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Apec, GM in deal to roll out automotive plan

THE APEC partnership for equitable growth (PEG) and General Motors (GM) Corp have agreed to roll out an APEC-wide automotive development programme.

PEG, established through the APEC economic leaders, aims to see balanced developments and a more level playing field among member nations.

The founder patron of PEG is Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, and its board of directors comprises leading members of the APEC business advisory council.

Kuala Lumpur-based PEG said in a statement that its chief executive officer (CEO), Dr Shafiq Sit Abdullah, and GM Asia-Pacific region new business ventures director in charge Alan Perriton signed an agreement to push forward the APEC Automotive Apprenticeship (APEC-AAA) programme.

PEG, which already offers pan-APEC SME Work Program which deals in quality management problems caused during the process of training and education, transfer of technology and operational down time issues in the car industry, will collaborate with GM to run this unique programme. During the last four years, GM had signed numerous contracts with motor vehicle companies, especially small- and medium-sized companies. In South Korea alone, this amounted to US\$1 billion (US\$1 = RM3.80).

The AAA programme which modelled after the GM programme, will provide the participating companies with opportunities to co-operate in areas such as technology exchange, improvement of work efficiency, product design and product quality management.

Shafiq said that the goal of the programme is to increase competitiveness of the small- and medium-sized car sector within the region, and to prepare them to actively participate in the global market.

It will also help them to assist small- and medium-sized automotive companies to work along side global companies such as GM in a partnership which would give mutual benefit to the participating companies, he added. According to the Shafiq, this will be APEC's first economic-technology co-operation in the automotive area that involves both the private and the public sectors.

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