

Choking India gets first fully-fledged electric car

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India hopes electric vehicles will help ease pollution caused by combustion engines

Motorists in India, home to some of the world's most polluted cities, can now buy a fully-fledged electric car after Hyundai unveiled a model that can travel 452 kilometres (281 miles) on one charge.

The Kona Electric SUV will cost \$36,000—more than three times the price of the cheapest combustion-engine SUV and more than eight times dearer than a regular saloon car.

But its improved range will address one of the major concerns among customers in India, where there is a shortage of charging stations, Hyundai Motors Managing Director SS Kim told the Press Trust of India.

India is forecast to become the world's most populous nation within a decade, and although last week the government unveiled new tax incentives, manufacturers say that there is no clear roadmap to get more EVs on the roads.

The market share of [electric vehicles](#) is now just 0.06 percent, compared with 39 percent in Norway, according to government figures cited by Bloomberg News.

"We think more can be done by the government to accelerate adoption of EVs in India," Kim said.

Local firms Tata Motors and Mahindra & Mahindra previously launched electric vehicles, but only with limited ranges or not for commercial sale.

Currently there are fewer than 7,000 on India's roads, many of which are imported. In China by contrast, 455,571 electric vehicles were sold in the first half of 2019 alone.

India is home to 22 of the world's 30 most polluted cities, according to Greenpeace, with industrial emissions, car fumes and smoke from burning crops creating a toxic cocktail.

Poisonous air killed 1.24 million Indians in 2017, according to a study

published last year by Lancet Planetary Health, which said tens of millions of people face serious health risks.

India currently generates about two-thirds of its electricity with coal and gas, making it the world's third-biggest emitter of greenhouse gases.

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