

# Scooter-makers hit fast lane on 125-cc premium models

Drawing buyers with features and easy-riding traits

**G BALACHANDAR**

Chennai, August 16

At a time when the growth in scooter sales has moderated to single digit, the new trend of premiumisation, where sales of 125-cc scooters are zooming, is providing some cheer to the industry.

Traditionally, the 110-cc scooters, which form the bulk of the scooter market in India, have been challenging the commuter segment bikes in fulfilling the utilitarian role.

"Now, there is a natural evolution towards 125-cc scooters from 110-cc models, as customers desire a premium and life-style experience. This is where the growth will be in the coming years," according to Sajeev Rajasekharan, Executive Vice-President, Suzuki Motorcycle India, which has been posting record growth in sales of its 125-cc scooters.

It appears that customers



Now, 125-cc scooters account for up to 20-30 per cent of scooters sold, mainly at urban centres AFP

now desire more power along with easy riding features. Now, 125-cc scooters account for 20-30 per cent of scooters sold, mainly at urban centres.

"There is definitely an up-gradation happening from 110cc scooters to 125cc scooters. Though the volumes are small, this trend will continue," YS Guleria, Senior Vice-President - Sales and Marketing, Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India, said.

Anupama Arora, Vice-Presid-

ent, Sector Head — Corporate Ratings, Icra, pointed out that 125-cc scooters had better styling, were feature-rich and offered better ride quality and premium appeal. Therefore, with improving aspiration levels of consumers, 125-cc segment has been witnessing a faster growth.

## Brisk sales

Some of the fast-growing 125-cc scooters include Suzuki's Access, which sold about

128,000 units during Q1 of this fiscal when compared with 86,500 units a year ago, Honda Grazia (launched in November 2017), which sold about 59,500 in this June quarter, and TVS Motor's NTorq, launched in February this year, clocked little more than 44,000 units during this period. Piaggio sold close to 10,000 units of its 125-cc scooters Vespa and Aprilia SR during Q1.

In Q1 of this fiscal, total scooter volumes grew 10 per cent to 18,18,235 units.

With growing momentum in 125cc segment, Suzuki launched its new Burgman Street, a 125cc scooter last month to further strengthen its scooter portfolio, particularly in the premium scooter segment. The company has already completed more than 10,000 despatches for Burgman Street within the first-month of the launch.

More launches are expected in this segment, Hero is also planning to roll out 125cc versions of its Duet and Maestro Edge soon.