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Proton aims to double Gen.2 sales to 60,000

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PROTON Holdings Bhd hopes to double the sales of its Gen.2 model to 60,000 units by the end of its financial year to March 2006.

Proton chief executive officer Tan Sri Tengku Mahaleel Tengku Ariff said the company has recorded sales of 30,000 units since the model was launched in the market last year.

The company plans to introduce three new models this year in line with its strategy to boost sales and increase its presence in the motor vehicle market.

The new models are expected to replace Proton's existing Tiara, Satria and Wira. However, Tengku Mahaleel did not disclose their exact launch date.

The introduction of the new models will also enable Proton to further compete with other foreign carmakers.

The company's market share dropped to 44 per cent last year from 66 per cent in 1999.

"We are currently working closely with a German company to get international recognition for Proton cars," Tengku Mahaleel told reporters after the official launch of a new stamp series featuring the Gen.2.

Proton adviser Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Energy, Water and Communications Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik and Pos Malaysia Bhd chairman Tan Sri Adam Kadir were at the launch.

Tengku Mahaleel said Proton will be investing RM900 million to have its own engineering platforms for state-of-the-art engineering design capability.

"We have so far completed the construction of four platforms out of the total five planned," he said.

The platforms will help increase Proton's capability in developing new designs under its brand name, he added.

He also said that the engineering platforms, which will be financed with internal funds, will enable the company to save on royalty cost as well as boost its production capability.

(END) Source : Business Times