

# **Dr M: We will review hill projects**

**By M. Jeffri Razali**

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — The Government will review development projects on hills, especially if they involve the clearing of trees, in the light of the Highland Towers building collapse, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said it was obvious that earth movement had knocked down the base of the building, causing it to collapse.

The 12-storey apartment block was built in 1979 on a hillside.

"I think the Government will have to review this kind of construction, particularly the cutting down of trees on hillsides, because it is obvious that earth movement knocked down the base of the building causing it to collapse.

"We need to study this thing carefully because there are many buildings that may be constructed this way, posing a danger to many people," he told reporters after visiting the site this morning.

This was Dr Mahathir's second visit. He spent about an hour at the site last night looking at the damage and to check on the rescue operations.

"The rescue teams are doing their best to locate the victims," he said.

"They have received help from Singapore. They are looking for equipment that might help them in the search, including water-jet cutters. They will continue to tunnel through," he said.

Asked whether it was possible there would be survivors, he said there was a possibility, but added that it was a "a very thin hope".

Housing and Local Government Datuk Dr Ting Chew Peh agreed with Dr Mahathir that construction on hills, especially if it involved the cutting down of trees on hillsides, had to be reviewed.

Ongoing building projects in such locations would be stopped if it was proven that the developers or their architects were taking short-cuts in their construction, he added.