

# No relaxation in ban on trade links with Israel

By Syed Nadzri

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — The Government has not relaxed its policy on disallowing trade and business links between Malaysia and Israel. Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"At the moment, we still have not allowed any kind of business dealings with Israel," the Prime Minister said.

He was speaking to the Press after meeting delegates of a consultation gathering involving the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT) and its Commonwealth Private Sector partners here today.

The two-day gathering, organised by the MIGHT Support Unit of the Prime Minister's Department, is attended by more than 60 delegates, including several key corporate figures.

Items on the agenda include a round-table session on Smart Partnership for Global Business, business forums on advanced com-

posites in non-aerospace applications, and affordable quality housing.

Dr Mahathir, who also had lunch with the delegates, was asked if there was any change in government policy towards Israel in the light of a visit by Melewar Corporation chairman Tunku Abdullah Tuanku Abdul Rahman to Israel last month.

He said the Government was studying the circumstances of Tunku Abdullah's visit.

"We have to look into it. But as far as we know, he only wanted to gather information (there).

"We have yet to make any decision on the matter," he added.

Asked whether the Government would take action against Tunku Abdullah, the Prime Minister said if action was to be taken, it had to be on all those who had visited Israel and not just on Tunku Abdullah.

"It is true that what he (Tunku Abdullah) did was wrong but there have been others who were similarly

wrong. We did not take action against them.

"If we take action, it has to be against all," added Dr Mahathir referring to reports that a journalist with *Utusan Melayu* had also visited Israel recently.

Tunku Abdullah had, on Saturday, confirmed that he visited Israel last month, adding that it was a personal visit aimed at investigating business opportunities.

He said he also met Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres but expressed regret that Tel Aviv had politicised the visit as he happened to be the brother of the Yang di-Per-tuan Agong.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today he would find out more about Tunku Abdullah's visit.

Speaking after opening the International Crisis Management Course at the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations here, he said he would talk to Tunku Abdullah to find out the true nature of the trip.