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YOUR DAILY GUIDE TO ALL THE ACTION AT AUTO EXPO 2020



GWM

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AUTO EXPO, HALL NO. 1, GREATER NOIDA, 7-12 FEBRUARY 2020



WELCOME

SIRISH CHANDRAN

WHILE ELECTRIC VEHICLES ARE A BIG theme of the Auto Expo, another big trend is the shift to SUVs. The newly-christened Skoda Auto – Volkswagen Group India, kick-started the launch of new SUVs at the Expo with the unveil of the Skoda Vision IN and VW Taigun. The two SUVs are based on VW's MQB-A0-IN platform that has been re-engineered to use Indian steels and that will be a key reason for the 92-95 per cent localisation that has been targeted for the two, when they go on sale next year. Slotting between a compact and mid-size SUV, these two will also have locally-built engines of which the 1-litre turbo-petrol will be the main stay.

On the SUV theme, Great Wall Motors introduced their SUV brand to India – Haval. This is the largest-selling SUV brand in China, incidentally the largest automotive market in the world, and is backed up by a 1 billion US dollar investment in the Indian market.

This Show Daily is a run down on all the important SUVs at the Auto Expo and on the cover, we have the all-new Force Gurkha. Designed and engineered completely in-house, the Force Gurkha is based on a new ladder-frame chassis that is crash compliant, and it also gets twin front airbags and ABS. There's a new dash, much better fit-and-finish and it is more civilised on the road while retaining its class-leading off-roading prowess.

There's also information on the MG Gloster, Hyundai Creta, Kia Sonet and the Mercedes-Benz GLE and GLA. Bookings for the latter are now open and it will drive volumes of India's best-selling luxury brand. And we have news on the new 1.3 turbo-petrol engine that will go into the updated Renault Duster, the SUV that really initiated this trend in India.

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FAMILY TIME!

With a myriad events, ranging from vintage car display to modern exotics and even superbikes, Family Days at the Expo were a hit

AUTO EXPO 2020 RECEIVED AN overwhelming response this weekend, which the Expo had declared as "Family Days". The family days had a myriad activities, ranging from superbikes and supercar displays, vintage vehicles and some interesting product unveils as well.

A biker group from Delhi, ROAR – Rise of Asphalt Riders, flagged off their ride from Delhi with 20 motorcycles and reached the Expo, promoting the message of safe riding, encouraged by SIAM's safe ride program. Delhi's oldest biker group, GODS – Group of Delhi Superbikers also rode down to the Expo. The GODS started off their ride from Delhi Noida Direct flyway (DND) and rode to Jewar and from there, reached the Auto Expo.

On day 1 of the Family Days, Maruti Suzuki unveiled its fourth generation model of Jimny, one of the highly anticipated enthusiast cars, garnering tremendous response from the audience. The experience zone at the Expo, witnessed a huge footfall, with families lining up to get a hands-on experience of cars stationed by Kia Motors and MG Motors.

Another interesting attraction at the Expo through the family days was the super car pavilion. Supercars like the Aston Martin DB11 Coupe, Lamborghini

Aventador and Porsche 911 graced the event. There was a vintage car zone as well, which garnered a lot of attention at the Expo. The collection included cars that were restored and timeless classics in their original state. The collection also included the 1952 Austin 7 Boat Tail Speedster, 1934 Cadillac Model 355-D & 1950 Wolseley 6/80 Mk1, Cadillac Coupe de Ville, to name a few.

Auto Expo 2020 has been hosting lucky draw contests for all ticket holders through the Expo days and on Saturday, Amardeep Sinha won a brand new Evolet Pony in the lucky draw.



THE VINTAGE CAR ZONE GARNERED A LOT OF ATTENTION AT THE AUTO EXPO



GWM'S BIG PLANS

Great Wall Motors has launched the Haval brand and will launch its first SUV in 2021 – Pg. 5



COMPACT MERC

Mercedes' smallest SUV, the new GLA, is on display and open for bookings – Pg. 12

SHOWDAILY

YOUR DAILY GUIDE TO ALL THE ACTION AT AUTO EXPO 2020

Jimny

Maruti Suzuki surprises the crowds by showcasing its rugged off-roader



PRASAN FIRODIA

“WE ARE LOOKING AT ELECTRICS”

SAYS THE MANAGING DIRECTOR, FORCE MOTORS

KIA SONET CONCEPT Pg. 9





A PART FROM ALL THE BRANDS displaying their snazzy concepts and production vehicles, there were some colleges that stole the show, displaying their engineering prowess with formula racing cars, electric bikes and cycles, and even future concepts.

Aligarh Muslim University
Mechanical engineering students from the AMU drew a lot of attention at the Auto Expo 2020 with their formula racing car. The university's ZHCET Formula Racing team has been participating in Formula Student racing competitions since 2014 in India and even in the UK.

At the Expo, was the latest iteration of their competition car, developed from ground up by them. The team used a Honda CBR 250 engine and have tuned it to deliver 22bhp and 50Nm of torque. That apart, the suspension, brakes and the frame are all designed by them.



STUDENTS AT AUTO EXPO 2020

We took a look at what Gen-Z brought to the Expo, and we came away pleasantly surprised!

Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
IIT Delhi's 'technical club' called AXLR8R Formula Racing is headed entirely by engineering students. They were the runners-up at the Formula Bharat 2019 and were the first and the only Indian team at the Formula Student Germany 2019, to have cleared the stringent technical inspections, reliability tests and safety tests of German Racing Standards.

At the Expo, they showcased their engineering prowess with an electric racing car. The monocoque chassis is equipped with a 7.8kWh battery pack that has six stacks of cells. While the battery is outsourced, the battery management system is entirely designed by the students. Peak power is 48bhp and 84Nm and all of it is transferred to the rear wheels.

University of Petroleum and Energy Studies (UPES)

With two working models, UPES had an impressive stall at the Expo. The first one was an electric bicycle which focuses on fitness by not having a fully electric mode. Instead, it has electrically-assisted pedals that can assist you for 70km. The battery takes 4 hours to charge via a regular household socket and it has programmable power settings for different users, for example, for a kid the torque and top speed will be lower while for a heavier person they can specifically bring up torque. The cycle can even have a biometric lock installed that will only open when the user's fingerprint matches! The second was an electric cart built to be

used as transport in the campus. It cost the students ₹1.9 lakh to build it. The cart uses IoT (Internet of Things) to communicate with other electronics in the campus. The students had been approached by a few companies for collaborative and sponsored projects, and hope for the same at this year's Expo.

IDC School of Design (IIT Bombay)
IDC had their semester and graduation projects on display but instead of being set in the future like the others, IDC's projects were tackling current issues. The students spoke to blue collar workers and fixed the problems that their vehicles and machinery had. It's great to see the younger generation not just think about the future, but solve the problems that exist today.



ARTSY!

Families flock to see installations by young talent

THE WEEKEND IS where the Expo was at its most crowded. People flocked with their friends and families to share their passion for automobiles. With the halls being filled with enthusiastic crowds, the beautiful sunny days and chilly weather made the outdoor Carlist exhibit the ideal place to have a casual stroll while looking at automotive art. Sure enough, the exhibit was soon filled with adults and children alike, who were surprised to see what could come out of things disregarded as waste! Art competitions were held over the weekend, where students from design colleges all over the city came to participate and showcase their talent. We were truly awestruck by some of the paintings and models that were being made right in front of our eyes!

National Institute of Design

The students of NID had brought along their seriously impressive graduation projects. The scale models had intricate details and ranged from boats to cars to personal flying vehicles. The models are made up of clay and are focused on the future with completely original designs. The students have also highlighted the inspiration for their projects. The aim of getting their work here was to showcase their talent, since most major manufacturers come to the Expo, it's a great place for them to get picked up by an automobile company.



GREAT WALL MOTORS IS showcasing the true-blue off-road SUV – Haval H9 at the Auto Expo. Haval is the largest SUV-maker in China and H9 is the largest SUV in their entire portfolio.

To give you perspective about how large the H9 is, let us tell you the numbers. The ladder-on-frame SUV is a longer than the Ford Endeavour, Toyota Fortuner and Mahindra Alturas G4 at 4,856mm, wider at 1,926mm and even taller at 1,900mm. We expect it to be larger than the competition in terms of the cabin space as well.

Speaking of which, it's a fully kitted out SUV and has six airbags, front and rear parking sensors, rear camera, ABS with EBD and traction control, hill ascent and descent control and electronic parking brake. Being a ladder-on-frame SUV, it also comes with three diff locks and off-road cruise control. Of course, there is a transfer case that lets you slot into low ratio. You also get a winch at both ends.

The H9 is powered by a 2-litre, four-cylinder turbo-petrol engine that makes 218bhp and 324Nm of peak torque. An 8-speed automatic gearbox is standard too. If the H9 comes to India, we expect it to be offered with a diesel motor as well.

The top-end variant in China comes with a sunroof, automatic headlights with LED DRLs and a follow-me-home function, automatic wipers with heated wiper blades, a four-way adjustable leather-wrapped, heated steering with buttons for the audio system and cruise control, leather seats with a massage function (the driver's seat is eight-way power adjustable while the front passenger's is six-way), three-zone automatic climate control, and keyless entry and go. Infotainment duties are taken care of by an 8-inch touchscreen system that is paired with a nine-speaker sound system.

Haval also has monocoque-based SUVs in its range, namely F7, F5, F7X and F5 which are on display at the Auto Expo. These are being evaluated and one of them might go into production at Talegaon once GWM takes over the General Motors plant that they are acquiring. This is all a part of GWM's strategy to be among the top three carmakers in the world.

NEXT BIG THING

The H9 is Haval's largest SUV in its SUV-only line-up and may come to India in its next update in 2021



BEING A LADDER-ON-FRAME SUV, IT COMES WITH THREE DIFF LOCKS FOR OFF-ROADING



THE FORCE MOTORS PAVILION at the Auto Expo 2020 did gather quite a big crowd. Not just because of the custom lifted Force Gurkha but even for the BS6 iterations, and a brand-spanking new modular platform for the Gurkha, the Cruiser and the Kargoking.

At first glance, the Force Gurkha will look downright similar to the pre-BS6 version, but Force Motors' has made the new Gurkha more civilised with modern levels of fit-and-finish courtesy an all-new C-in-C chassis, suspension, body and interiors. The new platform has been designed considering convenience, safety, ergonomics, driveability and passenger comfort. The body panels on the Gurkha are all-new with parts like the door, now being a single-piece and not five pieces put together.

The interior has been given a mild makeover with the centre console now getting a touchscreen infotainment system along with a new instrument cluster and a digital MID. The cabin now has four

THE FORCE IS STRONG

Force Motors' Gurkha for 2020 doesn't just get a BS6 upgrade, but an all-new crash compliant chassis



forward-facing seats. Gone are the awkward jump seats in the back, making way for two individual pilot seats in the second row with smaller jump seats for third row. It also gets much needed exterior upgrades such as funky new LED headlights with DRLs and new taillights along with features such as rear parking sensors and power windows. Also, the Gurkha is now compliant with the latest crash safety norms with two airbags and ABS.

Under the hood of the Gurkha sits a BS6-compliant 2.6-litre turbo-diesel. It will be the only engine option available since the powerful 2.2-litre, 140bhp motor in the Xtreme has been discontinued. The new

motor makes 88bhp which is a 4bhp bump compared to its predecessor and is mated to the same 5-speed manual gearbox with transfer case. The Gurkha will now be available in both four-wheel drive and two-wheel drive variants. The four-wheel drive Gurkha retains the live-axes with twin manual locking differentials. The suspension too is the same, independent on the front with coil springs at all four ends.

Also displayed at the Force Motors stands was a radical lifted Gurkha rig that caught plenty of eyeballs. The customised Gurkha showcased the company's capabilities with 4x4 off-road spec vehicles. The engineers have used the new

Gurkha chassis, given it a lift kit which features double hydraulic coil-springs and independent suspension all around. Adding to the functionality are the massive 37-inch tyres on 17-inch rims which, are driven by Unimog portal axles.



THE GURKHA WILL NOW BE AVAILABLE IN BOTH FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE AND TWO-WHEEL DRIVE VARIANTS



Prasan Firodia, managing director, Force Motors, talks to us about the all-new Gurkha

Q: What is the new Gurkha all about?

Prasan Firodia: "On the styling front, we've kept the new Gurkha similar to the old Gurkha because we wanted to retain the old character and the DNA of the Gurkha line. But it's a completely new body, completely new interiors, it's now crash compliant with dual airbags. So we've done all this and taken care of the convenience features that were demanded. Its NVH levels are significantly lower, the firewall is a single firewall and the doors are new right from the rubber beadings. This has made the vehicle much more comfortable. We've also tamed it and made it more road-friendly. The Gurkha is the best in terms of a pure hardcore off-roader and I don't think anything comes close to the Gurkha. But now it is tuned more towards behaving much better on the roads as well. We should have a good response from the customers now. We have spent about 50 to 70 crore rupees on the project. It will also come with five doors"

Q: When will it go on sale?

PF: "The current three-door now will go on sale by May."

Q: So this vehicle also has to undergo Armed Forces trials all over again?

PF: "We will not put this into the Army because the Army does not require power windows or infotainment."

Q: Is it an all-new engine?

PF: "The peak firing pressures have gone up significantly, which means that the engine characteristics have changed,

POWER HAS GONE DOWN. WE ARE NOT MAKING A HIGH-SPEED

INTERVIEW

"WE ARE LOOKING AT AN ELECTRIC POWERTRAIN"



which meant the engine block needed to be changed and this is a significantly new engine now. Power has gone down. We are not making a high-speed SUV, this is still an off-roader. This power will still give you 120kmph, now I can't think of any road in India which allows you to drive at 120kmph and in fact, the official speed limit in India is 80kmph. Given the ground clearance, to try and build a high speed SUV, this is the wrong platform, we have to make sure we strike the right balance between on road and off road. So what is more important is the torque."

Q: What about automatic transmission?

PF: "For now we have decided to stick with a manual 'box. I think at the end of the day, it's for those who really enjoy driving an off-roader with diff-locks etc. The DNA with a manual and diff-locks is very different as compared to an automatic."

Q: Is Force Motors also looking at petrol powertrains?

PF: "We are looking at electric powertrains."

Q: What export markets are you looking at, which countries?

PF: "We have been selling Gurkhas in the African countries for a long time. For example, you will see hundreds of them in the army in Angola. So Several African armies buy the Gurkha on a regular basis."

Q: What about the custom Gurkha?

PF: "It's basically to show the consumers or the aspirational Gurkha owners that you can buy a standard Gurkha and you can make it into a monster so the Gurkha is adaptable to take it to extreme wild imagination. That was the object, to showcase that you can buy the standard product and this is what you can do. So clearly we said, we want to create a vehicle which first looks monstrous. The minute you look at it you want it. So the desire to own it must be significantly high, third we said it must have terrific ground clearance, fourth it must have springs to improve everything in terms of articulation like crazy. So based on all the elements we put it together and we then said we need to accessories it in a way that it is fully compatible wherever you go with it. So a

lot of these accessories if you have noticed carefully are compatible for adding on additional equipment for camping, for putting up tents so on and so forth. So based on that we have created it and it has been created in only two months."

Q: How big is your R&D set up?

PF: "We have now close to about eleven hundred people in engineering. In the last four years we created three platforms, ground up and significantly, this was done completely in house."

Of course we have used global domain experts for ride and handling and crash testing which, is the norm for every OEM. But apart from that to keep the cost under control we have done significant engineering in-house and we have built new R&D facilities in-house. We have built a lot more R&D capability in-house and we are also building a brand new track at Pithampur. It will be road-biased and will test the squeaks or squeaks. This is a global van platform and all these elements are important. Having created this platform has allowed for a lot of learning across the organisation. "



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THE HYUNDAI CRETA WAS named after Crete, a scenic holiday island in Greece. This reflected in the design of the previous-gen Creta; it reflected the spirit expected from a mid-size SUV. Its generous proportions were perfectly approachable and had a kind of genial mass appeal. And now, the second-generation Creta, which Hyundai unveiled at the Auto Expo 2020 takes it a step further and even borrows styling cues from the Palisade, Hyundai's largest SUV worldwide. Working on the motto of "Sensuous Sportiness", the new Creta now shows off a tighter, more angular overall look, a far cry from the 'soft-roader' origins of its predecessor, something which strikes you even at a passing glance. Viewed from the front, the cascading three-dimensional grille layout, flanked by boomerang shaped DRLs, with the new slit-like LED headlights above them immediately give you an impression of seriousness.

This focused approach is carried over on the sides, where the combination of the altered profile, roof rails and rear spoiler, along with the flared wheelarches and redesigned 17-inch alloys gives off an out-and-out SUV look, with the sharp taillights, distinctive Creta badging and skid plates at the front and rear concluding the overall muscular stance.

NEW AND PUMPED

The 2020 Creta seems to have spent a spell in the gym, and is now showing off its pumped up features



THE NEW CRETA LOOKS MORE SPORTY AND MUSCULAR

Within the cabin, the infotainment system is now equipped with Hyundai's Blue Link 1.5, previously seen with the Venue which doubles up as a user interface, allowing for navigation coupled with alerts and location based services, as well as real-time vehicle status and service reminders. Another new feature is the full-size panoramic sunroof, which preserves the holiday vibe, as well as making the cabin feel airy and keeping the mood light.

Speaking at the launch of the 2020 Creta, S S Kim, MD and CEO, Hyundai Motor India, said, "The all-new Creta is the second-gen SUV for new-age customers. It epitomises the new Hyundai look and embodies the Sensuous Sportiness design language. With over 6.5 lakh proud customers worldwide, the Creta has been a loved and admired SUV, and we are sure the new Creta will offer great delight and supersede customer expectations."



No significant changes under the hood have been mentioned, so we expect the 1.6-litre petrol and the duo of 1.6-litre diesel engines to continue doing duty, albeit in a BS6-compliant avatar. The 2020 Hyundai Creta is expected to go on sale in March 2020, and will go up against the likes of the Kia Seltos, Tata Nexon, MG Hector and the soon-to-be-launched Volkswagen Taigun.



KIA MOTORS TOOK THE WRAPS off its sub four-metre compact SUV concept – Sonet. Earlier known by the codename QYi, the sub four-metre compact SUV is close to production and is expected to launch in this calendar year itself.

The Sonet borrows its platform and most of its underpinnings from the Hyundai Venue. However, Kia's design embellishments make it stand out. The tiger nose grille in the Sonet gets a fresh design and looks sharper and gets a unique 'stepwell' pattern in the centre with splashes of red, as do some other parts. There are red strips that run along the full length of the space between the two wheels and right above the front faux skid plate.

Below the grille is the central air dam that is flanked by silver fog lamp inserts and air vents. Sleek headlights with integrated LEDs merge with the grille seamlessly and together with the high bonnet and muscular creases make it look very different from the Venue. The wheel arches are neatly filled up by the large alloy wheels and in combination with the window line that rises up sharply at the C-pillar, make for an arresting side profile. Concept car elements like the barely-there wing mirrors, flush door handles and even

KIA'S CHALLENGER

The ready for production Sonet will find itself in one of the most competitive segments in the Indian automotive industry

the large section tyres will understandably not make it to the production version.

From the rear, the Kia Sonet grabs attention with elements like a sloping C-pillar and a sharply raked rear windshield with blacked out textured inserts. The sweptback taillamps are connected with a horizontal LED bar with the Kia logo in the centre. The Sonet also gets black plastic cladding on all sides, giving it a butch appeal.

Although, interior images haven't been revealed yet, Kia has announced that the Sonet will get a 10.25-inch infotainment display and a Bose sound system, like the one seen on the Seltos. Also available will be front ventilated seats and Kia's connected car tech.

Engine and transmissions are expected to be the same as on the Venue. Expected are a 1.2-litre petrol, a 1.0-litre turbo-petrol, and a 1.5-litre diesel engine paired



THE SUB FOUR-METRE COMPACT SUV IS READY FOR PRODUCTION



with manual and automatic transmission options. Kia motors also announced an IMT (Intelligent manual transmission) that will be available with the Venue – what that entails is unclear at this moment.

To be launched in the second half of this year, the Sonet will find itself in the company of the likes of the Maruti Suzuki Vitara Brezza, Tata Nexon, Ford EcoSport, Mahindra XUV300 apart from Hyundai's Venue, in a hugely competitive segment. After the success of the Seltos and early positive signs for the Carnival, Kia's Sonet is expected to target large volumes when it launches.





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**THE JIMNY
NAME
MAY SEEM
UNFAMILIAR,
BUT ITS
LEGACY ISN'T**



GYPSY REBORN

The Jimny draws in the crowds at the Maruti Suzuki pavilion

WALK BY THE MARUTI SUZUKI pavilion at the Auto Expo, and it would be impossible to miss the Jimny. The diminutive off-roader captivated the automotive world when it was showcased globally in 2018, and after much waiting, we finally have it on display here in India. But don't get your hopes up just yet. Maruti Suzuki has not confirmed that the Jimny will launch here. Instead, it is trying to gauge the response to the car and will then take a call.

Now in its fourth generation, the Jimny carries forward the body-on-frame construction, compact footprint and light weight of its predecessors. The Jimny name may seem unfamiliar, but its legacy isn't. The second generation Jimny was being sold in India as the Gypsy, kept alive here far longer than it was in global markets courtesy the demand from the Indian army.

The Jimny showcased on the Maruti Suzuki pavilion featured Suzuki's 1.5-litre petrol which is similar to the one under the hood of the Ertiga, Ciaz, XL6 and the recently facelifted Vitara Brezza. However, it is in a slightly detuned state at 102bhp and comes mated to a five-speed manual, or gets the option of a four-speed torque converter. It also gets a four-wheel drive system with a low range gearbox. In Japan, the Jimny can also be bought with a small



660cc turbo-petrol engine.

At the Expo, the Jimny was showcased in Olive green, and there is a very specific reason for that. Maruti Suzuki need scale to justify the costs of bringing the Jimny to India and are hoping the Army will buy in to it. Demand from the Army kept the Gypsy alive for two decades, after all. The Jimny's body-on-frame platform is completely different from any other Maruti Suzuki platform on sale in India, including the Heartect monocoque that so many of its cars are based on today. This would require Maruti to set up a whole new production line for the Jimny. The Jimny will feature the 1.5-litre petrol



engine already on sale in India, but significant investment will have to go in to platform development. This sort of a lifestyle vehicle is very niche, and sales in the passenger vehicle side of things are low. The Mahindra Thar, which is the most popular vehicle of this format couldn't break in to four-figure sales numbers even

in its prime. Hence, if the army picks up on it, Maruti Suzuki could justify the investment they would need to make to build it here.

That said, any car enthusiast would love to see the Jimny on our streets. The Gypsy was a great hero car in its day, and the Jimny could take up that mantle.



SUPER XUV300



SUPER XUV!

Mahindra Adventure displays Gaurav Gill's rally-spec Super XUV300

SHOWCASED ALONGSIDE Mahindra's new electric unveils was the rally-spec Super XUV300. It was built back in June 2019 by Coimbatore's Arka Motorsports who made two different versions of it – turbo-petrol R2C-spec and a R2-spec turbo-diesel. Displayed at Mahindra's pavilion was the turbo-petrol version which, is driven by multiple APRC and INRC champ Gaurav Gill, who also won the Popular Rally in the 2019 INRC.

Gill's car has a 1.2-litre turbo-petrol motor under the hood. It is built to R2C-spec and makes close to 50bhp more than the stock motor courtesy of a bigger turbo, a reworked in-take system and free-flowing exhaust. The motor is mated to a stock six-speed manual gearbox with the power being sent to the front wheels via a limited-slip differential.

The wiring harness has also been upgraded to handle a Haltech engine management system. The Super XUV300 gets an FIA-spec roll-cage, racing bucket seats with eight-point harnesses and a fire extinguisher for safety. To improve the

handling, the stock suspension is swapped for adjustable Reigers on both ends. The brake rotors and calipers are stock but equipped with performance brake pads. They also have braided brake lines for reduced fade.

The 2019 INRC season was more of a test for the new car and we hope to see an updated, more powerful version in the upcoming season of the INRC.

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**IT MAKES
CLOSE TO
50BHP MORE
THAN THE
STOCK MOTOR**

TURBO POWER!

Renault to equip Duster with a 1.3-litre, turbo-petrol motor soon

DUSTER BS6



RENAULT WILL NOT BE continuing with the 1.5-litre diesel motor that sits under the hood of the Duster and Captur SUVs. But fret not, the plans are all set for the BS6 emission norms. Renault is showcasing its all-new 1.3-litre, four-cylinder, turbo-petrol motor at the Auto Expo which, is expected to power not just the SUVs aforementioned but in 1-litre guise will also power the Tribes and the upcoming compact-SUV based on the CMF-1 platform.

The 1.3-litre motor will go into the Duster and will be offered in two states of tune – 130bhp and 154bhp; with a fixed-geometry turbo and variable-geometry turbo, respectively. The torque is claimed to be a healthy 250Nm while in

terms of transmission. Renault is only suggesting a CVT at the moment but we expect them to offer a manual gearbox sooner or later. This will be a shot in the arm of the Duster that is still among the most sorted SUVs on Indian roads with the ride and handling package that most SUVs can only dream of matching. However the AWD powertrain will not be offered going forward.



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MG(IANT!)

MG Motors India is out for the top trumps with the Gloster full-size luxury SUV

MG MOTOR INDIA HAS already made a name for itself in two very different sectors: the mid-size SUV market and the nascent EV SUV market. And now the brand is aiming big and high (literally) with its Gloster full-size SUV which, the brand claims, is headed to the Indian market later this year, soon after the launch of the Hector Plus. MG has chosen the name Gloster as it pays homage to the brand's

British genes, since this was the name given to one of Britain's early jet-engined fighter aircrafts, the World War II-era Gloster Meteor.

The Gloster is based on the D90 which is sold under the Maxus brand. It is a 'proper' 4x4 ladder-frame chassis SUV, with three rows of seats, and in terms of size and stance, the Gloster has a presence at par with the full-size SUVs, and MG will be positioning the Gloster as the brand's flagship product.

Now, we know most SUV customers are somewhat partial towards diesels, and MG should fulfil their wishes by giving the Gloster the 2-litre 170bhp turbo-diesel engine made in India by FCA, and could also have a nine-speed automatic transmission as an option. That said, we are not completely sure about the petrol engine's details, so we can hazard a guess that MG might bring in a 2.0-litre inline-four 218bhp petrol engine, mated to a six-speed manual or 8-speed automatic 'box used by the international-spec D90. But that's just us speculating.

The Gloster will go up against the Ford Endeavour, Mahindra Alturas G4 and Toyota Fortuner, which it might even undercut in terms of price.

MERC'S BABY SUV

The new generation GLA is showcased at Auto Expo, alongside a host of other Mercedes-Benz SUVs

MERCEDES-BENZ HAS A variety of cars at their pavilion, from fast saloons to luxury limousines but there's no taking away from the SUVs. Mercedes-Benz debuted the all-new GLA at Auto Expo, seen in India for the first time.

The new GLA gets plenty of updates: up front there are new headlamps that flank the diamond grille, and there's a distinct power dome in the bonnet. The car on display at Auto Expo is an AMG Line car, and that is apparent from the flared bumpers and sporty wheels. For this generation, the GLA is slightly taller but is shorter in length giving it a more SUV-like stance compared to the older crossover look that the previous gen had. At the rear, you can tell it has new taillamps that follow the same design language as the bigger GLE.

The bigger changes are on the inside. The GLA gets the new MBUX system, along with two 10.25-inch screens for the instruments and infotainment. Being an AMG Line car, you also get a sporty flat-bottom steering wheel. The GLA has a fresh-looking dash layout which seems to

take inspiration from the G-Class, and it also gets a panoramic sunroof.

In addition to the GLA, the other SUVs showcased at the Mercedes-Benz pavilion that you should not miss are the recently launched GLE, along with the crazy Mercedes-AMG G 63.

“**THE GLA HAS A MORE SUV-LIKE STANCE NOW, COMPARED TO THE OLDER CROSSOVER LOOK**”



“**IN TERMS OF SIZE AND STANCE, THE GLOSTER IS AT PAR WITH THE FULL-SIZE SUVs**”

SKODA SHOWCASED THE Vision IN concept, the brand's first SUV based on the Volkswagen MQB A0-IN platform, alongside the Karoq, which is based on the MQB platform, the same as the Skoda Kodiaq (and Volkswagen Tiguan) at the Auto Expo 2020.

Speaking about the Vision IN concept, it was showcased alongside sister brand Volkswagen's Taigun (also based on the same platform), and despite being in concept stage, a lot of what we see on the Vision IN will make it to the production-spec car. The design language is classic Skoda, the trademark butterfly grille now getting vertical slats. From the side, the straight roof line with the panoramic glass roof and buffed aluminium roof rails convey a sporty appearance, with the L-shaped LED taillights connected by an LED light bar giving it a sophisticated yet rugged overall look.

Considering, the MQB A0-IN platform on which the Vision IN is based has been tailor-made for India, its interiors meld traditional Indian themes with elements of classical Czech crystal design, evident with



the decorative trim on the dashboard, combined with the crystal elements and door panels, as well as the all-new crystal button on the dashboard that doubles up as the digital assistant and the interface reflecting on the free-standing 12.3-inch infotainment screen.

Under the hood, the Vision IN boasts of the platform-specific 1.5-litre TSI engine mated to a 7-speed DSG making a claimed 148bhp and 250Nm, which, Skoda says, can take the Vision IN to 100kmph from standstill in 8.7 seconds and on to a top speed of 195kmph.

Skoda says the Vision IN will be available in production guise by early 2021, and once it is here, it will go up against the likes of the Kia Seltos, Hyundai Creta and MG Hector.

Moving on to the Karoq, exterior highlights include a blacked-out grille with vertical slats and a chrome surround, rectangular headlamps and high-mounted fog lights. The interiors are typically Skoda, the interiors and instrument cluster will be the similar Virtual Cockpit interface seen on current Skoda cars, with a large touchscreen infotainment system with Android Auto and Apple CarPlay. A panoramic sunroof will also be on offer.

“**SKODA SAYS THE VISION IN WILL BE LAUNCHED BY EARLY 2021**”

The Karoq will get two petrol engines: a 115bhp 1.0-litre three-cylinder TSI and a 150bhp 1.5-litre TSI engine (probably a retuned one from the Vision IN), both of which will get a six-speed manual 'box. Both these engines are already offered on the international-spec Karoq. Skoda will also add a diesel at a later stage, and will perhaps use a detuned version of the 2-litre TDI from the Kodiaq, perhaps with the seven-speed DSG.

Skoda says the Karoq will be here by April, and will go up against the likes of the Hyundai Tucson and Jeep Compass.

THE BROTHERS CZECH

Skoda's first MQB A0-IN and latest MQB-based SUV are set to join the ranks soon



KING OF SUVs

India's original SUV-maker brings in an updated Harrier, showcases the Gravitas and the Hexa Safari edition



TATA MOTORS SHOWCASED the much-awaited Gravitas along with an automatic variant of the Harrier at the Auto Expo. The Gravitas was first showcased at the 2019 Geneva motor show as the Buzzard SUV. The design and styling of the Gravitas is quite similar to its sibling, the Harrier. The stand out elements for the 7-seater are split LED taillamps and a raised roof at the back to add more headroom for an extra row of seats. The tailgate has also been re-designed for a chunkier look at the rear. The rear bumper, too, is unique to the Gravitas. Interestingly, Tata Motors has

kept the wheelbase the same as the Harrier but increased the rear overhang.

The rest of the SUV is the same as the Harrier and gets a split headlamp setup, large faux skid plate, and an overall butch and muscular look. Interiors are also similar for the most part, save for the lighter coloured trim in the Gravitas.

The Tata Gravitas also brings with it a more powerful BS6-compliant derivative of the Harrier's 2.0-litre engine. Power is now up to 170bhp, up from 138bhp, while torque remains the same at 350Nm. What, however, stands out as the biggest change is the addition of an automatic option – the



Harrier was available only in manual. The 6-speed torque converter automatic unit has been sourced from Hyundai, and is now offered on the Harrier as well, along with the more powerful BS6 diesel engine, also showcased at the Expo. As with the Harrier, the Gravitas is also expected to be a two-wheel drive model.

The Harrier also got an update for 2020. The SUV based on the Land Rover D8



THE GRAVITAS WAS FIRST SHOWCASED AT THE 2019 GENEVA MOTOR SHOW AS THE BUZZARD

platform called Omega Arc now gets a 6-speed automatic transmission option along with the new-generation 2.0-litre Kryotec diesel engine that makes 170bhp. An added feature is the panoramic sunroof. The 2020 iteration has been launched at an introductory price of ₹13.69 lakh for the manual and ₹16.25 lakh for the 6-speed automatic.

Tata Motors also showcased a Hexa Safari edition that gets some new trims and features. The seven-seater SUV, which will be replaced by the all-new Gravitas, now gets a BS6-compliant version of the existing 2.2-litre, four-cylinder 'Varicor' turbo-diesel engine and 4x4. Cosmetic additions are limited to new badges on the outside and a beige-and-black dual-tone theme on the inside.



VW'S BIG PUSH

Volkswagen Group has invested 1 billion euros and will be launching a range of SUVs over the next two years

VOLKSWAGEN HAS GRAND plans for India. The brand has announced it will launch four new SUVs over the next two years, and its pavilion at the Auto Expo gives us a glimpse of what will come. Volkswagen Group has invested 1 billion euros in India, to develop an all-new platform called MQB-A0-IN which, will underpin a host of new cars, the first of which will be the Volkswagen Taigun.

The Volkswagen Taigun is a mid-size SUV that will rival the likes of the Hyundai Creta and Kia Seltos. Showcased in concept form, it gives us an idea of what the final production car will look like. Styling is typically Volkswagen, with

minimalist design and tight bodywork. On the inside, the interiors are dual-tone with plastic inserts on the dash matching the body colour. Volkswagen has confirmed the Taigun will get 1-litre and 1.5-litre TSI turbo-petrol engines. The Taigun is still a while away, with a launch slated for 2021.

In the interim though, Volkswagen will be bringing two new SUVs to India to keep their model line fresh. The first is the Tiguan AllSpace: an extended wheelbase Tiguan that can seat seven. The AllSpace gets more legroom in the second row along with two seats in the third row. The AllSpace will be launched with a 2-litre TSI engine that makes 187bhp, gets all-wheel drive and Volkswagen's 7-speed DSG. On



the inside, it gets a large panoramic sunroof, three-zone climate control, a rear view camera and 7 airbags.

The second SUV that will be launched in India is the T-Roc. A stylish-looking compact SUV based on the European-spec MQB platform, and will be brought to India as a CBU or CKD. At 4.2 metres long, it will sit under the Tiguan in VW's India line-up and looks great in the R Line trim, especially with the sloping roofline. The T-Roc will be sold in India with a 1.5-litre TSI engine that makes 148bhp and 340Nm, mated to a 7-speed DSG gearbox. In terms of features, it gets analogue clocks, an 8-inch touchscreen, wireless phone charger, in-car connectivity, six airbags and adaptive cruise control.

Both the Tiguan AllSpace and the T-Roc will be launched in India within the next four months, as Volkswagen readies the Taigun for its India assault. There is one



TIGUAN ALLSPACE AND T-ROC TO LAUNCH BY JUNE 2020

more SUV on the cards for India, though Volkswagen has not confirmed which one it will be. Could it be the production version of the I.D. Crozz showcased at its pavilion? We're just going to have to wait and see.



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VENUE LAYOUT OF AUTO EXPO 2020

Gate 7

Gate 9

Gate 10

Gate 11,12

Food Court

Emergency Exit

Food Street

Hall 15



Hall 14

TATA MOTORS

Hall 7

Hall 5

Hall 3

Hall 1



Gate 5



Hall 12

Hall 11

Hall 10

Hall 9

Gate 4

LIST OF EXHIBITORS

Car manufacturers : Force Motors, GWM, Haima, Hyundai, Kia, Mahindra & Mahindra, Maruti Suzuki, Mercedes-Benz, MG Motor, Renault, Skoda, Tata Motors, Volkswagen
Bike manufacturers: Piaggio Group, Suzuki Motorcycles
EVs: Charjet E-mobility, Devot Motors, Goreen E-mobility, Hero Electric, Jitendra New EV Tech, M2go Electric, Okinawa Autotech, Olectra Greentech, Raptee Energy, Rissala Electric
Others: ARAI, Firefox, JBM, JK Tyre, Map My India, SML Isuzu, TVS Srichakra

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