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95 Protons cars sent to Lebanon in last two months

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LEBANON has imported 95 Proton cars in the last two months with another 100 cars to be shipped there next month.

Malaysian Lebanese Trading House Ltd executive chairman Datuk Mohamad T. Al-Ozeir said yesterday they expected to capture five per cent of the Lebanese passenger car market by the end of next year.

"Our plan next year is to import another 400 cars but we may double the number depending on the demand.

"There is a big demand for the Satria model among the younger generation in Lebanon and we expect the Satria to be our top seller," said Al-Ozeir who has asked at least 50 Satrias for next month's shipment.

He added that most of the cars imported over the last two months had been sold.

MLTH was awarded the distribution rights in June when Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Bhd and MLTH signed an agreement during the visit of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to Lebanon.

Al-Ozeir said MLTH also had the first option to export Proton cars to Syria.

"However, we only expect to export cars into Syria in the middle of next year.

"Our plan is to establish Proton in Lebanon first."

Lebanon is the eighth Proton market in the Middle East.

The other countries importing Proton cars are Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Jordan and Bahrain.

On the Lebanese car market, Al-Ozeir said Korean and Japanese models dominated the market.

"However the prices of the Proton cars are very competitive compared to the Japanese and Korean models and, for that reason, we are confident of boosting sales.

"There were also encouraging write-ups on the quality of Proton cars in automobile magazines in Lebanon.

"Our workshop is fully equipped and we have all the spare parts as we believe that after-sales service is very important.

"And our spare parts are cheaper than our competitors, which gives us an edge over them," Al-Ozeir said.

He added that as Lebanon had a population of only 3.5 million, he was considering hire-purchase facilities to increase sales.

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