

15 MAY 1997

ANDHRA PRADESH WANTS TO BE LOCATION FOR PROTON CAR PLANT

NEW DELHI, May 15 (Bernama) -- The Chief Minister of the Southern Indian State of Andhra Pradesh, Chandrababu Naidu, now on a visit to Malaysia, has shot off a letter to the Indian Industry Minister, requesting him to grant permission to the Malaysian Government to locate the Proton car plant in his state.

Naidu sent the letter from Kuala Lumpur following the in-principle acceptance by Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad of his request for setting up a Proton car plant in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, according to a press release issued by the Chief Minister's Office in Hyderabad.

The letter to Industry Minister Murasoli Maran said: "I am confident a formal letter from you will go a long way to expediting the final decision by the Malaysian Government for locating the Proton plant," according to a report in the English daily, the Hindu.

Naidu is the chairman of the Steering Committee of the United Front and played a major role in arriving at a concensus on the choice of Inder Kumar Gujral as a successor to Deve Gowda as the country's Prime Minister. He has, therefore, a great deal of clout with the Gujral government.

Visakhapatnam has been selected as the site for the Proton car plant as a steel plant and several ancillary industries are located there, the press release said.

Naidu also told Mahathir that there was scope for twinning Visakhapatnam and Klang ports to cater to the transshipment needs of the region.

The Chief Minister, said the release, followed up his meeting with Mahathir with a letter to the Prime Minister seeking Malaysia's involvement in the development of the state's infrastructure and suggesting the setting up of a joint task force focused on collaborative ventures proposed in the state.

Naidu suggested to Mahathir a partnership between the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) and Hyderabad Information Technology and Engineering Consultancy (HITEC) and between the MSC and the Information Technology University coming up in Hyderabad, the capital of Andhra Pradesh, the report said, quoting the release.

He also suggested Malaysian participation in tourism, road and port development. -- BERNAMA

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