

Tesla's cars coming soon to India? Co seeks retail staff

Showrooms Likely In Mumbai's BKC, Delhi Aerocity

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New Delhi: Elon Musk may be inching closer to launching Tesla's much-acclaimed electric cars in India. Days after meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the US, Tesla seems to have revived its stalled plans to enter the Indian market and has advertised for retail positions in Mumbai.

This is one of the strongest indications that the company has finally decided to look at starting operations in the country, after flirting with the idea for several years, including Musk announcing plans to visit the country early last year, before calling it off at the last minute. Sources said Tesla will initially import cars into the country and sell them through retail outlets in Mumbai and Delhi.

"In Delhi, the showroom is

MUSK'S FLIP-FLOPS ON INDIA

2021 | Musk says he wants 'temporary relief' on custom tax as 'import duties (in India) are the highest in the world by far for any large country!'

2022 | Tesla begins work to import cars into India after exploratory efforts, and also hires some



personnel, but plans go into cold storage

➤ Musk complains about high import duty in India, claims the tax structure does 'not seem consistent with the climate goals' of the country

2024 | Musk announces plans to visit India in April to meet PM Modi, but cancels at the last minute

likely to open at WorldMark at Aerocity in one of the three existing office blocks. The likely site could be at Worldmark 3 that once used to house a mall and is the biggest space in this complex. Brookfield and Tesla have been in talks for the same," said a source. Real estate insiders said Tesla had been scouting for a place in Delhi "between Saket and Vasant

Kunj." In Mumbai, the showroom is going to be in BKC.

The company has listed 13 jobs on its website and social media platform LinkedIn for various customer-facing and back-end roles in Mumbai. Among them is a "store manager", responsible for overseeing and driving sales at the location, one job listing showed, a pointer to the company loo-

king to open a showroom in India's financial capital. Delivery operations and customer support specialists are also being sought, the ads showed. Tesla is understood to have hired some officials in India earlier too but then let them go as entry plans were put on hold.

Musk and US President Donald Trump have often criticised the high import duty on cars in India, and Tesla may have decided to change plans in favour of the country after assurances of support from the govt this time around.

Besides, India and the US have agreed to negotiate a bilateral trade agreement, where tariffs are expected to be cut. Tesla's plans may have also been encouraged by a decision in the Budget where govt lowered the basic customs duty for cars costing upwards of \$40,000, though the effective duty was left unchanged.