

# PM: It's economic arm-twisting

By Barani Krishnan

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad described today as "economic arm-twisting" the move by the US Congress to withdraw its US\$1 million (\$2.7 million) military training grant to Malaysia.

"This is a tactic the United States uses when dealing with smaller nations.

"It is not the money we need. We only need the technology.

"But if they are not willing to give it to us, never mind," the Prime

Minister said today.

He was commenting on a report that the US Congress passed an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act on Thursday which sought to withdraw the grant for "refusing asylum to refugees fleeing Vietnam."

The amendment is expected to be sent to President George Bush tomorrow.

Dr Mahathir said: "This goes to show that they (the United States) never hesitate to resort to economic arm-twisting tactics when dealing with smaller nations. For them,

might is right."

He said the United States had been chasing away Mexicans and Haitians from its shores, "but this does not seem unjustified to them."

"One country just killed 21 Palestinians, but nothing is done against it," Dr Mahathir told newsmen after closing the 44th World Amateur Bodybuilding Championships.

Asked how Malaysia would react, he replied: "What can we do? They are strong, we are weak. They don't hesitate to knock us, and we are helpless."