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## More Cars Are Coming From India

By NICK KURCZEWSKI  
Published: June 26, 2009

CARS and trucks bearing well-known names could soon arrive in the United States with "Made in India" on the window sticker. Automakers from around the world are already exporting Indian-built vehicles to Europe, the Middle East and the rest of Asia.

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Hyundai, of South Korea, wants to turn India into its "small-car export hub," said Lheem Heung Soo, chief executive and managing director of Hyundai Motor India. Last year, his

company sent about 240,000 vehicles to more than 95 countries.

Engineering cars for one or two countries is more costly and time-consuming than building vehicles to a single standard, Mr. Lheem said. "We supply the same quality levels for our local models as we do our exports."

Two new models, the Hyundai i10 and i20 hatchback are built and sold in India and exported globally. The cars have been engineered to meet European safety and emissions requirements.

Other companies — including General Motors, Renault-Nissan, Toyota, Suzuki and Volkswagen — are building new factories or expanding their existing operations. Labor costs are a key factor; the annual per capita income in India remains less than \$800. Equally important is India's strong engineering base and its expertise in small, [fuel-efficient](#) vehicles.

G.M. recently finished a new factory in Talegaon, 110 miles southeast of Mumbai, where it will build the Chevrolet Spark city car.

The Spark is due to reach the United States in 2011, though American versions may be built in South Korea. Still, Bala Balendran, a spokesman for G.M. India, did not rule out exports of the Spark or other models like the new Chevrolet Cruze compact sedan.

G.M., Renault-Nissan and Toyota also say they are planning ultra-low-cost vehicles to compete with the Tata Nano.

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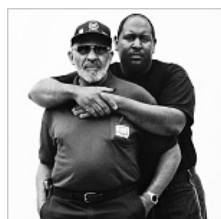
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