



Continental to Make Automotive Interior Surfaces in India in 2020

Technology Company Continental performed the symbolic groundbreaking ceremony in Pune signaling the start of construction work on a plant to manufacture premium surface materials for the automotive industry.

A 12,000 square meters manufacturing facility with an initial annual capacity of 5 million square meters is to be built on the four-hectare plot at a cost of about 22 million euros (18 billion rupees). The factory is scheduled to begin production in 2020 with a workforce of up to 110 employees initially.

Continental will supply surface materials to the local Indian market from Pune.

"India is now rated as the fifth-largest automotive market in the world with huge growth opportunities," said Dr. Dirk Leiß, who is responsible for the business unit for surface materials at Continental.

"Every vehicle needs interior materials for seats, door trims and instrument panels. This investment will enable us in the future to offer our Indian customers local solutions that are manufactured in the market for the market."

It is estimated that the number of vehicles in India could more than double from the current 4.8 million to around ten million by 2025.

The Acella Eco artificial leather that will be produced in Pune from 2020 is already proving popular in India as a replacement for real leather. "Premium interiors are an important selection criterion for the end user," said Leiß. The solvent-free and thus low-odor decorative material is hard-wearing and is available in a two-color design.

Continental has already been represented by a sales team in India for six years. It now supplies the country's five largest vehicle manufacturers and one of the largest motorcycle manufacturers from other plants.

"The new plant in Pune will enable us to further improve both our reaction times and responsiveness and lastingly grow our business in India," commented Leiß

In addition to Acella Eco, the plan is also to manufacture the environmentally compatible Yorn and Yorn Light expanded foils. The interior surface materials offer soft haptics and a broad processing spectrum. They also allow an extensive range of colors and grain designs.

An environment-friendly biogas system will supply



energy to the plant. Air treatment will be carried out in accordance with a stringent global standard for surface production specified by Continental. The plant, which will offer room for further expansion, will include production, warehousing, R&D labs, sales, logistics and product development facilities and local purchasing. Only environment-friendly ink systems will be used on the shop floor.

Continental produces surface materials in 15 plants around the world and is therefore represented in the key markets in Asia, the Americas and Europe.

In India, Continental currently has eight plants and 8,000 employees at 15 sites and is planning to increase the workforce size in the country to 10,000 in the next two years. The Continental Technical Centre India (TCI), which employs more than 3,000 engineers at present, is one of Continental's three system and technology centers worldwide.

Nucor Corporation acquires POK

Nucor Corporation (Charlotte, North Carolina) announced it is acquiring Corporacion POK, S.A. de C.V. (POK), a fully integrated precision castings company with a facility in Guadalajara, Mexico. POK produces complex castings and precision machined products used by the oil and gas, mining and sugar processing industries.

"Our company has had a presence in Mexico for more than a decade. We know the market and the customers there. This acquisition supports Nucor's strategy in Mexico, which is focused on downstream processing for high-quality, value-added applications targeting niche markets," said John Ferriola, Chairman, CEO and President of Nucor Corporation. "Expanding our capability to produce value-added products is a key component of our strategy for long-term profitable growth."

POK produces precision castings using steel, bronze, iron and specialty exotic alloys. In a news release, Nucor said "the acquisition of POK will enable Nucor to broaden its current product offerings and give the company the opportunity to increase sales into new and existing markets. POK currently employs 425 people at its Guadalajara production facility."