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Perodua makes its mark at home and abroad

SEVEN years ago, Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Kedua Sdn Bhd (Perodua) was established to undertake the second national car project. It was an extension of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's vision for the nation to emerge as a major car manufacturer capable of competing in the global market.

Three companies were entrusted with the operations of the second national car: Perodua as the holding company, Perodua Manufacturing Sdn Bhd as the manufacturer and Perodua Sales Sdn Bhd as the sales and distribution arm.

The holding company is 71.58 per cent owned by Malaysians (UMW Corp Sdn Bhd, PNB Equity Resource Corp Sdn Bhd, MBM Resources Bhd and Daihatsu Malaysia Sdn Bhd) and 28.42 per cent by Japanese concerns (Daihatsu Motor Co and Mitsui Co Ltd).

Since its establishment, Perodua has manufactured five vehicles, for both local and export markets. These are the four-wheel-drive Kembara (1998), multi-utility vehicle Rusa (1996), Kenari (2000) and two compact cars, Kancil (1984) and Kelisa (2001).

A total of 73,835 units of the Kancil were registered last year. The Kelisa, which was launched on August 24 last year, recorded sales of 10,671 units in the same year. Up to July this year, both the Kancil and the Kelisa have chalked up sales of 36,288 units and 23,000 units, respectively.

Perodua said the Kancil is still the company's best-selling model. In terms of volume, the car is expected to account for 46 per cent of Perodua's total production volume this year and represents 37 per cent of the forecast revenue for the year.

Perodua's export markets include the UK, Egypt, Singapore, Malta, Cyprus, Lebanon, Jordan, Sudan, Syria, Qatar, Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Fiji, Comoros Island, Vanuatu, Brunei and Mauritius. The company is currently negotiating with suitable candidates in Saudi Arabia and several other Gulf countries to act as its distributors in these new markets.

As at 2001, a total of 7,432 cars have been shipped to its top five export markets - the UK, Egypt, Singapore, Malta and Cyprus.

Perodua's 81ha site at Sg Choh in Rawang, Selangor, houses its headquarters and plant which has a production capacity of 150,000 units a year on a two-shift cycle.

Perodua is also gearing itself for the advent of the Asean Free Trade Area. The group recently undertook a restructuring exercise, which saw the formation of a joint venture company called Perodua Auto Corp Sdn Bhd (PCSB).

PCSB's shareholders are Perodua (49 per cent), Daihatsu Motor Co, Ltd (41 per cent) and Mitsui & Co Ltd (10 per cent). Daihatsu and Mitsui are existing shareholders in Perodua, where together the two companies hold a 28.42 per cent stake in the holding company.

The restructuring exercise had been primarily motivated by the recognition of all stakeholders of the need for the Perodua group of companies to increase their efficiencies, enhance quality and accordingly to improve their overall competitiveness for the post-Afta era.

With this restructuring, management control of the manufacturing operations will be passed on to Perodua's Japanese joint venture partners, via their 51 per cent direct shareholding in PCSB. The effective majority

of the manufacturing operations remains 53 per cent owned by Malaysians.