

Newspaper	MALAYSIAN RESERVE
Date	13 MARCH 2015

Agreement with Saudis expected within 6 months

FROM P1 *Proton*

reported that Proton chairman Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad mooted the idea to Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed during her visit to Malaysia in December last year. Neither Proton nor PHP would disclose the investment amount involved in the venture but it is understood that the Bangladeshis are interested in the Exora.MPV model for production.

PHP Group is a diversified company involved in the business of petroleum products, textile, power, ship recycling as well as real estate. The company also pioneered the steel and float glass industries in Bangladesh.

Proton is also in discussions with Saudi Malaysian Industrial Development Holdings Co (Samyco) to explore the feasibility of Proton helping to kick-start auto production in Saudi Arabia that will begin with the production of re-badged Preve and Suprima models.

Sources said an agreement should materialised within six months. In April last year, it was reported that Saudi Arabia's first locally produced cars could come off the assembly line in 2017 following a deal between Saudi and Malaysian businesses to build a plant.

Sources said the plant is

expected to be built on a 324ha site in Damman.

Reports quoted Samyco chairman Rashed Othman Jawhar as saying that 300,000 units a year of Saudi-made Meeya cars will be produced when the plant reaches maximum output.

Jawhar said the factory would start producing 50,000 cars in the first 36 months. The vehicles would come in three models ranging in prices between 45,000 riyal and 120,000 riyal (RM117,744).

In February, Proton signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Indonesia's PT Adiperkasa Citra Lestari (PTACL) to help the latter develop and manufacture an Indonesian national car.

While the MoU is non-binding, it will facilitate a six-month feasibility studies involving technical, legal, financial and commercial evaluations for the purpose of developing and manufacturing of vehicles in Indonesia.

PTACL is a special-purpose vehicle set-up specifically for this partnership with Proton, underlying Indonesia's seriousness in the collaborative effort. PTACL is helmed by a member of President Joko Widodo's economic transformation team, Gen Dr Abdullah Mahmud Hedropriyono.