

28 NOV 2002
INOKOM- ATOS

MAHATHIR HOPES INOKOM ATOS COULD BE PRODUCED FOR EXPORT AFTER AFTA

PUTRAJAYA, Nov 28 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad hopes that INOKOM Atos, a multi-function vehicle (MFV) manufactured by Industri Otomotif Komersial (INOKOM) Corporation Sdn Bhd could be produced for export after the implementation of Asean Free Trade Area (AFTA) for motor vehicles in 2005.

Dr Mahathir said the vehicle would have to strongly compete with the market especially after Afta was implemented.

"I hope that the company could learn from its Korean partner on how to reduce the cost of the national car as Korea is a very good car maker and the prices are low," he said.

Dr Mahathir was speaking to reporters after witnessing the signing of Certification for Mass Production of INOKOM Atos between Inokom Corporation Sdn Bhd and Hyundai Corporation, Korea here.

Inokom was represented by its chairman, Amer Hamzah Ahmad while Hyundai was represented by its vice-chairman, Park Byung Jae.

Mahathir later took a test drive for nearly 15 minutes around Putrajaya, accompanied by Amer and Park.

In another development, Amer told reporters that INOKOM would maintain the name and would not change the design of the vehicle because Atos had been well accepted in the Asean countries.

But this time around Atos exported to Asean countries after AFTA would be manufactured in Malaysia.

The one-litre engine capacity vehicle based on the current Hyundai ATOS platform is expected to roll-out for the local market end of this year.

The vehicle would be priced at RM43,000 on the road and INOKOM targets sales between 15,000 to 20,000 units within 12 months after the roll out.

Amer said the company would not be rushing into production because what was more important was the quality and not the quantity adding that efforts had been made to upgrade its plant in Kulim, Kedah.

"We have another two years to do all the upgrading," he added.

On other Hyundai models to be manufactured by Inokom in the future, he said there were at least two more models in the pipeline but the emphasis now was to make INOKOM Atos a success. -- BERNAMA

AKT KTC