

TPPA is to control weak nations, says Mahathir

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The Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) is an alternative means for strong countries to control the weaker countries comparable to the use of military might, said former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"It is yet another attempt to penetrate the market of weak countries so that they can control everything," Mahathir told reporters when asked if Malaysia would be able to negotiate a favourable outcome for the country at the TPPA negotiations.

"They already control the world through their military might, now they want to control the world through economic power."

NONE Mahathir spoke to reporters after breaking fast with DRB-Hicom staff at the Shah Alam Convention Centre last night.

The 18th round of TPPA talks began yesterday in Sabah, with 10 countries - United States, Australia, Brunei, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Japan and Vietnam - negotiating the terms of the agreement in secret.

Little is known about what is being discussed, but leaked documents suggest that the TPPA would allow offshore lawsuits by companies against governments, eradication of generic drugs and stiff intellectual property rules.

Thus far, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Miti) has not been forthcoming on the potential impact of the trade agreement.

NONE On Saturday, Mahathir had wrote in New Straits Times and on his blog that the TPPA would "bind our hands and feet" and that it was a form of neo-colonialism.

He also warned that Malaysia had a reputation of performing poorly in international negotiations while suggesting the government to ignore the October deadline to conclude talks.

"I know MITI is already set to agree to the TPPA. It will not entertain any counter arguments. It wants to do this secretly. We don't punish people who make agreements detrimental to the interest of this country. So what is there to lose?"

Alvivi 'lawless and stupid'

Meanwhile, Mahathir also chimed in on the controversy surrounding sex bloggers Alvin Tan and Vivian Lee, accusing them of attempting to stir religious turmoil.

He described the couple as irresponsible "children", guided by wrong values.

NONE"Maybe there will be some who may respond (to good advice)... but these are lawless, stupid people you cannot teach," he said.

Mahathir has previously defended Ibrahim Ali, the president of right-wing group Perkasa in which the former premier is patron, over his attacks on the Christians.

Tan and Lee, better known by their online moniker Alvivi, got into trouble yet again after uploading a photograph that was deemed demeaning towards Muslims, who are observing the holy month of Ramadhan.

They are currently being investigated by the Malaysian Multimedia and Communications Commission (MCMC) for producing offensive content and the police for publishing seditious material.

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