

India reshapes its workforce to plug into the EV era

TaMo to upskill half its workforce in 5 years; Tamil Nadu teams up with World Bank to fuel the transition

SHINE JACOB & SOHINI DAS
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Weak global demand for electric vehicles (EVs) and mounting industry challenges have pushed several automobile (auto) makers to announce job cuts. Last week, American automaker Ford said it would reduce its European workforce by 14 per cent, blaming ongoing losses due to sluggish EV demand, inadequate government support for the transition, and competition from subsidised Chinese rivals.

Ford joins Nissan, Stellantis, and General Motors, which have also taken cost-cutting measures as the sector struggles with high EV production costs, making them unaffordable for many consumers.

In India, the transition from internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles to EVs is unfolding differently. Industry experts

THE FUTURE IS ELECTRIC, AND UPSKILLED



believe manufacturing jobs will remain unaffected as ICE demand continues to rise alongside economic growth.

As the country moves towards greater EV adoption, automakers and state governments are taking proactive steps

to avoid job losses by focusing on upskilling the workforce.

Tata Motors, Hyundai Motor India, and Mahindra & Mahindra are among the companies leading these efforts, while Tamil Nadu has taken a unique

EV workforce transformation

TATA MOTORS: Trained 20% of its workforce for the EV shift, aiming for 50% by 2029. Focuses on CESS technologies

MARUTI SUZUKI INDIA: Upskilled 14,194 employees in 2023-24, partnered Gujarat's IACE for an EV Skill Lab

India's EV market ▶ Valued at ₹49,000 crore, projected to reach ₹3.18 trillion by 2030

HYUNDAI MOTOR INDIA: Provides in-house and external EV training for employees

MAHINDRA & MAHINDRA: Reskilled workforce in EV architecture, battery tech, and high-voltage safety, with hands-on job rotations

approach by collaborating with World Bank to address job stability and skill development during the shift to EVs.

Tata Motors has already trained 20 per cent of its workforce to adapt to the EV transition and aims to upskill half of

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Ola electric gets gig-ready with sub-₹40K e-scooter

With India's gig economy projected to double in size, reaching over 10 million workers in the coming years, Ola Electric unveiled its new line of budget-friendly e-scooters, starting at under ₹40,000. The market responded positively, with Ola Electric's stock rising by 5.67 per cent on the BSE. The new range includes the Ola Gig, priced at ₹39,999, specifically designed for gig workers making shorter trips. The S1 Z series starts at ₹59,999.

its employees over the next five years. Industry observers expect both ICE and EV demand to grow simultaneously for at least a decade.

"We have set a goal to equip over 50 per cent of our workforce with new-age

autotech capabilities in five years. Our strategy focuses on CESS (connected, electric, shared, and sustainable) technologies, combining technical and soft skills. This includes in-house training programmes and partnerships with academic institutions offering certifications in areas like mechatronics, auto electronics, and vehicle communications," said a senior Tata Motors official.

Maruti Suzuki India (MSIL), the passenger vehicle market leader, is gearing up to launch its first EV in early 2025. During 2023-24, the company upskilled 14,194 employees, up from 13,122 the previous year, according to its latest annual report. MSIL has also introduced 'high-voltage' training equipment at 100 industrial training institutes to support education in EV and hybrid technologies.

In Gujarat, MSIL has partnered the Institute of Advanced Computing and Entrepreneurship to establish an EV Skill Lab. This collaboration focuses on training professionals in battery management systems, power electronics, electronic drivetrains, and charging infrastructure. Turn to Page 6 ▶

EV mkt may reach ₹3.18 trn by 2030

It also offers students opportunities for internships, apprenticeships, and employment. Hyundai Motor India, preparing to launch the Creta EV, is also investing in workforce development.

“Our employees undergo training in EV-related areas through both in-house programmes and collaborations with external institutions. These efforts ensure we are ready to meet evolving customer expectations,” said Gopalakrishnan Chathapuram Sivaramakrishnan, whole-time director and chief manufacturing officer at Hyundai Motor India.

Mumbai-based Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M), which is introducing its range of ‘Born Electric’ vehicles, expects EVs to account for 20-30 per cent of its total sales by 2027.

Rohit Thakur, chief human

resource officer for the auto and farm sector at M&M, said: “The shift to electric-origin vehicles is an opportunity to empower our workforce with future-ready skills. We’ve launched reskilling programmes in EV architecture, battery technology, vehicle electronics, and high-voltage safety. Job rotations provide hands-on experience with both ICE and EV technologies, while specialised training for our front-line workforce focuses on battery handling and advanced manufacturing.”

India’s EV market, currently valued at ₹49,000 crore, is projected to reach ₹3.18 trillion by 2030, according to a report by the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India and Grant Thornton Bharat.

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