

Minister defends 'world's worst car' Kelisa
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A minister defended a car made by national automaker Perodua after British motoring critic and BBC presenter Jeremy Clarkson labelled it the worst car in the world.

Abdul Raman Suliman, deputy minister in the prime minister's department, said the British distributor of Perodua's mini five-door Kelisa had never received complaints, Bernama news agency reported.

"From 2001 to 2007, Perodua has exported more than 2,400 units of Kelisa to the UK and the sole Perodua distributor there had not received any negative complaints as made by Jeremy Clarkson," Abdul Raman was quoted as telling lawmakers in parliament concerned over the comments.

He also accused Clarkson of making the criticisms to boost sales of his magazine and said they were only his personal opinion.

Bernama quoted Clarkson as saying last year that the Kelisa "is without doubt the worst car, not just in its category, but in the world."

Clarkson, a host on the BBC's "Top Gear" motoring show with a magazine of the same name, has attacked the Kelisa hatchback several times.

In a February 2004 article in the British Sunday Times, he described the Kelisa as "a car built in a jungle clearing by people who go to work in shoes made from leaves", according to the newspaper's website.

He also released a DVD of car reviews in 2005 in which he bashes the Kelisa with a sledgehammer and then blows it up with dynamite. [see video]

Perodua is Malaysia's second national carmaker and began operations in 1995 as a producer of small and fuel-efficient compact models.

Japanese small car-maker Daihatsu Motor, a subsidiary of Toyota, owns a 51 percent stake in Perodua which has produced a series of attractive models well suited to the Malaysian market.

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