

# Foxconn EV venture targets India, Thailand for new small car

Reuters

Foxconn's venture attempting to build a standardised electric vehicle (EV) platform is targeting India or Thailand for the production of a small battery-powered car under development, the unit's chief executive said.

The Taiwanese company's EV platform unit Mobility in Harmony (MIH) would be willing to work with its parent or another company to build the new three-seat EV priced below \$20,000 and tailor-made for a corporate delivery fleet, MIH CEO Jack Cheng said.

MIH has been in talks with convenience stores, car rental companies and courier companies ahead of unveiling its first prototype EV at Japan's largest auto trade show in October, Cheng added.

## STRATEGY

He declined to name the companies in talks with MIH, but said the car would be priced between \$10,000 and \$20,000. India and Thailand are likely contenders for production sites, he said, adding that he expected India to be crucial to MIH's longer-term growth.

"You build where the potential market is...In India or South-East Asia, you have a huge volume opportunity right now," Cheng said, calling India a potential "emerging power for the next generation" in the EV sector.

MIH had not previously described its manufacturing strategy or the potential customers for its new vehicle.

Foxconn established the MIH consortium of about 2,600 suppliers two years ago to create an open platform that could become the equivalent of Google's Android operating system for EVs.

Cheng conceded MIH had



Jack Cheng, CEO, MIH

"not seen success yet," but said returns for participating suppliers would come with orders for a range of new EVs called Project X. The idea is to use low-cost, shared platforms to allow corporate fleet operators to order custom-made EVs.

So far, that model is largely untested, and analysts have said the best opportunity for a new EV entrant like Foxconn could close in the next few years as established automakers and startups ramp up their own production.

MIH plans to start production of the three-seat EV about 18-24 months after the prototype is unveiled in October, Cheng said. A six-seat EV is scheduled to follow in 2024 and a nine-seat model in 2025.

Based on its timeline, it would take MIH four years or more from its founding to first sales in a best-case scenario.

## 'SHANGHAI IN INDIA'

"I'm building another Shanghai, probably in India," Cheng said. "If this is a Foxconn plant, fantastic, it's the mother company, we put it into the Foxconn plant. If this is a local India plant and it's even more competitive, give it to the India plant."

Foxconn, which only produces a small number of EVs currently, has set an initial target of gaining a 5 per cent share of the global market by 2025. MIH's sales will count towards Foxconn's target, Cheng said.