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Kantipur Report

KATHMANDU, June 14 - Nearly 30 electric vehicles — Reva cars, Safa tempos and two-wheelers — took part in a Spinal Injury Electric Vehicle rally that began at Maitighar Mandala and ended at Saanga near Banepa in Kavre district on Saturday morning.

The rally was organised to pressurise the government to formulate an environment-friendly policy to promote the use of the electric vehicles in the country. At the same time, the rally aims to generate funds to support patients at the Spinal Injury Rehabilitation Centre at Saanga.

Inaugurating the rally, popular artiste Madan Krishna Shrestha hoped that the rally would help create awareness about the preservation of environment by promoting eco-friendly electric vehicles.

The participants included individual owners of electric vehicles as well as organisations such as International Center for the Integrated Mountain Development, GTZ, World Food Programme and the Norwegian and U.S. embassies. The umbrella organization, Electric Vehicles Association of Nepal (EVAN), also took part in the rally.

Dibya Man Sherchan, president of EVAN, said though the vehicles are environment friendly, the government has not given much priority to promote these vehicles compared to conventional fossil-fuel vehicles which are the major sources of environment pollution. He said the state should come up with a policy promoting the use of electric vehicles.

At present, there is an exemption on value-added tax for batteries and mechanical parts used by electric vehicles.

Meanwhile, Sherchan said that at a time when the government is planning to displace vehicles more than 20 years old, it is better to convert the vehicles to electric by assembling some parts. "Rather than investing a huge sum of money in providing compensation to the old vehicles and introducing newer vehicles, the government should restructure the old vehicles to electric ones," he said.

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