

CHANDIGARH PLANS TO ACCELERATE ADOPTION OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES

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Chandigarh's Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy, 2022 seeks to reduce the use of fossil fuels, which contribute substantially to the rising particulate air pollution in the Union Territory.

As a "model EV city", Chandigarh aims to have one of the highest penetrations of zero-emission vehicles (ZEV) among all Indian cities by the end of the policy period of five years.

Approved by Chandigarh Administrator Banwarilal Purohit, the policy, which came into effect earlier this week, addresses the slow uptake of EVs and the changing policy, technology, and market landscapes of the sector.

The policy prioritises public and shared transport, goods carriers, and two-wheelers to accelerate the adoption of EVs.

Dharam Pal, adviser to the administrator, said the policy incentivises the adoption of vehicle categories such as e-bicycles, e-2 wheelers, e-carts, e-autorickshaws, e-goods carriers, and personal and commercial e-four wheelers, over and above FAME-II policy incentives provided by the Government of India. With an eye on adopting zero-emission mobility for achieving carbon neutrality in Chandigarh by 2030, the policy envisages that EVs will contribute 70% of new vehicle registrations by the end of the policy period.

According to the policy, disposal of EV batteries in landfills will be prohibited and while the adoption of EVs can aid better air quality, and reduce noise pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, experts have voiced other environmental concerns.

"Electric vehicle has long-term dangers. The lithium ion batteries used in EVs could be dangerous. Lithium as such is a very reactive material and if this enters our food chain, it could have devastating health consequences," Jatinderpal Kundra of the Chandigarh-based environment work group Climategiri and the NGO Save Environment Society said.

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