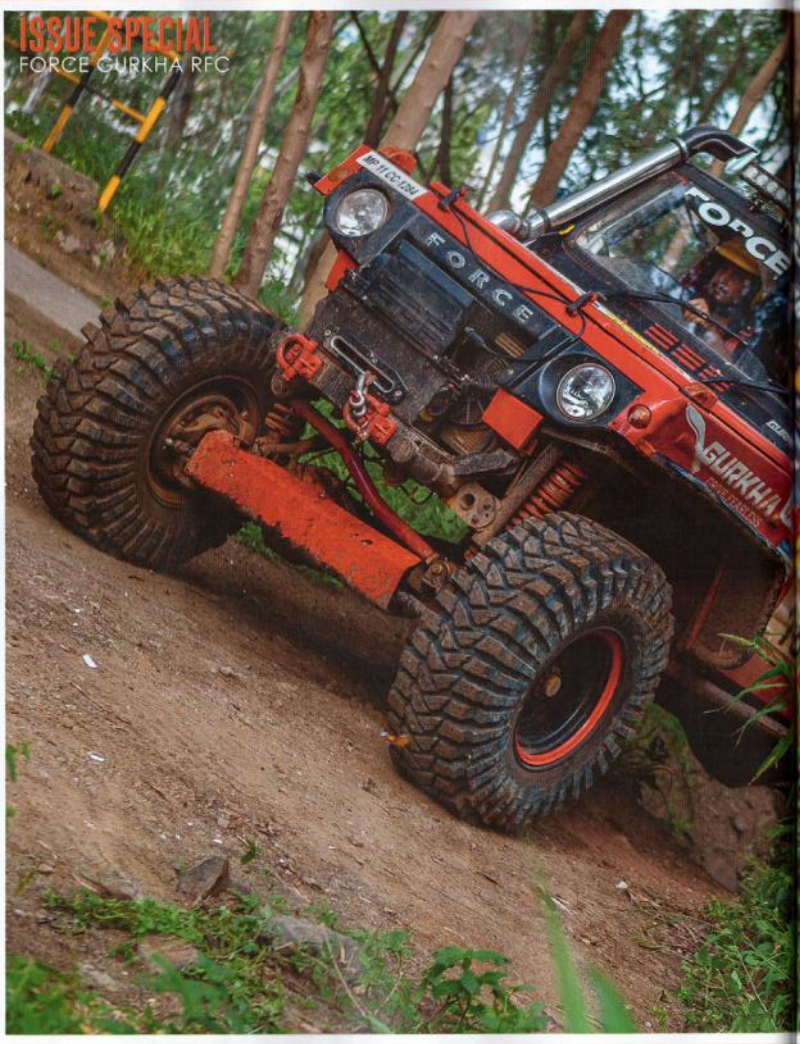
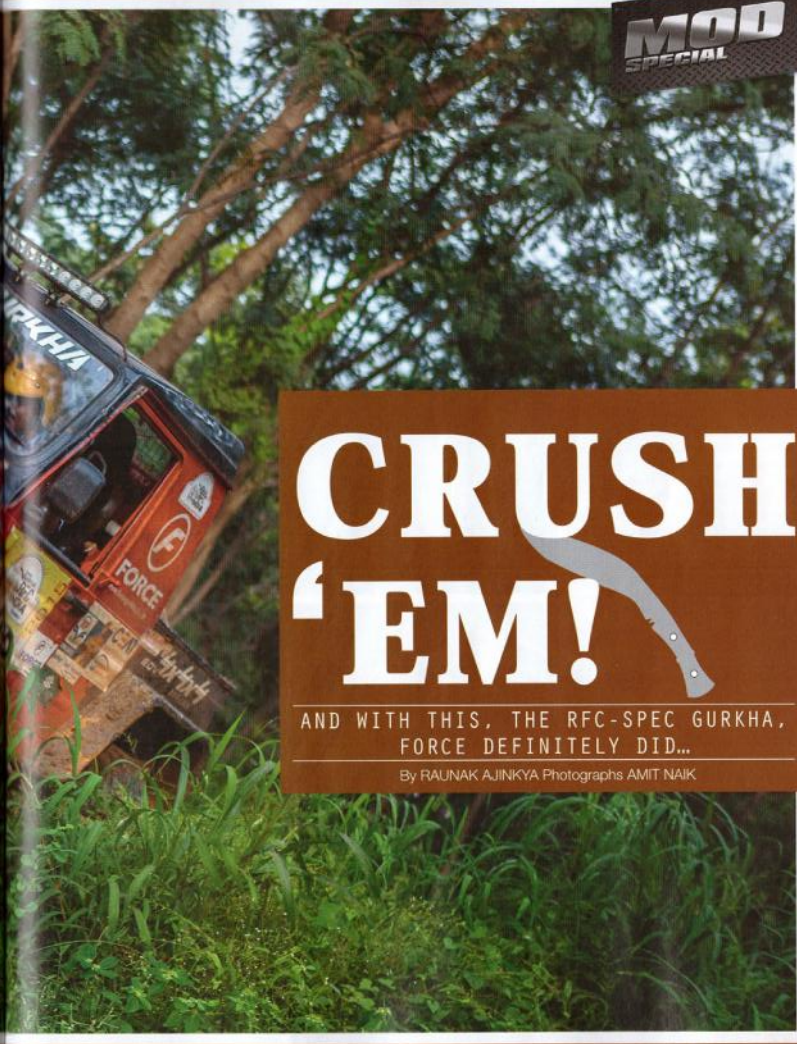




CRUSH 'EM!

AND WITH THIS, THE RFC-SPEC GURKHA, FORCE DEFINITELY DID...

By RAUNAK AJINKYA Photographs AMIT NAIK

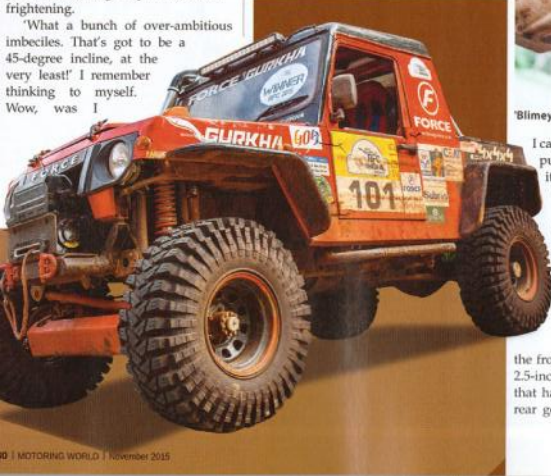
In the grand scheme of things, we all feel pretty little, don't we? Think of it: what you're doing right now – eating a banana, force-feeding your kid some cereal, trying to understand what exactly that Iran hostage crisis was – it's all inconsequential when you consider it sitting a billion miles away yanking on the galaxy via strings like some puppet master. In that sense, it must be fun to play God, right? I felt so, and so did the good folks at Force. Its version of God was the Force Gurkha RFC, and my galaxy for the day, so to speak, was Force's specially-designed off-road facility in Pune.

The sheer audacity of this regular-Gurkha-on-steroids will astound you. Having access to such immense capability at your fingertips feels a little wrong after a certain point. It felt a bit like handing over the keys to the playboy mansion to a hopped up teenager with absolutely no restrictions. Ouseph Chacko, from *evo India*, was allotted the same time slot as I was, and as it turned out, he had a go in it before I did. What this RFC (Rain Forest Challenge)-spec Gurkha can do is frightening. Encountering-a-pack-of-rabid-dogs-in-your-bedroom frightening.

'What a bunch of over-ambitious imbeciles. That's got to be a 45-degree incline, at the very least!' I remember thinking to myself. Wow, was I wrong. Not only were they a perfectly-within-their-rights ambitious bunch, the Force folks, the incline was also a 50-degree one. And it was scaled. With ease. I'm talking sitting-in-a-motorised-wheelchair-and-covering-a-21K ease.

It was at this point that I was informed by a friendly Force employee that this monstrosity can wade through 1100 mm of water! I'm fairly certain even

'KILL' floors the throttle and crushes humans. Quite apt



'Blimey. Reckon you need a wash, mate!'

I can't do that myself, let alone this pulveriser. As luck would have it, the rains were already a thing of the past by the time I drove this thing, so there was no way to put that to the test. Based on the events of the day, though, I have no difficulty believing Force's claim.

What is it that makes this such a fantastically capable beast, then? Take the suspension setup for a start – the front gets a three-link setup with 2.5-inch Dia Dual coil over shocks that have a 14-inch travel, while the rear gets a four-link setup with coil over shocks and the same 14-inch travel. Immense Maxxis Bighorn tyres that seem capable of scaling buildings do the dirty work, while the power comes from a stock 2.2-litre 4-cylinder diesel that produces 140 bhp and 32.6 kgm of torque. Believe you me, that is abundant enough to tackle pretty much anything in its path. It also gets a hardy five-speed manual, locking diffs, an enormous snorkel intake, and bucketloads of ego as standard fitment.

Clambering into its dual occupancy cabin showed me what I expected – only the basics. Bucket seats with racing harnesses, while the dash houses an array of switches to fiddle around with the diff locks. You're sat so high up that you expect to trounce even relatively big cars like Fortuners that come in your way. After seeing what this RFC-spec Gurkha can do around the specially built track, I was left with no questions at all as to how the RFC has been utterly dominated by the Gurkhas. That E.O.V. (Extreme Offroad Vehicle) tagline is looking less and less like a gimmick, honestly.

With some hesitancy, after the drive, I went up and asked about the availability of a long termer, rather greedily. Sadly enough, I was informed that there are no plans to put this heckler into production just yet, so a long-termer is out of the question. One can hope, right? So, while getting to drive something like this on a regular basis is still a bit away, it was definitely worth the experience. Want to play God? This is your best shot, then.

The Force guys won't admit it, but a luxurious cabin with all the trappings was the main aim here

'Sod it. Ready? FIRE IN THE HOOOOOOOOOLE!'