

Small wonder

This year's auto expo has been seeing the rise of small cars as the new smart choice with automotive biggies battling it out to grab a larger piece of the small segment car market.

As the appeal for B-segment cars is growing by the day, their smaller cousins are flourishing in the automotive market despite a 20 per cent price hike.

"We have noticed that high inflation, rising interest rates and surging fuel prices have forced consumers to opt for smaller cars instead of big ones. Maruti has always been popular in the market for cost-efficient cars in both small and large segments and we have the maximum number of small segment cars to offer," says Mayank Pareek, managing executive officer (marketing and sales) Maruti India.

There is some competition to Maruti as Honda's new car Brio is vigorously trying to take

over the place that Jazz failed to take in the rapidly expanding small car market. "The price of Honda Jazz was closer to a sedan as compared to the hatchback segment cars. So, we took a fresh look at the market and realized that in India," says Takahiro Higuchi, Brio development, team leader, Honda R&D.

The usual formula of big car implying more space and small car implying less space seems to have been discarded quite dismissively by automobile companies. Today's small car is armed with a host of accessories ranging from power windows to Bluetooth operated electronic interiors aligned to a



All good things come in small packages is an adage that has come alive in the ongoing auto expo. The small car segment seems to be grabbing all the eyeballs. **SHIBAJI ROYCHOUDHURY** talks to some auto experts to tell you about this latest trend



remote instead of buttons on the dash board.

Renault is not to be left behind when it comes to the small car segment. "These cars are in fashion these days. No just because of being economical in terms of fuel efficiency, but it is easy to park, low maintenance cost, cheaper spare parts and easier to maneuver in traffic," explained, Len Curran, vice presi



dent (sales and marketing), Renault India Pvt. Ltd

While Renault is still trying to make their mark in the Indian automobile market, pioneers like Hyundai, Chevrolet and Toyota revealed their new hatchback in the expo as well. Hyundai's latest baby, Eon, has hit the market with a storm.

At an ex-showroom price of ₹2.69 lakh, this is by far Hyundai cheapest car.

Chevrolet also unveiled their latest edition to the small car segment called Sail. It is partially bigger in size as compared to Beat.

Finally, Toyota announced the launch of their first hatchback called Etios Liva.