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Renault Duster SUV clocks 6,000 bookings by Siddharth Bharadwaj

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SUVs are the new found love of the Indian customers, here is something that can prove it right. After a long wait and three car launches Renault has finally tasted success in the Indian car market. Renault Duster SUV which was launched in the Indian car market in the first week of July has hit the bullâ€™s eye. The compact SUV within a week of its launch has able to rope in 6,000 bookings which is a great number considering that the brand is not that popular in India and the dealership network slow. Service stations are also less in numbers and hence this was one big hurdle in the companyâ€™s growth in India. However, passing all the hurdles, Duster has emerged a success and has brought some relief to the French car maker.

Renault Duster SUV is a five seater that can be transformed into a seven seater SUV with the twin jump seats that the company is offering as a dealer accessory. These jump seats will be placed in the boot of the SUV and will be positioned in the side. The addition of the jump seat will be able to seat seven people inside the car but will shrink the place to keep luggage inside the SUV as the vehicle is designed to accommodate five people comfortably.

The SUV has been launched in India in both petrol and diesel guise in various trim levels. The base version of the petrol variant is priced extremely competitively at Rs 7.19 lakhs (ex-showroom Delhi). The low priced petrol models are aimed at attracting the customers, this would help the French car maker to garner volumes. The diesel version on the other hand will be getting bookings for Renault Duster as diesel powered cars are highly anticipated in India. Available in two engine tunes, the 1.5 litre K9K turbo diesel engine that produces 85 PS of high power and a 200 Nm of torque. The same engine that delivers a tad high power output of 110 PS along with 240 Nm of torque figure is available in the other diesel version of the SUV. The diesel engined variants will be the main volume puller as customers are ready to splurge more money on the diesel powered variants of the cars as they return better mileage as compared to the petrol engined cars.

The 85 PS diesel variant is harmonized to a five speed manual transmission and the petrol version too is mated to a five speed manual transmission. On the other hand the 110 PS diesel version is synchronized to a six speed manual transmission that will help in manoeuvring the vehicle in a better manner on the highways. The petrol variants of the Duster SUV lack the safety features while the diesel variants are equipped with the safety features which include airbags, ABS and EBD. Renault Duster price for the top end version is tagged at Rs 11.29 lakhs (ex-showroom Delhi). This is the introductory price which is subject to change in the future.

All the variants of Duster are offered with front wheel drive version. Renault is now planning to launch rebadged version of Nissan Sunny sedan in the domestic market. This sedan would be known as Renault Scala and will be based on the Nissanâ€™s flagship sedan Sunny which was launched last year in India. Scala will be another mass segment product in the French car makerâ€™s India portfolio. However, Renault Scala sedan is expected to be priced above Nissan Sunny sedan as it will have looks and will be equipped with better features. Scala is expected to be launched in India by the last week of September.

Renault and Nissan not only share the manufacturing plant which is located in Chennai but they also share platforms to manufacture vehicles. Scala is the second product which is being developed on the platform sharing, prior to this the company developed Renault Pulse premium hatchback on Nissan Micra. This rebadged technology save a lot of money of the company as it does not have to develop a car from scratch. We hope that Scala also brings glory to Renault and helps ramping up its monthly sale which have started to improve eventually with the launch of Renault Duster in the

Indian car market.

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