Ashok Leyland to buy JV shares from Nissan

Chennai / Japan – One of India’s largest commercial vehicle manufacturers, Ashok Leyland Ltd of Chennai, India has signed a restructuring agreement with its existing joint venture partner for light commercial vehicles and components, Nissan Motor Company of Tokyo, Japan, whereby Nissan is to relinquish its entire interest in the three joint venture companies.

The agreement, which was signed on September 7, 2016, is to see Nissan sell its entire stake in the three joint ventures to Ashok Leyland; this would see the companies become wholly-owned subsidiaries of Ashok Leyland. Ashok Leyland said the transaction would be concluded upon receipt of all necessary approvals from the regulatory authorities in India. The process is expected to be concluded later this year.

It was back in 2008 that Ashok Leyland formed the three joint venture companies with Nissan: They were, Ashok Leyland Nissan Vehicle Ltd for light commercial vehicle manufacturing; Nissan Ashok Leyland Power Train Ltd for powertrain manufacturing and Nissan Ashok Leyland Technologies Ltd for technology collaboration. Ashok Leyland stated that it would continue to build, under a licensing agreement, the Dost and Partner light commercial vehicles, which are based on Nissan’s design, engineering and technology. Servicing and parts availability for customers is said to be ensured by a new technical support arrangement. In addition, Ashok Leyland said that the two companies have agreed to continue a deal to procure made-in-India parts to Nissan.

Philippe Guérin-Boutaud, head of Nissan global LCV said: “We are pleased to be moving forward into a new phase of our business with Ashok Leyland. Nissan is committed to India and has invested substantially in manufacturing, research and development and sales networks in the country. We are on track to becoming a major player in the Indian market. Under the licensing arrangement with Ashok Leyland, Indian commercial vehicle customers can continue to benefit from Nissan’s engineering, with servicing and parts availability.”

Legislation

New scraping policy likely to remove 18 million vehicles and generate huge replacement demand

New Delhi - The government of India is expected to bring into law legislation that will see commercial vehicles 12 years and older scrapped, which is expected to generate huge replacement demand for new trucks and buses in the new financial year.

The government is expected to legislate at the next parliamentary session and before the end of this year for all commercial vehicles registered before March 31, 2005 to be scrapped under the Vehicle Fleet Modernization Programme (V-VMP scheme)1. As a result, it is anticipated that 18 million commercial vehicles could be scrapped in a phased manner creating huge replacement demand for trucks.

At the SIAM° annual convention in New Delhi, Abhay Damle, joint secretary, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), said: “The new vehicle scrappage policy will target heavy commercial vehicles first as they cause 65-70 per cent of the (vehicular) pollution.”

Union minister, Nitin Gadkari of MoRTH, added: “While pollution is one of the biggest concerns, the industry has been very supportive of our efforts to address this issue. We are attempting to implement a scrapping policy for old vehicles, which will help reduce pollution.”

“V-VMP: Vehicle Fleet Modernization Programme proposes to offer tax benefits and discounts to people who scrap old vehicles and replace them with new ones. It proposes to cut excise duty on new vehicles by half and subsidise the purchase of a new vehicle after scrapping the old one.”

Investment / Expansion

Bosch India expands braking and driver assistance R&D centre in Bangalore

Bangalore / Germany – Bosch India Pvt Ltd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Robert Bosch GmbH, Stuttgart, Germany has expanded its research and development centre in Adugodi, Bangalore. Bosch said it has invested some USD52.39m in expanding the facility, which is to focus on antilock braking systems, electronic stability program mes, driver assistance, passive/active safety systems, hardware development and other software developments for the local market.

Bosch stated that this investment was the first phase in plans to create a global research facility and that it was planning to expand the complex with further investment totalling USD175m.

Dear Reader,

The outlook for India has never been better it seems as prime minister, Narendra Modi, wins support for radical reform, including the recent decision to make 500 and 1,000 rupee notes illegal tender as part of the government’s strategy to reduce the black economy and move towards a cashless society.

In general, there seems to be a general view that the commercial vehicle industry in India, under Mod’s leadership, is on course for steady growth during the next five years. A report on Frost & Sullivan presentation pages 4 and 5, while during the second fiscal quarter (July to September) the CV sector experienced a short pause in growth – both the M&HCV truck and trailer segments declined 15% and 16% respectively, reflecting the regulatory enforcement of the trailer code and introduction of ABS in trucks and trailers - the outlook looks strong. Customers were perhaps deferring purchases until later in the year in expectation of further discounts by OEMs at the year’s end and ahead of BS IV norms in April.

Buses on the other hand exhibited modest growth of 1% in the MCV and 3.71% in the LCV segments, respectively. This was driven mainly by pent up replacement demand and uncertainty over increased prices of future vehicles that will need to comply with new regulatory norms such as the bus body code, ABS, as well as new BS IV emission controls from April.

Rajesh Khanna
COO, RACE Innovations
Jim Gibbins
Editor, Truck & Bus Builder

Henkel India opens acoustic lab in Pune

Pune / Mumbai / Germany - Henkel Adhesive Technologies India Pvt Ltd, headquartered in Mumbai, the Indian subsidiary of Henkel AG & CO in Düsseldorf, Germany, has inaugurated a new acoustic lab at their innovation centre in Pune.

The acoustic lab enables the company to develop components and systems to meet evolving and increasing challenges in the area of noise and vibration, harmonics (NVH) to international standards. The lab uses the very latest software programmes such as Computer Aided Engineering (CAE) and Finite Element Analysis (FEA) to perform measurement and virtual tests, when designing these components.

Shilip Kumar, country president, Henkel India and business director, transportation and metal SBU, Henkel IMEA, said: “Noise and vibration play a crucial role in determining the vehicle’s quality, and we have started to focus on developing vehicles with lower NVH levels. At Henkel, we put our customers at the centre of what we do and work closely with them to develop solutions to challenges faced by them. At this acoustic lab we will collaborate with our customers by solving NVH problems.”

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Serving the industry since 1978
**BL BorgWarner to localize visctronic fan production**

Chennai – Thermal management components and systems specialist, BorgWarner Cooling System India Pvt Ltd, a subsidiary of BorgWarner Inc of Auburn Hills, Michigan, has announced its plans to increase the local content of its visctronic fans built for the Indian market to 70%. The fans are built at its Sriperumudur facility near Chennai. Operations with this increased local content, is scheduled to start during the first quarter 2017.

In October 2015, BorgWarner said it had started supplying BharatBenz followed by other OEMs like Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Ashok Leyland, Volvo Eicher Commercial Vehicles as well as others.

The Chennai plant is to be fourth plant of BorgWarner’s to manufacture visctronic fans after the US, China and Europe. Visctronic fans drive with high speed and respond directly to the engine cooling needs, says BorgWarner; they offer increased performance, while improving fuel economy and reducing noise and vibration harshness.

**Agreement**

**India gears up for borderless trade**

New Delhi / Bhutan / Bangladesh / Nepal – Following the Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) signed by four countries Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal (BBIN) on June 15, 2015 (abbreviated as BBIN MVA) - which permits the seamless transport of goods and passengers between these countries - India has seen the first borderless transport trial operate successfully between Dhaka in Bangladesh and New Delhi in India via Kolkata.

The trial allowed implementation of protocols specific to border controls and to the Motor Vehicle Act and Rules. Rudrapur, Malda, head of the border management, said that following the agreement, the vehicles were allowed to move with temporary e-permits at the borders by customs. The trucks were electronically sealed the moment they reached the first land customs station, and then monitored until they reached the Inland Custom Depot in Patparganj, New Delhi, where a bill of entry and customs duty payment was made by the importing company.

Nitin Gadkari, Road Transport and Highways Ministry, said: “History was written at the Inland Customs Depot in Patparganj in East Delhi today. For the first time a cargo truck from Bangladesh drove with a Delhi-bound consignment, having come seamlessly through the border customs free, and further still, paying the way for the implementation of some 30 priority road construction projects worth eight billion US dollars as part of this initiative to connect neighbouring countries.”

For trade in these countries it means considerable cost savings as Nithi Dua, India country manager for Marks & Spencer, suggested: “We are expecting the freight cost to come down by 20% and transit time to be reduced by three days.” Costs are expected to reduce mainly due to the removal of the current practices of off-loading and re-loading freight at the borders, and the reduction in waiting time for clearance of transit goods. 

Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal (BBIN) signed a landmark Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) for the Regulation of Passenger, Personnel and Cargo Vehicular Traffic among the four South Asian neighbours in Thimpu, Bhutan today. The MVA agreement between the four SAARC nations, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) is expected to pave the way for a seamless movement of people and goods across their borders for the benefit and integration of the region and its economies.

The BBIN MVA Agreement was signed by the Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways and Shipping Mr Nitin Gadkari on behalf of India.

**Investment / Expansion**

**KUS Auto to set up new plant in Chennai**

Chennai / China - KUS Auto the abbreviated brand name for Dongguan Zhengyang Electronic Mechanical Co Ltd of Dongguan, Guangdong province, China, a manufacturer of liquid level sensors and AdBlue/DEF (diesel emission filters) and gauges to many transportation sectors, is setting up a new production plant in Sriperumbudur, near Chennai with operations scheduled to commence in early 2017. The plant is to be operated by its subsidiary, KUS India Pvt Ltd in Chennai. KUS Auto set up a sales, marketing and administration office in late September 2015 in Chennai to be able to import and supply its components to various Indian OEMs including Daimler, Tata Motors, Ashok Leyland and Mahindra & Mahindra.

Steven Lee, director at KUS Auto, remarked: “We see demand for the localization of AdBlue tanks in India. We will begin manufacturing these at our upcoming production plant early next year. Our products will be for the HCV industry where we have Tata Motors, Ashok Leyland, Mahindra & Mahindra (MM&M), and Daimler as our customers in India. Currently, we are supplying our products to our plants based in China. Localisation will help us get more aggressive in the Indian market.”

**Strategy / Investment**

**BorgWarner to localise visctronic fan production**

**Strategy / Agreement / Export**

**Tata Motors now exporting to Bolivia**

Mumbai / Bolivia - Tata Motors Ltd of Mumbai has signed an agreement with Bolivian Auto Motor of Santa Cruz, a local importer, for the sale of its range of CVs in Bolivia.

To date the company has launched products from its light commercial vehicle range, these include a mini and light duty truck, Tata SuperAce1 and Tata LPT 613, and one pickup truck, Tata Xenon – the vehicles are being sold through three outlets in Santa Cruz, La Paz and Cochabamba.

“Tata LPT 613 is a 4.2t payload truck. It is fitted with a 6-cylinder engine (equipped with turbo-charger and inter-cooler) and 5-speed gearbox.”

**Innovation / Manufacture**

**Fasching contemplating production in India**

Austria - Safety seat belt manufacturing specialist for the commercial vehicle industry worldwide, Fasching Salzburg GmbH of Salzburg, Austria has announced plans to set up a production facility in India. At Busworld India 2016 in Bangalore, Harald Pessl, sales director and authorized officer for Fasching said that Fasching had been active on the Indian market for more than six years and during that time it had been most closely following the rules and regulations governing safety belts in the commercial vehicle industry. Pessl said it was now time to take a step forward and set up a production facility in India. This would enable the company to manufacture its safety belts to its high standards but at a more competitive price for the Indian commercial vehicle and military markets.

“Our production facility should be implemented and completed by mid-2018, so allowing full production to start in the second half of 2018”, said Pessl. Fasching aims to achieve its goals by partnering with an already identified but unnamed experienced local company and plans to form a joint venture to achieve its goals over the next 12 to 18 months.
Mahindra launches on-board real-time diagnosis system called DiGi SENSE

Mumbai - Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd (M&M Ltd) of Mumbai has launched a connected telematics tool called DiGiSENSE, which it is rolling out initially with two small commercial vehicles, Jeeto1 and Imperio2.

Developed by Mahindra, the company says that DiGiSENSE is the first of its kind technology platform, which, mulls application and multi-product enabled, it is a smart application that empower customers to digitally build knowledge 24 hours a day about the performance and location of their vehicles. DiGiSENSE, says Mahindra, will enable operators to access information about their vehicles remotely in real time and take to proactive steps in preventative maintenance and repair. Drivers can contact emergency breakdown services or pull up a route planner at the touch of a button, fleet owners and dealers can track the location of their vehicles in real-time and override speed limiters to move new service teams to monitor the vehicle’s health and productivity parameters.

It is expected that DiGiSENSE will be introduced with Mahindra medium and heavy duty commercial vehicles in the future; this, suggests Race Innovations Pvt Ltd, the Chennai-based subsidiary of France’s Michelin Group to bring the most advanced tyre technologies in real time, while remote diagnostics and reports allow businesses transportation needs.

Vehicle Breakdown assistance - The emergency alert button immediately alerts the nearest service centre and can notify the owner, without any trouble searching for assistance

Vehicle Usage and Delivery Reports – Snapshot

- The emergency alert button immediately alerts the nearest service centre and can notify the owner, without any trouble searching for assistance

- The web/app notifications

- SMS & Webpage Alerts - The web/app notifications and sms alerts enable greater driver control for geo fencing, over speeding, excessive idling etc. It also analyses potential improvements in business by changes in vehicle usage pattern

- Vehicle Tracking - It ensures locating the vehicle in real time, tracking the history of the vehicle travel, facilitating better planning and control of business deliveries.

Michelin’s new radial tyres for Indian trucks

Chennai / France - Michelin India Pvt Ltd, the Chennai-based subsidiary of France’s Lyon-based tyre manufacturing company, has launched its X guard radial truck tyre range, which are manufactured in India using two patented technologies; Infinicoil1 and Regenion2 – these have been adapted to be produced in India and are offered at Indian market conditions and prices.

The X guard radial tyre is priced at USD275 a tyre, says Michelin, which, it claims, makes it more competitive than its Indian competition, while, Michelin continues, providing significantly improved benefits in terms of performance and safety.

Mohan Kumar, commercial director, Michelin India, remarked “The new Michelin X Guard is a demonstration of the commitment of the Michelin Group to bring the most advanced tyre technologies to India. The Indian market is rapidly evolving and it was important for us to adapt to the customer’s changing needs. Michelin X Guard, built exclusively for the Indian market, is a paradigm shift from the Indian consumer’s viewpoint. This product is a true reflection of the ‘more for less for more’ philosophy that combines the best of Michelin proprietary technologies to deliver a high quality product, but at an attractive market price. We expect this product to attract more customers to our brand.”

“Regenion technology offers the tyre to self-regenerate the tread and new grooves appear as they wear out; this improves tyre life and boosts tyre mileage significantly.”

Product / Technology / Manufacture

Tata launches Super Ace mini-truck in Vietnam

Mumbai / Vietnam – The Tata Super Ace 1-ton payload truck has now been launched in Vietnam on behalf of Tata Motor Ltd of Mumbai, India by Tata Motor’s ‘existing local partner’, TMT Motors.

The trucks are already available in both diesel1 and petrol versions2 across seven sales points in northern Vietnam, with more outlets being added gradually through the country.

Ravindra Pisharody, CV head at Tata Motors, said: “Having officially announced our entry into Vietnam under the Tata Motors portfolio, we are happy to announce the launch of our very first product, the Tata SuperAce mini-truck in the country today.

The Tata SuperAce petrol model has a 4-cyl, 1,405cc diesel engine and 5-speed transmission.

The Tata Super Ace petrol model has a 4-cyl, 1,396cc 85hp petrol engine and 5-speed transmission.

Having sold over 1.5 million mini-trucks on the Ace platform globally so far, the Tata SuperAce has been developed based on Tata Motors’ deep understanding of the CV customer, for a wide range of applications. Through our partnership with TMT Motors, we are committed to shaping the commercial vehicles industry here and are determined to build a long lasting relationship with the customers, with competitive business advantages and the trusted credentials of the Tata Motors brand.

“TMT Motors manufactures, assembles and distributes a number of brands in Vietnam. In May 2015, TMT Motors signed an agreement to distribute Tata CVs in Vietnam.

- The Tata SuperAce Diesel has a 4-cyl, 1,405cc diesel 70hp engine and 5-speed transmission
- The Tata Super Ace petrol model has a 4-cyl, 1,396cc 85hp petrol engine and 5-speed transmission.

AL wins order for 777 trucks and buses

Chennai / Tanzania – Ashok Leyland Pvt Ltd of Chennai has received a second major order from the government of Tanzania of 777 trucks and buses, including equipment for workshops to deliver the vehicle maintenance, worth USD170m.

The order, which is backed with finance support from the EXIM Bank of India under the National Export Insurance Account (NEIA) scheme, follows a very similar order previously for 735 vehicles. Vinod K Dasari, MD for AL, said: “Export business offers strategic intent to globalise their product portfolio, de-risk their market position in India”.

Ceat launches Win series tyre for commercial vehicles

Mumbai - Tyre manufacturer, CEAT Ltd, the flagship company of RPG Enterprises1 of Mumbai, has launched a new tyre series, called Win, which is dedicated to the commercial vehicle market.

The Win series tyre, says CEAT, is designed to offer low rolling resistance targeting improved fuel efficiency, whilst using high strength rubber and steel for higher loads and increased durability. This series is an evolved version of its earlier Pro Series tyre and targets the long haul cargo truck and intercity coach segments.

RPG Enterprises is an Indian multi-industrial company headquartered in Mumbai. It has more than 15 subsidiary companies, which are located throughout India.

Ashok Leyland to invest $60m to expand LCV operation

Chennai – Following its ownership separation agreement reached with its LCV joint venture partner, Nissan Motors Company in September (see separate article in this issue), Ashok Leyland Ltd of Chennai, it has announced that it will expand operations with investments totalling USD59.84m over the next three years. This, it added, would involve the launch of eight to 10 new product models, said the company, as well as updating its existing product range.

Cooper Standard relocates India HQ to Pune

USA / India – Cooper Standard Automotive Inc of Novi, Michigan has opened its new India headquarters and technical centre in Pune, Maharashtra.

Relocated from its previous location in Sahibabad, the 6,000 sq ft facility employs approximately 15 people and designs sealing components and fuel and brake delivery products. Serving an expanding Asia Pacific customer base, Cooper Standard, including its joint venture partners, now operates 32 facilities in the Asia Pacific region, including 11 in India, 13 in China, five in Korea, two in Japan and one in Thailand.

Product Development

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Outlook for bus and coach market looks positive as India pushes for cleaner emissions, says Frost & Sullivan at Busworld India 2016

India - The whole of India is moving to BS IV (Euro 4) in April 2017 and in just three years’ time, India is proposing to by-pass or skip adopting BS V (Euro 5) emissions regulations and move directly to BS VI (Euro 6) by April 2020, stated Chandran Kailasam, Kailasam, Head of global commercial vehicles research for Frost & Sullivan in a presentation at Busworld India in Bengaluru last month. Kailasam said that the Indian government was taking huge steps towards enforcing cleaner emissions by introducing such low emission norms. He said that the Nitin Jayram Gadkari, Minister for Road Transport and Highways and Shipping had already instructed all state transport undertakings to make their fleets, comprising some 17 lakh (1,700,000) buses, either Euro VI or bio-fuel compliant by April 1, 2020. Kailasam has also stated that Euro VI fuel would be made available in metro cities much earlier than the deadline. By adopting BS VI, Tata Motors, Ashok Leyland, and Mahindra and Mahindra from trucks and buses would, he said drop by 50% and 89%, respectively from BS IV norms – the latter comes into effect across the whole of India on April 1, 2017. A concern still remains that fully compliant BS VI vehicles may increase demand across all bus segments - but now also entering the volume / value segment with its UD brand. All such overseas bus producers are looking at India as a production hub for export to regions such as Asia Pacific, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East and the Kailasam is sure that “there is a considerable demand for the technology companies to move into the market, and expects BYD to lead the way in full electric buses. The Indian bus industry like many other industries is led by the truck business with buses being a secondary business, said Kailasam. Historically, the bus chassis has always shared the same architecture as that of the truck. So, in Kailasam’s view, there remains considerable time to go before the OEMs design and build purpose-built buses. “What is needed is a market change in the general bus and coach architecture, stated Kailasam. The customer experience will change due to investment in the interior design and use of technologies to improve the passenger experience such as free Wi-Fi and infotainment systems. For the passenger, this is a benefit as it allows them to compete in the aftermarket by providing benefits that are practical in terms of track and trace and in the provision of various levels of fleet management systems. F&S expects driver Smartphone usage to grow from 1.8% in FY2016 to over 25% by 2020. This will enable fleet operators to empower its drivers and improve its fleet management. However, he does not see the highly sophisticated safety and fleet operator solutions now available in Western Europe such as driver fatigue and alko-lock systems, video monitoring and parking systems or lane departure warning systems coming onto the market for many years yet, unless the government introduces them through legislation.

Kailasam stated that in addition to legislation there were a number of key trends driving the bus and coach market which, in his view, are likely to continue and even escalate in the future. These are: higher levels, safety and low cost manufacturing. He said there were 100 Smart cities in India, where action plans were being undertaken to address key issues for modern city dwelling; the top three issues are air pollution, water pollution and e-waste. He said the fourth is efficient and sustainable mass mobility. Kailasam stated that the Indian customer was becoming more sophisticated because of such trends, with greater interest in safety, levels, and low cost manufacturing. He said that in addition to legislation there were a number of key trends driving the bus and coach market which, in his view, are likely to continue and even escalate in the future. These are: higher levels, safety and low cost manufacturing. He said there were 100 Smart cities in India, where action plans were being undertaken to address key issues for modern city dwelling; the top three issues are air pollution, water pollution and e-waste. He said the fourth is efficient and sustainable mass mobility.

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Telangana - The MG Group of Telangana, India

used Busworld India in 2016 to announce its move into a new market segment with the unveiling of a 12m low floor integral airport bus.

Called Columbus, the bus it built to a monocoque design with front and rear chassis modules. The front module featured a ZF front portal axle, while the rear module included a ZF standard drive axle with ZF’s fully-automatic ZFtronic transmission and Cummins 5.9-litre 230hp Euro IV engine fitted transversely.

Lait Waarkhede, consultant – vehicle integration at the MG Group, explained that the use of front and rear modules, in the event of damage, allows them to be replaced if necessary without affecting the structural integrity of the vehicle. The vehicle has a long wheelbase of more than six metres (6m) enabling a low floor virtually throughout the bus with a small step over the rear axle. The passenger area has been designed to offer swift entry and exit with just eight seats around the wheel arches, with five passenger doors – three on the driver’s off side consisting of a single plug door at the front, and two double doors between the wheelbase and then two more double swing-out doors opposite on the driver’s side. The interior layout permits it to accommodate up to 70 passengers (6 seated and 64 standing). Use of 275/70 tyres allows a passenger entry floor height of 290mm, after kneeling. The vehicle is 2.6m wide, is equipped with deep flush panel sealed windows that offers good light and much space within the vehicle. It also has many of the latest technologies such as ECAS (electro-hydraulic suspension), ABS (anti-lock braking) and CAN bus system, which the MG Group stated, makes it fully compliant with airport handling manual regulations.

In addition it has a new driver binacle with digital display, developed and supplied by the Group’s bus electronics solutions, MG Grey Engine LLP.

Anil Karnat, managing director of MG Group, said: “Over the past two decades, we at MG Group have played a significant role in the Indian bus building landscape, recognizing customer needs and introducing game-changing and innovative products and solutions for the bus and coach industry. The Columbus, currently diesel powered, is envisioned to be offered with CNG as well as electric drive lines in the short term. In India, the air passenger traffic has been increasing approximately 20% year-on-year and hence the demand for tarmac coaches [apron transfer buses] is also increasing. The total park volume is currently 800 units, being a highly niche segment."

The MG Group said: “A good tarmac coach further enhances the image of the airline. The Indian market currently demands about 50 coaches per year, which is expected to grow as aged tarmac coach fleets are also due for replacement. Leading airlines have also placed record order sizes for aircrafts, which in turn, will increase the demand for tarmac coaches. Tier-2 City Airports under focus will also boost the demand of tarmac coaches. Keeping in mind the urgent need for spacious and high technology coaches by the airline industry, the Columbus has been positioned as a revolutionizing product and a technology demonstrator. The bus is to be initially introduced for the export markets and is to use the Columbus platform to take critical feedback from Indian customers with a goal to introduce it in the domestic market in the near future."

Chandigarh – “Bus operators increasingly prefer to buy complete vehicles,” said Sukhdeep Singh, assistant manager, product marketing and administration for SML Isuzu Ltd at the show. Singh advised Truck & Bus Builder that it had seen a significant rise in demand for its complete bus products, and suggested that it is the one point of contact for maintenance, service and repairs was driving this trend. Another reason was the impact of the Bus Body Code (AIS 052) in effect in April this year with only some 100 or so bus builders now certified. SML Isuzu used the show to display four vehicles, two of which are new: the Ecomax and the Executive Lx Coach. The Ecomax is short wheel-base luxury minibuses for 12+1/13+1 seats in 2+1 layout with air conditioning, USB charging points, cup holders and magazine rack. The driveline is available with BS II or BS IV compliant 3.45-litre engine with direct injection / common rail fuel injection and rated at 101hp (75kW) and torque of 315Nm / 310Nm. The Executive Lx Coach is a luxury 8.3m long coach offered with a choice of three seating layouts of 19+1 reclining push back seats, 28+1 semi-reclining high back seat or 30+1 variant. It has the same engine choice as the Ecomax with an output at both BSIII and IV of 101hp (75kW) output and 310Nm torque. The transmission is different 6 speed unit is instead a 5-speed. SML Isuzu has its truck and bus building plant in Ropar, Punjab state. In 2015/16 it achieved sales of 12,700 vehicles and 11,716 in the previous year, with around 4,000 buses and coaches being included that number. It expects to build in excess of 13,000 units this year. The plant produces its own engines, transmissions and axles and employs 150 people in R&D.

The MG Group plans entry into the low floor airport bus sector

MG Group plans entry into the low floor airport bus sector

**Product / Diversification / Strategy / Export**

**Strategy / Market**

**MAN India ready for BS IV emission regulations**

**Market / Product**

**Growing demand for fully-built buses, says SML Isuzu**

**Product / Regulation**

**Tata DLT first to be ARAI certified for trailer code**

Pune - With ten year anniversary celebrations of MAN’s presence in India at this month’s Bauma Conexpo India 2016 in Delhi, Joe Mommertz, chairman of the managing director of MAN Trucks India Pvt Ltd of Pithampur, Pune, was upbeat about prospects and of increasing sales in India with new vehicle configurations to offer the markets: Speaking with Truck & Bus Builder at Busworld India 2016 in Bangalore, Mommertz said that MAN India’s plan was to replace its current off-road product for the mining sector in 6x4 and 8x4 configuration to offer lighter weight products in the road product for the mining sector in 6x4 and 8x4.

MAN India has made much progress in recent years: Four years ago, D0836 engine production was localized and today, local content exceeds 80%. As well as the engine, it makes axles and

Pune - Tata International DLT Pvt Ltd (Tata DLT), a manufacturer and supplier of trailers in India based in Pune (a subsidiary of TRF Ltd) is the first to present an ‘organized’ trailer manufacturer to homologate its range of trailers in accordance with the new mandated AIS’ 113 trailer code and to receive certification by ARAI.

Tata DLT has a manufacturing capacity of 300 trailers a month in Pune, and satellite plants in Jamshedpur and Ameer, with monthly capacities of 75 and 150, respectively. It plans to manufacture the trailers in line with the AIS 113 type code starting at a fourth plant, which it opened in Pune in October this year.

Thereafter, implementation of the AIS standard code is to be introduced gradually across its other three plants.

TTF Limited is a subsidiary of the Tata Group of companies, which consists of more than 90 enterprises operating in over 80 countries. In 2007, it diversified into truck and trailer applications by acquiring York Transport Equipment in Singapore, Dutch Lanka Trailers (DLT) of Sri Lanka, and Aditya Auto Components of Lucknow, India. DLT was an established trailer manufacturing outfit in Colombo, Sri Lanka – DLT was renamed after acquisition as Tata International DLT Private Limited.

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**Tata DLT first to be ARAI certified for trailer code**

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Tata DLT has a manufacturing capacity of 300 trailers a month in Pune, and satellite plants in Jamshedpur and Ameer, with monthly capacities of 75 and 150, respectively. It plans to manufacture the trailers in line with the AIS 113 type code starting at a fourth plant, which it opened in Pune in October this year.

Thereafter, implementation of the AIS standard code is to be introduced gradually across its other three plants.

TTF Limited is a subsidiary of the Tata Group of companies, which consists of more than 90 enterprises operating in over 80 countries. In 2007, it diversified into truck and trailer applications by acquiring York Transport Equipment in Singapore, Dutch Lanka Trailers (DLT) of Sri Lanka, and Aditya Auto Components of Lucknow, India. DLT was an established trailer manufacturing outfit in Colombo, Sri Lanka – DLT was renamed after acquisition as Tata International DLT Private Limited.

**AIS - 113:2013 Automotive Indian Standard guidelines - type approval to certify trailers.**

**APRAI- Automotive Research Association of India.**
Daimler assumes management control of bus build operations to accelerate production

Oragadam - To ramp up bus production in order to meet growing demand for its products in India, Daimler India Commercial Vehicles Pvt Ltd (DICV) in August assumed management control of the Wrightbus bus body production operations and supply chain in Oragadam, according to Jitesh Jain for DICV at Busworld India last month. While Wrightbus continues in its role in bus design, as Daimler has already a substantial supply chain in India, in a step for Daimler to assume a closer management role, Jain explained. 2016 has been the bus operation’s ramp up year, explained Shina Satyapal, manager corporate communications at DICV. The company started with truck production in 2012 and recently passed the 50,000 total output mark (earlier this year it launched the next generation Bharat-Stage IV compliant 9t and 12t trucks), while output at its bus plant began with concept vehicles in 2015. Ms Satyapal said DICV has invested a substantial sum in its bus operations totalling INR 425 Crore (approx. EUR56m). The DICV bus division has a twofold strategy, Satyapal continued, with volume production under the BharatBenz name and top of the range products under the Mercedes-Benz name. Currently, it has three products - three vehicles at 9t gvw (school, staff and tourism), in the pipeline for 2017 introduction are 12t and 16t variants, announced Satyapal. Under the Mercedes-Benz logo it is offering its 2436SHD 14.5m high deck coach model. Bus sales have been focussed in markets of south and west India, Satyapal remarked and now the company is to expand its bus sales into the north and east of India. DICV has an extensive network (more than 80) of truck dealers and service partners throughout India. On display at Busworld India 2016 in Bengaluru were two 9t gvw, 9.78m front-engine standard floor bus models – the Bharat-Benz School Bus and the Bharat-Benz Staff Bus. With previews of these models in June 2015 and sales having started in January, the company has already exceeded its targeted sales volume for the year, Satyapal stated. Both models share the same drivetrain of a locally produced 4-cylinder 4-litre in-line inter-cooled and turbocharged engine (4D34i) meeting either BS III or BS IV emission standards and rated at 170hp for the school variant and 140hp for this staff bus. Both models are fitted with ABS as standard.

Safety – A high priority in Bharat Benz school bus design

The highly visible yellow school bus uses the Wrightbus Aluminique body structure with R66 rollover strength and meets a 42 degree tilt angle in the tilt test, which more than complies with ARAI’s recommended tilt test angle of 28 degrees. In addition to the ABS, an electronic pressure sensor is used to monitor the air pressure in the brake chambers and the VSSS connectors minimise the leaking of air, thus leading to highly effective braking. Safety is further enhanced in the chassis design, which as a wide frame width, tubeless radial tyres, and front and rear anti-roll bars for improved cornering, stability and better handling. Additional safety features in include individual seat (lap) belts on the two person bench seats, the interior is made from fire retardant fabric and plastics, anti-slip vinyl floor and access is facilitated via a retractable lower step. There is an emergency exit near door on the driver’s side as well as all windows offer an exit with the life hammer mounted on the vertical stanchions on each side. The driver’s area is fitted with a guard to prevent children accessing the driver’s area; there is also a buzzer in the driver’s cabin, fire extinguisher and passenger announcement system.

Chennai - Daimler India Commercial Vehicle (DICV) of Oragadam, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Daimler AG, Germany, is to start export of 9-ton gvw fully-built Mercedes-Benz branded school buses1 to middle eastern countries, part of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), by end of this year. The 9.1m long school bus is based on the Mercedes-Benz of 917 RF C front-engine chassis with rugged truck technology produced at the Indian Daimler Trucks plant at Oragadam, near Chennai. The four-cylinder 3.9-litre engine offers an output of 170hp (125kW). It is optionally available either Euro III or Euro IV emissions regulations, depending on the market and regional requirements. The school bus comes with 17.5-inch wheels, parabolic springs on both axles, anti-lock braking system, anti-roll bars and three-point seatbelts and comes with standard features like automatic stop arm, automatic fire suppression systems, CCTV (closed circuit television) cameras and a LED (low emitting diode) destination board. The Daimler bus is to be sold under Mercedes-Benz brand in the GCC countries. Currently the company is already exporting as 9 tonne chassis to Africa, South east Asia and Latin America, making the fully built buses a new development. In future Daimler AG is planning to expand its portfolio on the domestic market by launching a 16 tonne bus chassis next year with plans to sell to the Indian STUs for the upcoming years. The fully built buses comprise bodies built by Wright Bus Engineering Pvt Ltd, a subsidiary of Wright Bus International UK at its newly installed (2015/2016) facility in Oragadam within the DICV facility, to cater to the Daimler bus future body demands.

1GCC – Gulf Cooperation Council member countries include, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.

Alternative Drive

Tata supplying 25 e-buses

Mumbai – The bus division of Tata Motors Ltd has partially completed its supply of 25 diesel series-hybrid electric buses since it was awarded the contract in March this year by the Mumbai Metropolitan Authority. All 25 will be delivered by April 2017.

Mahindra & Mahindra taking action to reduce carbon emissions from operations

Mumbai – To play its part in reducing greenhouse gases from its production operations, Mahindra & Mahindra Pvt Ltd of Mumbai, Maharashtra State, has announced an investment of some USD4.4m over the next three years to reduce its carbon emissions by 25%. It says, it currently produces in the region of 300,000 tons of carbon a year. Mahindra states it has become the first company in India to measure its operational activities in terms of carbon footprint. (The company is indicating a cost or carbon pricing in round figures of USD10 per ton). Mahindra & Mahindra adopted the new carbon emissions reduction scheme, after several months of rigorous planning and effort in keeping with its progressive attitude toward sustainability. The company partnered with the World Bank, IFC and the World Resources Institute in India to gain an understanding of the carbon price mechanism. Dr Pawan Goenka, executive director, Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd, said: “Mahindra is a pioneer in sustainability and is deeply committed to the creation of low carbon businesses. We have reduced our carbon emissions over the years and this new carbon price will help accelerate innovation and drive our investments in energy efficient and renewable technologies. We hope this encourages other companies to take action at a time when India’s emissions are set to rise in business as usual scenario in step with the country’s economic growth.”

Commenting on the development, Tom Kerr, director, Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition at The World Bank Group, said: “Mahindra & Mahindra’s initiative is a carbon price and an excellent example for companies in India and around the world of how smart companies are taking advantage of low-carbon investment opportunities while managing carbon risk.”

Show Report – Busworld India 2016

Continued from p4

Exports not only by indigenous producers like Tata, Ashok and Eicher will rise; newly established brands like Bharat-Benz, Volvo, Scania and others will actively use India as an export hub for Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Volvo Bus Corporation in the past year has exported Euro 6 intercity buses to markets in Western Europe. Above and opposite, as well throughout this issue, are a number of articles recording the key developments and product announced at the show, Busworld India. 2016 was the best attended show yet, which included a visit by Shri R. V. Deshpande, Honourable Minister for Large and Medium Scale Industries and Infrastructure Development, Government of Karnataka.

Tata Starbus is the name of the diesel series-hybrid electric low floor 12m, 32 seat/35 standee bus powered by a BS IV compliant 6B.9 CNG 320hp Cummins engine connected in series with an eight pole magnet synchronous motor of 44kW with high-power lithium ion batteries and capacity of 11Ah, 3.74 kwh max. It featured electronically controlled air suspension (ECAS) and electronic braking system (EBS) with regenerative braking.
**Product**

**Apollo launches three new radial tyres**

Gurgaon/Chennai - Tyre manufacturer, Apollo Tyres Ltd of Chennai has launched three new commercial vehicle radial tyres, Apollo EnduRace RD HD1, Apollo EnduMile LHD2 and Apollo EnduComfort CA3. Rajesh Dahiya, Group Head – Sales, ISO (India), SAARC & OCEANIA at Apollo Tyres, said: "This is a very special day for us as we take the next leap in Truck Bus Radials (TBR). We entered the TBR segment in 2010 and have grown stronger over since. One main difference between Apollo and other brands is that we do not bring products from world-over and test them with the customer. We develop tyres along with the customer for the Indian market suitable for Indian roads and usage conditions and this has been a main reason for our market success. We are confident that each of the three products launched today will be a benchmark in its category.

Apollo EnduRace RD HD is a long haul drive tyre suitable for high speed operations and provides over 20% superior mileage than its predecessor. The ventilated block design supports heat dissipation for cooler running and the ACTO casing design (Apollo Cord Tension Optimised) makes the tyre more durable supporting multiple retrades. The superior mileage compound and the optimized contact pressure ensures longer life of the tyre.

Apollo EnduMile LHD is a regional drive tyre with ACTO (Apollo Cord Tension Optimised) Casing reinforced with 25% higher strength in the Belt & Body Ply. With stronger sidewalls too, this tyre is most suited for heavy-duty applications. The open and wide tread design helps heat dissipation resulting in faster turnaround. The hexagonal tread block design with tie-bars provides higher resistance to irregular wear.

Apollo EnduComfort CA is an all-wheel pattern tyre, specially designed for luxury coaches. The optimized contact pressure and balanced rubber mass distribution with new age compound provides excellent handling (comfort) and mileage. The special tread design reduces in-cabin noise too.

**Expansion/ Product / Agreement**

**Rambal to manufacture active shock absorbers for the Indian market**

Chennai / Canada – Shock absorber supplier, Rambal Ltd3, which is based in Chennai and is a subsidiary of the Shriram Group2, has announced plans to start manufacturing active air suspension control systems or pneumatic active shock absorbers for bus, coaches and vans.

It announced it plans to invest USD4.49m in creating a new facility in Oragadam, near Chennai, to address what it sees as a rise in demand for air suspension systems in intercity coaches, staff and school bus applications, it is expected to see more opportunities for home export grown oriented players like Rambal.2

"A manufacturer of shock absorbers and other precision components mainly for global OEMs, tier 1 component suppliers, Rambal manufacturing facility is located in Chennai, spread across 7.5 acres, with capacity to produce 1 million shock absorbers per annum. Rambal is a renowned export oriented supplier of struts, seat dampers, gas springs for buses and trucks.2

"Shriram Group is an Indian conglomerate, founded on April 1974.

"General Kinetics is a global manufacturer and supplier of dampers, shock absorbers; hydro-pneumatic suspensions; semi-active damping systems; seat suspension dampers for military vehicles, specialty trucks, and off-highway vehicles; air spring systems for industrial handling, forestry, mining and agriculture markets.2

"Active Shocks are described by Rambal as an advanced form of shock absorber offering real-time control on suspension system to offer maximum comfort to passengers. The continuously variable damping force is controlled by a patented Ride State Aware algorithm that reads sensors embedded in the damper and the chassis to output the ideal damping force target in real time.
Bus and coach sales see positive growth in first half of fiscal year 2016-17

India - Bus sales (7.5t gvw and above) in the first half (April to September) of fiscal year 2016-17 increased by 4 per cent to 23,882 units from 22,955 units in the same half of last year (April to September 2015-16). Total bus production, however, fell dramatically by 8.5 per cent to 25,144 units, from 27,476 in the same period of 2015-16. Total bus exports (7.5t gvw) increased by 11 per cent to 5,634 from 5,076.

Turning to the individual segments, sales of intermediate-duty buses (ICV: 7.5t to 12t gvw) decreased by 2.6 per cent, decreasing from 11,203 units in the first half of last year to 10,914 units in same period this financial year. While export sales, however, rose from 902 to 1,377 units, an increase of 52.7 per cent, production fell by 5.5 per cent to 10,773 units. Tata Motors is the dominant brand in the segment (ICV: 7.5 tonnes - 12 tonnes) with sales volume of 3,439 units, by almost 15 percent, and SML Isuzu Ltd of Chandigarh had a strong half year in second place with sales of 2,141 units, up from 2,252, a rise of 6.7 percent. The medium and heavy bus and coach segment experienced sales growth of 10.8 per cent in the half year to September 2016-17 compared with 11,704 units last year. Exports in this segment increased by 2.0 per cent to 4,257 units from 4,174 units in the same period of 2015-16. Ashok Leyland still is the dominant supplier of large bus and coach chassis.

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**Statistics – Rigid Trucks**

**Rigid truck sales slip 2.7% in first half of 2016-17**

India: Sales of medium and heavy rigid trucks (7.5t gvw and above) in India decreased by 2.7 per cent from 95,081 trucks in the second half of 2015-16 to 92,508 units in corresponding period of 2016-17. The total number of medium and heavy rigid trucks manufactured, however, rose from 113,495 units in the first half of 2015-16 to 116,685 units in same period this financial year, an increase of 2.8 per cent. Production reflected the rise in domestic demand but also a rise in exports. Eicher, which accounted for 13,631 units, up 35.1 per cent on 10,088 rigid trucks (7.5t gvw and above) exported in the same half a year prior.

Turning to the individual truck segments, sales of medium-duty rigid trucks (7.5t to 12t gvw) experienced a growth rate of 11 per cent compared with 20,948 units in second half of 2015-16. Sales of lighter-weight heavy-duty rigid truck segment (16.2t to 25t gvw) increased to 6.9 per cent from 95,081 trucks in the second half of 2015-16 to 21,252 units in half of 2016-17. Production output reflected strong export growth during the period, with sales up 35 per cent at 13,631 units. Exports of heavy trucks, showed growth of almost 400 per cent to 1,405 from 287.

There remain two dominant weight categories in terms of sales volumes. These are the heavy-duty truck segment (35.2 tons < GVW ≤ 40.2 tons) and the intermediate-duty bus and coach segment (12 tons < GVW ≤ 16.2 tons). The medium and heavy bus and coach segment experienced sales growth of 10.8 per cent in the half year to September 2016-17 compared with 11,704 units last year. Exports in this segment increased by 2.0 per cent to 4,257 units from 4,174 units in the same period of 2015-16. Ashok Leyland still is the dominant supplier of large bus and coach chassis.

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**Statistics – Tractors**

**Tractor sales grow 12.6% in first half of 2016-17**

India: Total tractor sales increased by 12.6 per cent during the first half of 2016-17 to register 21,032 units compared with 18,677 tractors in the same half of the previous year (2015-16). Tractor production was positive too, albeit an increase of 1.5% overall from 902 to 1,377 units, an increase of 52.7 per cent. However, exports decreased dramatically by 58.5% to just 623 (1,502). There remain two dominant weight categories in terms of sales volumes. These are the heavy-duty tractor unit (40t < GCW <49t) segment and light-heavy-duty segments (35t < GCW < 40t). The 40t < GCW <49t tractor segment is the largest, accounting for more than 50% of the tractor market. This segment saw sales grow by 3.4 percent from 10,286 to 10,632. The other main segment (35t < GCW < 40t) saw sales grow by 46 per cent to 4,761 units from 3,250 units.

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**Statistics – Bus Half yearly**

Bus and coach sales see positive growth in first half of fiscal year 2016-17

India - Bus sales (>7.5t gvw) in the first half (April to September) of financial year 2016-17 increased by 4 per cent to 23,882 units from 22,955 units in the same half of last year (April to September 2015-16). Total bus production, however, fell dramatically by 8.5 per cent to 25,144 units, from 27,476 in the same period of 2015-16. Total bus exports (>7.5t gvw) increased by 11 per cent to 5,634 from 5,076.

Turning to the individual segments, sales of intermediate-duty buses (ICV: 7.5t to 12t gvw) decreased by 2.6 per cent, decreasing from 11,203 units in the first half of last year to 10,914 units in same period this financial year. While export sales, however, rose from 902 to 1,377 units, an increase of 52.7 per cent, production fell by 5.5 per cent to 10,773 units. Tata Motors is the dominant brand in the segment (ICV: 7.5 tonnes - 12 tonnes) with sales volume of 3,439 units, by almost 15 percent, and SML Isuzu Ltd of Chandigarh had a strong half year in second place with sales of 2,141 units, up from 2,252, a rise of 6.7 percent. The medium and heavy bus and coach segment experienced sales growth of 10.8 per cent in the half year to September 2016-17 compared with 11,704 units last year. Exports in this segment increased by 2.0 per cent to 4,257 units from 4,174 units in the same period of 2015-16. Ashok Leyland still is the dominant supplier of large bus and coach chassis.
Chennai - In an October edition of The Hindu, an interview with T. Venkatraman, senior vice-president, Global Businesses at Ashok Leyland, revealed that it was reconfiguring its bus business strategy to meet the changing market conditions resulting from introduction of new regulations. Venkatraman is reported to have said that its business model until recently was to change the mix between MDV (medium duty vehicles - 16 tons) and IDV (7.5 to 16 ton range). The ratio currently stood at 65:35, but he expects IDVs to dominate Ashok Leyland’s bus sales in the future.

Venkatraman also stated that intermediate duty vehicles (IDVs) would be the new focus segment in the bus field. “A combination of factors, the focus on last-mile connectivity, growing demand from the school segment and tourism application-related spurt in sales, had all augured well for IDVs,” he said. The aim was to capture the lucrative MDV segment, which is growing.

While Mahindra remains the standout performer in the medium duty vehicle segment, registering growth of 18.6 per cent from 81,081 units in the first half year of fiscal 2016-17 (April to September), Tata Motors grew by 10.3 per cent to 201,457 units.

Light bus segment up 8.5% 

India - Sales, production and export of light-duty passenger vehicles (7.5 tons and below) saw substantive increases in the first financial half (April to September) of 2016-17. Sales increased 8.5% to 27,851 units, up from 25,487 units, production increased by 16.5% to 28,206 (24,217) and exports increased by 33% from 2,042 to 2,715 units.

In the minibus segment with more than 13 seats (gvw ≤ 5 tons no.of seats including driver >13) sales increased by 2.4% to 9,727 from 9,497 and minibuses with less than 13 seats saw a massive growth of 9.4% to 3,679 from 3,364. Force Motors remained the clear market leader in both segments. Export sales in both segments also increased substantially.

In the heavier weight, light-duty small bus sector (5 tons ≤ Gvw ≤ 7.2 tons), sales rose by 12.8% to 14,245 (12,626), while exports increased 13.7% to 2,104 units (1,850). Production, however, increased by 17.5% to 13,946 (11,873).Mahindra and Mahindra dominate this segment with the segment growth of 27.8%, its sales grew from 665 to 850.

LCV trucks sales up 12.7% 

India - Sales of LCV goods carrier vehicles (ie trucks gvw ≤ 7.5t) gained 12.7% to 167,923 units, all but 26,251 units in the other segment (3.5t ≤ Gvw ≤ 7.2t) saw production increased by 16.5% to 28,206 (24,217) and exports increased by 33% from 2,042 to 2,715 units.

The largest segment, Gvw ≤ 2t, saw production rise 6.3% to 68,345 units (64,605), reflecting steady sales growth domestically of 3.6% per cent to 54,478 (52,602); export sales, however, did not add production figures as it fell by 5.2 per cent to 10,194. The 2t ≤ Gvw ≤ 3.5t segment, remained the most popular segment with a sales volume of 95,154 units, registering growth of 16.6 per cent from 81,061 units. While Mahindra remains the stand out performer in this segment, it Tata Motors that recorded the biggest percentage gain of 65.1 per cent in the first half of 2016-17 to 17,790 units from 10,776 units. Both the heavier segments in this category, ie 3.5t ≤ Gvw ≤ 6t and 6t ≤ Gvw ≤ 7.5t, experienced positive growth in sales of 14.3 per cent to 11,402 units and 10.1 per cent 5,889, respectively.
Rigid truck sales fall 15% in second quarter

India - The total production volume of medium and heavy rigid trucks (7.5t gvw and above) fell by 12.4 per cent from 61,020 units in the second quarter (Q2) of 2015-16 (July to September) to 53,460 units in 2016-17. This reflected the fall in domestic demand but rise in exports. Domestic sales of medium and heavy rigid trucks in India decreased by 15.3 per cent from 53,462 trucks in the second quarter of 2015-16 to 45,291 units in the corresponding quarter of 2016-17. Exports accounted 7,124 units, up, 43.7 per cent from 4,966 on rigid trucks (7.5t gvw and above) exported in the same quarter of the previous year.

Sales of medium-duty rigid trucks (7.5t to 12 tons) experienced a growth of 8.7 percent in 2016-17 to record 2,012 units compared with 1,838 units during the last financial year. Sales of higher-weight heavy-duty rigid trucks (16.2t to 25t gvw) decreased by 3.5 per cent to 14,082 units in the second quarter of 2015-16, which was 14,593 units. VECV enjoyed the best times in this category to register 10,829 units during Q2 2016-17

Tractor sales slide 16.5% in Q2 2016-17

India - Total tractor sales decreased by 16.5 per cent during Q2 of 2016-17 to register 9,269 units compared with 11,600 units in the corresponding quarter of last year (July to September) of fiscal year 2016-17 increased by 8.7 percent in 2016-17 to record 2,012 units in the same quarter of the previous year.

The two dominant weight categories tractor segment, heavy-duty tractor (40t < GVW <49t) and light-heavy-duty tractors (35t < GVW < 40t) had polar growth during second quarter of 2016-17. Sales of 40t < GVW <49t increased by 9.5 per cent to register 2,012 units compared with 1,838 units during the last financial year. Ashok Leyland still retain the lion's share of this segment.

Large bus and coach sales showing signs of positive growth during second quarter of 2016-17

India – Domestic sales of large buses and coaches (>7.5t gvw) in the second quarter (July- September) of fiscal year 2016-17 increased by 7.1 per cent to 11,960 units from 11,165 units in the same quarter of last year (July to September 2015-16). Total bus production experienced a fall of 14.4 per cent to 12,191 units, up from 14,241 in the same period of 2016-17. Total bus exports (>7.5t gvw) increased by 8.7 percent in 2016-17 to 2,963 from 2,727 in 2015-16.

Turning to the individual segments, sales of intermediate-duty buses (ICV: 7.5 tonnes - 12 tonnes) decreased by 4.7 per cent, from 4,221 units in the second quarter of last year to 4,021 units in the same period of 2016-2017. Export sales in the same category increased by 58.9 per cent from 455 to 723 units, but production fell by 28.2 per cent to 3,509 from 4,885 units. VECV’s Eicher brand was one of two in the segment (ICV: 7.5 tonnes - 12 tonnes) with sales improving by 20.1 per cent to 603 from 502 units.

Export sales also decreased by 47.4%.

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Source: RACE Note: Excludes Daimler locally-built brands and imported vehicles
Statistics – Light-duty Bus

LCV bus sector up 3.7%

Sales of light-duty passenger vehicles (7.5 tons and below) recorded incremental growth of 3.7 per cent in the second financial quarter (July-September) of 2016-17 to register 12,109 units, up from 11,681 units in the previous year’s quarter. Production rose by 13.3 per cent and exports rose by 36.6 per cent to 1,411 from 1,033 units.

In the minibus segment with more than 13 seats (GVW ≤ 5 tons no. of seats included the driver > 13) decreased in sales by 0.1 per cent to 4,731 (4,735) units. Force Motors dominates sales with a segment market share of some 70 per cent; it sales edged up 0.8 per cent from 3,720 to 3,750 units. Sales of minibuses at 5t gvw and below with fewer than 13 seats (incl. driver seat) fell by 2.3 per cent to 2,208 from 2,260 units in the same quarter the previous year. Export sales surged up 373.3 per cent to 71 units (15). Production, however, fell by 0.6 per cent to 4,566 (4,592).

Statistics – Light-duty Goods

LCV trucks experiencing gradual growth in Q2

Sales of LCV goods carrier vehicles (ie trucks with GVW ≤ 7.5 tons) grew by 13.1 per cent to 87,762 with 7.5 Tons ≤ GVW ≤ 6 Tons recording incremental growth of 3.7 per cent to 5,170 (4,686), while exports increased to 16.5 per cent to 1,096 units (941). Production, however, fell by 0.6 per cent to 4,566 (4,592).

Trade Event

ACMA holds first buyer meet seller event

New Delhi – October saw the Automotive Component Manufacturing Association (ACMA) hold the first edition of AutoConnect; a two-day event where buyers such as OEMs, tier 1 suppliers and distributors from around the world are able to meet with Indian suppliers to the automotive industry. Held in New Delhi, India during October 6th & 7th the focus of the event was to establish export opportunities for both other segments (3.5t ≤ GVW < 6t and 6t ≤ GVW ≤ 7.5t) experienced positive sales growth of 14.5 per cent to over 6,000 units and a modest 1.57 per cent to more than 3,000 units.

Manufacturers Production Domestic Sales Exports

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Light Bus & Coach - Production, domestic sales, and exports for New Delhi – October saw the Automotive Component Manufacturing Association (ACMA) hold the first edition of AutoConnect; a two-day event where buyers such as OEMs, tier 1 suppliers and distributors from around the world are able to meet with Indian suppliers to the automotive industry. Held in New Delhi, India during October 6th & 7th the focus of the event was to establish export opportunities for the Indian automotive component industry. Inaugurated by Pravin Agarwal, director for the Department of Heavy Industries - Government of India, the event created a platform for some 180 Indian ACMA members to display their product and services to potential distributor and customers from 45 countries. This event ties in with the “Make in India” initiative to open up export opportunities.

The next edition of this event is planned to be held in New Delhi from 11 to 13 October 2017.

11
MG Group launches domestic versions of Mammoth at Busworld

Zaheerabad - The MG Group used Busworld India 2016 in Bangalore last month to announce derivations of its Mammoth coach for the domestic market.

The Mammoth premium luxury coach, which is built on a front-engine MAN CLA bus chassis supplied from the truck and bus chassis plant of MAN Trucks India Pvt Ltd in Pune, was on display in two versions for the domestic market: a double bunk sleeper (30 places with aisle offset and 1+2 configuration) and a tourism coach with reclining seats (44 seats in 2+2 configuration). Each seat comes with USB charging port and above in the luggage rack there is fitted a reading lamp and air conditioning control. The MG Group reminded its audience at the show that Mammoth had been designed with the biggest focus on safety and features no fewer than eight emergency exits, including the ‘EM – Secure’ Rear Emergency Exit, which is patented by MG. This offers an escape route through the rear of the coach via a top-hinged rear panel that opens upwards and using steps that fold down.

The company said that it had managed to export 12 units since its launch at Busworld India 2015 held in Mumbai in March of that year with the majority being delivered to customers in Ethiopia. Anil Kamat, managing director, MG Group, explained the company’s plans for the Indian market, he said: “Celebrating our journey of 20 years in the bus building industry, the launch of ‘Mammoth’ will enhance our position in the market. We will be launching the ‘Mammoth’ in the domestic market in both seater and sleeper variants. With this new future ready product, MG Group is set to transform the bus building industry in India, and I am convinced that we’re setting new benchmarks for the entire industry.”

“Mammoth coaches,” Kamat continued, “will be available in four variants in the market. The price range will be between Rs. 60 lakh and Rs. 65 lakh depending on the type of variant and technical specifications.”

The MG Group said that it would pass building its 100,000 bus in 2016 and that more than 8,000 had been built for export to customers in more than 25 countries during the Group’s 20 year history. It builds on five domestic manufacturers’ chassis; they include Mahindra & Mahindra, Ashok Leyland, VECV, Tata Motors and MAN. Manufacturing takes place in two plants in Zaheerabad, Telangana and Belgaum, Karnataka, which collectively have an annual installed capacity of some 16,500 buses and coaches.

Solaris’s main focus with JBM JV is alternative driven bus development and component sourcing

Poland / Gurgaon – Good progress is being made by Solaris Bus & Coach SA and its bus building joint venture partner, JBM Group of Gurgaon, New Delhi in India, according to Mateusz Figaszewski, deputy public relations director at Solaris. The JV, the ownership of which is 80% JBM and 20% Solaris currently has two main focus points: The first is taking the Urbino electric and hybrid buses technology and transferring this technology into JMB’s fully integral city bus, which has already been developed with diesel and CNG powered drivelines. By sharing this technology in a new market, Solaris sees the benefit of gaining cost advantages in terms of increasing volume of purchasing components for alternative drivelines. Solaris is to be responsible for electric and hybrid component purchasing and integration for the JV.

Figaszewski said that since the start of the year, the joint venture has been working well with project teams now well established. JBM is a newcomer to bus production, focusing on fully integral designs. It has committed to this project with the formation of new state of art manufacturing facilities in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu over the past two years.

Ashok Leyland launches Indian-made electric bus

Chennai - Ashok Leyland Ltd has unveiled a prototype of an electric bus, named ‘Circuit’ for evaluation purposes. Ashok Leyland said the electric bus had been developed in conjunction with its majority-owned UK subsidiary, Optare Plc and that its engineers had been working closely with its engineering colleagues at Optare, who have had considerable experience of building electric versions of its single deck bus, Solo; most recently at the Euro Bus Expo 2016 in Birmingham, it displayed a full electric version of the Metrodecker double deck bus.

An initial investment of USD3.3m has been spent in the development of the ‘Circuit’ bus, stated Ashok Leyland with a further USD74.92m to be invested in phases for the complete product development and for establishment of production. Ultimately, the Circuit is to be built locally at two of Ashok Leyland plants in Alwar, Rajasthan and Viralimalai, Tamil Nadu.

Ashok Leyland states that the Circuit bus, with seating capacity for 35 seats and accommodation for up to 65 passengers in total, currently has a range for up to 120 kilometres on a single charge. The cost of the bus is expected to range from USD220,000 to USD450,000 depending on the configuration. It pointed out that around 60% of the product cost was that of the batteries, which are imported currently from an unnamed supplier in the United States of America.

Ashok Leyland said subsidies / incentives are expected to be received under the FAME1 (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of hybrid and Electric vehicle) programme from central government to make it affordable to the end user.

1Optare Plc of Shurton-in-Elmet is part of Ashok Leyland. It is a bus builder of midi, single and double deck buses in diesel powered, hybrid and electric drivelines.

1Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric vehicle, or otherwise referred to as the FAME India Scheme, is part of National Electric Mobility Mission plan under the Heavy Industries Ministry, which has allocated USD2.1 billion to promote eco-friendly vehicles by way of incentives and subsidies.