

PM: I WAS NOT TOLD

JOHORE BARU, Thurs. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today he was not informed about Singapore's intention to invite Israeli President Chaim Herzog to the republic.

He said Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew also did not mention it during the latter's six-hour visit to Kuala Lumpur in August.

"They (the Singapore authorities) might have informed Wisma Putra. But I do not remember being informed about it ... I read about it in the papers," he told a Press conference at the end of a one-day visit here this evening.

Yesterday, Singapore High Commission counsellor Jack Choo said the Malaysian Government had been informed.

Dr Mahathir dismissed suggestions that Singapore-Malaysia ties were tense but ad-

LING: SINGAPORE IS BEING INSENSITIVE — P2

mitted "they are now not as good as before."

However, he said he does not have any plans to meet Mr Lee in the near future to discuss the matter.

On a suggestion that Singapore might have cancelled the visit if Malaysia had stated its stand earlier, Dr Mahathir said: "It is always easy to say (such things) after the event."

On the calls by various groups and political parties urging the Federal Government to sever ties with the republic, he said:

"We have received many memoranda, including one today from the Johore branch of the People's Action Committee and the contents are mostly the same. We will take any action we consider necessary."

The Prime Minister said Malaysia took its relations with other countries seriously.

"I will keep watch for any repercussions in trade, political and the social aspects following the protests. Only then will we de-

cide our next course of action."

On calls for a review of the water pact with Singapore, he said: "I do not see anything of that nature being reviewed at the moment. We have not reached that stage."

He said whether the issue blows over or not depends on "each other's (Singapore and Malaysia) reaction."

On comments by Singapore Senior Minister S. Rajaratnam that Asean countries had no reason to protest, Dr Mahathir said: "We don't care what his opinion is."

"He is entitled to say what he likes ... about history or anything else," he said in reference to Mr Rajaratnam's statement that Malaysia did not protest when the late Egyptian president Anwar Sadat visited Israel and when the then King Hassan of Morocco and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt received the former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres.

In Petaling Jaya, Deputy Prime Minister

Abdul Ghafar Baba said Malaysia would continue to express dissatisfaction and disappointment with Singapore for its invitation to Mr Herzog.

He said that Malaysia does not condone the Israelis' violent and aggressive policy towards the Palestinians.

However, he added that the relationship between Malaysia and Singapore "would remain normal."

Encik Ghafar also criticised Mr Herzog for saying Malaysia and Indonesia were "outdated countries" because they were against his visit to Singapore.

"We are protesting because Israel has constantly refused to find a solution to the Middle East crisis. It has refused to let justice be done."

"We cannot be said to be outdated just because we are protesting and others are not," he told reporters in Petaling Jaya after opening the *Microfest '86*, a computer festival organised by *The Star*.

Meanwhile, Brunei has officially protested to Singapore over the visit, the third Asean country to do so (*story on Page 2*).