ANGVA2U Info *02/2024. 23rd February 2024 (for ANGVA members only)*

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1.0 Selected News / Articles

1.1 India

Tata Motors sold 1.3 lakh CNG cars in 24 months

15th February 2024. By Haji Chakralwale

- **Second largest CNG portfolio after Maruti Suzuki**
- **Offers industry-leading twin-cylinder CNG tech**

Tata Motors recently launched the first-in-India CNG automatic cars, the Tiago and Tigor CNG AMT. With this, the automaker also announced that it has sold over 1.3 lakh CNG-powered cars in the country in the last 24 months.

Currently, the brand has four CNG models on sale including Tiago, Tigor, Altroz, and Punch. All these models are equipped with the brand's proprietary twin-cylinder CNG kit which allows customers to take advantage of a usable boot space, unlike other CNG cars which offer single-cylinder CNG kits occupying most of the boot space.

All four Tata CNG cars share the same 1.2-litre NA petrol engine coupled with twin 30-litre CNG tanks. While the Altroz and the Punch only get the five-speed manual gearbox, the new Tiago and Tigor come mated to a five-speed AMT unit which we expect the former two to get soon.

In other news, the automaker recently displayed the CNG-powered Nexon SUV at the Bharat Mobility Show. Once launched, the Nexon CNG will be the first turbocharged petrol CNG car in the Indian market.

Talking about their CNG portfolio, Amit Kamat, Chief Commercial Officer, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd. said, "CNG, known for its widespread availability and accessibility, has garnered considerable acceptance over the years. Tata Motors has revolutionized the CNG segment with various industry firsts like the twin-cylinder technology (helping provide no compromise boot space), high end feature choices and direct start in CNG. In the past 24 months we have sold more than 1.3 lakh CNG vehicles. Tata Motors boasts of the widest CNG

portfolio, including Tiago, Tigor, Altroz and the Punch. As one of the top two brands in the CNG market, we have experienced a remarkable 67.9% growth in CNG sales in FY24 compared to the previous year. With the introduction of these Intelligent, Safe and Powerful twins, we are confident to further improve demand for this fuel option, in turn continuing to sustain our growth momentum in passenger cars."
Source: *https://www.carwale.com/news/tata-motors-sold-13-lakh-cng-cars-in-24-months/*

1.2 India

The Rise of CNG Vehicles in India: A Greener and Cost-Effective Future

18th February 2024. By Rafia Tasleem.

The Rise of CNG Vehicles in India: A Greener and Cost-Effective Future

In 2023, CNG vehicles in India saw a 53% sales surge, driven by economic prudence, environmental responsibility, and expanding CNG infrastructure. As consumers embrace better mileage and lower costs, the future looks greener for India's automotive market.

In an era where the words "fuel efficiency" and "cost-effectiveness" are more than just buzzwords, the Indian automotive market has witnessed a remarkable shift. The year 2023 has been a testament to the growing consciousness among Indian consumers, as evidenced by the surge in sales of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) vehicles. With a staggering increase of 53% compared to the previous year, the ascent of CNG vehicles is a narrative of economic prudence and environmental responsibility intertwining on the highways of change.

The Driving Forces Behind the Surge

Scratching beneath the surface of this automotive revolution, several compelling reasons emerge. The Union ministry of road transport and highways has pinpointed the price difference between CNG and its traditional counterparts, petrol and diesel, as a significant motivator. With 1.8 lakh units rolling off the showroom floors in 2023, up from 1.18 lakh units the year prior, it's clear that the Indian consumer is voting with their wallet. The allure of better mileage and the promise of lower ownership costs have not only captured the imagination of the public but have also seen a substantial 53% uptick in sales of CNG vehicles, including cars and auto rickshaws.

Delving deeper, the narrative extends beyond mere numbers. Approximately 1.04 lakh CNG-powered cars found new owners in 2023, a leap from 68,542 units in 2022. This surge is a direct response to the escalating costs associated with owning a vehicle in India today—fuel prices are soaring, vehicle costs are on the rise, taxes are becoming more burdensome, and service expenses are climbing. Yet, in the face of these economic challenges, the Indian consumer has found solace in the arms of CNG vehicles.

A Greener Horizon

The shift towards CNG is not solely a matter of economics; it's also a stride towards sustainability. The expanded network of CNG stations across the country has made accessibility less of an issue, encouraging more consumers to make the switch. This growth is complemented by the environmental edge CNG holds over traditional fuels—reduced carbon emissions. At a time when the global conversation pivots towards climate change and reducing carbon footprints, the Indian market's pivot to CNG can be seen as a reflection of a broader, global imperative.

Industry experts are optimistic about the future, pointing to these trends as indicative of a significant transformation in the automotive sector. The transition to CNG, they argue, is not just about the immediate benefits of cost savings or even the environmental advantages. It's about setting a precedent for the future, where sustainability and economy drive the market in equal measure.

Looking Ahead: The Road Forward for CNG Vehicles

As we navigate through the early days of 2024, the trajectory of CNG vehicles looks promising. The momentum gained in 2023 is not expected to wane but rather to accelerate as more consumers become aware of the benefits of CNG. The automotive industry, in response, is anticipated to continue innovating, with manufacturers likely to introduce a broader range of CNG models to cater to this burgeoning demand.

The narrative of CNG vehicles in India is more than just a story of numbers and statistics. It's a testament to a collective shift towards more sustainable living choices, driven by economic necessity and environmental consciousness. As the wheels of these CNG vehicles turn, so too does the wheel of change, guiding the country towards a greener, more cost-effective future.

The journey of CNG vehicles, marked by a significant leap in sales in 2023, is a clear signal that the Indian consumer is ready for change. Embracing better mileage, lower ownership costs, and reduced carbon emissions, the rise of CNG vehicles is not just a trend but a transformation. As we look to the future, the message is clear: the road ahead is greener, and CNG vehicles are leading the way.
Source: *https://bnnbreaking.com/tech/the-rise-of-cng-vehicles-in-india-a-greener-and-cost-effective-future*

1.3 Nigeria

Inadequate CNG stations frustrating FG's gas-powered vehicle initiative — Stakeholders

15th February 2024. By Jide Ajia

Stakeholders in the petroleum and transport sector have said that the Federal Government's initiative aimed at promoting the use of Compressed Natural Gas-powered vehicles nationwide is facing a major challenge due to inadequate CNG stations in the country.

CNG can be used in place of petrol, diesel, and liquefied petroleum gas. It is used in traditional petrol/internal combustion engine automobiles or specifically manufactured vehicles.

President Bola Tinubu approved the establishment of the Presidential Compressed Natural Gas initiative last year, targeting over 11,500 new CNG-enabled vehicles.

Also included in the target are 55,000 CNG conversion kits for existing PMS-dependent vehicles as the initiative seeks to strengthen in-country manufacturing, local assembly, and expansive job creation in line with the presidential directive.

However, stakeholders in the petroleum and transport sectors have lamented that the absence of the needed CNG stations is frustrating the FG's initiative and stalling the massive roll-out and use of CNG-powered buses.

An insider in the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission, who is not authorised to comment on the issue, in a chat with PUNCH Online, however, said that the government is making efforts to encourage and support the establishment of CNG stations.

She noted that the regulatory framework for CNG is designed to ensure the safety of consumers and promote fair competition.

Abubakar, however, also harped on the need for the establishment of more CNG stations.

A truck driver, Musa Idris, speaking with our correspondent stressed the need for the Federal Government to increase awareness of the use of CNG-powered vehicles.

He also urged the FG to partner with the private sector and gas marketers to increase the number of gas stations across the country.

He said, "The major challenge is the inability to access gas stations when driving long distances. This is a big threat to the use of CNG by truck drivers even though we value it more than diesel.

"Diesel and petrol are now expensive, while CNG is cheaper, safer and more economical," Idris told PUNCH Online.

NNPC, NIPCO partner to establish 35 additional CNG stations

The Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited recently announced that it has partnered with NIPCO Gas Limited to construct 35 CNG stations across the country, adding that the partnership aims to provide cheaper alternative fuel to motorists in Nigeria in compliance with President Bola Tinubu's directive.

"As part of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) Limited's commitment to providing cheaper alternative fuel to motorists, the company is happy to announce a strategic partnership with NIPCO Gas Limited to deploy compressed natural gas (CNG) stations across the country.

"This landmark collaboration aims to expand our CNG infrastructure, improve access to CNG, and accelerate the adoption of cheaper and cleaner alternative fuel for buses, cars, and Keke NAPEP, which will significantly reduce the cost of transportation and engender sustainable national economic growth.

"Once fully operational, the stations can service over 200,000 vehicles daily, thereby significantly reducing the cost of automobile fuel for Nigerians and the cost of transportation.

"The first phase, comprising 21 CNG stations, will support intra-city transportation and be ready by the first quarter of 2024; while the second phase, comprising 35 CNG stations, will support inter-city transformation and will be ready by late 2024. This will be further complemented by an additional 56 stations to be deployed by NNPC Retail across the country," NNPC said in a statement.

The Chief Corporate Communications Officer, NNPCL, Mr Femi Soneye, when called to share more details on the partnership to establish more CNG stations requested our Correspondent to send him a message, but he has yet to respond to the message as of the time of filing this report.

Assistant General Manager, Corporate Communications, NIPCO Gas Plc, Mr Lawal Taofeek, in an exclusive interview with PUNCH Online, however, told our Correspondent on Tuesday that NIPCO Gas Limited is operating 14 CNG stations across Nigeria and has converted over 7,000 vehicles to run on CNG.
He said, "NIPCO's technical competency and field experience will bolster the initiative's success and amplify its positive impact on the nation's economy".
Source: *https://punchng.com/inadequate-cng-stations-frustrating-fgs-gas-powered-vehicle-initiative-stakeholders/*

1.4 United States of America

7 Firefighters Injured, 2 Critically, in CNG Truck Explosion in Wilmington

15th February 2024. By Contributing Editor

At least seven firefighters were injured Thursday, two critically, when a 100-gallon compressed natural gas cylinder being used to a power a semi-truck exploded near the Port of Los Angeles.

Firefighters were originally sent to the 1100 block of North Alameda Street shortly before 7 a.m. on a report of a vehicle fire, according to Nicholas Prange of the Los Angeles Fire Department.

"Firefighters arrived to find a CNG-powered semi truck — tractor-only — on fire, and deployed hose lines to address the flames," Prange said.

"Six minutes after 10 firefighters arrived on scene … an explosion injured at least seven of our members — two of which were in critical condition — and all seven (were) transported to area hospitals," Prange said.

There was no immediate word on the full extent of the firefighters' injuries. LAFD officials and Mayhor Karen Bass were expected to hold a late-morning news conference outside the emergency department entrance at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center in Torrance to provide an update.

There were no reports of any other injuries. The status of the truck driver was unclear. Fire officials said it was unclear how the original fire began, or if the truck was moving or stationary when it occurred.

Fire officials said the explosion sent a large plume of smoke into the air, and the force of the blast even caused a nearby pole-mounted electrical transformer to explode.

LAFD hazardous-materials specialists were sent to the scene, and firefighters set up a 500-foot perimeter around the location of the blast. According to the LAFD, the truck was equipped with two 100-gallon CNG tanks, one of which exploded. Gas from the second cylinder was slowly being released into the air, and much of it had dissipated by late morning, fire officials said.

Prange said no evacuations had been ordered of nearby homes, although residents were advised to stay indoors as a precaution.

More than 150 firefighters were sent to the scene, Prange said.

Prange reminded the public that it is illegal to fly drones within 500 feet of an emergency incident "without clearance," and he urged motorists to seek alternate routes around the explosion area.

Source: *https://mynewsla.com/business/2024/02/15/7-firefighters-injured-2-critically-in-cng-truck-explosion-in-wilmington/*

1.5 Bangladesh

Filling station worker dies as autorickshaw cylinder explodes in Feni

19th February 2024. By Feni Correspondentbdnews24.com

The incident took place on Monday morning at the Prime CNG filling station in Feni's Devipur area

A man has been killed and another injured after an autorickshaw's CNG cylinder exploded at a filling station in Feni Sadar Upazila.

The incident took place on Monday morning at the Prime CNG filling station in Feni's Devipur area along the Dhaka-Chattogram highway.

The dead man has been identified as 30-year-old Saidul Islam Roni, an employee of the filling station.

Autorickshaw driver Zahid Alam was severely injured after the three-wheeler's cylinder exploded during a refill, according to the police.

Following the blast, the victims were taken to Feni's 250-Bed Hospital, where doctors declared Saidul dead. Zahid was sent to Chattogram Medical College Hospital for advanced treatment.

"The autorickshaw involved in the accident was new and untested. The explosion did not happen due to any fault on our part. The owners of the vehicle are responsible for this," said Kudrat Ullah Babu, the filling station's manager.

Saidul's body has been transferred to the Feni General Hospital morgue, according to Shahidul Islam, chief of the local police station. Legal action will be taken over the incident, he said.

Source: *https://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/v9ptl044uf*

1.6 India

CNG-operated Aapli Bus catches fire, no casualty

18th February 2024. By Staff Reporter

A COMPRESSED Natural Gas (CNG)-operated Aapli Bus was completely gutted after it caught fire near Kadbi Chowk on Kamptee Road in the wee hours of Saturday. Around 3.22 am, Nitin Damodar Rewade, driver of the bus (MH-31/CA-6110), was taking the vehicle from

NMC Starbus Khapri Depot to refill at HCG CNG Station opposite Yashodhara Nagar Police Station. As he reached near Kadbi Chowk, he noticed thick smoke emanating from the engine.

Firefighters dousing the flames. The bus, on way to refill station, was gutted near Kadbi Chowk around 3.28 am on Saturday.

He stopped the bus immediately and got down. Without wasting time, he called the Fire Brigade. Soon after receiving the call from the bus driver around 3.28 am, a team of firefighters from the Fire & Emergency Department of Nagpur Municipal Corporation rushed to the spot. Two fire tenders were pressed into service. Firefighters doused the flames within half an hour but the bus was completely gutted. Preliminary investigation revealed that the cause behind the fire was a short circuit in the vehicle's electrical system.

Source: *https://www.thehitavada.com/Encyc/2024/2/18/CNG-operated-Aapli-Bus.html*

1.7 Greece

100 CNG-powered Iveco Urbanway are headed to Athens, Greece

21st February 2024. By Editorial Staff

Iveco Bus is set to export as many as 100 Urbanway CNG in Athens, Greece. The Greek Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport has indeed chosen Iveco Bus for its Urbanway CNG articulated model. This bus runs on compressed natural gas (CNG) and is compatible with biomethane.

Source picture: Iveco Bus

A total of 100 units buses will be delivered by the end of the year to renew the existing fleet in Athens, Iveco Bus says.

Source pictures: Iveco Bus

Iveco Urbanway CNG for Athens

The 18-meter-long Urbanway models meet Euro VI-e emissions standards for CNG vehicles. The buses on order will be fitted with the Cursor 9 NP engine manufactured by FPT Industrial. With 4 doors, 42 seats and one wheelchair area, they can welcome a total of 144 passengers on board. The vehicles also integrate the new ADAS (Advanced Driver Assistance Systems) devices to comply with the GSR (General Safety Regulation) regulation coming into force in July 2024.

Christos Staikouras, Minister of Infrastructure and Transport, said: "The signing of the contract with Iveco France SAS for the supply of 100 articulated 18-meter long CNG city buses marks another step towards achieving a three-fold goal set by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport. This goal concerns the upgrade of urban transportation, the promotion of sustainable urban mobility, and the attainment of a high-level of public transportation services offered to citizens."

"We are delighted that our natural gas technology has impressed the Greek Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, and that they have chosen our new-generation Urbanway CNG for the renewal and modernization program of the city bus fleet of Athens. That so many important cities around Europe choose IVECO BUS for the energy transition of their fleets is a confirmation of the quality and performance of our vehicles for sustainable mobility," said Giorgio Zino, Head of IVECO BUS Europe Commercial Operations.

Source: *https://www.sustainable-bus.com/cng-lng-bus/iveco-urbanway-cng-athens-greece-order-100/*

1.8 Uzbekistan

Operating hours of gas filling stations may be restricted due to cold weather

2nd January 2024. By Anthony Wrighton

From February 16-18, a sharp drop in temperature is expected throughout the country, with daytime temperatures dropping to -3...-8 °C and nighttime temperatures plummeting to -11...-16 °C.

Photo: Kun.uz

In light of this, 'Hududgazta'minot' JSC has assured that measures are being taken to ensure an uninterrupted supply of natural gas primarily to the population and social sector facilities. 'Hududgazta'minot' JSC has readied 262 emergency teams across the republic to maintain a consistent supply of natural gas to consumers.

The JSC has reminded consumers to exercise caution when using natural gas during this period, not to leave gas stoves unattended during heating and cooking processes, to pay particular attention to ventilation systems, and to avoid using non-standard heating equipment and homemade incendiaries to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

Additionally, 'Hududgazta'minot' JSC has urged citizens to use natural gas wisely, to turn off heating appliances when leaving home, if possible, not to rest in rooms where gas appliances are operating, to ensure there is no smell of gas before lighting a flame, and to contact the gas service in case gas odor is detected.

Taking the opportunity, 'Hududgazta'minot' JSC reminded consumers of the importance of timely payments to ensure continuous gas supply. Payments can be made at district gas supply divisions and local bank branches, as well as through mobile applications of all payment systems in a 24/7 mode.

Due to the expected increase in gas consumption on cold days, and to prevent queues and inconvenience at CNG filling stations, 'Hududgazta'minot' JSC requests drivers to ensure their vehicles are fueled in time. Currently, all CNG filling stations in the country operate around the clock, but changes to their operating schedule may be introduced soon in agreement with local authorities, as stated in the report.
Any suggestions, complaints, and appeals can be reported to the telephone number 1104, while incidents of gas leaks and other technical issues can be reported to the emergency number 104.
Source: *https://kun.uz/en/news/2024/02/15/operating-hours-of-gas-filling-stations-may-be-restricted-due-to-cold-weather*

1.9 International

Alternative Fuels: What Makes Sense Today?

9th January 2024. By Peter Keller. Chairman of Sea-LNG.

Facts are important. Even if the facts are uncomfortable or inconvenient. The industry is starting to understand that methanol is no silver bullet solution for shipping's decarbonisation challenge contrary to the claims of certain operators.

File image courtesy SCF

When you burn methanol (CH3OH) in a marine engine, you emit CO2. The chemical composition of methanol is a fact. And this alleged 'silver bullet' is, in fact, a fossil fuel. Methanol adopters talk about green methanol, but grey methanol is all that is available on the market today. Its lifecycle or Well-to-Wake emissions are estimated at around 14% higher than VLSFO due to the energy needed to produce methanol.

The small amount of "green" methanol recently bunkered by an early mover was made from biomethane – not renewable hydrogen – using a valuable green fuel, biomethane, as a feedstock. This green methanol production process is wasteful, consuming a scarce green resource to make a more expensive marine fuel.

It takes six to seven times more renewable energy to turn biomethane into biomethanol compared with simply liquefying the same bio-methane to make bio-LNG (or liquefied biomethane). This green energy could be put to better use.

In the next 10 – 20 years before green hydrogen production really scales, green fuels and their associated feedstocks will be scarce. Taking biomethane, an existing green fuel, and using it as a feedstock in an inefficient process which loses 35 percent of the green energy to create bio-methanol makes no sense.

Further, if we look at the properties of fuels themselves, to carry the energy equivalent of one tonne of bio-LNG onboard, ship operators will need to bunker almost three tonnes of bio-methanol. In short, more space required for fuel means less capacity for cargo. The rationale of these demonstration projects escapes logic.

The industry needs to act now with solutions that make a difference today. The declaration by the CEOs of Maersk, CMA CGM, Hapag-Lloyd, MSC, and Wallenius Wilhelmsen at COP28 emphasises the urgency of accelerating the transition to greener fuels and creating the regulatory conditions to achieve this. While regulation is vital, LNG coupled with other proven technologies can start shipping's decarbonization journey now and continue to its zero emissions destination as greener forms of LNG such as bio-LNG and e-LNG become available at scale.

We cannot hope that there will be better answers decades down the road. University College London (UCL) estimates that every year of inaction this decade will add an extra $100 billion to the cost of shipping's decarbonisation. This sum is dwarfed by the potential cost of climate-related damages to the wider society if shipping fails to cut emissions. GHG emissions are cumulative, and the longer we wait to reduce them the tougher, and more expensive, the decarbonization challenge will be.

When we discuss fuel choice today we must consider the full gamut of investments in vessels, engine technology, fuel production and availability, distribution, storage and supply. Other factors - such as safety for crew and port communities; energy density and onboard space requirements; and pilot fuel demands - are daunting and wide-ranging questions that need to be considered in an absence of reliable information. Clearly when there is so much uncertainly, the industry needs to create options but it should be wary of placing bets. LNG is a known quantity with a clear and proven pathway forward.

In terms of what we can and should be doing right now, improving energy utilization coupled with realistic and practical solutions must be considered first. The LNG Pathway, when used together with other proven technologies which exist today, adds to the benefits gained and

results in real carbon savings, not theoretical future benefits that are dependent upon unproven technologies and significant future investments.
The opinions expressed herein are the author's and not necessarily those of The Maritime Executive.
Source: *https://maritime-executive.com/editorials/alternative-fuels-what-makes-sense-today*

1.10 Europe

Bioenergy a key to unlocking Europe's energy transition

18th January 2024. By Bioenergy International

Jérémie Geelen (left), Bioenergy Europe's Market Intelligence Director, Bioenergy Europe; Martin Colla, PhD Candidate in Sustainable Energy, UCLouvain & VUB; Esther Bustillo Vazquez, Project Engineer, ENGIE Laborelec, and moderator Anna Gumbau, energy and climate journalist (photo courtesy Bioenergy Europe).

At COP28 world leaders agreed on the need to break free from fossil fuel dependency and triple production of renewable energy by 2030. Bioenergy is Europe's leading source of renewable energy but could do more as participants at a Bioenergy Europe briefing that shed light on the significance of bioenergy in the European Union's decarbonization journey.

Held on January 18, 2024, in Brussels, Belgium, Jérémie Geelen, Bioenergy Europe's Market Intelligence Director, presented details of the Association's most recent statistical report, 'Bioenergy Landscape' that was released in December 2023.

Currently, imported fossil fuels remain the main source of energy in the EU. At COP28 world leaders agreed on the need to break free from fossil fuel dependency and triple production of renewable energy by 2030.

Primarily produced in Europe, bioenergy represents a versatile renewable that can be used for heating, transport, and electricity and is Europe's leading renewable source.

Heating represents most of our energy demand. To reach climate neutrality by 2050 it is key to decarbonize the sector, Bioenergy takes the lead, contributing a substantial 83.6 percent to the EU's renewable heating mix. Its standout features—versatility, indigenous supply, and independence from weather conditions — position bioenergy as a leading solution in the renewable heating landscape, stated Jérémie Geelen, Market Intelligence Director, Bioenergy Europe.

During the event, speakers presented different perspectives on bioenergy potential to push forward the energy transition.

The energy transition confronts us with the imbalance of our actions on the ecosystems on which we rely. The use of biomass for energy has highlighted the relationship between humans and nature and the renewal cycle of natural resources, raising awareness on sustainable practices and environmental protection of ecosystems, highlighted Martin Colla, PhD Candidate in Sustainable Energy, UCLouvain & VUB.

Speakers agreed that bioenergy and electrification are complementary and not competing, bioenergy is a crucial source of energy for households, especially those with lower incomes, and it has unique characteristics that Europe needs to achieve neutrality.

Bioenergy is not only the most versatile renewable energy solution but also a viable option for hard-to-abate sectors like heavy industry and transportation. In essence, bioenergy is not just part of the solution; it is a key player in creating a cleaner, greener future for us all, declared Esther Bustillo Vazquez, Project Engineer, ENGIE Laborelec.

To assist the EU in its decarbonisation efforts Bioenergy Europe has outlined three steps towards the energy transition on its Manifesto for the 2024 European Elections.
Source: *https://bioenergyinternational.com/bioenergy-a-key-to-unlocking-europes-energy-transition/*

1.11 Germany

Sales of hydrogen cars in Europe's largest market collapsed in 2023, with nearly 70% drop in registrations

9th January 2024. By Polly Martin

German government figures reveal that only 263 fuel-cell electric vehicles were registered last year

Only 263 fuel-cell electric vehicles (FCEVs) were registered in Germany — Europe's largest market for hydrogen cars — throughout 2023, down nearly 70% from the 835 registered in 2022, according to figures from the Federal Motor Transport Authority (KBA).

This brings the number of passenger FCEVs currently on German roads up to 2,364, according to the National Organisation for Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technology (NOW) — compared to more than 1.4 million battery-electric vehicles (BEVs).

The KBA counted 524,219 BEVs registered in 2023 alone, steadily growing from 470,559 the year before.

German taxpayer's association Bund der Steuerzahler (BdSt) in September called for an end to subsidies on FCEVs and hydrogen refuelling stations, estimating that at least €450m ($493m) — excluding EU funding — had been spent since 2007, which it described as "absurd" and "pointless".

That translates to more than €190,000 of subsidies per fuel-cell car. Only a handful of hydrogen-powered trucks are believed to be running on German roads, but the KBA has not released figures on this.

Hydrogen passenger cars have failed to take off around the world since the introduction of the Toyota Mirai in late 2014, with UK-based analyst IDTechEx recently attributing this to the "lack of hydrogen refueling infrastructure, the cost of hydrogen, and the upfront cost of the vehicles".

Germany currently imports all of its fuel-cell cars, with only two models — the Mirai and Hyundai's Nexo — sold in the country.

Munich-headquartered BMW launched a 100-vehicle pilot fleet for its hydrogen-powered iX5 in February last year, although no timeline has yet been disclosed on when the car will be available for sale to the public. (Copyright)
Source: *https://www.hydrogeninsight.com/transport/sales-of-hydrogen-cars-in-europes-largest-market-collapsed-in-2023-with-nearly-70-drop-in-registrations/2-1-1580371*

1.12 United States of America

Shell to permanently close all of its hydrogen refuelling stations for cars in California

8th February2024. By Polly Martin.

Oil major cites 'supply complications and other external market factors' in decision to exit market for light-duty H2 vehicles in the US

A now-closed Shell hydrogen refuelling station at 1250 University Avenue, Berkeley.Photo: Hydrogen Fuel Cell Partnership

Shell has permanently closed six of its seven hydrogen refuelling stations (HRS) for passenger cars in California, citing "supply complications and other external market factors".

This leaves the oil major only operating three H2 filling stations for heavy-duty vehicles in the state, as well as one light-duty station, in the city of Torrance, a Los Angeles suburb, which remains open for the time being while Shell "is exploring options to divest", a spokesman told Hydrogen Insight on 14 February.

Shell had last September told Hydrogen Insight that it had "discontinued its plan to build and operate additional light-duty vehicle fueling stations in California", effectively scrapping the 48 new sites it had previously announced it would build.

At the time, the oil major had also "temporarily" shut down five of its hydrogen stations, with a note to customers that was unable to confirm a date when these sites would reopen.

A Shell spokesman told Hydrogen Insight on 9 February: "Shell discontinued the build out of its light-duty hydrogen station network in California in 2023, and after temporary closure of five of its seven light-duty stations, made the decision to permanently close its light duty station network in California in early 2024. This was due to a number of market factors."

Shell previously told Hydrogen Insight in December that it would prioritise hydrogen for heavy-duty mobility, while investing in EV charging to decarbonise light-duty vehicles.

This decision could also reflect a lack of demand. While California was one of the few markets for hydrogen-powered vehicles to grow this year, only 3,143 were registered in 2023 — less than 1% of battery-electric cars in the same period, according to the most recent figures from the California Energy Commission.

The oil major had in 2022 closed down all three of its hydrogen filling stations in the UK, with the company and its partner Motive citing a similar focus on serving heavy-duty trucks, which the sites would not be able to accommodate.

While Shell has not given any further reasons for its decision to close down its California sites, the oil major had also used filling station equipment supplied by Norway's Nel — currently at the centre of a lawsuit by industrial gas company Iwatani, which alleges major defects in its H2Station range.

This article was updated on 9 February to add a new quote from Shell, and on 14 February to note that the Torrance station has remained open while Shell is seeking a buyer for it (Copyright)

Source: *https://www.hydrogeninsight.com/transport/shell-to-permanently-close-all-of-its-hydrogen-refuelling-stations-for-cars-in-california/2-1-1596104?utm_campaign=2024-02-13&utm_content=hydrogen&utm_medium=email&utm_source=email_campaign&utm_term=recharge*

1.13 International

Rental giant Hertz dumps EVs, including Teslas, for gas cars

14th January 2024. By Nathan Gomes and Joseph White

Hertz car rental logo is seen in this illustration taken June 27, 2022. REUTERS/Dado Ruvic/Illustration/File Photo

Jan 11 (Reuters) - Rental firm Hertz Global Holdings (HTZ.O), opens new tab is selling about 20,000 electric vehicles, including Teslas, from its U.S. fleet about two years after a deal with the automaker to offer its vehicles for rent, in another sign that EV demand has cooled.

Hertz will instead opt for gas-powered vehicles, it said on Thursday, citing higher expenses related to collision and damage for EVs even though it had aimed to convert 25% of its fleet to electric by 2024 end.

CEO Stephen Scherr had last year at the JPMorgan Auto Conference flagged headwinds from higher expenses for its EVs, particularly Teslas.

Hertz even limited the torque and speed on the EVs and offered it to experienced users on the platform to make them easier to adapt after certain users had front-end collisions, he said.

Shares of the company, which also operates vehicles from Swedish EV maker Polestar among others, fell about 4%. Tesla's (TSLA.O), opens new tab stock was down about 3%.

Hertz also expects about $245 million in charges related to depreciation expenses from the EV sale in the fourth quarter of 2023.

BUMPY ROAD FOR EV GROWTH

Its decision underscores the bumpy road EVs have hit as their sales growth slows, causing carmakers like General Motors (GM.N), opens new tab and Ford (F.N), opens new tab to scale back production plans.

Morgan Stanley analyst Adam Jonas said in a note Hertz's move was another sign that EV expectations need to be "reset downward".

While consumers enjoy the driving experience and fuel savings (per mile) of an EV, Jonas said there are other "hidden costs to EV ownership".

"Expenses related to collision and damage, primarily associated with EVs, remained high in the quarter," Hertz said in a regulatory filing on Thursday.

The company, which had earlier planned to order 100,000 Tesla vehicles by 2022 end and 65,000 units from Polestar over five years, said it would focus on improving profitability for the rest of its EV fleet.

German rental car company Sixt said in December it had not purchased Tesla vehicles since 2022 and was selling its fleet of Teslas "as part of our regular de-fleeting process".

It still plans to offer a range of electrified vehicles and "stick to our goal to electrify 70-90 percent of our rental fleet in Europe by 2030", it said on Thursday.

USED-EV PRICES DROP

Meanwhile, wholesale used-EV prices fell for most of 2023 as prices for new EVs fell and inventories of unsold electric vehicles rose, according to Cox Automotive data.

Cox forecast before Hertz's decision that used-EV prices would decline more than overall used vehicle prices in 2024.

"While 20,000 cars isn't a large number in the total used vehicle market, it does mean Hertz will be taking a major loss on each of these sales while further contributing to the trend of falling used EV values," iSeeCars.com analyst Karl Brauer said.

Hertz is selling some Tesla Model 3 for as low as about $20,000, nearly half the purchase price for the cheapest variant of the compact sedan, its used car website, opens new tab showed.

It lists more than 700 EVs on sale, including BMW's i3, Chevrolet's Bolt and Tesla's Model 3 and Model Y SUVs.

Reporting by Nathan Gomes and Akash Sriram in Bengaluru, Joe White in Detroit; Editing by Shilpi Majumdar, Sriraj Kalluvila and Arun Koyyur. Our Standards: The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles.
***Source**: https://www.reuters.com/business/autos-transportation/hertz-sell-about-20000-evs-us-fleet-2024-01-11/*

1.14 Mongolia

Six killed in gas truck explosion in Mongolia – officials

24th January 2024. Reuters

Burnt vehicles stand near the site where a truck carrying liquefied natural gas exploded, in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia January 24, 2024. REUTERS/B.

Jan 24 (Reuters) - At least six people, including three firefighters, were killed when a truck carrying 60 tons of liquefied natural gas crashed and exploded in the Mongolian capital of Ulaanbaatar on Wednesday, according to Mongolia's officials.

At least 11 people were injured in the fire near the Dunjingarav market, Mongolia's Emergency Management Office said in a post on Facebook. Its chief G. Ariunbuyan told local media that the agency received a call about the incident at 1:04 a.m. (1704 GMT Tuesday).

More than 600 firefighters in 100 vehicles were involved in putting the fire out, which was eventually extinguished.

"Unfortunately, as a result of the accident, three officers of the 63rd Fire Fighting and Rescue Unit of the National Fire Service were killed while performing their duty," the Emergency Management said in the post on Facebook.

Preliminary assessment showed that the truck crashed into a small car causing an immediate explosion, then a second blast occurred that ripped off a part of the truck with great force and killed the firefighters at the scene, Mongolia's Deputy Prime Minister S. Amarsaikhan told TenGer TV.

According to local online news outlets, the fire quickly engulfed several nearby buildings, including a residential building. Scores of cars were burnt.

Russia's TASS news agency reported that residents of nearby houses were advised to evacuate.

An unnamed resident told TenGer TV that his windows shattered and the balcony was destroyed by the impact of the first blast.

Another said she and other residents had to forcefully break out of their building after flames reached their building exit. She said the fire had already spread to the top floor when they got out.

Eyewitness Erdenebold Sukhbaatar, who lives 100 metres (yards) away from the explosion, said he first thought an earthquake or airplane crash had happened. As he rushed to his living room, he told Reuters he saw an explosion and the fire quickly spreading to the nearby apartment building.

The 40-year-old lawyer live-streamed the event on Facebook.

Amarsaikhan, the deputy prime minister, said there were no casualties reported from the apartment building but "we cannot guarantee that the casualty count will not increase" as investigation and emergency measures were still underway.

Reporting by Lidia Kelly in Melbourne, Xiaoyu Yin in Beijing and Nicoco Chan in Shanghai; Writing by Liz Lee; Editing by Michael Perry. Our Standards: The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles.
Source: *https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/three-firefighters-among-six-killed-gas-truck-explosion-mongolia-officials-2024-01-24/*

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