

## Electric vehicle adoption vientiane

VIENTIANE (Laotian Times): The burgeoning popularity of electric vehicles (EVs) in Laos has marked significant growth in 2023, with a total of 4,631 EVs sold, comprising 2,592 cars and 2,039 motorbikes.

But while the world is striving toward a green transition, this surge in EV adoption in Laos is not seamlessly matched by the necessary infrastructure. Currently, the country boasts only 41 charging stations, with the majority being in Vientiane Capital.

This is in stark contrast to its neighboring countries. Thailand, for instance, has surged ahead with an extensive network of 2,222 charging locations and a total of 8,702 charging units as of September this year.

Nonetheless, the Ministry of Energy and Mines is collaborating with relevant sectors to establish regulations on taxation, technical standards of EVs, and the management of vehicle charging stations.

In 2022, former Prime Minister Phankham Viphavanh introduced a policy to facilitate the sales of electric vehicles by removing import limits, provided the vehicles met international quality, safety, after-sales service, maintenance, and waste management standards.

The policy also offers a 30 percent reduction in the annual road tax for electric vehicles compared to their petrol counterparts with equivalent engine power and allows EVs priority parking at charging stations and other public parking areas.

The Ministry of Industry and Commerce, in collaboration with the natural resources and environment sector, is actively developing strategies for managing expired batteries. EV batteries must be replaced every seven to 10 years for smaller vehicles, and three to four years for larger EVs such as buses or vans.

While Laos' EV market is currently smaller than that of neighboring countries like Thailand and Vietnam, the government is proactively driving EV adoption. Leveraging the country's considerable potential for electricity generation through renewable sources, Laos aims to increase its EV consumption to at least 1 percent of total vehicles by 2025, encompassing cars, buses, and motorcycles.

The surge in electric vehicle (EV) adoption in Laos has seen remarkableIn 2023, Laos experienced growth in electric vehicle (EV) sales, totaling 4,631 units, which included 2,592 cars and 2,039 motorbikes. However, despite this encouraging trend, Laos encounters obstacles in infrastructure expansion, evident by the limited presence of charging stations, numbering only 41 and predominantly situated in Vientiane Capital. The growth of the EV market in Laos, the infrastructure limitations, government initiatives, and the country's vision for sustainable transportation.

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In 2023, Laos experienced substantial expansion in its EV market, marked by the sale of 4,631 EVs, indicating an increasing inclination towards sustainable transportation options. Nonetheless, the uptick in EV usage is hindered by inadequate infrastructure, exemplified by Laos' possession of merely 41 charging stations. This scarcity poses a barrier to the widespread acceptance of EVs.

In contrast to Laos, neighboring countries like Thailand have made significant strides in EV infrastructure, proudly presenting a vast network comprising 2,222 charging locations and 8,702 charging units as of September. This infrastructure gap highlights the need for Laos to enhance its charging infrastructure to support the growing EV market effectively.

The Ministry of Energy and Mines in Laos is working alongside pertinent sectors to develop guidelines regarding taxation, technical standards for EVs, and the administration of vehicle charging stations. In 2022, Former Prime Minister Phankham Viphavanh implemented a policy aimed at boosting EV sales. This policy entailed the removal of import restrictions, a 30 percent reduction in annual road tax for EVs, and the allocation of priority parking at charging stations.

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