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KUALA LUMPUR (March 6): Northport (Malaysia) Bhd and Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Sdn Bhd (Proton) have signed a strategic collaboration and services agreement for port services.

Northport said the collaboration would include vehicle storage and the handling of Proton vehicles at the port.

In a statement today, the port operator said Proton would continue to use the Northport as their home for the export, import and transshipment of its vehicles.

"Currently, we offer 8,100 slots for vehicle storage and 4,500 slots are allocated for Proton," it said.

Northport chief executive officer Datuk Azman Shah Mohd Yusof said the port was poised to facilitate Proton's demand for comprehensive port services and was capable of providing end-to-end automotive logistics services.

"Proton has been using the port to support its shipment related activities since 1989 with the carmaker's first sport utility vehicle (SUV), the Proton X70, currently utilising Northport as its discharging port.

"To date, Northport has handled close to 9,000 of the SUV and is expected to continue to handle the remainder of the vehicles before local production begins at end-2019," he said.

Meanwhile, Proton chief procurement officer Datuk Radzaif Mohamed said Northport was a vital strategic partner for the company's plans to grow its export markets.

"Proton is pleased to extend its business collaboration with Northport in our efforts to rebuild the brand both locally and abroad," Radzaif added.