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NEWS

International

Volkswagen creates integrated commercial vehicles group

Volkswagen AG is creating an integrated commercial vehicles group and thus putting in place a structured framework for business with mid-sized and heavy trucks and buses. **Truck & Bus GmbH** is to become the new Volkswagen Group holding for the **MAN** and **Scania** commercial vehicle brands. To this end, the shares in **Scania AB** held by Volkswagen AG will be transferred to Truck & Bus GmbH. The wholly-owned Volkswagen subsidiary already holds 75.28 percent of the voting rights in **MAN SE**. The company will be led by **Andreas Renschler**, member of the Board of Management of Volkswagen AG. Truck & Bus GmbH will steer and coordinate cooperation among the three commercial vehicle companies **MAN Truck & Bus AG**, **MAN Latin America Ltda.** and **Scania AB**. **Volkswagen Nutzfahrzeuge (Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles)**, Volkswagen Group's manufacturer of light commercial vehicles, will also form part of the integrated commercial vehicles group and will report to Renschler. However, the brand will continue to maintain close ties with the **Volkswagen Pkw (Volkswagen Passenger Cars)** brand where the synergies mainly lie.

Delphi may spend up to \$3 billion on an acquisition in 2015

Delphi Automotive plc could spend \$1 billion to \$3 billion this year on a large acquisition related to its traditional “hardware” business, the company’s CEO **Kevin Clark** said in an interview with Reuters. “There is a funnel of some larger transactions” in the range of \$1 billion to about \$3 billion he is quoted as saying. “It’s always tough to predict larger transactions like that but based on where we sit today, I would say it’s greater than a 50-50 probability,” to occur in 2015, Clark told Reuters.

Flextronics to acquire Mirror Controls International

Flextronics International Ltd. announced that it has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire **Mirror Controls International (MCi)** from private equity firm **Egeria** in an all cash transaction valuing its share capital at €457 million (\$494 million). Based in Woerden, the Netherlands, and with three highly automated manufacturing facilities in China, Mexico, and Ireland, MCi is a global manufacturer of glass and powerfold mirror actuators in the automotive market and generated approximately €200 million (\$216 million) in revenue over the past twelve months, historically growing over 20 percent year over year. The acquisition is expected to close in the third quarter of 2015. Flextronics intends to fund the acquisition from currently available resources.

U.S. Federal Trade Commission clears ZF’s acquisition of TRW

TRW Automotive Holdings Corp. announced that the U.S. **Federal Trade Commission (FTC)** cleared the proposed acquisition by **ZF Friedrichshafen AG** of TRW. The FTC’s clearance is subject to certain conditions, which ZF has agreed to undertake following completion of the proposed acquisition, including the sale of TRW’s Linkage and Suspension business which is currently underway. Subject to the receipt of antitrust approval in Mexico, which the parties expect to obtain shortly, and the satisfaction of other customary closing conditions, ZF’s proposed acquisition is expected to close later this month.

Bulgaria

Yazaki plans third plant for Bulgaria

Yazaki Corporation will construct a third plant for production of wiring harnesses in Bulgaria, **Sinan Kar**, General Manager of **Yazaki Bulgaria EOOD**, told Capital daily. According to Kar, the new factory would be located in the central part of Bulgaria, the exact location is yet to be selected. Plans call for the investment of about €30 million in the new project over the next two years. Yazaki currently operates two plants in Bulgaria. The factory in Yambol, which manufactures wiring harnesses for **Renault** and **Ford** vehicles, employs about 3,700 workers. The second site in Sliven produces wiring systems for the Ford Transit and has some 1,300 employees. Kar stressed that the new plant has to be outside of Yambol or Sliven because the labour force resources of these regions had been exhausted. He also explained that the third factory will be dedicated for a new project related to a new client.

Czech Republic

Škoda to show fun pickup built by trainees at GTI Meeting in Austria

The **Škoda FUNstar** concept, a pickup based on the Škoda Fabia, will be celebrating its public debut at the 34th **GTI Treffen (GTI Meeting)** in English) in the small Austrian city of Reifnitz alongside the Wörthersee Lake from the 13th to 16th May. The fun vehicle concept is the result of Škoda's 'trainee car' project, which was run for the first time last year. 23 trainees from the **Škoda Auto Vocational School** have been tinkering on their very own vehicle project since November. The trainees have been supported by Škoda's chief designer **Jozef Kabaň** and Production Director **Michael Oeljeklaus**. "The Škoda FUNstar is a sassy pickup – cheeky, fresh and surprising" said Škoda. It is painted with metallic colours steel-grey and moon-white. The sills, grille surround and the rear spoiler form a striking contrast in reflex-green. One special feature is the LED lights mounted below the sidebars. The duel-lens headlights also feature LED technology, with green LED light strips serving as daytime running lights. LEDs are also used in the rear lights. The FUNstar drives up on 18-inch 'Gemini' alloys from the Octavia RS. The engine is a 1.2 TSI petrol with 90 kW. The sporty look continues in the interior. Individual elements are also finished in the colours steel-grey and moon-white.



Porsche Holding to take over Škoda distribution in Colombia

Porsche Holding GmbH, the Austrian-based import and retail subsidiary of **Volkswagen AG**, will take over responsibility for **Škoda** import in Colombia starting from July. Porsche Holding's Colombian subsidiary,

which is already responsible for the import of **VW** passenger cars, **VW Trucks and Buses** and **MAN**, will add Škoda as well as **VW Commercial Vehicles**, **Audi** and **Seat** brands which are now imported by the company **VAS S.A.**

MBtech Bohemia appoints new COO

Martin Novotný (40) was appointed COO of **MBtech Bohemia s.r.o.** last month. This change is in conjunction with the appointment of **Dr. Wolfram Motz**, previously CEO of MBtech Bohemia, as CEO at **AKKA Central and Eastern Europe- Engineering** at the beginning of 2015. In his new position, Motz is not only responsible for the strategic management of MBtech Bohemia, but also of **AKKA Technologies S.A.**'s subsidiaries in Romania and Turkey.

Arburg inaugurates extension of technology centre in Brno

Arburg GmbH + Co KG, the German manufacturer of injection moulding machines with clamping forces between 125 and 5,000 kN, officially opened the extension of its **Arburg Technology Center** in Brno. The 615 square metre extension brings the available floor space to more than 1,660 square metres, providing more space for the booming automation solutions sector, as well as turnkey systems. Moreover, there will now be a separate area dedicated entirely to the Freeformer and additive manufacturing. "Annual growth rates here are between 10 and 15 percent. Out of a total of 34 employees, five are exclusively responsible for automation solutions and specific turnkey systems. The addition of five more is planned in the near future," **Michael Hehl**, Managing Partner and spokesperson for the Arburg management team, said during the ceremony.

CzechInvest at SAE 2015 World Congress

CzechInvest, the Czech investment and business development agency, participated in the **SAE 2015 World Congress** in Detroit with its own stand. While CzechInvest representatives were negotiating with existing and potential investors, **ASSA ABLOY - FAB**, **Česká Zbrojovka a.s. (SBU Auto & Aero)** and **ZKL Bearings CZ a.s.** were presented at the CzechInvest stand

Hungary

Motherson Sumi to set up a plant in Kecskemét region

Motherson Sumi Systems Ltd. (MSSL) through its subsidiary **Samvardhana Motherson Automotive Systems Group BV (SMRPBV)** received its "biggest ever order from **Daimler**" the company said. In order to be close to its customer, the company has decided that its division **Samvardhana Motherson Peguform (SMP)** will set up two new plants close to Daimler AG's assembly plant: one in the region Kecskemét in Hungary and the other in the region around Tuscaloosa in the USA. In addition, the supplier will invest in capacity expansion in existing plants in Germany as well as new machines, tools and product development efforts. MSSL estimates the new orders from Daimler for the supply of a range of exterior and interior systems for several future **Mercedes-Benz** vehicle generations to generate sales revenues of approximately €2.2 billion over its lifetime starting from 2018. "We can state that the preparatory work for the establishment of the two new plants has already begun" said **Vivek Chaand Sehgal**, Chairman of MSSL. Products supplied

to Daimler by Motherson today include exterior mirrors, door panels, bumpers, water deflectors, exterior and interior trim parts and other products. Another Motherson subsidiary **Samvardhana Motherson Reflectec** already operates a plant in Mosonszolnok, Hungary which produces rear view mirrors.

Fehrer-Rába completes development project

Fehrer Automotive-Rába Kft announced that it has wrapped up its HUF 3.477 billion project at its Mór site which was mainly aimed at improving its facilities. The rented production hall was refurbished, a new warehouse was built and new production lines were installed. 100 new jobs have also been created so now 381 people work at the plant which produces foam for seats. It is now fully owned by **F.S. Fehrer GmbH & Co. KG**, a member of the **Aunde Group**.

Poland

Neapco may consider investment in Olesno

US supplier **Neapco Holdings LLC**, which operates its Polish plant **Neapco Europe Sp. z o.o.** in Prazska, may construct a new plant in Olesno, Nowa Trybuna Opolska reports. According to the report, trade union members of the Neapco plant in Prazska said that **Kenneth L. Hopkins**, Neapco's CEO and President, visited possible investment locations in Olesno in March. According to reports of local media Neapco intends to construct a new production hall but faces problems with the expansion of its current site in Prazska as the land suitable for the expansion is privately owned. Currently the company employs about 880 people in Prazska.

Volkswagen celebrates topping out of new plant's assembly hall

Volkswagen Poznań Sp. z o.o. celebrated the topping out of a new assembly hall which is part of the new plant for the next-generation **VW Crafter** in Białeżyce near Września. Production in the new factory will start in the second half of 2016. The company has already recruited the first 300 employees for the new sites.

Orbit One reports new investments in Polish plant

Orbit One, the Swedish contract manufacturer of electronic and electromechanic components and modules, reports new investments in the equipment of its Polish plant **Orbit One Sp. z o.o.** located in Prabuty. A new paint robot has been installed along with new **Fuji NXT** modules, and a new oven will be installed this spring.

Romania

Cash for clunkers program for 2015 launched

This year's cash for clunkers program, also known as Rabla, started in the last week of April. People willing to take part in it can register at an authorized dealer in order to reserve the RON 6,500 vouchers they receive in order to buy new cars in exchange for their old ones. The person that signs up for the program will receive the voucher in exchange for scrapping a car older than eight years. Clients also can cede the scrapping voucher in favor of other persons that want to buy new cars. A total number of 20,000 vouchers for physical

persons and 5,000 vouchers for juridical persons and public institutions worth a total of RON 200 million have been allocated for the 2015 program. Participants also can benefit from eco-bonuses. Last year of the 20,000 cars sold with the help of the program about 10,000 were **Dacia** cars.

Russia

Russia to change calculation of local content to ease ruble risk for foreign companies

Russia's government is planning to change the way the local content is calculated in order to reduce the risk of ruble volatility for foreign automakers and suppliers that have localized production in the country, Kommersant business daily reports, quoting unnamed sources. The Ministry of Economy may include a coefficient taking into account fluctuations in the ruble exchange rate to the formula that determines the level of localization. The target is that the companies can fulfil their local content obligations despite the ruble volatility. Automakers asked the government to consider such measures late last year. According to Kommersant, the changes, which are being considered by the Ministry, may be approved toward the end of the second quarter or early in the third quarter.

BMW postpones decision on Russian assembly plant

BMW AG said it had postponed a decision about whether to build an assembly plant in Russia because of the uncertainty caused by the economic crisis, Reuters reports. "Russia is a challenge for our company and we have asked ourselves how will things go on there," BMW's CEO **Norbert Reithofer** told reporters, adding that a decision about whether to build an assembly plant had been postponed. Currently contract manufacturer **OOO Avtotor Holding** assembles BMW cars from SKD kits in Russia. Original plans called for the construction of a CKD plant as a joint venture project between BMW and Avtotor. The plant would be part of Avtotor's new automotive cluster in Kaliningrad. Back in October 2013 Avtotor said it has started earth-moving work for the future BMW plant. "I think that before the end of the year we will complete all the procedural issues," Avtotor's Chairman **Vladimir Shcherbakov** said about the expectation for a final agreement with BMW in October 2013. He also said that the investment of about €360 million (\$496 million) will be shared equally with BMW.

Ford Sollers appoints Wolf as new Vice President for production

Rene Wolf, (51), who until now served as Plant Director at the **Ford-Werke GmbH** plant in Cologne, Germany, has been appointed new Vice President responsible for Production at **OOO Ford Sollers Holding**. Prior to his last position in Cologne, Wolf served as Production Director in Cologne (December 2011 to August 2013), Director of the assembly plant in Saarlouis, Germany (June 2010 to December 2011), Director of the press and welding shops in Cologne (February 2009 to May 2010) and Director of assembly in Cologne (November 2006 to February 2009). Between February 2005 and October 2006, Wolf served as **Ford Motor Co.**'s Quality Manager Commercial Vehicles Europe with responsibility for the plants in UK and Turkey. In Cologne, Wolf is followed by **Vic Daenen** (47), who recently served as Plant Director of Ford's plant in Genk, Belgium, which was closed in 2014.

Bosch to ramp up production in Samara slower than planned

Robert Bosch GmbH will ramp up production at its new plant in Samara slower than originally expected. The construction work will be finished "soon" as planned, **Volkmar Denner**, Bosch's Chairman of the Board of Management, said on the sidelines of the company's annual press conference in Stuttgart. "Of course, we adjust the investments in the production lines," he said. At the turn of 2015/2016 the production of driving dynamics components is to be started. Additional product groups (originally starters and alternators, common-rail injectors for commercial vehicles and windshield wiper systems were planned) are to be added "with delay" Denner added.

AvtoVAZ to increase wages

ОАО AvtoVAZ will increase wages of all of its about 52,000 employees (excluding managers working on contract base) by 6 percent effective from the 1st of June. "The average monthly wage at AvtoVAZ will be increased from today's RUB 27,500 to RUB 29,000" the company said. Employees of three departments – production of the **Lada** Granta/Kalina and **Datsun** on-DO/mi-DO models, engine production and production of prototypes – will receive a bonus of average RUB 29,000 in July. In addition, the company is currently increasing the monthly wage of about 600 welders in the production of cars based on the B0 platform by an average of RUB 2,100.

New appointments at GAZ

Gruppa GAZ announced several new appointments which became effective on the 5th of May. **Pavel Sereda** was appointed Director of **Legkiye Kommercheskiye i Legkovye Avtomobili (LKILA) Division** or **Light Commercial and Passenger Vehicles (LC&PV) Division** in English. Since 2008 Pavel Sereda held the position of the Division's Director for Development and was responsible for designing new **GAZ** products – from the upgraded GAZelle Business to a new generation LCV family NEXT. For the past year he also has been the Director for Development of GAZ Group. The newly appointed Director for GAZ Group's Production Sites Development is **Evgeniy Gorynin**, who was previously responsible for this area of activities in the LC&PV Division. In 2012–2013 Gorynin supervised the launch of **Volkswagen/Škoda** and **Daimler** contract manufacturing projects. **Andrey Sofonov**, previously LC&PV Production Director, was appointed to the position of the Division's Operations Director. In the new capacity he will handle the matters of ensuring production processes efficiency and cost reduction at all production sites of the Division including GAZ's light commercial vehicles and medium duty trucks production facility and contract manufacturing facilities in Nizhny Novgorod, **ООО Nizhegorodskiy Motory** powertrain and component plant in Nizhny Novgorod, **ОАО Ulyanovskiy Motorny Zavod (UMZ)** engine plant in Ulyanovsk and **ОАО Saransky Zavod Avtosamosvalov (SAZ)** tipper plant in Saransk. In 2012–2014 Sofonov supervised the GAZelle NEXT and GAZon NEXT preproduction activities. **Alexey Zaytsev**, who previously served as Director of Strategic Marketing and Product Planning Department of **Avtokomponenty Division (Autocomponent Division)**, was appointed to the position of the Director for Development of Autocomponent Division.

GAZ: Škoda and VW assembly interrupted for three weeks

The contract assembly of **Škoda** and **VW** at the **Gruppa GAZ** plant in Nizhny Novgorod was interrupted for the time between the 5th and the 25th of May, RIA Novosti reports quoting Volkswagen's Russian PR department.

For some weeks in March and April the Škoda and VW assembly ran only at four days per week. However, Volkswagen told the agency that the contract assembly in Nizhny Novgorod has been operating on five days per week since the 20th of April and this working mode will continue after the current interruption.

Volkswagen to launch facelifted Polo Sedan soon

OOO Volkswagen Group Rus is preparing volume production of a facelifted version of the **VW Polo Sedan** at its plant in Kaluga. According to Kolesa.ru about 15 facelifted cars have already been assembled. Following some more pilot vehicles which may be produced later this month, volume production of the Polo Sedan Facelift is expected to be launched in June.

Toyota to cut jobs in St. Petersburg

OOO Toyota Motor Manufacturing Russia plans to cut 250 temporary workers effective from the 1st of June. Currently the company employs some 1,850 people. Despite the cuts the plant is expected to continue work on two shifts five days per week, local media report.

AvtoVAZ may increase production of Lada 4x4 Urban

Initially **OOO AvtoVAZ** planned to produce 5,000 **Lada 4x4 Urban** SUVs in 2015, but the production plan may be increased, the company said. About 700 4x4 Urban vehicles were sold since the launch of sales in November 2014. AvtoVAZ decided to transfer the production of the model from its subsidiary **OOO PSA VIS-Avto** in Togliatti to the main plant. In AvtoVAZ's portfolio the Lada 4x4 Urban belongs to the "Cross portfolio" which also includes the Kalina Cross and Largus Cross model. About 2,000 Kalina Cross and 100 Largus Cross were sold until now.

AvtoVAZ takes measures against tuning company

OOO AvtoVAZ sent a statement regarding the company **OOO Yuroltuning** to the Russian law-enforcement bodies with the initiative to conduct an investigation. The reason is that the tuning company Yuroltuning,



which is based in Vasilyevka near Togliatti, plans to launch sales of bumpers for **Lada** Granta and Kalina models that imitate AvtoVAZ's new design language using the "X" face this month. "Such activity is unacceptable, since it represents an attempt to illegally use the development of AvtoVAZ in industrial design and new corporate identity of the Lada car" said **Bo Andersson**, President and CEO of AvtoVAZ. "We take all the necessary tough measures to immediately stop trying to parasitism on our achievements". The first Lada models using the new design language are the Vesta and XRAY which were show as concepts at the Moscow auto show last August and are scheduled for volume production start in the second half of the year. AvtoVAZ is expected to use the new design language for facelifts of existing models as well. Yuroltuning calls its new tuning solutions Granta X mug and Kalina X mug. The picture above shows a comparison of the normal Lada Granta front part and the Yuroltuning version X mug.

GAC Motor prepares launch of sales in Russia

Chinese car manufacturer **GAC Motor** is preparing the launch of sales in Russia, **Wang Sunsheng**, the company's General Manager Assistant responsible for the International Business Division, confirmed in interviews with Chinese media. "Currently, our subsidiary in Russia is under registration and will complete registration in July," Sunsheng told the Chinese web XCAR.com.cn. The certification in Russia is expected to be completed at the end of June. Initially the company will offer CBU imports in Russia. "Next, we plan to realise localisation and to assemble our products in Russia. Then, we may establish joint and cooperative ventures to bring our products and technologies into Russia," explained Susheng. "We are looking forward to the future development and take the Russian market as one of our strategic priorities." According to Sunsheng it makes sense to launch sales in Russia despite the current economic situation. "It is economical that we invest in Russia now. When we complete our market layout in Russia, a sales peak will come as long as the market is activated," Sunsheng explained in an interview with Xinhuanet Auto. "We expect to lay a solid foundation at this stage for our development in Russia in next year and the year after it".

GM-AvtoVAZ adds new Chevrolet Niva trim level

ZAO GM-AvtoVAZ will begin production of a new **Chevrolet** Niva trim level, the LE+. The Limited Edition Plus (LE+) is based on the top Niva trim, and will pair special off-road options typical of the LE trim with the up-level vehicle including air conditioning, styling details and the full safety pack. The dealer recommended price is RUB 624,000. The Niva LE+ distinguishes from GLC with the following options: **Continental** Cross Contact tires with 7Jx16H2 silver off-road style alloy wheels; Rear underbody skidplate with integrated tow-bar; Unpainted bumpers & other exterior trim for off-road use. The first 112 Niva LE+ will roll off the production line in May.

Medvedev signs regulation on expansion of Lyudinovo Special Economic Zone area

Russia Prime Minister **Dmitry Medvedev** has signed a regulation on expansion of Lyudinovo Special Economic Zone area by 432 hectares. The new special economic zone land plot is located in Borovsk District of Kaluga Region. Previously the special economic zone consisted of land plots of 610 hectares in Lyudinovo District, Kaluga Region. The new plot is located next to production facilities of **Vorsino industrial park**, the **Freight Village** multimodal logistics centre and Ermolino airport.

Serbia

Confezioni Andrea to add jobs in Jagodina

Confezioni Andrea Serbia d.o.o., the Serbian subsidiary of the Italian car cover manufacturer **Confezioni Andrea S.R.L.**, plans to recruit about 150 new employees at its site in Jagodina. Currently the company employs 750 workers and 100 additional persons are trained, plant director **Darko Kitić** told Tanjug. According to Kitić, the company will open another facility in Jagodina, which will bring the total number of employees to 1,100 or maybe even more.

Slovakia

Reisinger takes over as new Head of ZKW Slovakia

Jürgen Reisinger (47) has taken over the position of General Plant Manager of the **ZKW Slovakia s.r.o.** plant in Krušovce, a subsidiary of the Austrian company **Zizala Lichtsysteme GmbH**, last month. He succeeds **Alfred Macher**, who is now in charge of **ZKW México S.A. de C.V.** Austrian-born Reisinger was most recently the Managing Director of **Magna Steyr Fuel Systems GmbH** between October 2010 and March 2015. Prior to that, he served as Assistant General Manager at Magna Steyr Fuel Systems (April 2006 to September 2010) and as Head of the **Magna Powertrain** assembly plant in Ilz, Austria (November 2001 to March 2006).

Slovenia

Revoz phases out production of Clio II

The last **Renault Clio II** was manufactured at the **Revoz d.d.** plant in Novo Mesto on the 4th of May. Since the start of production in March 1998 Revoz produced 1,490,607 units of the Clio II. Production of the Clio II was connected to several milestones of Revoz factory. For the Clio II project the plant was significantly modernised, mainly with the help of robots. The first introduction of a third shift at Revoz or the first time the factory produced more than 100,000 cars per year were connected to the Clio II production. Starting from the beginning of 2013 it was not more possible to sell the Clio II on European markets because of changed legislation but Revoz continued the Clio II production for North African markets, mainly for Algeria. **Renault S.A.** still builds the Clio II, called Clio Mio, at its plant in Cordoba, Argentina. Revoz now fully focuses on the production of the third-generation Renault Twingo and the **smart** forfour.

Turkey

New Fiat compact sedan to be unveiled at the upcoming Istanbul Motor Show

A new **Fiat** compact sedan will see its world premiere at the upcoming Istanbul Motor Show (22nd to 31st of May). Designed by the **Fiat Chrysler Automobiles N.V.** Style Centre and developed jointly with the R&D department of **Tofaş Türk Otomotiv Fabrikası A.Ş.**, the new Fiat sedan at the Tofaş factory in Bursa. Sales will begin in Turkey next November and continue in over 40 countries in the EMEA region.

Tofaş celebrates 1.5 millionth Doblò

Tofaş Türk Otomotiv Fabrikası A.Ş., the Turkish partner of **Fiat Chrysler Automobiles N.V.**, announced that the 1.5 millionth Doblò rolled down from the assembly line. It's been 15 years since production of the light commercial vehicle was launched at the Bursa factory. Today the company is producing the fourth-generation model, which is being sold under the **Fiat, Opel, Vauxhall** and **Ram** brands.

Profil launches supplies to Daimler

Profil Sanayi Ticaret A.Ş., a Bursa-based supplier of sheet metal parts, including door beams, torque arms, seat brackets, ball joints, tie rod ends etc., launched shipments to the **Daimler AG**. In an interview with Turkish daily Hürriyet, **Sezai Sezer**, Chairman of the company, mentioned that chassis parts and body parts are being sent to Germany.

Ukraine

Evrokar plans assembly of 2,000 cars this year

Ukrainian assembler **Evrokar** plans to assemble 2,000 **Škoda** cars this year compared to 3,649 cars made in 2014, the company's owner **Oleg Boyarin** told LIGABiznesInform. "We made 530 cars. This is 37 percent of the production volume of the first quarter 2014. And we sold only 395 cars. Octavia remains the best-selling model with 175 cars sold," Boyarin said when asked about the first quarter of this year. "The fall is catastrophic. But in this case the numbers are a consequence of the policy pursued by the government," Boyarin is quoted as saying.

NEWS FROM MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

Bahrain

GAC Motor signs agreement with Bahrain distributor

GAC Motor has signed a cooperation agreement with the **Tasheelat Automotive Company**, which is part of the **National Motor Company W.L.L. (NMC)** of Bahrain. NMC is an automotive distributor owned by publicly listed **Bahrain Commercial Facilities Company (BCFC)**, which is also known as **Tasheelat**. Founded in 1988, NMC represents **Honda, Chevrolet, GMC** and **Cadillac** brands.

Iran

Iran targets production of three million vehicles per year

Iran plans to increase its annual vehicle production to three million over the next six years, **Valiollah Afkhamirad**, the country's Deputy Industry, Mines and Trade Minister and Head of the **Trade Promotion**

Organization of Iran, said. Iran manufactured more than 1.13 million vehicles in the past Iranian year 1393, which ended on the 20th of March. He said that the Iran has provided favorable conditions for foreign investors to invest in the vehicle and vehicle parts production industry. If any famous international automaker is interested to produce cars with up to 2.5 liter engines in Iran the ground of cooperation will be prepared, Afkhamirad said. He made the remarks during a meeting with a Swiss business delegation in Tehran.

Award for IKCO TAM

In the 16th Conference of Acknowledging Industrial Units and Green Services, **IKCO TAM** received the Silver Trophy for its services, meeting quality, safety and environment criteria as the sole presenter from Tehran province among representatives from all over the country. IKCO TAM is for example in charge of supplying **Iran Khodro Co. (IKCO)** robotic lines. Apart from automotive industry, the company is active in other markets especially in control centres, instrumentation and mining.

Morocco

Renault's plant in Tangier is candidate for new low-cost model

The Moroccan **Renault S.A.** plant in Tangier is a candidate for the production of a future low-cost small car, **Jacques Prost**, CEO of **Renault Morocco**, confirmed in an interview with Usine Nouvelle. Renault will soon introduce the new model in India. Initially the new low-cost car will be produced in India. According to Prost, the candidacy of the Moroccan plant will be considered by the group in the light of the potential interest of this vehicle for the European market. In case of positive decision, the production could be done on existing lines, said Prost.

Renault plans to produce about 250,000 cars in Tangier this year

Renault S.A. expects to produce about 250,000 vehicles at its plant in Tangier this year, compared to 174,245 units manufactured in 2014, **Jacques Prost**, CEO of **Renault Morocco**, told Usine Nouvelle. "The growth is there. Seen from Morocco we perceive that European demand regained momentum because the site works at 90 percent for this market. Production in 2015 is expected to be around 250,000, it is very positive!"

Renault targets higher local content for Tangier plant

Renault S.A. aims to achieve 60 percent local value integration for its plant in Tangier compared to just over 40 percent today, **Jacques Prost**, CEO of **Renault Morocco**, explained to Usine Nouvelle. The company is trying to find more local suppliers. Prost welcomes the partnership with **AMICA (Association Marocaine pour l'Industrie et le Commerce Automobile)**, the **Moroccan Association for Automotive Industry and Trade**. "Our number one partner is AMICA who is there to help us structure and deploy all this automotive platform in Tangier. This is a very positive thing" said Prost. "Luck of Morocco is that the Minister of Industry has recognised the need to be in action. He pushed that AMICA receives an operational structure. This was not the case when I arrived in Morocco two years ago," he added.

INTERVIEW

with Pang Hai, General Manager of Chongqing Sokon Motor (Group) Import & Export Co. Ltd.

“We plan to export 60,000 vehicles in 2015”

The Chongqing Sokon Motor (Group) Import & Export Co. Ltd. is responsible for the export of Chinese-made vehicles under the DFSK and Sokon brands. The company plans to increase exports and is developing activities in new markets.

Mr. Pang Hai, how many vehicles were sold in China and exported in 2014 and what is the export plan for this year?

Last year we sold about 300,000 vehicles in China and exported about 50,000 units. We plan to export 60,000 vehicles in 2015.

What are the main export regions?

Our main export region is North Africa with Algeria as the largest market. The second largest export region is South America.

You are now starting cooperation with the Iranian vehicle manufacturer Zamyad. Zamyad exhibited DFSK vehicles at several local shows in Iran under both DFSK and Zamyad brands. What are the plans for cooperation with Zamyad?

In the future our vehicles will be assembled at Zamyad.

When do you plan to launch the assembly?

The assembly of our vehicles at Zamyad is to start this year.

Currently the DFSK vehicles are assembled in ASEAN countries. Do you plan to launch other assembly projects for example in Africa and Latin America?

Yes, we have.

DFSK vehicles are already sold in several European countries for several years mainly through small distributors. However, at this year's Geneva auto show DFSK was represented for the first time with a significant stand at a major European auto show. In addition, DFSK's new importer in Switzerland is the Emil Frey Group, a large import and retail company. What are your plans for Europe?

The European market is the leading market in the world regarding technology, standards or emissions. So we will try our best to enlarge our market share. In the future we try to reach the export of more than 10,000 units per year to Europe in three to five years. Russia is not included in that figure.

Interview conducted by Peter Homola

THIS WEEK ON CEAUTO.CO.HU

New car market in Russia: 139,850 new cars and light trucks were sold during March, 2015

<http://ceauto.co.hu/news/new-car-market-in-russia-march-2015-figures-are-released>

New car market in Czech Republic: 22,843 new light vehicles were registered during March, 2015

<http://ceauto.co.hu/news/new-car-market-in-the-czech-republic-march-2015-figures-are-released>

New car market in Slovenia: 6,740 new light vehicles were registered during March, 2015

<http://ceauto.co.hu/news/new-car-market-in-slovenia-march-2015-figures-are-now-available>

New car market in Bulgaria: 2,555 new cars and light trucks were sold during March, 2015

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New car market in Serbia: 2,043 new cars and light trucks were sold during March, 2015

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New car market in Bosnia: 675 new light vehicles were registered during March, 2015

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New car market in Moldova: 273 new light vehicles were registered during March, 2015

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IMPRINT

Editor: Peter Homola, Phone: +43 664 124 4870 E-mail: peterhomola@ceauto.at

Chief Correspondent: Csaba Delényi. Phone: +36 30 862 7287. E-mail: dc_saba@ceauto.co.hu

Copy Editor: Timothy Rawson

Layout Editor: Katalin Böröcz

Publisher: Pal Negyesi. Phone: +43 664 883 60 677. E-mail: pnegyesi@ceauto.at
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