

Ford India plans to set up an engine hub in India for exports

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Ford India, one of largest global players in automobile industry, has decided to set up an exclusive manufacturing hub for low displacement engine in Chennai for the company's export market in South Africa and Asia Pacific region.

This was announced by Ford India president and Managing Director Michel Boneham during an interaction with the media after formally launching Ford India's latest B-segment car Figo in eastern India.

In our proposed low displacement engine hub we would be producing 250,000 engines for supplying them to our plants in South Africa, Australia, The Philippines, Vietnam and Malaysia and in some other countries in the Asia Pacific region," Mr Boneham said.

He said the Chennai hub would also produce about 200,000 cars of different varieties to grab the speedily growing Indian market for small and medium cars through very aggressive marketing strategies.

At present Ford India, which since 1995-96 had invested a whopping one billion dollars in India, had been enjoying a market share of only about two to three per cent of the country's fastest growing B segment car market, the Ford India president said.

But from the initial response from our Indian customers about Figo, also launched in New Delhi last week, we are confident of increasing it (the market share) to the double digit figure within the next 12 to 18 months," he asserted.

Asked about the growth trajectory of the company which during past one-and-a half year had pumped in at least 500 dollars as fresh investments in India, Mr Boneham said despite the global recession in auto industry they were able to sale about 30,000 to 35,000 cars every year since 2003 registering a comfortable growth of about 22 per cent on an average from the previous years.

Expressing huge optimism about the prospect of growth in business of Ford India, the MD said they were also planning to launch a new car in every 12 to 18 months in India to become the largest player in India.

He, however, refused to share any further detail on the issue saying those would be disclosed before their respective launch.

About the dealership network Mr Boneham said with the handing over of 28 new dealership across the country, Ford India's exclusive dealership in India would go upto 200 by December this year.

The new Ford Figo, available in seven colour variants, presently has four petrol and diesel models at ex showroom price range of Rs 3.49 lakhs to Rs 5.29 lakhs with a host of attractive features.

The car, with a capacity of five passengers, is fitted with state of the art Kinetic engine, blue tooth facilities and several unique safety features.