

30/07/2005

Najib-AP

CABINET TO ASK RAFIDAH TO EXPLAIN AP ISSUES RAISED BY MAHATHIR

JOHOR BAHRU, July 30 (Bernama) -- The Cabinet will ask International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz for her views regarding issues on Approved Permits (APs) for car imports raised by former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said Rafidah could use the weekly Cabinet meeting to give her views.

"The Cabinet is studying the matter because there was a statement made by Tun (Dr Mahathir) and a reply by him. Surely the Cabinet would want to know the views of the Minister of International Trade and Industry on the matter," he told reporters after launching National Cooperative Day 2005 today at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia here.

Also present were Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman and Entrepreneur Development and Cooperative Minister Datuk Mohamed Khaled Nordin.

Dr Mahathir, who is the Proton adviser, on Tuesday claimed Rafidah did not give all the facts on the issue at the Umno general assembly last week and had thus misled the delegates.

He also said the AP system, which was originally introduced to increase the number of Bumiputeras in the automotive industry, had instead benefited only a few Bumiputeras who received thousands of APs.

In response, Rafidah released the list of AP recipients for 2004 on the instruction of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who was then on an official visit to South Africa.

Rafidah, who accompanied the Prime Minister to South Africa, had earlier released the list of AP recipients for 2005.

Najib said the Cabinet would continue to be transparent on the award of APs in line with the approach by the Prime Minister.

"A transparent approach is best because there is nothing to hide from the public," he said.

Asked on the decision by Proton Holding Bhd not to renew the contract of its Chief Executive Officer Tengku Tan Sri Mahaleel Tengku Ariff, he said the board of directors had the power to determine the leadership of the company.

Tengku Mahaleel is now on leave before retiring from Proton at the end of September.

Proton has appointed Datuk Kisai Rahmat, its director of operations, and Datuk Kamarulzaman Darus, the CEO of Proton Tanjung Malim Sdn Bhd, as co-chief operating officers of Proton Holdings.

-- BERNAMA

MHI CTL