

M&M invests ₹500 cr more in EV infra in TN

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Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) has made further investments of more than ₹500 crore in strengthening its EV (electric vehicle) infrastructure in Tamil Nadu as the leading automaker is accelerating the development of EV platforms to roll out electric SUVs.

The company has built an EV battery test lab at an investment of ₹210 crore at Mahindra Research Valley, the flagship R&D and Innovation centre of the Mahindra Group. The new facility was formally launched by State Chief Minister MK Stalin through a video conference.

The new EV battery test laboratory serves the need to test the batteries' suitability in

safety-critical driving situations and for vehicle safety. "This lab will allow us to undertake EV battery tests at temperatures from -40 to 80°C," R Velusamy, President, Automotive Technology and Product Development, Mahindra & Mahindra told *businessline*.

He said more than 1,000 people were working on the EV-related areas as part of the company's R&D operations.

CRASH TEST

Mahindra is also setting up an EV crash test unit at the Mahindra SUV Proving Track (MSPT) at Cheyyar near Chennai at an investment of ₹290 crore. The Chief Minister kick-started work for the project through video mode on Monday.

Crash tests for electric cars

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and SUVs cannot be done the way it is done for ICE vehicles. Electric cars are different in the way they crash. There are chances that EVs may catch fire after collision and the fires can be extremely hard to put out. So, the presence of large-size traction batteries requires special safety measures. "EV requires different crash test procedures and standards. So, we are establishing this facility

to test electric SUVs with required norms," said Velusamy.

"The equipment and components for the EV Crash test unit are being procured and this facility will be running by January 2024, he added.

Mahindra is also investing about ₹12 crore in its Software Defined Vehicle Centre in Coimbatore.

The company has chalked out ambitious plans to roll out at least five electric SUVs under a new EV platform IN-GLO. Its first electric SUV XUV400 with a 39.4 kWh battery pack and a range of 456 km was unveiled in September 2022. "The deliveries started in March 2023 and the company had an order book of 20,000 units and had sold more than 3,000 units," the management told during an analysts' meet in May this year.