

Press Release
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BMW Group Thailand gears up for an electrified future with the localization of high-voltage battery production



Photograph shows (from left), Khun Opas Noppornpitak, Manager Corporate Communications, BMW Group Manufacturing Thailand, Mr. Gerhard Irnesberger, Plant Director, DRÄXLMAIER Group Thailand, Mr. Johann Strebl, Head of Coordination CKD, DRÄXLMAIER Group, Mr. Peter Schmelz, Director Program Management IS, DRÄXLMAIER Group, Mr. Christian Wiedmann, President, BMW Group Thailand, Mr. Uwe Quaas, Managing Director, BMW Group Manufacturing Thailand, Mr. Carsten Mueller-Deiters, Director Purchasing, BMW Group Thailand, Khun Krisda Utamote, Director Corporate Communications, BMW Group Thailand

Bangkok. BMW Group Thailand has set its sights on another milestone in Thailand's journey towards a future of electro-mobility with local high voltage battery production – which comprises production of the battery modules and the battery itself – from 2019 onward at a new production facility located in WHA Chonburi Industrial Estate 2. In partnership with the DRÄXLMAIER Group, one of the world's leading automotive suppliers and a strong systems partner with BMW Group since 1966, BMW Group Manufacturing Thailand is now laying a solid foundation for local battery production through advanced training and qualification programs starting September 2018.

Mr. Christian Wiedmann, President, BMW Group Thailand said, "We are very excited to be taking another big step forward in our electro-mobility strategy. The start of local battery production will enable us to better respond to growing demands for electrified vehicles across

ASEAN markets. Furthermore, this new capability adds to the strengths of Plant Rayong, which has already been serving as an automotive production hub in the region. With four BMW plug-in hybrid models already rolling out from our assembly lines at Plant Rayong, local battery production will certainly complement our production of plug in-hybrids.”

Alongside the electric motor, the high-voltage battery is a central element of partially and fully-electrified vehicles and a highly sophisticated component that requires specialized skills to produce. To strengthen the foundations for high-tech assembly work, BMW Group Manufacturing Thailand and DRÄXLMAIER Group are engaging in an intensive cooperation to bring this advanced expertise to Thailand.

Mr. Gerhard Irnesberger, Plant Manager DRÄXLMAIER Group Thailand, said, "It is a very big honor, to produce the high voltage storage local for BMW Thailand. Currently, there are two DRÄXLMAIER teams working hand in hand from Germany and Thailand to lead the project to a successful start of production".

Since September 2018, staff from the DRÄXLMAIER Group have been taking part in the battery production training program at BMW Group Plant Dingolfing and the pilot plant for e-drivetrains to share their expertise in cutting-edge production technologies such as laser welding, plasma activation, robotics, gluing, automated optical and electrical inline quality inspection along with end-of-line testing. The training is also focused on supporting a highly-automated process, which is an important part of battery module production, as well as comprehensive quality assurance, product methodology and technology, rework, and analysis.

With a strong grasp of battery production skills, the staff will work on battery cells provided by suppliers in the Asian region along with other imported parts such as aluminum housing, electronics, and cables to roll out the high-voltage batteries that meet BMW Group world-class standard and to meet Thailand’s local content requirement regulation. Final batteries will then be transported to Plant Rayong for the production of the PHEVs based on the BMW 5 Series, BMW 7 Series, and BMW X5 in the first phase from 2019 onward.

“To ensure that the production process is in line with the BMW Group’s exceptional standards of quality, experts from BMW Group Munich are involved. Together, BMW Group and DRÄXLMAIER plan to invest over 400 million baht to establish a new beacon for e-mobility innovations in Thailand and the region. For BMW Group Thailand, we have already planned and approved for government’s incentives by Thailand’s Board of Investment (BoI) to further invest over 700 million baht for more BMW Plug-in Hybrid models to come.” Mr. Wiedmann added.

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The BMW Group

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world’s leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises 30 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.



In 2017, the BMW Group sold over 2,463,500 passenger vehicles and more than 164,000 motorcycles worldwide. As of 31 December 2016, the BMW Group had a workforce of 124,729 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

BMW Group Thailand

BMW Group Thailand, a subsidiary of BMW AG, Germany, was established on the 3rd October 1998. The three entities of BMW Group Thailand include BMW (Thailand) Co., Ltd. with responsibility for wholesales & marketing of BMW Group products, BMW Manufacturing (Thailand) Co., Ltd. with responsibility for BMW and BMW Motorrad local production, and BMW Leasing (Thailand) Co., Ltd. with responsibility for financial services offerings to both wholesale and retail customers.

Within the first 9 months of 2018, BMW Group Thailand achieved a historic sales record with 8,903 BMW and MINI vehicles delivered to customers, an increase of 15.6% year-on-year. BMW Motorrad Thailand also enjoyed strong year-to-date performance with 1,425 motorcycles delivered for an increase of 9.4% year-on-year.

On the production side, the BMW Group Manufacturing Thailand plant was founded on BMW Group's strong belief in the growth potential of Asian markets and Thailand in particular with its unique location, strong manufacturing base, and ready supply of skilled automotive labor, being an automotive hub for ASEAN. On-going investment has been put into the expansion of plant Rayong in terms of assembling processes, aiming to meet growing customer demand. In addition, with approximately 4 billion Thai Baht representing the amount of annual purchasing in Thailand, the BMW Global Purchasing office has been established in Thailand. This is to source various components from local suppliers in Thailand and the broader ASEAN region, in order to supply the entire BMW production network of 30 production and assembly facilities, located in 14 countries worldwide.

As of November 2018, BMW Group Manufacturing Thailand produces the following 13 models: BMW 3 Series, BMW 3 Series Gran Turismo, BMW 5 Series, BMW 7 Series, BMW X1, and BMW X3. For BMW Motorrad, the BMW F 750 GS, BMW F 850 GS, BMW R 1200 GS, BMW R 1200 GS Adventure, BMW S 1000 R, BMW S 1000 RR and BMW S 1000 XR are also locally assembled at the plant. In addition, BMW Group Manufacturing Thailand now assembles four BMW plug-in hybrid models; BMW 330e, BMW 530e and BMW 740Le.

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