

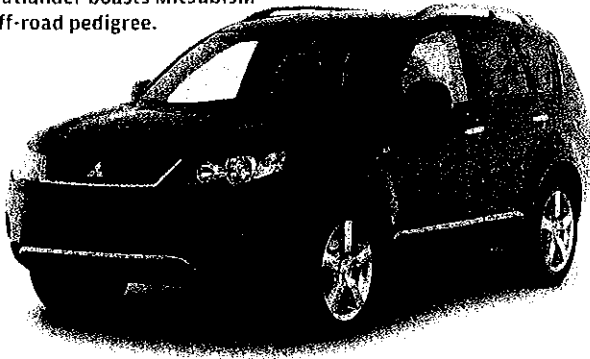
Mitsubishi Outlander

THIS MONTH

Outlander to undercut CR-V

■ Sub-Rs 20 lakh price tag ■ Locally assembled ■ August 2008 launch

Outlander boasts Mitsubishi off-road pedigree.



HINDUSTAN MOTORS (HM) is planning to launch the Mitsubishi Outlander at a sub-Rs 20 lakh price in a bid to steal market share from its main rival, the Honda CR-V. Unlike the CR-V, which is completely imported (and hence attracts a 120 percent tax penalty), the Outlander will be locally assembled by HM in its Thiruvallur plant where the Lancer and Cedia are also assembled. Locally-assembled cars pay far less tax than imported cars and this is the key reason why HM can price the Outlander competitively.

The Outlander is similar in size and specs to the CR-V, and has a 2.4-litre four-pot petrol motor with Mitsubishi's version of variable valve timing. Called MIVEC or Mitsubishi Innovative Valve Timing Electronic Control, the system features three different modes for low, medium and high engine speeds. Although it produces 170bhp, this motor is expected to be slightly detuned to account for the quality of our fuel.

Transmission options include a six-speed manual and a stepless CVT with six pre-selected ratios which can be controlled via pad-

dles on the steering wheel, which is expected to be more efficient than a conventional automatic.

The Outlander has Mitsubishi's All Wheel Control system, which, when engaged, transfers torque between the front and rear axles for maximum traction. For conventional road use, it functions as a front-wheel-drive. The driver also has the option of 4WD lock for negotiating extreme conditions, but there isn't a low-range option available. The Outlander has a very advanced suspension package which includes mono-tube dampers and coil springs at all four corners. Monotube dampers have a faster response time compared to conventional tube-

in-tube dampers, and this eliminates wheel hop. The benefits are felt in both ride and handling departments.

According to sources in HM, the Outlander will come in essentially one trim level which will be fully loaded to include a high-end entertainment system, replete with four six-inch speakers, twin dome tweeters, a 10-inch sub-woofer and a 650 watt amplifier as standard.

The Outlander comes with a 7-seat configuration but this option will not be offered in India as it requires a space-saver spare tyre to be used under the floor behind the third row of seats.

Regulations do not allow the use of a space saver and hence a full-size spare has to be used which eats into the third-row seat area. Mitsubishi also focused a lot of development time on safety. Intelligent airbags that deploy according to the severity of impact are one such feature. The Outlander also boasts class-leading pedestrian impact ratings.

HM plans to begin trial production of the Outlander by mid-2008 and launch it soon after.

