

## More than triple its Middle East sales in 2017

## Ford Transit fastest growing van brand in ME

KUWAIT CITY, March 6: The Ford Transit has quickly established itself as the fastest growing van brand in the Middle East by charting an incredible 240 per cent boost in regional sales for 2017.

Key partnerships in Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Kuwait during the year helped fortify the Transit's foothold in the region, and with a number of new products and innovations expected in 2018, Ford Middle East is expecting to further grow its volumes this year.

"Businesses have relied on Ford Transits to get the job done for over 50 years, and we're extremely happy that customers in the Middle East are beginning to see the Transit as a versatile and essential business tool," said Terry Rayner, Commercial Vehicle Director for Ford Middle East and Africa.

**Emergency vehicles**  
The Dubai Corporation for Ambulance Services (DCAS) was an early adopter of the Transit-based emergency unit, and debuted its "Ambulance of the Future" during the Arab Health Exhibition and Congress in January. DCAS already has a number of Transit-based ambulances on fleet, and the next generation version is safer, both for paramedics and patients, and packed with technology that helps monitor every facet of the vehicle's use and performance.

Ford is also being considered for a number of other ambulance tenders around the region as the industry turns towards the Transit for its built-in safety attributes and convertor-friendly configuration.

**Versatile operator**  
Ford secured a number of key contract wins across the region in 2017 including significant orders from SOUQ and DHL, both of which see

the Transit as a reliable, safe and economical machine for their delivery operations.

The Transit's unparalleled versatility was on show during the Gulf Food Manufacturing Show last November when Ford debuted its Transit Custom refrigerated van. With a cavernous interior, wide opening rear doors and a powerful chiller unit, the van can be specified for chilled or frozen goods delivery – making it an attractive package for inner city operators and timely delivery of temperature sensitive packages.

**Economical solution**  
With the recent rise in fuel prices, interest in the diesel-powered Transit Custom has grown as fleet operations and SME companies look for cleaner and more efficient vehicles.

The Transit's latest generation Ford 2.2-litre Duratorq turbo diesel engine has been developed with the latest turbocharging, fuel injection, combustion system, structural design and low-friction technologies to deliver significant improvements in fuel efficiency, performance and operating refinement, while also providing outstanding durability and low cost-of-ownership.

With a typical fuel economy of 15 km/litre and an 80-litre fuel tank, the Transit delivers an unrivaled combination of power and economy by providing a full 1,200 km range between fuel stops, with significant savings in running costs when compared to petrol-powered rivals.

**Expanding portfolio**  
Ford's Commercial Vehicle range will expand to include three new versions of the Tourneo; the Kombi (entry level for employee transportation), mid-series (for hotel/airport shuttle and travel operator use) and Premium (for business executive and luxury transportation use).

The team also plans to announce new vehicles for the region at the Arabian Travel Market Show in April, and other vehicles throughout the year as Ford looks to progressively expand its Transit range in line with regional customer requirements.

**Dedicated services**  
Launched in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, the Transit Mobile Service Fleet will continue to grow across the region throughout 2018. The service is designed to keep customers on the road by providing them with roadside assistance, and it has met with tremendous success since its introduction in 2017.

In the UAE, Al Tayer will launch an industry leading three-year, 100,000 kilometre maintenance pack (including brakes) with all Transits sold in the Emirates. This provides a "Gas and Go" proposition which means the customer has total peace of mind and a cost effective ownership experience.

Ford's dedicated Commercial Vehicle business team is based in Dubai. The team covers product development, business development, and sales and marketing, and is focused on growing its business through the region and generating new customer propositions. For more information, please visit Ford's Business Solutions MEA LinkedIn page here.

To explore the 2018 Ford cars line up, please visit the Alghanim Auto New Vehicle Showroom in the Shuwaikh Industrial Area, opposite from the Classical Car Museum and Sirbb Circuit. Working hours are 9am to 10pm from Saturday to Thursday and 2pm to 8pm on Fridays. For more information, please call the customer care center at 1898900; visit www.fordalghanim.com; or on social media @FordAlghanim



Ford self-driving test vehicle.

Whole new way of moving people and goods

## Miami: Proving ground for Ford's self-driving service

KUWAIT CITY, March 6: Watching some of the world's greatest athletes over the past week had me thinking about all of the individual elements that come together for the extraordinary performances we see from these competitors. It's overwhelming to think about the dedication, commitment and the amount of time these athletes had to put in to get every little step, spin, jump – any move you can think of – just right to win a medal.

Now, I'm inspired more than ever because Ford is in a similar position as we pull together our self-driving vehicle business. We've spent years researching and developing self-driving technology, studying changing customer behaviors, serving some of the largest fleets in the country with help from our dealers, and working with governments big and small. Now it's time to pull it all together head for the finish line!

So now, we're headed to Florida to test and prove out our business model. With the help of Miami-Dade County, we're taking our service directly to the streets of Miami and Miami Beach.

Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos A. Giménez is a champion of innovative technology and applying it to help improve life for residents of the county. He's on the forefront of thinking about the future of transportation, leading a county that already offers a diverse set of transportation modes ranging from ride-hailing services and rail to buses and bike sharing. He understands the potential of self-driving vehicles and how they can fit in, interact with, and enhance all of those modes and more. That's why this collaboration makes so much sense.

There's clearly a need for innovation. Miami was recently listed as the 10th most congested city in the world, according to the Inrix Global Traffic Scorecard, and the fifth most congested city in the United States. Miami commuters spend an average of 64 hours in congestion per year during peak time periods – or nearly 10 per cent of their total drive time. That's just not right, yet it serves as a reminder that people always need to be at the centre of our plan, so we're setting out to solve for their pain points.

To understand what Miami-Dade residents would experience with self-driving vehicle service, the first part of our presence will involve pilot programmes throughout the year with our partners, starting with Domino's and Postmates. What we learn from this customer experience research will be applied to the design of our purpose-built self-driving vehicle that we plan to launch in 2021 to support the expansion of our service.

The types of questions we're trying to answer include:

■ Before a self-driving vehicle makes a delivery, how will employees stock it and send it off?

■ At the end of its journey, how will customers interact with the vehicle to retrieve their food or groceries, and how far from their homes are they willing to walk to get it?

■ What benefits could and should people get from a self-driving experience?

Another way to think about it is to consider the costs of convenience. Today, deliveries can be made to someone's door, though there is usually an extra charge involved. Oftentimes, drivers illegally double-park when they can't find a space, potentially causing traffic congestion for others. A self-driving vehicle won't need to be tipped and it won't park illegally. So, from the outset we understand there are both hurdles and benefits to self-driving delivery in cities and we intend to learn all of these ins and outs so that we can serve people in a way that's most intuitive and convenient. Our Domino's pilot is already up and running in Miami, and we're finalising plans to launch one with Postmates in March.

In parallel to creating the best customer experience possible, we will continue to develop the self-driving technology powering our vehicles by expanding testing in partnership with Argo AI. Running a self-driving business in any city requires a comprehensive understanding of local laws and the unique driving habits of residents,

## Organizers try to restore reputation

## Sumo needs brighter days

TOKYO, March 6, (AP) – The most damage inflicted in sumo in recent times has been to the image of Japan's tradition-steeped national sport.

An alcohol-fueled restaurant brawl that left a Mongolian wrestler with a fractured skull and a sexual assault scandal involving the sport's highest-ranked referee have rocked the sport in recent months. Those episodes followed a match-fixing investigation in 2011 and the death of a teenage wrestler in training in 2007 that have tainted sumo over the last decade.

Organizers are hoping to restore its battered reputation when the Spring Grand Sumo tournament starts on the weekend.

Takanoiwa, who fractured his skull in an altercation with former Grand Champion Harumafuji in a restaurant last October, is hoping to make a comeback at the Osaka event.

"I'm just focusing on doing my best," the 28-year-old Takanoiwa told reporters last week during a training session for the tournament. "It will take a bit more time to be ready."

A healthy Takanoiwa wouldn't solve all sumo's problems but would be a big step in the road to recovery.

He was hurt after a group of Mongolian wrestlers had assembled at a restaurant during a regional tour.

Harumafuji was reported to have become aggravated when Takanoiwa repeatedly checked his mobile phone while the two were conversing.

In addition to Harumafuji, who was forced to retire last November in the wake of the incident, Grand champion Hakuho was also present and had to defend his inability to intervene before the situation got out of control.

The altercation dominated news programs and headlines for weeks. Adding to the bad publicity, the sport's top-ranked

referee was forced to resign earlier this year over a sexual harassment scandal.

Shikimori Inosuke apologized to the Japan Sumo Association for allegedly kissing a teenage referee and touching him on the chest while intoxicated during a regional tour of Okinawa in December.

Inosuke said he had no recollection of the incident, and the junior referee declined to file charges.

In the wake of the scandal, though, Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko didn't attend January's New Year tournament for the first time in four years.

Weeks after that, Egyptian wrestler Osunaarashi was caught driving without a license after a vehicle collision and was ordered to pay a \$4,700 fine.

The recent incidents are just the latest scandals to rock the sumo world.

In 2011, the JSA decided to cancel the Spring tournament after revelations that 14 wrestlers were involved with match-fixing.

In 2010, grand champion Asashoryu, also of Mongolia, announced his retirement following reports that he injured a man while intoxicated.

In the most troubling case in 2007, the 17-year-old wrestler Takashi Saito died when he was beaten over the head with a beer bottle at the direction of his trainer.

Saito's stable master Junichi Yamamoto and three wrestlers were subsequently arrested and charged with manslaughter. In May 2009, Yamamoto was sentenced to six years in prison.

The incident brought substantial political pressure to the governance of the sport in Japan.

In response to the latest scandals this year, the Japan Sumo Association announced that a third-party committee has been convened and will question every member of the JSA. About 900 people, including active wrestlers and elders, will be included in the inquiry.

"Our goal is the preservation of sumo," committee chairman Keiichi Tadaki, a former prosecutor general, said.



Takanoiwa



Transit Line-up

## Childs scores career-high 33 points

## BYU upends Saint Mary's in WCC semis

LAS VEGAS, March 6, (AP) – Yoeli Childs and BYU saved their best game of the season for the right time.

Childs scored a career-high 33 points and the Cougars shot 61 percent from the field to beat No. 22 Saint Mary's 85-72 in Monday's West Coast Conference Tournament semifinals.

"It was a real good win for us," BYU coach Dave Rose said. "Tonight, they were on it. They shared the ball, made big shots, executed well. It was a well-played game on both sides."

The Cougars (24-9) now face No. 7 and top-seeded Gonzaga (29-4) in the championship game Tuesday night as they go for their first WCC Tournament title.

"Our reward is Gonzaga," Rose said. "We played them a week before and we look forward to it. We'll start thinking about when we get back to the hotel."

Childs was 13 of 18 from the field, including hitting all three 3-point attempts. He also had six rebounds.

"The ball was popping around for us (tonight)," Childs said. "We just gave each other energy. We had the mentality to win."

Elijah Bryant added 25 points for the Cougars, going 8 of 13 from the field and making all eight free-throw attempts.

Jordan Ford led Saint Mary's (28-5) with 27 points and six rebounds.

"The biggest problem was at the defensive end," said Saint Mary's coach Randy Bennett, whose team shot 50 percent from the field. "We usually hold them to 40-41 percent (from the field). We gave up 61. We gave them 10 points on hustle

## BASKETBALL

plays. When you play good teams at this stage of the season, you can't give teams easy baskets."

The Gaels' Jock Landale, who fouled out with 21 seconds left, had 23 points but only four rebounds. Landale committed his third foul with 1:49 left before halftime and fourth with 8:39 left in the game.

"Every loss, I've been in foul trouble," Landale said. "I've got to stop making silly plays."

T. J. Haws had 11 points, while Dalton Nixon had 10 points and six rebounds for the Cougars, who will be making their first tournament final appearance in three years. Gonzaga beat BYU twice in the regular season and has won five straight WCC Tournament titles.

After the Cougars led 41-37 at intermission, they expanded their lead to 67-54 with 7:35 left. Saint Mary's cut it to 71-65 with 3:24 left, but the Cougars' hot shooting helped them pulled away in the final three minutes.

Calvin Hermanson had 12 points for Saint Mary's.

The Cougars likely will have to win Tuesday in order to get an NCAA Tournament bid. ... The Cougars reached the WCC final 2014 and 2015. Both Childs and Bryant each now have 13 20-plus point games. ... This is the first time in 10 years the No. 1 and 2 seeds will not face off in the final game.

Saint Mary's: This is the first time in three years the Gaels will not be in the WCC final as they struggled in Las Vegas, even having to rally from five points down to beat 10th-seeded Pepperdine (6-26) in the quarterfinals. ... The Gaels are now 11-12 in WCC Tournament semifinal games. They had won five straight against the Cougars coming into Monday night.



T. J. Haws #30 of the Brigham Young Cougars drives to the basket against Jordan Ford #30 of the Saint Mary's Gaels during a semifinal game of the West Coast Conference basketball tournament at the Orleans Arena on March 5, in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Cougars won 85-72. (AFP)