

27 APR 1996

RUSA TO BE COMMON SIGHT ON MSIAN ROADS SOON

By: Mohd Arshi Mat Daud

KUALA LUMPUR, April 27 (Bernama) -- Sighting the Rusa on Malaysia's roads, the country's first and very own Multi Utility Vehicle (MUV), will be a common sight as such vehicles continue to gain popularity here.

Some 200 of Perusahaan Otomobil Kedua Sdn Bhd (Perodua)'s Rusa have hit Malaysian roads todate since the first batch of the MUVs were registered between March 15 to March 21, 1996.

The General Manager of Marketing for Perodua Sales Sdn Bhd, Zainuddin Bahaudin, said 110 of the five-seater Rusa EX are now driven on the road as well as 90 of the seven-seater Rusa GX.

The EX variant which until March 20, 1996 received around 1,200 bookings, saw 150 units booked for the period from April 1 to 7, 1996, he said in a reply to Bernama recently.

The more popular GX model, which until March 20 saw over 5,900 bookings, has for the same period registered order for 240 units.

For early bookers who are complaining of not receiving their precious Rusa todate, Zainuddin said that "there was a production shortfall for March/April 1996, which has affected the number of delivery to dealers."

"We hope that this situation will improve from May, 1996 onwards," he added.

Based on a sample of current bookings, he said the majority of Rusa buyers are those between the ages of 35 to 44, with each drawing a monthly salary of RM2,000 and over.

Seventy percent of the 1.3 litre Rusa buyers are males while the remaining 30 percent are females.

Meanwhile, Perodua Kancil, the Rusa's older but smaller sister, was targetting a different segment of the market.

A majority of its buyers fell under a younger group category, between the ages of 25 to 34 and each earning between RM1,000 to RM1,500 per month.

There was almost an even ratio among the male and female buyers for the Kancil where the latter constituted 55 percent of the bookings or sales, said Zainuddin.

Bookings for the 660 cc mini car for the first seven days of April stood at 1,030 vehicles, with the four speed EX at 240 units, the five speed GX at 490, the automatic EZ at 260 and the ERA (EX with a facelift) at 40.

The Kancil, since the introduction of the first two variants (EX and GX) in September 1994, has seen 60,000 units on the roads so far, he said.

Of these, 14,000 units were the EX, 31,000 the GX, 14,000 the EZ and 1,000 the limited edition ERA.

The Kancil, whose price range from RM24,900 to RM33,000, seems unhurt by the introduction of Tiara, the latest Proton variant, that was tagged at about RM34,900 without optional accessories.

The 1.1 litre Tiara, modelled along the lines of the Citroen AX, was launched by the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad on April 5.

"The introduction of Tiara has not affected the demand for Kancil."

"In some instances where bookings have declined, it is attributed more to the long waiting period," added Zainuddin.--BERNAMA

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