

ZekiTek and MDF partner to build commercial case for electric vehicles

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ZekiTek Pty Ltd, a Queensland-based renewable energy technology and electrical charging systems manufacturer, has partnered with the Australian Government's Market Development Facility (MDF) on a pilot project looking to establish a new commercial electric vehicle (EV) leasing model for Fiji.

Renewable energy generation and electrification are rapidly advancing as a key response to climate change. Solutions include hydro, solar and wind power, as well as EVs, as clean energy replacements for fossil fuels. However, despite lower running costs, EVs are considerably more expensive to purchase. This partnership aims to establish a business case for local companies to switch to a new EV commercial leasing model, eliminating upfront capital costs and enabling them to enjoy expected cost savings on fuel and maintenance.

"We are excited to partner with MDF to bring our renewable energy technology and electrical charging systems to Fiji and introduce a new commercial leasing model for electric vehicles," said Zekitek Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Rikesh Ram.

"We are laying the foundation for EV charging infrastructure around Viti Levu and have imported an E-Van from Australia to conduct a six-month pilot trial that will showcase the commercial feasibility and environmental benefits of electric vehicles. We are pleased to have several prominent transport and logistics companies participating in the pilot," Mr Ram added.

The Pacific Island Countries and Territories fossil fuel imports cost the region approximately USD6 billion annually, between five and 15 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product of Pacific Island economies. In Fiji alone, petroleum products make up to 20 per cent of total imports.

The ZekiTek-MDF commercial EV trial will analyse participating companies' fuel consumption savings, operational cost savings, carbon emission and noise pollution reduction. MDF will support ZekiTek to use the data to inform a business feasibility case study for a new EV leasing model for commercial vehicle operators, including electric

buses, trucks, and vans. To start the leasing model, ZekiTek has imported an E-Van and portable charging stations with MDF support.

"We have partnered with ZekiTek to help businesses attract investors and introduce renewable energy and electrification to the Pacific. Electric technologies have strong potential to reduce the cost of fossil fuel imports and decrease carbon emissions in our region and this commercial leasing model pilot also aligns with government's plans to decarbonise Fiji's transport sector," said Kelera Cavuilati, MDF Fiji Country Director.

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