

DLSI rolls out 6x6 mine-protected vehicle

Defence Land Systems Indian (DLSI), a JV between M&M and South Africa-based, BAE Systems Plc recently supplied six mine-protected vehicles (MPV-I) to the Jharkhand Police. An armoured vehicle with 6x6 configuration, the MPV-I is built on the chassis of a 6x6 rock-body tipper from Ural. Without any change to the driveline, a V-shaped hull weighing over 6 tonnes is mounted on the chassis. The MPV-I is constructed using special, high-strength steel imported from Sweden with high, blast protection capabilities. The V-shape monocoque hull chassis, directs the force of the blast away from occupants, besides combining both ballistic and mine-protection abilities. The MPV-I is built at

an angle of 90 degrees, and offers ballistic protection from a distance of 10m, against the 7.62 mm x 51 NATO ball rifle cartridge, the 7.62 mmx 39 AK-47 ball and the 5.56 mm ball of an INSAS rifle. The MPV-I has tested in blast protection conditions of more than STANG 4, which is the highest protection level available in India.

With a seating capacity of 18 personnel, which includes the driver, co-driver and combat loads, the MPV-I has engines with 230 HP, to enhance protection and better mobility, best-suited for anti-terrorist and anti-Naxal operations. With the Jharkhand Police as its first customer, DLSI has begun mass production of the MPV-I at its 100 vehicles per annum capacity plant, at Palwal, Haryana. It is here

that technology and product capabilities have been transferred from BAE Systems. Currently, working on a single shift, a vehicle is being rolled out every second day. The scale of operations would clearly need ramping up. Besides the Jharkhand Police, the MPV-I has also been the object of interest for other Naxal-affected states. The M&M-BAE JV has been armoured light vehicles in India, and has supplied over 1,000 bullet resistant, light vehicles to the Army, para military forces as well as state and central police forces. The company manufactures various combat vehicles like the Markaman, Rakshak Plus, Rapid Intervention vehicle, Rakshak, Up-armoured Scorpio and an armoured bus at the special military vehicle facility. ■

