

# Maruti plans to drive in small EVs after eVitara preview at Mobility Expo

DEEPAK PATEL

New Delhi, 16 January

Maruti Suzuki India (MSIL) plans to launch a small electric car in India after fully mastering the manufacturing techniques for such vehicles and assessing customer response to its first electric car, the eVitara, which is set to be unveiled on Thursday at the Bharat Mobility Global Expo, said Suzuki Motor Corporation (SMC) President Toshihiro Suzuki on Wednesday. SMC is the majority shareholder in MSIL.

The eVitara is a premium sport utility vehicle (SUV). During a press conference, Toshihiro said that the company is currently focused on strengthening its position in the SUV segment as part of its goal to achieve a 50 per cent market share in the Indian automobile market. Currently, MSIL holds about 41 per cent of the domestic passenger vehicle market.

“Globally, the electric vehicle (EV) market is sluggish, but in India, we believe there is potential for growth. Therefore, we studied manufacturers who launched their EVs before us to learn what customers want. We are now unveiling the eVitara based on our findings. We are using an exclusive



platform to develop the EV,” he said.

He added that the company has focused on providing a good range for the electric car and is also working on expanding the charging infrastructure across India. “We would now like to focus on the sales and marketing of this product,” he observed.

When asked whether the company plans to launch an electric car in the hatchback or sedan segment, he responded: “First, one must learn the proper manufacturing techniques for

EVs. Once we fully grasp EV manufacturing, it will make sense to move towards small cars. We do have plans to launch EVs in the small car segment as well.” However, he did not provide a timeline for the launch of the small electric car. “First, we are going to launch only the eVitara, and we would like to analyse and capture customer needs and demands. We want to follow a multi-pathway strategy and see in which segment and area the products will be required,” he said.

Turn to Page 6 ▶

# MSIL's vision: Tailored EVs, not mass conversions of petrol cars

According to the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations, about 99,165 electric cars were sold in India in 2024, showing 20 per cent year-on-year growth. Tata Motors leads the electric car market with about 62 per cent of the market share.

The eVitara has been built on a completely new platform. When asked if MSIL would like to launch electric versions of its existing petrol-run models, Toshihiro replied: "I don't think it's correct to convert all existing internal combustion engine models into EV models. We need mobility solutions that are appropriate for specific regions.

To achieve this, we need to think about the right product and the right place."

He will unveil the company's first electric car, the eVitara, and electric scooter, the eAccess, at the Bharat Mobility Global Expo. The eAccess is part of the fleet of Suzuki Motorcycle India, also a subsidiary of SMC.

"For these two products, India will be the production hub. First, the eVitara will be exported to Europe and Japan, and later to other parts of the world. The eAccess will also be exported from India," he said.

Sales of sedans and hatchbacks in India have been

declining over the past few years. "Sales of small cars are declining. However, I don't think small cars will cease to exist. People want to shift from two-wheelers to cars, and there are 1 billion of them in India. They want a good, affordable car in the entry-level segment," he said. Regarding SMC's successful partnership with Toyota Motor Corporation, he described Toyota as a "good business partner" and "a good competitor". When asked if an Indian could become the chief executive officer (CEO) of MSIL, he said that it is very much possible, as "nationality is not a factor" in becoming the CEO of a company like MSIL or SMC. Currently, Hisashi Takeuchi is the managing director and CEO of MSIL.

