

# **FRANCISCO MOTORS STRIKES HISTORIC DEAL WITH NIGERIA: ELECTRIC JEEPNEYS AND HYDROGEN TRIKES TO POWER AFRICA**

**By ABS-CBN News**

**Published: June 5, 2025 | Manila, Philippines**

In a defining moment for Philippine innovation and legacy, Francisco Motors—the nation’s oldest, biggest, and strongest 100% Filipino-owned automotive manufacturer—has signed a historic agreement to export electric jeepneys and hydrogen fuel cell-powered tricycles to Benue State, Nigeria, initiating a pioneering sustainable transport program on the African continent.

This milestone is backed by the full support of House Speaker Martin Romualdez and the Philippine Congress, recognizing Francisco Motors as a national icon since 1947 and a leader in the country’s clean mobility movement.

The deployment—featuring the Francisco Passenger Jeepney (FPJ), PINOY Transporter, and H-Trike—is being executed in partnership with Space AI Nigeria Ltd, supported by Philippine foreign missions in Abuja and Lagos.

## **UNIFIED GOVERNMENT SUPPORT: BOTH NATIONS COMMIT TO CLEAN MOBILITY**

The agreement was formalized during a high-level meeting attended by leaders from both the Philippines and Nigeria, including:

- DTI-BOI Undersecretary Perry Rodolfo, who advocated for zero tariff treatment for Francisco Motors exports
- PhilExport President & CEO Sergio Ortiz-Luis, Jr.
- PCCI President Nina Mangio
- Ambassador Mersole Mellejor of the Philippine Embassy in Abuja
- Consul Emmanuel Akpakwu of the Philippine Consulate in Lagos
- Commissioner Barrister Omale Omale, Benue State Commissioner for Transportation, Renewable Energy and Power
- Along with key Philippine and Nigerian officials from public and private sectors

The gathering underscored a shared commitment to climate-resilient infrastructure, transport equity, and cross-border technology transfer.



## **CAMARINES NORTE: BASE OF OPERATIONS**

Underpinning this global push is the newly approved Francisco Motors Special Economic Zone in Camarines Norte, sanctioned by the PEZA Board under the leadership of DTI Secretary and PEZA Chair Cris Roque and PEZA Director General Tereso O. Panga.

The project also enjoys the full support of Camarines Norte Governor Ricarte Padilla and Jose Panganiban Mayor Ariel Non with the assistance of Land Transportation Office Region 5 Assistant Regional Director Vincent O. Nato, who have committed to facilitating the development of this major eco-industrial hub for the production, assembly, and export of Francisco Motors vehicles.

This special economic zone will serve as Francisco Motors' centralized hub for manufacturing, research, and export of electric and hydrogen mobility systems—beginning with the Nigeria deployment.

The zone will also house two key international technology partners:

- NextGen NRG of Australia, actively contributing to the development of Francisco Motors' hydrogen fuel cell systems
- A German electric drivetrain technology group, establishing co-location in the SEZ to synergize engineering, assembly, and deployment pipelines



## **A FAMILY LEGACY WITH GLOBAL PURPOSE**

Established in 1947, Francisco Motors transformed postwar military surplus into the world-famous Filipino jeepney. Today, it continues that legacy through its current leadership: Chairman Elmer Francisco, son of co-founder Jorge Francisco, and President & CEO Dominic Francisco.

Together, they've modernized the jeepney while preserving its soul—now integrating electric drivetrains and hydrogen fuel cell systems built to meet the mobility demands of tomorrow.

“Our family has always built vehicles to move Filipinos,” said Elmer Francisco. “Today, we build to move the world—cleanly, proudly, and powerfully.”



## **VEHICLES FOR AFRICA**

- FPJ (Francisco Passenger Jeepney): All-electric, heritage-inspired, and emissions-free

- PINOY Transporter: A high-roof, group transport model engineered for high-capacity and comfort
- H-Trike: A tricycle powered by hybrid battery and hydrogen fuel cells, using water as fuel for efficient, clean urban transport

All vehicles are built in the Philippines using local materials, labor, and design, and adapted for scalability across developing markets.

## **BENUE STATE: THE FIRST STOP**

Benue State, Nigeria, will host the first deployment, with Space AI Nigeria Ltd leading local implementation. The program includes the establishment of charging stations, hydrogen refueling infrastructure, digital fare systems, and local assembly training, laying the groundwork for community empowerment and MSME participation.

Inspired by the Philippine boundary-hulog system, vehicle ownership plans will be introduced to enable Nigerian operators to eventually own their units through inclusive financing models.

## **INTEGRATED DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM: JEEPNEY.IO**

Supporting the entire platform is [www.JEEPNEY.io](http://www.JEEPNEY.io), the official social media and service platform of Francisco Motors. The ecosystem includes:

- e-Wallet integration with secured Digital Identity
- Tokenized Payment System
- Fleet Management and Security Tools
- Aftersales Services Platform
- Streamlined Spare Parts and Inventory Management
- Real-time Rating and Feedback System
- Tokenized Incentivization for passengers, drivers, and operators

This digital backbone ensures transparency, efficiency, and seamless engagement across users, operators, and the company's aftersales network—cementing Francisco Motors' position as a future-ready mobility brand.

## **SPEAKER ROMUALDEZ & CONGRESS STAND BEHIND FRANCISCO MOTORS**

House Speaker Martin Romualdez and the Philippine Congress continue to express full support for Francisco Motors as a national export champion and cornerstone of the domestic EV and hydrogen transport revolution.

Recognizing the company's unmatched history and capability, Congress is rallying institutional support to ensure Francisco Motors leads the country's push into green industrialization and international manufacturing.

## **THE FUTURE RUNS ON FILIPINO EXCELLENCE**

From Camarines Norte to Benue State, Francisco Motors is proving that Filipino-made transport can be beautiful, functional, and world-class — without sacrificing heritage.

This time, the jeepney doesn't just move people.  
It moves nations.  
And it doesn't run on fuel—  
It runs on Filipino vision, values, and victory.

### **Media Contact:**

info@franciscomotors.com

 [www.franciscomotors.com](http://www.franciscomotors.com)

© 2025 ABS-CBN News. All rights reserved.