

Stay away from business,

PM tells unions

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Trade unions should never venture into business but should concentrate more on union work, **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad** said today.

"That is not their business," the Prime Minister said at the Royal Malaysian Air Force base after returning from Kota Baru.

He was replying to reporters' questions on the Transport Workers Union's business deal with an unnamed financial backer as part of a package to settle an outstanding \$13 million debt to Bank Buruh (M) Bhd.

Dr Mahathir said he had always felt that trade unions should keep away from carrying out any business deal and should concentrate only on resolving workers' problems.

The TWU is led by general-secretary V. David and deputy general-secretary Zainal Rampak. They are also the Malaysian Trades Union Congress secretary-general and president respectively.

The TWU's debt problem almost led to the auction of its two prized assets — Wisma TWU in Petaling Jaya and the Workers' Institute of Technology building in Pandamaran, Port Klang.

Earlier in Machang, Dr Mahathir said the three awards won by the Proton Catalyst at the British International Motor Show was a recognition of the car's quality.

This clearly showed that the car was as good, if not better than those manufactured by other countries, he said.

The Proton Catalyst won two gold awards and the Prestigious Award for Excellence from the Institute of Transport Managers.

He was speaking to newsmen after opening the Kelantan Umno convention at Sekolah Menengah Hamzah here today.

The Prime Minister said when the country first ventured into car manufacturing, many people were sceptical about it.

In fact, some people even described the car as being an engine-powered bullock cart, he added.

He said Malaysians had the ability to do whatever they desired provided that all efforts were geared towards achieving it.

"Our people can be as good as those in the developed nations and we do not have to feel inferior," he added.