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A Lighter Battery to Convert a Four-Seater to 10

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D-Espat, which is based in Choolaimedu, has come up with a design that would reduce the weight of four-seater Reva car by 175 kilograms — reducing it from 665 kilograms to 490 kilograms — thereby paving way for an increased load.

“When the weight of the car is reduced, the payload can be increased and the battery will run for a longer period. The design of the car can be changed either to make it eight to 10 seater with the same battery, or use the excess payload to transport goods,” says Syed Mubasheer Ali, director of D-ESPAT Pvt Ltd., and a former engineering design national award winner.

The prototype will be displayed at an expo organised by the Tamil Nadu Energy Development Agency (TEDA) in June this year. “Our aim is to introduce electric vehicles for public transportation. Some of our batteries have been used in countries like Philippines, where the rechargeable batteries are fit on to three-wheelers and two-wheelers attached with side cars that are used for public transport. The local transport authorities in Philippines had taken up the initiative as part of their drive to go green. The drivers can either recharge the battery at home or get it recharged from a network of Battery Swapping Stations in the city,” he says.

While an electric car today is two and half times higher than the cost of a normal car, according to Syed, the cost can be brought down considerably if one goes for mass transport. “If the vehicles are used for mass transportation, much of the excise duty and red tapism that goes towards making electric cars expensive can be reduced, “ he says.

This is apart from the advantage of reduced fuel cost. “The refitted car now has a battery charging cost of `25 per kilometre. If this is used for mass transport with large volumes, this can be brought down to as low as `50 paise per kilometer. As such, it will be much more economical for both public transport and local transportation of goods,” he says. The company has been recognised by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research of the Ministry of Science and Technology, and has been designing everything from batteries for the military and aerospace to medical equipment. It has also been working with the students of VIT to design electric racing cars. The team was one of the two student teams from India to race at Silverstone in the UK last year.