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Mercedes-Benz India Plans Increased Localisation



The German luxury car manufacturer, Mercedes Benz is gearing up to get into the number 1 spot in the domestic luxury car segment, a position it lost to its rivals, BMW and Audi. Mercedes is planning to get back the “numerno uno” position by putting in more investments at its manufacturing facility at Chakan near Pune in Maharashtra. Mercedes plans to be able to produce more and more cars locally so as to avoid the high import taxes. The company will also be strengthening its Rs. 20 lakh to 3 crore portfolio for increased presence in the Indian market.

“We have been in constant talks with our headquarters for ramping up our operations here in India. A significant investment will happen in the CKD (completely knocked down) category. We would like to do more and more local assembly here. For that, we need to ramp up the capacity,” Debashish Mitra, Director-sales and marketing, Mercedes-Benz India, said.

He forecasted that in October, India’s luxury car market is set to grow to 35% which amounts to 23,000 units from 17,000 last year. However, he said that the amount of investment is still not decided but revealed that a chunk of that investment would be spent on its new product line-up, manpower, IT and services department. He went on to add that the company still retains a dominating position in products of Rs. 25 lakh and above and would like to now focus on bringing in more entry-level premium cars and sports cars. At the 2012 Auto Expo, Mercedes will be showcasing the SLS AMG Roadster which is going to be positioned above SLS-AMG alongwith the new M class. Also, Mercedes will be launching its compact B class and A class vehicles at the end of this year and 2013 respectively while the GLC will follow in 2014.



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