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Electric vehicles (EVs) will revolutionise the automotive industry with their unique and innovative technology. But that revolution is at least a few years away from now. Although electric cars are gaining popularity, it's not everyone's cup of tea, especially in India. One of the closest alternatives to EVs is the Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV). They provide the flexibility of switching between electric mode and conventional engine mode. Read on as we provide you with a complete guide on PHEVs.

The PHEV full form is Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle. It is a vehicle that uses a combination of an electric powertrain and a conventional Internal Combustion (IC) engine. Unlike a traditional hybrid car, the PHEV comprises a larger battery pack which enables it to run on pure electric power at slower speeds.

One can charge the battery by plugging it into an external power source. The battery also gets charged via regenerative braking or through the IC engine. The IC engine can take over and propel the vehicle during high-speed cruising. In some scenarios, the electric motor can also assist the engine for better efficiency. A PHEV is similar to a standard hybrid vehicle except for the larger battery pack and the capability to run on pure electric power.

Like electric vehicles, the Plug-in Hybrid Vehicles command a premium price tag. That's predominantly due to the advanced electric powertrain and a larger battery pack. Hence, you don't see many manufacturers offering PHEVs in India. Below is the list of the plug-in electric vehicles in India as of April 2022.

*As per ARAI (Automotive Research Association of India)

As mentioned earlier, only a few plug-in hybrid cars are on sale in the Indian market. Hence, there are not many options available in the SUV segment. The Volvo XC90 Recharge is the only PHEV SUV available in the country.

The story is no different when it comes to the sedan segment. Since plug-in hybrid technology is complex and expensive, only a few manufacturers are keen to explore this segment. Currently, the BMW 7 Series is the only PHEV sedan available in India.

In India, hatchbacks are predominantly mass-market offerings. Even the premium hatchbacks carry an affordable price tag. A plug-in hybrid hatchback may be way too expensive in a price-sensitive market such as India. That's the reason why there are no PHEV hatchbacks in India.

Typically, a PHEV starts up in all-electric mode, wherein the electric powertrain independently propels the

vehicle.

The vehicle will continue to run in pure electric mode until the battery pack runs out of charge.

In some PHEVs, the vehicle switches to hybrid mode (electric motor + IC engine) once the car hits cruising speeds.

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