

Lifan's Russian plant adds 3rd sedan, now builds complete line



The Lifan 320 hatchback resembles the BMW Mini.

CHONGQING, China -- Lifan (Industry) Group Co. is now building its complete lineup of sedans at its assembly plant in Russia after adding output of the Lifan 320 small car earlier this month.

The Lifan 320 is a hatchback that resembles the Mini produced by BMW Group.

"To date, Lifan has achieved local production in Russia for all its three models - the Lifan 520, 620 and 320," the private Chinese company said in a statement.

The vehicles are assembled from kits exported from China to a plant in the city of Cherkessk near the Black Sea. The plant is jointly owned by Lifan and Russian automaker Derways Automobile Co.

Lifan started assembling cars in Russia in 2007. The first model built at the Cherkessk plant was the Lifan 520 compact. It was followed by another compact sedan, the Lifan 620, in 2010.

Annual output of the Russian plant is expected to increase to 32,000 units this year from 14,000 units in 2010, said Lifan.

Lifan exports its cars to 54 countries. Besides Russia, it has assembly plants in Azerbaijan, Vietnam, Iran and Ethiopia.

Lifan, located in the south China city of Chongqing, sold 114,332 vehicles in 2010, up 37 percent year-on-year, according to J.D. Power.

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