

Malaysia : FTA with Chile another chance for Proton to re-enter Latin America
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An exclusice by Dalila Abu Bakar

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 13 (NNN-Bernama) -- The Malaysia-Chile Free Trade Agreement, which will be effective early next year, will provide another opportunity for Proton models to re-enter the Chile market, a senior Chile government official said.

International Vice-Director (Exports Promotion Bureau) Carlos Honorato Comandari believes Proton vehicles would re-enter the Latin America market after the agreement comes into force.

"We had Proton cars years ago. Then, they went out of our market. I believe with the free trade agreement, the (Made-in-Malaysia) cars will return (to our market). Our economy is wide open (to receive the cars)," he told BERNAMA in an exclusive interview.

Comandari said there was no Chinese or Korean-made vehicle brands in Chile's automotive industry before his country signed free trade agreements (FTAs) with that two countries.

"After we inked the FTAs with China and South Korea, we now have 12 Chinese brands in our car industry. We also have Korean brands. Why not Malaysian cars?"

"Our automotive industry is open and competitive. I'm pretty sure South Korea and China are waiting to see what is going to happen (after the Malaysia-Chile FTA is enforced)," he said.

Comandari also said Chile has huge potential in the tourism industry as that sector has not been developed over the last decade.

"There are a lot of opportunities in the hotel and services sectors as we want to double tourists coming to Chile in the next couple of years," he said.

Comandari said Chile also offered ample opportunities in the energy sector as his country needs to double its energy capacity by 2018 from the current 10,000 megawatts.

"If we want to be a developed nation by 2020 or at the earliest in 2018, our companies need energy. We need to double our energy capacity and for that, we need to have investors.

"They can use either water or wind as their energy source," he said.

\Chile also needs renewable and clean energy, another area Malaysians can explore, he added.--NNN-BERNAMA

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