

The taxi concept designed by Karsan is embodying many technologic futures inside. For the vehicle, which is equipped with a CNG (i.e. environment-friendly) compressed natural gas engine, even an electronic ramp that will enable the handicapped persons to embark and disembark comfortably has been thought. The passengers can access the Internet in the taxi cab. The owner of the taxi on the other hand will be able to earn extra income by receiving advertisements by means of the monitors mounted on the vehicle.

"WILL SELL TURKISH-MADE TAXIES TO THE WORLD'S METROPOLITAN CITIES WITH AN INVESTMENT OF US\$ 150 MILLION"

Karsan of Bursa is aiming at penetrating the metropolises of the world such as New York, Dubai, Istanbul and London with the "Taxi of Tomorrow" it has designed. The company will put the Turkish-made taxi concept in to mass production with a US\$ 150 million investment.

(Mete Tansu)

The Turkish automotive Sector, which has become one of the largest production centers in the world, is creating its own brand. Karsan, the only multi-brand company of Turkey, is putting the final dot to the much-discussed debate of "whether Turkey can create its own brand".

The company, which produces vehicles for the brand names such as Peugeot, Citroen, Hyundai and Renault Trucks at Bursa, has developed a vehicle concept to be used as a taxi only. The "Taxi of Tomorrow" project designed by Karsan and Hexagon Studio, affiliates of Kıraca Holding owned by the veteran automotive-man İnan Kırac, participated in the taxi tender in New York for the first time. However, the target of Karsan is not only New York, but participating in the tenders in four corners of the world with the 100 percent Turkish-made taxi project and export the vehicle. Jan Nahum, Delegated Member of the Karsan Board of Directors, said that the Turkish automotive sector had embarked on a journey for creating a brand name and the sector should fill many such vacancies around the world.

"The vehicle may bear a Turkish name"

In the event the 26.650 car New York tender is awarded to the "Taxi of Tomorrow" project, stating that the production would commence in Bursa with an investment of US\$ 150 million next year, he explained the following: "We have created a brand new and taxi-specific platform. We are capable of developing any type of vehicle we wish on that platform. Whether we win the New York tender or not, we have the opportunity to develop all types of vehicles on that platform, just by modifying the upper body. We can produce models for Dubai and Istanbul separately. We aim to sell this taxi concept to the whole world."

Nahum said that they had not decided on a name for the taxi developed, but did not neglect to add: "It may be a Turkish name too, we are working on it."

"Peugeot wanted to become partners"

Stating that Peugeot was in regret for transferring the intellectual property rights of J9 some 4-5 years ago on the grounds that it would not sell "They sought a partnership with Karsan a short while ago, but we did not accept. Because we saw the future of the Turkish automotive sector in branding. If someone does not come forward and make this move, this sector cannot reach the point aimed in 10-15 years from now." Said İnan Kırac.

"If Tofaş would 20.000 pieces from the "bird series" they could still be sold"

Complaining that Karsan was branded as "assemblers" for a long time, " You are Wrong. You produce older vehicles they said. Both were true, but we had no other chance. If you market 20.000 pieces a year, you have to prolong the model years." Went on Kırac, Chairman of the Karsan Board of Directors. Stating that those vehicles had served the Turkish society well, he emphasized that the a 45 year-old Murat 124, Anadol or Renault car could still be found in the market, Kırac made the following claim: " If you would tell the Tofaş factory to produce 20 thousand pieces from the "bird series", I bet that those 20.000 pieces would sell in the country and exported too".

"The Connect of Gölcük will be manufactured in Mexico for the USA"

Stating that they were the owners of the only Turkish-made vehicle that entered the New York Taxi tender, Jan Nahum said the following: "The Transit Connect, which Ford entered the tender with, will not be manufactured in Gölcük as told before. If the tender is awarded to our competitor Ford, they would produce the vehicle in Mexico for the New York municipality. Therefore, we have no other competitor produced in Turkey against us".

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