Article Side

Renault Scala coming before Diwali in India by Sahil Wadhwa

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The Indian arm of the French auto maker, Renault is planning to launch the entry level sedan Renault Scala prior to the auspicious Hindu festival of Diwali. This would be the fifth car from Renault in India. The company had proclaimed to launch five new cars in India in the second innings of the auto maker in the domestic market.

Renault had planned to launch five cars in India within a time span of 18 months beginning May when the company launched its first solo product, Renault Fluence premium sedan. After launching the first five products in India, the company will then have time to mull over the next set of products which includes an entry level hatchback. This hatchback could see light of the day in next couple of years.

The company recently launched its first mass segment product, Renault Duster compact SUV in India which is getting a good response from the customers. Scala sedan would be the second entry level sedan in India which is likely to be armed with a 1.5 litre diesel motor generating a maximum power output of 84.8 Bhp, this is the same output that is produced by Nissan Sunny sedan launched last year in India by Renaultâ€™s partner Nissan Motors. The petrol engine may follow the suit equipped with a 1.5 litre petrol powertrain. Nissan and Renault share platforms, the first product launched based on this was Renault Pulse premium hatchback which received few cosmetic changes.

Similarly, Renault Scala India is also expected to get few cosmetic changes that include minor changes in the headlight, tail lamps, bumper and grille. A team of designers at the Renault design centre located in Mumbai have worked hard to make sure that Scala looks different from Sunny sedan unlike Pulse and Micra. The new Renault Scala which is expected to launch in India before Diwali is anticipated to be priced higher than its sibling Nissan Sunny sedan. Nissan Sunny price ranges between Rs 6 lakh to Rs 8 lakh, therefore expect Renault Scala price to be more than that.

Renault has three premium cars in its portfolio and the company does not want to come out of the premium car makerâ€™s image. Even when Renault Pulse was launched, the company introduced the top two variants only as the company was not aiming at the volumes but they wanted to create the image of a quality car maker among the customers. Renaultâ€™s luxury crossover Koleos is also based on Nissan X-Trail. The new compact SUV launched in the Indian car market in the first week of July, Duster is not inspired by any of the vehicles produced by Nissan. However, the B0 platform has been taken from Nissan, Duster was launched in the global market by the Romanian company Dacia in 2009. Total of 300,000 units of Duster were sol across the world.

The company has three premium vehicles in the hatchback, sedan and SUV segments. And Renault Duster is the first competitively priced vehicle from the car maker that eyes at generating volumes. Priced between Rs 7.31 lakhs to Rs 11.49 lakhs, customers would definitely mull over it as a lucrative option for their driveway. The initial response for the SUV has been good and the company is hoping to continue the trend in future with Renault Scala sedan.

The French car major sold only 1500 cars last year which the company eyes to surge to 30,000 cars in 2012. Out of 30,000 units that the company manages to sell in 2012, the company expects Duster SUV to account for 15,000 units alone. Nissan Motors India is also hoping to touch the 50,000 sales unit mark by 2013 and double the amount to 100,000 units in 2014. The sales of the French car maker have dropped in the European car market. Sales are being generated from overseas markets. Other car markets like India, China and Brazil would among the top 10 markets across the world. In India Duster would be the game changer for the French company. Apart from this, the

company is also planning to expand its dealership network in India. The company has less dealership in India which is also one of the cause behind people being sceptical to buy Renault cars.

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