

M&M cautious on production ahead of new EV launches

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AHEAD OF THE much-awaited launch of its two new electric vehicles BE 6 and XEV 9e, SUV heavy-weight Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) has adopted a cautious approach towards their production. Instead of going all-out on distribution, M&M is ready to sacrifice on its volume goal of 5,000 units a month, but not on product consistency.

Rajesh Jejurikar, executive director and CEO (automotive and farm equipment sectors), M&M, said, "We are being very mindful of not trying to ramp this (production of the two models) up too fast. So, if we have a doubt and we don't sell 5,000 but 3,000, that's fine. We will not trade off the number for quality."

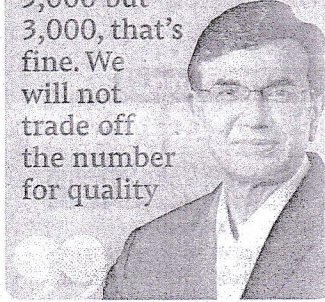
Jejurikar was talking to analysts in a post-earnings call.

The BE 6 and XEV 9e models are M&M's first attempt at built-from-scratch EVs developed on dedicated platforms. Bookings for both the models will be opened on February 14 and deliveries will start in March. The company has pumped in ₹4,500 crore towards their development and preparation of production at the Chakan plant near Pune.

While these two EVs will not be the first by M&M since it already has the XUV400 in the market, technologically, the BE 6 and XEV 9e are a lot different and advanced from their predecessors. Production

RAJESH JEJURIKAR, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO, M&M

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of the XEV 9e was started in December and BE 6 in January.

"Last month (January) we sold nearly 2,000 units for dealer displays and test drives. We are going much less than our capacity. We know it's a hi-tech product and a new technology for us. We have a very good manufacturing facility with good automation. We have put in a lot of effort in validation and robustness," Jejurikar added.

Priced at ₹18.9 lakh for the base variant with a range of 557 km, the BE 6 will compete against Hyundai Creta, Tata Curvv, MG ZS EV and the Maruti Suzuki eVitara.

The XEV 9e will come at a more premium end with prices starting at ₹21.9 lakh. This larger, five-seater EV will compete against BYD Atto 3.