

Philippines bin electric vehicles

With a variety of electric vehicle (EV) brands and models entering the Philippine market, finding an EV is more convenient. Check out the latest DOE recognized EV models below pursuant to the Electric Vehicle Industry Development Act (EVIDA). These electric vehicles are for sale in the Philippines. If you are not sure where to charge your EV, you can easily search for charging stations near you through the EV Industry Portal.

I'm no songwriter, so I can't say for sure what Philip Oakey and Giorgio Moroder had in mind when they penned "Together in Electric Dreams" back in the '80s. Perhaps it's a story on the enduring power of friendship. Maybe the pair wanted to comment on the increasing role of technology in people's lives. Hell, it could just be gibberish layered on top of a then-trendy synthpop beat.

Or--hear me out--maybe Oakey and Moroder were visionaries who foresaw that we would all one day be riding around in battery-powered two- and four-wheelers. Yes, I see it now. "We'll always be together, together in electric...vehicles." Cue synthesizer.

Overused musical references and atrocious lyricism aside, the fact is that the future of our personal mobility will be powered by electricity. Toyota, who is responsible for roughly two out of every five brand-new cars sold in the country, plans to sell 5.5 million electrified units annually across the globe by 2025. Volkswagen Group has stated that it will stop selling internal combustion-powered cars in Europe entirely by the early 2030s. In some countries, electric cars and charging stations are already a common sight.

Figures from the Land Transportation Office (LTO) show that there were 11,950 electric vehicles registered with the agency between 2010 to 2019. Of these, cars, SUVs, and utility vehicles made up just 7.5%--roughly 896 units--over that 10-year stretch.

Why has the Philippines been so slow to adapt? According to former Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) supervising research specialist Maureen Ane Rosellon, who recently wrote a paper titled "Clean Energy Technology in the Philippines: Case of the Electric Vehicle Industry," there are numerous challenges plaguing the progress of EVs in the country.

"[The growth of EVs in the country] faces relatively low technology utilization, general concerns about the infrastructure, and strong competition for investments," Rosellon said during a PIDS webinar titled "Challenges and Prospects of the Philippine Electric Vehicle Industry."

The infrastructure concerns are perhaps more prominent in the Philippines than in any other country in the region. In 2019, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) noted that there were only 19 charging stations throughout the country. Vietnam, in contrast, has over 400 stations courtesy of automotive startup Vinfast to service the country's 97 million citizens.

On paper, this may not be as big an issue as it seems--a recent study by J.D. Power found that almost 90% of EV owners prefer to charge at home. However, considering that the Philippines has some of the most expensive electricity rates in Asia and a low average income, the lack of publicly available charging stations is a significant deterrent for many would-be EV buyers.

And if charging is not widely available, then motorists' range anxiety would only grow further. A study commissioned by Nissan in 2018 investigating the state of EVs in Southeast Asia found that 60% of respondents consider worrying about running out of power to be "Very Important."

"The future car is going to be autonomous, electric, connected, and shared. Hence, there is a need to focus on the role that the Philippines could play in building autonomous vehicles and smart cities, e-commerce and the future of delivery vehicles, and online mobility platforms or ride-hailing applications," she stated during the PIDS webinar.

Aldaba adds that attention should also be given to encouraging the use of more convenient public transportation in urban areas as well as the growing number of e-scooters and e-bikes in the country. As per the LTO, there were 4,260 electric motorcycles and 6,783 electric tricycles registered with the agency last decade.

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