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Mahathir-EON (with pix)

EON SERVICE ABROAD IMPORTANT TO BOOST PROTON SALES, SAYS DR M

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SHAH ALAM, June 6 (Bernama) -- Edaran Otomobil Nasional (EON) Berhad must establish a satisfactory after-sales service in the countries in which it wants to market the Proton car, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

This is important to ensure that the export of the national car, including to South countries, does not fail, he said.

"We must plan to ensure that export (of the car) to any country does not fail because it will be very difficult to recover once we fail," he told reporters after opening the new headquarters of EON and launching its 10 anniversary celebrations, here.

"We can expand but we must ensure that we are able to offer after-sales service to the cars that we sell," he said.

Unless this is done, EON may not be able to repair the cars sold should they develop faults later, he added. -- more

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▼06/06/16-26MST

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Mahathir-EON 2 Shah Alam

Dr Mahathir said the Proton car could be bartered for other goods in countries which were unable to pay in currency.

Replying to a question on components of the car, he said Proton should use 100 per cent local technology in automotive engineering, from concept design to the finished product.

Dr Mahathir said he was convinced that the cost of the Proton car, currently dependent on the fluctuation of the Yen owing to some imported Japanese components, can be reduced if employees of the company are able to acquire the necessary skills.

"We will continue with the local content policy," he said.

He also said, when replying to another question, that there was the possibility of EON evolving into a conglomerate such as Japan's Mitsubishi, considering the growth it has achieved over the last 10 years.

But he could not say when EON will reach that stage because, according to him, EON was 100 years behind when compared to Mitsubishi. -- more

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Mahathir-EON 3 Shah Alam

Dr Mahathir said he was proud of the achievements of EON thus far because it had developed to a stage of sophistication which none dreamed of 10 years ago.

For example, he said, EON was able not only to change the design of the Proton car to a quality design but also produce a high-performance vehicle for racing.

Such an achievement can only be possible because the employees have attained skills in the various aspects of automotive engineering, he said.

"This shows that the automotive industry in Malaysia, through Proton and EON, has achieved progress that we all can be proud of," he said.

In his speech earlier, Dr Mahathir said he was proud that EON had made strides overseas through its investment in Cycle and Carriage Ltd., a conglomerate in Singapore, and Proton Car Europe, and through the activities of EON Trading in general trading at the international level. -- more

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Mahathir-EON 4 Shah Alam

"These efforts are in line with the Malaysian government policy to promote trade and investment abroad, including in countries of the South," he said.

The appointment of EON in the programme of general trading companies reflects the confidence the government has in the company to help further promote the country's exports, he said.

Dr Mahathir also said that the success of the national car project depends greatly on the ability of Proton to excel in the export market as the domestic market is too small.

In this matter, he said, he was convinced that EON was in a good position to help Proton grab the various opportunities in the overseas market by using the expertise in marketing it had garnered over the last decade.

Dr Mahathir said this was based on EON's ability to sell 521,000 units of the car thus far and control 74 per cent of the Malaysian market for passenger cars, and sell more than 85,000 units to 15 countries. -- more

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Mahathir-EON 5 (last) Shah Alam

On the opening of a 24-hour service centre, the first in the region, at the new EON headquarters, he said it showed EON's commitment to provide excellent service to owners of Proton cars.

At the ceremony, Dr Mahathir handed over car keys to Principal Assistant Director Encik Mohamad Nawawi Mohamad Arshad of the Youth and Sports Ministry who is the owner of the 521,000th Proton car. Dr Mahathir then went on a tour of the new headquarters.

He also took a look at the new version of the Proton Wira Aeroback Eksekutif and handed over the keys to a Proton Wira Limousin to the chairman and chief executive of Sukom Ninety Eight Sdn Bhd, Tan Sri Hashim Mohamed Ali. -- Bernama

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