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NAM: MERCEDES BENZ NOT GIVEN AS GIFTS TO LEADERS

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 26 (Bernama) -- The Mercedes Benz cars used to ferry leaders at the 13th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit here would not be given as gifts to the leaders who attended the conference, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said last night.

"This is the first time I have heard of it. I am sorry Australia is not in the delegation (member state of NAM), but don't be too disappointed because we are not giving away the Mercedes," he told a press conference after closing the summit.

He was asked by an Australian journalist to confirm rumours that the Malaysian government had donated the cars to the leaders who made it to the summit.

"They (the cars) were not actually bought by the government. They are loaned to the government for this meeting and after this we will return these cars to the people who lent the cars. We are not that rich," said Dr Mahathir, the chairman of the grouping of developing countries.

-- BERNAMA

MNY SR YBY