

**News report vindicates cheap car policy, says PKR**  
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PKR said today its plan to slash car prices has been vindicated by a report in a major daily that says the federal government is also heading in that direction.

Welcoming this development in a press statement today, PKR strategy director Rafizi Ramli said it showed that his party's pledge to gradually reduce excise duties on cars was doable.

"It also reflects the two-faced nature and hypocrisy of Umno and BN leaders who continue to criticise PKR's proposal on grounds that it will bankrupt the country," Rafizi added.

Among these critics are Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin and Umno supreme council member Nor Mohamed Yakcop, who heads the Prime Minister's Economic Planning Unit.

Rafizi was referring to a speculative report in The Star yesterday. The report titled Car prices in M'sia to drop gradually? quotes an anonymous industry source.

"The government, through the Malaysia Automotive Institute (MAI), had engaged us in the past few months to discuss the matter.

"There will be a policy that will tackle the gradual reduction of car prices in Malaysia. Details of this policy are expected to be made public in the near future," the source is quoted as saying.

Trade minister must show way

In view of this latest development, Rafizi said, the onus was now on International Trade and Industry Minister Mustapa Mohamad to reveal if there was indeed such a plan.

Mustapa is heading the team that is drafting the revised National Automotive Policy, which among others aims to prepare Malaysia for free trade agreements with Japan, Korea and Australia.

"(Mustapa should) clearly tell the people what Umno's and BN's policies are regarding the reduction of car prices," Rafizi said.

And should there be such a plan, he added, Mustapa should hold discussions with Pakatan Rakyat, since this an issue the opposition bloc agrees with.

"I also urge Khairy and Nor Mohamad to withdraw their statements criticising our proposal."

Rafizi also reiterated his party's position that cheaper car prices would bring many benefits to the country, such as:

1. Lowering household debt, thus providing more disposable income;
2. Compelling the federal government to improve public transport to reduce traffic gridlocks;
3. Introducing a car scrapping policy to reduce the number of vehicles on the road;
4. Increasing the affordability of quality cars; and
5. Increasing the affordability of cars with green technology.

In view of the many benefits, Rafizi said, PKR and its coalition partners would continue to press for cheaper car prices.

PKR launched its Turunkan Harga Kereta (Reduce Car Prices) campaign before Hari Raya Aidilfitri, targeting road users heading leaving the Klang Valley for the Aidilfitri holidays.

The party argued that the hefty excise duties imposed by the federal government was a major burden on Malaysians and proposed that the car excise duty be gradually removed.

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