

# Entrepreneur's mobility solution

Eicher Polaris  
launches Multix to  
fill the void

**MURALI GOPALAN**

It was an upbeat Siddhartha Lal who proclaimed, "Jaipur is the 'City of Polaris' where we will set up our roots." The occasion was the launch of the Multix, a product which the Managing Director & CEO of Eicher Motors believes has the potential to be a game-changer in the personal mobility space.

The Jaipur plant was originally a Royal Enfield assembly operation (now centralised in Chennai) and will now house the Multix and, perhaps, other mobility solutions from Eicher Polaris in the coming years. Priced ₹2.32 lakh and ₹2.72 lakh (ex-showroom Jaipur), the vehicle will be out in August.

## Made to measure

"Personal and utility is the space which Eicher Polaris would like to address," said Lal while elaborating on the journey of the Multix. According to him, Indian conditions have their own unique characteristics right from their roads, cost of fuel (as a percentage of income) and a family's work-life balance. It was, therefore important to conceive a vehicle

keeping these parameters in mind and out of this was born the Multix targeted at the 'independent businessman'.

Extensive market studies by Eicher Polaris indicated that almost everyone in this work category owns a bike which does not manage meet his needs completely. This is particularly true in the case of a family where a two-wheeler is not the safest of options. This, incidentally, was the feature that caught Ratan Tata's eye many years ago and led to the creation of the Nano.

Lal, however, is focused on a specific customer base Eicher Polaris has targeted in the form of the entrepreneur who is part of India's vast landscape and operates in cities, towns and villages. There are a staggering 5.8 crore such people across India whose mobility options are grossly inadequate like two-wheelers or overpriced as in the case of cars. This category of people also copes with poor electricity supply in their towns which meant that any mobility solution would have to factor this input also.

"The independent businessman needs a mobility solution where even the running costs should be affordable," said Lal. He also requires extreme adaptability from family to business and vice-versa in this vehicle.



**Smart solutions** Siddhartha Lal, MD and CEO, Eicher Motors, Radhesh C Verma, CEO, Eicher Polaris, and Mike Dougherty, VP, Polaris, at the Multix launch in Jaipur

"We feel our product will unlock this customer's potential," he added.

## Affordable solutions

Eicher realised that it would not be able to make such a product on its own as it required finesse and style. This was when Polaris, known for disruptive innovations, entered the picture. "We are excited about this breakthrough product and believe this is a complementary partnership where Eicher has the passion and skills and can teach us a lot about the Indian market," said

Mike Dougherty, VP, Asia-Pacific & Latin America, Polaris.

Lal was confident that the solution in the form of the Multix would "resonate" with its target buyer. It has high ground clearance and comfort where five people can sit comfortably inside. The vehicle has been tested in the US and India and has proven to be durable, reliable and safe. As a team member of Eicher Polaris observed, "It can double up as a car, pickup van, generator and lifesaver."

*The writer was in Jaipur on an invitation from Eicher Polaris*