

Honda Motor plans a scooter-bike crossover, to unveil it at Auto Expo

By [Ketan Thakkar](#), ET Bureau | 26 Jan, 2016, 04:12AM IST

[Post a Comment](#)

MUMBAI: [Honda Motor](#) is combining the convenience of a [scooter](#) and the agility of a [motorcycle](#) to produce a [crossover](#) two-wheeler for the Indian market.

The idea has come from the four-wheeler market, where crossovers are a hit. Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India is developing the crossover locally, and is set to unveil it at next month's [Auto Expo](#) and start offering to buyers in April or May.

The project is internally called K74, said people in the know. Honda didn't reveal details of the project, but said in a news release that the vehicle would be aimed at the "young trendsetter of India", and create a new segment in India's two-wheeler landscape. The product will be branded NAVI, it said.

K74 is the first project for the newly formed Indian R&D centre, which is handling its development from concept to production version, said the sources.

It will be powered by the 110cc engine that hauls the Activa scooter and is likely to have variomatic transmission.

The vehicle is not a moped or step-through vehicles, as seen in Southeast Asia, so it will carve out a new segment in the country, a source said. "It is Bobby version 2.0 - a quirky two-wheeler, which Bollywood actor Rishi Kapoor was first shown on in the 70s. The NAVI is a more modern avatar of it."

The NAVI will be manufactured at the company's existing factory at Manesar in Haryana.

Honda Motorcycle & Scooter didn't respond to an email seeking details of the new vehicle.

A near-term challenge for the company will be the largely untested consumer behavior towards two-wheeler crossovers in India, said VG Ramakrishnan, managing director of Aventeum Advisors. There were a few unsuccessful experiments in the past with the designs of a scooter integrated with a motorcycle engine, such as the Bajaj M80 and Hero Street, he said.

The design of the vehicle will be very critical for the success of the vehicle. "It's to be seen what design philosophy these products adopt and consumer reactions to these designs," said Ramakrishnan.

Since India's Hero Group and Honda parted ways in India, the Japanese company has been on a dream run, with its market share doubling to 26 per cent. While the company has dominated the scooter market by capturing over half the market, its presence in the motorcycle space has remained fairly modest at 14 per cent.

Barring the Honda Unicorn and Shine, other attempts made by Honda have added to volumes but not much to the share in the motorcycle market. The company has managed to click with the family buyers with its scooters and more matured buyers with the Unicorn and Shine, but it has not been able to woo the youth as much despite interventions like the Stunner and Twister.

The attempt with this crossover is part of a major change in strategy to appeal to the youth. In a big marketing bash, the Honda Revfest, it unveiled or launched a range of bikes under the CBR (150, 250, 650) family. It also launched a new 160cc bike, Hornet.

The crossover is part of 10 new models which will be showcased at the Auto Expo. The 10 include six Indian launches and four concepts.

While the company has been tight-lipped about details of the vehicle, the marketing campaign for the NAVI started on January 1. In its news release, Honda said: "We are here to change the way India plays with two wheels...the NAVI is set to excite the young trendsetter of India and create a new segment in Indian two-wheeler landscape."

The vehicle is designed in such a way that it opens up a significant opportunity to modify and accessorise it to suit the user's taste, said a person in the know of the plan.



Honda Motor is combining the convenience of a scooter and the agility of motorcycle to produce a crossover two-wheeler for the Indian market.

ET SPECIAL: Love visual aspect of news? Enjoy this exclusive slideshows treat!

The company is talking about a limited volume of about 1 lakh units per annum to begin with. If the concept takes off, it is ready to step up production.

Stay on top of business news with The Economic Times App. [Download it Now!](#)   

[Live Market](#) [News](#) [Portfolio](#) [Mobile](#) [Live TV](#) [Newsletter](#) [Commodities](#) [Speed](#) [QnA](#) [Blogs](#) [Alerts](#) [RSS](#)

Other Times Group news sites

[Times of India](#) | [इकॉनॉमिक टाइम्स](#)
[ईशानमिड टाइम्स](#) | [Mumbai Mirror](#)
[Times Now](#) | [Indiatimes](#)
[नवभारत टाइम्स](#) | [महाराष्ट्र टाइम्स](#)
[ವಿಜಯ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ](#) | [Lifehacker](#)
[Gizmodo](#) | [Eisamay](#) | [IGN India](#)
[NavGujarat Samay](#)

Living and entertainment

[Timescity](#) | [iDiva](#) | [Bollywood](#)
[Zoom](#) | [Luxpresso](#)
[Online Songs](#) | [Travel](#)
[Guides](#) | [Hotel](#)
[Reviews](#) | [Cricbuzz.com](#) | [Prepaid](#)
[Mobile Recharge](#)

Networking

[itimes](#) | [MensXP.com](#)

Hot on the Web

[Daily Horoscope](#) | [Weather in Delhi](#)
[Mumbai Map](#) | [Horoscope 2016](#)
[Hotels in Delhi](#) | [Xiaomi Mobile](#)
[Phones](#)

Services

[Book print ads](#) | [Online shopping](#)
[Matrimonial](#) | [Astrology](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Property](#) | [Buy car](#) | [Bikes in India](#)
[Used Cars](#) | [Online Deals](#) | [Restaurants in Delhi](#) | [Movie Show Timings in](#)
[Mumbai](#)
[Remit to India](#) | [Buy Mobiles](#) | [Listen Songs](#) | [Voice Greetings](#) | [Technology](#)
[News](#) | [Augmented Reality](#) | [Mobile Recharge](#) | [Compare Mobile Phones](#)