

Trendy, yes; but price is key for end users



■ (Left) An old Tata truck and (right) a truck from the company's newly-launched Prima range. Much of the transformation in heavy commercial vehicles is due to regulatory pressures. **AJAY AGGARWAL/HT**

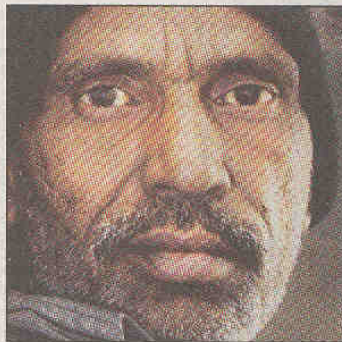
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NEW DELHI: No more sweaty shirts or foul smelling cramped interiors. The new age truck is here and for once truck makers have spared a thought for the drivers who criss-cross the country in what can be best described as sub-human conditions.

"The new generation trucks will give us better drive quality, air conditioned interiors and will be safer compared to the rickety machines that we have been driving for ages," Kalicharan, a Delhi based truck driver says with a glint of hope in his eyes.

He said the old age trucks are not weather proof, be it summers or winters, the conditions inside the cabin are sub-human but one has to endure it



■ **Trucker Kalicharan looks for change.** **AJAY AGGARWAL/HT**

to earn a living.

Tata's Prima and Leyland's U-Trucks would put India on par with the international trucks that are totally different form what Indian highways have seen till now.

"The products should be priced optimally. We welcome the new products offered by the

manufacturers but the price points have to justify the new add ons that should help the end user increase productivity at the same costs," Vineet Agarwal, executive director, Transport Corporation of India which has a fleet of 1200 trucks said.

Agarwal added that there should be over all development of the transport sector to support such enhancement in productivity.

"Proper after sales and service, affordable spares and good highways are necessary for the new age trucks or else the purpose will be defeated," Agarwal added.

However those with smaller fleets feel these trucks would not make any economic sense as high maintenance costs leading to low returns would not help their business.