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VEHICLE-PRODUCTION

VEHICLE PRODUCTION ON A POSITIVE TREND, SAYS RAFIDAH

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 7 (Bernama) -- The production of motor vehicles is showing some positive trends, especially for the months of August and September this year, despite the current economic slowdown experienced by the country, said Minister of International Trade and Industry Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz.

Citing an example, the minister said the total production for August 1998 was 15,188 units and that for September 1998 was 14,977 units.

The production figures for these two months were higher by at least 50 percent than those of earlier months, indicating that the industry is picking up, she said here today at the launch of a Malaysian 1-tonne van, called Inokom Permas, by Industri Otomotif Komersil Sdn Bhd (Inokom).

Rafidah was representing Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the launching ceremony.

The minister said sales of motor vehicles, including commercial vehicles, increased by 11 percent to 404,837 units in 1997 from 364,788 units in 1996.

She pointed out that the sales from January to September this year totalled 104,593 units, of which 90,181 units were passenger cars/vehicles while 14,412 units were commercial vehicles.

The total sales of motor vehicles for October 1998 was 16,638 units, registering an increase of 14 percent over the September sales of 14,308.

Touching on local content, she said the overall gross local content for passenger vehicles is between 65 and 70 percent.

Elaborating further, Rafidah said the gross local content for Proton is 80 percent and for Perodua, it is 70 percent. The local content for local assembled vehicles is 40 percent while that for the Inokom Permas is 25 percent.

The net local content for Proton and Perodua is 55 percent and 40 percent respectively, she said.

Earlier, Rafidah said the introduction of foreign technology into the country should be viewed as a prime mover to local efforts rather than be seen as "technology dependency syndrome".

As for the Permas van that was launched today, the van comes with an interesting mix of variants to cater to the respective motoring needs. There are standard and deluxe versions offering a range of fittings and features. Matching the variety is the attractive range of affordable prices.

For commercial or private registration, the Permas prices range from an affordable RM41,746.32 for a panel van to RM60,912.53 for a long wheelbase, high-roof window van.

These Inokom Permas vans are distributed by two established automotive companies - Quasar Carriage Sdn Bhd and Hyumal Motor Sdn Bhd. -- BERNAMA

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