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Maruti's A-Star drives off from Mundra port

DV Maheshwari. Bhuj



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The Mundra container terminal of the Adani Group witnessed the export of Maruti Suzuki's A-Star cars on Saturday. Shinzo Nakanishi, managing director and CEO of Maruti Suzuki India Ltd (MSIL), flagged off the pilot consignment of 1,458 cars headed for the UK and 76 for Italy.

The cars were brought from MSIL's Mansar plant in Haryana by specially designed double-decker auto wagon rail rakes and were parked at the wharf of the Mundra Port and Special Economic Zone (MPSEZ). The cars were then driven on to the car rakes of MV Cassiopeia Leader, a special ship owned by leading Japanese shipping line, Nippon Yusen Kabushiki Kaisha.

Describing the event as "historic" and "a milestone", Nakanishi said that the export of the cars gave them the opportunity to display their technological and manufacturing capability to build a world-class car for the international market. He said that they

however needed a dedicated car terminal to fulfill their ambitions. They had found such a facility at Mundra and had signed a 20-year memorandum of understanding with the Adani Group for the export of cars, for which they will create a world-class facility, he said, adding that they planned to export 1.5 lakh cars by 2010.

Replying to a question from the media, the MSIL chief said they did not plan to use Kandla or any other port in the country for the export of their cars, and that their experience with Kandla in 1987 was not good. He also ruled out the possibility of them setting up a plant in the state.

Regarding Tata Motors's Nano, which will be manufactured in Gujarat, Nakanishi said he "could not say anything right now" about whether it would pose a problem for them.

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