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Buyers won't be forced to buy optional accessories: EON, USPD

EDARAN Otomobil Nasional Bhd (EON) and Usahasama Proton-DRB Sdn Bhd (USPD) will not force buyers to buy optional accessories when they purchase new Proton cars.

Both EON and USPD expressed support for a move by Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Bhd (Proton) to launch a consumer awareness campaign that informs car buyers of their rights regarding standard and optional accessories.

"We at EON support the advertisement in ensuring that customers are not forced into buying optional accessories," EON managing director Datuk Adzmi Abdul Wahab said.

Commenting on the issue that certain Proton dealers are said to have forced customers into buying optional accessories or else delivery of their cars will be delayed, he said as far as EON is concerned the situation is well under control.

"Since EON's directives in October and November last year, all EON sales branches and dealerships have adhered in ensuring that customers have the choice on whether to buy the optional accessories or not.

"No customers are forced into buying any accessories they do not want," he added.

Adzmi said thus far, EON has not had any further encounters of unscrupulous dealers.

The campaign, which came in the form of a large advertisement in the New Straits Times last week under the heading "A clarification for all Proton car buyers", was to inform Proton car buyers about the standard accessories that come with every purchase of a Proton car.

It informed consumers that Proton cars come from the factory fitted with only six government-approved accessories.

"Everything else offered by the distributor is an option. The choice is yours," the advertisement read.

USPD chief executive officer Maruan Mohd Said said it is Proton's initiative in keeping customers fully aware of their rights.

"Directly, it has always been Proton's position to clarify what is and what is not with its customers. The six government-approved accessories fitted into Proton cars are the standard accessories, and those wishing to buy optional accessories should be well-informed of the additional price they may have to pay," he added.

Maruan further said complaints that certain dealers have forced buyers to take the optional accessories were never the case.

"Buyers have always been given the choice whether to buy the optional accessories which may require additional price or just go with the standard accessories with no extra payment.

Maruan said currently at USPD, installation of optional accessories has been on the decline with minimum requests from buyers.

"Even formerly, the optional accessories offered to customers were thrown-in items, no major complaints were heard where customers were made to buy any accessories without their consent," he added.

The thrown-in items consist of a CD changer, a boot tray with a tool kit, hazard sign, a first-aid-kit and body stripe.

Meanwhile, commenting on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's dismissal of rumours that EON may lose its Proton distributorship rights to USPD, Adzmi said the discussion on the distributorship agreement is still ongoing.

"As soon as the agreement is finalised, both Proton and EON would issue a statement," he said.

"In place right now for the national car project is the healthy joint existence of both EON and USPD which has made the national car project a success and continues to do so," Adzmi added.

Meanwhile, declining comment on the distributorship issue, Maruan only said that for the time being both EON and USPD are distributors for Proton cars. "Whatever the situation may be in future, for now it is best that we as Proton dealers do our best in making the national car project a success," he said.

Talk of EON losing its distributorship franchise surfaced last year with the falling out of the proposed acquisition of EON by Proton.

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