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Mahathir-Motorcycle

MODENAS JAGUH, SYMBOL OF MALAYSIANS' INDEPENDENCE, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

GURUN, July 19 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today launched the second Made-In-Malaysia motorcycle "Modenas Jaguh", describing it as a symbol of Malaysians' supremacy and independence.

He said the launching of the motorcycle was a meaningful achievement to the government for its success in introducing automotive technology to Malaysians.

"Before Independence, Malays only worked as padi farmers...only a small number of them were employed as office boys and clerks by the colonialists," he said when launching "Modenas Jaguh" at a colourful ceremony at the Kilang Motosikal dan Enjin Nasional Sdn Bhd (Modenas), here.

He said the Malays remained stagnant in poverty and none of them became carpenters, vehicle mechanics and watch repairers pioneered by the Chinese while the Indians worked in rubber estates.

"But after Independence, we introduced the New Economic Policy to eradicate poverty and to bridge the economic disparity. The results can be seen today with our people using technology to produce motorcycles," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the post-Independence government adopted an inquisitive approach, asking around those in the know to learn the technology to develop the country.

For instance, Modenas, which was set up just two-and-a-half years ago, acquired the technology by entering into a joint venture with the Japanese motorcycle manufacturer, Kawasaki.

"We asked them on the technology as they know about it and maybe one day others will enquire from us when we have become experts.

" Anything we aspire to do will become a reality if we have the confidence and discipline to do it.

"I've visited the factory here and saw that all works related to assembling were done by our people...this is something to be proud of," he said.

As a result of the learning process, Malaysia's national car producer Proton could now manufacture a car right from its designing to production and Modenas was able to roll out a motorbike every six minutes, he said.

"This is what is said to be the fruit of the acquired technology and the independence enjoyed all these while," he said.

Dr Mahathir reminded the people to value the freedom and not to forsake it as they would not have a second chance.

Meanwhile, the Modenas Jaguh is a 175cc model with an air cooling four-stroke-engine. It has a stylish low and long cruiser look.

The five-speed fuel-economic bike is sold at RM7,500 inclusive of half-year road tax, registration fee, number plate and comprehensive insurance coverage for single riders.

Edaran Modenas Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of Modenas, has set a sales target of 12,000 units in the first year and 20,000 in the second.

The bike will be exported at the year-end.

This is Modenas' second motorcycle model after the Kriss 110cc launched on June 14, 1996.

Modenas, a company under the DRB-Hicom Group, with a paid-up capital of RM100 million, manufactures and produces the national motorcycle and small

multi-application engines.
-- BERNAMA
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