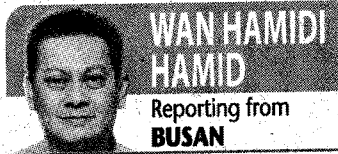


Najib: APs provided to solve 'old problem'

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THE approved permits for tuned-up imported cars granted last year were for vehicles that had been brought into the country before the AP system was scrapped, the deputy prime minister said.

Datuk Seri Najib Razak said the government had not retracted its decision to stop the issuance of APs for tuned-up cars.

"This is a legacy of an old problem which needed to be solved once and for all."

In the past, some importers had brought in cars before APs were approved.

Many of the cars were stuck in ports and storage after the government decided to stop issuing new APs last year.

Last Thursday, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz was reported as saying that Najib's special Cabinet committee had approved the issuance of 3,000 APs last year.

She was also quoted as saying that the APs were given to Wald Motor Malaysia, a company deal-

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Datuk Seri Najib Razak



ing in tuned-up cars.

On Friday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the committee's decision must have been made for special reasons.

Najib said the committee only decided to provide the APs because of the residual problem and that was only done after stringent assessments by the Transport Ministry.

"Only and until (the Transport Ministry) had approved the type specifications for each model

were the APs issued. But there will be no more APs after this."

Najib reiterated Abdullah's explanation that the government had not reversed its policy of not issuing APs for tuned-up cars.

He also said he could not verify the specific numbers of legacy APs, as the authorities were still rectifying the situation.

"But this is a residual problem. We have to resolve the residual problem. The entire committee agreed on this."

The deputy prime minister

spoke to the Malaysian Press after visiting the Samsung Techwin plant here yesterday.

Najib, who is also Defence Minister, was briefed by Samsung officials on the company's latest artillery system, including the K9 Thunder tank and K10 Ammunition Resupply Vehicle (ARV).

He said no decision has been made to buy the tanks and ARVs.

The government, however, had approved a budget under the Ninth Malaysia Plan to acquire a multi-role support ship (MRSS) for the armed forces that would be handled by the Royal Malaysian Navy.

"The MRSS is one of the projects we are considering under the 9MP because we have a need for such a ship due to its wide range of capabilities such as for United Nations peacekeeping and other humanitarian roles.

"The ship can also be converted into a hospital ship."

Najib and his delegation had earlier visited the South Korean navy MRSS, built and maintained by shipping conglomerate Hanjin Group at Busan Bay.

At present, the navy has two smaller MRSS, including the KD *Merong Mahawangsa*, built by Hanjin, that provided peacekeeping support in Timor Leste last year as well as humanitarian aid to tsunami victims in 2004.