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Auto Expo sends adrenaline levels soaring by Rocky Singh

Article published on January 9th 2012 | Advertising

With its gates finally opening to the public, the third day of the 11th Auto Expo awoke to a rousing welcome as Pragati Maidan witnessed Indiaâ€™s passion for wheels and yet another surge of footfalls. A multitude of new products and upgrades await the anticipating crowds as exhibitors hope to receive a positive and an enthusiastic response from potential buyers and auto buffs.

CII Director General Chandrajit Bannerjee said, â€œBringing together so many automakers under one roof has been a successful endeavour and it has set the ball rolling for integration and alliance between manufacturers, suppliers and key strategists. The favorable outcome of the exposition can be judged by the tremendous turnout it has garneredâ€•.

Going the green way

In tune with the theme â€œMobility for Allâ€•, Firefox Bikes today launched the Trek Elite 9.9 SSL bicycle. With a full carbon frame and priced at Rs 4.25 lakh, it is touted to be the costliest cycle in the country but could be a viable option to save resources.

Delhi Chief Minister, Sheila Dixit along with Managing Director of GM India, Karl Slym, drew back the covers off the new Chevrolet E-Spark â€“ another step towards promoting an eco-friendly way of life.

Maruti Suzuki's electric car concept Eeco Charge is yet another offering that seeks to reduce the carbon footprint.

Carmakers pitch for the long ride

Volkswagen, the German automobile giant, targets the much sought-after SUV market with new versions of its SUV, Touareg and the small car Beetle. It also unveiled its concept hybrid car XL 1.

Renault also introduced its latest concept, DeZir â€“ a two-seater designed to touch 100kmph in five seconds.

The two-wheeler reigns supreme

Italian heavyweight Ducati showcased its Monster 795 for the Asian market among 13 other models including the Hypermotard and Super Bike. Fending off competition from Harley Davidson and Triumph, the M795 has been aggressively priced at Rs.6.99 lakh.

Domestic players rise to the occasion

Force Motors exhibited the Traveller-26, declared to be the worldâ€™s largest monocoque van. Also on display are two CNG versions of Traveller and Trump and the Traveller Hybrid which houses onboard energy harvesting technology.

Trucks make their presence felt

Introducing its truck series, PACCAR showcased its premium DAF CF trucks today. Equipped with the PX-6 180 horse power engine, the design can be used for tractor and vocational configurations. PACCAR has also established its new technical center at Pune in partnership with KPIT Cummins

to accelerate new product development.

This undertaking advances Indiaâ€™s emergence as a globally preferred destination for engineering, IT and component sourcing for worldwide productions and aftermarket operations.

Mr. Arvind Kapur, President ACMA, mentioned that, â€œThe auto components industry in India has witnessed robust growth in the domestic sector but there is no denying that fortunes are also linked equally to the global marketplace. Auto Expo 2012 is the ideal platform for cross-pollination of ideas and widening of business opportunities. Delegations from Canada, Germany, France, Netherlands, Sweden, Japan, Malaysia etc will be visiting in large numbers to explore opportunities of engagement with the Indian auto component industry. The representatives from the auto component bodies will be looking to fulfill the component sourcing requirements from India.â€•

SAFE â€“ Society for Automotive Fitness and Environment and SIAM (Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers) in association with Delhi Traffic Police and Bajaj Auto Ltd took the unique initiative of organizing Road Safety Training Program and Health Check Up for three wheeler drivers, today. The Road Safety Training Program was organized with the faculty support from IIJT Education Pvt Ltd and Hubert Ebner India.

Mr. S Sandilya, President, SIAM said â€œThree things are of prime importance. Three wheeler drivers must receive etiquette training, proper health check up and safety training. Overtaking from the wrong side, red light jumping are major factors which cause road accidents. Through this programme we would try to benefit more drivers and realize the importance of not only safety and defensive training, but also etiquette training.â€•

With emphasis on research and development and the increasing need to develop sustainable energy options, brands are no longer zeroing in on that niche market but are catering to the masses with their new range of technologies. The current trend of expansion and experimentation also allows for diversification of operations as manufacturers gear up to provide tailor-made automobile solutions for the Indian market.

January 7, 2012

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http://www.cii.in/PressreleasesDetail.aspx?encYtqP8ifIet8b2oJFsUXTOzwaj6rjojb2qbiiBQR2OVsTIU8mgCNBpG3X6+ZPvmKnfQK5qmcx5W49bmPywP3XJ/s5/5IQBgUvw8sRvn782JC2gtomP6tNZp6aYCp1kVRg2eV7HLdWcKXw/48N/9RmBw

Article Keywords:
Auto Expo 2012,11th Auto Expo,Delhi Auto Expo

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