

# Dr M: Second car project on as scheduled

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KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad** said today the second Malaysian car project would be carried out on schedule.

The Prime Minister has denied that there was any hitch holding up the project, his Press secretary **Hashim Makaruddin** said, clarifying a report from Tokyo.

The report indicated that the project could be delayed by some management and administrative problems between Daihatsu Motor of Japan and its Malaysian partners.

Dr Mahathir said whatever problems there might be would be resolved by the management.

The project, located in Serendah, Hulu Selangor, is scheduled to get off the ground in the third quarter of 1994.

Under the project, Daihatsu will produce an economical car of 660cc in partnership with Med-Bumikar Mara, Permodalan Nasional Berhad (PNB) and UMW Holdings Bhd.

Dr Mahathir also said Japanese businessmen and officials have started to show greater interest in the proposed East Asia Economic Caucus.

The Prime Minister, who returned today after a week-long visit to Hong Kong and Japan, described this as an encouraging development since, at one time, Japan had shown disinterest in the proposed grouping.

"Japanese businessmen and officials want to know more about the EAEC ... this is good," he told a Press conference at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Subang.

Dr Mahathir, who was accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ah, was greeted on arrival by Information Minister **Dafuk Mohamed Rahmat**, Transport Minister **Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik**, National Unity and Social Development Minister **Datuk Napsiah Omar** and Chief Secretary to the government **Tan Sri Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid**.

He said the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, Japan's financial newspaper, had interviewed him during the far-day private visit, and he had explained at length the concept and objectives of the EAEC.

He said he also held talks with Daihatsu on the second car project, adding that the project had been approved.