

Mercedes-Benz Korea discloses EV battery makers after fire

August 13 2024



A Mercedes electric car charging station at a parking lot in Seoul. Mercedes-Benz Korea has released the names of its electric vehicle battery suppliers, bowing to public outrage after one of its cars burst into flame in a parking lot earlier this month.

Mercedes-Benz Korea released the names of its electric vehicle battery

suppliers on Tuesday, bowing to public outrage after one of its cars burst into flame in a parking lot earlier this month.

The August 1 [fire](#) damaged hundreds of vehicles and created a national panic, with car parks across South Korea imposing a wave of adhoc restrictions amid growing calls for transparency on battery supply chains.

South Korea is a major producer of batteries and electric vehicles, including local carmakers Hyundai and Kia, with EVs making up 9.3 percent of new cars purchased last year—higher than in the US.

"Although the analysis is still in progress, the CCTV footage suggests that this fire exhibits all the signs of being caused by a battery," a spokesman at the Incheon Fire Department told AFP.

According to experts, battery fires are tougher to extinguish than conventional ones due to the thermal runaway effect—a chain reaction within battery cells.

The Mercedes-Benz model EQE 350 that exploded into flames had a battery from Chinese manufacturer Farasis Energy, Mercedes Korea disclosed on its website Tuesday.

Local media have shown dramatic images of the car catching fire, causing a blaze that destroyed 40 vehicles in the [parking lot](#), with the fire department saying some 23 people were hospitalized for smoke inhalation.

Fire authorities are investigating the deactivation of the car park's sprinkler system in the fire's initial minutes, with local media speculating a maintenance worker may have thought it had been activated in error.

South Korea's Office for Policy Coordination said Tuesday it would

recommend automakers voluntarily disclose the battery brand information for all electric vehicles sold in the country.

"To alleviate the concerns of residents in multi-unit housing, it has been decided to conduct urgent inspections of fire safety facilities, such as sprinklers, in underground parking lots," it added.

The government also plans to offer a "free inspection" of electric vehicles to ease any fire-related concerns among their owners, they said.

The incident has heightened concerns about the safety of [electric vehicles](#), prompting some apartment complexes to ban EVs from underground parking and to shut down charging stations.

Other Mercedes battery suppliers include South Korean companies LG Energy Solution and SK On and China's CATL, the company revealed Tuesday.

The fire has sparked a public demand for mandatory disclosure of [battery](#) suppliers by EV manufacturers.

© 2024 AFP

Citation: Mercedes-Benz Korea discloses EV battery makers after fire (2024, August 13) retrieved 16 August 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2024-08-mercedes-benz-korea-discloses-ev.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.