

Foxconn India journey gets a leg-up

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Apple and iPhone have been in the news as part of the India manufacturing story. On Friday, Foxconn, a leading contract manufacturer for Apple, got recognition in the form of a civilian award conferred on the Taiwanese firm's chief executive officer Young Liu.

Among the 17 winners of Padma Bhushan, Liu was one. A total of 132 won the 2024 Padma Awards (Padma Vibushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri) for excellence in diverse fields.

As for Foxconn, its India journey began as early as 2006 when it entered the market as a manufacturer for Nokia in Tamil Nadu and its subsidiary FIH Mobile set up three facilities in the state. About two decades later, Foxconn

is seen as a powerhouse of electronics manufacturing in the India market, both for exporting iPhones to other countries and domestic sales.

"I firmly believe this is an affirmation of a collaboration that benefits India's long-term development and supports the growth of local economies. I will continue to inspire my team. Let's do our part for manufacturing in India and for the betterment of society,"

Liu said in a statement after the award.

Foxconn is the world's largest electronics manufacturer and Apple's biggest iPhone maker. For Foxconn's expansion in India, geopolitics has played a role. With Apple following a 'China Plus One' strategy, its contractors like Foxconn have upped their game in India, an ana-



YOUNG LIU

CEO & Chairman,
Foxconn Group

INDIA TIMELINE

April 2006: Foxconn enters India market as a manufacturer for Nokia in Chennai

2014: Winds up operations after Microsoft buys Nokia. Later, re-enters India as an Apple manufacturer

February 2022: Foxconn, Vedanta join hands for chip manufacturing

July 2023: Companies snap talks

December 2023: Centre confirms Foxconn submitted application for chip fab unit India

lyst said. The company had earlier said that its India operations generate around \$10 billion revenues annually.

Foxconn is also planning to make India its third global hub for electric vehicle (EV) contract manufacturing.

Analysts explained the Padma award for the Foxconn CEO as an honour to an industry major which is set to invest "several billion dollars" in India. Last year, it had lined up mega investments in states such as Karnataka, Telangana and Tamil Nadu.

However, it's not been a

smooth ride all through Foxconn's India journey.

As a contract manufacturer for Nokia earlier, it had to experience a sudden turn of fortunes when Microsoft acquired Nokia in 2014.

Following a dip in orders, it announced in December 2014 that it was winding up operations. But the firm later returned to India as an Apple manufacturer.

At present, the company reportedly has an estimated 15 subsidiaries in India.

"We have over 30 factories in India. The turnover and business

size are roughly \$10 billion annually. We have over 20 dormitories that shelter tens and thousands of employees who work with Foxconn in India," Liu had told the media recently.

The group's investments include ₹8,800 crore in Karnataka by Foxconn Industrial Internet (FII), a ₹1,600 crore deal with Tamil Nadu for a mobile component unit, a phone enclosure project in Karnataka for ₹3,000 crore and another worth ₹2,000 crore for semiconductor equipment project.

In Tamil Nadu's Sriperumbudur unit, the company is increasing the staff strength from 15,000 to around 18,000 in the immediate future.

One of its unsuccessful plans was a venture with the Vedanta group or making semiconductors. Last July, Foxconn withdrew from the joint venture.

Last month, the government said that Foxconn had submitted its application for setting up a semiconductor fab unit in the country—that could mean a bigger pie in the India market for the Taiwanese major.