

Friday, November 19, 2010, Kolkata

CAR TO BE LESS BULKY, HAVE BETTER INTERIORS & ENGINE

Hind Motors Amby gets ready to woo non-VIPs

Shweta Bhanot

Mumbai, Nov 18: The legendary Ambassador (Amby), produced by Hindustan Motors (HM), is sprucing itself up to woo not just VIPs but others too.

While the car is being readied for the new emission norms (Bharat Stage IV), HM says newer models will be less bulky and powered with an enhanced engine. Not just that, the Amby will also get brand new interiors and be fitted with a new gearbox.

"We are planning to launch three to four new variants of the Amby in the next 18 months. It will be a new and stunning Amby, which we expect, will appeal to a larger audience. Our aim is to expand our product portfolio together with Mitsubishi and bring in several improvements," said Manoj



Jha, managing director, Hindustan Motors.

Meanwhile, the company hopes to be back in the black in the next financial year.

Currently, the maximum sales of the Amby are made to government departments. With new models, HM hopes to revive interest in the car and reach out to newer customers. To this end, the company is doubling production

at the Uttarpara plant in West Bengal to 2,300 units, over the next 18 months.

Currently, it manufactures around 1,000 units of Amby at the Uttarpara plant, where both passenger cars and commercial vehicles are made.

HM also plans to launch a sub-one tonne light commercial vehicle (LCV) in the first quarter of the next fi-

nancial year (2011-12), cashing in on the ever-expanding sub 3.5 tonne LCV market in the country. Some of the popular products in this segment include the Tata Ace and M&M Gio.

The company said its plant in Pithampur, Madhya Pradesh, which has been dormant for 3-4 years, is being revamped and will produce light commercial vehicles. Currently, the company is producing the HM Winner from the Pithampur plant. The plant will produce LCVs up to two tonnes.

"We are producing around 500 units of the HM Winner every month at Pithampur plant. The plant has been operational for a few months now and we hope to ramp up production to 1,000 units per month with two new LCV launches planned for the next financial year," said Jha.