

## China's Xiaomi to enter cut-throat EV market for the first time

**BEIJING, MAR 28:** Chinese consumer tech giant Xiaomi will launch its first-ever EV at a press conference in Beijing Thursday, injecting itself into a fiercely competitive sector in the world's largest car market.

China's EV sector has grown rapidly in recent years -- propelled by purchasing subsidies that were discontinued in late 2022 -- and dozens of domestic automakers are engaged in a stiff price war to get ahead in a crowded market.

Xiaomi is known around the world for affordable smartphones and sleek home appliances, and CEO Lei Jun says he is now putting his "reputation on the line" with the SU7 EV, and challenging Chinese car giant BYD and Elon Musk's Tesla. Sleek, sporty, and available in blue bay, olive green or elegant grey, the SU7 even includes "sound simulation", Lei says, "to recreate the thrill of driving a sports car". Lei has not divulged the price, but has promised it will be "the best-looking, best-driving and smartest car" costing under 500,000 yuan (\$69,200 - Rs 57.72 lakh). Analysts



have said they expect it to come in at half that price. "If my guess is correct, the 200,000 to 250,000 yuan range, that actually is the most competitive segment in the China EV space at the moment," Johnson Wan, an analyst at Jefferies Financial Group Inc, told Bloomberg. Xiaomi is the world's third-biggest smartphone maker, and its experience in that sector has helped

shape its EV strategy.

Lu Weibing, Xiaomi's president, told CNBC last month that there were around 20 million people who used the company's premium smartphones, a figure that helped it price the SU7. "I think the initial purchasers will be very overlapped with the smartphone users. So that's our strategy," said.

China is now the world's largest pro-

ducer of greenhouse gases, but officials plan for domestic car sales to be made up mainly of electric and hybrid models by 2035.

The launch of the SU7 comes just days after BYD, the world's top seller of EVs, posted record annual profits as it pushes a rapid expansion overseas into countries in Southeast Asia, as well as further afield in Latin America and Europe.

In a note attached to the earnings report, BYD CEO Wang Chuanfu acknowledged the year had not been all smooth sailing.

"At the beginning of the year, the recovery of automobile consumption was relatively lagging behind, affected by the switch in promotional policies and market price fluctuations," he wrote. XPeng -- one of BYD's top competitors in China -- last week reported a net loss of 10.4 billion yuan (\$1.4 billion) in 2023. Further highlighting the challenges of the sector, Evergrande NEV -- a subsidiary of the debt-ridden real estate group -- on Wednesday said it had delivered only 1,389 vehicles since its launch.

## Reliance Industries invests in Mahan Energen, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Adani Power



**NEW DELHI, MAR 28:** An investment agreement has been entered into among Mahan Energen Limited (MEL), a wholly owned subsidiary of Adani Power Limited (APL), Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) and APL, in terms of which RIL has agreed to subscribe and

MEL has agreed to allot 5 crore equity shares with face value of Rs 10 each to RIL at par. RIL said in a filing that the proposed investment by the company is in compliance with the provisions of Electricity Rules, 2005 in terms of which the company, as a captive user, is required to own 26 per cent

proportionate ownership in one unit of MEL of 600 MW capacity, with RIL being the captive user of 500 MW generation capacity.

RIL and MEL have entered into a 20-year long term power purchase agreement for this purpose, RIL said.

MEL, a company engaged in generation and supply of power, was incorporated on October 19, 2005. The turnover of MEL, as per its audited standalone financial statement, for financial years 2022-23, 2021-22 and 2020-21 was Rs 2,730.68 crore, Rs 1,393.59 crore and Rs 692.03 crore, respectively.

"The investment is not a related party transaction and none of the company's promoter/promoter group/group companies have any interest in the said investment," RIL said.

## Hyundai Ioniq 5 N Awarded World Performance Car of The Year



**NEW DELHI, MAR 28:** Ever since its launch, Hyundai Ioniq 5 has not only grabbed eyeballs but has also gained a lot of recognition. More recently, Hyundai Motor Company has bagged yet another plaque at the 2024 World Car Awards. It was the Ioniq 5 N that facilitated this award in the World Performance Car section. This marks the fourth major victory

for all-electric Ioniq 5 lineup. This is not the first time Hyundai Ioniq 5 has made its presence known at the World Car Awards. Building on the past success on global stages, Hyundai Ioniq 5 N has bagged the World Performance Car award. This recent accolade for Hyundai Ioniq 5 N is in fact the fourth one that this retro-styled fully electric crossover SUV has added to its

belt within the past three years since its debut. The high-performance N version was introduced in July 2023 and is a testament to Hyundai's commitment to designing and developing driver-centric high-performance vehicles. Ioniq 5 N is also a shining beacon highlighting company's relentless pursuit in motorsports and is proof of Hyundai's engineering prowess. Continuing its winning streak at the World Car Awards in 2024, Hyundai's Ioniq lineup has bagged as many as four World Car Award wins in the last three years.

World Car Awards announced this year's winners at the 2024 New York International Auto Show. World Car Awards is an annual event witnessing around 100 international jurors across as many as 29 countries who test-drive and rank eligible cars and position them winners in their nominated segment.

## India-Bound Kia EV9 Gains Double Title Win at 2024 World Car Awards

**NEW DELHI, MAR 28:** Kia's flagship electric vehicle has been amassing accolades in global markets ahead of its official launch in India which is scheduled for later this year. This electric SUV saw its global debut in Seoul, South Korea in March 2023. It is now slated to come to India this year. What makes this Kia EV9 so special is the fact that it has received a double title in 2024 as it was declared 2024 World Car of the Year and 2024 World Electric Vehicle. These two titles were secured and announced at the World Car Awards ceremony at the New York Auto Show held on March 27, 2024. This was the company's 4th and 5th win in World Car Awards since 2020. In 2024 World Car of the Year, Kia EV9 had to contend with finalists -- BYD Seal and Volvo EX309 while for 2024 World Electric Vehicle title, Kia EV9 beat BMW i5 and Volvo EX30. These two titles were secured after being adjudged by a jury of 100 automotive journalists representing 29 countries, who selected the winners by secret ballot based on a detailed evaluation of each eligible vehicle. Kia EV9 was finally declared a winner from an initial entry list of 38 vehicles and then from a short list of 3 finalists. The 7 seater Kia EV9 boasts of both exterior refinement and interior comforts while it is also regaled for its aggressive pricing and state of the art on-board infotainment. It is based on an E-GMP platform and its all-electric performance sets itself apart being the first Kia car to be powered by the latest 4th gen battery technology.

## Maruti G Vitara, Invicto Strong Hybrid New TVC Highlights Mileage 1200+ Kms In Full Tank

**MUMBAI, MAR 28:** Maruti Suzuki India Limited, a current leader in the passenger vehicle segment plans to bring in strong hybrid technology into its many existing models along with new offerings in India. To promote the same, Maruti has launched a new TVC campaign to highlight the benefits. 'The extraordinary benefits of Strong Hybrid Technology', 'IT'S UNBELIEVABLE. IT'S STRONG HYBRID.' is the catch line for the new campaign initiated by Maruti Suzuki India Limited to proclaim its ventures into the strong hybrid segment. With special emphasis on strong hybrids, the company shows off this technology on the Grand Vitara and Invicto via a TVC campaign. The campaign talks of a blend of both electric mobility and internal combustion engine



(ICE) harnessing combined power under different driving conditions.

The Grand Vitara with a fuel tank capacity of 45 liters could offer a range of 1258.65 kms while the Invicto with a fuel tank capacity of 52 liters could offer a range of 1208.48km 60% on EV mode under city driving conditions. This strong hybrid technology

will not only offer a more eco-friendly mode of travel but will also relate to a smoother and more silent driving experience, higher level of fuel efficiency and significantly lower carbon emissions. This TVC campaign comes at a time when there is an overall revival in customer's preferences towards strong hybrid technology vehicles.

## Hyundai i30 Facelift Revealed No More i30 N, Only N Line On Offer

**MUMBAI, MAR 28:** One of Hyundai's popular hatchbacks in global markets, i30, has been given a minor facelift. This is a minor nip and tuck exercise and these changes hold true to all of the variations of i30 -- Hatchback, Fastback and Wagon. This facelift could help Hyundai i30 better position itself against other compact hatchbacks.

When we say a minor facelift, it is pretty much just that, a minor facelift. The word minor is quite literal. In global markets, Hyundai i30 hatchback rivals the likes of Volkswagen Golf, BMW 1-Series and others. Now that i30 N hot hatch has been discontinued from the old continent, the specification is an N Line variant. So, no more 280 PS 2.0L Theta T-GDI engine under the bonnet of i30. Currently in its third generation model, it was first



revealed in 2016. In 2020, Hyundai gave its first facelift and sticking to the four-year time period, 2nd facelift was unveiled recently in 2024. There are three variations of i30 on sale -- Standard i30 Hatchback, i30 Fastback coupe-style sedan and i30 Estate. If Hyundai had kept the Elantra alive in India, we would have probably got i30

Fastback. In fact, i30 is still sold under the Elantra name in many markets like North America. Design changes are subtle, but lend newness and a sense of heightened sophistication. For starters, there is a new fascia featuring a slightly redesigned grill pattern, new front bumper and new fog light housing. There are new LED headlights that are being

offered as standard fitment across variant lineup. Hyundai is offering new 16-inch alloy wheel design with this facelift. At the rear, we can see a new bumper along with a few newly added chrome bits to up its jazz. Company is offering twelve colour options with Hyundai i30 facelift and seven of these are new.

Stepping in, we i30 facelift offers a 4.2-inch instrument screen as standard and offers 10.2-inch TFT unit for instrumentation as an option. New upholstery design, piano black plastics, USB Type-C ports at the front and rear, a 10.25-inch infotainment screen, OTA updates and a slew of ADAS features including Junction AEB are notable attributes. Even though i30 N is axed, buyers can opt for i30 N Line variant that brings some visual sense of sportiness.

## Honda 6 Crore Sales Milestone Crossing the Threshold

**NEW DELHI, MAR 28:** Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India has indeed traversed remarkable milestones, exemplifying its commendable journey in the Indian two-wheeler market. Achieving the monumental 6 crore domestic sales milestone in March 2024 is a testament to Honda's unwavering commitment to reliability and efficiency. It marks a pivotal moment in its illustrious history. Since its incorporation (went solo) in 1999, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India has strategically expanded its manufacturing plants across the country. From the first plant in Manesar to the recent expansion at the Vitalapur plant in 2024, Honda has established a robust manufacturing infrastructure. These manufacturing facilities serve as the backbone of Honda's operations. They have enabled HMSI to meet the growing demand for its products and maintain its position in the top tier. In 2001, HMSI introduced its inaugural two-



wheeler, Activa. Setting the stage for its remarkable trajectory in the country. The topselling Indian scooter continues to be a winning proposition this many years later. In 2002, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India commenced its exports, marking expansion of its operations beyond the domestic market. By venturing into exports, Honda

demonstrated its confidence in the quality and competitiveness of its products. And this paved the way for further growth and success in the years to come. The subsequent years witnessed Honda's steady ascent. Marked by notable achievements such as reaching the 1 crore customers milestone in 2012. A testament to the

brand's growing popularity and widespread acceptance among Indian riders. By 2015, Honda had further established itself as a dominant player in the Indian two-wheeler landscape, celebrating the 2 crore customers milestone. The years that followed saw Honda's relentless pursuit of excellence. Milestones aplenty. HMSI announced 3 crore customers in 2017 and 4 crore customers in 2018. In 2021, Honda achieved yet another monumental feat, surpassing the 5 crore customers milestone. Fast forward to March 2024, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India has gone a step further. Achieving 6 crore domestic sales. Throughout its journey, Honda has diversified its product portfolio to cater to the evolving needs and preferences of Indian consumers. From the fuel-efficient 100cc Shine to the luxurious 1800cc GoldWing Tour, Honda offers a comprehensive range of scooters and motorcycles. There's something for everyone.

## Skoda Slavia CNG Spied Or New Engine Emission Testing?



**MUMBAI, MAR 28:** Riding on the wave of success generated by India 2.0 strategy, Skoda Auto Volkswagen India has spawned four vehicles, 2 for Skoda and 2 for Volkswagen. However, the company is already hatching India 2.5 strategy. India 2.5 is expected to hold a lot more significance with a new sub 4m SUV. But is CNG a part of India 2.5 strategy? Yep, you read that right. The company's new India 2.5 strategy might include a CNG vehicle. Automotive enthusiast

Abhimanyu Komawar spotted a Skoda Slavia test mule with emission testing equipment. This could very well be just a routine testing for current generation of 1.0 TSI and 1.5 TSI engines. Conversely speaking, this may be more than that. Considering Skoda had confirmed CNG powertrain development with the now-discontinued Rapid. There were many test mules of Rapid CNG spotted as well. Slavia is the spiritual successor of Rapid and the project might have seen the light of day.

Once considered a poor man's solution, CNG powertrains can be a genuine alternative to diesel fuel with proper design and implementation. Tata Motors' dual tank CNG portfolio is a stellar example of this idea. Skoda might have spotted a demographic where lower running costs of a CNG could expand sales potential.

If true, it will be offered with the smaller 3-cylinder 1.0L TSI engine. There may be a demographic for CNG variant of Slavia or Virtus in global markets like South Africa or Latin countries.

What else could this be? 1. TSI 200 -- In Latin markets like Brazil, Volkswagen Virtus with the 1.0L TSI engine makes 128 PS of peak power and 200 Nm of peak torque in one specification. This tune promises slightly higher performance than India-spec 1.0 TSI-equipped Slavia and Virtus' 115 PS and 178 Nm. This higher-spec tune could stir the interest of Indian enthusiasts.

## Tata Curvv Vs Citroen Basalt Design Compared Tough Choice?



**NEW DELHI, MAR 28:** After launching C3 Hatchback and C3 Aircross SUV, Citroen is poised to launch its third vehicle under the C-Cubed strategy for India. The company recently revealed Basalt Vision Coupe SUV which will spawn a production-spec version that will

be Citroen's third vehicle based on CMP platform. But how does it fare against Tata Curvv?

While the first vehicle from Citroen's C-Cubed strategy was a hatchback with a crossover design, second vehicle is marketed as an SUV. Now, Basalt Vision has been

revealed, which is a coupe-style SUV with a stylish sloping roofline. This description rings a bell in us as Tata Motors aims at the same genre with Curvv.

Citroen is highly likely to keep the production-spec version of Coupe SUV close to Basalt Vision concept revealed yesterday. This is a good thing considering we like what we saw on Basalt Vision. There's no denying the fact that Tata Curvv ain't no slouch where design, style, sophistication and presence are concerned. Basalt gets almost the same fascia as C3 Aircross, except for a few styling elements on lower bumper. Curvv draws heavily from the recently revised Harrier and Safari SUVs. So, both feature familiar fascia sticking to their respective family DNA. Basalt features quad LED DRL signature while Curvv has a connected three-piece LED DRL signature.

## Hero Mavrick 440 To Launch In The UK – Most Affordable A2-legal Roadster Likely

**NEW DELHI, MAR 28:** Similar to the Indian market, Hero Mavrick 440 will take on rivals such as Triumph Speed 400 and Royal Enfield Bullet 350 in the United Kingdom With its partnership with Harley-Davidson, Hero MotoCorp is looking to target the premium motorcycle segment. Harley-Davidson X440 based Hero Mavrick 440 was launched earlier this year in February. Going forward, plans are to introduce the Mavrick across international markets such as the United Kingdom. While the Hero brand is not widely known in the UK, the Harley-Davidson DNA of Mavrick 440 can work to its advantage. Hero can also deliver more value to customers by launching Mavrick 440 in the UK at a competitive price point. For reference, Triumph Speed 400 is available in the UK at a starting price of £4,995. Royal Enfield Bullet 350 is offered at £4,709. While there is no official statement about the pricing of Mavrick 440 in the UK, it is likely to be cheaper than Speed 400. In India, Hero Mavrick is priced at Rs 1.99 lakh, which is approximately £1,900. In the UK, Hero Mavrick will cater to A2 motorcycle license holders. This category is for people who are 19 years or older. The engine displacement for A2 should be at least 395cc and engine output should not be more than 47 bhp. Powering the Mavrick is a 440cc, air cooled with oil cooler engine. It churns out 27 bhp of max power and 36 Nm of peak torque. The engine is mated to a 6-speed gearbox. The bike has an assist and slipper clutch, which will be useful for folks who have recently got their A2 license in the UK. Rival Triumph Speed 400 is equipped with a 398.15 cc, liquid cooled, DOHC, single cylinder engine. It generates 39.5 bhp and 37.5 Nm and is mated to a 6-speed gearbox. Speed 400 has 43 mm USD Big Piston forks, whereas Mavrick comes with standard telescopic front forks.