On January 7, 2025, Dr. Jimmy Gasore, Rwanda's Minister of Infrastructure, reassured the public about the government's plan to phase out non-electric motorcycles in Kigali. He addressed concerns that this transition could disrupt the transport system or negatively impact the livelihoods of motorcycle riders.

In a session with members of Parliament, Dr. Gasore explained that the initiative, starting in 2025, was part of Rwanda's commitment to environmental sustainability and the promotion of clean transportation in Kigali.

Dr. Jimmy Gasore, Rwanda's Minister of Infrastructure

During the discussion, Nkuranga Egide, a Member of Parliament in the Chamber of Deputies, voiced concerns about the potential consequences of removing non-electric motorcycles, especially given the limited public transport options in Kigali. He stressed that many residents rely on these motorcycles for daily commuting.

In response, Dr. Gasore assured the public that the transition would not affect existing riders. "Current motorcycle operators can continue their work without any immediate changes," he stated. "Only new entrants into the industry will be impacted by the policy."

The Minister also emphasized that electric motorcycles would gradually become more prevalent as a network of battery exchange stations is established throughout Kigali. He reassured motorcycle riders that the transition would be phased, with no one being required to switch immediately.

Non-electric motorcycles will remain operational until they are no longer functional. Once a motorcycle reaches the end of its useful life, the owner will need to transition to an electric model.

This policy is part of Rwanda's broader strategy to reduce air pollution. Dr. Gasore pointed out that motorcycles are responsible for 50% of Kigali's air pollution. Shifting to electric motorcycles is a crucial step in improving the city's environmental health.

Rwanda took a significant step towards this goal in 2021 when it partnered with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to begin replacing fuel-powered motorcycles with electric ones. This collaboration is aimed at reducing carbon

emissions and preserving the environment.

As of now, Rwanda has over 100,000 motorcycles, with 46,000 used for transporting people and goods. Of these, 26,000 are based in Kigali. While electric motorcycles still represent a small portion of the total, their numbers are steadily increasing.

Dr. Gasore also highlighted the financial benefits of electric motorcycles. “Electric motorcycles are cheaper to operate than their fuel-powered counterparts,” he said. “Switching to electric motorcycles not only helps the environment but also saves Rwandans money.”

Research from the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) suggests that transitioning to electric motorcycles could save Rwanda up to 9 billion Rwandan Francs annually by reducing the need to import fuel-powered motorcycles.

Despite the progress made, 20% of trips in Kigali are still made on fuel-powered motorcycles. However, the government remains optimistic that the transition to electric motorcycles will lead to a cleaner, more sustainable transportation system in the future.