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INDIA'S No. 1
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UNDOING THE URBAN TANGLE



Modern cities could be India's
next growth accelerator



AUTOMOBILE

Not really hybrid

MAHINDRA & MAHINDRA's "fuel-smart cars with micro hybrid technology" may be fuel smart but they aren't really hybrid vehicles.

Traditionally, hybrid vehicles are those that use electric power along with another fuel, and in some cases muscle power, for greater mileage. Even electric cycles are hybrid vehicles since they use the rider's pedal power along with an electric motor to run the engine. And then there is the traditional motorised pedal bike or the moped.

Not exactly hybrid, Mahindra's cars do have a fuel-efficient engine that raises car mileage, and results in saving of up to 5 per cent fuel. The new Scorpio and Bolero, which have been fitted with the "country's first fuel-smart engines with micro hybrid techno-

SMART CAR: Mahindra cars can cut down emissions majorly

logy" have an engine that switches off automatically at a traffic light when idle and in the neutral gear. It starts on its own once the driver depresses the clutch before moving forward, leading to reduced running costs and reduced emissions.

According to the company patriarch Keshub Mahindra, "This technology is not really avant-garde but it is appropriate and relevant." With this, the company claims, its diesel SUVs can compete with small cars. It also says that India can save up to 0.7 million tonne of fuel a year if all cars use this technology. And all that fuel conservation comes just for Rs 4,000 extra. Fuel smart, surely, price wise as well!

Shalini S. Sharma

BON VIVANT

Home grandeur at its best



IF YOU THOUGHT FANTASTICAL ROOMS WERE A JUST A 'VEGAS THING' YOU NEED TO think again. A number of home owners in India are increasingly turning to high-end luxury interior design outfits. The Delhi-based **La Sorogeeeka** can transform their bedrooms and living areas into something out of the ordinary — a Mediterranean retreat, a tribute to Indian royalty or a dream-like all-white haven with silk and crystal. The ten-year-old firm, headed by Anjali Goel, specialises in providing total design solutions — right from ceiling colours, flooring materials, wall effect, furniture, light fixtures, to even canvases for the walls — for what they term 'mega homes' that is homes with an area of over 10,000 sq ft. At the moment, the team at La Sorogeeeka works with 12 luxury concepts which include Persian, Jamaican, Romantic, Motif and the Indian Classic. Unfortunately, you cannot just pick an individual item like a chair or a vase, you have to opt for the entire ensemble.

For those who have a penchant for luxury items there is the House of Raro instead. This 11-year old high-end furniture design house was founded by Raajeeta and Rolly Gupta who create exquisite pieces that are handcrafted from materials such as two centuries old ebony, rare crocodile skins, lapis lazuli sterling silver, 24-karat gold leaf, semi precious stones and rich leathers. The duo, who retail through their stores in Delhi and Mumbai, also create specially commissioned pieces.

So if you are house proud, have a discerning eye and money to spare then maybe it is time you re-decorated your home.

Sumati Nagrath

