

PROTON EV IS OFFICIAL CAR OF ASEAN 2025

e.MAS 7 made its debut at National Day parade

NOR AIN MOHAMED RADHI
AND ASILA JALIL
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday announced that Malaysia's first electric vehicle (EV), the Proton e.MAS 7, will serve as the official car for the country's Asean chairmanship next year.

"For Asean next year, the e.MAS 7 will be our official car," he said at the vehicle's launch yesterday.

Present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof; Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz; Transport Minister Anthony Loke; Proton chairman Tan Sri Syed Faisal Albar; Proton chief executive officer Dr Li Chunrong; and, Geely Auto Group chief executive officer Jerry Gan.

The e.MAS 7 made its debut at the National Day parade alongside other models, reflecting Proton's evolution over its 41-year history.

Anwar said Malaysia aims to set an example in the region, not only by showcasing its ability to produce cars but also through the development of EVs.

He said Proton, as a national car manufacturer, should leverage its role in the domestic automotive industry and the EV project.

"This is a direct, visible extension of our commitment to net zero, ensuring that this EV is reliable for the people.

"The National Automotive Policy 2020 should serve as a reference for Proton when producing this model in the country.

"Proton has toured the country to take the car to the people in all states ahead of today's launch.

"I must commend the Proton family for taking this initiative, learning from experiences, and promoting not only a modern and sophisticated car, but also an environmentally friendly one.

"I'm also pleased to see that in the near future, this car will be built in Malaysia, in Tanjung Malim, uplifting Malaysian vendors



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim checking the Proton e.MAS 7 at its launch in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. **REUTERS PIC**

through the transfer of technologies and skills related to EVs."

Anwar said it was also the responsibility of companies in the automotive industry not just to sell vehicles, but also to create opportunities for investment and employment by establishing a holistic ecosystem.

He said the government's role was to provide advice, industry-friendly policies and incentives.

"This would benefit the country and the industry. But, more importantly, it ensures we provide infrastructure, such as airports, ports, and highways, elements that form part of the ecosystem."

He acknowledged the supply-side challenges faced by the industry and the government.

"We must ensure we have the capacity and clear policies to encourage domestic production and support domestic industries and vendors, including Bumiputeras."

He added that more than 75 per cent of Asia's energy consumption came from hydrocarbons and was projected to double by 2030.

"Now we must balance demand with security, affordability and sustainability.

"Under the responsible transition initiative, Malaysia boosts its competitiveness by reducing fossil fuel dependency and nurturing growth in green mobility, renewable energy and energy storage solutions.

"Our projections indicate this could yield investment opportunities as high as RM1.3 trillion by 2050 and an additional contribution of RM220 billion to the gross domestic product and generate over 300,000 jobs."

He said Malaysia has the Low Carbon Mobility Blueprint to reduce emissions from the trans-

portation sector, which ranks as the second largest CO2 emitter.

"Our framework includes four areas of focus and the launch of Proton's first SUV EV today is timely. It will be a catalyst for moving us into the next era of low carbon mobility. It is the government's wish for Proton and its strategic partner Geely to continue to lead the development of the country's automotive competencies and ecosystem.

"I'm confident that with the development of the Automotive High Tech Valley in Tanjung Malim, more domestic vendors will be involved with the production.

"Not only for Proton cars but also for other brands."

He said Geely-Proton would be a shining example of the networking opportunities and economic cooperation that has existed between Malaysia and China for over 50 years.

"I commend both parties for the creativity and diligence to make this partnership a success."

He said in most of his meetings with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang, Geely-Proton were often discussed, showing the commitment of China and Malaysia to ensure that this arrangement succeeds.

He said the DRB-Hicom and Geely partnership involves the commitment to friendly relations between China and Malaysia.

"It's an example that proves Malaysia is an independent trading nation with a high-tech economy providing high-value goods for the region and the rest of the world.

"We intend for this partnership to support our economy and people. Therefore, I would like to reiterate what I have said often, that this must be treated as a major challenge for us."