

Tesla rival VinFast readies India drive for export hub

PHOTO: SHINE JACOB

EV major plans first stop in Tamil Nadu

SHINE JACOB

New Delhi, 19 January

Vietnamese electric vehicle (EV) major and Tesla's global rival VinFast is set to make India a global export hub eyeing markets like West Asia and Africa, with the first phase of its \$2 billion facility in Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, expected to be operational by mid-2025, a senior company executive has said.

The company will also focus on developing an entire EV eco-system, including battery manufacturing and setting up of charging stations across the country. V-Green, a group company, will be looking for co-investors in creating charging infrastructure.

On Saturday, the Vietnamese company showcased its first electric vehicles for the Indian market at the Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025.

The Nasdaq-listed automaker unveiled two all-electric premium SUVs — VF 7 and VF 6 — that will be launched this year.

“We selected Thoothukudi since it is close to the seaport and airport, which will allow us to export. We have two factories in Vietnam — one is 50,000 and another around 100,000. We are looking at India for the domestic market, West Asia, and Africa,” said Pham Sanh Chau, chief executive officer of VinFast Asia.

The initial phase of the unit will see an investment of \$500 million.

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VinFast Asia CEO Pham Sanh Chau (left) and Deputy CEO of Sales and Marketing Ashwin Ashok Patil unveil VF6 at Auto Expo 2025 in New Delhi



‘Exports will be key driver, growing at 25% every quarter’

MRF, one of the largest tyre makers in India, is among the most expensive stocks in the country.

Vice-Chairman and MD **ARUN MAMMEN** talks to Shine Jacob during the ongoing Bharat Mobility in New Delhi, about the firm's growth strategy, export road map among others. **2 ▶**

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India Inc top brass to attend Davos summit

India Inc's top brass, including RIL's Mukesh Ambani, JSW's Sajjan Jindal,

Aditya Birla group's Kumar Mangalam Birla, and Tata's N Chandrasekaran will attend the World Economic Forum (WEF)'s annual summit in Davos, beginning today. **DEV CHATTERJEE** writes



▶ INVESTOR PITCH FEST AS 6 STATES COMPETE FOR GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT IN DAVOS

VinFast's EV unit to generate up to 3.5K jobs

Chau added that localisation is the buzzword, and the company will look at manufacturing batteries in India.

"We need to push localisation to the maximum. We will have dealer partners across all metros and Tier-I cities initially. We came here with a vision to stay long and invest in our Thoothukudi factory. The factory is under construction. It is likely to be ready by the end of H1 or the beginning of H2," Chau added. The establishment of VinFast's integrated electric vehicle facility in Tamil Nadu is anticipated to generate approximately 3,000-3,500 employment opportunities locally.

"Our India-centric premium SUVs VF 7 and VF 6 are expected to go on sale from early in the second half of CY 2025. VinFast is appointing dealers across major towns in India with an omni-channel presence," Ashwin Ashok Patil, deputy chief executive officer of sales and marketing at VinFast India, said,



VinFast Asia CEO Pham Sanh Chau (left) and Deputy CEO of Sales and Marketing Ashwin Ashok Patil unveil VF6 at Auto Expo 2025 in New Delhi

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"We believe our premium offerings — SUVs VF 7 and VF 6 — are the game changers that will accelerate the adoption of EVs in India. We are thrilled to exhibit our broader portfolio of electric mobility solutions at the expo. Our presence here not only underlines our commit-

ment to the Indian market but also showcases our vision for sustainable mobility solutions and advanced technology," Chau explained.

He noted that the company is in talks with the government to check if it can benefit from the EV policy.

"We have seven products to position ourselves as a premium carmaker and target the high end of the Indian middle-class. We have good features and the policy to support dealers in terms of a ten-year warranty. We also have a system of battery leasing," he added.

