

KSK Initiatives for the Future (this section has been quoted from President Komaba’s message.)

Here I will introduce the current situation of KSK and the activities we are following for the future.

1. Renewed Vitality: Two New Projects

(1) Startup Activities

We have begun recruiting ideas for Startup Activities within the company based on a concept of “From B to B to B to B/C, From the Automotive Industry to a Wide Range of Industries” as one of our measures to promote diversification, and as of May, we have already received more than 150 suggestions.

(2) Metal 3D Printers

All structural personnel were appointed in April, and we will now spend two years installing metal 3D printers in the Kanuma Plant Irie Cram School from the middle of June to expand our “Prototype manufacture → service part manufacture → AM part design” initiatives.

2. SDG Initiatives

We have started implementing the following initiatives as part of our efforts to conserve the global environment.

(1) Production of facilities for creating compost out of garbage

(2) Production of air-cleaning facilities ---- Currently at the stage of producing prototype facilities

(3) The use of the heat energy generated by our casting machines for agricultural purposes (greenhouse cultivation)

3. Enhanced Kaizen Activities

We are shifting our Kaizen activities across to creative originality Kaizen activities due to the effects of COVID-19, and so far we have reduced processing time by approximately 2,000 hours (team activities have been shifted across to individual Kaizen activities to avoid 3C contagion).

4. Review of Internal Structures ---- Creation of direct-management teams

In principle, we will accelerate the creation of multi-functional teams for the purpose of revising business practices and reorganizing existing structures.

5. Production Activities

(1) We aim to return to production activities at almost the same level as average years. We have already created a system to increase customers from June onwards

(2) We are currently carrying out production preparation activities aimed at the launch of new products in the Kanuma Plant, the Hokkaido Plant and the Ohtawara Plant

We presume that the coronavirus pandemic will continue into next year, and are therefore initiating all possible procedures and activities to carry KSK into the future.

Automotive Area (Compact EVs to enter the Maas market)

Idemitsu Kosan Co., Ltd. and Tajima Motor Corporation established a new company in April 2021 that will be involved in the Maas (Mobility as a Service) market with the use of ultra-compact electric vehicles (EVs). They are planning on providing mobility services that involve the manufacture and sale of ultra-compact EVs using Idemitsu’s service station network and material development technologies and Tajima Motor’s EV design technologies.

Idemitsu Kosan will invest in Tajima EV, a subsidiary of Tajima Motor involved in the development of EVs, and the new company will be inaugurated under the new name of Idemitsu Tajima EV. The new company’s first ultra-compact EV will be announced at the Tokyo Motor Show, which is (was) scheduled to be held in October 2021, and mass-produced vehicles will be available for sale during 2022. The new company will develop and produce prototypes, and mass-production is scheduled to be carried out by an Idemitsu branch in collaboration with external suppliers.

The dimensions of the EV currently being developed is 2,495mm in length, 1,295mm in width and 1,765mm in height, which will be made available in four seater and single seater (cargo type) models.

The maximum output of the power motor is 15kW, and it can travel at speeds under 60km/h. The dimensions, motor output and maximum speed conform with the new standards for ultra-compact

dimensions, motor output and maximum speed conform with the new standards for ultra-compact mobility vehicles (type-specified vehicles) established by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism. Impact safety and other safety performances levels also clear the standards for ultra-compact mobility vehicles set by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism. The lithium-ion battery has a capacity (total electricity volume) of 10kWh, and this allows the vehicle to travel approximately 120km on a single charge. Because ultra-compact EVs are low-speed vehicles that are banned from driving on expressways, they are expected to use batteries that contain recycled lithium.

Nobuhiro Tajima, joint president and CEO of Tajima Motor Corporation, has announced that the company intends to keep the cost of the vehicles down to below 1.5-million yen once they go into mass-

production. However, owing to the fact that EVs at a cost of 500,000-yen or less have already been released onto the market in China, he also emphasizes that they will try to bring the price down to 500,000-yen or less eventually through mass-production, etc.

Source: Nikkei Automotive



Keihin Seimitsu Kogyo (Problem with resin supplies)

Amid increasing demand for resin on a worldwide basis, a cold front struck Texas in the United States during February this year and led to the extended shutdown of factories, which has placed heavy pressure on the supply of certain resins since the middle of April.

Owing to this, KSK's sales department, procurement department, development department, technical department and production department have come together as one to carry out the following:

- (1) Stock allocation of all parts that use resin, and checking to ascertain the dates when parts will run out... Three parts are already in a critical state
- (2) Negotiations with suppliers and the trading companies that provide our suppliers with stocks to check when supplies will be delivered and in what quantities
- (3) The purchase of substitute supplies from overseas plants, and the purchase of substitute supplies from Japan and overseas
- (4) The production of parts using substitute supplies, and the implementation of strength and durability tests
- (5) Sharing information with customers, and checking to ascertain process modifications for using substitute parts
- (6) The holding of daily internal meetings to share information, and the implementation of measures to cope with any problems that arise

Given the current situation, we estimate that selective management will need to be continued for

Post-editorial Notes: (The Shonan coast, the ancient Tokaido Road and a disco/karaoke room)

I was remembering back to when I used to spend long weekends walking along the ancient Tokaido Road and the ancient Oshu-Kaido Road before COVID-19 began to spread... It was then that I resolved myself to take a hike from my home as far as the Hiratsuka Post Station along the Shonan coastal road and ancient Tokaido Road.

I departed early in the morning. I walked down to the coastal area of Enoshima Island amid beautiful sunshine and then headed west along the cycling course that follows the coast with the early-summer sea breeze ruffling my hair. I was listening to YouTube as I walked, and by the time I reached Chigasaki, I was humming to Yuzo Kayama, which led onto me screeching out Southern Allstars songs by the time I reached the Southern Beach, and I crossed the Sagami River in good spirits. I arrived at the Hiratsuka Post Station in a short three-and-a-half hours, so I left my bag at the Hotel and then stretched my legs a little further along the ancient Tokaido Road through to the Oiso Post Station. The clouds began to look a little threatening, so I returned to the hotel... There I worked up a sweat carrying out my own exercise routine, consisting of squats, push-ups, and stomach and back muscle training, and then took a shower so that I was ready for anything.

Attracted by the sunset, I walked down to the promenade and entered a bar, where I sat in a private room for two people and quenched my parched throat.

I ordered salt-grilled atka mackerel, duck with spring onions and a medium-sized bottle of Premium Malt beer, and the beer flowed down my dry throat the best it has in a long time, as if I had just discovered water in the middle of a desert. I then moved onto a spicy tofu broth, a chopped cabbage salad and flat lemon sours, and all of this having raised my spirits, I began to think back on a hiking tour I took along the ancient Tokaido Road several years ago. I remembered the great drinks I had at Tokyo Station before boarding the night bus, the cicadas singing as I arrived in Hamamatsu the following morning and sounding as if they were telling me to "Die, die!", to which I replied, "Shut the hell up!", the absolutely amazing taste of the beer I had during lunch, and rejoicing in a loud voice when I reached Kyoto. All of these thoughts ran through my mind as if I was staring through a kaleidoscope, together with memories of me overdoing things in karaoke bars.

Having returned to my room, I put on YouTube and began to feel my body reacting to the music. I drank some wine... I sang some of my favorite songs... I began to instinctively dance... I then drank some more... And then I began to laugh out loud (my body was refusing to obey the commands from my more demure brain).

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I put on the songs that I used to love back in the days when I could be found jiving and heaving under mirror balls in Roppongi, including Michael Jackson, the Dooby Brothers and Stevie Wonder... That's when things really took off... My body rejected my brain's demands to take hypertension depressants as the perspiration began to flow and I drank more and danced more... I ended off the session with a bowl of ramen noodles, and when I checked the time, I was astounded to realize that it was already two o'clock in the morning...

The sunshine appeared to be brighter than normal the next morning (due to me overdoing things in my room, despite the fact that my main objective was a long hike), and my body continued complaining as I huffed and puffed my way through the return journey while observing the pine trees lining the road out of the corner of my eye, until I finally arrived home...

(I had achieved my objective, so I stubbornly wrote off the sense of ambiguity that "being me"... Despite this, it was a very enjoyable overnight trip. Ha, ha, ha... v(^o^)

Pine Trees Lining the Tokaido Road

Enoshima



Fujisawa Post Station



Hiratsuka Post Station

