

Naren gets his dream car

Rayan Rozario

COIMBATORE: The Mitsubishi's street rally ace Lancer Evolution X has been a dream car for seven-time national rally champion V.R. Naren Kumar. And, the champion driver from Coimbatore took delivery of it at the Gee Dee Driving School in Echanari on Thursday.

"It is great to receive the keys of my dream car. This car is synonymous with rallying, one that has done well in the world championship. I thank Mitsubishi for bringing it to India," said Naren.

Yoshiaki Wada, Head, Marketing and Channel Development, Hindustan Motors Ltd (Chennai), enjoyed the honour of presenting the keys of the car to Naren. "We are very happy that you are driving our pride," he said. Initially, Naren was to have taken delivery of the car, said to be a 'Powerhouse on Wheels,' at Mitsubishi's Coimbatore dealership Anamallais Automobiles P Ltd on Mettupalayam Road. But with the Indian National Rally Championship (INRC) round the corner, the organisers decided to give the World Production Rally Championship driver a feel of his own world.

Along with the presentation, HM-Mitsubishi organised a unique event to provide first-hand rallying experience to its customers and the media personnel with a drive in the Mitsubishi Cedia, the most-sought after rally car on the national circuit.

And, they all enjoyed the



PROUD OWNER: V.R.Naren Kumar, seven-time INRC champion, has a feel of street rally car Mitsubishi's 'Evolution X' which was handed over to him by Yoshiaki Wada (left), Head-Marketing and Channel Development, Hindustan Motors Ltd, in the city on Thursday. - PHOTO: K.ANANTHAN

thrill of being inside the Cedias steered by rally drivers Sirish Chandran, Rahul Kantharaj and Shailendra Hegde.

"Indian Rally and the Mitsubishi brand, as a whole, have always gone together. If you look at the INRC competition, half of them are on a Cedia," said Mr. Wada.

"We also want to get closer to our customers and the rally fans. And, that is one reason we are here," he added.

Mr. Wada pointed out that they have been doing small events in various cities for the Cedia drivers. "We created a party-like atmosphere for the customers in Chennai during the INRC round. And, here we wanted them to experience the 'Mitsubishi Friendly Spin'. After all, rally drivers and our customers are our friends. We have a passion for

motor sports and they have passion for our brand."

It was also a sort of practise and trial run for the couple of rally drivers ahead of the Rally of Coimbatore. "It certainly will give us a small advantage," said Hegde.

"It is a good avenue to promote motor sports. Not many get a chance to sit inside a rally car. I am happy that they have provided some here with a great opportunity. Small events such as this can make a big impact," said Nikhil Pai co-driver for Sirish.

However, he was quick to add that it was not testing miles for them ahead of the Coimbatore rally. After the customers had enjoyed the feel, Naren took over. He impressed them all with his dazzling driving skills. And, that set the tone for the evening.

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