

# + Renault plans CNG variants alongside new models

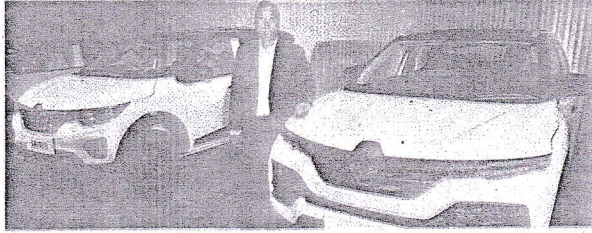
**G Balachandar**  
Chennai

French automaker Renault plans to expand its product line-up by introducing CNG variants for three existing models, aiming to capitalise on the growing demand in both personal and fleet markets.

The CNG models are set to be launched ahead of the company's planned release of five new vehicles, including an electric vehicle (EV), in the coming months.

"We're moving quickly on CNG and plan to launch it soon, starting with the Triber and Kiger, followed by the Kwid," Venkatram Mamillapalle, Country CEO and Managing Director, Renault India Operations, told *businessline*.

He explained that while the Kwid faces challenges in accommodating a CNG cylinder, the Triber is well-suited for it, offering ample storage space even with the cylinder installed. The company is likely to unveil the



Venkatram Mamillapalle, Country CEO and MD, Renault India, at the launch of Kiger, Triber and Kwid limited editions BUOY GHOSH

CNG models in the next few months. Mamillapalle highlighted that Renault's CNG offerings would address strong demand from the fleet market, particularly for affordable seven-seaters like the Triber.

#### PRICING STRATEGY

"With CNG, we aim to cater to customers seeking economical vehicles without the hefty price tag of more expensive models," he added. The company is finalising its pricing strategy and negotiating with suppliers, with a clearer idea expected by early next year.

Renault is targeting markets with well-established

CNG infrastructure, such as Chennai, NCR and Gujarat, while exploring potential in other regions as well.

In 2023, approximately 5.24 lakh units of CNG passenger vehicles, including cars and UVs, were sold in India. So far this year, over 4.8 lakh CNG vehicles have been sold, according to data from the Vahan portal.

On upcoming new launches, Mamillapalle confirmed that Renault's next five models will include all-new versions of the Triber and Kiger, a B-segment SUV, a B+ (or C-segment) SUV, and an EV.

"We'll announce the exact dates soon. Our timeline is

progressing as planned, and we are actively preparing for the launches," he said.

#### INVENTORY LEVELS

Regarding inventory levels and the upcoming festive season, Mamillapalle acknowledged the car-makers' high stock levels but maintained that Renault's inventory remains manageable.

"We're expecting strong demand, and this period helps us ensure dealers have the right models and colours in stock. We're optimistic about selling a significant portion of our inventory during the festival season," he said.

The company has introduced limited editions of the Kiger, Triber and Kwid with special features and cost benefits to drive excitement and sales during this time.

However, Renault is expected to end this calendar year with flat sales volumes. It sold about 53,000 units in India in 2023, down from around 79,000 in 2022, but hopes to boost volumes with the launch of its new models.