

# Mahindra & Mahindra evinces interest in Punjab, may invest in electric vehicles

ET Bureau|

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Punjab is focusing on environment-friendly electric vehicles in a big way. Chief Minister Capt. Amarinder Singh is meeting representatives of auto companies trying to make a paradigm shift towards the environment-friendly electric vehicles. State Government is likely to come up with a new industrial policy with focus on the same. Mahindra & Mahindra that employs 6000 people in the state seem to be the front-runner.

On Monday, Chief Minister met Mahindra & Mahindra Managing Director Pawan Goenka. Even the Chinese energy major Yinlong, recently discussed the possibility of launching electric cars and buses in state.

Goenka said his company was keenly interested in investing in promoting electric vehicles in Punjab. He suggested a scheme to bring in electric taxis to propagate green energy and generate employment in the state.

"We are also in talks with Ola for electric taxis. Government is keen to explore electric vehicles as a replacement for the traditional, more polluting petrol and diesel run vehicles in the state," Capt. Amarinder Singh said.

Also a proposal to launch an Uber-like app for tractors, called Tringo, was also discussed at the meeting. The app would enable owners to rent out their tractors. The chief minister responded favourably to Goenka's request for expansion of their tractor units in Punjab and asked the company to submit a proposal.

Urging the company to support the state's efforts to provide employment to youth, the chief minister offered help to Tech Mahindra in setting up a BPO in Mohali after Goenka said there was huge potential in the IT sector for job creation. Terming employment generation as the state's biggest challenge, the chief minister urged

Goenka to ensure that the company has an effective presence in the upcoming job fair in Mohali.

"Mahindra & Mahindra is also interested in potato seed development for exports," Goenka said.

The chief minister also reminded Goenka of his suggestion, made to Anand Mahindra in Mumbai, for setting up a defence project in Abhor. Goenka said the company was exploring the same. The chief minister said the government was also considering the company's proposal to develop the Ranjit Sagar dam resort.

Taking forward from their Mumbai talks, the two sides also discussed an Uttar Pradesh-like Dial 100 emergency response system for Punjab to provide prompt integrated emergency services to ensure public safety for all, including those with special needs. Home and Police departments were studying the proposal.

Mahindra & Mahindra is further interested in setting up training institutes for industrial workers. The company, which employs about 6000 people directly and another 30000 indirectly in Punjab, currently earns Rs. 6000 crore in revenue from the state.

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