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Mahathir-car

CONCEPT CAR DESIGN COMPETITION TO SPUR LOCAL DESIGNERS

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SHAH ALAM, April 20<sup>93</sup> (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the government will organise a concept car design competition, probably next year, to draw the talents of Malaysian designers and spur them into making greater efforts.

It was also aimed at enhancing the capacity of the national automobile industry so that Malaysia need not depend on other countries in the future, he added.

It was hoped the competition would also help improve the motor engineering capabilities in Malaysia, the Prime Minister told reporters after opening the Proton Research and Development Building here.

Cash prizes and other awards would be given to the winners and an organising body would be set up while the panel of judges would comprise experts from the automobile industry and universities.

He said the competition would not be restricted to Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional (Proton) but also open to all bodies involved in the automotive industry and universities offering courses in automobile engineering and design. -- more

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Dr Mahathir said despite having its own capabilities in the automobile industry, Malaysia would continue to co-operate with other nations in this area.

Elaborating on the concept car, he said it would seek to portray the car of the future, be it five or 10 years from now, as envisaged by the designers.

Future cars to be produced in the country would take after such designs, not necessarily the whole of it but the idea would originate from the design and changes would be made to suit the tastes of buyers and users.

"They can make models of any concept cars not just small models but also full scale models and that which can be used," he added.

Designs emanating from the competition could be used for all cars even though Proton would probably design its own cars.

Companies and universities could design their own concept cars based on their respective ideas.

Responding to a question, Dr Mahathir said the competition could be held as early as next year as Malaysia already had the capability in automobile engineering and design. -- more

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"As we can see here (at the Proton plant), they can make drawings, transfer the drawings to plan and make clay, wooden and plastic models... we have the ability in all these...", he added.

Speaking at the function, he said money spent on concept designs did not go to waste as it was a wise investment to build on the efficiency of the country's automobile engineers be they from the industry or the academic field.

Proton should give encouragement to concept car designs and inventions from its research and development division, he added.

Dr Mahathir hoped the proposed competition would get good response from everyone.

He also said the government aspired to support the development of the automotive industry by providing facilities for testing such as a "proving ground" which could be used by everyone involved in the transport industry.

-- Bernama

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