The wait is over. Tesla's Model Y finally set to hit Indian roads

The much-hyped electric vehicle carries a hefty starting price tag of ₹59.89 lakh

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Nine years after Elon Musk announced Tesla's entry into India, it finally launched its first electric vehicle, the Model Y, in the country on Tuesday. It carries a hefty starting price tag of ₹59.89 lakh (ex-showroom) due to the duties of over 100 per cent that India levies on imported luxury cars.

The model comes in two variants, the lower-priced rear-wheel drive with a range of up to 500 km and the long range RWD at ₹67.89 lakh. At this price, it competes with Mercedes-Benz EQA, which starts at ₹67.20 lakh, and BMW's iX1, which is available from ₹66.90 lakh.

Incidentally, both the Tesla models launched here start at less than ₹34 lakh in the US and China.

BOOKINGS OPEN
The heavy downpour did not deter the waiting journalists and camerapersons eager to get their first glimpse of the cars at the

CHARGING UP. Tesla Regional Director Isabel Fan with the company's Model Y at its newly-inaugurated showroom in Bandra Kurla Complex, Mumbai, on Tuesday PTI

4,000 sq ft Tesla Experience Centre in Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai. The second showroom will open in Delhi by this month end.

Bookings for the cars are already open on the Tesla website. Deliveries of the rear wheel drive will begin from Q3 and the long range rear-wheel drive model in Q4. The company also plans to introduce the Cybertruck in India.

Both Mumbai and Delhi will have four charging stations each. Each will be equipped with 16 superchargers and 16 destination chargers. Every Tesla owner in India will get a home charger free along with the vehicle. "The owner is connected through Tesla technology. Tesla vehicles direct consumers to the charging stations," said Isabel Fan, Senior Director, South Asia and South-East Asia, Tesla.

Mumbai will be the company's headquarters. Tesla, which has been testing Model Y in India for over two years, has redesigned the vehicle for Indian roads. The car will not have the self-driving (autopilot) feature in the country as India does not have a law yet to regulate self-driving vehicles.

EV MANUFACTURING
While the cars displayed at the showroom were made in China, company officials were tight-lipped about where they would import the EVs from to be sold in India. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis hoped that, in future, they would be made in India. "Tesla cars will be imported first but we are hopeful that in future, it will be 100 per cent manufactured in India," he said.

Experts pointed out that Tesla's entry in India will increase consumer interest in EVs in the country. "Tesla's initial impact may be more symbolic, but it will undoubtedly elevate consumer awareness, spark greater interest in EVs and set new benchmarks in connected and autonomous mobility," said Vinay Raghunath, Partner, Automotive and Mobility Sector Leader, EY India.

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