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## INDUSTRY WATCH

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### Desert Dash 09 flags off from Delhi

On December 03, 2009

Desert Dash 09, exclusively featuring only premium street legal SUVs and sedans in a rally format for the first time, was ceremonially flagged off from The Aman Hotel in New Delhi, on November 28. The rally is the maiden venture of Cougar Motorsport, a motorsport club in North India that brings together the experience of motor sport competitors, officials and event management specialists. The event has been divided into four legs to be driven across four days through the vast expanse of the Thar Desert, combining both on and off-road routes, thereby testing the resilience of both the car and the competitors. Seventeen cars have been cleared to compete, and there are eight women among the 36 competitors.

Desert Dash 09 aims to combine the thrill of motorsports with the luxury of Rajasthan's hotels. The rally will end at the magnificent Amanbagh near Alwar. Entries have been restricted to premium class, street legal SUVs and sedans, which is also a first, as such an elite grouping has never been tested together in the classic rally format. The rally will have two separate categories for both two-wheel drive (2WD) and four-wheel drive (4WD). Noted auto journalist Murad Ali Baig has also confirmed his participation.

Desert Dash 09 is a closed invitational event, approved by FMSCI and with limited participation. The four-wheeled beauties on display in the inaugural event would include cars like the BMW X5, Porsche Cayenne, Volkswagen Touareg, Mercedes M Class, Mercedes E Class, Mitsubishi Montero, Pajero, Outlander, Toyota Prado, Land Cruiser, Honda CRV and Ford Endeavour, among others. The participants include CEOs, senior executives, business owners and golf club members.

Ashish Gupta, Director, Cougar Motorsport, said, "We are ecstatic to see the realisation of our efforts, which had started off as a discussion between friends at the bar. All of us at Cougar Motorsport are professionals with large organisations who have experienced the added dimension that motorsport can bring to executive life. We are thankful to the other participants to take time off from their extremely busy schedule to make this possible. We believe that this is a small beginning to a great future for Cougar Motorsport."

Aman Resorts is the hospitality partner, Fortis Healthcare is the medical partner, and Swarovski is an associate sponsor of the event. Andpersand, Outlook Traveller and AutoXchange are the media partners across the lifestyle, travel and auto verticals, respectively. A crew from Times Now television is also participating and covering the event.

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### INDUSTRY WATCH

IM Entertainment to manage The Triumph Show 2009 on Dec 10

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A panel discussion had industry players give in their inputs about the ways to plan and detail a MICE programme.

**MaxiMICE 2009: 'A MICE programme often becomes an institution within the organisation'**  
The second edition of MaxiMICE, which is a leadership conclave for the discussion on the evolving needs of brands to enhance their meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions, was held at Trident in Mumbai on December 2.

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Mudra Max has organised 'The Mill Culture Crawl' as a three-day music, arts and fashion festival in the compound premises.

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