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MIDSIZE SUV RUSH

India's hottest car segment is all set to explode in 2026



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COMMENT



2026 BATTLEGROUND



AFTER A RECORD 4.5 million cars sold last year - the highest ever for India - the post-GST momentum has carried over into the New Year. But as prices rise again in January and input costs squeeze margins, the real

question is whether the good times can last. What's clear, though, is that 2026 has already found its battleground: the midsize SUV segment.

This has long been the sweet spot for the Indian buyer - aspirational yet attainable, urban yet rugged and, most importantly, the perfect footprint - not too big and not too small. Now, the midsize SUV segment is witnessing an unprecedented product onslaught. The refreshed Skoda Kushaq and Volkswagen Taigun will get sharper updates and more features, the all-new Kia Seltos aims to step out of the Creta's shadow to seriously challenge its dominant cousin, while a phalanx of all-new challengers like Maruti Suzuki's Victoris, the reborn Tata Sierra, Renault's comeback Duster and Nissan's Tekton want their share of the pie too. Add the electric wave to that, with Maruti Suzuki's e Vitara and its Toyota twin arriving this month, and you have the broadest, most technologically diverse midsize SUV line-up yet, spanning every possible powertrain from petrol, diesel and CNG to hybrid and EVs.

For Tata Motors, the Sierra is a litmus test of whether it can finally shrug off the lingering perception of inconsistent quality and genuinely challenge the Koreans on finesse. For Renault, the new Duster is a shot at reclaiming the legacy of the SUV that arguably kicked off India's midsize SUV revolution.

For once, even the long-reigning Creta feels vulnerable. Discounts have begun to creep in, and with rivals swarming the segment, its easy dominance of the last decade will be hard to defend. If 2025 was the year of record numbers, 2026 is the year of the midsize SUV, and customers will be pampered with more choice than ever.

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THIS MONTH

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The midsize SUV rush
It's the new sweet spot of the market

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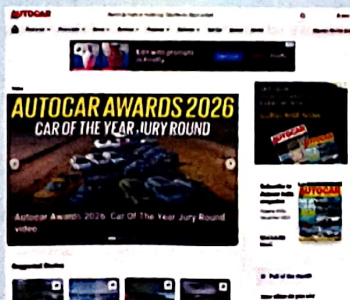
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