

Mitsubishi rolls out new electric car in Hong Kong

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The Mitsubishi i-MiEV (Mitsubishi Innovative Electric Vehicle) is displayed during the Los Angeles Auto Show in 2008. Japan's Mitsubishi Motors unveiled its i-MiEV electric car in Hong Kong on Thursday, its first foreign launch of the vehicle as competition accelerates in the clean-energy auto sector.

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The compact [Mitsubishi electric](#) car will go on sale in the glitzy, densely packed former British colony from Friday priced at 395,000 Hong Kong dollars (50,000 US dollars).

The company aims to sell 50 of the hi-tech vehicles in Hong Kong by the end of the year, as it reaches out to a wider market.

Mitsubishi "has been conducting fleet testing in countries and other areas all over the globe and plans to launch left-hand drive i-MiEVs in Europe from the end of this year," it said in a statement.

The electric car market has been held back by criticisms about such vehicles' performance, high cost and the absence of re-charging stations.

But breakthroughs in the development of long-lasting lithium-ion batteries have lowered the cost of [electric vehicles](#) and increased their range and speed.

Mitsubishi sold about 1,400 i-MiEV's to Japanese municipalities and companies last year, with sales to individuals starting last month, the automaker said.

EU Auto Technology, developer of Hong Kong's first homegrown electric vehicle, the MyCar, said Monday that it planned to sell the automobile in the United States from next year.

Also this week, Japanese carmaker Nissan announced that its Leaf electric car would be sold in Europe for under 30,000 euros (37,000 dollars) after various government incentives.

Last month, luxury carmaker BMW said it planned to launch its first all-electric urban vehicle in 2013, two years earlier than planned, with rivals Daimler and Volkswagen also jumping into the market.

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