

# WASTED FLEETS

PM: US naval deployments in East Asia unnecessary

By ANDREW FERNANDEZ

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**KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday that US naval fleets in East Asia were a "waste of money" as there was nothing to fear from either Japan or China.**

There is no need for US military presence in East Asia to check the dominance of any economic giants, the Prime Minister added.

He was replying to questions on the need for security arrangements to check the possibility of the growing ambitions of the two Asian countries.

"We are hoping they (Japan and China) will cancel out each other. I think there is mutual distrust so they will each try to balance the other.

"There is no necessity for any special security arrangement or any arrangement to prevent the dominance of any economy over the rest of the region," he said after delivering the keynote address at the 10th meeting of the Pacific Economic Council (PECC).

"I think we can get along with each other. We have really no fear of China or Japan," he added.

He rejected the possibility of a rift in the region in the event that the big powers sought allies.

"We, even in the Asean grouping, refuse to have any alliance except for some trade arrangements. We are not committed to any form of security agreement," he said.

He added that while the United States could still provide some form of checks and balances, there was no need for its fleets to patrol the seas.

"The mere presence of the US might is enough to persuade people not to be aggressive.

"The US should stay in the US, as much as Japan should stay in Japan and China in China.

"We know they are strong. We do not want to disturb them and they do not want to disturb each other," he said.