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MAHATHIR-MAHALEEL

TUN DR MAHATHIR DEFENDS TENGKU MAHALEEL'S STATEMENTS

KUALA LUMPUR, July 6 (Bernama) -- Proton advisor Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has defended the company's chief executive officer, Tengku Tan Sri Mahaleel Ariff's remarks for allegedly criticising the government's handling of the automotive policy, saying the latter was duty bound to protect the national car manufacturer.

He said this when responding to reports that Mahaleel was given a showcause letter to explain these remarks in an interview with a Chinese daily recently at a press conference here today.

Mahaleel had in the interview lamented over the poor treatment given by the government to Proton.

Tun Dr Mahathir met Proton chairman Datuk Azlan Hashim yesterday to get a clearer picture of developments surrounding Mahaleel. -- BERNAMA

MAD/UMI MR