

# Daewoo plans e-bike rollout in India comeback

Also looking to sell solar and inverter batteries, consumer electronics goods such as LED televisions, refrigerators

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Posco Daewoo, the South Korean conglomerate whose Cielo sedan and Matiz hatchback were once the pride of Indian car owners, is looking to re-enter India. And its return journey is riding on plans to sell electric bikes and e-cycles.

The company termed India's robust economic growth and surging consumer demand as reasons behind its comeback plans, saying they make India "one of the world's most promising consumer markets," according to Y S Choi, general manager, Posco Daewoo South Korea. The company is also looking to sell power and energy products such as solar and inverter batteries, consumer electronics goods such as LED televisions, air purifiers, and refrigerators.

The firm plans to capitalise on the India opportunity by partner-

ing Gurugram-based Kelwon Electronics and Appliances that has "substantial experience and capabilities in the manufacturing, marketing, and sales of Daewoo products in India," Choi said.

He also added that the Indian energy and power market was worth over \$100 billion and the Indian consumer electronics market was a over \$20 billion opportunity.

The company is betting on the Indian electric 2-wheeler market growing rapidly in the coming years. "The Indian government is investing heavily in the development of these sectors, and we are the leading manufacturer of batteries and consumer durables products. Hence, by entering India through these sectors, we can position ourselves for long-term success in the Indian market," Choi added. Daewoo had first entered the Indian market in 1995 with its four-wheeler offering Cielo, followed by



ILLUSTRATION: BINAY SINHA

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Nexia and Matiz. In 2001, General Motors (GM) decided to buy the company's assets, barring its India sub-

sidiary, leading to the closure of its India operations in 2003-04.

"There is a lot of difference

between India's economic scenario in the last two decades," Choi said, adding given India's projected market growth, it was "impossible to not be present in India today and be a part of this growth story.

Its Indian partner Kelwon plans to first cover the entire energy and power segment by selling automotive batteries for all two- and four-wheeler vehicles, solar batteries, inverter batteries, and lubricants and once the business has stabilised it will then enter other categories, including consumer electronics, in the next financial year.

In home entertainment, it plans to launch LED televisions and audio speakers. In the home environment space, it has set its sights on selling air purifiers, coolers, and fans, and the kitchen appliances segment will see it offering refrigerators, water purifiers, hobs, chimneys, toasters, among other products.