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# Govt will not divest shares to foreigners

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The government will not divest shares in national corporations to foreigners in a big way, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad told a group of local and foreign fund managers yesterday.

According to a fund manager, the prime minister said this when asked whether the government will reduce its stake in corporations such as Tenaga Nasional, Telekom Malaysia, Proton and Malaysia Airlines, following Morgan Stanley Capital International's move to place heavier weightings on shares with bigger free float.

This is because foreign companies would not normally take care of Malaysians' welfare and would repatriate funds back to their respective countries, Mahathir told about 40 fund managers and investment bankers at the closed-door meeting.

He also reiterated that Malaysia has no succession problem. He was quoted to have said that "it is usually the number two that will take over as Umno president and obviously the prime minister's post".

Mahathir, according to another fund manager who declined to be named, was forthcoming in the closed-door meeting and handled the situation well.

"He fielded a variety of questions on broader issues, regional competitiveness vis-a-vis China, politics, and the economy well," the fund manager added.

Another fund manager agreed, adding: "I am impressed with the way the prime minister handled the broad-ranging issues."

The meeting, which was held at Nikko Hotel here, was organised by Commerce International Merchant Bankers Bhd, an investment bank.