



Tata Motors: Asserting leadership in tipper segment

“Tata Motors Ltd. (TML) has maintained its leadership with nearly half of the tippers being sold in the country, thanks to our vast product range, performance enhancing features, and customer engaging service initiatives”. Mr. Rajesh Kaul, Head - Product Line, M&HCV, CVBU, Tata Motors, elaborates on the construction and mining tipper sales in India, and explains how his company contributes to value-addition in this segment by indulging in product diversification and technology adoption.

Excerpts:

With respect to mining applications, what are the unique customer requirements associated with heavy-duty tipper trucks? What are the evolving needs of the market?

Mining applications are broadly divided into light, medium and heavy mining. Varied applications like stone quarry, iron ore mines, coal mines deploy tippers for removing overburden and getting the ores or material extracted. Mining applications need rugged heavy duty vehicles with very good manoeuvrability and gradeability. There is a growth in the quarry to crusher stone movement and then the subsequent transportation of crushed stones (blue metal) from the crusher to site of consumption or further transportation.

In this regard, customers wish to have performance enhancing features, which will add to the safety and provide a better operating efficiency in-terms of payloads, carrying strength, mileage and easy serviceability and lower maintenance.

Can you share us the sales figures of construction and heavy-duty mining tippers in FY 2017-18? How do you see the tipper segment growing?

The Indian MHCV Tipper market was around 60,000 units last year, with YOY market growth of 6.5 per cent. This trend has continued into this year as well. First five months of this fiscal has seen the numbers more than double as compared to FY 2017-18 the same period.

The 25T tippers continues to be the largest segment in tippers with a share of more than 70 per cent of the overall industry. Mining segment continues to have majority of 25T tippers, with minor shift to 31T. High development rate of construction activities and reclamation of mining exercise in select States are fueling demand for tipper trucks in the country. MHCV Tipper segment has started looking positive post the



Mr. Rajesh Kaul, Head - Product Line, M&HCV, CVBU, Tata Motors

clarity on the increased axle load norms. Also, norms to allow existing transporters to carry more loads on the pre IAL vehicles has helped continue the buying till the time companies bring new IAL vehicles.

Therefore, growth will be buoyant this year due to upcoming elections. It will continue in the next fiscal due to pre-buying on account of BS-IV implementation. After this lot of things will depend upon a stable and progressive government at the centre. Tata Motors continues to be a significant player in providing tippers suitable for all the needs of surface transport as well as the light and medium mining segments with a majority market-share.

How has the tipper segment evolved in the recent times? What are the new technologies or innovations that are fast catching up? What is in stock for the next-generation mining and construction needs of the country in this regard?

Industry has gone through many regulatory and standardization changes in recent past. TML offers tippers with comfortable cabin, proven powertrain, robust chassis, and better payload capacity. The chassis used are powder coated (through Cathode Electrode deposition method), riveted and bolted. The frames are reinforced and have thicker dimensions to carry more load. The Prima tippers boast scoop body made



out of Hardox material offering enhanced life and durability, including the Prima Lx 3130.K HRT 19 CuM Scoop. Surface transport tippers for rated load movements like Signa 3718.K 24 CuM Box have an option of lighter bodies that can increase the effective payload and body life.

In terms of advanced safety, we are pioneering in Electronic Stability Control (ESC) for select truck variants. The technology will provide vehicle stability, and reduce accident risk, repair cost, and improve vehicle uptime. The Automatic Traction Control (ATC) and Hill Start Aid (HSA) will also aid in improving active safety.

Yet, India is largely a price sensitive market. For new technologies to become mass scale, costs have to come down. For instance, adoption rates for AC cabins is still low in spite of industry push. We are working on few domestic and international vendors to get appropriate innovations at the right costs so that we can offer these advanced features in our vehicles. Once people start using them and seeing the benefits the features fast catchup.

How is the mining trucks segment embracing digital technologies and big data, especially through telematics and fleet management? What are customer preferences in this regard?

For the mining industry, fleet management plays a vital role. We are among the first OEMs to adopt this technology and integrate into our products, under 'Tata FleetMan'. It offers best in class solutions to help customers track and control vehicles anywhere in the country with a wide range of features like real-time monitoring, geo-fencing, trip review, alert reporting, and trip management. It also monitors any unauthorized vehicle movement and determines the exact location of the vehicles with a user-friendly graphical map.

Another critical feature is trip management where one can assign a specific trip to any vehicle within the fleet with start and end locations, specify the load carried and the estimated time of arrival at the destination. The system tracks the specified vehicle by providing alerts as per the parameters set. This helps in increasing cost efficiency and better fleet utilization through trip assignments and tracking of your vehicle.

High end technologies get adopted slowly as there is a learning and awareness curve involved. Customers have started adopting the Fleetman and telematics system. Buyers of Prima tippers and a majority of 37T tippers have started adopting the feature. This is a positive sign and we see the penetration increasing in the days to come. Tata Fleetman enjoys the patronage of happy customers benefitting from the rich data that gets generated. Today, Tata Motors boast largest active fleet of over 1,00,000 vehicles plying on the Indian roads enjoying the unmatched benefits of fleet telematics.

The Fleetman is also closely integrated with the Tata Motors 'Suraksha', i.e., the maintenance contract offerings or AMC. We offer a proactive maintenance intervention process based on the real-time fault code transmission. This service is available on Prima range covered under AMC.



How do you create brand awareness, and reach out to the customer in the mining segment? How do you rate your after-market thrust?

We have been regularly conducting customer clinics, 'Tipper Mahotsavs' and 'Truck melas' apart from participation in larger exhibitions. To capture emotional sentiments and feedbacks of customers, we regularly organize 'Bandhan', where we meet the key customers across India. They are also invited to our plant time to time to share their ideas and feedback. Also some of the new vehicles are given on trial basis so that the customers can understand the performance in real life scenario in their applications and terrains. All this helps to build the affinity towards the brand and connects the customer better with us.

Our aftermarket services are indeed a strategic differentiator. Tata Motors offers variety of AMC options for the consumers. Our onsite services being one of the major attractions. The vast service network of Tata Motors across the country is also of great help to the consumers. Also our service packages offer flexibility of service onsite which in-turn improves the vehicle utilization ratio.

Any global trends or observations in the mining trucks segment according to you catching up in India?

Trends like fitment of telematics, rear view camera, full maintenance contract, procuring vehicles through lease are catching up in India. Also there has been a steady rise in the organized players with access to high knowledge and technology in the mining sector. Preference has started shifting to higher tonnage and high horse power vehicles as the depth of mines increase. We expect this trend to pick up very fast in near future.

In future, lot of progress may be seen on the transparent tendering system, mining land acquisitions, ore extraction, mine planning including the mine haul road design, working & living conditions in and nearby the mines and rated load implementation. ♦