

Ashok Leyland eyes larger share in pickup segment



Dheeraj Hinduja (right), Executive Chairman, Ashok Leyland, and Rajat Gupta, Head, LCV, at the launch of Bada Dost i1, i2 and the limited edition LCV range in Chennai on Monday **BIJOY GHOSH**

Unveils new range of Bada Dost; prices i1 model at ₹7.9 lakh and i2 at ₹8.63 lakh

OUR BUREAU

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Leading truck and busmaker, Ashok Leyland, has introduced a new range of pickup vehicle, Bada Dost, as the Hinduja flagship gears to boost presence and market share in the small commercial vehicle segment.

The company has introduced 2.5-tonne GVW (gross vehicle weight) Bada Dost i1, which will have a payload capacity of 1.5 tonne and 2.88-tonne GVW Bada Dost i2, which will offer a payload capacity of 1.425 tonne.

The new range comes with a mileage promise of 16-17 km per litre. It has also launched a features-packed limited edition of Bada Dost to celebrate two years of the model. Bada Dost i1 will be priced at ₹7.9 lakh (the AC version will be available with an additional amount of ₹25,000), while Bada Dost i2 is priced at ₹8.63 lakh. The limited edition model is priced at ₹9.43 lakh.

"The new range has been introduced based on the customer feedback especially in e-commerce sectors and a few other applications where customers travel about 200 km a day," Rajat Gupta, Head-Light Commercial Vehicles, Ashok Leyland, told *Business-Line* during the launch.

While i1 may target customers in intra-city applications, i2 will focus on customers in both the intra-city and inter-city applications.

'Chip shortage is easing'

Dheeraj Hinduja, Executive Chairman, said the issues relating to the availability of semiconductors were easing. The company's LCV sales would have been higher by 10-15 per cent had there not been any chip shortages. "The indications we get from our vendors is that the situation is improving," he added.

He also indicated the company would soon launch CNG variants while its EV arm Switch Mobility would start rolling out electric models in six months.

The company hopes to increase its market share in the pickup segment from the current about 20 per cent helped by the new launches.