

Sharp drop in sale of foreign cars: PM

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ALOR STAR, Fri. — The Proton Saga has caused a sharp drop in the sale of foreign cars, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the overwhelming response of Malaysians to the national car had drawn some "strong reactions" from the car companies concerned.

"This is to be expected as no car dealer would praise another car and discredit the model he is selling."

The Prime Minister, who was speaking to reporters

after meeting State Umno branch leaders, division heads and members at the Bangunan Tuanku here, also denied reports that there had been several attempts by certain quarters in the State to sabotage the made-in-Malaysia car.

"There may be some vandalism but there have not been any attempts to sabotage the Proton Saga," Dr Mahathir said.

He added that a Malaysia-Hong Kong firm in China had ordered 10 Proton Sagas, and the cars would be

delivered soon.

"This will help promote our national car abroad."

He also advised Edaran Automobil Nasional (EON) to be more careful in protecting the image of the national car.

Dr Mahathir also met student leaders of the Universiti Utara Malaysia at its campus in Pekan Darulaman today.

The university's vice-chancellor, Tan Sri Prof. Awang Had Salleh, told re-

porters the Prime Minister had called on the staff and students to promote unity in the campus.

Tan Sri Awang said Dr Mahathir had a heart-to-heart talk with 46 student representatives at the closed-door meeting.

Tan Sri Awang said Dr Mahathir also briefed the students on Islam and its implications towards development and the country.

Dr Mahathir later planted a Flame-of-the-Forest tree on the university grounds.