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New Perdana would be a redemption model

FROM P1 **Proton**

Najib said Mahathir's era in Proton has ended and a new chapter is beginning for the company.

"Now it is time for lessons to be learned and for serious measures and reforms to be put in place for the company to get back on track and realise its potential."

The government has also set up a task force headed by Performance Management and Delivery Unit CEO Datuk Seri Idris Jala to look for new strategic partners for the carmaker. A new management headed by chairman Datuk Seri Syed Faisal Albar has also been charged to turn Proton's fortunes around.

Syed Faisal said Proton is more than just a carmaker and the company has the capacity to regain the heyday that saw it hold a 70% share of the market.

"It is more than that. It is about more than a million human beings depending on it. It is about self-esteem," he said at the launch.

"We recognise the fact that Proton is in a situation that isn't very comfortable. We have enough production head start, hopefully the products would be available from today onwards at our dealers and showrooms around the country."

Proton CEO Datuk Ahmad Fuaad Kenali said the company is targeting to sell 100,000 cars this year, including about 3,000 units of the new Perdana, which has already received 900 bookings.

"We expect the new Perdana to be a redemption model. We believe this is a

new beginning for us. Our focus now would be more on delivering good quality cars that meet customers' satisfaction and improving our after-sales service," Ahmad Fuaad said.

"The new Perdana was supposed to be launched in January. So by right, the whole year would have given us 6,000 units in terms of the target."

The fourth-generation Perdana was developed with Honda Motor Co Ltd, using the Accord platform.

Ahmad Fuaad said Proton is working on an export version of the Perdana, with different transmissions and engines, that will be ready sometime in 2018.

Under the agreement with Honda, Proton is not allowed to export the current version, which production is also limited to 7,000 per year. Ahmad Fuaad said Proton will renegotiate the number if local demand surpasses the production cap.

"We will try to negotiate with Honda when possible, if needed. Hopefully we can resolve the issue with Honda, if it does come up," he said, adding that there are currently about 77,000 existing Perdana units on Malaysian roads.

There are two variants available for the new Perdana — 2.0 and 2.4 — each priced at RM113,888 and RM138,888 respectively.

The 2.0 variant produces 154hp with 189Nm of torque, while the 2.4 variant produces 178hp with 222Nm of torque.

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