

Iran Khodro (IKCO) begins test production of Samand at Tabriz plant

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Vehicle expected to meet Euro IV standard and will be produced with a nominal capacity of 70,000 sets each year

Iran Khodro Industrial Group (IKCO) has started trial production of the Samand EF7 at its Tabriz plant in Iran, according to a company press release. The variant features gasoline (petrol) and compressed natural gas (CNG)-based engines, with displacement of 1,800cc. The news report cited IKCO's deputy chief executive officer (CEO) of Tabriz plant, Mokhtar Asghari, who said that "the vehicle is expected to meet Euro IV standard will be produced with a nominal capacity of 70,000 sets each year". The model has passed key safety tests such as head-on collision, side impact, and roof strength, added Asghari.



Significance: According to IHS Automotive data, IKCO started production of the Samand, a C-segment car, in 2001 at its Tehran plant. The Samand is based on IKCO's D/X/Z platform and is fitted with the company's EF7 engine. The automaker added production of the model at its Tabriz plant in 2015, which also produces the Arisun. Production volumes at Tabriz are expected to surge from 16,097 units in 2015 to 53,227 units in 2016. From 2017, the automaker is also expected to add production of Peugeot's 2008, 208 and 301 models at the plant, which will take the total production volume at the plant to 81,013 units in 2017. In April, IKCO also announced plans to add a new model by end of March 2017. According to IHS Automotive forecasting analyst Stephanie Vigier, the upcoming model will be a C-segment car and its Iranian sales are likely to total nearly 27,400 units by the end of 2017.

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