

'National car project will drive learning'

The Star - 18/3/2019 pg. 4

Plan will enable Malaysians to understand automotive industry better, says Dr M



Ready to roll: Dr Mahathir waving onboard the NiO EP9 as Jazeman looks on at the launch of Asia GT Festival at the Sepang International Circuit. — Bernama

SEPANG: The move to launch a third national car project is to enable Malaysians to learn and understand automotive engineering technology, said Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Speaking to reporters after launching Asia GT Festival at the Sepang International Circuit yesterday, Dr Mahathir said Malaysians thought national cars were bad and did not support the government's plan to launch the third car project.

"People think our cars are bad. They say, don't buy Malaysian cars, buy foreign cars.

"You see, they (Malaysians) think they know everything already, including the technology involved here. That is why they don't want the third car and say it is a waste of money," he said.

"They know nothing (about) automotive engineering. That is why we (the government) plan to introduce the third national car to learn the technology involved.

"You see how much progress China has made in a short while because they have decided to go into the automotive business."

Dr Mahathir was also happy to see 70 first-generation Proton Saga cars at the Malaysia Speed Festival Saga Cup race, saying their engines sounded like Formula One cars during the race.

The race was held to pay tribute to Dr Mahathir's brainchild from the 1980s, the Proton Saga.

Earlier, Malaysian race car driver Jazeman Jaafar took Dr Mahathir for a lap around the track in the high-powered electric car NiO EP9, which is also one of the fastest electric cars in the world.

When asked about his experience sitting in the NiO EP9, Dr Mahathir said it was very thrilling and that "my heart rate went up to 140 beats per minute".

Malaysia hosted the first Asia GT Festival (outside of China) during the weekend, which saw over 30 GT cars from all around the world racing for the coveted prize money of RM5.45mil. — Bernama

Watch the video
thestartv.com

