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PM SAYS CALL FOR ABOLISHING APs PERSONAL OPINION OF RAFIDAH

SHAH ALAM, Aug 13 (Bernama) -- International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz's statement yesterday calling for approved permits for car imports to be abolished is her personal opinion, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.

"That is her personal opinion. I don't take it into account," he told reporters today after visiting the environment data centre that measures air quality and is run by Alam Sekitar Malaysia Sdn Bhd.

Rafidah reportedly said the APs system should be abolished as it conflicted with the World Trade Organisation agreement.

The AP issue was raised by former Prime Minister and Proton adviser Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad who questioned the large number of APs issued to a few bumiputera businessmen.

Dr Mahathir also said the issuance of APs to import cheap foreign cars was undermining the competitiveness of Proton in the domestic market.

Abdullah said the mass media should "accept" the decision of the Cabinet to take over from Rafidah's ministry the task of formulating the National Automotive Policy which would determine the way APs were awarded.

"Wait for it," he said.

The policy is expected to be announced next month.

-- BERNAMA

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