

18/01/2002

Proton saves RM145m a year in forex with EMS

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PERUSAHAAN Otomobil Nasional Bhd (Proton) has managed to save RM145 million a year in foreign exchange (forex) with its engine management system (EMS).

Proton chief executive officer Tengku Tan Sri Mahaleel Tengku Ariff said the EMS has reduced Proton's engineering development cost by between 20 per cent and 30 per cent.

"The EMS has further reduced our reliance on foreign technology that places limitations on product development for the national car company," he told reporters in Shah Alam, Selangor, yesterday.

He had earlier presented appreciation awards to Proton's 79 engineers and support staff.

"The cost-saving of up to 30 per cent is one of the main reasons Proton has been able to maintain the price of the Wira in spite of rising costs," he said.

He said the EMS has enabled Proton to have a free hand in determining future performance parameters and strategies for the cars it produces.

Mahaleel said Proton is also able to reduce its reliance on outside parties and payments of royalties and invisible costs.

The EMS project comprises two versions - the EMS400 and EMS700.

The EMS400 is developed for the Satria and Wira models and is already installed in both models which rolled out of the production line from July last year.

The second version, the MS700, is developed for the Waja model and is due to be fitted on the Waja model which will be out by the first quarter of next year.

Research and development work on the EMS700 is on-going and is being intensified.

Proton first initiated the project in 1998 to enable its Wira model to meet the more stringent European Emission Legislation (Step III) for sale in 2001.

EMS simply means the tweaking of engines in the selected Proton models ranging from 1.1 litres to 1.8 litres according to the driving style of its owners.

Utilising electronics, it controls functions such as fuel injection rate, ignition timing, idle speed control, cooling fans, air-conditioning as well as other integral parts of the engine.

The EMS700 series will have enhanced capabilities to match it with the technological edge offered by Camshaft Profile (Campro), Proton's own engine.

Campro was first unveiled by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in the UK in July 2000.

The Waja will be the first vehicle to use the Campro which will be managed by the EMS700 version.

A major highlight of the EMS700 is the Drive By Wire (DBW) system.

Proton jointly developed the EMS system with its subsidiary Lotus Engineering as well as German giant Siemens VDO.

Mahaleel said Proton was able to recover the RM20 million invested in developing the EMS six months after its launch in July last year.

He added that the EMS is not fitted into other models such as the Perdana V6 and the Juara.

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