

Proton-Mitsubishi talks: Dr M says he was unaware

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A disappointed Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad today said he had been unaware that national carmaker Proton was in talks with Mitsubishi Motor Corporation of Japan.

The Proton adviser said he often had to learn of such things through the newspapers.

"I am not aware of anything," he said. "They (the Proton board) do things without my knowledge so I cannot be aware if they are talking or not.

"I do not give advice anymore. I just listen. As long as they do not sack me, I will be the adviser."

Dr Mahathir was responding to reporters after launching the Maju Talks series on "The Global Political-Economic Scenario Beyond 2020: Its Ramifications and Implications with Special Reference to Malaysia", at Maju Tower here.

Asked if the Proton board still sought his advice, Dr Mahathir said the board sometimes kept him informed but at other times he learned from the Press. "You know better than I do."

He said he had posed some questions to the Proton board but they had gone unanswered.

"The board decides there is no need to answer the questions. I thought they were supposed to be transparent with everything."

Dr Mahathir said that as Proton was a public-listed company and as an adviser, "I have the right to know why they did these things".

Referring to Proton's sale of MV Agusta Motors SpA for E1, Dr Mahathir said: "You buy something for E70 million (RM322 million) and sell it off for E1 and say you don't lose any money.

"They won't even say what discounts they are giving to sell Proton and how much it amounts to."