

# Threat shows Soviet ambition: Mahathir

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BANGI, Sun. — The Soviet Union's warning to Ascan countries not to confront Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea was in fact an open admission of their ambitions in this area and intention to subvert the five countries, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

"It is only an excuse for them (the Soviet Union) to do that kind of thing (subversion)," the Prime Minister said.

Commenting on the So-

viet threat made by its Deputy Foreign Minister Mikail Kapitsa in Singapore, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said Malaysia took the threat seriously "as they now have said it openly."

"They are emboldened by the fact that they have taken control of Afghanistan and certain African countries. Now they seem to have ambitions in this area," he said.

He said the Vietnam issue in context of the Soviet warning was "irrelevant." "This is just an excuse."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir told newsmen after opening the Peninsu-

lar Malaysia Malay Students Union (GPMS) that the warning would not deter Malaysia or any of its Ascan partners from continuing their efforts to find a peaceful political solution to the Kampuchean problem.

"We will stand by what we think is right," he said.

"We cannot accept a country marching into another country to set up a Government."

"If we accept that, it is possible that the Russians will march into our country to set up their Government."

On what actions Ma-

laysia and other Ascan countries would take in view of the Soviet threat, he said: "We have always been making sure that such a situation (subversion) does not arise. None of the Ascan countries want to be subverted."

As to whether Malaysia would provide military aid to Thailand, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the situation now did not warrant such action.

"We will think about this when we cross the bridge," he added.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said Malaysia did not think that the supply of American arms to Thailand at this stage would make Vietnam

more aggressive.

"Thailand is the one having to defend itself. Thailand is not the aggressor," he said. "Vietnam is attacking the country with Soviet help."

"Thailand is not attacking Vietnam with American arms."

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the United States was only sending Thailand arms it had bought. "They are only sending it earlier, this is nothing extraordinary," he added.

The Prime Minister also said Malaysia was providing humanitarian aid to the Kampuchean refugees. He said medicine and food were being sent. Malaysia had recently given the refugees money to buy food, he added.