

Toyota, Nissan Recall 6.5 Million Cars over Exploding Airbags



Tokyo, May 15 (RHC)-- Japanese auto giants, Toyota and Nissan, have recalled 6.5 million vehicles globally in the latest phase of an exploding airbag crisis, which has been linked to several deaths.

Toyota, the world's biggest automaker, said that it has recalled 5 million vehicles affected 35 models globally, which were produced between 2003 and 2007. Nissan also announced that it is calling back 1.56 million vehicles also due to faulty airbags made by embattled supplier, Takata.

"This will affect many of our markets, including Japan, Europe and North America," a Nissan spokesman told AFP, adding that the risk of explosion was only one of problems seen in the defective airbags. "There might be many factors. (But) we have seen risks that the metal casing for inflators can malfunction," the spokesman added. Nissan's recall will reportedly affect a range of models produced between 2004 and 2008.

Both Toyota and Nissan have announced that there were no reports of deaths or injuries linked to their latest recall. The announcement comes after some 20 million vehicles produced by automakers, including General Motors and Honda, were recalled because of the risk that their Takata-made airbags could improperly inflate and rupture, potentially firing deadly shrapnel at the occupants.

At least five deaths have been reported in relation to the defect, with one in the United States initially investigated as a murder due to the victim's grisly injuries.

Despite the ongoing problem, Nissan's results appeared to be relatively unaffected. Just after the recall announcement, it said fiscal-year net profit soared a better-than-expected 17.6 percent to 457.6 billion yen (USD 4.2 billion), with the firm crediting a weak yen and new model rollouts.

Meanwhile, annual profit of Honda, as Takata's biggest airbag customer, turned down 8.9 percent to USD 4.4 billion. "We have been conducting various ongoing investigations regarding Takata-produced airbag inflators," the firm said in an email, adding, "Among the parts collected from the Japanese market, certain types of airbag inflators were found to have a potential for moisture intrusion over time. As a result, they could be susceptible to abnormal deployment in a crash."

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