

Hybrid car sales enter the fast lane on growing adoption

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Hybrid electric cars appear to be replacing more and more of diesel cars in the country, while the pick up in the sales of fully-electric cars is slower.

The response to hybrid EVs, particularly strong hybrid electric vehicles (SHEVs), has been encouraging.

Leading players such as Toyota and Maruti have seen their hybrid vehicle sales soar in recent months. Maruti's hybrid vehicle sales grew to more than 14,000-plus units during the April 2023 to January 2024 period compared with about 8,500 units in the year-ago period.

Toyota is also seeing a strong spurt in demand for its hybrid SUVs. Toyota's Innova HyCross has clocked sales of over 50,000 units since its

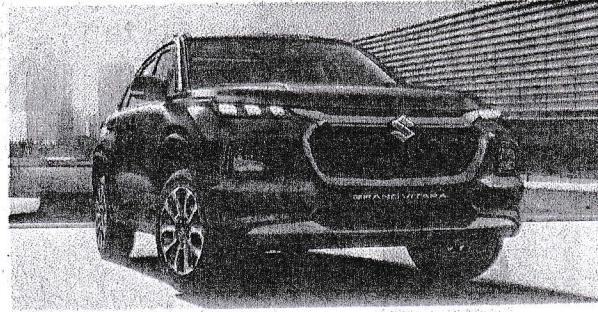
launch in November 2022.

The two Japanese OEMs offering hybrid in key models do reflect that consumers are finding hybrid as a replacement for diesel vehicles. As the share of diesel cars declines, hybrid cars are likely to catch up faster.

Industry representatives and analysts believe that hybrids will play an increasingly important role in the transition from ICE to EV era.

VALUE PROPOSITION

"Consumers who drive more than 15,000 km in a year may find hybrid to be a value proposition considering the up-front cost customers have to pay for owning hybrids. An EV is the best solution for consumers once we have batteries with high range (700-km range) and better charging infra which definitely is a concern for inter-city travel right



PICKING UP. Maruti Suzuki India's hybrid vehicle sales grew to more than 14,000 units during the April 2023 to January 2024 period

now," Puneet Gupta, Director, S&P Global Mobility, told *businessline*.

"In the current environment, SHEVs offer several advantages over ICE vehicles. On an average 60 per cent of the time SHEVs run on EV mode. They can have up to 44 per cent higher fuel efficiency than corresponding ICE vehicles. Also, they cut up to 30

per cent CO2 over a corresponding ICE car. Additional cost at factory level (without taxes/subsidies) will be about ₹3 lakh," said Rahul Bharti, Executive Director, Corporate Affairs, Maruti Suzuki India Ltd.

Toyota's SHEV models include HyCross, Hyryder, Vellfire, and Camry Hybrid, while Maruti's current offerings in-

clude Grand Vitara and Invicto.

"We believe that all xEVs (full electric, PHEVs, SHEVs and Fuel Cell EVs) are important to meet the carbon-neutrality goals and will continue to evaluate the options based on the needs of society and consumers," said Vikram Gulati, Country Head and Executive Vice-President - Corporate Affairs and Governance, Toyota Kirloskar Motor.

Gupta said that other passenger vehicle OEMs would also come up with more hybrid offerings targeted at buyers who aren't ready for battery electric cars.

"The hybrids being low in running cost will be a consumer choice, especially in B&C Segment vehicles. While in Segment A, CNG may emerge as a better solution till the time we next gen of hybrid cars," he added.