

MAHATHIR-MOTOR

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KUALA LUMPUR, SEPT. 6 (BERNAMA) — THE GOVERNMENT'S PREOCCUPATION WITH PRICE HAS MADE POSSIBLE FOR THE PRICES OF MOTOR VEHICLES IN THIS COUNTRY TO BE THE CHEAPEST IN THE ASEAN REGION, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TONIGHT.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ASSURED CONSUMERS THAT IN IMPLEMENTING THE ACCELERATED LOCAL CONTENT PROGRAMME, THEIR INTERESTS WOULD STILL BE SAFEGUARDED.

+THE BASIC PRINCIPLE OF FAIR PRICE OF MOTOR VEHICLES TO CONSUMERS WILL NOT BE UNDULY SACRIFICED AT THE EXPENSE OF THE HEALTHY GROWTH AND PROFITABILITY OF THE MOTOR VEHICLE INDUSTRY,+ HE ADDED.

SPEAKING AT THE MALAYSIAN MOTOR VEHICLE ASSEMBLERS ASSOCIATION'S DINNER, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, WHO IS ALSO THE TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER, SAID SOME QUARTERS HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER HIS RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE GUIDELINES FOR MANDATORY COMPLETELY KNOCKED DOWN (CKD) DELETION.

HE EXPLAINED THAT THE GUIDELINES WERE A MEANS TO PROVIDE GOVERNMENT, ASSEMBLERS AND COMPONENT PART MANUFACTURERS AN EFFECTIVE APPROACH WHEN CONSIDERING AN AUTOMATIVE COMPONENT PART FOR CKD DELETION. — BERNAMA MORE 2230/ID

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THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO IDENTIFY MORE PARTS FOR MANDATORY CKD DELETION AS A MEANS OF INCREASING THE LOCAL CONTENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES ASSEMBLER IN THE COUNTRY.

HOWEVER, HE SAID THE PROBLEM FACED IN THE FORMULATION OF THE LOCAL CONTENT PROGRAMME WAS THE PROLIFERATION OF MAKES AND MODELS WHICH TENDED TO IMPEDE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMPONENT PARTS MANUFACTURING.

DUE TO THIS MULTIPLICITY OF MAKES AND MODELS, THE MOST CURRENT POPULAR MODELS MIGHT COMMAND A MERE MARKET SHARE OF ABOUT 10,000 UNITS ANNUALLY, WHICH WAS SMALL FOR A SPECIALISED PART TO BE MANUFACTURED LOCALLY.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS THEREFORE STUDYING WAYS OF OVERCOMING THE MULTIPLICITY OF MAKES AND MODEL CHANGES WHICH WERE DEEMED COSMETIC RATHER THAN ESSENTIAL.

HE SAID THAT INITIAL STUDY HAD SHOWN THAT THERE WAS JUSTIFICATION FOR A MORE RAPID INTRODUCTION OF LOCAL CONTENT PROGRAMME FOR THE MOTORISED TWO-WHEELER INDUSTRY IN VIEW OF ITS SMALLER NUMBER OF MAKES AND MODELS AND LARGER VOLUMES OF PRODUCTION. —BERNAMA MORE

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ON LOCALLY ASSEMBLED VEHICLES, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR REGRETTED THAT OF LATE THERE HAD BEEN A SPATE OF COMPLAINTS FROM THE PUBLIC REGARDING THEIR QUALITY.

HIS MINISTRY HAD RECEIVED NUMEROUS COMPLAINTS ABOUT A PARTICULAR PASSENGER MODEL WITH PROBLEMS OF +SLIP-IN-GEAR+ AND +GEARBOX NOISE+. HE URGED THE COMPANY CONCERNED TO TAKE A MORE RESPONSIBLE ATTITUDE AND COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY WITH THE CAR OWNERS CONCERNED TO OFFER WHATEVER SERVICES THAT WERE NECESSARY.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ALSO HOPED THAT THE PANEL OF EXPERTS SET UP TO LOOK INTO THE QUALITY OF LOCALLY ASSEMBLED CARS WOULD ALSO ERADICATE FROM THE MINDS OF THE PUBLIC THAT LOCALLY ASSEMBLED CARS WERE INFERIOR IN QUALITY AS COMPARED WITH THOSE OF THE IMPORTED ONES.

THIS COULD BE DONE THROUGH CAREFULLY THOUGHT -OUT PROGRAMMES INCLUDING ORGANISING PANEL DISCUSSIONS OVER TELEVISION BETWEEN THE PUBLIC, THE CONSUMERS ASSOCIATIONS, THE PRESS AND OTHER ASSOCIATIONS PERTAINING TO THE ASSEMBLY INDUSTRY. -BERNAMA MORE 2240/1B

+I BELIEVE THE MOTOR VEHICLE INDUSTRY OWES THIS SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PUBLIC WHICH TODAY IS SOPHISTICATED AND HIGHLY CRITICAL AND HAS COME TO RECOGNISE ITS RIGHTS AS CONSUMERS.+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR ALSO DISCLOSED THAT THE ASEAN ECONOMIC MINISTERS COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, MINERALS AND ENERGY (COIME) HAD DESIGNATED ITS EXPERT GROUP TO MEET IN JAKARTA THIS YEAR TO STUDY THE PROPOSAL OF UNDERTAKING HEADLIGHT AND CARBURETTOR PROJECTS FOR THE REGION.

HE SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT THE HEADLIGHTS UNIT PROJECT PROPOSED WOULD LIKELY BE SITED IN THIS COUNTRY.

HE URGED THE AUTOMOTIVE FEDERATION OF MALAYSIA TO STUDY THE PROPOSAL IN DETAIL WITH A VIEW TO MAKING A SERIOUS BID FOR THE PROJECT TO BE SITED HERE. — BERNAMA MORE 2245/1B

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ON BUMIPUTRA PARTICIPATION IN THE MOTOR VEHICLE INDUSTRY, DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS UNHAPPY THAT THE OVERALL PERCENTAGE OF BUMIPUTRA DEALERS IN THE TRADE WAS STILL INSATISFACTORY WHEN COMPARED WITH THE TOTAL NUMBER OF MOTOR DEALERS IN THE COUNTRY.

HE CALLED ON THE FRANCHISE HOLDERS AND MAIN DISTRIBUTORS CONCERNED TO MAKE SERIOUS AND CONCERTED ATTEMPTS TO INCREASE BUMIPUTRA PARTICIPATION IN THE INDUSTRY.

HIS MINISTRY WOULD CONTINUE TO MONITOR CLOSELY THE APPOINTMENT OF MORE BUMIPUTRA DEALERS IN THE INDUSTRY TO ENSURE GREATER BUMIPUTRA PARTICIPATION.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ALSO STRESSED THAT THE RECRUITMENT OF BUMIPUTRA PERSONNEL IN THE MANAGERIAL AND EXECUTIVE LEVELS IN THE MOTOR ASSEMBLY AND MOTOR TRADING COMPANIES SHOULD BE FURTHER IMPROVED.

HE SAID IT HAD COME TO HIS KNOWLEDGE THAT SOME COMPANIES WERE CONSCIOUSLY AND DELIBERATELY ADOPTING A DELAYING TACTIC IN THE RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF BUMIPUTRAS IN THE MANAGERIAL AND EXECUTIVE LEVELS. — BERNAMA 2255/1B

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