

06/07/2005

BBC-Automotive

BBC WANTS GOVT TO SOLVE PROTON, AUTO ISSUE

KUALA LUMPUR, July 6 (Bernama) -- The Barisan Nasional's Backbenchers Club (BBC) wants the government to resolve the controversy surrounding the automotive industry policy and national car manufacturer Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Bhd (Proton).

Its chairman Datuk Shahrir Abdul Samad said a working committee had been set up to deal with the issue and would also seek a clearer picture on the matter from the relevant parties, including from Proton advisor Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"Last week, we met up with vendors of Proton and Perodua. This week, we will discuss with Proton itself and get their inputs and we are trying to get a date for a meeting with Dr Mahathir," said Shahrir, who is also Umno Supreme Council member, when met at the Parliament lobby here today.

Meanwhile, opposition party PAS wants the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) to investigate into what it alleged as the lack of transparency on the issuance of Approved Permits (APs) by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Miti).

Its Secretary-General Datuk Kamarudin Jaffar said the the question of AP issuance was raised by former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad must be given importance especially on AP issuing procedures.

Speaking to reporters at the Parliament lobby here, he said the government should also clearly outline the national auto import policy.

"Issuance of APs for car imports must be carried out openly through public auction so that all companies which are offering the highest prices are eligible, thus improving the country's revenue," said Kamarudin.

He also urged the government to announce the list of AP holders so that members of the public could assess the issue, which was alleged to have threatened Proton's position.

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

In a statement, he said allegations by Proton Chief Executive Officer Tengku Tan Sri Mahaleel Tengku Ariff that the company was being treated unfairly by the government's automotive policy and the "test of will" between Minister of International Trade and Industry Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz and Dr Mahathir, should be immediately debated.

"Parliament must debate the latest crisis in Proton's 20-year history and not only whoever is right or wrong, Mahaleel and Mahathir or Rafidah and the Proton Board but whatever is best for the country and Malaysia's 26 million people," he said.

--BERNAMA

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