

GM, Honda announce fuel cell venture in Michigan

NEW YORK: General Motors and Honda announced plans on Monday for the first "mass production" of an advanced hydrogen fuel cell system that could be used in future vehicles.



The two companies, which have collaborated on the technology since 2013, will launch the Fuel Cell System Manufacturing venture in an existing GM battery facility in Brownstown, Michigan, south of Detroit, the US auto capital.

Production is expected to begin around 2020 and the venture will create nearly 100 new jobs, the companies said in a statement.

GM and Honda will invest \$85 million each in the technology. Fuel cell vehicles can operate on hydrogen made from a renewable source such as wind and biomass. The only emissions from these engines is water vapor.

"Over the past three years, engineers from Honda and GM have been working as one team with each company providing know-how from its unique expertise to create a compact and low-cost next-gen fuel cell system," said Toshiaki Mikoshiba, chief operating officer for Honda in North American.

Fuel cell technology has been under study for some 20 years as an alternative to the combustion engine. However, the technology so far has not made economic sense, in part because of a lack of infrastructure to recharge vehicles with hydrogen.

Mark Reuss, GM executive vice president for global product development said, "The combination of two leaders in fuel cell innovation is an exciting development in bringing fuel cells closer to the mainstream of propulsion applications."

Source: AFP

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