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Floods in Thailand disrupt assembling operations

Our Bureau

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Following natural calamities in Thailand (floods) and subsequent disruption of operations at the Mitsubishi Motors unit there, the launch of its SUV – Pajero – has been delayed in India. The vehicle, which was supposed to be launched at the January 2012 Auto Expo, will now be launched in the first quarter of 2012. Kolkata-based Hindustan Motors (HM) assembles and markets Mitsubishi Motors Corporation's Pajero and other premium vehicles in the country. The assembling is done at the Tiruvallur plant in Tamil Nadu. A senior company official said that the production at the Thailand unit had been hampered on account of floods thereby bringing to a grinding halt the assembling of the vehicle in the Tiruvallur plant.

Explaining the cause behind the delay in the launch of the vehicle, Mr Manoj Jha, Managing Director, Hindustan Motors, in a press statement said, "We had decided to launch Pajero and other new variants from the HM stable at the Auto Expo 2012



in New Delhi. However, some dislocation of operations at Mitsubishi Motors Thailand facility due to the natural calamity and unexpected events compelled us to alter our plans."

HM is likely to get approval from the Automotive Research Association of India for one of its passenger carrier variants soon. "Other commercial variants built on the Ambassador platform are also in the pipeline. Market research is being conducted across different States to elicit

customer feedback," Mr Jha said.

The company had recently launched a new variant for commercial applications and is hopeful of ramping up volumes through these variants.

For the quarter ended September 2011, Hindustan Motors reported a net loss of Rs 22.36 crore on an income of Rs 145 crore. The net loss during the quarter was higher than Rs 11.6 crore during corresponding period last year.

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