

Najib: Defence spending depends on others

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia will consider reducing its defence spending if other countries adopt a similar stand, said Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, adding that the ministry will seek a budget allocation "within the government's affordability."

He said that although he did not know the exact amount the Government wanted to spend on defence, it would be in proportion to the country's Gross National Product.

He said this after a courtesy

call by the Royal New Zealand Air Force Air Vice-Marshal J.H.S. Hamilton at the ministry.

He was asked about the call by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the Kuala Lumpur World Peace Conference on Saturday for countries to spend less on researching and developing more expensive weapons.

"If the situation does not change, then Malaysia will continue to spend a certain portion of its wealth on defence," Najib said.

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