

Electric vehicle adoption naypyidaw

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At least 12 Chinese-made electric vehicle (EV) charging stations were imported by Myanmar's military regime in the second week of February as the junta attempts to jump-start the domestic EV market even as it struggles to maintain a reliable electricity supply across much of the country.

"Construction of EV charging stations for electric vehicles has already started. Pilot projects for EV charging stations are being carried out in Yangon and Naypyidaw. EV charging station models were sent to the office of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy in Naypyidaw," said a merchant in Yangon.

The junta-appointed Minister of Electricity and Energy U Thaung Han has told some local media that the required electricity for EV charging stations will be sourced primarily from solar power.

The regime's National Steering Committee for Development of Electric Vehicles and Associated Businesses invited interested domestic and foreign companies to import electric vehicles (EV) and related products in September 2022.

Out of 26 companies that made submissions to the committee, two Chinese companies -- Chin Dwin Shan Construction and NPK Motors -- were selected and allowed to import electric vehicles and accessories for the first time on January 24.

A merchant from Naypyidaw, who did not want to be named, said there was no transparency in inviting companies to import electric vehicles into the country, and only a few companies that are cosy with the military regime were allowed to import.

"There is no transparency. Only companies close to the military council are allowed to import electric vehicles," he said.

The National Steering Committee for Development of Electric Vehicles and Associated Businesses announced that the initial pilot project period for the importation of electric vehicles and accessories has been set from January 2023 to December 31 of this year. The committee has approved the installation of 51 charging stations, including seven along the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway and seven in Naypyidaw.

Junta boss Min Aung Hlaing, who is also Myanmar's self-appointed prime minister, has said that electric charging stations will also be installed along the Mandalay-Lashio road, Yangon-Mawlamyine road, and in Kayin (Karen) State.

Electric vehicles (EVs) seem to be facing increasing hurdles as adoption slows down across the United States and Europe, even as demand surges dramatically higher in China. With car manufacturers and governments grappling to fulfill longstanding commitments to improve affordability and expand charging infrastructure, the transition to EVs is proving more complex than initially anticipated.

The underlying challenges are manifold. Firstly, numerous drivers have expressed skepticism especially concerning charging stations, pricing, and the general range of electric vehicles. This skepticism has been compounded by changing political landscapes, particularly with reports of an upcoming U.S. president who has vocalized his disapproval of government support for EVs.

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