

Indian states clamour for Tesla plant after Musk tweet

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Tesla's hopes to sell its vehicles in India have been stalled by efforts to negotiate lower import duties.

Indian politicians are clamouring for Elon Musk's attention on Twitter, chasing the coveted right to host a Tesla factory, after the billionaire said

government "challenges" were delaying his electric car company's local launch.

Tesla's hopes to sell its vehicles in one of the world's biggest markets have been stalled by efforts to negotiate lower import duties, which can be as high as 100 percent.

After being quizzed about a potential launch date last week, Musk tweeted that his California-based company was "still working through a lot of challenges with the government", without giving further details.

The comments have since prompted ministers from several Indian states to respond on Twitter with public overtures to the world's wealthiest man—himself a prolific user of the social media platform.

"Hey Elon, I am the Industry & Commerce Minister of Telangana state in India," KT Rama Rao tweeted in response to Musk on Friday.

"Our state is a champion in sustainability initiatives & a top notch business destination."

Three other states put their own cases forward over the weekend.

West Bengal's minority affairs minister said his corner of the country boasted the best infrastructure and "vision".

In Mumbai the development minister touted his state's "progressive" credentials.

And in Punjab, lawmaker and retired international cricketer Navjot Singh Sidhu promised a commitment to green jobs and sustainable development.

Musk has tweeted numerous times since his "challenges" comment last week, but has so far not responded to any of his Indian entreaties.

New Delhi has introduced incentives for foreign carmakers to manufacture their vehicles locally but Musk has said he wants to gauge demand with imports first.

India imposes a 100 percent tax on imported [electric vehicles](#) worth more than \$40,000, and Tesla fears the steep duties will price them out of the cost-sensitive Indian market.

Electric cars accounted for only 1.3 percent of all vehicles sold in the country in 2020-21, according to research by digital consultancy Techarc.

The government's target is for 30 percent of private cars to be electric by 2030 as part of a wider push to decarbonise the transport sector.

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