

HM strategy to regain glory

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New Delhi, Aug. 5: Hindustan Motors is planning to roar back into the tier-I passenger car market with a sub-four metre Ambassador, which the company claims will have a stylish retro look with a powerful engine and will be targeted at the youth.

The present Ambassador is 4.3-metre long, while probable competitors Swift DZire and the Mahindra Verito are sub-four metre sedans.

Hind Motors, which gave India a local version of the Morris Oxford in the 1950s and the Contessa in the 1980s, now wants to combine the two concepts — a shorter sedan with a powerful engine.

Hind Motors sources said the new variant would be the company's key to re-enter the tier-I market, which it had lost to competitors such as Maruti Suzuki and Honda.

"It will have a modern yet retro look. The engine will be powerful and some-

THE PROMISES

- A sub-four metre Amby
- Powerful engine
- Retro look
- Price under Rs 6 lakh
- Reduced boot space
- Interior space same as old Amby
- Manufactured at Uttarpara plant

thing which the youth have not been offered by other companies till now and all this at an affordable price," Uttam Bose, chief executive officer and managing director of Hindustan Motors, told **The Telegraph**.

Though the company is keeping the design and development of the car under wraps, Bose indicated the price tag would be kept under Rs 6 lakh.

He said the modifications would lead to a reduced boot space, but the cabin space would remain the same.

The reduced length will help the company to attract a lower excise duty. Consequently, it will be affordably priced to target small car owners wanting to buy a sedan as well as buyers of high-end hatchbacks.

"The new model will be based on the existing platform, but will have many new and advanced features that exist in other automobiles. The original Ambassador name will remain but we will add something youthful to the tag to attract the youth," Bose said.

The company would start producing 1,000 cars per month and might ramp it up later, depending on the response. It would be manufactured at the company's Uttarpara plant, which has capacity to produce 20,000 vehicles annually.

Hind Motors has not sought any design or research support from Mitsubishi Motors and Isuzu, with which it has tie-ups.