

Hind Motors to launch 2nd brand, four new Ambassador variants

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Kolkata, Sep 30: CK Birla controlled Hindustan Motors has firmed up plans to launch a second brand, while introducing four new variants of the Ambassador, which has been on the Indian roads since 1958.

Manoj Jha, managing director, said everything about the new brand will be finalised in 12-15 months but before that the first variant of the four new variants of the Ambassador will be launched within the first quarter of 2011-2012.

"All the four new variants of the Ambassador will have a new look from all sides with changed interiors as well. Designers from

both India and Europe are presently working on it and we hope to be ready with the designs in another 3-4 months," Jha said.

He, however, did not want to disclose the amount that would go in designing the new variants and launching the new brand.

The variants, according to Jha, would cater to various segments, though the focus would be on getting a larger space in the personal segment in which Ambassador has very little intervention.

Currently around 800 ambassadors are sold in a month, of which around 25% goes to the personal segment. The target would be to make it at least 50% of the

overall Ambassador sales, while also increasing the volume of sales.

However, HM will not phase out the existing Ambassador model, Jha said, adding that there will be a better utilisation of the Uttarpara facility for making the new models with all four expected to be rolled out within another 12-15 months.

Besides recreating the Ambassador, the company has geared up to explore the open market for its components business, which was so far meant to support in-house facilities. "Our new component making capacity in Uttarpara, which was so far utilised by 25-30% would be 75-80% utilised within the

fourth quarter of the current fiscal. The forging and casting capacities are of 1000 tonne a month each," Jha said.

He said the company was aiming at a turnover of Rs 150 crore by 2011-2012 from its component making capacity.

On fully utilising HM's Chennai capacity, Jha said the company was exploring into the possibilities of doing contract manufacturing in that facility but it would wait for Mitsubishi till the fiscal end to get a clear view of whether it would increase its supplies of kit to make more numbers of Mitsubishi Pajero, Lancer and Outlanders.