

## HM to roll out new variants of Amby from January

Kolkata, Nov 19 : Different variants of 'new look' Ambassador passenger car will finally roll out from the Hindustan Motors' Uttarpara plant near here from January next, HM Managing Director Manoj Jha disclosed here today.

Speaking to UNI on the sidelines of the inauguration of the Auto Show East,organised jointly by the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers(SIAM)and the Confederation of Indian Industry(CII) showcasing different branded cars,Mr Jha,however, said the 'prototype' of the new look car would be exhibited 'sometime next month' following a two-year research and development by a dedicated team of automobile designers at HM's Uttarpara plant before the cars formally roll out for commercial sale next January.

Referring to the emotional attachment of this age old sedan with the country's millions of car lovers since it first hit the Indian roads in 1952,based on the British car design of 1932,Mr Jha said while conceptualising the new variants of Ambassador special attention was given to maintaining its simplicity,hardiness and comfortable accommodation in line with the age old model.

"Though there would be some changes in both exterior and interior designs,no compromise was made in terms of its safety, comfort and reliability," Mr Jha asserted.

He, however, refused to disclose further technicalities of the country's once 'most loved car'.

He said the new variants of Ambassador would be available in both petrol and diesel versions with the latest 1.2 and two litre powerful engines and was likely to cost a little higher than its present models.

Asked to be a little more specific about changes in the design of the new variants, Mr Jha,flanked by Company Head, Vehicle Strategies and Development,Sandhya Pande,said among several changes on the exterior were in the shape of headlamps,sidelamps and the bumpers,while special attention was given to provide a classic look in the interior design of the car and its upholstery.

He said the financial condition of HM,which had been experiencing mounting losses for the past many years because of lack of enough orders, was likely to undergo a sea change following the launch of the new look Ambassador.

"We also expect to increase our production level at HM's Uttarpara plant by over 20 per cent from the very first year to take it from around 8,000 cars per month now to over 10,000 vehicles every month from January itself," Mr Jha explained.

About the situation in HM's Chennai plant where the Lancer version of SUV and passenger cars were being produced under joint venture, Mr Jha said though at present only about 40 per cent of the capacity was being utilised, a rejuvenated marketing strategy for all brands of HM cars, including Ambassador, Lancer and Winner, one tonne pick up truck from this year, would soon start paying rich dividends in terms of sale.

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