

TIMES BUSINESS

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Pune design co to give Amby new look

First Variant Likely To Be Rolled Out In December

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Kolkata: Hindustan Motors (HM), one of the oldest passenger car manufacturers in Asia, has roped in Pune-based design firm Onio Design for giving a new look to Ambassador. The first variant of the new look Ambassador, better known as Amby, would be ready by December. It may be noted that HM introduced

'original' wheels of India, Ambassador in 1958, followed by not so spoken about Contessa in 1984.

The exercise is part of a strategy to revitalise HM which was on the brink to refer to BIFR following 90% networth erosion in the first quarter of this fiscal. HM managing director Manoj Jha said that Onio Design is working on the styling of Amby along with a core team of HM. "The first prototype will be ready by December this year. The first new look Amby will be commercially launched in first quarter of 2011-12. We can say that it would be a better

proposition. Our aim to broadening the target audience is by offering Amby in different



variants. The new variant will be rolled out from Uttarpara," he said. He was talking to reporters on the sidelines of Auto Show East organised by CII and SIAM in the city.

Onio Design is also work-

ing for other Indian auto companies on styling. Incidentally, Jha had earlier said that all the variants will have distinctive look from all the sides. He also said that four variants will be launched under umbrella brand of Ambassador and it would introduce a new brand for two variants. Commenting on the Chennai facility, he said that

now the capacity utilisation is around 40% but it would rise as Mitsubishi is planning to introduce more variants in India. It is also looking at better capacity utilisation in component business. It has 1000 tonne per month capacity for forging and casting each at Ut-

tarpara. Now, it is utilising only 25% of the capacity. It would go up to 75% by the end of Q4. "In two years we will have a turnover of ₹150 crore from component business," he had earlier said.

Over 70 years old HM has also undergone a financial restructuring in the last quarter, that resulted in infusion of Rs 40 crore in the company. The financial restructuring includes selling a prime property in Chennai and transferring some HM stake in Avtec to other group companies in order to bring in funds to the company. Later on the company reduced the value of paid up equity to ₹5 from ₹10 to set off ₹80 crore in order to come out of the woods.