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Honda To Launch Jazz In June



Honda India will launch the Jazz hatchback middle of this year. Honda is currently grappling with the problem of making the Jazz (which would sport a 1.2-litre petrol engine), price-competitive for the Indian market. The Jazz is priced higher than the City in many foreign markets, including Thailand, but still manages to sell more. However, the Indian market is price conscious and analysts point out that people may not be very eager to pay a big price for a hatchback, despite its luxury and safety features.

"The Jazz will be a premium segment hatchback and we do not expect that it will overcome the sales numbers of the City sedan in India," Masahiro Takedagawa, president and CEO Honda Siel Cars India said.

The City sedan currently sells for Rs 7.5-8.6 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi) and averages around 5,000 cars in monthly sales. The Jazz would share the platform and many components with City, making it easier for Honda to source the inputs in bulk at competitive prices and keep localisation at over 70% initially.

Jazz gets the premium tag due to the company's focus on making it luxurious and safe by adding features like airbags, ABS (anti-lock braking system) and G-CON Technology (an advanced passive shielding that offers the occupant a survival zone in case of an unavoidable collision). Honda, however, believes that customers would be willing to pay for the additional features.

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