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EVOLUTION OF ROYAL ENFIELD IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of the study is to explain about the Royal Enfield corporations History, Evolution and its present stage in market at India. The Research concludes that the company got a tremendous growth in India and had become a dream bikes for many of the youngsters.

KEY WORDS: *Lawnmowers, neutral-finder, Redditch plant, protectionist, Eicher Motors, defunct.*

INTRODUCTION

Royal Enfield comes under Enfield Cycle company founded in 1893 and manufactured motorcycles, bicycles, lawnmowers etc. The very first Royal Enfield motorcycle was built in 1901. Royal Enfield Bullet is the brainchild of Enfield Cycle Company and is the longest-lived motorcycle design in the history. In 1955, Enfield of India was formed with Chennai (Madras) as its headquarters. From 1962, all the components needed were made in India. Siddhartha Lal is the present CEO of Royal Enfield. He took over the company when it was going to bankrupt and then

the turnover happened. Royal Enfield motorcycles were the first priority at the time of World Wars and it is one of the oldest motorcycle companies. Presently, Enfield sells motorcycles in more than 50 countries. Today we decided to bring you the evolution of the Royal Enfield motorcycles right from 1893.

EVOLUTION

The Bullet has evolved from a four-valve engine with exposed valve-gear to the latest all-alloy Unit construction engine with electronic fuel- injection.

1931-1939

Introduced in 1931 as a four-stroke single cylinder motorcycle, this model was the first to feature the Bullet name. It differed in a number of ways from its successors (which are now familiar): it had an inclined engine with exposed valve gear featuring four valves per cylinder with 350 cc and 500 cc options. In 1933, a 250 cc option was also added to the range. Its frame was also considerably different, having centre-spring girder front forks, being among a new range of models from Royal Enfield that featured them, along with a saddle-type fuel tank. However, common to motorcycles of this period, it had a rigid rear-end, necessitating a 'sprung' seat for the rider, which resulted in the iconic look of the motorcycle that is much replicated today, even though the sprung seat is unnecessary in modern models.

1939-1949

This model refreshed Royal Enfield's model line-up for 1939. It differed in cosmetic details, as well as in having two rocker boxes, which resulted in higher volumetric efficiency for the engine. The basic design with front girder forks was retained.

1949-1956

A number of changes were implemented in order to bring the bike up-to-date. This model featured a vertical engine with alloy head and higher compression. The frame was changed to a fully sprung design using a swing-arm with non-adjustable hydraulic shockers at the rear, while the front used a brand-new telescopic fork of Royal Enfield's own design. This enabled the introduction of a bench seat made of simple foam and with no large springs. Power transmission was via the same four-speed Albion gearbox as the previous model, with a unique 'neutral-finder' lever the rider could press from any gear other than first to shift to neutral. The crankshaft continued to have a fully floating big-end bearing. The headlight assembly was enclosed with the speedometer and ammeter into a nacelle, which also served as the attachment of the front suspension as well as the handlebars. An otherwise similar model, but with engine displacement of 499 cc, made its debut in 1953. In 1949, the ordered Royal Enfield Bullets for border patrol use and the company decided to open a factory in. In 1955, the 350 cc Bullets were sent from the Redditch factory in kit form for assembly in India, but Enfield India Ltd. soon developed the factory and produced complete motorcycles independently under licence. The 1955 model remained almost unchanged for years and Madras produced over 20,000 Bullets annually.

1956-1964

In 1955, Royal Enfield carried out some retooling and redesign at their Redditch plant, in the UK, to modernise the Bullet, and in 1959 some changes were

made to the gear ratios. These changes, however, were not incorporated by the Indian arm due to its commitment to supply the Indian Army. Thus the British and Indian lines diverged, never to meet again.

Between 1956 and 1960, the British Bullet was released in several models, including a 350 cc Trials "works replica" version, a 350 cc "Clipper" model and in 1958 the *Airflow* version. This model had full weather protection from a large fibreglass fairing and included panniers for touring. The design was developed in partnership with British Plastics and featured as a series in magazine. The engines were the same and the only differences were in exhaust, seating, instrumentation, handlebars and fuel tank. Numerous technical improvements were also made, including moving to alternator charging (1956) and coil ignition (1960). The 350 cc model continued in production, but the 500 cc model was discontinued in 1961. In 1962, the UK Company was sold and the Bullet discontinued and in 1967, the factory closed. Finally, in 1970, Royal Enfield closed down completely.

1965-1995

Enfield India Ltd. continued production of the 1955 Bullet design almost unchanged, re-introducing it to the British market in 1977 under the name 'Enfield'. This was a period of stagnation for the Bullet.

Due to the protectionist nature of the Indian economy, no need for improvement was apparent, and the brand survived into the 1990s essentially as a domestic Indian commuter bike. Equivalent bikes in the market were the and the. Both bikes enjoy a cult following in India, but have been out of production for decades. However, this could not prevent the erosion of the bike's market once the economy was sufficiently opened up to allow the Japanese motorbikes. The bike's high fuel consumption (its main competition was from bikes with superior and more economical 100 cc engines) caused a descending spiral of sales until the company, near bankruptcy, was bought out by, a tractor and commercial vehicle manufacturer.

1995-1997

Under the newly appointed CEO of Enfield India, Eicher undertook major investment in the ailing firm. This was started with the purchase of trademark and intellectual property rights of the defunct British Royal Enfield firm, changing the name of the company to Royal Enfield Motors. Many management and production changes were made, with the production process being streamlined and excess capacity redistributed. The company also faced the difficult task of catering to a very diverse market. To preserve the Bullet's nature and reputation as a classic British bike, as the Raja Gaadi, and to attract youngsters away from the newly appeared performance motorcycle market, the Bullet marque was split up into two. The Bullet Standard 350 featured all the increased

manufacturing quality and reliability but was maintained in the traditional 'Bullet' look, available only in black. A new model, available in more colours and chrome accents, and gas-charged shock absorbers - but with the same engine and gearbox as the Standard - was launched. This model was called the 'Bullet Electra'

1997-2009

Ever tighter European emission norms forced the Bullet Standard 350 to end 2007 as its last model year in the EU, so when on-hand stocks were all sold the British-design engined Bullet became no longer available new. All new models exclusively featured the AVL 'lean-burn' engine. The introduction of a five-speed gearbox meant that Royal Enfield could 'fix' one of the long-standing quirks of the Bullet design—the foot-brake is on the left side while the gearshift is on the right. Accordingly, the Bullet Machismo 350 was equipped with this gearbox and a big hit in market which was rich in design and first chrome model in Enfield. However, the 'left-shift' gear change provoked a backlash from Indian Bullet customers, forcing the company to not only continue the Bullet Standard with the traditional system, but even on the Electra it was offered only as an option, leading to the Electra four-speed (traditional) and Electra five-speed (left-shift) variants. Sales figures indicated that Indian Bullet customers had shunned the new gearbox, foregoing even the attraction of five-speed transmission to keep the gearshift traditional. However, it became standard fitment on all exported models. New developments included the addition of electric start as an option on some models, while standard on others. In 2007 and 2008, a limited edition, heavily accessorised 500 cc lean-burn Machismo 350 and 500 was produced where the motorcycle features 20.85 Nm of torque at 3000 rpm, unique 19 -inch wheels, 280 mm front disc brake & the same engine chassis configuration being exported to Europe, USA & Australia. The Machismo 350 and 500 was discontinued which is a failure model due to lot of noise in engine.

SINCE 2007

As a result of work spanning several years, a new set of engines was introduced. These were the engines (UCE). The 350 cc UCE found use in the domestic model Thunderbird Twin Spark in a configuration with two sparkplugs per cylinder, with integrated 5-speed left-shift gearbox. It has not been featured on any of the Bullet models, domestic or otherwise. By 2011, the old cast-iron engine had been completely phased out, including in the Standard 350 model. Now all Royal Enfield bikes are only available with the all-aluminum UC engine.

The 500 cc UCE features and has greater power than any Royal Enfield 500 cc motor. The 500 cc UCE, with an integrated five-speed gearbox, powers the

current Bullet Classic model. Starting in 2009, this engine was available only in the EU to satisfy emissions regulations, but as of 2010 it is available in the United States under two frame models, the Bullet Classic C5, or the Bullet G5, which looks similar and shares paneling with the earlier AVL Electra models. In 2011 a third export model, the B5, was introduced combining the newer 500 cc UCE engine with the traditional Indian domestic tank and frame.

FALL IN MARKET IN 2019

Royal Enfield Company got a tremendous growth in all over the countries and had become a dream bikes for many of the youngsters. The company has lowered their production at the end of 2018 for the two main reasons

1. JAWA motorcycle corporation has launched a twin cylinder bike with twin exhaust with a lower rate of the Royal Enfield bikes, this attracted the many customers to their side from Royal Enfield.
2. The Indian Government has implemented a rule that the two-wheelers launching above 150 CC should compulsorily have dual channel ABS. This may increase the cost of production and automatically increase the selling price. So they decreased 50% of their production.

MARKETING STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY ROYAL ENFIELD INDIA

1990 was the year for Enfield to enter into a strategic alliance with the Eicher Group in India, and later merged with it in 1994. Royal Enfield positions itself in 'lifestyle' category of the motorcycles market. The year 2000 could have been decisive. That was when the board of directors at Eicher Motors decided to either shut down or sell off Royal Enfield – the company's oldest Chennai-based motorcycle division. For all its reputation, the sales of the bike were down to 2,000 units a month against the plant's capacity of 6,000. Though the bikes had diehard followers, there were also frequent complaints about them with regard to engine seizures, snapping of the accelerator or clutch cables, electrical failures and oil leakages. Many found them too heavy, difficult to maintain, with the gear lever inconveniently positioned and a daunting kick-start. In 2010, 113 lakh motorcycles were sold in India of which the company sold only 52,000. Since the brand is a niche brand, it cannot target the mass market. But in order to survive in the market place they were faced with the daunting task of ensuring that the sales grow gradually and the margins keep on increasing due to increased cost of overheads.

Newspaper reports were of the opinion that there is an increasing demand of high end bikes in India. Kawasaki Ninja, Ducati, Honda all are seeing a spike in sales. Even the legendary brand Harley Davidson is now in India. All these brands are in the 500 cc plus segment. The competition is the last

problem for the brand. The only competition to Royal Enfield is Royal Enfield itself. The competitors cannot cause much problem because they are far too costly. While Ninja comes at Rs. 4 to 5 lakh, Harley is available at Rs 7 lakh. Compared to this, the price range at Enfield is Rs. 95,000 to Rs. 1, 70,000 only.

CONCLUSION

We can conclude younger generation and middle age are more interested in Royal Enfield, the buying behavior is governed predominantly by need for Power and respect for the iconic Brand and users are mostly Professional Males, 20-35 years of age, including some students. Most of the customers are attracted to newly released Classic 350/500, also customers are easily affording the price of Royal Enfield bikes and customers are very loyal towards the brand Royal Enfield.

Royal Enfield should concentrate on its advertising campaign to reach the customers, mileage of the Royal Enfield bikes is very economical and most of them prefer to buy their bike brand new from showroom with the spare parts a valuable in market easily.

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