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Drive to sustainability

With an aim to improve the quality and efficiency of auto rickshaws in India, a Hybrid Auto Rickshaw Show was organised at the SRM University recently. **Radhika Ramaswamy** reports...



Auto rickshaws are undeniably the most indispensable means of transport on Indian roads. Besides being the most popular form of transport, they are also the most polluting and hazardous of all the vehicles. Nothing much has been done to improve the quality and efficiency of auto rickshaws in the country. Keeping this in mind, Enviu, a Dutch sustainability company, in association with its Indian counterpart, Context India organised a first-of-its-kind Hybrid Auto rickshaw Contest 2009 from July 22 to July 25 at the SRM University. The objective of this expo was to create prototypes of upgrade systems, keeping fuel-efficiency, emission and business plans in mind. As many as seven institutions - three from India and four from the Netherlands, participated in this competition. Stef

Van Dongen, Director, Enviu, says, "The auto rickshaw community is huge in India and they have an enormous potential to contribute to the economy. So, the idea is to bring awareness, encourage the youth and bring in sustainable and eco-friendly measures to transform the auto rickshaw concept on Indian roads."

The teams were selected on the basis of their technical concepts, business ideations and other general criteria. "When we proposed this idea, several students showed interest and came up with many innovative solutions," says Pradeep Esteves, Director, Context India. The four-day event was a technical extravaganza of sorts. Initially, the autos were fitted with the prototypes developed by the teams and then the autos took 25 laps around the ground following which emission tests were conducted.

Several local mechanics were also called for the event to test the equipments, its user-friendliness and also to

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understand if it could be adopted by the local drivers. On the final day, auto drivers from around the city took a test drive of the prototypes. Based on the above-mentioned tests, the winners were adjudged by an international jury of experts. The participating teams from India

included SRM University, R V College of Engineering, Bangalore and MS Ramaiah Institute of Technology, Bangalore. Ankur Kumar, Team Captain of SRM University, says, "We have developed a kit that can enhance mileage upto 30% and reduce 60% emissions. This is a result of thorough research, study and hard work of over 6 months. If accepted, we plan to sell the kit in the market."

The competition was divided into 2-stroke (developed by the Indian teams) and 4-stroke (developed by the Netherlands teams) categories and winners were declared for both. Several eminent people like Bob Hiensch, Ambassador of the Netherlands, former astronaut Rakesh Sharma presided over the event. The winners were awarded 10,000 Euros and the most original innovation received 5,000 Euros.

Press Clipping

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SRM University will set up an Industrial estate to enable small and medium enterprises to set up facilities to provide practical training to students and faculty.

Speaking at the valedictory function of Hybrid Auto Rickshaw contest and exhibition organized at the Kattankulathur campus, he said the 'SRM University Industrial Estate' would be set up in an area of 30 acres inside the campus. The university would provide lands at cheaper rate for the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in areas like mechanical and electrical and provide training to the students.

SRM University students bagged the first prize in the Hybrid Auto Rickshaw contest and exhibition, organized by the SRM University. Sqdn Ldr. Rakesh Sharma, first Indian astronaut to space and Chairman Automotive Workflow, SRM University Vice-Chancellor, Prof. P. Sathyanarayanan and Ambassador of the Dutch Embassy, Mr. Bob Hiensch are seen with the winners.

HYBRID AUTO RICK SHAW 2009



எரிபொருள் ஆட்டோவுக்கு முதல் பரிசு

சென்னையை அடுத்த காட்டாங்குளத்தூரில் எரிபொருளை சேமிக்கும் நவீன ஆட்டோ ரிக்ஷா கண்காட்சியில் எஸ்.ஆர்.எம். பல்கலைக்கழக மாணவர்கள் வடிவமைத்த ஆட்டோவுக்கு முதல் பரிசை வழங்குகிறார் இந்திய விண்வெளி முன்னாள் வீரர் ராகேஷ் சர்மா. (உடன்) சென்னைக்கான நெதர்லாந்து தூதர் பாப்டெய்ன், எஸ்.ஆர்.எம். பல்கலைக்கழக துணைவேந்தர் சத்யநாராயணன் உள்ளிட்டோர்.