

Aug 7, 2023



HOME | COMPANIES

Tire JV under BRI starts operations in Pakistan

By WU YONG in Shenyang | China Daily | Updated: 2022-04-01 09:39



An employee from Chaoyang Long March Tyre Co Ltd (second left) addresses staff queries at the manufacturing plant of Service Long March Tyres in Pakistan.
[Photo provided to China Daily]

A major project of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the first all-steel radial truck/bus tire plant in Pakistan, kicked off production recently, marking a milestone in the South Asian country's tire manufacturing industry and another achievement under the Belt and Road Initiative.

The plant is operated by Service Long March Tyres Pvt Ltd, a joint venture company cofounded by China's Chaoyang Long March Tyre Co Ltd (CLMT) and Pakistan's

Service Industries Ltd. The \$250 million project mainly produces all-steel radial tires for trucks and buses, aiming to tap the robust demand of the transportation market.

Pakistani President Arif Alvi expressed his gratitude to the participating companies and highlighted the role the plant will play in the country's development.

"This would eventually provide 85 percent of the production capacity of tire products and earn foreign exchange for Pakistan. It will provide employment opportunities for thousands of people," Alvi said at the inauguration ceremony of the JV.

Based in Liaoning province, Chaoyang Long March Tyre is a leading company in the domestic all-steel radial tires manufacturing sector.

"The project can not only promote the development of tire-related industries in Pakistan, but also help Pakistan develop relevant national standards," said Li Qingwen, chairman and general manager of the CLMT, adding the project will fill the gap in Pakistan's domestic all-steel radial tire production and attract more participation into the sector.

Thanks to the benefits brought by BRI and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the Pakistani economy has grown rapidly in recent years. Its freight industry in particular, which is mainly based on automobile transportation, has driven up the all-steel radial tires market.

However, the lack of relevant technology and investment has made tire production a bottleneck for Pakistan. Industry insiders said the country spends an average of \$300 million to \$400 million importing all-steel radial tires annually.

"Last year, my colleagues and I went to China to learn tire production technology, which was brand new to us. With the help of Long March engineers, we are now able to train Pakistani operators. We will produce high-quality tires in the joint venture," said Yousaf Muhammad Usman, an employee of Service Long March Tyres.

Song Yanlin, director of the Liaoning Provincial Department of Commerce, said the cooperation is "one of the successful cases of outstanding enterprises in Liaoning province to explore the international market and actively participate in the construction of the Belt and Road".

"Due to the strategic relationship between China and Pakistan, China has helped Pakistan invest in and build many infrastructures. The success of Long March will introduce more Chinese companies and benefit both sides," said Li Hongbiao, a senior researcher at the China Academy of Northeast Revitalization.

Qian Yizhu contributed to this story.

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