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Mahathir-Economy

LAUNCH OF KEMBARA SHOWS ECONOMY NOT THAT BAD, SAYS DR M

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 24 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today's launch of the Perodua Kembara proves that Malaysia's economy is not as bad as claimed by foreigners.

He said confirmed booking for 475 units of the locally-made four-wheel-drive vehicle showed that Malaysians "still have two or three ringgit to spend on new cars."

While the world felt Malaysia's economy was about to collapse and needed the help of the International Monetary Fund, "strangely, we launch a new car," he said to applause from the more than 1,000 guests at the launching.

The Prime Minister said foreigners had been saying Malaysia was doing all the wrong things contrary to the advice of foreign journalists "who seem to know much more in running countries, better than any government in the world."

These journalists "strangely remain journalists and not ministers of any country", he said.

Dr Mahathir expressed confidence that Kembara would be well-received by the public as the vehicle would be the cheapest four-wheel-drive in its category.

He said Kembara was aerodynamic in shape and this could make it more popular than the other "boxy look" four-wheel-drives.

Perodua, or Perusahaan Otomobil Kedua Sdn Bhd, would be able to export the Kembara in future, he said.

Dr Mahathir also said that he had tested a 850 cc Kancil direct fuel injection and was surprised that it could really accelerate.

However, he did not say whether the car would go into mass production.

Kancil is the second national car after Proton and is produced by Perodua.

With its reasonable prices, Malaysians could buy more Kancils, maybe at the expense of the Proton," said Dr Mahathir in jest.

-- BERNAMA

AD MR SK