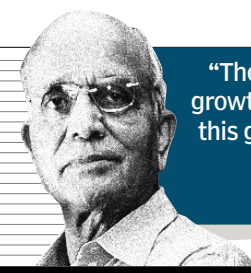


WILL INDIA MAKE IT?

2016



"The Indian passenger vehicle sector saw a modest growth of 5.5-6% this year. Going ahead, not only will this growth continue, but will also slightly increase."

RC BHARGAVA, Chairman, Maruti Suzuki India Limited



MERCEDES CLA-CLASS
LAUNCHED JAN 22

A new Teutonic order

German luxury car maker Mercedes-Benz brought its new design language to India, and with it the numbers needed to successfully challenge luxury car market leader Audi. The rakish looks of the CLA-Class worked; the car was immediately followed by the new C-Class.

Distinct VERNacular

If looks worked for the Merc, they didn't for Hyundai. The Korean car maker, in an effort to regain its leading position in the mid-size sedan segment, launched the 4S Fluidic Verna. However, the car couldn't beat either of its competitors—Honda City and Maruti Suzuki Ciaz.



HYUNDAI VERNA
LAUNCHED FEB 18



HYUNDAI i20 ACTIVE
LAUNCHED MARCH 17

The Elite i20, crossed

The strength of Hyundai's Fluidic Sculpture design philosophy was soon displayed when the company entered a new segment—crossover cars—with the i20 Active. So successful was this new crossover that, within a month of launch, it doubled the segment size.



RENAULT LODGY
LAUNCHED APRIL 9

Renault's Lodgycal drive?

Seats seven, is powered by an efficient engine, has a sturdy body, rides well ... the Renault Lodgy ticked as many boxes as Toyota Innova does. However, the Lodgy wasn't as INNOVative an MPV as its Japanese competitor and its sales never really took off.



TOYOTA CAMRY HYBRID
LAUNCHED APRIL 30

The intelligent, now elegant

Among the first cars to take pricing advantage under the government's FAME scheme (for electric and hybrid vehicles), the new Camry Hybrid by Toyota proved to be a runaway success. Of the total Camry sales, over 75% have since been garnered by the hybrid version.



VOLVO XC90
LAUNCHED MAY 12

Safety wears a suave suit

With the new XC90, Volvo took Audi Q7 and Mercedes-Benz GL-Class head on. Suave, spacious and safe for seven, the XC90—for the price—is the closest you can get to luxury on wheels, personalised living space and possibly a land yacht.

AUTO EXPO 2016 is round the corner

It, clearly, is the age of SUVs and crossover cars, and a lot of these will be displayed at the Auto Expo 2016, to be held from February 5-9, at the India Expo Mart, Greater Noida, Delhi NCR. Some deserve a special mention.

Maruti Suzuki YBA

Maruti Suzuki is expected to showcase its compact SUV, codenamed YBA. Also called XA Alpha/Vitara Brezza, this sub-4-metre SUV will compete with Ford EcoSport, Mahindra TUV300 and soon-to-be-launched Tata Osprey.



Tata Nexon/Osprey

The picture here is of the Nexon concept showcased at the 2014 Auto Expo. Tata has now readied this compact SUV and there are high chances of it being displayed at the 2016 Auto Expo. It's likely to be called Tata Osprey.



Honda BR-V

Short for Bold Runabout Vehicle, the Honda BR-V is unlike most cars you have seen in India. In fact, Honda calls the BR-V a 'crossover utility vehicle'. It can seat seven passengers and will compete with crossovers, MPVs and SUVs, even sedans.



SsangYong Tivoli

The Tivoli is the first new model from SsangYong under Mahindra ownership. A direct Hyundai Creta rival, the Tivoli is based on SsangYong's new design language. It could get both diesel and petrol engines.



Datsun Go-Cross

Nissan's budget brand Datsun, which earlier revealed the Go-Cross concept at the 2015 Tokyo Motor Show, is set to showcase this affordable crossover car. When ready, it just might be the cheapest crossover in the country. Also on display will be the RediGo.



Jaguar F-Pace

In the acronym JLR, 'J' stands for Jaguar (makes only cars) and 'LR' stands for Land Rover (makes only SUVs). While Land Rover hasn't made any cars, Jaguar has developed an SUV, called the F-Pace. It should be displayed at the JLR stall.



BACK ON THE ROAD?

THE INDIAN PASSENGER VEHICLE INDUSTRY, WHICH HAD LITERALLY GONE OFF THE ROAD OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS, IS EXPECTED TO GROW ABOUT 6% THIS YEAR, DRIVEN BY NEW MODELS, BENIGN INFLATION, INTEREST RATES COMING DOWN, AND LOWER OWNERSHIP COST DUE TO SOFTER OIL PRICES. WHILE IT WON'T PICK UP SPEED ANY TIME SOON, THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT THE INDUSTRY APPEARS TO BE BACK ON THE ROAD, HELPED, IN PART, BY THE SHEER NUMBER OF NEW CAR LAUNCHES IN 2015. WE TAKE A LOOK.



TATA NANO GenX
LAUNCHED MAY 19

Hello again, cutie

The Nano is not yet perfect, but the GenX was the best thing to have happened to the cute little 'Indian' car. Among other things, the Nano GenX got the Automated Manual Transmission. The GenX, however, couldn't reposition the Nano as a fashionable and urban mobility solution.



MARUTI CELERIO DIESEL
LAUNCHED JUNE 3

Mileage champion

The Celerio—among India's top 10 selling cars—got a diesel mill. The two-cylinder, 793cc DDiS is the first diesel engine developed by Maruti. With a claimed mileage of 27.62 kpl, the Celerio Diesel became India's most fuel-efficient car too. Good things come in small packages.



HONDA JAZZ
LAUNCHED JULY 8

New Jazz, more Fit for the task

Having failed in its first attempt in 2009, Honda relaunched the Jazz—called the Fit globally. Also available in diesel, the customer response to the car was good, but it couldn't shake the highly-successful Elite i20. Monthly sales took off well, but have since settled at less than half of the latter.



HYUNDAI CRETA
LAUNCHED JULY 21

Small is the new big

Hyundai cars are always designed well, but oddly-named Creta also proved to be a Hyundai that is built strong, is smooth to drive, and makes a powerful statement. The compact SUV has since attracted over 75,000 buyers and went on to win the Indian Car of the Year award.

Maruti's master-stroke

Want lessons on increasing fuel-efficiency? Join the Maruti SHVS school. The company launched Ciaz SHVS (Suzuki Smart Hybrid Technology)—India's most frugal diesel car with an incredible mileage of 28.09 kpl. A great example of using appropriate technology to suit the needs of Indian consumers.



MARUTI CIAZ SHVS
LAUNCHED SEPT 1

A Kwid goes pro

If Renault failed with the Lodgy, it more than made up for it with the Kwid. From purely a product point of view, the Kwid—priced from ₹2.57 lakh onwards—proved to be far more value-for-money car than its competitors. Renault started taking Kwid bookings on a mobile app and launched a virtual showroom.



RENAULT KWID
LAUNCHED SEPT 24



MAHINDRA TUV300
LAUNCHED SEPT 10

Baahubali among SUVs

Mahindra re-entered the compact SUV space with the TUV300. Inspired by a battle-tank, this tough looking vehicle immediately attracted buyers, helping Mahindra gain some market share it had lost to Hyundai's Creta.



MARUTI S-CROSS
LAUNCHED AUG 5

Maruti goes premium

With the S-Cross, Maruti charted a new path. Here was a 'premium' car, sold only at 'premium' showrooms (the Nexa) and Maruti charged a 'premium' for the same. The critical reception to the car was mixed, as was sales response. Some models today sell at a discount of about ₹2 lakh.



FORD FIGO ASPIRE
LAUNCHED AUGUST 12

Blue Oval's new play

Most sub-4 metre sedans look like an afterthought. But Ford build the Figo Aspire from ground up—neatly integrating the boot—and the result was a compact sedan that doesn't compromise on space, safety, comfort or looks. Ford also started working on bettering its after-sales services.

Premium, and looks the part

If the S-Cross was its first premium crossover car, with the Baleno Maruti entered the premium hatchback segment. Like the S-Cross, the Baleno too is sold only at Nexa showrooms. The car proved to be a huge success, taking away numbers not only from competition, but also from siblings Swift and S-Cross.



MARUTI BALENO
LAUNCHED OCT 26