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MAHATHIR-MAHALEEL

PROTON CHAIRMAN MEETS DR MAHATHIR OVER MAHALEEL ISSUE

PUTRAJAYA, July 4 (Bernama) -- Proton advisor Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad today met the national car manufacturer's chairman, Datuk Azlan Hashim, over reports surrounding Proton's chief executive officer, Tengku Tan Sri Mahaleel Tengku Ariff.

Speaking to reporters prior to the meeting at the Perdana Leadership Foundation, here, he said: "I am going to see the chairman and I would like to ask him what happened."

Dr Mahathir was abroad when several major newspapers reported that the board had allegedly given Tengku Mahaleel a showcause letter to explain his recent remarks, criticising the government's handling of the automotive policy in an interview with a Chinese newspaper, Oriental Daily.

"I know a little from the newspapers and all that, but I need confirmation. I can't make a comment based on newspaper reports because sometime you all report something else.

"So I have to find out what is the true situation," said the former premier, who was instrumental in the formation of Proton.

Asked whether he had read the interview given by Tengku Mahaleel, Dr Mahathir said: "I don't read Chinese but I read the NST (New Straits Times)."

The newspaper had carried excerpts of what was purportedly said by Tengku Mahaleel to Oriental Daily.

As to what he thought about the interview (based on the NST report), he quipped: "That is what the newspaper said. I don't know whether he said it (or not)."

Meanwhile, Azlan who went into the meeting at 2.30 pm today, came out a little after an hour.

Asked on the outcome of the meeting, he refused to say anything but that "it is not something that should be discussed with the media."

To whether Proton would hold a press conference, he also did not say anything. -- BERNAMA

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