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JAPAN AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Top News

JAMA and JAPIA Chiefs Lead Mission to Thailand

Against the background of ongoing negotiations on an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the governments of Thailand and Japan to promote mutual economic development through trade liberalization, JAMA has assumed an active role in advancing discussions pertaining to the automotive sector.

Most recently, the heads of JAMA and JAPIA jointly led a mission to Thailand in early October to meet with Thai Prime Minister Thaksin and other Thai government authorities to explain their perspective with respect to the EPA and to exchange opinions on the future of the automotive industry in Thailand.

Mission Focus: Increased Auto Industry Competitiveness Benefits All

JAMA Chairman Itaru Koeda and JAPIA Chairman Hiromu Okabe, together with representatives of their respective member companies, impressed upon Prime Minister Thaksin and the Thai ministers of finance, industry, and foreign affairs the fact that Thailand represents not only a domestic market for Japanese automotive manufacturers and investors, but also a potential key production and development base in the southeast Asian region.

The crucial issue at hand is how best to develop Thailand's domestic automotive industry so as to increase its competitiveness in ASEAN and the global market, particularly in the present context of China's own rapidly developing auto sector. A globally competitive Thai automotive industry would translate to a win-win situation for both Thailand and Japan.

With a long-term vested interest in the automotive industry in Thailand, JAMA and JAPIA representatives sought the Thai officials' understanding that early trade and investment liberalization is essential to the promotion of increased international competitiveness. It was pointed out that the establishment of an EPA between Thailand and Japan will lead to market growth, which in turn will encourage further investment in and expanded technology transfers to Thailand.

The aim of the JAMA-JAPIA mission was thus to solicit support, cooperation and strong leadership from the various parties concerned in Thailand, to pave the way for smoother progress towards the conclusion of the EPA between the two countries and, ultimately, to contribute to the future development of all the economies involved.

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