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Mahathir-Proton

SYRIA KEEN TO IMPORT PROTON CARS, SAYS DR M

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 19 (Bernama) -- Syria is keen to import Malaysia's national car Proton, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said this intention was conveyed to him during his just concluded visit to Syria.

"Damascus has the potential to be the best market for Proton cars, and they consider the Proton product better than others in the same category," he told a news conference on his return from Syria at the RMAF base in Subang, near here.

Dr Mahathir, accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, had been away since Aug 10, visiting Algeria, Swaziland and Syria.

During the trip, Dr Mahathir attended the Southern Africa International Dialogue (SAID) 2003 in Swaziland and held talks with Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and Syrian President Dr Bashar Al-Assad.

Proton has already penetrated the markets in many countries, including Australia, the United Kingdom, Bangladesh, Bahrain and Iran.

Dr Mahathir also said that Islamic countries, especially Algeria and Syria, wanted to strengthen trade ties with Malaysia.

"They are all interested in having closer ties with Malaysia and many of them regard Malaysia as a good model for them.

"I could see that they were so friendly, especially Algeria and Syria. They want close cooperation with Malaysia and have invited Malaysia to invest in their countries and to seize the opportunities arising from their open attitude, especially towards Malaysia," he said.

The Prime Minister advised Malaysian investors to be more aggressive in introducing and promoting their products in these countries to help expand trade between them and Malaysia.

"Our people are not too aggressive. We did not go there; We did not have exhibitions of our products that can be marketed there. So, they are buying from Korea and other countries," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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