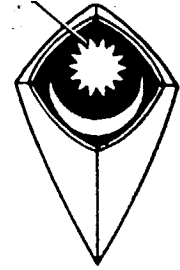


# ENTER THE SAGA



② 310 JUL 1985

car project

**SHAH ALAM, Tues. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad launched the Malaysian car, the Proton Saga, today and said that the project proved the capability of Malaysia and its people.**

"Today, our country moves one step further towards industrial progress. The national car factory and the production of the Proton Saga are proof of our willingness to achieve the objective of national industrial development," he said.

"Determined efforts, wholehearted dedication and the willingness to face up to challenges will surely help us achieve this."

Dr Mahathir pressed a button at 10.30a.m. to roll off the assembly line and minutes later he received the key to the first Proton Saga, a blue four-door sedan.

He then took the car for a test drive, accompanied by Tan Sri Jamil Jan, the chairman of Hicom

(Heavy Industries Corporation of Malaysia).

The Prime Minister's verdict? "It's a lively car."

Earlier, Dr Mahathir opened the Proton (Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional) factory which is expected to produce 7,500 cars from now until December.

He also planted a Saga tree in front of the Proton administration office.

The ceremony was attended by about 1,000 guests, including Ministers and diplomats.

Dr Mahathir said the Government's decision to go ahead with the heavy industries programme was to extend and strengthen the national industrial base and to become an industrialised nation.

Although Malaysia was only starting to industrialise, it would eventually succeed if the people are determined, he added.

Dr Mahathir said the success of the national car project would give the nation's economy a great push.

"While we are proud to produce our own car, this project will also be the catalyst for the growth and development of support industries."

Dr Mahathir said manufacturers should also improve the quality of

car components for export.

He praised Syarikat Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional for setting up a research and development department and hoped other firms would follow its example.

The Prime Minister said the production of the Saga was timely as the Government was checking the flow of foreign exchange by encouraging the people to buy Malaysian-made goods.