

‘Reducing air pollution’ best reason to buy electric vehicles not rising fuel cost: survey reveals

75% of respondents support a target of at least 50% of all vehicles in India to be electric by 2030

September 6, 2018: A survey commissioned by Climate Trends and carried out by FourthLion Technologies reveals that 87 percent of the respondents believe reducing air pollution is the best reason to purchase an electric vehicle. The survey was conducted online between August 21-24 among 2,178 Indian drivers, vehicle owners and those who plan to purchase, own or drive a vehicle in the next 10 years.

Transportation accounts for about 24% of India’s carbon emissions and is a major source for air pollution in several cities across the country. According to a recent WHO report, 14 of the top 20 most polluted cities of the world are in India.

The survey revealed that most drivers and vehicle owners are personally affected by poor air quality. 76% say they – along with their neighbours, friends or family - suffer from poor air quality every day or are starting to show symptoms of being affected by air pollution. Delhi seemed to be worst affected with 91% of its respondents said they or someone they knew were suffering from poor air quality. Similarly, high percentages were recorded in Hyderabad (78%), Chennai (75%), Mumbai (74%), Bangalore (71%), and Kolkata (70%).

Drivers and vehicle owners say they are ‘much more likely’ to consider purchasing an electric vehicle after learning that ‘electric vehicles reduce air pollution through zero on-road emissions’ (72%) and after learning that ‘recharging and driving an electric vehicle costs less per kilometre than fuelling and driving a petrol or diesel vehicle’ (71%).

India is the third largest market for automobiles and the world’s largest market when it comes to two-wheelers. Over 4 million internal combustion engine vehicles were sold in India in 2017, and 81% of those sales (20 million units) came from the 2-wheeler segment alone. In comparison, according to data from Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles (SMEV), less than a million electric vehicles were sold in India, from which 93% were electric 3-wheelers.

The survey indicates very healthy awareness and potential willingness among the respondents to consider purchasing electric vehicles. However, they identified the lack of easily accessible charging infrastructure (59%) and limited driving range on current battery packs (46%) as their biggest objection towards adopting one.

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About Climate Trends: Climate Trends LLP is a media strategy initiative focusing on building public understanding and reportage of climate change, environment and clean energy issues. We help organisations, think tanks and start-ups to achieve their communication goals on climate change and clean energy campaigns. We identify gaps and opportunities on the road to low carbon pathways and work towards creating a media discourse focused on solutions to climate change.

About FourthLion Technologies: FourthLion Technologies is India’s leading provider of public opinion polling including its proprietary instaVaani polling platform. FourthLion has conducted more

than 1 million telephone, online and in person surveys with Indian voters and citizens and has published findings in leading publications such as India Today and Mint.

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Quotes

Anil Srivastava, DG-DMEO and Advisor to Niti Aayog,

"100pc EV by 2030 is too far, it will happen much sooner. 70pc entrenchment of 2 and 3 wheelers will be electric in next few years. Two wheelers contribute to at least 25 pc of pollution. India needs to handle mobility issues differently. The writing is on the wall, Morgan Stanley report predicts India to be ahead of China in EV penetration and shared mobility."

Kedar Soman, Plugin India

"What is interesting to are very high numbers of people who state that they are affected by pollution and consider switching to electric vehicle with worsening pollution in mind. These numbers strongly resonate with the sentiment we see on ground in formal and informal settings. Many people realize that if they have a vehicle that can go 300 km and takes 3 minutes to refill, but if they don't have clean air to breathe, that's not really a convenience.

This makes a strong case for a broader effort on public education on electric vehicles. We don't need awareness, it's there now. Now we need education to get enough people to switch to EVs that it will build necessary critical mass for catalysing mass change. Policy needs to focus on not only economics but education as well."

Andrew Claster, FourthLion Technologies

"The survey demonstrates that Indians are literally sick and tired of breathing air that makes them ill. Indians are ready for electric vehicles and they want their government to take the lead by setting a target that at least 50% of vehicles must be electric by 2030."

Anand Mahindra, Chairman, Mahindra Group

"Since we invested in the technology we have often been told that we were making a big mistake betting on battery powered vehicles. And today with the world transitioning to the new normal, we are recognized as pioneers in electric vehicles and look forward to making India an economy powered by electric mobility."