

MAHATHIR-CARS
BM

ALUR SETAR, OCT. 29 (BERNAMA) -- MALAYSIAN-MADE CARS SHOULD HIT THE MARKET IN 1984 IF NOT EARLIER, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

HE SAID THE MALAYSIAN-MADE CARS WERE LIKELY TO HAVE AN ENGINE SIZE OF BETWEEN 1200 CC AND 1600CC FOR THIS MODEL WAS POPULAR IN THE COUNTRY.

"HOWEVER, THE ACTUAL ENGINE SIZE FOR THESE CARS HAVE TO BE KEPT A SECRET," HE TOLD REPORTERS AFTER CHAIRING A MEETING OF THE KUBANG PASU UMNO BRANCH IN JITRA ABOUT 16 KM FROM HERE.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID INITIALLY THE MALAYSIAN-MADE CARS WOULD NOT BE EXPORTED BECAUSE "THESE CARS WOULD BE NEW AND WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO COMPETE WITH THE OTHER CARS IN THE MARKET."

THE ANNOUNCEMENT ON MALAYSIA'S AIM TO PRODUCE HER OWN CARS WAS MADE BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DATUK MUSA HITAM YESTERDAY WHO ALSO SAID THAT THE PROJECT WAS A PET PROJECT OF THE PRIME MINISTER.

THE MALAYSIAN-MADE CARS PROJECT IS A JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN THE HEAVY INDUSTRIES CORPORATION OF MALAYSIA (HICOM) AND A JAPANESE COMPANY.

-- MORE 1500/LK

ZCZC N062: (F)

MAHATHIR-CARS 2 ALUR SETAR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE PRICE OF THE MALAYSIAN-MADE CARS WAS LIKELY TO BE LOWER THAN THE OTHER CARS IN THE MALAYSIAN MARKET.

THE NAME OF THE NEW CAR HAS YET TO BE DECIDED, HE ADDED.

AT PRESENT, MALAYSIA IS ASSEMBLING SEVERAL MODELS OF CARS, USING ABOUT 10 PER CENT OF LOCAL MATERIALS SUCH AS TYRES AND BATTERIES.

"THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO INCREASE THE USE OF LOCAL CONTENTS,"

THE PRIME MINISTER ADDED.

HE NOTED THAT MALAYSIA WAS THE THIRD LARGEST BUYER OF CARS IN ASIA WITH ABOUT 100,000 UNITS A YEAR.

THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO NOTED THAT IT WOULD BE A MAJOR PROBLEM IF THE MALAYSIAN CARS WERE TO BE MADE WITH 100 PER CENT LOCAL RESOURCES AT THE START BECAUSE OF THE HIGH CAPITAL COST AND TECHNOLOGY.

THE MALAYSIAN-MADE CARS WOULD HOWEVER HAVE A DESIGN OF ITS OWN, DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER COUNTRIES.

-- MORE 1505/LK

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ZCZC N063: (F)

MAHATHIR-CARS 3 ALUR SETAR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID AFTER HAVING DESIGNED THE SHAPE OF THE CAR, MALAYSIA WOULD INSTAL THE ENGINES AND MANUFACTURE THE ENGINE COMPONENTS TILL A STAGE WHERE THE COUNTRY WAS ABLE TO MAKE THE WHOLE CAR BY HERSELF.

"WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS THAT THE FIRST STEP HAS TO BE TAKEN IN THIS DIRECTION," HE ADDED.

-- BERNAMA 1508/LK

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