



# Mahindra Jeeto: Sound Contender

Employing a modular concept to address a wider audience, Mahindra Jeeto aims to shake up the small commercial vehicle segment.

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In a sector that has been de-growing for a little less than two years in a row after posting over 40 per cent growth five years ago, the Small Commercial Vehicle (SCV) segment is not in the best of health yet. It is true that the rate of decline has slowed down in the past six months; Light Commercial

Vehicle (LCV) sales, of which SCVs are a part according to the classification by Society of Indian Automotive Manufacturers (SIAM), declined by 11.6 per cent in FY15 against the 17.6 per cent fall registered in FY14. Industry experts are of the opinion that there is still time for the (LCV) segment to recover as

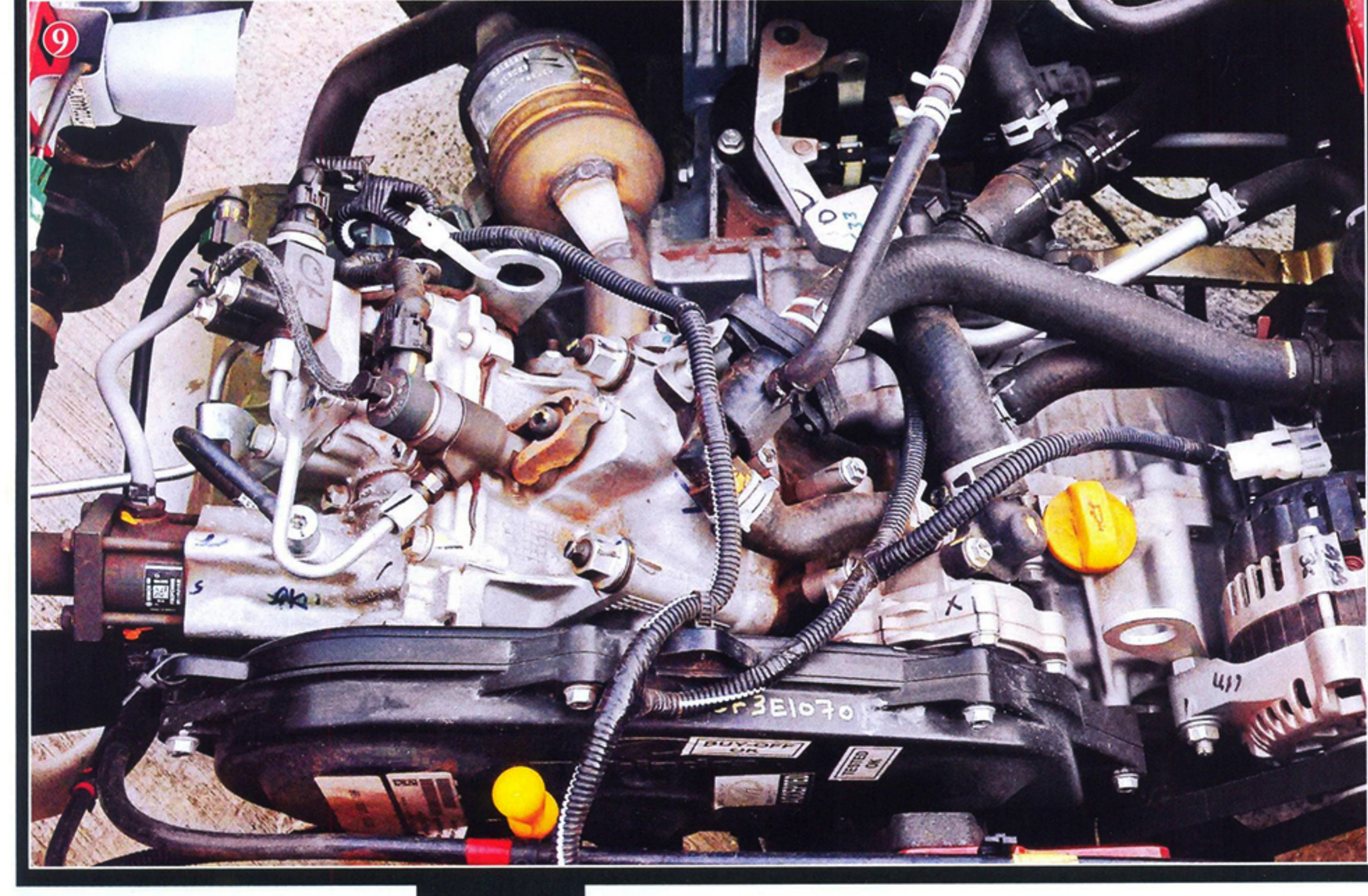
compared to the recovery posted by Medium and Heavy Commercial Vehicles (M&HCV) in the course of seven-to-eight months. M&HCVs posted a 16.6 per cent year-on-year growth in FY15 against a decline of 20 per cent in FY14. It was in 2014 that the news of Jeeto's development broke out. Enthusiastic

motoring press put up images of the camouflaged SCV being subjected to tests with a brief explanation that this was to be the new arrival sometime next year. They went to the extent of digging out information about the project, and claimed that it was called as P601 in the Mahindra circles. It was around the same time, the news of Maruti Suzuki developing a SCV broke out too. In mid-2014 to be precise.

Beginning as P601 at Mahindra's Research valley on the outskirts of Chennai, Jeeto is expected to redefine the segment that currently has the Tata Ace Zip and Ace. It has begun rolling out of the company's Zaheerabad plant. To facilitate its production a new building was erected, leading to an extension of the Zaheerabad plant. The extended facility, inaugurated by the chief minister of Telangana, K Chandrashekar Rao on April 22, 2015, was built with an investment of Rs.250 crore, and includes the manufacture of Jeeto and its two engines. The plant has an installed capacity of 92,000 units. It will be hiked to 2.5 lakh units as the demand for Jeeto and other Mahindra products made at the plant rises. This would include 1.5 tractors and 60,000 Boleros and Alfas. Alfa, ironically, is Mahindra's three-wheeler cargo carrier in the 0.5-tonne category. It is almost in the same category where the Jeeto will head for, albeit with four-wheels to boot. Capex to 2.5 lakh units according to Vivek Nayer, Chief Marketing Officer, Mahindra and Mahindra, will happen over a period of time, and will be dictated by an uptick in demand. Jeeto is certain to be an important part of this strategy, and it does not come as a surprise when Nayer expresses that the category has seen challenging times in the past, and the company is therefore cautiously optimistic. "The launch of this product (Jeeto) will allow us to leverage the maximum



1. Jeeto sports a spacious cabin for its size.
2. Head light leveling switch
3. Oval shaped instrument panel is easy to read
4. 12 Volt outlet on dash
5. The gear shift lever is dash mounted



when the turnaround in the economy happens," he says further.

## Modern and comfortable

The name Jeeto signifies 'Go out and win' in Hindi. Marking the arrival of a new cargo platform, the Jeeto measures 3281 mm, 3431 mm and 3581 mm in length (more on this

6. Jeeto rides on 145/80 R12 LT 8PR radial tyres
7. Recessed head lights contribute towards the modern look of Jeeto
8. Tail light
9. The m-Dura 625cc engine produces 11 bhp and 16 bhp respectively.

later), and 1485 mm in width. A soft, rounded front gives the vehicle a modern look. Contributing towards it is the pseudo grille and lamps that are set into a recess. Turn indicators are a part of the head lamp assembly, and gives an impression of being 'projector lamps'. A high bumper below sports a large air dam with

a honey comb grille. If the quarter glass and a step at the bottom of the windshield presents the Jeeto with a cab-forward stance (folks at Mahindra call it as semi-forward), it also hints at clever packaging. For its width, the cabin of the Jeeto is surprising spacious enough to seat two, and without feeling cramped. There's