Ashok Leyland has launched the new, innovative U-Truck platform that will straddle the entire range of tractors, tippers and haulage trucks in the 16 – 49 tonne segment. Over 25 models and a host of variants are slated to roll out in 18 months starting April 2010. The range will be powered by BS III and BS IV engines that are also protected for BS V norms, ranging from 160 to 380 hp. Joining the proven ‘H’ series is a new NEPTUNE family of engines - entirely developed in-house that are stronger and more reliable by design, with higher power and greater fuel efficiency.

“U-Truck is truly inspired by the customer and shaped by his needs. It offers a holistically superior customer experience. It will transform Indian trucking.”

R Seshasayee, Managing Director.

“The U-Truck is a sublimation of our in-depth understanding of the customer, his requirements, his pain points and converting our insight into a product platform best-suited for him. It is an innovative platform that will set a new benchmark in terms of a holistically and superior trucking experience including higher Return on Investment” said R Seshasayee, Managing Director, Ashok Leyland, at the launch. “A standout feature of the U-Truck platform is the wide choice available to the customer, depending on his specific application-based requirement.” he added.

One key aspect of the U-Truck platform is its superior, electronic and efficient engine management system. The U-Truck platform will be equipped with electronic clusters and advanced telematics for real-time track and trace, on-board diagnostics and driver management features to ensure the safety of the driver and cargo. The cluster can give alerts on vehicle health, fuel levels, service requirements, and also provide comprehensive reports on fleet productivity and driving habits.

“The U-Truck is a win-win proposition for both the customer and our channel partners” said Rajive Saharia, Executive Director – Marketing, Ashok Leyland. “For the customer the attributes of quicker speeds, more trips, improved fuel efficiency, greater comfort and safety and more choices of fully-built options translate into higher revenue, lower operating costs and hence better profitability. Reliable aggregates and interfaces with proper matching of consumables ensure long and synchronized service intervals. This along with our bouquet of service offerings will help our channel partners to service our customers a whole lot better” he added.

“This platform represents an organizational transformation for us at Ashok Leyland,” is how Seshasayee put it. “A completely fresh approach in terms of processes, attitude and product, wherein the sale of a vehicle is not the end but a beginning, because we are ready with a whole range of service products for a life-long engagement with the customer.”

Vinod K Dasari, Chief Operating Officer, Ashok Leyland explained that the modularity of the new platform endowed the Company with the agility to respond quicker to specific customer demands than ever before. “The modularity gives us speed, it helps us to control our inventories and we can help our vendor partners to plan their inventories better. On the manufacturing front, it will cue our transition from stock-and-sell to make-to-order system.” he concluded.
The U-Truck is designed for high uptime and profitability. Vitally supplementing the product in this objective are a bouquet of service products covering the entire product life cycle.

Rajive Saharia,
Executive Director – Marketing

U-Truck packs long-life aggregates designed and developed to lower lifecycle costs and improve reliability.

R. R. G Menon,
Executive Director – Product Development

Electronics helps monitor the technical condition of the vehicle real time, for alerts – both for unplanned as well as predictive maintenance.

B Venkat Subramaniam,
Special Director - Future Vehicles Program

Leyland Direct

Here on, the quickest way to reach Ashok Leyland is to dial Leyland Direct on 1800-266-3340.

Leyland Direct is the one window for all consumers to contact Ashok Leyland directly. It offers services like handling sales queries, parts queries, service queries, providing technical support, booking servicing, giving candid feedback amongst others. This service is first of its kind, offered in vernacular languages and with a strong service network ensuring assured and efficient solutions to every consumer.

Amongst the bevy of services offered under Leyland Direct, is a unique service- Tatkaal- which takes consumer engagement to a new level in the Indian consumer vehicles market. All it takes is a call and be sure that a response team reaches a stranded customer within four hours anywhere on the Golden Quadrilateral and restores the vehicle back on road within 48 hours, with a committed compensation for any delay.

Leyland Direct and Tatkaal are steps ahead towards a life-long engagement with the customer and a manifestation of the Company’s belief that the sale of a vehicle is not the end but just a beginning.
Neptune Engine
Roaring Powerhouses

The U-truck will feature a completely electronically governed engine range. The all new Neptune six cylinder and four cylinder engines (160-380 HP) are entirely CRS electronic. The NEPTUNE engines have been benchmarked for lower operating costs, lower maintenance, longer life, higher vehicle availability and better comfort.

Ashok Leyland collaborated with Austrian powertrain specialist AVL to develop Neptune engines. AVL provided the design and prototyping expertise while the testing and production completely relied on in-house expertise.

Just as with the H-series development four years ago, the Neptune was developed top down from a six cylinder to a four cylinder. The engines are modular with common pistons and combustion chamber dimensions. While the bore is 112mm, the stroke is 135mm. Among other features, Neptune offers top down cooling, wet liner with top end cooling and a noise optimised design. These allow for peak firing of 220 bar with a single turbocharger and as much as 380 bar with a double turbocharger.

While the four cylinder engine uses a waste gated turbocharger, the six cylinder deploys an asymmetric turbocharger. A single turbocharger can raise the output of the six cylinder Neptune engine to 360 HP and a double turbo up to 380HP.

The base architecture is BSIV with an option to either migrate to BSII or BS V. Both the six and four cylinder engines use latest third generation Bosch common rail fuel injection which ensures high injection pressures of 1800bar and torque up to 1050Nm.

The N series can currently meet BSIV norms with Exhaust Gas Re-circulation (EGR) technology to reduce emissions. Also, interestingly on account of their high power density, the 220 HP four cylinder engine can easily substitute the 230 HP six cylinder H-series engine.

“For the contemporary Neptune engines, AVL provided the design and prototyping expertise while the testing and production completely relied on in-house expertise.”

Murali Saketharaman
SD-Neptune Program
Ashok Leyland’s Green theme at Auto Expo 2010

There was a green twist to Ashok Leyland’s corporate theme of ‘Engineering your tomorrows’ at the Company’s stall at Auto Expo 2010. Rightfully so, because among the products displayed were the next big steps in Ashok Leyland’s tradition of pioneering with breakthrough, eco-friendly technology for vehicles.

Not to mention the first two products emerging out of the revolutionary U-Truck platform, and the first of the NEPTUNE engines.

Streams of appreciative visitors apart, the products were in for some rave reviews by the mainstream media. Here we exclusively bring to you, our customer, an up close look at the products that were on display …

**EFFI 20**

Green and Fuel efficient

The EFFI 20 embodies 20 innovative ideas that together deliver 20% better fuel efficiency and over 20% reduction in CO₂ emissions.

The EFFI 20 brings in efficiencies by reconfiguring all vehicle systems across engine systems, transmissions and drivelines, auxiliary systems, aerodynamics and driver assists. For eg. the engine management system can dynamically reconfigure based on load and driving conditions to maximize fuel efficiency. The engine is coupled to a Selective Catalytic Reactor (SCR) emission control system that contributes to fuel efficiency. The engine’s cooling fan and thermal management have also been optimized to minimize wast.

A high efficiency driveline employing multiple ratio axles ensures optimal operation. The minimization of parasitic losses has been dealt with the lift axle option, special lubricants to reduce driveline friction and high efficiency accessories for steering and electrical systems. Even losses from brakes have been minimized.

Beyond this, the EFFI 20 has adopted several driver assists including the Gear Shift Advisory, tyre pressure monitoring system enabling the driver to eke out that last little bit of additional efficiency. The cumulative gains from these improvements have been validated by tests at ARAI.

**HYBUS**

India’s first Plug-in CNG Hybrid bus

The HYBUS is India’s first plug-in CNG hybrid bus which is more eco-friendly than a CNG bus, 20-30% more fuel-efficient than a conventional bus and also has novel pedestrian safety features.

The HYBUS combines conventional CNG engine with electric propulsion system. The engine is operated at an optimal efficiency to drive the generator for charging on-board battery. The Lithium-Ion battery that powers the electrical drive system provides the propulsion.

The HYBUS intelligently selects the most efficient operating mode to ensure maximum fuel efficiency without compromising performance, comfort or passenger safety.

HYBUS has a host of commuter-friendly features including ultra low entry at 390mm with kneeling option, noise-free rear engine, front and rear air suspensions and retractable ramp for wheel-chair entry.

HYBUS also incorporates some innovative pedestrian safety concepts: sound and light alerts while the bus moves, a camera-assisted reversing aid for the driver and night time highlighters near the tail lights. The bus front has a novel design to absorb impact on collision, which drastically reduces severity of injury.
iBUS2 Emergency Response Centre on Wheels

The iBUS2 is an emergency response centre on wheels which enables Vehicle-to-Infrastructure (V2I) communication. iBUS2 is the solution that blends user-friendly mobility with best-in-class connectivity.

iBUS2 forms part of the iBUS series from Ashok Leyland that integrates relevant technologies with mobility solutions. The new iBUS2 solution answers a long-felt need in security preparedness, with its innovative features facilitating intelligent responses to emergency situations.

The iBUS2 offers State-of-the-art digital communication equipment that wirelessly communicates in real-time with a remote control centre for the exchange of critical information required for decision making. With an integrated wireless communication network (long range mobile and short range Wi-Fi communication), the iBUS2 allows safety personnel to transmit a wide range of critical data including voice, information, pictures and streaming video. Cisco’s Smart + Connected Health solutions as well as its Smart + Connected Safety and Security solutions for incident response are integrated into the iBUS2.

The iBUS2 can be uniquely configured for other potential applications such as citizen services, ‘Business-on-Wheels’ for corporate, banking and retail customers as well as ‘Service-on-Wheels’ for healthcare, tele-medicine and interactive e-learning.

U-4932 Heavy duty transportation

Built on the U-truck platform, the U-4932 (6X4) tractor is a power-house specially designed to add muscle to your business. Engineered for superior performance and the best driving experience, the U-4932 has the scope and the flexibility to deliver handsomely on productivity and fuel efficiency, durability and driving comfort. So no matter the distance, the terrain or the load, the U-4932 is the ideal truck for heavy duty transportation.
**Powerful, productive and dependable**

Built on the U-truck platform, the U-2523 Tipper (6X4) is a rugged workhorse engineered to perform on rough terrains and under harsh conditions. Engineered for superior performance and the best driving experience, the U-2523 has the flexibility and scope to give you a host of benefits that range from more trips and more uptime to enhanced comfort and safety, superior fuel efficiency and higher durability.

**Mobile concreting unit - Instant concrete anytime, anywhere**

The new mobile concrete unit from Ashok Leyland is designed to save costs and time. Its electronically controlled batching operations ensure good quality of design mix concrete with varying grades. What is more, it is available wherever required thanks to its inherent mobility advantage.

Built on the Ecomet III2 (BSIII), the vehicle is powered by a ‘H’ series 4 CTI BS III turbocharged intercooled engine, making it suitable for compact and rugged construction. It has a reversible drum of 0.5 Cum capacity for higher productivity and an integrated concrete pump, with a good reach of vertical height of 50 m and a horizontal distance of 200 m. The total solution is powered with the vehicle engine which optimizes the customer’s maintenance cost.

There are three separate bins, hydraulically operated, with individual weighing mechanism for each aggregate and the low height enables easy loading of materials into them. The mobile concreting unit has an operator friendly control panel with an independent display for each bin. Even the grade of concrete required can be set using this.

**Rigid bulker High performance bulk transporter**

Ashok Leyland’s Rigid Bulker is a heavy-duty powerhouse, engineered to deliver the best performance in bulk transportation. It is mounted on the 3116 MAV and has a unique design facilitating carrying of more and faster discharge while giving long lasting endurance, reliability and higher profits.

With an optimized engine power for better fuel mileage, a user friendly inline FIP and uprated suspension on all axles, the rigid bulker enables superior performance. The bulker features a 380mm (15") ceramic clutch disc for higher durability and long life. Amongst other advantageous features it has a ZFS636 sycromesh gear box with 9.2 FGR to allow for higher torque and better durability. With a clutch booster it allows for easy and smoother operation and less driver fatigue.

The rigid bulker has a volume of 27 cum. which is 12.5% more volumetric capacity making it the highest capacity available on rigs and enabling it to deliver high performance. With a discharge rate of 1.25T/min. (approx.) with the help of a booster line, it intrinsically delivers 15-20% more per minute. The discharge mechanism is a 5” rear/side delivery port which ensures lower
AVIA D120 Designed to Impress, Engineered to Perform

The AVIA D120 sports a stylish, aerodynamic form with clean and modern lines. Both the chassis and cab designs meet and exceed the most stringent of European legislation.

The AVIA D120’s Cummins ISBe5 4.5 litre engine is equipped with 1800bar pressure common rail FIE to meet Euro V emission standards. The front axle allows tighter turning circles, full air ventilated disc brakes, front and rear, brings control whilst the wider profile springs deliver enhanced vehicle stability. Eco-friendly, the D120 incorporates SCR system that reduces harmful exhaust emissions and is more fuel efficient, has a 6-speed ZF gearbox and extended servicing interval of 50000 kms between oil changes.

The roomy cab provides ample space for driver and two more, while the cab suspension system features high-tech, coil springs with shock absorbers at the rear and generous rubber bushes at the front for maximum comfort. The D-line comes in a range of models to fit every fleet plan and flexible customisation options according to payload requirements.

This powerful bulker is ideally suited for applications in: cement industries, Thermal power plants (fly ash), RMC plants, grain transportation amongst others.

The light weight construction with aluminum hatch covers reduces its weight by 10% ensuring higher power to weight ratio and superior tyre life. The bulker uses an imported semi permeable polyester hose for air slide which almost halves the maintenance cost as it has a much higher life cycle. Also, it has an extremely user friendly design comprising single valve delivery ensuring easy operation.

The D120 is ideally suited for applications in cement industries, Thermal power plants (fly ash), RMC plants, grain transportation amongst others.
1. Mr S Jaipal Reddy, Union Minister for Urban Development, visits the Ashok Leyland stall. To his right (in red shawl) is Mr Prakash P Hinduja, President, Hinduja Group Europe and to his left is Mr Rajive Saharia, ED-Marketing, Ashok Leyland.

2. Mr Kamal Nath, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, takes a look at the HYBUS.

3. Mr Vilasrao Deshmukh, Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises, listens to an Ashok Leyland volunteer.

4. Mr R Seshasayee, MD, Ashok Leyland with Mr Ratan Tata, Chairman - TATA Group (centre), and Mr Ravi Kant, Vice Chairman-TATA Motors.

5. Mr Senthil of Ammayappar Roadways, takes a close look at the Avia D120.

6. Mr Raj Singh of ABR Roadways in the driver’s seat of U 4932.

7. Mr Sundaram, President – Sankari Lorry Owners’ Associaton (centre) goes around the stall.

8. A group of customers from Kerala with Mr Seshasayee.

9. Mr G R Shanmugappa, President – All India Motor Transport Congress, chats up with Mr Seshasayee.
More schools across the country are discovering the value of Ashok Leyland’s A+ range of school buses comprising the Stag and Lynx buses. Together, they form a strong combination in school bus fleet, offering numerous features that ensure safety and comfort of school children and extra value for the schools.

A+ Stag has a seating capacity of 26-40 seats and A+ Lynx can accommodate 37-49 seats making them the biggest and most spacious LCVs/ICVs in the market. Only Ashok Leyland’s A+ range together offer up to 12 seating options which imply more seats, no overcrowding, more gangway capacity, more paying passengers, comfort and efficiency.

Ashok Leyland’s A+ buses come with ‘H’ series 4CTI (BS II) Turbocharged Intercooler engines, renowned for their fuel efficiency with a power of 120 ps @ 2500 rpm and a maximum Torque 40 kgm @ 1600 rpm. This, combined with a lower outlay on maintenance gives a fine revenue earner for institutions. All A+ school buses have S-Cam brakes for increased safety. Ashok Leyland’s A+ school buses are the only ones to come with a Seal of Safety.

These buses are known for their better engineering with rugged long lasting aggregates that ensure on-road reliability and breakdown-free performance. They have a longer life cycle and a good resale value adding upto a better return on investment.

Ashok Leyland’s A+ is backed by a nation-wide service network which offers convenient on-site maintenance for the fleet plus on-road breakdown assistance and the option of Vishwas.

The buses have a new facia, large windows and upgraded features that make it look sleek, smart and contemporary matching up to the school’s image.

The buses are fully built and designed specially for the needs of school children with several child-friendly features that ensure that children have a safe and comfortable ride to school. They have more safety features than any other school bus:

- Seat belts for safety
- Tooth guards
- Extra hand grips for security
- Emergency exit at rear
- School bag rack to stow away bags
- Window railing for additional safety
- Easy entry for children to alight & board
- Contemporary and service friendly interiors
- Fire Extinguisher for any hazard
- Notice Board
Silver Oaks - The school of Hyderabad believes that schools lay foundation for refinement of a child’s life and hence they pursue a holistic learning approach.

The multi-dimensional approach taken by the school using the school buses is innovative, ingenious and teaches children about India’s States in a fun and memorable way. Each Ashok Leyland vehicle has been given the name of a State or a Union Territory. So, there are buses named after the 28 States and 7 Union Territories and the rest are named after our neighbouring countries. The concept of national integration and friendly relations with neighbors is easily grasped by the students this way. The zeal, and the enthusiasm, to know more about “their State” is highly infectious. It is a treat to watch a pre-primary student rattling facts about the different States, their capital and various statistics. Every State(school bus) has a CM (Chief Monitor) who in most cases is a student of grade 9 or 10. Most of them have made small groups with in-charges and conduct quizzes, ask questions amongst others about their parent State.

Ashok Leyland feels proud to be instrumental in this ingenious learning opportunity.

Lalaji Memorial Omega International school Chennai, owns 12 Ashok Leyland vehicles as a part of their fleet. They chose these Stag and Lynx buses post a thorough review of available models and relied on Ashok Leyland’s performance, reputation, customer satisfaction, testimonials and the competitive pricing offered.

They found the personal involvement of the top management team commendable and pleasantly surprising. Their experience with the buses has been more than satisfactory. In their own words, “As regards performance of the 12 vehicles purchased from Ashok Leyland, we are happy to note that the experience so far has been good. While there has been a need to address minor issues, the prompt service support given by Ashok Leyland, has been excellent. One of the most pleasant experiences was the willingness of the top executives to intervene and sort out all issues. In fact, the school management was really touched by the extraordinary adjustments that the company management was willing to make when it came to supporting student’s education initiatives of the school.”

As Mr. S. Ramakrishnan, Correspondent with LMOIS puts it, “It is certain that this customer orientation continues over time and we express our sincere gratitude to the company and its staff for the commitment and support.”
From his fifth floor apartment off Hailey Road in New Delhi, Anil Goel has a great view of Connaught Place and Barakhamba Road and a unique view of sky scrapers that one doesn’t see while driving around. Masks, artifacts and figurines from all continents adorn the well appointed drawing room of this one-time globetrotter, but dominating its walls are two Gujaral paintings.

When Anil’s Himghiri Ashok Leyland started operations at Sahidabad in Gaziabad district the late 2008, service support and customer satisfaction were at a low ebb, in this trucking centre with potential high demand. Remembers Anil: “We conducted a survey in major markets such as U.P.border and Noida. With the results of the survey we understood that though the customer was happy with the product, lack of service facility and spare parts was a major deterrent. The survey also helped us collect data of truck owners in the area”.

Anil’s focus was on service and he opened a 10-bay facility there. He pressed into service a branded service van and hand bills for service marketing, launched free service campaigns at his workshop and at customer doorsteps. The 53 AMCs clinched in a short period helped workshop revenue and also earned customer satisfaction. “With my strong commitment towards customer satisfaction I grilled into my staff my policy: “Sahi Kaam, Sahi Dham, Sahi Waqt”, thus ensuring that we provide quality work within the shortest period of time at the optimum rates, even if it meant we had to work late evenings to fulfill our commitment towards the customer”, he says. Results were soon visible, with a four-fold increase in service revenue and a service market share of close to 20% in one year. Importantly, for the fledgling business, the service revenue was to prove effective buoy through the recessionary year. “We gave quality service and our workshop became profitable within one year of our operations. The high customer satisfaction also ensured that our sales zoomed during the recessionary months of early 2009. It helped us increase the market share from 5% to 35% in a short span of just one year”, recalls Anil.

Having tasted success, Anil identified opportunities in Noida and is opening a compact-but-no-compromise three-bay outlet. Also on the anvil is a large outlet in Moradabad to improve reach in the Western U.P region.

Having vetted his appetite for service business, Anil took on the DTC service contract from Ashok Leyland and his dealership handles the complete maintenance and upkeep of 100 CNG buses. It is captive business and rewarding, but not without risks; but then, Anil thrives on challenges. It has been so through his life.

Summing up his association with Ashok Leyland, says Anil: “I am especially thankful to Ashok Leyland for their valuable guidance and support to our dealership towards training our manpower, mapping of our area, product knowledge and pricing, systems and procedures which have helped us increase our market share in both sales and service and also make us profitable. The knowledge I gained on my interactions with the managers of Ashok Leyland gave me a lot of confidence in selling engineering products such as commercial vehicles. It has been a highly satisfying, enriching and profitable association with Ashok Leyland.”

“Customers are the same everywhere and for all products they want the best in class services.”

The first child of a Government employee, Anil was sent to a Sainik School in Orissa. All of nine years old, away from home and in a tough environment - at a time when
telephones were not common. Anil remembers often crying in private, but he never complained to his parents. Looking back, he believes that this early phase shaped his personality. Adding to his self-proclaimed toughness was his joining the Merchant Navy. It was a great learning in man management and a fantastic opportunity to see the world.

Turning Point
On vacation in Delhi in 1986, a chance meeting with Brijmohan Lal Munjal changed the course of his life. Munjal offered him a service outlet. The young man took offense and said he was good for lot more: after all, the Government of India trusts him with over 500 crores worth of assets and he manages a 65-strong team! Moreover, on return, he was due to be made the captain of his ship. Munjal liked the guts and the self-confidence of the young man and predicted a great future for him. With an investment of Rs 2.5 lakhs and a loan of Rs 60,000 for stocking 5 bikes, Anil became a Hero Honda dealer. He would himself man the sales counter and the domestic help would wash the bikes.

In two months, he shifted himself to the workshop. One thing Anil learned in his global travels was the importance of customer satisfaction. Having seen the world, he also could visualise how India would change and what products would be in demand. Looking back, Anil believes these two learnings to be the foundation for his business success. With the help of service manuals, Anil will attend to electricals and going by the book he would adjust the carburetor. Soon, news spread about the ‘engineer’ at Himgiri automobiles and his magic hands that improve fuel efficiency. Customers would come driving down from Rohtak and Agra, to get the vehicles serviced.

Through quality service, I could create a differentiator. I was the youngest and my outlet the newest. I knew I had to give that extra bit”. That extra bit propelled his business. In 4 years, Himgiri became the number one dealership in the region and subsequently in the all India Top 5 league.

Anil repeated the magic with the Hyundai dealership he got in 2005. In the very first year, he topped the customer satisfaction index in the region and in another 2 years was adjudged all India best overall. Subsequently in 2008-09 was all India best in Sales & in 2009, the best in Service.

Customer driven
It is the same attitude to the customer that marks Anil’s Ashok Leyland dealership for commercial vehicles. “Customers are the same everywhere and for all products they want the best in class services”. In CV, service is even more important because the vehicle is the operator’s means of livelihood”. Anil’s dealership started getting complaints about CNG buses sold to Noida customers. They reported “starting problem”. Anil’s response was typical, rational and methodical. He decided to set up a service centre in Noida. In a refinement that meant much to the customers, he kept his workshop open on Sundays, the off day for school buses. The complaints came down to a trickle. To tackle that, he made his mechanics available from 6.00 am on mobikes, so that school children did not have to agonise over buses not turning up.

Anil relishes challenges especially new business ventures. He tried his hand in restaurants and runs what customers rate the best in that locality. A far greater challenge was a mall he took over, only to turn it into a roaring success, with 3,000 club members and the ‘best banquet facility’, with theatres and halls.

Anil’s man management is based on sound selection and then trusting his people. “I rarely make mistakes in this”. Among those who joined him as salesmen, some are full-fledged dealers of sought after brands. He has his ways of getting his message across. “How do you expect your customer a 100 kms away to come to you if his speedometer wire is cut? It’s our business to reach it to him”, you can hear him telling his workshop manager.

Take a closer look at the Gujaral paintings and you will see in one, children playing with tops. The second frame has a dexterous kite maker flying a handful of them. Goel denies any subliminal meaning to his choice, saying, he bought them just like that. But there is no denying that Anil has a way with launching new enterprises and they fly high and keep flying.
Participative Management:

Soni’s success formula

For Ramesh Chand Soni of Triputi Automobiles Pvt Limited, ‘employees as partners’ is no theory but an ardent practice and what he believes to be the key to his success. “Alone, you cannot succeed. The team makes things happen”, says Mr Soni. True to his words, 10 out of his 50 employees are his partners in business, including mechanics and drivers whom he considers valuable assets for his business success.

Mr Soni started off retailing auto parts at Kotputli in Rajasthan, in 1982. In 1995, he entered trucking, with an Ashok Leyland 2516. Even on bad roads and with the punishing loads of marble, he found the stability of the vehicle to be very good. He is now shifting to 4921 tractor, mainly to augment existing fleet to haul cement from JK Cements Nimbaheda plant to the NCR region. The recession of the last year had no impact on Soni’s business. His entire fleet of 182 vehicles were up and running. 130 of them are 4018/4019 tractors, with plans to add 70 nos 4921 Tractors this year. “I do not look at any other models because I am very very happy with the vehicle performance including fuel average. I get great support from the Ashok Leyland and Rajesh Motors teams. I have no problem whatsoever. Why should I then think of any other brand when I get total care?”, asks Soni.

Even while managing his varied interests that include hotels, petrol pump and real estate, Soni follows a set routine. The day starts with one hour of walking. Four hours in the office and then lunch, followed by a compulsory two hour rest. During this “power nap”, no one will dare disturb or call him! From 3.00 pm till 10.00 pm, it is back to work, serious hard work.

Where did Mr Soni pick up the participative management style? Was it from the socialistic phase many go through in school and college? Mr Soni nonchalantly dismisses such fancies and explains that he learned it on the job. Mr Soni clearly learned his lessons in the “classroom” of business. Not surprisingly, he is putting son Vivek through the paces, by giving him 45 vehicles to operate. “If he makes a profit, good for him. If he makes a loss, he better tell me why. Where is the failure? Is it in management, operations or maintenance?”, says Soni, who has one of the best workshops in the region, with all facilities including wheel alignment. Because, Soni knows the importance of well-oiled machines and trained manpower. And has no hesitation in getting trainers all the way from Ashok Leyland’s Namakkal Driver Training Centre in Tamil Nadu, to perfect the skills of his team.
Avijit is headed for a century

From owning just one Comet Super to a big fleet of 92 vehicles, the journey has not been easy for Avijit Kower, aka “Barda”. But as he says, there were three key elements to support him: IOCL, SBI and Ashok Leyland who he calls his ‘Dharti Mata’.

It all began on 31st Dec, 1984 when pushing aside popular opinion he trusted his instincts and bought one Comet Super. His trust has been well rewarded. After 25 years, 200 vehicles and 300 employees behind him, today he is one of the most successful and respected entrepreneurs in Kolkata.

From poultry business to running a mustard oil mill to owning a diagnostics centre to transportation of LPG cylinders – he has done it all. With three companies namely Shakti Roadlines, Shakti Road Links and Anima Transport Corporation, his main business remains the transportation of LPG cylinders for IOCL and BPCL and recently HPCL as well.

For transportation of LPG cylinders from bottling plants to the distributors, his vehicles (CG1613H) operate at rated load – the forward load carries 306 filled LPG cylinders weighing 30.2kg (avg.) each; the return load carries empty cylinders of 16 kg (avg.) each. His business requires the vehicle to give a steady performance over a longer period of life-time (in his case, 12 years) in terms of more mileage and less maintenance and major overhauling costs.

As a mixed fleet owner where more than 80% vehicles are Ashok Leyland make, he highlighted that CG1613H was better than the competition on all these parameters. Precisely the reason why he always advocates Ashok Leyland. From his early days in 1984 till date, his relationship with Ashok Leyland has always been great, which is further being strengthened with him being appointed as an Authorized Service Centre owner in the coming months. With his long experience of maintaining an Ashok Leyland fleet, good infrastructure and with proper support from Ashok Leyland, he is confident that he will be able to succeed in this case too.

Down to earth, principled, and a family person, Avijit adheres to the philosophy of “Karma”. He believes that one should dream high but one should never forget the ground from where one has risen. This workaholic entrepreneur is very attached to the companies and people who have influenced his life. Right from his first Ashok Leyland Vehicle he bought in 1984, he can reel off the registration numbers of all the vehicles that have been part of his fleet. As for the Comet Super it is well preserved and has been given the pride of place in his workshop- “Laxmi Gaadi” as he calls it!
Aiming high has been Prasanna Patwardhan’s abiding principle in life: be it scoring 3-pointers on the basketball court or setting his business goals. Starting off as a trainee in 1985 with Prasanna Travels, owned by his father Keshav Waman Patwardhan, Prasanna soon earned his spurs and under the tutelage of his father started a luxury coach service in 1988. Now, he is at the helm of the Prasanna Group of Companies as the Managing Director, steering it with passion, foresight and a tremendous amount of drive.

Prasanna Travels Pvt. Ltd. has a fleet of 100 luxury coaches plying over 35+ routes. The Company operates from six Regional Offices, five branch offices, through 25 franchisees and 600 agents.

Looking Back
In 1996, Mr. Prasanna Patwardhan gave wheels to METROLINK, with Warun Travels, a major fleet owner, that offered luxury bus service exclusively between Mumbai and Pune. Next, he launched an overseas travel division – Prasanna Overseas Travels Pvt. Ltd. – to facilitate domestic and international ticketing, hotel booking across the globe, passport, VISA and provide air taxi charter service. The Company was awarded the IATA status in 1996. With some international tie-ups, Prasanna is equipped to handle tourists and NRIs’ visiting India.

Having established his presence on road and in the air, he turned his attention to the other mode of travel – rail and soon he was authorized by the India Railways to be a railway travelers’ service agent for railway tickets reservation across all classes.

Prasanna Termitels Ltd, an attractive motel a traveler seeks: restaurants, cafeterias, waiting lounges, inter-State bus connections, shopping complexes, transit camp accommodations, petrol pumps, service stations, STD and ISD connectivity, self-contained parking lots for cars and bus terminals. Some even offer conference facilities. ‘Smilestone’ is one such motel on the Pune-Aurangabad stretch that has been a runaway hit with both holidaying and business travelers.

Forays into city bus operations
On 15th August 2009 Prasanna Group started its city bus operations in Jalgaon. Twenty Ashok Leyland Stag buses and six SLF (Semi-Low Floor) buses branded ‘Ecobus’, run in Jalgaon covering 15 routes with a frequency of 10 minutes. Passengers’ response to the ‘Ecobus’ has been overwhelming. Thanks to some very innovative facilities on offer like special seats for women and senior citizens, concessions for school going children, LED displays at bus stops and on the buses delivering information on the ETA and routes covered, e-tickets, RFID Smart Card monthly passes and SMS alerts to parents about their children’s travel. A GPRS system keeps Prasanna informed of the actual position of his fleet on road from his headquarters in Pune.

Achievements
A keen basketballer, Prasanna has donned the national colours, is a regular feature at almost all basketball tournaments in Pune and is the official coach of the Maharashtra team that he once captained. He has been richly felicitated for his outstanding achievements being the recipient of the V.S. Vaidya Award, the Excellence in Service in Service Industries Award and the Excellence in Transport Industries Award.

His achievements are many but Prasanna Patwardhan is ready to seek new horizons and scale greater peaks. And Ashok Leyland is playing a vital role in helping him realise his dreams!
A tribute from Ashok Leyland to a war Hero

It was not a usual delivery when Mr. AK Agarwal, Area Manager handed over an AL 1612H to Mrs. Mohini Pandey, mother of Late Lieutenant Manoj Pandey. 20th Aug, 2009 was not just a day when she got the truck for the transportation of gas cylinders for their Indane Gas Agency in Lucknow but a day that reminded everyone of the courage and sacrifice of her brave son.

A gathering comprising Mr G C Pandey (Manoj’s father), Mr Mahit Jain(Sr. Manager – VS, Lucknow), Mr S K Nigam (Branch Head, TVS – Lucknow) and other team members of Ashok Leyland & TVS paid a solemn tribute to Manoj with the help of Ashok Leyland at T V Sundaram Iyengar & Sons Ltd, Lucknow.

Born eldest in the family in Sitapur (UP), and educated in Uttar Pradesh Sainik School, Manoj excelled at sports, boxing and body building.

Lieutenant Manoj Pandey was commissioned in the 1/11 Gurkha Rifles of the Indian Army. On June 11, 1999 when the enemies forged ahead, he forced them back at the Batalik Sector in the Kargil war. He courageously led his men to capture the strategically located Jubar top.

Moving quickly, the young officer led his platoon along a narrow, treacherous ridge that led to the enemy position. Fearlessly assaulting the first enemy position, he killed two enemy personnel and then destroyed the second position by killing two more.

While clearing the third position, he got injured on his shoulder and legs. Undaunted and without caring for his grievous injuries, he led the assault on the fourth position and destroyed it with a grenade. Even as he suffered a fatal burst on his forehead, his last words were, “Don’t Spare Them”.

Manoj was awarded the Param Vir Chakra, India’s highest medal for gallantry, posthumously. His father, Mr. Gopichand Pandey, received the award from the President of India on the 52nd Independence day.

In his personal diary he wrote “Some goals are so worthy, it’s glorious even to fail”. Truly our hero hasn’t failed and will always be an inspiration to many of us.

First ever CHANNEL IMPROVE held

IMPROVE, Ashok Leyland’s home-grown concept that involves and recognizes employee teams that achieving all-round excellence, has now taken roots among the dealer fraternity.

The first ever ‘Channel Improve’ conducted across Regions saw 117 teams participate at the regional level, with 17 teams qualifying for the Nationals. The finals, conducted at Behror - about 120 kms from Delhi - was a grand affair, complete with song and dance.

The winners – TVS Nilambur

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Reaching out: MITR meets

Chandigarh

A MITR mechanic and parts retailers meet organised at Chandigarh evoked good response from channel partners. Participants from 22 MITR mechanic & 11 parts retailer outlets spread across Chandigarh, Mohali, Ropar, Ambala, Solan, Darlaghat and Nerchowk attended the Meet. The Sales/Service & Parts teams of Ashok Leyland Chandigarh, along with parts distributor J V Motors and main dealer, Patiala, Yashoda Motors, were present at the Meet and provided inputs on products, technological improvements, need for secondary support, mechanic & driver training.

Nagpur

83 channel partners participated at a MITR meet organised in Nagpur in association with Automotive Manufacturers Private Limited, N S Automotive Private Limited and Universal Indl Sales and Services. It also served as a platform to launch e-MITR. Leyparts branding, various modifications in the products, new products and introductions on conversion kits were among the subjects covered. A retailers meet was also organized, where in customers specific application requirements and parts initiatives like e-MITR were discussed. The channel partners appreciated e-MITR as a unique initiative by Ashok Leyland.

Patiala

A MITR mechanic and parts retailers meet was organised at Patiala. 39 Mechanics & 9 Parts Retailers from Patiala & nearby areas of Patran, Nabha, Devigarh, Rajpura, Ambala, Khanna, Sirhind, Samana, Khanauri and Govindgarh participated in the Meet.

Customer meets

Yavatmal in Maharashtra is a high potential market with many upcoming dam and canal works in and around the area. Ashok Leyland has good presence in this market with models like Taurus, Tippers and 12M buses. In view of this, a customer meet was organized at Yavatmal to understand the present market needs.

Display of Leyparts for running models along with display of new carton design of Leyparts aroused lot of Interest.

The new service products like Extended Warranty and Service Packages were explained to customers. Customers expressed their satisfaction for arranging such a valuable customer meet and increasing the awareness of new models and maintenance of vehicles.
High Mileage Awards

400 people attended a high mileage/high KMPL award function organized by PRTC at their head office at Patiala. Transport minister of Punjab, Master Mohan Lal was the chief guest.

A total of 33 drivers of Ashok Leyland depots were given high mileage award along with appreciation certificates. Additionally, 11 watches were presented to drivers achieving high KMPL with accident-free record.

Road safety seminar

As part of their sesquicentennial celebrations, Tamilnadu Police conducted a national seminar on Road Safety and Urban Traffic Management.

Ramji Narayanaswamy, GM-PMG, made a presentation on ‘Role of Automobile Manufacturers in Road Safety’ covering statutory norms, product features of Ashok Leyland contributing to road safety, driver training and CSR activities.

TANBOF Meet

TANBOF - Tamilnadu Bus Ownders’ Federation - is an apex body for all the Bus Owners’ Associations in Tamil Nadu. At the AGM organized jointly by Vellore and Thiruvannamalai District Bus Owners’ Associations, more than 2000 operators across the State participated. Ashok Leyland displayed a BS 3-ready bus.
Leyland Direct is a one-stop-window to Ashok Leyland for all queries and virtual trouble shooting for all our customers. We will handle all your sales queries, parts queries, service queries, offer technical support and book servicing directly. Call now for all your needs.

VEHICLE BREAKDOWN?
WE WILL QUICKLY RESTORE IT

**тактtal**
Assured Emergency Response

**RESPONSE** (reaching the spot)
WITHIN 4 HOURS on receipt of call

**RESTORATION** (vehicle back on the road)
WITHIN 48 HOURS