

CNS4716

R GE 16-07 00170 EF498

aae

Mahathir - Rabin

MAHATHIR DENIES MEETING RABIN

bm

KUALA LUMPUR, July 15 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight denied reports that he secretly met Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in Paris on July 6.

The Prime Minister said Rabin and he stayed at the same hotel but they never had any meeting as reported by an Israeli TV station late Thursday.

"(At Hotel de Crillon) he stayed on the second floor, and I stayed on the third floor. That's all. There is no reason for me to meet him," he told reporters after a meeting with Kelantan Umno divisional heads at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

Dr Mahathir made an official visit to France from July 6 to 9. Rabin was also in Paris at that time to receive a UNESCO Peace Award with his Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

The Israeli TV report was picked up by AFP.--more

▼16/07/00-23MST

CNS4722

R GE 16-07 00127 EF501

aae

Mahathir - Rabin 2 Kuala Lumpur

Dr Mahathir said Hotel de Crillon was owned by the French government and all state guests stayed at the hotel.

He said he could only suspect that the Israeli TV station was up to no good.

"They think they can cause me problem by making such a report," he said.

On the visit of Melewar Chairman Tunku Abdullah Tuanku Abdul Rahman to Israel last month, Dr Mahathir said the Israeli TV report gave the impression that the visit was on the instruction of the Malaysian Government.

Dr Mahathir said Tunku Abdullah subsequently informed him that he had gone there at the invitation of the Tel Aviv government.--more

▼16/07/00-52MST

CNS4723

R GE 16-07 00138 EF502

aae

Mahathir - Rabin 3 (last), Kuala Lumpur

The Prime Minister said Tunku Abdullah told him that his visit was to find business opportunities with Israel and Palestine.

He said the government would not act against Tunku Abdullah although his action was wrong.

"Utusan (Malaysia) staff also visited Israel before but we did not take any action," he said.

On his meeting with Kelantan Umno divisional heads, Dr Mahathir said it had succeeded in resolving many problems.

He said everyone expressed his views openly "and the party is now more united."

However, the appointment of pro tem divisional committees had yet to be settled.

He said the list of the committees would be announced as soon as it was finalised.--Bernama

AH OS