

Not worried about delay in EV launch: Yamaha India head

DEEPAK PATEL

New Delhi, 9 December

Yamaha will launch its first electric scooter in India “within a few years” and it is not worried about being late in entering the growing electric vehicle market of the country as the company wants to ensure quality and safety, the firm’s India Chairman Eishin Chihana said.

The number of electric vehicle sales in India for October stood at 111,971 units, which is 184.7 per cent more than October 2021, according to the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA). About 70 per cent of the total electric vehicles sold in India are electric scooters.

“I am pushing my engineers a lot in Japan as well as in Chennai regarding the launch of an electric scooter in India,” Chihana said in an interview with *Business Standard*. Yamaha has already launched electric scooters in Japan, Taiwan and Europe.

“I know that more than 40 companies, including established ones, are rushing to introduce new electric two-wheeler models in India. Some of them fail, some are partly successful and some are going to be successful,” Chihana noted.

Some of these firms are getting a head-start but it is not difficult to catch up, he said.

“Even if we are a bit late, I am not worried because in the end, the consumer in India will choose the most reliable model with good quality. At that time, Yamaha would be one of the choices,” he added.

So, does he want to ensure quality even if it takes some time. “Yes. Quality and safety,” he replied. The first e-scooter will be launched in India “within a few years”, he added. He said the company had not decided if it wanted to launch a “motorcycle-type electric vehicle” after launching the e-scooter in India.

The company sells internal combustion engine—(ICE-) based motorcycles, such as FZS 25 and R15S, which are in the 150-250 CC premium segment, in the country. It also sells ICE-based scooters such as Aerox 155 and Rayzr 125, which are in the 125-155 CC premium segment, in India.

Chihana said in the next 2-3 years, the company will con-



“IN MID- TO LONG-TERM, WE HAVE A PLAN TO INTRODUCE 300 CC, 700 CC AND 900 CC MOTORCYCLES. YAMAHA HAS THESE MODELS GLOBALLY, SO WE PLAN TO BRING THEM TO INDIA ACCORDING TO THE RISING DEMAND

YAMAHA MOTOR INDIA,
chairman

tinue to focus on branding and marketing the 150 CC-plus engine motorcycles to the young generation in urban and semi-urban cities.

“In mid- to long-term, we certainly have a plan to introduce 300 CC, 700 CC and 900 CC motorcycles. Yamaha has these models globally, so we plan to bring them to India according to the rising demand,” Chihana noted.

Yamaha India sold 220,000 scooters in 2021. In comparison, it has been able to sell only 180,000 scooters in 2022. This has been due to semiconductor chip shortage.

He said Yamaha India “intentionally” reduced the production of scooter units in 2022 because the company has focused on utilizing the limited available number of semiconductor chips mainly in motorcycles instead of scooters.

“Our motorcycles are much more profitable than scooters. Also, motorcycles such as R15 and MT15 have more than one month of back orders (waiting period) since the beginning of 2022,” he explained.