

Auto giants lobby against govt's 100% EV mandate

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Top auto CEOs have dubbed the government's mandate for 100% electric vehicles (EVs) in four-six years as "unrealistic" and "impractical" with the potential to derail an industry that supports 4 million jobs in India.

Businessmen, including TVS Motor Company chairman Venu Srinivasan and Bajaj Auto MD Rajiv Bajaj, have suggested a more "gradual" and "middle path" alternative instead. While auto companies are supportive of the overall goal towards electrification, "to force an unrealistic deadline for mass adoption of electric twoand three-wheelers will not just create consumer discontent, it risks derailing auto manufacturing in India that supports 4 million jobs", said Srinivasan.

The auto industry, he added, has been doing "serious development work to ensure we can offer a mass market EV product" so as to "co-opt consumers into making a switch, so it's driven by consumer willingness and, therefore, adopted easily and widely". "The supporting infrastructure for charging also needs to be as robust as conventional fuel options," he explained.

Bajaj also expressed a similar opinion. First, he said, "it may be impractical to target such a scale when none of the stakeholders currently possess any meaningful experience with any of the pieces of the EV puzzle". He added, "Second, it's ill-timed to target a date so close to BS6 implementation. And finally, to target two- and threewheelers but not cars, etc, makes it an incomplete initiative."