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COVER PAGE



Micro Automobile Manufacturing

Though automobile assembly in Sri Lanka started as early as the middle part of the 20th century, a Sri Lankan designed, developed and manufactured car was only produced in 2001. Named "Micro Privilege" this mini car was produced by Micro Cars Ltd., which commenced operations in 1995. Now, Micro Cars has evolved into a major automobile manufacturer in Sri Lanka, producing and assembling compact cars, sedans, vans, luxury SUVs, large trucks, buses & even world renowned super luxury cars. The entrepreneur has created employment and opportunity to gain high level technical skills for the youth of Sri Lanka while entering the country into the global auto manufacturing fraternity.

Facts contributed on invitation by:
Dr. Lawrance Perera
Chairman/CEO,
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From the Editor ... III

SECTION I

Control Systems in Hybrid Energy Renewable Power Systems: Review 1
by: Eng. S M Wijewardana

Assessments of Irrigation Water Requirement from Deduru Oya Left Bank Canal to Supplement Deduru Oya left Bank Irrigation Demand 17
by: Eng. D S Sampath,
Eng. (Prof.) S B Weerakoon,
Dr. B K Mishra and
Dr. Srikantha Herath

Effect of Bed Roughness on Submerged Hydraulic Jumps 33
by: Eng. Y Dilrooban,
Eng. K Imasalan,
Eng. K Sujana and
Eng. (Prof.) K P P Pathirana

SECTION II

Airport Curbside and Parking Area Operations at BIA - Analysis of User Behavior 43
by: Eng. S D B Galagedera,
Dr. H R Pasindu and
Prof. J M S J Bandara

New Dynamic Battery Model for Hybrid Vehicles and Dynamic Model Analysis Using Simulink 53
by: Eng. S M Wijewardana

Historical Timber Structures in Sri Lanka: A Review on Pekada, Kenimandala and Madol-Kurupawa 63
by: Eng. C Jayawardana,
Eng. K Peiris and
Eng. S Wijesinghe

Notes:

- **ENGINEER**, established in 1973, is a **Quarterly Journal**, published in the months of January, April, July & October of the year.
- All published articles have been **refereed** in anonymity by at least two subject specialists.
- **Section I** contains articles based on **Engineering Research** while **Section II** contains articles of **Professional Interest**.

Universal Science – Part IV 69
by: Eng. S D S Deshapriya

**New Approach for the Success of Yala
Cultivation in Dry Zone under Drought
Condition** 79

by: Eng. R M B Rajakaruna

*The above Paper was placed First in the 'Over 35
years of age' Category at the Competition on "Eco
Efficient Water Infrastructure for Sustainable
Development/Management" 2012/2013*
Sponsored by: St. Anthony's Industries Group
(Pvt) Ltd.

**Design of Sewerage System in Kirulapone
for Colombo Municipality** 87

by: Eng. (Miss) Shahina M Mysan and
Eng. (Dr.) Ananda Ranasinghe

*The above Paper was placed Second in the 'Over 35
years of age' Category at the Competition on "Eco
Efficient Water Infrastructure for Sustainable
Development/Management" 2012/2013*
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(Pvt) Ltd.

**Hydro Electricity Driven Drip Irrigation
Systems; Potentials and Constrains in Sri
Lanka** 95

by: Eng. P Samitha Karunarathna

*The above Paper was placed First in the 'Under 35
years of age' Category at the Competition on "Eco
Efficient Water Infrastructure for Sustainable
Development/Management" 2012/2013*
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FROM THE EDITOR.....

In 1885 when Karl Benz first developed an internal combustion engine propelled vehicle he would have never thought that his invention would have such a colossal impact on humanity, both as a gift and a bane. Present development of the mankind, based on personal comfort, consumerism and convenience was aided in no small way by the automobile which has impacted on all social levels. On the other hand, fossil fuel combustion by products as well as other pollutants from automobiles have created a near calamity in the global environment as well as critical sustainability issues.

With that being said, it is glaringly obvious that ownership of an automobile is a social status symbol that had lately being pushed to the proportion of a necessity. Given the human nature, nowadays everyone tends to desire a personal automobile and our country is no exception. Added with the fact that all imported autos involve expenditure in foreign exchange for capital, fuel and spares it really makes economic sense to manufacture our own. If one wishes to stack social factors such as creating jobs, encouraging local equipment supplying industry and national pride, the argument becomes even stronger.

It is within this background that we have to view the rapidly developing local automobile manufacturing and assembling industry. Though the economy of scale in production might not permit us to produce a totally local product, a substantial local component could be injected to justify national contribution and sustain the industry in economic perspective. As has been already done, tapping foreign markets for customized autos is an effective way of alleviating the economy of scale problem.

To be a truly Sri Lankan product we should endeavour to incorporate our national heritage of environmental friendliness into our automobiles, through innovations making them low cost but acceptable quality, low maintenance but functional design, and less environment polluting. This could be the fore preparation for the next energy crisis, which invariably has to come. What Henry Ford did with the model T and Ferdinand Porsche did with the Volkswagen in the 20th century, we should be able to do in the 21st.

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