

# APOCALYPSE NOW

*The world is coming to an end. Time to grab the key and run. Or save the world*

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**THE XTREME RESEMBLES THE G-WAGEN NOT JUST IN THE WAY IT LOOKS BUT IN CAPABILITY TOO**



**Q**

**QUESTION. WHAT DO YOU NEED A GURKHA or Tiger for?** Commuting to work? Instagramming the f\*#ck out of it? Or actually doing good?

True story. Last year, during the initial days of the floods in Kerala, when God's Own Country was assaulted by God's Own Wrath, early responders in Gurkhas were the first on site with emergency supplies and rescue equipment. Nothing except for the Gurkha could have waded through the waters and got to the regions cut off from the rest of the state and its capabilities got so hard-wired into the hearts and minds of the Malayalis that Kerala is now the best-selling market for the Gurkha.

Which brings us to our story. The apocalypse is here. You've got a few cans of fuel and a set of keys. What do you take to escape to high ground and wait out the end of days?

**Abhishek Wairagade:** Global warming is for real. Look around you. Despite it being March, we're still roaming around in cardigans. And despite it being only March, tankers are supplying water to areas that never, ever, had a water shortage. Hailstorms are making Noida look like the streets of Srinagar. Mumbaikars aren't flocking to Mahabaleshwar or Matheran, choosing instead to enjoy the cold breeze on Linking Road. It's minus 40 degrees in Chicago (hence the genius that is Trump asking where is global warming). Last week I got a text from the university I studied at in the UK, that they were going to be shut for a day to let students in their thousands protest against climate change. Where in the Lord's name are we really headed?

**Hari Kudchadkar:** With so much pressure, the favourite whipping boy is being, err, whipped. It's election time so the government cannot go after farmers burning their fields. It's election time so the politicians will not go after builders and their construction debris either. So let's whip them cars! Electrics, electrics, electrics — without a thought to

the abject lack of infrastructure required to support the electric cars they want, like, yesterday. And what happens if there's another round of floods? How are you going to charge it? And would you dare take your EV out in the floods even if fully charged? If the movie 2012 were to come true, wouldn't it make more sense to build bigger, sturdier and faster go-anywhere vehicles that can best survive the apocalypse? Just like the Gurkha I'm driving right now?

Be it the old Xplorer or this new Xtreme, the Gurkha is not your regular SUV but the 'Ultimate Response Vehicle'. What's a URV you ask? A vehicle prepped for when calamity strikes and even the Indian Army agrees with us. Based on the Army's Light Strike Vehicle, the Xtreme resembles the G-Wagen not just in its looks but in its capability too. It may take forever to get to 100kmph but with its 'function over form' nature, it will let you jump over (or even through) buildings. The minimalistic looks serve a purpose; the approach, departure and ramp over angles are better than many top-shelf SUVs. You get a low-ratio gearbox and locking differentials that can help it find traction even through the Amazon basin, and all this on the stock Yokohama Geolandars. Even the optional accessories serve a purpose. The Xtreme is the only one in its class to come with a snorkel, allowing you to venture through waters up to four feet deep. Time to throw that fishing net away then. And of course in this dark brown shade, the Xtreme even camouflages itself well in our dry Indian jungles, so much so that even a Tiger won't spot it.

**AW:** There's no escaping the eye of the Tiger my dear friend. My Triumph is as technologically advanced as the genetically modified dinosaurs in Jurassic World while your Xtreme seems from a time when the dinosaurs really did roam the earth. The TFT cluster on my Tiger packs in more pixels than your cellphone, and allows me to choose from five riding modes. Need to get away quickly from an earthquake? Select Rider

**FORCE GURKHA XTREME**

Engine 2149cc, 4-cylinder, turbo-diesel Transmission 5-speed Power 138bhp @ 3800rpm Torque 321Nm @ 1600-2400rpm Weight 2510kg 0-100kmph 18.6sec (tested) Top speed NA Price ₹12.99 lakh (ex-showroom)

ESCAPING A  
VOLCANIC  
ERUPTION?  
SELECT ENDURO  
MODE AND  
MAKE A GRAND  
SPECTACLE BY  
SLIDING AWAY  
TO GLORY

### TRIUMPH TIGER 800 XCx

Engine 800cc, in-line 3-cylinder Transmission 6-speed Power 94bhp @ 9500rpm Torque 78Nm @ 8050rpm  
Weight 205kg (dry) 0-100kmph NA Top speed NA Price ₹14.03 lakh (ex-showroom)

mode. Escaping a volcanic eruption? Select Enduro mode and make a grand spectacle by sliding away to glory. I even get Bridestone Battletwing off-road tyres as stock on my XCx along with spoked wheels. And jumps, you say? The suspension is a massive 220mm at the front and 215mm at the rear. My Tiger also weighs just 205kg, letting me jump over obstacles without breaking a sweat. Not to mention the power-to-weight ratio: a staggering 458bhp/tonne!

**HK:** The Jurassic World mentions are cute, I gotta say. You should know that the Xtreme might be big and not-too-fast but like the T-Rex it's one of the most ferocious animals to have ever walked the earth. Your genetically advanced creation may be full of electronic gizmos but what happens when the apocalypse is accompanied by an electric surge that short circuits all your fancy gizmos? In my battle tank on the other hand, there's not much to go wrong, really. With the same 2.2-litre Mercedes-Benz sourced engine that powers the Tempo Traveller, my Xtreme can hold a decent clip on the highway; haven't you seen all those mini-buses flashing their lights and trying to get past cars on the highway? Also, when the apocalypse comes, you'll be asking me to ferry your family in the Xtreme. After all, how many people are you going to cart along on your bike? Life is

tough on a motorcycle after all.

And when waves as tall as my T-Rex hit the shore, I'll simply use my Borg Warner transfer case and plug away. Meanwhile you'll be floating on a tiny island in the Indian Ocean like Tom Hanks, judging by the amount of time needed to wear all your riding gear and switch the Tiger to Enduro mode.

**AW:** Well, if you remember well enough, the dinosaurs went extinct for the same reasons. Nevertheless, I wouldn't completely disagree with you. Unlike the Teslas of the modern world, the Gurkha and Tiger are masochists and love to take a whipping. The Gurkha Xtreme is the best off-roader in the country, by a fair margin and we have the Indian Army to vouch for it.

The 4x4 badge may have gone along with the silly Built For War stickers but what remains is its ability to take on every trail through all kinds of weather and terrain. Plus it is more civilised and looks mean as hell. It is inspired by the legendary G-Wagen and incorporates lessons learnt by its victories at the Rain Forest Challenge. That is some pedigree! And for the price of one G-Wagen, you can get almost fifteen Gurkha Xtremes. Now multiply that with six and you could probably save your entire neighbourhood. Who the heck needs Spiderman?





**Top:** Just the bare essentials in the Gurkha.  
**Above left:** Articulation much? **Above right:** Tiger's TFT cluster can be adjusted as per your liking

**HK:** Now you're talking! Of course, the Teslas are great but when it comes to saving the world, the likes of Gurkhas and Tigers are the real superheroes. The Tiger is an exceptional package and, like its four-legged namesake, deserves to be called the National (adventure) bike of India. It's quick enough to hit 100kmph in under five seconds, is comfortable enough for day-long rides and can handle the bad stuff with aplomb. To test its abilities, we even rode it on a lake bed with lots of soft sand and it passed the test with flying colours. It might not have an air conditioner but aren't temperatures dropping already? And the heated grips that come as standard keep the rider warm anyway. Above all, the Tiger feels solid. It has a never-say-die attitude and can always survive a crash. Deep within, it has what it takes to save the world.

**AW:** And so to conclude, what do you choose when riots break out and hell freezes over? For a quick getaway the Tiger, no doubt. To save your family and friends and then return for rescue missions the Gurkha, of course. Or you can just get serious about global warming, plant more trees, and employ your go-anywhere machines in hardcore conservation work. 🇮🇳