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AFX News Limited

BASF, Huntsman, China cos mull building further MDI plant in China

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LUDWIGSHAFEN, Germany (AFX) - BASF AG said it is considering, together with Huntsman Corp and a group of Chinese companies, to construct a new MDI (diphenylmethane diisocyanate) plant in China to meet growing demand for this product.

The Chinese companies are Shanghai Hua Yi Group Co, Sinopec Shanghai Gao Qiao Petrochemical Corp and Shanghai Chloro-Alkali Chemical Co Ltd.

It said several sites for the plant are being evaluated, and that startup is planned from 2010 onward, with a capacity of 400,000 metric tons per year of crude MDI.

A total cost for the project was not disclosed, but another ongoing project designed to produce both MDI (240,000 tons) and TDI (toluene diisocyanate) (160,000 tons) is estimated to cost 1 about 1 bln eur.

This project is also a joint venture between Huntsman, BASF and the above mentioned

group of Chinese companies.

MDI is a key chemical component in the production of polyurethane foams and elastomers.

Polyurethane foams is used among others in refrigerators and freezers, while elastomers are used in footwear, automotive and electrical industries.

TDI is mainly used as a raw material for flexible foams, which are used among others to make furniture and car seats.

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