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REPEAT aae tbe

Mahathir-Israel

BAN ON TRADE RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL TO REMAIN

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KUALA LUMPUR, July 18 (Bernama) -- Malaysia said today it has no intention to withdraw a ban on trade relations with Israel with which it has no diplomatic relations.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said: "We have yet to allow anyone to establish trade relations with Israel."

He was speaking to reporters on the visit of Tunku Abdullah Tuanku Abdul Rahman, younger brother of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Ja'afar, to Israel last month.

The reporters had questioned Dr Mahathir on Tunku Abdullah's visit after the prime minister had attended a meeting of the Malaysia Industry-Government Group for High Technology at the Prime Minister's Department, here.

Dr Mahathir reiterated that Tunku Abdullah's visit was a private one and solely for the purpose of obtaining information on business opportunities.

He also said that it could be considered wrong for him to have made the visit.

"Other people have visited that country previously but we did not take action. If we take action against him, we have to act against everyone else," he said. -- more

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Mahathir-Israel 2 (last) Kuala Lumpur

On speculation by some quarters of a misunderstanding between Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and former Finance Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin, the prime minister said: "If the rift is true, I should be panicky today."

"Actually, there is no problem," he said.

"You cannot expect everyone to be in agreement with everything all the time.

"In any group, between people, even husband and wife, there may be differences of opinion, but these are no problems," he said.

"Not everyone will agree 100 per cent, even in Umno we have not agreed with certain matters. That is why we have meetings; if everyone is in agreement then there is no use for meetings," he said. -- Bernama

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