

Japan, Malaysia take united stand against terrorism

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The two premiers agreed to cooperate and to take every measure they can to counter threats of global terrorism

SHANGHAI, Mon: Japan and Malaysia today vowed to stand firm against global terrorism and agreed to closely cooperate in efforts to counter it.

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad held talks after a weekend summit meeting of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum here.

"We shared the importance of fighting terrorism with firm resolve," Koizumi told reporters after meeting Dr Mahathir.

"We strongly oppose terrorism and agreed to cooperate and take every measure we can to counter terrorism threats," he said.

Apec leaders, including US President George W. Bush, yesterday issued their first-ever political statement, condemning terrorism and pledging to limit the economic fallout of

the "murderous deeds" of the September 11 attacks on the US.

Dr Mahathir told Koizumi that Osama bin Laden, prime suspect in the September 11 attacks, did not represent Islam, but also urged the world to act with great caution in fighting terrorism.

"He told me we must handle the terrorism problem very carefully. I understand that each nation has its own domestic concerns," Koizumi said.

"After talking to him, I learned how complicated this problem is and how important we must act in a united front," the Japanese premier said.

Yesterday, Dr Mahathir reaffirmed his opposition to the US-led campaign in Afghanistan, but said the use of "more specific" ground forces was preferable to air raids.

"We object especially against the use of so-called smart bombs and smart rockets," Dr Mahathir told reporters after the Apec summit.

Meanwhile, Koizumi told Dr Mahathir yesterday that Japan would continue to give economic support to Malaysia. — AFP