

# British to invest more in Malaysia

NST-23/9/2006

## ■ From Zaharah Othman in London

BRITAIN'S top bosses pledged more investments in Malaysia, showing their famous stiff upper lip to the recent troubles in Thailand.

They were reassured about the region's economic stability by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi during a two-hour lunch here on Thursday.

"They have shown great interest and they are sincere as friends of Malaysia. I have also given them assurances about developments and implementation of the Ninth

Malaysia Plan and they in turn told of their interest in investing in new areas," Abdullah said.

Abdullah, who was in London for a two-day working visit after the United Nations General Assembly in New York, stressed that Malaysia would not interfere in Thailand's affairs.

"I told them that we will monitor the developments in Thailand and I hope that there will not be instability there as instability will badly affect the economy and the tourism industry in the region.

"We will look closely as Thailand is our neighbour in the north."

Abdullah said the informal meeting also touched on several issues such as the future of Islamic banking in Malaysia and the South Johor Economic Region. The business leaders responded by promising to grow new business in areas such as biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, aquaculture and nutraceuticals.

Among those present at the lunch was Lord Raj Kumar Bagri, chairman of Metdist Ltd which has an interest in Metrod (M) Berhad, a leading producer of oxygen-free, high-conductivity copper products.

Others included Michael Ge-

oghehan, CEO of HSBC; Bryan Sanderson, chairman of Standard Chartered plc; Henry Keswick, chairman of Matheson & Co Ltd which has a large interest in the Guardian Pharmacy, Cold Storage and Giant Supermarket; Sir Charles Masefield, vice-chairman of BAE Systems plc; Imran Khan, vice-president of Merrill Lynch; and Simon Parker, Dresdner Kleinwort vice-chairman.

Also present were Information Minister Datuk Zainuddin Maidin and Malaysia's High Commissioner to Britain, Datuk Abd Aziz Mohammed.