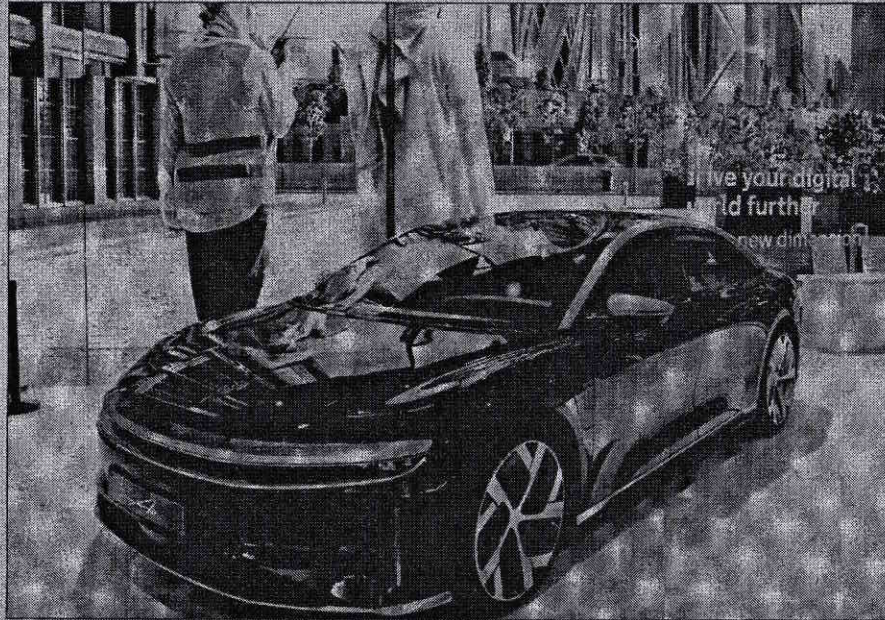


Geneva auto show resurrects itself in 40C heat of Qatar

SHIMMERING SKYSCRAPERS, DESERT backdrops and 40C (104F) heat: not what you'd usually expect at the Geneva International Motor Show, but that's the setting for this year's event as it shifts to Qatar's capital Doha.

Returning after a three-year hiatus due to Covid, the exhibition also known as GIMS opens Thursday with 30 automakers taking part, from luxury sports brands Lamborghini and McLaren to mass-market names like Toyota Motor and Volkswagen. "GIMS is excited to expand its legacy in the Middle East, venturing for the first time outside Geneva," said Sandro Mesquita, CEO of the auto show, adding that the event will bridge the gap between the automotive industries in the West and East.

Saad Bin Ali Al Kharji, deputy chairman of Qatar Tourism, said hosting large, globally recognised events such as the auto show is part of a strategic vision to become the fastest-growing destination in the Middle East by 2030. The highest-profile event Qatar has hosted was the 2022 FIFA World Cup. The motor show will coincide with the Qatar For-



Lucid's Air EV at the Saudi Telecom stand at the Mobile World Congress in Spain in February.

BLOOMBERG FILE PHOTO

mula One Grand Prix, to be held under lights at the Lusail International Circuit on Sunday.

Why Geneva in Doha?

In 2021, the country struck a 10-year deal with GIMS organizers to hold the 118-year-old event every two years from 2023. The spring

exhibition in Switzerland, held annually until the pandemic struck, will resume in 2024. VW's MD in the Middle East, Matthias Ziegler, said the show is an opportunity to engage with local customers and exhibit new vehicles coming to the region, which the German automaker described it as pivotal.

—BLOOMBERG