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One of a kind

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GOOD luck to Datuk Nadzmi Salleh for his noble efforts to turn Mara Holdings Sdn Bhd (MB, July 16 issue) around. His task is arduous and he has a mountain to climb. In the Bumiputera psyche, Mara (Majlis Amanah Rakyat) occupies a special place. Mara Holdings, as its investment arm, needs to show that it is a going business concern as only with profits can funds filter down for the benefit of the community. So, it was appropriate that Nadzmi was picked to lead Mara Holdings out of the doldrums. Nadzmi's tenure at Proton has served him well. After leaving Proton, he went on to pursue his private business interests which gives him the advantage of working in two thoroughly different environments. The manner of his leaving Proton will forever be the subject of conjecture and idle coffeeshop talk but Nadzmi himself is a model of discretion. Your writer did not get more than 'it was best for Proton' when asked about events surrounding his departure. This is such an admirable trait anyone can have.

For me, Nadzmi's lasting legacy remains in the success of the Proton venture. Who would have thought that Proton could have come this far. Together with its dedicated pioneer workforce, Nadzmi translated the vision of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad into reality. They had to endure the early critics who initially said it could not be done. When they eventually did it, the sceptics did not let up by deriding the car for its quality and desirability. Now so many years down the road, there is no doubt that the hard work has paid off. Accolade upon accolade and award upon award has been heaped on Proton, especially in the very demanding market in the United Kingdom. Proton has consistently won rave reviews for its durability and quality, beating so many other established makes, both European and Japanese among British drivers.

Your article made a cursory tour of his term at Proton which surely does little justice to his illustrious 'national' service, getting Malaysia's national car project up and running. Mara and the whole gamut of other businesses in which Nadzmi now has an interest stand to benefit from his expertise. I, for one, do not doubt that his target to steer Mara Holdings to profitability will be achieved.