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Multi-function Inokom Atos to be made here

PUTRAJAYA, Thurs. - The Inokom Atos, a multi-function vehicle modelled after the Hyundai Atos, will be mass-produced locally with the first roll-out scheduled for next month.

The project is a collaboration between Inokom Corporation Sdn Bhd and Hyundai Motor Corporation, with the former assembling the vehicle and the latter supplying the parts.

Both companies today signed the certification for the mass production at the Putrajaya Lake Club, witnessed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Representing Inokom was chairman Amer Hamzah Ahmed while Hyundai was represented by vice-chairman Park Byung Jae.

The vehicle will be produced at Inokom's plant in Kulim, Kedah, at the rate of between 600 to 700 units a month.

Inokom is targeting a production rate of 1,500 units a month by early next year. About 40 per cent of its components are locally sourced.

Dr Mahathir, who took it for a test drive after witnessing the ceremony, said: "It's a good car."

The Inokom Atos can also be used as a mini-van as its back seat can be folded down.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysian manufacturers could learn from the South Korean's ability to produce good cars at lower costs.

"We are interested in Korea because they are good car makers and their prices are low. We want to learn how to reduce the cost of our cars.

"I also hope Inokom will be able to produce the Atos for export, especially when the Asean Free Trade Area is in place," he said.

The car's sole distributor here is Hyundai-Berjaya Sdn Bhd. Present at the ceremony was Berjaya Group Bhd chairman Tan Sri Vincent Tan.

This is the first multi-function vehicle to be manufactured by Inokom.

Currently, Inokom is the national manufacturer of light commercial trucks and vans. It is also the contract assembler of other vehicles.

Inokom is a joint venture company between Hyundai, Renault of France and Malaysia.

Inokom officials said the price of the car would not be disclosed until its sales launch next month.