

Can Maruti recreate Gypsy magic with Jimny?

Enquiries pour in from Gypsy aficionados — armed forces

S Ronendra Singh
New Delhi

Maruti Suzuki India Limited (MSIL) — the supplier of iconic Gypsy to Defence and Paramilitary forces from mid-1980s till 2019 — may attract the sectors' attention for its upcoming all-wheel-drive (AWD) Jimny, awaiting launch on June 7.

A lot of enquiries are already flowing in from the forces for the Jimny, the company said. Unlike the Gypsy, the Jimny doesn't have a soft-top option, which could have been used for mounting guns/ armouries on the rooftop of the vehicle, but the company is confident of handling emerging requirements.

ICONIC BRAND

"We will of course, continuously monitor the requirements as we always do for all our products, and see if any change is required... we are in touch with some of the Defence people. There are enquiries on the vehicle, and the company will think of meeting all requirements," Shashank Srivastava, Senior



ALL SET FOR LAUNCH. MSIL says Gypsy was an iconic brand, but Jimny could be a good replacement BUOY GHOSH

Executive Officer, MSIL, told *businessline*.

MSIL used to supply 6,000 to 10,000 Gypsy units to the armed forces every year before it was discontinued owing to BS6 emission norms. Launched first in 1985, MSIL sold over 1.7 lakh units of the Gypsy in India, till it was phased out.

According to the company, the Gypsy was an iconic brand no doubt, but the Jimny could be a good replacement. The Jimny, rolled out first in 1970, is available in 199 countries and Suzuki has sold around 30,000 units of the SUV.

The Jimny units sold so far were of the three-door version, which was modified as five-door variants to fit in

markets like India. India will do the global launch of this AWD and will also export to a few in West Asia and Latin America.

GAME CHANGER

Srivastava said the Jimny was not only attracting off-roading SUV lovers, but general customers, too. "The body/ design (of the Jimny) is of a pure SUV, but consumers are also conscious of the running cost... They are buying it for normal commuting also because of the mileage that Jimny can offer (15-16 kmpl)," he added. Analysts say Jimny will create a new segment in the industry and can be a game changer, too, for MSIL, in terms of brand perception.