

### House in order, FMSCI prez Prithviraj to launch corporate drive

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WHAT difference a few years can make! In 2014, Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India (FMSCI) elections saw media furiously speculate as to who would support who, and the process itself was subject to legal challenges.

Fast forward four years and a new set of office-bearers have been elected unanimously, signalling an era of unity. The one common factor between the two elections is the man elected as president: J Prithviraj of Coimbatore Auto Sports Club.

"The unity that FMSCI members have shown in these elections augurs well for the future of Indian motorsports," he said. "This is a proud moment. I am sure this powerful council can do wonders."

For years, Prithviraj has been championing the cause of rallying in the country, but now he'll have a lot more on his plate. He will lead Indian motorsports into an era that is well over the hype of hosting Formula One; the last Indian Grand Prix in 2013 is but a fading memory. Force India is no more and the last Indian to race



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in the series did so six years ago. That is not to say that things are looking bleak for motorsports in the country. The recently-held finale of JK Tyre National Racing Championships at the same Buddh International Circuit that hosted the

FI races saw a healthy attendance. But top of Prithviraj's agenda as president will be getting more corporates enthused about the sport.

"We need to market the sport as a championship," he said. "That will be our biggest chal-

lenge for the new year. In that respect, 2019 is looking good. We have had corporates and promoters express more interest in the national racing championships."

Prithviraj also expects more international events to come to the country. "The Asia Pacific Rally Championship will come back in 2019. We hope to bring other international events too, though nothing concrete can be said at the moment."

Also on his to-do list is increasing the legitimacy of motorsports as a sport, especially with the Sports Ministry. An

Arjuna award in the discipline is something that they have been trying to achieve for a couple of years now.

There are things to be taken care of internally as well, with Prithviraj hoping to improve FMSCI's administration. He believes that this new-found unity within the body and the mix of youth and experience within the council and sub-committees leaves him uniquely equipped for the task. Joining fresh faces in the council are former presidents like Akbar Ebrahim and Vicky Chandhok.