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RM20 MLN SPENT TO ACCOMMODATE PROTON TIARA PRODUCTION

KUALA LUMPUR, April 5 (Bernama) -- About RM20 million was spent to establish a separate production line for the latest Proton variant, the 1.1 litre Proton Tiara, it was announced today.

An official of Usahasama Proton DRB Sdn Bhd (USPD), who requested anonymity, said a separate production line had to be constructed to accommodate the production of the "nippy, gritty and thrifty" car at the Automotive Manufacturers (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd's plant in Pekan, Pahang. The plant also produces the Proton Satria, which is modelled along the Mitsubishi Colt.

The new model, with a 1124 cc power plant, is a five-door, five-seater car modelled along the lines of the Citroen AX. It was launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad here tonight.

The on the road price of the Tiara, whose commercial launch would be in May, is RM34,912.39 while those with optional accessories will cost RM36,892.39.

The production of the Tiara is a result of an agreement between Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Bhd (Proton), USPD and Automobiles Citroen of France. Their agreement gives Proton the exclusive right to manufacture, assemble, sell and service the cars locally under its own brand name.

Citroen has also given Proton the right to distribute the cars and spare parts in other approved export markets bearing the Proton logo.

USPD, on the other hand, has been given the rights to assemble sell and service the vehicles for Proton.

The Tiara is the first non-Mitsubishi variant of the Proton and is expected to reduce Proton's dependence on the Japanese manufacturer.

"The Tiara is a marque that brings new standards of quality, fuel economy and small car motoring for the pleasure of everyone," said Abdul Rashid Rahim, chief executive officer of USPD.

He said it is equipped with the Citroen TU1/K engine that had been renowned worldwide for its modern design, high performance and reliability.

Rashid said the Tiara's emission control system, for example, illustrates USPD's commitment to environmental concern by reducing the volume of toxic gases emitted.

The cabin of the Tiara is amongst the most spacious in its class with sufficient space for five occupants and even for luggage.

The engine has a five-speed manual gear box and is capable of a maximum speed of 161 km/hr and an impressive fuel economy of 5.1 litres of fuel to cover 100 km at a constant speed of 90 km/hr. The Tiara is capable of reaching 0-100 km in 15.6 seconds. -- BERNAMA

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