decisions.

Cars will be assigned a rating between one star to five stars after being evaluated on three parameters — adult occupant protection, child occupant protection, and safety assist technologies present in the car. The first two parameters will be calculated with the help of three different kinds of tests, which include a frontal offset test where a vehicle is driven at 64 kmph and with 40% overlap into a deformable barrier which represents the oncoming vehicle, which replicates a crash between two cars of the same weight. Other tests are the side impact test at 50 kmph and the pole-side impact test (where a car is crashed into a rigid pole sideways) at 29 kmph.

Though Bharat NCAP is voluntary, in certain cases, cars may be subjected to a crash test such as for a base model of a popular variant (minimum clocked sale of 30,000 units), or when the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways recommends a model for testing based on market feedback or in the interest of public safety. Officials of the Ministry of Road Transport
and Highways say that automobile manufacturers have offered a total of 30 car models for crash testing under Bharat NCAP, without revealing the names of the auto companies willing to participate.

The testing protocols procedures of the Bharat NCAP are based on global standards, taking references from international protocols such as the Global New Car Assessment Programme (GNCAP) a UK-based NGO, Towards Zero Foundation. It serves as a platform for cooperation among new auto assessment programmes worldwide, including countries similar to the U.S., which has the world’s oldest crash testing governance since 1978. The NGO launched a Safer buses for India crusade in 2014 when it released the country’s first independent crash tests covering the Suzuki- Maruti Alto 800, the Tata Nano, Ford Figo, the Hyundai i10 and Volkswagen Polo.

All but one of the five models failed the test at 56 kmph and all scored zero stars at 64 kmph. With no airbags, the Swift also scored zero stars but a separate test of an interpretation vended in Latin America with airbags scored three stars which demonstrated the model’s eventuality for enhancement, according to the Towards Zero Foundation.

The BNCAP will be anchored by the Pune-based Central Institute of Road Transport (CIRT), which will invite OEMs to volunteer cars for crash tests. A random selection process will see the BNCAP committee pick the base variant of a model to undertake a crash test. ARAI in Pune, ICAT in Manesar, and GARC in Chennai, are the three test agencies that have been given the mandate to undertake crash tests and evaluate results for imparting the BNCAP star ratings.
Nitin Gadkari, said “Today is an important day in the history of the Indian automobile industry, with whose collaboration we are introducing the BNCP regime. With suggestions from all stakeholders, the programme has been structured in a systematic way that has been accepted by all. While the cost of testing at a global centre is Rs 2.5 crore, the BNCP test cost for a car is pegged at Rs 60 lakh compared to Rs 2.5 crore if done overseas. We have already received the request to test 30 models, this shows the importance of BNCP.”

He further said, “People are conscious of the higher star ratings. By star rating, people can understand product quality and create awareness in the minds of customers, and at the same time, there is huge domestic demand for higher star ratings, and people are quality-conscious. “People are conscious of safety, and pollution. If any new alternatives are there, they are ready to accept this,” he added.

Vinod Aggarwal, President of Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) said the BNCP initiative “will go a long way in educating customers in making informed purchase decisions, which would now be very strongly influenced by the safety parameters of the vehicle. “This programme will eventually help market forces push vehicle manufacturers to offer safer vehicles, with the potential of bringing everlasting change in the attitude of customers during the purchase,” he said.

Maruti Suzuki India Executive Officer, corporate affairs, Rahul Bharti said, “Any car that is launched in India follows the mandatory safety standards set by the government and is therefore safe. For consumers seeking extra safety or manufacturers offering extra safety features the Bharat NCAP (BNCP) system is an authentic and objective rating system to empower the customer to make an informed choice. Maruti Suzuki welcomes this initiative of the government and will offer at least three models for BNCP testing in the first lot itself.”

Hyundai Motor India Ltd Managing Director & CEO Unsoo Kim said this effort will raise safety standards, empower consumers with vital information, and make Indian roads safer for all. “At Hyundai Motor India, we remain committed to delivering the highest safety standards across our entire product range.”

The Country Head and Executive Vice President of Toyota Kirloskar Motor, Vikram Gulati said the initiative comes at a time when consumers are looking at the highest standards of safety and seeking safer vehicles. In addition to empowering consumers, this will also help bring about greater awareness and further transparency by allowing them to know comparative safety aspects of various products on offer,” he said.

Veejay Nakra, President - Automotive Sector, M&M said, “Safety has always been our top priority, which is evident in our products consistently receiving 5-star and 4-star Global NCAP (GNCAP) ratings. The launch of Bharat NCAP is a commendable initiative by MoRTH, and we believe it will further elevate the standards of vehicle safety in India. We will continue to keep customers at the forefront of our journey of innovation and integrating safety with advanced technology while shaping a safer automotive future for India.”

Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Managing Director Shailesh Chandra said safety has always been at the core of the company’s DNA, and Bharat NCAP aligns perfectly with its commitment to deliver vehicles that prioritise safety of customers.

The launch of the Bharat NCAP is on the back of a slew of road safety regulations over the past few years including mandatory dual front airbags, anti-lock braking system, seatbelt reminder and reverse parking sensors. It is expected that the demand for safer cars will increase, encouraging car manufacturers to comply with customer needs. With high safety standards, Indian cars will be able to compete better in the global market, increasing the export potential of car manufacturers in India. Over the years, India will also have to align Bharat NCAP with global standards by expanding testing parameters. For example, the U.S. NCAP also includes a roll-over test which tests whether a vehicle is vulnerable to tipping up on the road in a severe manoeuvre.
TATA INTRA V20 CNG
A GAME-CHANGER IN THE WORLD OF BI-FUEL PICKUPS
In the ever-evolving landscape of commercial vehicles, Tata Motors has unveiled a groundbreaking addition to its esteemed lineup—the Tata Intra V20 CNG. This remarkable vehicle stands as India’s maiden bi-fuel pickup, ingeniously blending the power of petrol and the eco-friendliness of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG). In this feature, we delve into the details of this automotive marvel that promises to revolutionize the industry.

The CNG Baby Elephant Arrives

Designed with precision and innovation, the baby elephant of the automotive world has arrived, and it goes by the name Tata Intra V20 CNG. This remarkable creation was conceived to complement Tata’s illustrious Ace model, a forerunner that paved the way for a series of exceptional models, including the V10, V30, and V50. However, the Intra V20 CNG takes the spotlight as the first-ever commercial vehicle to offer the flexibility of both petrol and CNG, setting a new standard in the industry.
Power and Payload Capacity

Don’t let its compact size fool you; the Intra V20 CNG boasts impressive capabilities. With a payload capacity of 1 ton, it can gracefully handle loads of up to 1,100 kg. Skeptics may wonder if CNG can bear such weight and keep the vehicle going. The answer is a resounding yes. Its engine packs a punch with 58.4bhp on petrol and a still formidable 53bhp on CNG. The torque is equally impressive at 106Nm when running on petrol and 95Nm when operating on CNG.

Dimensions that Stand Out

One glance at the Intra V20 CNG, and you’ll notice its distinctive feature—a rear load body stretching 8.8 feet. In comparison, other models in its class typically max out at 8.2 feet. Tata’s dedication to innovation extends to the driver’s cabin, where models come equipped with air conditioning. Though the V20 CNG doesn’t offer AC currently, it’s only a matter of time before this feature makes its debut. The vehicle’s steering also benefits from electric assist, ensuring effortless manoeuvrability.

Safety Takes Center Stage

Safety is paramount, particularly when dealing with CNG. The Intra V20 CNG features a pin-like facility for filling, a critical element to prevent mishaps. If the pin doesn’t fit correctly, the vehicle won’t start, thanks to a sophisticated sensor that guarantees CNG safety. The cabin proudly showcases white-coloured CNG tanks on both sides, with 35 litres in one and 45 litres in the other. This choice of colour isn’t just for aesthetics—it’s a strategic move to prevent overheating. In addition to CNG, the vehicle accommodates a 35-litre petrol tank, with an optional 5-litre tank for those who prefer not to use petrol exclusively. Plus, it can also run on E20 type petrol, the next level
of fuel efficiency.

Impressive Range and Features

The Intra V20 CNG delivers an impressive range, capable of travelling up to 700 km on a full charge. That’s nearly the distance between Kanyakumari and Chennai, an enviable feat for commercial vehicles. A digital instrument cluster provides real-time information, indicating whether the vehicle is running on CNG or petrol. For added convenience, a dedicated switch allows seamless toggling between the two modes, while the instrument cluster displays vital data such as speed, trip information, and time.

Tackling Tough Terrain

Navigating bumpy roads is a common challenge in many towns. However, the Intra V20 CNG takes it in stride with a ground clearance of 175mm, even when fully loaded, ensuring a smooth and comfortable ride.

The Future of Commercial Vehicles

Tata Motors believes that the introduction of CNG in commercial vehicles will be warmly welcomed by mid-sized businessmen, thanks to the Intra V20 CNG’s promise of enhanced mileage and cost savings. As it enters the market with a resounding presence, this new CNG baby elephant aims to carve out a niche of its own, competing with the likes of Mahindra’s Bolero, Ashok Leyland’s Dost, and Tata’s previous Ace Gold model.

In conclusion, the Tata Intra V20 CNG represents a significant leap forward in the world of commercial vehicles, introducing a bi-fuel option that combines the best of both petrol and CNG. With impressive power, safety features, and a commitment to environmental sustainability, it’s poised to make a lasting impact on the industry, offering versatility and efficiency that businesses can rely on.
In the fast-evolving world of electric scooters, Ather Energy has made a remarkable mark with its Ather 450 S. This scooter is not just about electric propulsion; it’s about redefining everyday commuting.

Because of the reduction in FAME-II subsidy by the government, the price of electric vehicles has increased. This has forced manufacturers to bring out more accessible variants in their lineup.

**Sleek and Stylish**

The Ather 450 S might be an everyday scooter, but it doesn’t compromise on style. With its clean lines, minimalist design, and sharp contours, it’s a head-turner. Ather has managed to blend modern aesthetics with practicality seamlessly.
At the front, you’re greeted by a distinctive LED headlamp that not only looks cool but provides excellent illumination at night. The exposed frame adds an industrial touch, emphasizing the scooter’s robust build. The overall fit and finish are impressive, reflecting Ather’s commitment to quality.

**Impressive Electric Performance**

The Ather 450 S may not have the brawny performance figures of its sibling, the 450 X, but it’s no slouch either. It is powered by a 5.4 kW electric motor that delivers a punchy ride. This scooter is not about outright speed but more about swift and efficient urban commuting.

The acceleration is smooth and linear, making it perfect for city traffic. It can comfortably reach speeds that keep you ahead of the pack at traffic signals. The instant torque delivery is a boon in stop-and-go traffic, ensuring you’re always ready to dart ahead.

**Decent Range for Daily Riding**

One of the critical factors for any electric vehicle is its range, and the Ather 450 S offers a practical one. The 2.9 kWh lithium-ion battery provides a real-world range of around 60-70 kilometres on a single charge. For most daily commutes, this range is more than adequate.

Ather has also included fast-charging capabilities. With the Ather Grid fast charger, you can charge the battery from 0 to 80% in approximately 3 hours, which is convenient if you need a quick top-up during the day.
Riding Comfort and Handling

The Ather 450 S offers a comfortable and composed ride. The telescopic front forks and the rear mono-shock do a good job of absorbing bumps and undulations, ensuring a smooth journey. The scooter’s nimbleness and agility make it a breeze to manoeuvre through crowded streets.

The seating position is ergonomic and comfortable, and the scooter provides ample legroom. The flat floorboard adds to the practicality, and the under-seat storage compartment is spacious enough to stow away your daily essentials.

Cost Management

The cool 7-inch touchscreen is not available on the Ather 450 S. In its place you get a 7-inch digital instrument cluster. This is a great unit, but does not reflect the cool quotient of the 450 X. You have a joystick on the handlebar which helps you navigate the instrument cluster.

Conclusion

The Ather 450 S might not have the thunderous performance figures of its sibling, the 450 X, but it doesn’t try to be a speed demon. Instead, it focuses on being an excellent everyday scooter that combines style, efficiency, and practicality.

If your daily commute involves navigating through city streets and you’re looking for a reliable, eco-friendly, and stylish companion, the Ather 450 S is worth considering. It’s a scooter that embraces the electric future without compromising on the essentials of everyday riding.
Award-winning TSI engine across the range
Acclaimed DSG transmission
25.65 cm (10") Integrated touch screen infotainment system
20.32 cm Fully digital instrument cluster
Ventilated seats

Virtus starts at ₹11.47 lakh*
Taigun starts at ₹11.61 lakh*
40+ Safety features

Terms and conditions apply. For the latest benefits contact your nearest dealership. *Ex-showroom price. **3 Free Services applicable on 1 000 kilometers, 7 500 kilometers and 15 000 kilometers. In service, only labour charges are free. Features and accessories shown may not be a part of standard equipment and are subject to change without prior notice. Actual car colour may vary. The dark shade on the glass is due to the lighting effect. Images are for representation purpose only. To know more on the schemes, please visit your nearest Volkswagen dealership or log on to volkswagen.co.in

In the world of motorcycles, few names resonate with as much history and innovation as the TVS Apache. Since its inception in 2005, the Apache series has consistently pushed the envelope, and the latest addition to this storied lineage, the TVS Apache RTR 310, is no exception. In this review article, we take a closer look at this exceptional machine that seamlessly marries power, technology, and style.

A Legacy of Apache

Before we talk about the RTR 310, let’s take a moment to appreciate the origin of the name “Apache.” The term actually traces its heritage to the Native American people who inhabited North America. Its Spanish root, meaning ‘enemy,’ suggests a history marked by resilience and tenacity, much like the motorcycle series itself. A history lesson in itself, isn’t it?

Evolution Unveiled

Eighteen years have passed since the Apache first graced the roads, and while many things have changed, one constant remains - the name. With over 50 million customers worldwide, Apache has become synonymous with quality and performance. The year 2017 saw the emergence of the Apache RR310, a racing marvel that garnered widespread acclaim. The Apache lineup now splits into the RR and RTR series, with the latest entry being the RTR 310.

Redefining Power

The RTR 310 takes the tried-and-true engine of the RR310 and unveils it in a naked, no-frills version. From cruise control to a climate-adjustable seat, this bike boasts a myriad of features that redefine comfort and control. The engine, synonymous with raw power, comes equipped with six gears, stability control, dynamic headlamps with power adjustments, and a bi-traction clutch shifter. This means effortless gear shifting even at top speeds, a feature we experienced...
A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE TVS APACHE RTR 310
firsthand during our test ride in bustling Bangkok traffic.

**Unparalleled Stability**

Corner stability is where the RTR 310 truly shines. A special sensor is employed to enhance cornering prowess. This sensor intelligently adjusts the ABS control modes when the bike leans and steers, ensuring a steady and confident ride even in challenging conditions.

**The Weight Factor**

Weighing in at 5 kg lighter than its RR 310 sibling, the RTR 310 owes its weight reduction to an aluminium frame design. This weight savings, combined with the already potent engine, results in an even more exhilarating riding experience.

**Innovative Tyre Pressure Monitoring**

Ever worried about tyre pressure during long rides? The RTR 310 eliminates that concern with its integrated tyre pressure monitoring system, giving riders peace of mind and a hassle-free journey.

**Performance Figures**

With an engine power of 35.6 PS and torque of 28.7 Nm, the RTR 310 packs a punch. It can reach a top speed of 150 km/h. The suspension, while similar to its predecessor, is now adjustable on both sides, allowing riders to fine-tune their riding experience.

**Customization Options**

TVS offers the RTR 310 with two additional kits - the Dynamic Kit and the Dynamic Pro Kit, priced at Rs. 18,000 and Rs. 22,000, respectively. These kits allow riders to further tailor their bike to their preferences.

**Practicality Meets Style**

With a ground clearance of 180mm, a seat height of 800mm, and an 11-litre
fuel tank, the RTR 310 is built for both urban manoeuvrability and long-haul adventures. Its blend of style and performance ensures it stands out in a crowded segment.

**The Verdict**

In conclusion, the TVS Apache RTR 310 is more than just a naked version of its predecessor; it’s a statement of style and performance. During our exhilarating ride through the vibrant streets of Bangkok, the RTR 310 showcased its versatility, seamlessly transitioning from urban streets to open highways. While there’s more to explore during long-distance rides, one thing is clear - the Apache RTR 310 is poised to win the hearts of riders seeking an amalgamation of innovation, power, and style. Only time will tell if this cool Bangkok debut will earn its place among the biking elite, but early indications are promising. So, gear up, and let’s hit the road with the TVS Apache RTR 310.
2023 HONDA SP160
The year 2023 brings exciting news for motorcycle enthusiasts as Honda, a brand synonymous with quality and performance, unveils its latest gem, the 2023 Honda SP160. Positioned as an entry-level sportbike, the SP160 is generating significant buzz in the motorcycle world. While we await the chance to ride the motorcycle and bring to you an in-depth review, let’s take a walkaround of this promising addition to Honda’s lineup.

Honda has tried to position this somewhere in between the Unicorn and the X-Blade. A motorcycle which provides you the practicality of the Unicorn with a few more modern styling cues.

**Design and Styling**

The first thing that strikes you about the 2023 Honda SP160 is its sporty and aggressive design. Honda has clearly drawn inspiration from its sportier siblings, and the result is a bike that exudes dynamism. The sleek lines, sharp angles, and modern graphics give the SP160 a distinct identity in the 160cc segment.

At the front, the SP160 boasts a sharp LED headlamp setup that not only enhances visibility
but also adds to its appeal. The tank is sculpted to provide a snug fit for the rider’s knees. The plastic cladding for the tank gets a dual-paint scheme, which makes it look a bit more premium.

The Tail section of the SP160 is well-proportioned, with an LED tail lamp that seamlessly integrates into the design. The sharp and angular tail cowl adds to the bike’s sporty character. Overall, Honda has done a great job in terms of design and styling, making the SP160 a real looker.

**Engine and Performance**

Powering the 2023 Honda SP160 is a 162.71 cc, single-cylinder engine. The engine remains the same as its siblings, Honda not wanting to change an already good thing. This unit produces 13.27 bhp @ 7500 rpm and 14.58 Nm at 5500 rpm. The 5-speed gearbox is expected to be as good as what we are used to!

Honda has always been known for its refined engines, and the SP160 should be no exception. It’s expected to offer a good balance of city-friendly torque and highway cruising capabilities. The exact dynamics will be crucial, but if past Honda engines are any indication, we can expect a powerplant that’s both reliable and efficient.

**Chassis and Handling**

The SP160 features a well-engineered chassis designed to offer nimble and agile handling. The ergonomics on this bike is meant to be comfortable for your everyday commute, along with a pillion. The precise handling characteristics should make it an excellent choice for city commuting and spirited weekend rides.

Suspension duties are handled by telescopic forks up front and a monoshock at the rear. These components should provide a good balance between ride comfort and
handling prowess, ensuring a stable and planted feel on various road surfaces. Once we ride the bike, we can tell you how well does the motorcycle actually do on the roads.

Braking is an essential aspect of any motorcycle, and the SP160 is expected to come equipped with a front disc brake for efficient stopping power. A rear disc brake is available as well, depending on the trim level. The higher disc variant has a 276 mm petal at the front and a 220 mm petal at the rear.

Wheels on the SP160, are now 17-inch alloys compared to the 18-inch wheels on the Honda Unicorn.

Technology and Features

In the realm of technology and features, Honda has been steadily raising the bar. It comes with a modern digital instrument cluster that provides essential information at a glance. Features such as a gear position indicator, trip meter, and fuel gauge are included. The switches on the handlebar felt like quality components and appeared to be ergonomically placed. We can get a better understanding of this, once we ride it.

Conclusion

The 2023 Honda SP160 appears to be a promising entry into the competitive 160cc sportbike segment. While we’ve only had a glimpse of what this motorcycle has to offer, it’s clear that Honda has invested considerable effort in its design and engineering.

The sporty styling, refined engine, and attention to handling dynamics make the SP160 an attractive choice for riders seeking a practical and stylish commuter. Whether you’re a beginner looking for a reliable and fun-to-ride motorcycle or a seasoned rider in search of an agile commuter, the SP160 is poised to make a mark.
In the ever-evolving landscape of motorcycle technology, where raw power meets cutting-edge features, KTM has once again asserted its dominance with the launch of the eagerly awaited Duke 390 Gen 3, a motorcycle that pushes the boundaries of performance and design. Buckle up as we take a thrilling ride into the future of two-wheeled perfection.

The Evolution of KTM

A decade ago, KTM burst onto the scene with the mantra “We are like that,” and the motorcycle world hasn’t been the same since. Now, in 2024, they’ve unleashed the Duke 390 Gen 3, a testament to their commitment to innovation. Gone are the days of simple ABS; we now find ourselves immersed in a world of cornering ABS, slipper clutches, and more.
**Design: A Visual Delight**

The Gen 3 Duke is a visual masterpiece. The standout feature is its tank, which exudes a bold and lively aesthetic. The LED headlights are seamlessly integrated, resembling the smart ant of the motorcycle world. Additional lights surrounding the headlamp add a touch of sophistication. While it lacks DRLs, it’s clear that every design choice was made with style in mind.

**The Art of Engineering**

The chassis and frame play a pivotal role in the Duke’s appearance. While the steel struts frame remains unchanged, the aluminium sub-frame is a game-changer. It not only enhances the bike’s overall look but also shaves off precious grams.

**Seat Position: Tailored Comfort**

The seat height has been thoughtfully lowered from 823mm to 800mm, catering to riders of average stature. Those seeking even more height can opt for a separate seat. The split seat design and revamped rear fender enhance both aesthetics and comfort.

**Ground Clearance: Taking on Any Terrain**

Recognizing the diverse Indian roadscape, KTM has raised the ground clearance from 150mm to 183mm in the Gen 3 Duke. How is this possible with a lower seat height? Enter the compact LC4C engine, a revolutionary departure from the LC4V, or Liquid Cooled 4V engine.

**Features Galore: Duke Wow!**

The Gen 3 Duke is a treasure trove of amenities. Quick shifter and ride-by-wire are just the tip of the iceberg. The adjustable suspension allows riders to tailor their experience, from soft to hard, to suit road conditions. The TFT
instrument cluster boasts three riding modes: Street, Rain, and Track, each finely tuned for traction control and ABS settings.

Enhanced Control and Safety

The Gen 3 Duke boasts a dual-channel ABS system, complete with a launch control option for track enthusiasts. The Future Super Moto mode disables rear-wheel ABS for controlled drifting. Additionally, speed control lets riders set a limit for added safety, ensuring friends and cargo arrive home securely.

Performance Boost

The Gen 3 Duke packs a punch with its larger 399cc engine, delivering a remarkable 46bhp. Thanks to the compact engine, the gross weight has been reduced to a mere 168 kg, ensuring an agile and exhilarating ride. While it may be gentler in the lower gears, the true performance shines through in the upper range.

The Joy of Handling

With a reduced wheelbase and customizable suspension settings, the Gen 3 Duke handles like a dream. Whether navigating through Pune’s bustling traffic or tackling bumpy roads, this Duke maintains its grace and composure.

The Verdict: Worth Every Penny

The Gen 3 Duke doesn’t come cheap, with an ex-showroom price of Rs. 3.10 lakh. However, in a market brimming with rivals like the Triumph-Bajaj Street 400 and TVS Apache RTR 310, the competition has never been fiercer.

In conclusion, the KTM Duke 390 Gen 3 is a revelation in the world of motorcycles. With its stunning design, state-of-the-art features, and improved performance, it promises an exhilarating ride for those who crave the ultimate two-wheeled experience. As KTM continues to redefine the boundaries of innovation, it’s clear that the Duke 390 Gen 3 is a force to be reckoned with in the 250-400 cc bike segment.
XMR

HERO KARIZMA BACK IN ACTION
You probably remember the iconic Karizma, the motorcycle that introduced many of us to the Indian sports bike scene, if you were a child in the 1990s. It was maybe one of the earliest affordable faired motorcycles. It was also a swoon-worthy machine, especially in yellow, as far as I can recall. When it was introduced in 2003, the Karizma quickly made a name for itself as a high-end offering and gained popularity. However, Karizma’s sales performance started to decline in 2011 after Hero and Honda split.

The legend is back, which is fantastic news, and has a brand-new avatar. The Karizma XMR marries a significant amount of nostalgia with the promise of contemporary improvements. But whether it can live up to the expectations is the real concern. Is the modern XMR deserving of the storied Karizma moniker?

While the original Karizma was stunning, the ZMR had a fairing and proportions that only Hero’s designers could appreciate. To be honest, its design was terrible! Hero, on the other hand, has finally redeemed itself with the new XMR, which is an amazing stunner with great proportions. It has a sharp and sporty style, and not a single aspect that looks anything other than spectacular. Sure, it’s not a fully-faired motorbike because the engine and frame are still exposed, but it cuts a sporty figure and is one of, if not the, best-looking motorcycles in the segment.

Furthermore, the X-shaped LED DRLs with projector, sleek LED indicators, clip-on bars, a stubby
exhaust, and overall aggressive aspect give it the typical sport bike demeanour. The tank’s dual-tone paint scheme, loud XMR insignia, and 3D Karizma monikers. Fat tyres with a new alloy wheel design and a brilliant yellow paint scheme add to its visual attractiveness. The only slight criticism I have is that its rear end is rather slim compared to the large front end, making it appear rather little from behind on the road.

Overall, the Hero designers have nailed the design of the new Karizma. And I believe that is half the battle won - its design will surely be one of its primary USPs, drawing the target audience to the showroom on its own.

The Karizma’s feature set is another remarkable characteristic. Aside from full LED illumination, it has a colour LCD display with smartphone connectivity, turn-by-turn navigation, and all the usual bells and whistles. It’s a decent unit with sleek and clear readouts, albeit sight in direct sunlight is limited. A fast-charging USB port is also included, as is an adjustable windscreen controlled by the ‘Visor’ button.

The fit-and-finish levels are decent enough but not exceptional in the segment. While the plastic quality of the switchgear is adequate, it is sticky in some locations. There are also several instances of exposed welds, which is unusual for a premium flagship product. However, when the pros and cons are weighed, the former clearly dominates the latter. Overall, the XMR provides excellent value in terms of features and equipment.

The XMR soon makes you feel at ease in terms of comfort and practicality - it’s the type of motorcycle that suits you as a rider like a glove. It’s small, light (163.5 kg kerb weight), and comfortable to ride, thanks to its 810mm seat height. The saddle is spacious and comfortable for the rider, but the split-seat configuration is inconvenient for the pillion. The foot pegs are slightly rear-set, but the clip-on bars aren’t as low as they are on, say, the Yamaha R-15, resulting in a very upright riding stance. Long rides will be less tiring because you won’t be putting all of your bodyweight on your wrists.

Let’s get to the heart of the new XMR, which in this case is a brand-new 210cc single-cylinder four-valve DOHC liquid-cooled engine.
Hero MotoCorp’s first liquid-cooled motorbike. The power output is 25.2 bhp, and the peak torque is roughly 20.4 Nm - both of which are healthy figures. Hero also claims to be the finest in their class (200cc).

But that is only on paper. What about its real-world performance? First and foremost, it is not a thriller, so if you were anticipating earth-shattering performance/acceleration, you should temper your expectations. The engine features a linear power delivery and, as such, a powerful low-mid range - between 2,000 and 4,000 rpm. After that, there’s a bit of a plateau from 4,000 to 6,000 rpm, and then it picks up speed again, pretty quickly, until around 10,000 rpm. It needs to be revved aggressively if you want to get the full performance out of it. However, it lacks the quick kick of a Yamaha or KTM in the second part of the rpm range. In comparison to those two, it’s fairly muted. Again, I am not saying it’s underpowered, but the engine doesn’t match the sporty look.
The XMR comes with a six-speed gearbox, however, because of its short ratios and tractable engine, you don’t have to use it all the time. The gear shifts, on the other hand, are a tad clunky. However, because we were riding a brand-new motorcycle, I would give it the benefit of the doubt - the shift quality should improve after the run-in period. Because of the slipper and assist clutch, the clutch lever is easy to operate. Overall, I would say the engine performance is underwhelming, leaving you wanting more. It falls a little short of my expectations.

The Karizma XMR comes with a brand-new steel trellis structure. The suspension configuration, on the other hand, has a standard telescopic front fork rather than an upside-down unit, which is a bit disappointing. Even the smaller, freshly released Xtreme 160R 4V receives 37mm KYB inverted forks, which I find very shocking. A pre-load adjustable mono-shock handles shock absorption duties at the rear.

The Karizma’s suspension had been calibrated to deliver a supple and comfortable ride - well-damped with a tiny touch of stiffness - despite having a conventional setup. The bike feels light and agile and tips into corners with ease. However, it does not feel clunky or awkward in traffic or on ordinary rides. The braking feel and performance could have been better. Despite having a big 300mm front disc and a 230mm rear disc, the setup lacks bite, which is especially noticeable while riding at triple-digit speeds and needing to slow down rapidly. Dual-channel ABS is standard, and the XMR is the first Hero motorbike to be equipped with it.

It could have been flawless, but there’s no doubt that the Karizma XMR is a powerful machine. Sure, it’s missing a few things, and the engine could use more power. However, as an entire package, it performs admirably, especially when compared to competitors such as the Yamaha R-15, KTM RC200, Bajaj Pulsar RS200, and Suzuki Gixxer SF 250. True, it isn’t the legendary comeback that many had hoped for, but it has brought the Hero of our youth back to life without jeopardising its legacy. And it’s worth celebrating just for that.
Hallo!

The Volkswagen Taigun achieved 5 stars in Global NCAP’s updated crash tests, becoming one of the first models ever in India to achieve 5 stars for both adult and child occupants' protection.

The Taigun exemplifies Volkswagen’s commitment to safety, and with 40+ safety features, it’s the SUVW that always puts you first. A testament to the uncompromising standards that make a Volkswagen, safe like a Volkswagen.

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#SafeLikeATaigun  #SaferCarsForIndia

Taigun starts at ₹11.61 lakh*

Terms and conditions apply. *Ex-showroom price. Images are for representation purposes only. India’s safest SUVW based on safety ratings of GNCAP tests. India’s safest SUV is category A0-SUV. **|Forever Care Includes 4 Year standard warranty, 4-year roadside assistance and 3 free services - 1 000 kilometers, 7 500 kilometers and 15 000 kilometers service only labour charges are free. Features and accessories shown may not be a part of standard equipment and are subject to change without prior notice. Actual colour may vary. The dark shade on the glass is due to the lighting effect. For further details, please visit our authorised dealership only. To know more about the schemes, please visit your nearest Volkswagen dealership, or log on to volkswagen.co.in
ROYAL ENFIELD’S ICONIC BULLET 350

A Timeless Blend of Heritage and Modernity
In the annals of motorcycle history, few names evoke the same level of reverence and nostalgia as the Royal Enfield Bullet 350. Introduced by the venerable Royal Enfield Company in 1932, this two-wheeled legend has become an enduring symbol of power, style, and tradition. For generations, it has been more than just a motorcycle; it has been a thread that weaves through the tapestry of Indian families, connecting grandfathers, fathers, sons, and grandsons. Now, with a nod to its more than 90-year heritage, Royal Enfield presents the reimagined Bullet 350, a machine that pays homage to the past while embracing the future.

A Classic Reimagined for the Discerning Rider
A Glimpse of Classic with a Touch of Modernity

The new Royal Enfield Bullet 350 strikes a harmonious balance between classic design and contemporary elements, with approximately 85% to 90% of its DNA being firmly rooted in its timeless predecessor. It’s the remaining that brings forth the distinguishing features, particularly in its design. The headlight caps, reminiscent of tiger eyes, and the antique-style mudguard hark back to an era of elegance and sophistication.

Bullet Meri Jaan: A Tribute to Legacy

To truly understand the spirit of the Bullet 350, one must delve into its history, a journey beautifully encapsulated in the video “Bullet Meri Jaan.” This evocative piece of art was created by meeting families across India who have cherished their Bullet motorcycles for generations. The Bullet, acting as a bridge between generations, has left an indelible mark on the hearts of riders, igniting emotions that span time.

The Royal Enfield Emblem: A Glimpse of Craftsmanship

The iconic Royal Enfield logo, featuring the letters under the Queen of England’s crown, has always been a symbol of excellence. Notably, the golden straps adorning the logo are meticulously hand-painted, a craft mastered by only a handful of artisans. In a delightful departure, the new Bullet 350 flaunts a copper strap, a subtle yet striking departure from tradition.

Crafted for Vintage Aesthetics

The single-stretch seat, slightly elevated, beckons riders to embark on a classic journey. A 19-inch front wheel and an 18-inch rear wheel, paired with timeless tyres, retain the vintage charm. The classic oval-type toolbox takes
on a more contemporary rectangular shape, all in pursuit of that enduring vintage look.

Modern Meets Classic in the Cockpit

Inside the cockpit, the speedometer retains its analogue charm, while a digital console below it provides a window into the modern world of connectivity. Elements such as the brake controls, switches, and mirrors stay true to the classic design language.

Revolutionary Engine Change

Royal Enfield has shifted gears with the engine, introducing the J Platform engine for the Bullet 350. This marks the end of the line for the UC engine, signifying a transition towards modernity.

Variants to Suit Every Taste

The Bullet 350 comes in three enticing variants: Military Red/Black, Standard Black/Maroon, and Black Gold. The standard model boasts disc brakes front and rear, and dual-channel ABS, while the other variants feature front-only discs and single-channel ABS. These models are priced at 1,73,000, 1,97,000, and 2,15,000 INR, respectively. The Black Gold variant stands out with its engine and exhaust block in this high-end lineup, while the others offer chrome accents.

True to Tradition: Spoke Wheels

In a nod to tradition, all variants come equipped with spoke wheels, eschewing alloy wheels that are favoured by some riders. The Bullet 350 remains the quintessential choice for those who seek classic charm.

Exclusive Accessories for Discerning Riders

For those who crave customization, Royal Enfield offers nine exclusive accessories designed specifically for the Bullet 350, allowing riders to tailor their machines to their unique tastes.

A Royal Enfield Legacy in Reach

Priced at just Rs 20,000 less than the base model of the Royal Enfield Classic, the Bullet 350 positions itself as an accessible yet premium offering in the market. It’s a mere Rs 3,000 more than the Hunter, making it an attractive proposition for those looking to embrace the next generation of riding.

In essence, the Royal Enfield Bullet 350 is more than a motorcycle; it’s a testament to timelessness, craftsmanship, and the enduring spirit of adventure. With this new heart, Royal Enfield’s claim of “same beat” rings true, beckoning riders to experience a harmonious blend of tradition and innovation on the open road.
In the ever-evolving landscape of electric vehicles, OLA Electric has emerged as a trailblazing force. This year, they have not only revamped their scooter lineup but have also surprised enthusiasts with the unveiling of four futuristic electric bikes. In this article, we delve into OLA’s latest offerings and explore their recent forays into the world of electric mobility.

**S1 Pro Gen 2: A New Dawn for Scooters**

At the forefront of OLA Electric’s new offerings stands the S1 Pro Gen 2. An evolution of one of OLA’s flagship models, the S1 Pro scooter, this latest iteration packs a punch with its impressive upgrades. The S1 Pro Gen 2 comes equipped with a mid-drive motor capable of delivering a whopping 11kW of power, ensuring an electrifying riding experience. It boasts enhanced suspension, a more potent battery pack, and a substantial reduction in weight.

One of the standout features of the S1 Pro Gen 2 is its remarkable range of 195 km, while its maximum speed clocks in at 120 km/h. For those seeking a thrilling rush, this scooter can accelerate from 0 to 40 km/h in a mere 2.6 seconds. The front twin-shock suspension and rear mono-shock suspension offer a smooth and comfortable ride. Priced at Rs 1,47,499 ex-showroom, this scooter is a true game-changer. Enthusiasts can book their own, with the second-gen model set to hit the market in September.

**S1 X: Affordable Electric Mobility**

For those on a budget, OLA Electric presents the S1 X, a welcome addition to their lineup. With affordability in mind, the S1 X comes in three variants, catering to various price points. The base model starts at just Rs 79,999, making electric mobility more accessible than ever.

The S1 X+, the top-tier variant in the S1 X series, boasts a 5-inch LCD
This update brings more than 20 new features, including biometric unlock, a scooter locator, customizable motor sound, and even a concert mode, promising an enhanced user experience.

display for added convenience. The mid-tier S1 X shares similarities with the S1 X+, both being powered by a 3kWh battery. The base model, simply named S1 X, features a 2kWh capacity battery. Despite their differences, all three models share a robust 6kW motor. The pricing for these models is Rs 99,999 for the S1 X+, Rs 89,999 for the S1 X (3kWh), and an astonishingly affordable Rs 79,999 for the S1 X (2kWh). Bookings for the S1 X series are expected to commence between the end of August and September, with the S1 X set to grace the roads by the year’s end.

**Electric Bikes: A Bold Leap Forward**

In a remarkable move, OLA Electric has expanded its horizons by venturing into electric motorcycles. While these bikes are still in the concept phase, they hold immense promise for the future of electric two-wheelers. OLA envisions four distinct variants, each designed to cater to specific needs.

**Diamond Head:** Featuring a minimalist design, this bike exudes elegance and simplicity.

**Adventure:** Geared for off-road enthusiasts, this model promises an exhilarating experience on rough terrains.

**Cruiser:** Ideal for long-distance cruising on open roads, this bike prioritizes comfort and endurance.

**Roadster:** With a focus on power and performance, the Roadster is poised to be a thrilling ride for speed enthusiasts.

While these bikes are currently in the concept phase, OLA aims to bring them to the market by the end of 2024. The anticipation for their production models is palpable.

**Software and Battery Updates: The Future Beckons**

In addition to their vehicle lineup, OLA Electric has introduced substantial software and battery cell updates. MoveOS 4, an operating system update for all OLA scooters, is set to roll out on September 15. This update brings more than 20 new features, including biometric unlock, a scooter locator, customizable motor sound, and even a concert mode, promising an enhanced user experience.
The most groundbreaking announcement comes in the form of a Giga factory in Krishnagiri, where OLA’s Future Factory already operates. This facility will focus on battery cell manufacturing, aiming to reduce dependence on foreign imports and establish India as a global player in battery production.

As OLA Electric continues to reshape the landscape of electric mobility, their commitment to innovation and sustainability shines through. With a diverse range of scooters, the promise of electric bikes, and groundbreaking updates, OLA is poised to capture the hearts of electric vehicle enthusiasts across the nation. Here’s to OLA’s relentless pursuit of a greener and electrifying future on two wheels!
Dhanush Dev shares his experience with us of riding from Nashik to Pune and back for a weekend of fun in the dirt. The joy of getting down and dirty, as well as upskilling in low traction conditions.

Dhanush grew up loving two-wheels from pulling stunts and drifting on his bicycle, to feeling the wind on his face while standing upfront on his dad’s Kinetic Honda. The love started early and only grew to greater heights. So much so, that Dhanush rode the Raid de Himalaya on his stock KTM Duke 200. A baptism by fire as he was introduced to the world of off-road riding.

Dhanush’s love for automobiles isn’t just restricted to riding them. He has been an automotive luggage and riding gear designer for the last 7 years. Giving a different perspective to motorcycling.

For this ride, Dhanush was using a Hero Xpulse with an aftermarket rally kit. The bike was equipped with Ralco motocross tyres to handle the dirt. Which wasn’t great to use on asphalt while riding on the highway. The second bike for the trip was the Royal Enfield Himalayan, which did a good job with highway munching, but came up a short once the real off-roading started.

The 4-lane highway between the cities was a relatively sedate ride. As the speeds were low, considering the motorcycles and the adaptations. The Xpulse felt really bad on the highways, as he could cruise at 75-85 kmph at the most. Even then the constant sound from the knobby tyres was enough to tire out the rider. The Himalayan on the
DIRT GAMES...
The trails wind through the ghats connecting different sections of off-road with varying technicalities. On these trails is where the XPulse shone, while the Himalayan was difficult to manage for an amateur. For riders with abundant off-road skill, the Himalayan would be fine, but not for a first timer.

The terrain through the course, constantly changed, making all the participants constantly adapt. It was an excellent opportunity to have fun with the correct motorcycle and gear. Riding around the track even at easy pace, was useful in honing your riding skills. Lot of new riders were burning their clutches as they got bogged down on the track. Dhanush carried tools and a tow strap to help out new riders, as they learnt the art of the dirt. Most new riders suffered on the climbs and where there was deep slush.

Dhanush, even with his little experience of off-roading, felt that he learnt a lot from this weekend in Pune. The lessons included throttle control, clutch play and body balance. A mix of all these elements helped navigate the
For a first timer, it is a great learning platform. But you need the correct machinery to truly learn and enjoy. There were riders with Activas and Splendors, but their motivation was to get across the course, not necessarily hone their skills. An advantage of going for such an event, is that you know that you will get help in case you have a breakdown or get injured on the trails.

The most important thing about such experiences is that this skill upgrade doesn’t just stay in the dirt. It also translates to your everyday riding as well. Especially in panic situations on the road, your muscle memory from the trail will help to keep calm and control the motorcycle.

After riding this event, Dhanush feels that riding in the dirt is a must do for every motorcyclist, as it helps you find a new motorcyclist within you!
Inspect and Maintain Your Tyres:

Monsoon roads can be slippery and prone to flooding. Make sure your tyres have adequate tread depth and are in good condition. Proper tyre maintenance is critical for safety. Additionally, keep your tyre pressure at the recommended levels to prevent hydroplaning.

Brake System Check:

Moisture can affect your car’s braking system. Regularly inspect your brakes for signs of wear and tear. If you notice squeaking, grinding, or reduced braking efficiency, get them checked and replace worn-out components.

Ensure Proper Lighting:

During heavy rains, visibility is often reduced. Ensure all your lights are working correctly, including headlights, taillights, brake lights, and turn signals. You may also consider applying an anti-fog solution to your headlights to prevent fogging up.
Wipers and Windshield Care:

The monsoon can be tough on your windshield wipers. Replace worn wiper blades to ensure clear visibility. Additionally, top up your windshield washer fluid and check for any cracks or chips in the windshield. Promptly repair any damage to avoid it worsening during heavy rain.

Battery Check:

Having a properly working battery is an essential requirement throughout the year, though it’s more important in the monsoons. The increased humidity and water on the roads can cause your car’s electrical system to work harder. This takes a heavy toll on the battery, which, if not in great shape, will cause trouble. Ensure that your battery is in good condition, clean the terminals, and check the charging system. If your battery is old, consider replacing it to avoid unexpected breakdowns.

Underbody Rust Protection:

Indian roads are known for their potholes and water logging. To protect your car’s underbody from rust, consider applying an anti-rust coating or underbody sealant. Regularly clean the undercarriage after driving through waterlogged areas.

Regular Fluid Checks:

Check and top up essential fluids, including engine oil, transmission fluid, brake fluid, and coolant. It’s crucial to maintain these fluids at the proper levels to ensure your car operates smoothly in the wet conditions.

Air Conditioning Maintenance:

While you might not use your AC as often during the monsoon, it’s essential to run it periodically to prevent mold and bacteria buildup in the system. Make sure the cabin air filter is clean, allowing for proper air circulation.

Exterior and Interior Cleaning:

Monsoon brings not only rain but also dirt, mud, and contaminants onto your car’s exterior. Regularly wash and wax your car to protect the paint and finish. Also, clean the interiors to prevent the growth of mold and unpleasant odors. If your car’s interior gets soaked, it can end up getting damaged. All that moisture can result in a foul smell. More worryingly, rust can emerge over time. Here’s a simple solution – always keep towels and newspapers handy to rid your car interiors of water.

Emergency Kit Preparation:

Keep an emergency kit in your car with items like a flashlight, first aid supplies, umbrellas, and a set of basic tools. These can come in handy in case of unexpected breakdowns or emergencies.

Conclusion

Proper car maintenance during the Indian monsoon is crucial for your safety and the longevity of your vehicle. By following these maintenance tips, you can navigate the challenges of the rainy season with confidence, ensuring that your car remains in top condition and ready to take on the road, come rain or shine. Remember, a well-maintained car not only ensures your safety but also contributes to a smoother and more enjoyable driving experience during the monsoon.
RED BULL ARE CHAMPIONS, AGAIN!
What happened in the last 3 months in the Formula 1 circuit? The constructor championship for the season is done and dusted. We've seen some new faces, a few records were broken and some new records were made, and a Ferrari driver won a race through brilliant strategy!

With 6 races to go, Red Bull has already clinched the constructor's World Championship of the year! The Austrian based team now has won back-to-back constructor titles and sixth overall. This is one of the most dominating seasons by a constructor as Red Bull won 15 of the 16 races that ended so far. They also broke McLaren's long-standing record of 11 consecutive race wins and extended that run to 15 races!
When the 2023 Formula One season started everyone expected Red Bull to win the title. They displayed a monstrous pace right from the Bahrain test session. Unlike 2022 when Ferrari challenged them for most part of the season, this season was smooth sailing for them at the top. Max Verstappen is driving in his own league where he's his only competitor and the RB19 looks like a jet with the Dutch in the seat. From Sakhir to Monza, they were unstoppable and won every single race. Singapore was the only hiccup in the near perfect season for them where the Galloping Horses surprised everyone.

But it wasn’t all smooth sailing for Red Bull. They had to deal with a variety of driver issues throughout the season. Their sister team Alpha Tauri’s rookie driver Nyck de Vries had a difficult start to the season and failed to score in the first 10 races of the season. They took a bold call of replacing him with Red Bull’s reserve driver Daniel Ricciardo. That didn’t bring them immediate results as the 8-time race winner struggled to get into points with a car that didn’t have much to give. Just after 2 races, the Australian injured himself during the free practice session of the Dutch Grand Prix and was filled in by Liam Lawson. With none of Alpha Tauri’s drivers having contracts beyond this season, questions were raised about their driver lineup for the 2024 season. The promising performance of Liam Lawson warranted him consideration but, in the end, they went with the same duo of Tsunoda and Ricciardo.

Leave what’s happening in the Alpha Tauri garage, the last 3 months weren’t that great for Red Bull either. When Verstappen is breaking and creating records, his teammate Sergio Perez is struggling big time.

It all started in Monaco when Perez crashed in qualifying. That was just the start of the continued qualifying failures. He struggled to get the best of the RB19 and faced multiple Q2 eliminations. Since Monaco, the Mexican had failed to win a race and stood on the podium just 4 times in 11 races. Lewis Hamilton and Lando Norris have also marked the same number of podium finishes since
Monaco. With so much expectation around him, the mediocre results brought far more criticism. In fact, he spoke about the difficulties of being Verstappen’s teammate and the mental health issue.

"After Miami, things started to get worse for me. I felt like I was driving another car that didn’t suit me so well. Subsequently, it was not possible to get into Q3 a number of times, which shattered my confidence. I was driving without any confidence. At a certain point, I just couldn't figure it out anymore. Formula 1 is my sport, my life, my passion. But when you are having such a hard time at work, it is difficult to be cheerful at home with your wife and children. That's why I hired a mental coach because my family deserves to have that cheerful father at home. I decided not to give up. In the meantime, I also continued to work hard with the engineers to resolve at least some issues. As a result, I am looking to find positivity again. And of course, you have to deal with Max Verstappen as a teammate. The past has proven that this task... that pressure... I sometimes call it: the toughest track in Formula 1" said Checo Perez.

Even though he's given a contract for 2024, Perez would know his seat is not untouchable. With the likes of Ricciardo, Tsunoda & Lawson knocking on the door, the former Force India driver has to step up big time.

The one thing we can't miss from the last 3 months is the Singapore Grand Prix. This could probably be remembered as the one race that Red Bull failed to win, but this should be remembered for the way Carlos Sainz won it. Ferrari who were at the receiving end of tactical mistakes multiple times in the past, took control of the race himself. Even though he was in clear control at the lead, he didn’t plan to fly and create a huge gap. Instead, he opted to keep the pack closer so that other teams won't have the space to make strategic pit plans. It was planned along with the team, but the way he stayed closer to Norris to keep the flying Mercedes cars away was a masterstroke. His conversation with his engineer at that time was something that will be remembered forever. When the engineer said that Norris was in the DRS range, the Spanish driver replied, "Yeah. It's on purpose". It's much better than the 'Smooth Operator', isn't it?
MOTO GP ROARS INTO INDIA

THE GRAND SPECTACLE OF INDIAN OIL

GRAND PRIX OF INDIA 2023
The anticipation had been building for decades, a palpable excitement that seemed to reverberate through the very asphalt of the Buddh International Circuit track in Greater Noida. The news of MotoGP finally making its debut in India had sent waves of enthusiasm rippling through the hearts of motorsport enthusiasts. And there we were, standing at the threshold of history, awaiting the ear-splitting, mind-melting spectacle that is MotoGP.

A Long-Awaited Arrival

Since its inception in 1949, MotoGP has circumnavigated the globe, leaving behind a trail of tyre smoke and adrenaline. But India, with its rich motorsport heritage, had patiently awaited its turn. The Indian Oil Grand Prix of India in 2023 was not just an event; it was a culmination of dreams nurtured for generations.

The Grand Stage

Nestled within the Buddh International Circuit, fondly known as the BIC, this hallowed track had once hosted Formula 1 races from 2011 to 2013. Now, it was being dusted off and meticulously adapted to the fierce world of MotoGP. The transformation from a car racing track to a motorcycle racing arena was a testament to the adaptability and versatility of this sporting coliseum.
MotoGP’s Evolution

MotoGP, in its inception, featured races in 125cc, 250cc, 350cc, and 500cc categories. Today, it has metamorphosed into three distinct divisions: Moto2, Moto3, and the premier MotoGP class. The history is replete with the rise of iconic manufacturers, from European dominators like MV Agusta and Gilera to Japanese juggernauts like Honda, Yamaha, and Suzuki.

In the 2000s, the competition made a leap, transitioning from 990cc to MotoGP with 4-stroke engines. The era of ‘The Aliens,’ featuring racers like Rossi, Stoner, Lorenzo, and Pedrosa, captivated fans from 2007 to 2012. Then arrived the era of Marc Marquez, a six-time MotoGP champion, whose return from injury was about to grace the Indian soil.

Rules and Regulations

MotoGP is a stage where two types of teams compete – manufacturer-
owned teams like Yamaha, Ducati, Aprilia, KTM and Honda, and independent teams like Pramac Ducati and LCR Honda. Each team fields two competitors, with stringent rules governing engine usage. The innovations in aerodynamics, braking systems, and suspension are where manufacturers distinguish themselves, as the playing field remains remarkably level.

The Heart-Pounding Action

The Indian Oil Grand Prix of India 2023 spanned three days of heart-pounding action. The first day marked practice rounds, the second intense qualifying session, and the third was reserved for the grand finals. The track itself, sprawling over 5 kilometres with 14 challenging turns, offered a stern test for the riders. Qualifying, especially, was a nail-biting affair, where failure to secure a good spot meant starting farther down the grid.

The Lightning-Quick Sprint Race

Adding to the spectacle, a sprint race captivated the audience during qualifying. Eleven laps of pure intensity saw Jorge Martin of Spain clinching the top spot, followed by Italy’s Francesco Bagnaia and the indomitable Marc Marquez. Despite starting from the 16th position overall, Marquez’s triumphant sprint race finish was a testament to his enduring prowess.

The Grand Finale

The crescendo arrived on the last day, with the competition commencing at 3:30 PM. Celebrities, including John Abraham, Ranveer Singh, and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, graced the occasion. Each lap was a lightning bolt, with riders defying gravity, and the audience felt their hearts race in harmony with the roaring engines.

The ultimate triumph belonged to Mooney VR46 Racing’s Marco Bezzecchi, who clinched the Indian Oil Grand Prix of India trophy. Jorge Martin of Pramac Racing secured the second position, and Fabio Quartararo of the Monster Energy Yamaha MotoGP team claimed third.

A Resounding Echo

Even after the race concluded and we left the circuit, the deafening roar of the bikes still echoed in our ears. It was a historic moment, an unforgettable chapter in the annals of Indian motorsport. MotoGP had arrived, and it was here to stay, igniting the passions of a nation, one rev at a time. As the engines quieted and the dust settled, one could only wonder what the future held for MotoGP in India. The roaring success of the Indian Oil Grand Prix of India 2023 was a testament to the enduring allure of motorcycle racing on the subcontinent. With each twist of the throttle, the spirit of competition burned brighter, forging a new chapter in India’s motorsport legacy.
AVINASH NORONHA

MOTO GP 2023
CHAMPIONSHIP
THE SEASON SO FAR
MotoGP, the grandest motorcycle spectacle on the planet finally found its way on Indian shores. We, Indian fans, were fortunate to witness these amazing machines roaring past the grandstand at Buddh International Circuit. You can read about our experience of visiting the race in the previous pages of this issue.

What is the update in the world of MotoGP after 13 rounds out of 20? The season has been topsy turvy, with riders being up one moment and down the next. Sometimes quite literally! The only constant has been the roaring success of the Ducati riders. Though the riders at the top changed with every Grand Prix. It is turning out to be a Ducati Championship, but for us fans, at the very least, there is a hard fight amongst the riders.

A roundup of the manufacturers after 13 rounds in the 2023 Championship:
Ducati

The Bologna Bullets are ruling the roost in 2023. Carrying over all the momentum they had gathered in the previous season. Currently the top 3 championship spots are locked out by Ducati riders. Francesco Bagnaia, the reigning champion, top of the pile. He has looked imperious for most of the season. But in the last few races the pressure has seen him unravel on occasion. A short string of bad results has seen his lead over second place Jorge Martin reduce to a paltry 13 points. Martin on the satellite Ducati has gotten stronger as the season has progressed and is looking a genuine championship contender. In third place, is another satellite Ducati rider, Marco Bezzecchi. He is trailing Bagnaia by 44 points. His up and down season has allowed the gap to grow, he has shown his mercurial talent, but needs a bit more consistency to win the title.

Though it has not been all smooth sailing for Ducati. The other factory rider, Enea Bastiani, has been out of contention for most part of the season due to injury. Much was expected of the Italian, but he has not shown any sign of making good on the promise. A lot of it is due to injury, but even otherwise he has not been able to find his feet on the factory bike this year.

KTM

The Austrian manufacturer has arguably the second-best bike on the grid. It is almost as good as the Ducati, but the team seems to be missing a bit of experience when it comes to fighting for championships. Brad Binder has been the star of the 2023 campaign. He sits fourth in the championship and watching him snake the orange machine through the field has been a treat this year.

On the other side of the garage, Jack Miller, showed a lot of promise in the beginning of the season. But has faltered in the second half. He has thrown away good race positions by crashing out. It is his first year with the Austrian squad, so there is room for him to learn and improve. The satellite bikes under the GasGas brand, have seen steady progress with rookie Augusto Fernandez, who has shown good results in a few GPs. Exactly what is expected of him. Pol Espargaro had a massive injury at the start of the year and it is difficult to know the real potential of the experienced Spaniard.

The biggest challenge for KTM this year, seems to be the predicament of placing generational talent of Pedro Acosta in the team for the 2024 season.

Aprilia

The Aprilia in the hands of lead rider, Aleix Espargaro, has seen some stellar performances. This has allowed the Spaniard to be in 5th place in the championship. But his stellar performances have been averaged out by overwhelming performances. The Italian factory has one of the smoothest bikes on the grid, but overtaking and overheating front tyres have been the nemesis. Second factory rider, Maverick Vinales has been steady in his progress and results this year. But is being hampered by his poor race starts.
In the satellite garage of Aprilia, Portuguese rider, Miguel Oliviera, has been one of the unluckiest riders this year. He has been taken out of races by mistakes of other riders far more times than anybody else! Yet, on his day, he has shown great form and some incredible results on a 1-year-old motorcycle. Teammate, Raul Fernandez, had a poor start to the season, before suffering from arm pump. But in the last few races, he has shown the results, which was always expected of him in the premier class.

**Yamaha**

Shockingly the first rider from the Japanese manufacturer finds himself in 11th spot in the championship. We have all seen what Fabio Quartararo is capable of when he has a half decent machine at his disposal. It is disappointing for the fans to see a rider as talented as Quartararo not be able to fight for the championship and races, because he has brought a knife to a gun fight.

Franco Mobidelli, the second rider on the Yamaha, hasn’t fared much better. And poor performances in the last season means that his contract will not be extended for 2024. He was given the marching orders by the Iwata team and will be replaced by Alex Rins in the factory squad next year.

**Honda**

If Yamaha’s situation seems bad, Honda’s is far more dire. The Yamaha riders face bad results. The Honda riders have to face that and also fear being thrown off their motorcycle for no good reason! The top placed Honda man currently is Alex Rins in 15th place. It is a sad situation which this Japanese behemoth finds itself in.

The biggest news around Honda is not its race results. It is speculation whether Marc Marquez will continue with Honda or leave for greener pastures. Big changes are needed to get Honda back in the game and as fans, we really need a fighter like Marquez to be at the pointy end of proceedings.
India’s Safest SUV
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