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Maruti to announce safety ratings by BNCAP next week

This makes Maruti Suzuki the second manufacturer after Tata Motors, to have its vehicles rated for safety by the BNCAP.

By Amit Vijay M | 05 May 2024 | 354 Views

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Maruti Suzuki will announce the safety ratings for its Grand Vitara, Brezza, and Baleno models from the Bharat New Car Assessment Programme (BNCAP) on May 8, say reliable sources who spoke to Autocar Professional.

The local arm of the Japanese carmaker which sent the Grand Vitara, Brezza, and Baleno models for safety ratings, will be the second manufacturer after Tata Motors to have its cars rated for safety. All three models of the company are estimated to have achieved "top ratings," said the source. The BNCAP first published the 5-star ratings for Tata Safari and Tata Harrier, in December 2023.

Tata Motors is expected to announce safety ratings for its Punch internal combustion engine (ICE) and EV models on the same day as Maruti Suzuki.

Rahul Bharti, Head of Corporate Affairs, said at a recent earnings investor call that Maruti Suzuki has submitted three models to BNCAP, with results expected soon.

India has a high rate of road accidents, so the Bharat New Car Assessment Programme (Bharat NCAP) was announced in August 2023, with the program taking effect in December 2023.

The GNCAP previously tested several Maruti models as part of the Safer Cars for India campaign, and the vast majority received poor safety ratings. Global NCAP, for example, gave the Alto and K10 models two stars for adult occupancy but zero stars for child occupant protection.

According to sources, the Maruti Baleno, Grand Vitara, and Brezza were delivered in January 2023 to the government authorities for the ratings.

They also passed the Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) and Central Road Transport Institute testing regimes as early as March 2024.

The government authorities fearing the programme will run out of steam have advised the OEMs not to wait until the code of conduct ends on June 4th and instead go ahead with the result announcement.

Maruti, which has 17 vehicles, has only sent three for testing at Bharat NCAP.

Global NCAP has previously evaluated the Brezza, but only the previous generation model, the Vitara Brezza. It earned four stars for adult occupant safety and two stars for child occupant protection. The Baleno's crash safety was previously assessed, and it received a dismal zero-star rating from Latin NCAP.

Hyundai and other car manufacturers' tryst with BNCAP

Hyundai submitted its latest micro SUV, the 'Exter', for BNCAP testing; however, because the program allows manufacturers to work on improving their models, the Korean automaker intends to make the necessary changes to achieve a better rating. According to sources, the Maruti Fronx, Hyundai Tucson, Honda Amaze, and Honda City will be the next cars to undergo BNCAP testing.

Other manufacturers, such as Honda and Maruti, that have received low GNCAP ratings, are receiving government assistance in sending their vehicles to ARAI to identify areas for improvement for testing by Bharat NCAP protocols. While ARAI performs preliminary testing, CIRT issues the test certificate.

What is the primary distinction between BNCAP and GNCAP?

For the uninitiated, the Bharat NCAP programme was created using the most recent GNCAP protocols. While most testing procedures and standards are similar between GNCAP and Bharat NCAP, there is one significant difference that distinguishes them.

The primary distinction between GNCAP and BNCAP is the maximum score a vehicle can receive for Adult Occupant Protection (AOP).

Under GNCAP, the maximum score is 34 points, while under BNCAP, it is 32.

Both testing protocols award 16 points for front- and side-impact tests. However, GNCAP gives two extra points for seatbelt reminders, half a point for each front seat, and one point for the second row.

Tags: Maruti Suzuki India

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Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) Ltd almost tripled its funding for electric buses to roughly 10,000 buses in FY24. The disbursement grew from Rs 2439 crore in FY23 to Rs 7124 crore, underlying strong traction for electric buses across State Transport Undertakings across the country.

Vivek Kumar Devangan, Chairman and Managing Director of government-backed REC told *Autocar Professional* that on the back of strong demand, he expects REC to fund over 50,000 electric buses over the next two to three years - at an event in Mumbai last week. Beyond electric buses, REC has outlined a tenfold higher allocation towards the entire renewable energy portfolio to about Rs 3 lakh crore by 2030.

For the fiscal year ended 2023-24, REC CMD said funding for all green energy projects, which includes a mix of solar, wind energy, and electric mobility, has increased by 533%, from Rs 21,554 crore in FY23 to Rs 1,36,516 crore, including electric mobility and green hydrogen.

According to information obtained from the company's top officials, it intends to finance the OEM's gross cost contracts (GCC model) originating from various state transport undertakings, the government of India's PM E Bus Sewa program, and private transport operators seeking to add electric buses to their diesel-run bus fleet.

Indicating a strong preference for green hydrogen and electric mobility projects, particularly electric buses, TSC Bosh, Executive Director of REC, said the company will 'play one of the largest roles in the country in funding bus programs' for RFPs issued by various state transport companies and supporting full ecosystem support for India's electric bus mobility journey including private players.

"We have aggressive plans to promote electric mobility in both the state transport bus industry and private tour and travel operators who want to transition to electric mobility, which is why we have outlined funding plans for 50,000 buses," Bosh also confirmed.

REC's green hydrogen and solar mission

REC Ltd's disbursement towards green hydrogen projects in FY24 stood at Rs 7997 crore from nil disbursements made in FY23.

The company's funding in the solar energy space has more than doubled to Rs 20,956 crore in FY24 from Rs 9031 crore in FY23.

He predicted that prices of green hydrogen which are close to USD 5-6 are likely to come down to USD 1 by 2026-27, on the same line as solar, which was costing Rs 16 per kWh, a few years back to current discovered prices of Rs 2.5 to 3 per kWh with more players entering the space.

REC plans to support funding for producing green ammonia, which is in high demand in Western European countries such as Germany, the United Kingdom, and France.

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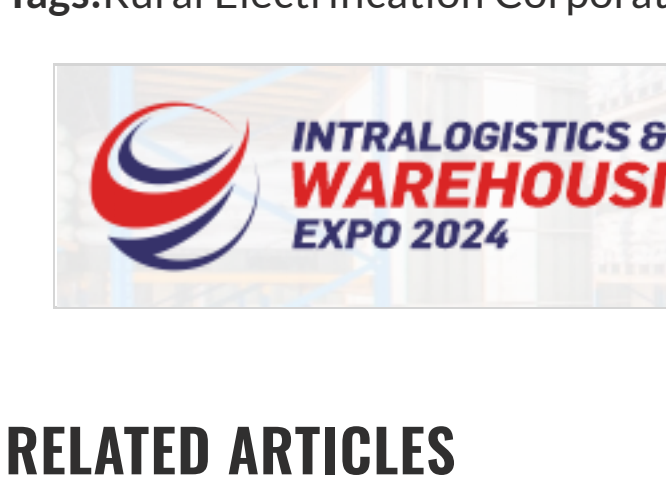
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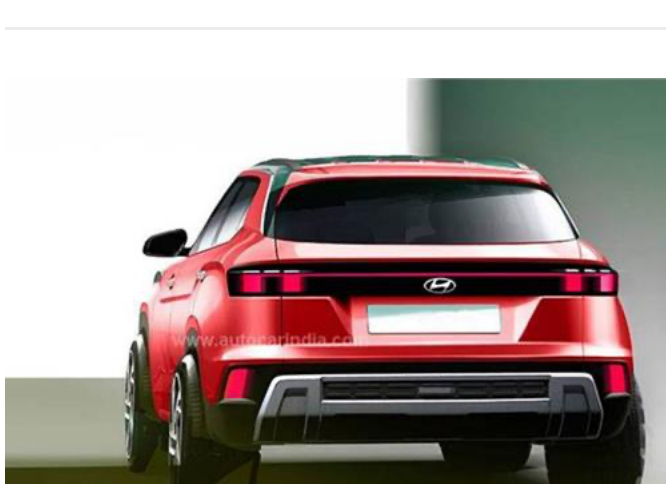


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