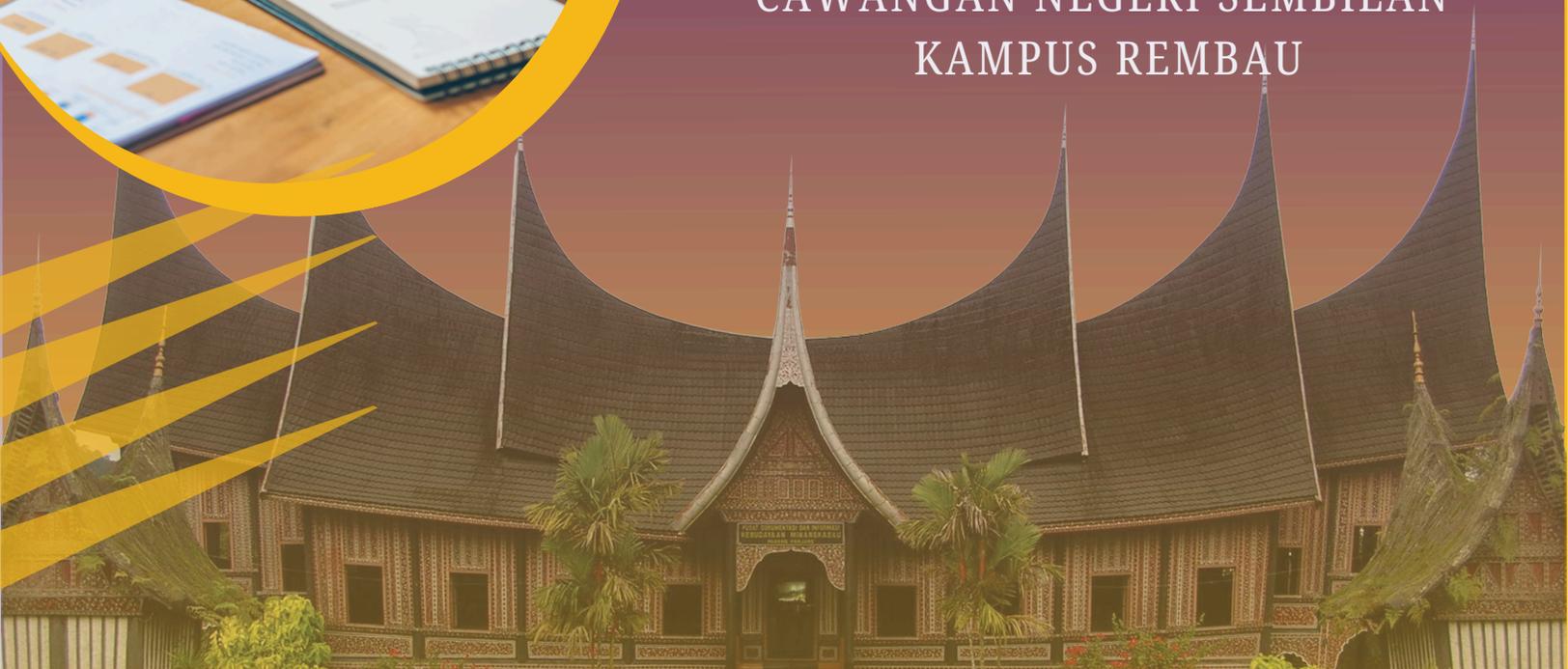


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COOL WHEELS, REAL COSTS, AND WHAT LIES AHEAD

Syazliana Kasim

If you've been on the road lately, you've probably noticed something new zipping quietly past you, electric vehicles, or EVs. From sleek Teslas to compact BYDs and even Proton's new e.MAS, EVs are no longer just for the rich and famous. They're becoming the latest trend in Malaysian car ownership. But is the hype worth the plug? Let's take a closer look.

Why Everyone's Talking About EVs

The buzz around EVs didn't just happen overnight. The Malaysian government has been pushing for cleaner and greener transport through various incentives, things like tax exemptions, free road tax (for now), and more charging stations popping up nationwide. Car brands have responded fast. Almost every month, there's news of a new EV model being launched. Whether you like sporty, practical, or luxury cars, there's likely an electric version already on the market — and the choices keep growing.

The Money Talk: Are EVs Really Cheaper?

Many people think EVs are automatically cheaper to run than petrol cars. That's true to a point but not the whole story. If you're charging your EV at home, your "fuel" cost can be as low as a few ringgits per charge, depending on your electricity usage. It's like paying less than half of what you'd normally spend on petrol. But, if you depend mostly on public charging stations, your cost can creep up, especially at highway fast chargers. So, EVs are most wallet-friendly for those who can plug in at home overnight. Buying an EV, however, can feel heavy on the pocket at first.

The price tag is still higher than most petrol cars, although that's slowly changing. Right now, tax-free benefits for imported (CBU) EVs will end in 2026, while locally assembled (CKD) ones will stay tax-free until 2027. So, if you've been thinking about buying, timing matters.

Home Charging: Great if You Can, Headache if You Can't

The biggest convenience of owning an EV comes from having your own home charger. If you live in a landed house, installing one isn't too complicated (though it could cost around RM4,000–RM8,000). But for those staying in condos or apartments, things get tricky. You'll need permission from the management and sometimes even technical checks before you can install one. If you can't charge at home and must rely on public chargers, you'll need to plan your trips more carefully especially during festive seasons when chargers might be busy.

Maintenance and Insurance: The Quiet Perks

Here's some good news: EVs don't need oil changes, spark plugs, or exhaust repairs. That means less routine maintenance. Some owners even say their annual servicing costs are much lower compared to petrol cars. But insurance can be a little pricier since EV parts, especially the battery, are expensive to replace. Still, as more EVs hit the road and local expertise grows, these costs should even out.

Charging Forward: How Ready is Malaysia?

Malaysia's EV ecosystem is still growing. The country has installed over 3,000 charging stations, and the goal is to hit 10,000 in the near future. Cities like Kuala Lumpur, Penang, and Johor Bahru are already seeing EV chargers at malls, hotels, and highways. However, rural and smaller towns still have some catching up to do. Until then, long road trips might need a bit more planning than usual.

Battery Life, Tech Updates, and Resale Value

One question many potential buyers have is: Will my EV battery last? The answer is yes where most come with warranties up to eight years or more. Still, EV technology is advancing so fast that newer models often boast longer ranges and faster charging, making older ones feel outdated faster. That's something to consider if you plan to sell your EV after a few years where the resale values are still finding their place in the Malaysian market.

The Future of EVs in Malaysia

The next few years will be exciting. With Proton and Perodua entering the EV scene, we'll likely see more affordable models on the road. Government policies, greener energy goals, and improved charging infrastructure will keep driving the shift toward electric mobility. But the real turning point will come when owning an EV feels as easy and affordable as owning a regular car, no waiting, no worries about chargers, and no range anxiety. Until then, Malaysians are still testing the waters, balancing between the thrill of new technology and the comfort of old habits.

So, Should You Get an EV?

If you mostly drive around town, have a place to charge at home, and love the idea of zero petrol stops, go for it. EVs are quiet, smooth, and surprisingly fun to drive. But if you're always on the highway or live in a condo without easy charging access, maybe wait a little longer. The EV market in Malaysia is maturing fast and in a couple of years, there'll be even more choices and better prices.

Final Thoughts

The EV hype in Malaysia is real, and it's not just about showing off a fancy new car. It's part of a bigger movement, one that mixes sustainability, technology, and lifestyle. So, whether you're a tech enthusiast, an eco-warrior, or just someone curious about saving on fuel, the electric revolution is worth watching closely. The spark has already started and it's only getting brighter.