

NITI Aayog pulls up bike cos on migration to electrics

Says Opposition Will Affect Drive Towards Clean Mobility

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New Delhi:

NITI Aayog on Friday gave a dressing down to incumbent two-wheeler makers such as Hero Moto, Honda, Bajaj Auto and TVS over their reservations to a proposed migration to electrics (sub-150cc) by 2025, saying their opposition is “not practical” and would “hamper the efforts towards driving in clean mobility”.

A high-level meeting, chaired by NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant and vice-chairman Rajiv Kumar, was attended by top industry captains such as Bajaj Auto MD Rajiv Bajaj, TVS chairman Venu Srinivasan, and Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India (HMSI) CEO Minoru Kato.

The meeting, where senior officers from the government were present, also had representatives from electric two-wheeler startups such as Ather, Revolt, Tork and Kinetic, all of whom agreed with the 2025 migration suggestion and rather wanted the timeline to be advanced further. “How much time do you want for the migration (to electric mobility)? 50 years, 25 years, 10 years?” the NITI Aayog functionaries asked, in a near-rebuke to the incumbent players who are opposing the migration by 2025 and asking for more time.

A senior Niti Aayog functionary said companies were told that nearly six years “are sufficient” to prepare for the change-over to electric. “If you cannot do it in six years, then how will the transition happen? The government has to take care of quality of life of citizens,” the official told **TOI**.

Sources said rollout of electric two- and three-wheelers could be in phases as it was done for BS4-compliant vehicles across states. To start with, cut-off date for electric vehicles (EVs) in this category could be set for most polluted cities and later would be extended across states, they added .

“The industry raised the point that taking EVs to rural areas will take more time. Industry was told that it better get ready for rolling out EVs and there would be no escape once any court intervenes or passes order in the light of increasing air pollution,” said another source.

Bajaj had earlier termed the suggestion of NITI Aayog as “ill-timed” and “impractical”, while TVS’ Srinivasan had called it an “unrealistic deadline” that may de-rail auto manufacturing in the country and lead to job losses.

(with Dipak Dash)

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➤ Inter-ministerial committee chaired by NITI Aayog CEO suggests only electric 2-wheelers (sub-150cc) to be sold from 2025 onwards



➤ NITI Aayog expresses concern over WHO report that says 14 of most 15 polluted

cities in the world are in India

➤ With large numbers on road, two-wheelers seen as the biggest polluters in the auto industry

➤ Two-wheeler companies are concerned over high costs for electric and poor charging infrastructure



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—2-WHEELER MAKERS TOLD