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Thimphu, 6 March 2023: The 16 EVs are among the total 19 supported through a USD 1.1 million project supported by the Government of Japan and UNDP. The remaining three cars will be delivered soon.

The project titled, "Leveraging Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to achieve net-zero emissions and climate-resilient development, in response to the climate emergency," is a partnership between the Government of Japan and UNDP's next phase of the Climate Promise: From Pledge to Impact. It aims to help countries turn their NDC (Nationally Determined Contributions) carbon reduction targets into concrete results.

The Cabinet Secretary, on behalf of the people and Royal Government of Bhutan, conveyed appreciation to the Government and people of Japan and UNDP for the support, notwithstanding the difficult times brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. "The support will go a long way in building public confidence in EV and reducing Bhutan's dependence on fossil fuel," said the Cabinet Secretary.

Eight quick charging stations will be installed at strategic locations through the project. It will also build the capacity of EV technicians and work towards creating an enabling policy for EV promotion and increase awareness on EVs to boost consumer confidence. These will help improve the EV ecosystem in the country.

The project builds on the "Bhutan Sustainable Low-Emission Urban Transport System" project funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and supported by UNDP, which helped 291 taxi drivers switch to EVs. It will help Bhutan achieve its goal to always remain carbon neutral.

UNDP Bhutan Resident Representative commended Bhutan's bold step towards greening its transport sector. He thanked the Governments of Bhutan and Japan for the partnership.

"EVs are an important solution for countries to meet their emission reduction targets. Our EV partnerships seek to demonstrate the viability of a low-emission transport system and pave the way for wider and faster adoption of EVs to reduce dependence on fossil fuel. It's imperative that we keep the EV momentum alive. UNDP remains committed to provide the support needed and at speed and scale," said Mr. Younus.

Almost 99.9% of motor vehicles in Bhutan are powered by diesel or petrol. Vehicle emissions accounted for 60% of the total emissions from the energy sector, amounting to approximately 398,829 metric tons of CO₂e emissions in 2019.

Most significant rise in GHG emissions is expected from light vehicles (3.8 times), followed by medium vehicles (3.6 times) and heavy vehicles (3 times). Currently, light vehicles (including taxis) and two-wheelers combined account for more than 81 percent of the total registered vehicles, while heavy and medium public transport buses together constitute less than a percent.

UNDP Cambodia would like to invite local NGOs and CBOs working on environmental conservation, climate change adaptation and poverty reduction in (1) all villages...

While Kuensel's regular coverage of the government's EV project (March 26, March 19, March 14) is appreciated, the vast majority of EV owners in Bhutan, which are privately owned and not taxis, are almost never mentioned. As having catered to this silent majority since 2014, I would like to share information for a more balanced view of EVs in Bhutan.

We were one of the first companies to introduce EVs for the mass consumer market in Bhutan in 2014 with the Nissan Leaf and have gone through ups and downs of the EV experience in Bhutan so far. Our work on EVs started in 2010 when we assembled an EV in Bhutan and applied for a patent. Although almost all the components were imported, we designed and fabricated the critical component connecting the electric motor to the gearbox in Bhutan. We also used open source firmware and purchased other software for the vehicle control system and the battery management system.

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