

Proton Saga: Getting set for new technology

(P) Dr. Mahathir - Nissan Car Project

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THE Government is considering the introduction of automobile engineering studies in the various institutions of higher learning as one measure in ensuring the transfer of technology in the production of the first locally made car, Proton Saga.

Dr Mahathir said that the Government was also looking into those aspects of the Proton Saga production which could be taken over wholly by Malaysians.

He said Proton Saga workers were being given intensive theoretical

and practical training in the hope that some of Proton Saga's production process could be wholly taken over by Malaysians in two years' time.

The Prime Minister's Department has also set up a technology transfer committee.

Loans secured

He was replying to DAP MP for Kuala Lumpur Bandar, Mr Lee Lam Thye, who wanted to know what steps the Government had taken to ensure the transfer of technology in the production of Proton Saga and that parts manufactured locally

would meet safety and reliability standards.

Mr Lee also wanted to know the amount of loans secured by Proton to finance the national car project.

Dr Mahathir said the Government had formed a committee under the purview of Sirim to scrutinise parts under the Local Contents Programme including application of visual and performance tests.

"Proton will also test every component produced by local manufacturers to ensure it follows specifications," he added.

Dimensional, quality,

performance, reliability and safety tests would be carried out here and in Japan.

Proton will use its research and development programmes to improve the production technology of local components to meet the necessary standards of reliability and safety.

Local manufacturers will be exposed to new technology made available by their foreign partners.

This will act as another measure to ensure that these components meet the reliability and safety standards.

On loans taken by Proton, the Prime Minister said to date it totalled \$340 million.

Of this, \$120 million came from Mitsubishi Motors and Mitsubishi Corporation.

Another \$120 million came from Deamond Lease Limited and Mitsubishi Trust and Banking Corporation.

The balance of \$100 million was a syndicated loan arranged by Bank Bumiputra and Bank of Tokyo.