

MPs: Resolve the AP dispute

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Backbenchers want to meet Dr Mahathir

KUALA LUMPUR: The Backbenchers Club in Parliament wants the Government to resolve the controversies surrounding the motor vehicle industry policy and national carmaker Proton.

Club chairman Datuk Shahrir Abdul Samad said they had set up a working committee to deal with the issue and to seek a clearer picture of the matter from the relevant parties, including from Proton adviser Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"Last week, we met vendors of Proton and Perodua," he told Bernama at the Parliament lobby here yesterday.

"This week, we will discuss with Proton itself. We are trying to get a date to meet Dr Mahathir."

PAS also wants the Anti-Corruption Agency to investigate accusations by Dr Mahathir that the International Trade and Industry Ministry was not transparent in issuing approved permits (APs).

PAS secretary-general Datuk Kamaruddin Jaafar said these allegations concerned the irregularity in the issuance of APs.

Dr Mahathir had said on Tuesday that the current AP system benefited only a few companies.

Of 67,000 APs issued last year, 12,600 were given to 82 companies and the remainder to 20 "selected" companies, he alleged.

Kamaruddin, who is Tumpat

MP, proposed that the Government come out with a clear policy for car imports.

"We want the Cabinet to disclose the list of AP holders," he told reporters at Parliament lobby, suggesting that APs be issued through public auctions.

He said Proton Holdings Bhd should also adopt accountability in its management, referring to a recent outburst by Proton CEO Tengku Tan Sri Mahaleel Tengku Ariff over the Government's handling of the automotive policy.

Meanwhile, Opposition chief Lim Kit Siang has sent a notice to the Dewan Rakyat Speaker to move a motion on the Proton issue at its sitting today.

In a statement here, he said allegations by Tengku Mahaleel that Proton was being treated unfairly by the Government's motor vehicle policy and the "test of wills" between International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz and Dr Mahathir should be immediately debated.