

Bridgestone India plant starts production

PUNE, India (Feb. 6, 2013) — Bridgestone Corp. has inaugurated production of car tires at its \$540 million Pune factory and is targeting October for starting truck tire production there.

Bridgestone India Private Ltd. marked the occasion with an opening ceremony Feb.5 with company and local government officials. The tire maker broke ground on the plant in 2010.

Daily car tire capacity at the 8.1-million-sq.-ft. plant is expected to reach 10,000 units by year-end 2014, Bridgestone said, with daily capacity for 3,000 truck and bus radials expected by mid-2017.

At the ceremony, Kazuhisa Nishigai, Bridgestone's chief operating officer and representative board member, said the plant will help the company offer its customers in India a higher level of service and supply and will strengthen its ability to supply tires to Indian customers.

Other dignitaries in attendance were: Hiromi Tanigawa, president of BSID; Kiyoshi Asako, consul general of Japan in Mumbai; Prithviraj Chavan, chief minister of Maharashtra; and Dilip Mohite Patil, member of legislative assembly.

The plant, in Maharashtra State, opens with 500 employees for the start-up phase. Bridgestone did not disclose how many employees there will be at full capacity.

The plant is Bridgestone's second India. The other is in Indore, where Bridgestone recently added capacity for radial truck and bus tires to the 15-year-old facility's original car tire capacity along with expanding car tire capacity.

Bridgestone said it will continue to build on its manufacturing and distribution systems in India in order to respond more quickly to changes in market demand along with working to support the growth and development of the local communities where it has a presence.