



German firm gives 'second life' to **used EV batteries**



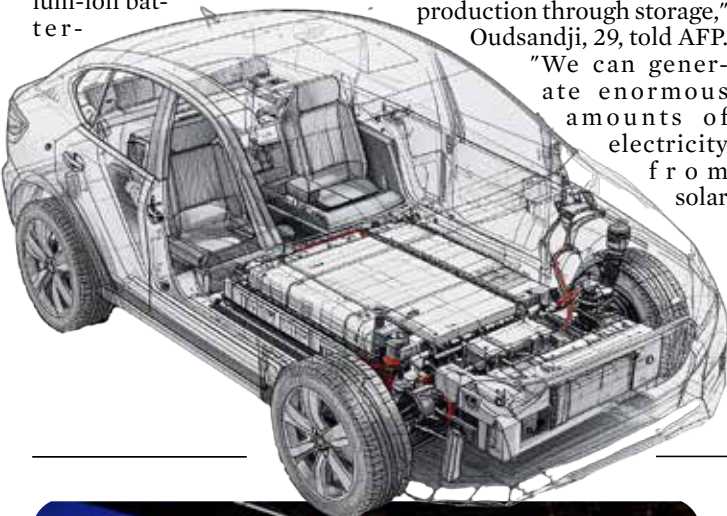
Building an EV battery does create more emissions upfront (sometimes up to 2x that of building a petrol car engine), but once on the road, an EV quickly "pays back" this carbon debt. Studies show that within about 1-2 years of driving, the total greenhouse gas emissions of an EV fall below that of a gasoline vehicle – and over a 10-year lifespan, an EV can cut emissions by 50-70%, depending on the electricity grid mix.

AFP | Aachen, Germany

A German company is putting used electric vehicle batteries to new use by stacking them into fridge-size units that homes and businesses can use to store their excess solar and wind energy.

This week, the company Voltfang -- which means "catching volts" -- opened its first industrial site in Aachen, near the Belgian and Dutch borders.

With around 100 staff, Voltfang says it is the biggest facility of its kind in Europe in the budding sector of refurbishing lithium-ion batteries.



A worker assembles battery units at the production site of Voltfang, a developing and manufacturing battery storage producer, in Aachen, western Germany

ies.

Its CEO David Oudsandji hopes it will help Europe's biggest economy ween itself off fossil fuels and increasingly rely on climate-friendly renewables.

While wind turbines now dot Germany's countryside and photovoltaic panels are found on many rooftops, he says the country still needs to build up battery storage capacity.

"We want to ensure European sovereignty in energy supply by enabling renewable energy production through storage," Oudsandji, 29, told AFP.

"We can generate enormous amounts of electricity from solar

and wind energy, then store it in a decentralised way all across Germany and distribute it," he said.

"This means that the more renewable energy we use, the more storage capacity we deploy, the less we need fossil gas or oil."

Inside the site, technicians receive used EV batteries and test them to determine their remaining lifespans.

Those still found to be in good condition are reconditioned for their "second life" and fitted inside cabinets the size of large refrigerators -- effectively huge power banks for excess electricity.

Among the first customers is the discount supermarket chain Aldi Nord, which wants to store power from its rooftop solar panels for later use.

Clean energy push

Voltfang, founded in 2020 by three university engineering students, aims to produce enough systems by 2030 to store a capacity of one gigawatt-hour

(GWh) of electricity per year, enough for 300 homes.

It is one of many small steps meant to help Germany's decades-old "Energiewende", or energy transition.

Last year, renewables covered nearly 60 percent of electricity produced in Germany, and the target is 80 percent by 2030.

One problem for solar and wind is what to do on days when the sun doesn't shine and the wind doesn't blow.

Such "dark lulls", most common in winter, have at times forced Germany to temporarily import power produced by French nuclear reactors or Polish coal plants.

To guarantee a secure supply, conservative Chancellor Friedrich Merz's government plans to build around 20 new gas-fired power plants by 2030.

The Greens and environmental groups have denounced this as a step backwards in German climate policy and fear the country will not meet its goal of carbon neutrality by 2045.



Tesla amps up the game with new Model Y Performance



TDT | agencies

Tesla has introduced the new Model Y Performance, bringing more power, sharper design and improved features.

The SUV is powered by the same dual 'Performance 4DU' motors as the top-spec Model 3, delivering 450 BHP and sprinting from 0-60 mph (96 kph) in just 3.3 seconds, before topping out at 155 mph (250 kph).

A new high-density battery cell lets the Model Y Performance almost match the range of the standard AWD version despite its extra power. Tesla claims up to 360 miles (579 km) on a single charge.

Chassis upgrades include adaptive dampers borrowed from the Model 3 Performance but with bespoke tuning, plus new suspension. On the outside, the car gains a sleeker front bumper, diffuser-style rear, carbon spoiler, 21-inch sports alloys and red brake calipers.

Inside, it features Tesla's largest and highest-resolution 16-inch touchscreen to date, alongside heated and ventilated sports seats with bigger side bolsters.

Built at Tesla's Brandenburg factory near Berlin, the Model Y Performance will first launch in Europe and the Middle East, with deliveries starting in October. Prices begin at £61,990 (US\$83,630).

Jeep updates Meridian (Commander) with refreshed styling and tech



TDT | agencies

Jeep has unveiled the facelifted Meridian for Brazil, where it is sold as the Commander. The mid-cycle update introduces subtle exterior and interior changes while adding more features.

On the outside, the Commander now sports revised LED headlights with integrated DRLs, sleeker LED taillights connected by a light bar, a redesigned front bumper, new alloy wheels, and dual exhaust outlets.

The cabin receives new upholstery and a rotary gear selector. Available in both 5- and 7-seat layouts, the SUV also offers a 360-degree



camera system and Level 2 ADAS.

For Brazil, three engine options are on offer: a 1.3-litre turbo flex-fuel unit paired with a 6-speed automatic, along with 2.0-litre turbo-petrol and 2.2-litre diesel options for AWD variants, both mated to a 9-speed automatic.



Jaguar Type 00



Actor Scott Eastwood joined Jaguar at the prestigious Monterey Car Week earlier this month, to celebrate the world premiere of the Jaguar Type 00. The unveiling marks a bold new design chapter for the iconic British luxury brand. Presented against the backdrop of California's Monterey Peninsula -- home to some of the world's most celebrated automotive showcases -- the Type 00 drew attention with its sleek proportions, futuristic lighting signature, and aerodynamic lines that pay homage to Jaguar's rich design heritage. Inside, the Type 00 features a driver-focused cockpit with sustainable luxury materials, advanced connectivity, and Jaguar's latest electric powertrain technology, reflecting the brand's transition to an all-electric future by 2030.

