

EV ADOPTION

Singapore's electric-vehicle journey in 2021

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Singapore

SINGAPORE made a great push for electric vehicle (EV) adoption this year, with the government unveiling several schemes to encourage consumers to make the switch.

It will set aside S\$30 million over the next 5 years for EV-related initiatives, such as measures to improve charging provision at private premises.

There are also plans to deploy 60,000 charging points at public car parks and private premises by 2030 – a more ambitious target from 28,000 previously.

As the year comes to a close, *The Business Times* recaps the key developments in the EV sector which Singapore saw this year.

Tesla comes to Singapore

The US car manufacturer delivered its first cars to customers here in July, and its most basic Model 3, which costs nearly S\$200,000 in Singapore, immediately became the country's top-selling sedan by September.

Data from the Land Transport Authority showed the number of new Teslas on Singapore roads rising more than 10-fold to 487 by the third quarter, from just 30 in the first half of the year.

Also in July, private equity real estate investment manager Firmus Capital announced that Tesla has leased an industrial building in Toa Payoh Lorong 8 from the company for a period of up to 20 years. The building will house a showroom for Tesla's EVs, a technical support and service centre, as well as Tesla's Singapore corporate office.

Separately, the electric car maker set up its first 3 "supercharger" charging points in Orchard Central, making it the supercharger's debut in South-east Asia. It has since installed charging points at 2 other malls – Katong V and Milenia Walk – with plans to set up more in the future.

BlueSG inks deal with TotalEnergies, acquired by Goldbell

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It plans to invest S\$70 million into BlueSG over the next 5 years, with S\$40 million to be made by 2023.

Goldbell had said in a statement that among its foremost priorities would be to establish an open innovation platform to act as a test bed for new and experimental pilot technologies and expand BlueSG's fleet and staff strength.

Separately, BlueSG also sold its network of 1,500 EV charging points to French energy giant TotalEnergies for an undisclosed sum.

TotalEnergies had said that it would continue to maintain and operate the chargers so long as it has approval to do so from the relevant authorities.

SP Group expands EV charging network

SP Group and Porsche Asia Pacific announced that they will launch 3 new Porsche destination charging network sites by January 2022, adding a total of 15 new charging points to the network.

Both parties have also partnered property developer City Developments Ltd (CDL) to expand EV charging infrastructure at 4 of CDL's properties – City Square Mall, King's Centre, Palais Renaissance and Quayside Isle, adding another

15 charging points to the PDC network.

Separately, the utilities group said it struck an agreement with Goldbell Group to make its EV charging network available to the vehicle leasing and distribution company's commercial fleet.

It would also install EV charging infrastructure on Goldbell's customers' premises, where feasible, and make its charging points available to BlueSG users post-acquisition.

SMRT to replace taxi fleet with EVs

Transport operator SMRT announced in April that it plans to replace its entire fleet of taxis with EVs within the next 5 years, and would bring in its first batch of EVs from July.

The fleet of EVs to be launched could include various models well-suited to meet the demands of the transport market. These could include sedans, station wagons and multi-purpose vehicles, SMRT had said.

Grab, Hyundai launch EV pilots in South-east Asia

The ride-hailing company and car manufacturer announced that it will launch new pilot projects in Singapore, Indonesia and Vietnam to encourage EV adoption among Grab drivers and delivery persons.

The pilots will test new EV business models, such as battery and car leasing arrangements.

Both companies said the programme seeks to lower the barrier to entry for EV adoption in South-east Asia and allay fears that EVs have inadequate range to reach a destination.

ComfortDelgro to operate electric bus fleet in NUS

The transport operator's wholly-owned private bus company secured a S\$30 million contract to operate the shuttle bus service at the National University of Singapore (NUS) campus.

With the deal, ComfortDelgro Bus is set to operate Singapore's largest electrified private bus fleet.

The NUS electric buses will begin operations in the third quarter of 2022, and will serve the 8 existing shuttle bus routes within the campus covering NUS Kent Ridge campus, University Town as well as NUS Bukit Timah campus daily.

SingPost trials use of electric motorcycles

SingPost began testing the use of 3-wheel electric scooters to deliver mail here, it announced in July.

It has plans to replace all of its lighter vehicles with electric ones by 2026.