

# Dr M says it's vital to boost economy and strengthen ringgit

**LANGKAWI:** The government is continuously working on attracting more foreign investments to boost the country's economy and strengthen the ringgit.

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad acknowledged that the trade war between the United States and China was affecting the ringgit,

but said the situation could be avoided if the country did not rely heavily on imports.

"For example, if we can produce vegetables, fruits, fish, livestock and so on, we do not depend on the supply from other countries.

"In the short term, we are trying to attract investment from abroad.

"For this, we have to work but unfortunately we cannot get employees from our own country, (so) we have to rely on foreign workers and when we depend on foreign workers, they get all the benefits," he said.

Commenting on the nation's foreign labour issue after handing over Kasih Ibu Darul Aman cards to

48 recipients at the Langkawi District Civil Defence Complex here yesterday, he said the government was working to reduce the dependency and that Malaysians could help achieve it by not being picky with job opportunities.

"We want to do away with foreign workers but cannot because

our people are not willing to (do the) work; in restaurants they are not willing (to work), neither in the supermarkets.

"In terms of heavy-duty work, I can understand if they are not willing to do it, but even in air-conditioned restaurants they are not willing to work," he said. — Bernama