

Malaysia not declaring a trade war against EU, says PM

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LANGKAWI, March 26 (Bernama) -- Malaysia is not launching a trade war against the European Union (EU) but is only making known to the world the problems Malaysia is facing due to the bloc's decision to ban palm oil usage in biofuels, says Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said the country is not initiating a trade war with the EU when he said that Malaysia could look at other countries to buy jet fighters from, instead of buying from European companies due to the EU's unfair treatment of palm oil producers.

"What I was doing, I was telling the world that it is grossly unfair for rich countries to prevent poor countries from getting richer by not buying their products. That was all. It's not (declaring) a trade war," he told reporters in a briefing held in conjunction with the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace 2019 (LIMA'19) exhibition here today.

Asked on Malaysia-Africa relations, he said the country has made slow progress in terms of harnessing a relationship with African countries after his departure as prime minister previously, and it will be challenging for him to ramp-up the relationship due to the time limitation that he has.

"I made a point of developing good relations with African countries. African countries are very rich (and) that is why Europeans went there and are still going there.

"Now that I am back as the prime minister, I would like to do the same. The only problem is that I have a short period of time and I'm cramming 10 years of work into two years. So, it is a bit difficult," he said.

Meanwhile, Mahathir said there are many parties seeking to invest in Malaysia but the

government needs to filter to ensure only quality investments are approved.

"We have to look into various aspects because we don't want any problems to arise later," he said.

Mahathir added that approved investments would also need time to be realised and they won't take place overnight.

LIMA'19 is held at the Mahsuri International Exhibition Centre and Resorts World Langkawi and ends on March 30.

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