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PROTON-PLANT

NEW PROTON PLANT IN TANJUNG MALIM NEARING COMPLETION

By: Arul Rajoo

TANJUNG MALIM, April 22 (Bernama) -- The RM1.8 billion new state-of-the-art Proton assembly plant in Tanjung Malim is 72.6 percent completed and is expected to roll out its first car using its own design campro engine at the end of the year.

Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Bhd (Proton) chief executive officer, Tan Sri Tengku Mahaleel Tengku Ariff said the construction of the building was 90 percent completed while equipment installation has reached 56 percent with 1,690 workers from 18 main contractors and 35 sub-contractors working on the site.

The initial production would be around 20,000 units while the plant itself has the capacity to produce 150,000 units per year, he told reporters after a tour of the plant to view the progress, here today.

The plant located in Proton City, about 11km from here, will only produce new models.

It is on a 512-hectare site which is almost five times the area of the Shah Alam plant.

The new plant will also incorporate new technology to further enhance the manufacturing process in terms of automation and quality control.

This will not only facilitate improvements in the production process of the company's existing cars but will also ensure sufficient production capacity for planned future models.

Tengku Mahaleel said the plant included many improvement for Proton and much of the system would be based on the Toyota manufacturing system.

"Firstly the plant is fully modular and a single module will provide a capacity of 250,000 units per year.

"It can be easily ramped up by a scale of 250,000 units per increase to reach one million units," he said.

The ground breaking ceremony for Proton City was officiated by Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on March 1996 but the project was suspended in January 1998 due economic recession. It was restarted in January 2002. -- BERNAMA

AR MKO KTC