

Maruti Suzuki looks at EVs as primary vehicle for retail buyers

TRANSFORMATION PHASE. Car maker to address cost, resale and service anxieties

Amit Vijay Mohile
Mumbai

Maruti Suzuki's electrification strategy with the newly unveiled e-Vitara focuses on establishing EVs as viable primary vehicles for retail buyers by addressing cost, resale and service anxieties. The secondary focus, still at an exploratory stage, could involve a purpose-built fleet EV aimed at replicating the Dzire's dominance in the taxi segment.

Partho Banerjee, Senior Executive Officer, Marketing & Sales at Maruti Suzuki, told *businessline* in an exclusive interaction that the e-Vitara is firmly positioned for individual buyers, even as the company evaluates the possibility of a future electric model tailored specifically for high-utilisation fleet operators — potentially on the lines of the Dzire.

"Right now, we have not given a thought to the fleet segment because of the volumes we have... may be not for e-Vitara, but as we launch more electric vehicles, we can think of a variant only for the fleet segment, something along the



WELL-PLANNED. Maruti's relatively late entry into the EV market is seen as deliberate rather than reactive

lines of Dzire," Banerjee said.

India's passenger EV penetration continues to hover around 4–5 per cent, despite multiple launches from Tata Motors, Mahindra and MG Motor.

Banerjee downplayed debates over market share within a small category, arguing that the larger issue is why overall adoption has not accelerated further.

SECOND CAR

According to him, most EV purchases remain second-car decisions. "Customers are not yet fully convinced that an EV can be their primary car," he said, citing concerns around charging access, accident repair costs

and uncertainty over resale value once battery performance declines.

Maruti's relatively late entry into the EV market is seen as deliberate rather than reactive.

With overall penetration still low, the company believes addressing ownership friction points is more critical than chasing early share.

An electric equivalent targeted at fleets could materially alter EV adoption in a segment where higher daily running makes per-km savings particularly compelling. Even the new-generation Dzire ranks among India's top 10 bestsellers — a rarity in an SUV-dominated market.

That positions Maruti well for its broader EV ambitions: 4–6 new BEVs by FY30 under a ₹70,000-crore local production push, targeting 15 per cent of domestic sales.

Rajesh Loomba, Chairman and MD, NSE-listed ECOS (India) Mobility & Hospitality Ltd, prioritises practicality and efficiency. "If priced at ₹10–12 lakh with 300+ km real-world range, it fits corporate transport — especially intra-city employee shuttles and business travel," he said.

He added that corporates prioritise consistency, professionally trained chauffeurs, strong technology integration and dependable service delivery.

"Any fleet EV entering operations must align with these expectations," he noted.

RETAIL-FIRST

The e-Vitara, positioned in the mid-SUV segment against models such as the VinFast VF6, MG Windsor and ZS EV, as well as the Tata Nexon EV, is aimed at retail buyers upgrading within the Maruti ecosystem, particularly existing SUV customers such as Brezza owners.