

Indian Manufacturer to Bring World's Cheapest Car to Russia

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Bajaj's Managing Director Rajiv Bajaj is seen through the windows of the newly launched first-ever four-wheeled vehicle RE60 in New Delhi.

From next spring, Russian drivers will be able to buy the world's cheapest car — the Indian Bajaj Qute, the RBC news agency reported.

Sales of the Qute will begin in March or April next year, once the vehicle is tested on Russia's winter roads, the general director of East West Motors, Bajaj's distributor in Russia, Alexander Alexeyev, told the agency.

Prices for the car, made by Indian motorcycle manufacturer Bajaj, will start at 250,000 rubles (\$4,000), he said. The cheapest car currently available in Russia is China's Lifan Smily, which costs 320,000 rubles (\$5,000), according to RBC.

The Qute is a single-cylinder four-seater with a 13.5 horsepower engine and a top speed of 70

kilometers per hour.

Its arrival on the Russian market comes amid growing demand for low-cost products as wages decline during an economic slump. A weaker ruble has also pushed up car prices by making imported vehicles and parts more expensive.

Car sales in Russia fell by 36 percent in the first half of the year compared to the same period in 2014, according to the Association of European Businesses, a Moscow-based lobby group that monitors the car market.

Russians still eager to buy a car mostly opt for cheaper vehicles costing less than \$10,000, RBC reported earlier this year.

However, some experts doubted the popularity of the Indian Qute in Russia.

Cars with better functionality and comfort can be bought second hand for the same price, Sergei Udalov, executive director of Autostat, a car market researcher, told RBC.

East West Motors' Alexeyev said the Qute's low operating costs could make it useful for commercial tasks such as delivery services. But the company's sales projections are still modest: it plans to sell 200-300 Qutes in Russia next year, according to RBC.

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