

Japan venture to bring electric tuk-tuks to Asia

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A Japanese company is hoping to win a big slice of Asia's tuk-tuk market, it said Wednesday, betting battery-operated buggies could cut burgeoning city pollution.

"There is no single company in Asia that mass-produces [electric bikes](#) or [tricycles](#)," said Terra Motors president Toru Tokushige.

"I think it could have a big impact if a Japanese company is the pioneer in the market with products of such a futuristic design."

Terra Motors unveiled the prototype of their electric tuk-tuk, a sleek-looking blue and white machine that can carry up to six people, including the driver.

The vehicle, 3.3 metres (11 feet) long and 1.47 metres wide, is powered by a [lithium battery](#), and can run 50 kilometres (30 miles) on one full charge, the company said.

Terra Motors is hoping to win the bid for part of a Philippine government contract that is expected to see 100,000 electric tricycle taxis on the country's streets by 2016, using a \$300 million loan from the Asian Development Bank.

The Japanese firm is aiming to become the world's number one seller of electric tuk-tuks over the next two years, the company said, without providing precise figures.

Tuk-tuks, a cross between a motorbike and a tricycle, are a common form of transport in urban areas across Asia. They usually have small, petrol-powered engines that are blamed for causing serious [air pollution](#).

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