

VinFast's Swift Tamil Nadu EV Build Signals Bold Ambition

Category: Business

written by News Mall | August 14, 2025



India wants millions of electric vehicles on its roads by the end of the decade. That transformation will require rapid execution not just from the government but also from car makers.

VinFast, the upstart Vietnamese EV maker, has just shown how quickly that ambition can take shape, in a feat that one prominent Indian newspaper called “the fastest manufacturing scale-up by any foreign carmaker in India.” From groundbreaking to inauguration, it took 17 months to turn an empty patch of land into an assembly plant in Tamil Nadu. The facility features robotic body shops, automated paint lines, and a workforce trained to international standards.



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The Race Against Time

Most large auto plants take 24 to 36 months to complete, according to Brian Jones, COO of Gray, a firm that has built many auto and parts plants across North America. "From the first shovel in the ground to the first vehicle rolling off an assembly line, the fastest we've ever seen is 24 months," Jones told one American media outlet.

VinFast beat that benchmark. The company broke ground in February 2024 and inaugurated the plant this August. The achievement required careful site selection. VinFast chose Tamil Nadu from 15 sites across six states, prioritizing port access, infrastructure, workforce availability, and – most importantly – a government that acted as an active facilitator. Tamil Nadu Industries Minister T.R.B. Rajaa said many states tried to grab the car manufacturing unit, but Tamil Nadu proved its capabilities by providing all necessary facilities.

"It reaffirms Tamil Nadus progressive industrial policies and will substantially contribute to local economic advancement, job creation, and technical skill development," Mr. Rajaa said in a press release.

The 400-acre facility can produce 50,000 units annually, with the flexibility to scale up to 150,000. An adjacent industrial zone will nurture local suppliers and create a broader manufacturing ecosystem.

Precision and Modernity From Day One

Inside the factory, the Body Shop houses 17 robots working alongside skilled welders and assemblers. The Paint Shop uses eight robots to apply consistent finishes, layer after layer.

To achieve that, VinFast partnered with ABB, Durr, Atlas Copco, Arrow, and Siemens. Together, they integrated automation and quality control systems that meet Industry 4.0 standards. A Manufacturing Execution System tracks each stage. Smart torque tools and 3D measurement systems verify parts before they move forward.

Another aspect showing VinFast's speed is the fact that hiring began long before the assembly lines were complete. In April, a large-scale recruitment drive was conducted through the Naan Mudhalvan program, and just three months later, the plant inducted the first 200 workers, trained to meet international standards.

By the time the plant reaches full capacity, it will employ between 3,000 and 3,500 workers directly.

A Factory Built for the Future

The site's proximity to a major port gives it an advantage beyond India's borders. VinFast plans to use Thoothukudi as its main export hub for South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. Orders from Sri Lanka and Mauritius are already

confirmed. *"We aim to develop the Thoothukudi plant into VinFast's largest export hub for South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa,"* said **Mr. Chau**.

State leaders see this as the start of something bigger, with the factory also fitting into India's broader climate goals. Chief Minister Stalin said it would address the commitment to combating global warming and also improve the economy of the southern districts.

The speed of construction was a statement as much as an achievement. For VinFast, it signals a determination to compete in one of the world's most dynamic EV markets, with the next phase bringing more automation, higher output, and deeper ties between Vietnam and India.

