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NEWS

International

Toyota Boshoku to acquire mechanical seat frame component business from Aisin Seiki and Shiroki

The **Toyota Boshoku Corporation**, **Aisin Seiki Co., Ltd.** and **Shiroki Corporation** have agreed that Toyota Boshoku will acquire the mechanical seat frame component business operated by Aisin Seiki and Shiroki (customer: **Toyota Motor Corporation** or Toyota Boshoku) in order to enhance the competitiveness of automotive seats. Currently, Toyota Boshoku, Aisin Seiki, and Shiroki develop and manufacture seat frame components. Seats are supplied to Toyota from Toyota Boshoku, which develops automotive interior systems. Mechanical components that make up seat frames, such as recliners and slide rails are supplied to Toyota

Boshoku from Aisin Seiki and Shiroki. The operations of Aisin Seiki and Shiroki's development and manufacturing of mechanical seat frame components will be transferred to Toyota Boshoku in stages, in order to establish an integrated system from development to production. By the end of 2015, the development operations will be consolidated, and the details of the transfer, including the manufacturing operations, will be determined.

Lear completes acquisition of Eagle Ottawa

The **Lear Corporation** has completed its acquisition of **Eagle Ottawa LLC**. The transaction is valued at \$850 million on a cash and debt free basis and is forecasted to be approximately 5 percent accretive to 2015 earnings per share, excluding synergies. Eagle Ottawa, a provider of automotive leather products, employs approximately 6,500 people and has 19 facilities in 12 countries. In Eastern Europe, the company operates the **Eagle Ottawa Hungary Kft** plant in Szolnok, Hungary.

Pirelli finalises sale of steel cord activities to Bekaert in three countries

Pirelli & C. S.p.A. and **NV Bekaert SA** successfully finalised the sale to Bekaert of Pirelli's steelcord activities in Italy (Figline), Romania (Slatina) and Brazil (Sumaré). In line with the announcement made in February, the sale agreement includes the transfer of Pirelli's steelcord activities in Turkey (Izmit) and China (Yanzhou) to Bekaert, for which local regulatory approvals are still pending. It is expected that these approvals could be obtained in the first quarter of 2015. The closing was for a value (enterprise value) of approximately €150 million, in line, on a pro-quota basis, with the overall operation's value of approximately €255 million announced when the agreement was signed.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Porsche Holding to take over import activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Porsche Holding Gesellschaft m.b.H., the Austrian distribution subsidiary of **Volkswagen AG**, will take over the import of Volkswagen Group brands in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the existing importer **ASA Auto d.o.o.** effective as of the 1st of July. According to **Alain Favey**, the head of Porsche Holding, the Austrian company plans to take over the main portion of employees as well as the current structure from ASA Auto.

Czech Republic

CTPark Hranice: Shin Heung Precision to establish production, DAS to expand activities

South Korean supplier **Shin Heung Precision Co. Ltd.** will establish production in the CTPark Hranice in Hranice na Moravě. The company will use 4,100 square metre space in the existing Jumbo hall of CTPark Hranice for production of parts for car seats. Plans call for the employment of 67 workers. In addition, the company **DAS Corporation** plans to expand its existing activities in the Jumbo hall. DAS will rent another 6,300 square metres in the hall and add 200 jobs. DAS assembles seat structures at the site. The installation of production equipment for both companies is expected to be finalized in the third quarter of this year.

Hungary

Musashi expands in Ercsi

Musashi Hungary Ipari Kft, the Hungarian subsidiary of the Japanese supplier **Musashi Seimitsu Industry Co. Ltd.**, has announced that it will invest €4 million to set up a production line for differentials at its plant in Ercsi. Production is scheduled to begin in 2017. Around 340,000 units a year will be supplied for installation in **BMW** and **Mini** cars.

Kayser inaugurates new production hall

Earlier this week **Kayser Automotive Hungária Kft** held a ribbon cutting ceremony at its Komárom facility, where a new, 3,200 square metre production hall has recently been completed. The project was realised with an investment of HUF 700 million which was partly funded from a Hungarian government subsidy. It enables the company to hire 66 new workers, bringing the number of staff to 388 people.

Hankook produces original fitment tyres for Mercedes-Benz V-Class

Hankook Tire Co. Ltd. is extending its line-up of tyres for the minivan and light truck segment by specific high-performance variants in 16 and 17 inch sizes. The tyre models Ventus Prime² and Vantra LT are now being manufactured at the company's plant in Hungary in original fitment versions for the **Mercedes-Benz V-Class**.

Kazakhstan

Infiniti opens first showroom in Kazakhstan

First Kazakh **Infiniti** showroom was opened in Almaty. The current showroom, which is operated by **GK Avtomir**, is a temporary solution. A completely new showroom, which will be located at another location, is to be opened in 2017. Currently Infiniti Q70, QX50, QX70 and QX80 models are offered in Kazakhstan.

Poland

Stomil Sanok to take over assets of Colmant Cuvelier

Stomil Sanok S.A. plans to take over the assets of the bankrupt French V-belt manufacturer Colmant Cuvelier. In December, a French commercial court located in Lille confirmed the offer for the takeover of **Colmant Cuvelier** by Stomil Sanok's French subsidiary. The takeover, which is to be finalized on the 15th of January, includes several assets without real estate. Colmant Cuvelier had turnover of €7.6 million in 2013 and €4.5 million in the first eight months of 2014.

Global Steering Systems details plans for plant in Opole

Following first information about the new **Global Steering Systems Europe Sp. z o.o.** plant in Opole published in mid-2014 the company announced more details about the project. Global Steering Systems will

invest PLN 27 million in a 4,200 square metre plant which will be located on a 2 hectare plot in Opole in the Opole Subzone of the **Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone Invest-Park**. The Polish facility will be the company's first plant in Europe. According to **Zbigniew Gorczyński**, Member of the Board of GSS Europe, the plot purchased by the company allows to expand the plant in order to double the capacity if needed. Construction of the factory is expected to start in the first months of 2015 with production start scheduled for the first quarter of 2016. The company plans to employ the first 40 persons in 2015. The first employees will be trained in GSS' plants in China and the US. Full production capacity is to be reached with some 220 workers by the end of 2018. If GSS decides for the construction of a second stage of the project the total employment would increase to about 300 people, said Gorczyński.

GKN buys land for new hall in Oleśnica

GKN Driveline Polska Sp. z o.o. has purchased a plot of about 11 hectares in Oleśnica. The land is needed for a new hall which will be used for the production of parts destined for the new **Volkswagen Poznań Sp. z o.o.** factory in Białężyce near Września. The investment will be at least PLN 100 million and the project will create at least 150 new jobs. The hall will be erected in a new zone of business activities in the South of Oleśnica. The inclusion of the new zone to the Wałbrzych Special Economic Zone Invest-Park was approved by the members of Oleśnica's city council in December.

Boryszew to invest PLN 80 million in automotive activities this year, plans expansion in Mexico

Boryszew S.A. plans to invest PLN 140 million to PLN 160 million this year, of that about PLN 80 million in automotive activities, **Piotr Szeliga**, the company's Chairman of the Board, told dziennik.pl. A significant part of the planned investment is destined for Boryszew's Polish plants. In addition, the company plans to expand its activities to Mexico. "Few months ago we decided on an important investment area for our group, which is the entry in Mexico, which marks the start of sales in North America," said Szeliga. "This is a huge and important market from the point of view of the automotive industry. These are also new customers, for which we up to now did not exist, I am thinking of **General Motors**" he is quoted as saying. "I expect that within three to four years, the plant in Mexico should reach at least \$30 million of annual sales," explained Szeliga. "We will start with a turnover of \$10 million in the first year and we expect a very intensive development".

Boryszew appoints new head of automotive activities

Cezary Pyszkowski has been appointed to a post of the Member of Management Board at **Boryszew S.A.** with responsibility for the company's automotive activities. He replaced **Paul Surówka** who will start working in the financial sector abroad. From 2008 to 2014 Pyszkowski was employed by **UniCredit CAIB Poland S.A.** at various managerial roles and in 2012 he was appointed Managing Director, Corporate & Investment Banking. Prior to that he worked at the **CDM Pekao Securities** (1997 - 2005) and at the Brokerage House of **Pomorski Bank Kredytowy** (1995-1997).

Sitech: Seat Academy inaugurated in Wrocław

A Seat Academy (Akademia Siedzeń in Polish) was inaugurated at the Politechnika Wrocławska university in Wrocław. The project, which is initiated by **Volkswagen AG**'s component subsidiary **Sitech Sp. z o.o.**, is a part of the **Volkswagen Component Academy**. Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny is involved as well.

Romania

Dacia starts sales in Israel

The first **Dacia** sales outlet was opened in Israel in Tel Aviv. The Dacia Duster, Sandero Stepway, Lodgy and Dokker are the four Dacia vehicles to go on sale in Israel. **Carasso Motors, Renault S.A.**'s long-time partner in Israel, will be responsible for sales and aftersales service. In 2015, Dacia is expected to open two Dacia-branded sales outlets, as well as a number of sales corners in selected Renault dealerships across the country. Following on from the UK, Ireland, Denmark, Norway, Cyprus and Malta in 2013, Israel will be the Dacia brand's 44th national market.

Russia

Fire at IzhAvto plant

Firefighters were at a fire at the **IzhAvto (OOO OAG)** car plant in Izhevsk on the 3rd of January. The fire was in the plant's paint shop. There is no official information about the amount of damage. According to Russky Avtomobil, three **Dürr** paint robots were damaged.

Project Kortezh: Sollers to produce all vehicles

OOO Sollers will be responsible for the production of all **Project Kortezh** models – limousine, sedan, SUV and minivan – which will be based on a modular platform, said **Denis Marturov**, Russian Minister for Industry and Trade. Earlier the government decided that the SUV model is to be manufactured at Sollers' subsidiary **OOO UAZ** in Ulyanovsk. The decision regarding other models was promised to be made by the end of 2014. "We took the final decision regarding the implementation of serial production at Sollers. There will be full-scale production of all models, including SUV, minivan, sedan and limousine, with the participation of **GK Rostekhnologiyi (Russian Technologies)** and **Rosavto**, which will be, essentially, the main business partner of the state, while ensuring the subsequent development of this project" Manturov said at the Rossiya 24 TV station. According to Manturov Russian Technologies is suitably qualified through its shareholding in **OOO AvtoVAZ** and **OOO Kamaz**. Manturov also said that AvtoVAZ's dealership network may be used for the Project Kortezh.

Russian market: Problems as result of ruble volatility in December

Several automakers temporarily halted or limited sales in Russia in mid-December in response to the ruble's fall. The companies had to implement significant price increases because of the development of the ruble's exchange rate. "It's a bloodbath for everybody. All car manufacturers are losing money," **Carlos Ghosn**, CEO of **Renault S.A.** and **Nissan Motor Co. Ltd.**, told media in Japan before Christmas.

IzhAvto may launch two new models in 2016

Production of two new models may be launched at the **IzhAvto (OOO OAG)** plant in Izhevsk in 2016, Russky Avtomobil reports, quoting unnamed sources. The new models are expected to be a **Lada** C segment car based on the Lada Vesta and a **Renault** crossover model.

AvtoVAZ is testing Lada 4x4 with Fiat diesel engine

OOO AvtoVAZ is testing a prototype of the **Lada** 4x4 equipped with a Fiat diesel engine, Russky Avtomobil writes. The **Fiat** 1.3 16v MultiJet diesel which is installed in the prototype has 85 hp.

IzhAvto manufactured more than 74,000 cars last year

The **IzhAvto (OOO OAG)** plant in Izhevsk manufactured 74,191 cars last year, up 28.4 percent from 2013, Russky Avtomobil reports. The total figure includes about 68,000 **Lada** Granta, of that 49,000 Granta liftbacks and 19,000 Granta sedans. **Nissan** cars accounted for the remaining volume. Original plans called for the production of some 80,000 cars in 2014. Plans for 2015 call for the production of 106,000 cars, but the real figure will depend on the economic situation. IzhAvto plans to launch volume production of a new Nissan hatchback model soon with the Lada Vesta scheduled for serial production start in September.

GM-AvtoVAZ reports lower production

ZAO GM-AvtoVAZ manufactured 45,067 **Chevrolet** Niva vehicles last year, which is 22.2 percent less than in 2013. In 2013, the company produced 57,939 units. GM-AvtoVAZ reached its highest ever production output with 62,981 vehicles in 2012. During last year, the wholesale to dealers made 46,023 Nivas, including 42,042 units sent to Russian dealers and 3,981 vehicles exported to other CIS countries. Since production was launched in 2002, 571,852 Chevrolet Niva vehicles were sold, including 42,326 vehicles shipped to other CIS countries.

GM-AvtoVAZ increases price for Chevrolet Niva

From the 1st of January, the retail price for **Chevrolet** Niva vehicles of all trim levels increased by RUB 20,000. Thus the price for the Niva L becomes RUB 489,000, LC – RUB 518,000, LE with air conditioning – RUB 547,000, GLS – RUB 560,000 and GLC – RUB 587,000.

Mobil GazService to establish production in Zavolzhye

Russian company **OOO Mobil GazService**, manufacturer of catalytic converters and exhaust systems, has signed an agreement with **OOO Zavolzhsky Motorny Zavod (ZMZ)** about the establishment of production at the territory of ZMZ's industrial park. Volume production is to start in June. The project is expected to create about 70 new jobs. According to ZMZ, Mobil GazService is the 12th resident of the industrial park. Mobil GazService's plant is located in Balakhna in the Nizhegorod Region. Vehicle manufacturers like **OOO AvtoVAZ**, **Gruppa GAZ**, **OOO UAZ**, **OOO Pavlovsky Avtobus (PAZ)** and **OOO MAZ** are among the company's clients.

Motordetal to launch pilot shipments to Ford Sollers this month

ZAO Kostromskoy Zavod Avtokomponentov (Motordetal-Kostroma) plans to ship first 400 pilot piston sets to the **000 Ford Sollers Holding** plant in Elabuga this month. The set includes piston, piston pin and piston rings.

Serbia

ContiTech may expand production in Subotica

The **ContiTech Fluid Serbia d.o.o.** plant, which is located in the Mali Bajmok business zone in Subotica, may be expanded. "All indicators in numbers coming from a number of audits where we are in direct contact with our customers, favour the direction that we will expand our capacities here" the company's General Manager **Živko Topalović** told Tanjug. The company has already expanded its production portfolio to components for trucks which are produced at an additional 1,500 square metre hall also located in Mali Bajmok, Topalović said. According to the General Manager, the company is currently calculating the profitability of the second and potentially third stage of the investment. Currently the company employs about 600 people which is three times more compared to last year and double the planned headcount when the investment started, Topalović said. The company's turnover for 2014 will total about €30 million, which is a tripled amount compared to 2013, he explained in December. Assembly of hose lines for the drive train was launched in Subotica in October 2012. According to Topalović, components produced in Subotica are destined for several **Volkswagen AG's** brands, which account for about 50 percent of the total activities, as well as **Daimler AG's** and **BMW AG's** vehicles.

Teknia acquires majority in Promotor-Irva

Spanish **Teknia Manufacturing Group** has acquired a 70 percent stake in the Kragujevac-based supplier **Promotor-Irva d.o.o.** Plans call for the production of parts for the Serbian **Robert Bosch GmbH** plant in Pećinci. The company also plans to supply clients in other countries in the region from Kragujevac.

I.G. Bauerrhin to increase production, may expand premises in Indija

German supplier **I.G. Bauerrhin GmbH** will increase production at its plant **IGB Automotive Comp d.o.o.** in Indija, Serbia, the plant's managing director **Nebojša Dragičević** said at a press conference. The company produced about 10 million heaters, 3 million sensors and 3 million cables in 2014. Plans for this year call for 12 million heaters, 4 million sensors and 4 million cables, said Dragičević. New heater projects are planned for **Audi**, **BMW** and **VW** cars. The company recruited more than 250 new employees in 2014. It currently employs some 1,320 workers and plans to add 100 jobs this year. There also are plans to expand the production space in Indija. "If we get suitable support from the state, we are planning to expand capacities in 2015 and to build new premises. This investment would enable us to employ even more people, apart from already planned 100 new hires" Dragičević told local media. In 2014, IGB Automotive invested RSD 151 million in new production and logistics premises and RSD 170 million in equipment. Some €10 million were invested at the Serbian subsidiary, which was founded in 2007, until now. IGB Automotive produces car seat and steering wheel heaters, car seat occupancy sensors and cables for seat heaters and electrical control units.

Slovakia

Volkswagen increases wages

Volkswagen Slovakia a.s. has increased wages of its employees by 2.3 percent effective from the 1st of January, 2015. Last year wages at Volkswagen Slovakia were increased by 2.4 percent.

Slovenia

Revoz plans to increase production by 20 percent

Revoz d.d. plans to increase production at its plant in Novo Mesto by 20 percent this year, a company's spokeswoman told Finance business daily. The company has not published production figures for 2014 yet. Revoz manufactures **Renault** Twingo and Clio II models as well as the **smart** fourfour.

Turkey

Toyota receives investment incentive certificate

Following the announcement of future production increases made last October, **Toyota Otomotiv Sanayi Türkiye A.Ş. (Toyota Motor Manufacturing Turkey)** has confirmed that it has received an investment incentive certificate of TLL 1.11 billion for model, expansion and modernisation of the plant. Within the scope of this certificate, the company's production capacity could increase to 250,000 per year. "Our first priority is to increase our production capacity and through producing different models in our plant we aim once again become export leader of Turkey in the future" TMMT's President & CEO **Orhan Özer** said. "2014 results were in accordance with our plans and expectations. We are among the leading exporters of Turkey" Özer added. "By the end of 2014, we have produced 131,000 cars and by exporting 85 percent of this to more than 50 countries of the world we have reached approximately \$2 billion export target".

Turkey/Saudi Arabia

Denso invests in DJ Cool

Denso Corporation has announced that it acquired a 50 percent stake in **DJ Cool Klima ve Soğutma Cihazları Sanayi Ticaret A.Ş.**, a Turkish company based in İzmir that designs, manufactures, and sells air conditioning systems for bus and tractors and refrigerator systems. The shares were bought by Denso in October. DJ Cool was established in Turkey by **Abdul Latif Jameel Co., Ltd. (ALJ)** of Saudi Arabia, a major automotive distributor in the Middle East region. Now DJ Cool is 50 percent owned by **Denso International Asia Pte. Ltd.** and 50 percent by **ALJ Holdings**, the regional affiliate of ALJ Group in Turkey. Denso and ALJ had already established a joint venture, **Denso Abdul Latif Jameel Co. Ltd.**, to manufacture and sell car air conditioning systems in Saudi Arabia in 2001. When established by ALJ in November 2013, DJ Cool took over the **Climart** brand products of air conditioner system for bus and tractors and refrigerator systems from a Turkish local manufacturer.

Ukraine

Ukraine may introduce additional important duties on cars, launches other tax changes

Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada (parliament) passed a law imposing a five to ten percent tax on imported goods. For cars the tax is to be 5 percent. The country was in "critical situation over the balance of payments" and the law was seen as a way to stabilise it, Prime Minister **Arseniy Yatsenyuk** said when explaining the reason for imposing this tax. However, Ukraine will only introduce the tax after consultations with the European Union and other partners. In addition, the government launches a new luxury tax for cars with more than 3 litre engine displacement not older than five years. The excise tax for different kind of vehicles also was increased.

Ukrainian vehicle makers protest against statement of minister Abromavicius

As Ceauto reported last month, Ukraine's new Minister of Economic Development **Aivaras Abromavicius**, the country's new Minister of Economic Development said that the support of the automotive industry is not among his priorities, describing the country's plants just as "screwdriver assembly". As a reaction, the Ukrainian vehicle manufacturers have sent a common letter to the minister. They are protesting against Abromavicius' statement and asking him to visit the country's vehicle plants and to meet representatives of the automotive industry. The letter is signed by the heads of Ukrainian car and commercial vehicle plants.

Ukraine/Czech Republic

Evrokar adds Škoda versions

PrAT Evrokar has started assembly of additional **Škoda** model versions at its plant in Solomonovo. The new versions now assembled in Ukraine include the Škoda Octavia liftback with four-wheel-drive and the Octavia Scout. The company plans to start assembly of next-generation Škoda Fabia and Superb models this year.

Ukraine/Iran

Bogdan launches sales of Saipa Tiba sedan

Bogdan-Avtotrade, the distribution company which belongs to **Korporatsya Bogdan**, launched sales of the Iranian-made **Saipa** Tiba small sedan. As already reported by Ceauto, the Tiba is to replace Bogdan 2110 and 2111 models in the budget segment. The launch price starts at UAH 121,990. The Tiba is mainly competing against **ZAZ** Sens/Lanos and Chinese models. The car is powered by a 1.5 litre engine with 80 hp. Bogdan-Avtotrade received the first batch of 48 Tibas. Initially the car was introduced in seven cities but it will be sold in the company's whole dealer network in the future. Contracts with 30 dealers were already signed. Plans call for the sales of 600 to 900 units in 2015, Bogdan-Avtotrade's head **Oleg Krivovyaz** told AUTO-Consulting.

Bogdan to add distribution of Saipa Tiba hatchback, considers other Saipa models

In addition to the **Saipa** Tiba sedan, **Bogdan-Avtotrade** plans to launch sales of the Tiba2 hatchback. The car currently undergoes certification in Ukraine. **Oleg Krivovyaz**, head of Bogdan-Avtotrade, plans to visit Tehran for negotiations about possible imports of other Saipa models in the near future.

Uzbekistan

General Motors Uzbekistan to produce Labo LCVs

General Motors Uzbekistan YoAJ plans to launch production of the Labo LCV this year, Podrobno.uz reports. The company will invest more than UZS 15.1 billion in the project. Plans call for the annual production of up to 5,000 vehicles, the report said. The Labo will likely be made at GM Uzbekistan's plant in Pitnak in the Khorezm region which is currently manufacturing the **Chevrolet Damas** and assembling the Chevrolet Orlando. Both the Damas and Labo are manufactured at **GM Korea Co.** in South Korea. Both vehicles re-entered the South Korean market after a longer interruption in the second half of 2014. Last year GM Korea sold 7,277 vehicles (3,871 Damas and 3,406 Labo) at the domestic market and exported 169 vehicles (135 Damas and 34 Labo). While all other GM Korea product are sold under the Chevrolet brand in South Korea, the small LCVs are just badged as Damas and Labo, without a Chevrolet badge. In Uzbekistan, the locally made Damas is distributed as Chevrolet.

Uzbekistan to construct tyre plant in Angren

Uzbek authorities have approved the feasibility study of an investment project of a plant located in the special industrial zone Angren and destined for production of automobile and agriculture tyres as well as conveyor belts. President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov signed a resolution "On measures on organization of construction of rubber products plant in the territory of free industrial zone Angren" in December. Uzbek company **GAK Uzkimyosanoat** signed a contract with **Poly Technologies Inc.** of China on construction of a factory with the annual capacity of 3 million automobile tyres, 200,000 agriculture tyres and 100,000 metres of conveyor belt on "turn-key" bases for \$183.96 million. Uzbek state-owned automotive industry company **AK Uzavtosanoat** reached agreement with General Motors Co. regarding the use of locally manufactured tyres at cars produced by **General Motors Uzbekistan YoAJ** if the tyres will fulfil GM's requirements. The financing of the project includes long-term foreign loans for \$156.36 million, refinanced by **GAKB Asaka (Asaka Bank)** with refinancing margin at the size of 0.25 percent APR, a loan for \$27.6 million from the Fund for Reconstruction and Development of Uzbekistan (FRDU) which will be refinanced by Asaka Bank (the loan issued for 10 years with three-year grace period with an interest rate of 2.25 percent APR, including refinancing margin at the size of 0.25 percent APR) and resources of the founders of the Directorate of the project for \$30 million to pay interest rates and commissions to service preferential loans of foreign creditors, FRDU and Asaka Bank, as well as to form turnover capital and so on. The share of Uzkimyosanoat will be 50 percent and **AK Uzavtosanoat** 30 percent, while **Almalyk Mining and Metallurgy Combine (AGMK)** and **Navoi Mining and Metallurgy Combine (NGMK)** will each have 10 percent. The project participants will be exempted from payment of customs payments for imported equipment and materials, as well as on some taxes and payments.

Uzbekistan/Russia

GM Uzbekistan to receive container cranes from Baltkam

Russian crane manufacturer **ОАО Балткран** will supply two container cranes (RMG) to **General Motors Uzbekistan YoAJ** this year. Earlier the Uzbek company used reach stackers. The container cranes will improve capacity of terminals and increase speed of loading and unloading to railway transport.

NEWS FROM MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

Algeria

Algerian army receives first locally assembled Mercedes-Benz G-Class

At an official ceremony, the Algerian army has received first **Mercedes-Benz G-Class** vehicles which were assembled at the **Société algérienne de fabrication des véhicules Mercedes Benz (SAFAV-MB)** plant in Ain Bouchekif. The first batch includes more than 200 vehicles. Currently the plant has some 150 employees.

Iran

Saipa Group announces new projects

At a press conference, Mr **Mossadeqi**, head of **Automotive Industries Research & Innovation Center** of **Saipa Automotive Manufacturing Group**, outlined the company's plans for the future. A new platform, called SP1, is being developed with an unnamed foreign automobile manufacturer. The first product will be launched later this year – a sedan with a 1.6-litre engine. This car is code named SP100. Other body variants, including a crossover and a pickup truck, will follow in 2016-2017. A second new platform, called SP2, is also being developed for more upmarket cars. The first product off this platform will be introduced in Iranian year 1397 (March 2018 to March 2019). Additionally **Zamyad Khodro**, a subsidiary of Saipa, will launch production of the new **Zamyad Z100** pickup truck during Summer 2015. This will replace the Zamyad Z24, a 1980s **Nissan Junior** which is still in production.

Iran Khodro to produce three Peugeot models

"In its new cooperation with **Iran Khodro**, **Peugeot** intends to produce three new cars in a joint venture with its Iranian ex-partner," **Jean-Christophe Quémard**, **PSA's** Operations Director, Africa-Middle East, said on the sidelines of the second Iranian Auto Industry International Conference in December. The Peugeot 301, the first new joint product of **PSA** and **Iran Khodro Co. (IKCO)**, will hit the Iranian market by the end of 2015 under Peugeot's brand name, Quémard is quoted as saying. The **PSA** executive restated that Peugeot could not ignore the Iranian market and wanted the mutual cooperation to be resumed as soon as possible.

Renault calls for higher parts localisation

"Localising auto parts is the best way to remove the obstacles out of the way of cooperation of **Renault** and **Iran Khodro**," said **Bernard Cambier**, **Renault S.A.'s** Senior Vice President and Chairman of Africa-Middle East-India Region, at an automotive conference in Tehran. "**Nissan**, **Daimler**, **AvtoVAZ** and many other companies are Renault partners and Iran Khodro is one of our important partners, having a long-term cooperation with us as well" he said. "We have an old, strong, cooperation with Iran Khodro and we care for Iran's market to the point that we'd like to stay in this market". Cambier underlined the only problem in Iran was about the slow cash flow, which came about due to the sanctions. He emphasised the necessity of finding solutions to remove the existing problems. "In order to boost auto part and component localisation, which is the best way to face these issues, we require to improve our partnership with Iran Khodro," Cambier is quoted as saying.

Renault: Sales of imported Clio and Captur to be launched soon

The **Renault** Clio and Capture will hit the Iranian market before the end of this Iranian year in the form of CBU imports and afterwards their production will be put on the agenda, **Pavman Kargar**, CEO of **Renault Pars**, said on the sidelines of the automotive industry conference in Tehran. Kargar said that his company was after technology transfer and investment promotion in Iran. "New cars and platforms to be produced with each of the two big Iranian carmakers are also on Renault Pars' agenda," said Kargar. "We are after producing a noticeable number of Tondar pickups and two other products that are the F90 minivan and the 7-seat R90 van to be jointly produced with **Iran Khodro**," Kargar said, referring to the production of the Tondar pickups which is shown at various Iranian auto shows for longer time as well as to the plans to produce Iranian versions of the first-generation Logan MCV wagon.

Pars Khodro launches sales of locally-made Brilliance H330 and H320

Pars Khodro, a subsidiary of **Saipa Automotive Manufacturing Group**, has announced the sales launch of **Brilliance** products in Iran. Currently the H330 sedan and the H320 hatchback models can be ordered, with the Haise minivan set to join the line-up later this year. The H330 and H320 models are made by Pars Khodro and wear the Pars Khodro badges, not Brilliance badges. The H330 which is powered by a 1.5-litre petrol engine is priced from IRR 438,000,000 (about €13,500). Deliveries set to begin in May.



Iran Khodro appoints new Deputy CEO for Sales and Marketing

Mostafa Khan Karami was appointed new Deputy CEO for Sales and Marketing at **Iran Khodro Co. (IKCO)**. He replaced **Abdollah Babai**. In 2002, Mostafa Khan Karami worked in Govah Company, a company which is responsible for after sales services for commercial vehicles produced by **Iran Khodro Diesel (IKD)**. In 2012 he started working in IKD's sales department. He also worked in contract, market research and development and sales engineering of the IKD sales and marketing department. Since last year, Mostafa Khan Karami has worked as IKCO's sale and distribution network manager.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2015.

- » **March, 5-15:** GENEVA, SWITZERLAND: 85TH MOTOR SHOW
<http://www.salon-auto.ch>
- » **March, 17-19:** MOSCOW, RUSSIA: RUSSIAN AUTOMOTIVE FORUM
<http://www.russianautomotive.com/>
- » **March, 24-26:** ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA: AUTOPROM RUSSIA, 2015
<http://autopromrussia.ru/>
- » **April, 9-12:** POZNAN, POLAND: MOTOR SHOW
<http://www.motorshow.pl>
- » **April, 23-24:** ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN: EURASIA BUSINESS FORUM
<http://www.ebf.kz>
- » **May, 19-21:** NOVO MESTO, SLOVENIA: STRATEGIC COOPERATION & JOINT PRODUCTION IN CAR BODY ENGINEERING
<http://www.automotive-circle.com/>
- » **May, 28-1, June:** BRNO, CZECH REPUBLIC: AUTOSALON BRNO
<http://www.bvv.cz/en/autosalon-brno/>
- » **June, 8-10:** GYŐR, HUNGARY: EUROPEAN AUTOMOTIVE CONGRESS
<http://eaec2015.org/>

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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
ceauto GmbH, Garnisongasse 7/21, 1090 Wien, Austria

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