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Capacity expansion for Hipore™ LIB separator

March 30, 2017
Asahi Kasei Corp.

Asahi Kasei will increase production capacity for Hipore™ Li-ion battery (LIB) separator* at its plant in Moriyama, Shiga, Japan, with start-up scheduled in the first half of fiscal 2019.

With increasing demand for hybrid-electronic and all-electric vehicles worldwide, the LIB market is forecasted to grow substantially in automotive applications.

Asahi Kasei is the world's leading LIB separator manufacturer, supplying both wet-process and dry-process separators with its Hipore™ and Celgard™ products. Wet-process manufacturing plants are located in Japan (Moriyama, Shiga, and Hyuga, Miyazaki) and Korea (Chungbuk), while dry-process manufacturing plants are located in the US (North Carolina). Proactively expanding the LIB separator business as a strategic area of growth, Asahi Kasei plans to raise its total LIB separator capacity to 1,100 million m²/y, including both wet process and dry process, by 2020.

* A thin microporous film of polyolefin placed between the cathode and anode of lithium-ion batteries. It prevents contact between the electrodes which would cause a short, while allowing lithium ions to pass between the electrodes.

Outline of the new Hipore™ capacity expansion

Location:	Moriyama, Shiga, Japan
Capacity:	200 million m ² /year
Investment:	≈¥15 billion
Start-up:	First half of fiscal 2019 (scheduled)

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Upon completion of the new production line, Asahi Kasei's total LIB separator capacity will increase to 860 million m²/year, with wet-process capacity being 610 million m²/y and dry-process capacity rising to 250 million m²/y through productivity improvements at existing plants. The capacity increases will further reinforce the company's capability to provide stable supply to meet rising global demand for LIB separators.

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