

REV IT UP,

PM TELLS PROTON

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Acquire know-how to make all parts, firm told

By ANDREW FERNANDEZ

KUALA LUMPUR: The Government wants Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional to acquire the know-how to design and manufacture all component parts so that the prices of Proton cars can be lowered.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday that Proton was now paying royalties for all Mitsubishi-designed parts.

“There is a charge when you don’t know how to do things yourself and it raises the cost of our car,” the Prime Minister told reporters after launching the book *The Making of the National Car — Not Just A Dream* at a hotel here.

“We can bring down the price a little bit if we don’t have to pay royalties.

“Until we reach the stage where we can design and manufacture our own engines and transmissions, we have not achieved progress in car manufacturing,” he said.

Asked if he felt things were not moving fast enough in the present Proton-Mitsubishi partnership, he said:

“I always want things to be done faster. We are behind others. The only way we can catch up is to run faster than those we are trying to catch up with.

“We get along fine with our Japanese partners but the Japanese are fond of telling us to do things step by step.

“For us that is too slow. If you don’t allow us to run, at least allow us to take longer strides.

“We’ll have to try to get the technology somewhere, somehow.”

Asked if Proton would turn to other sources to acquire such technology, he said: “Maybe it will also be from the Japanese, maybe from our (existing) partners or others.”

He said Malaysia had received several proposals in this area from European and US manufacturers.