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#### Study on EPF investment options for higher returns

THE Government is studying several investment options for the Employees Provident Fund, including financing infrastructure development projects, which are expected to provide it with higher returns, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad told the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

The Prime Minister, however, said the decision would be made by the fund's investment panel.

"We are looking into ways to utilise EPF funds in infrastructure development in Malaysia," he said when replying to a supplementary question from Dr Tan Seng Giaw (DAP-Kepong).

"This is capable of providing higher returns compared with just keeping the money with Bank Negara."

EPF has been criticised by some quarters for its inability to pay high dividends. Last year, it announced a 4.25 per cent dividend, the lowest in years.

Later at the lobby, Dr Mahathir, who is also Finance Minister, elaborated: "The Government will not be putting aside more money for infrastructure, including buildings.

"What we think EPF can do is to finance companies to construct these buildings. The Government will then lease the buildings from the companies and with the money we pay, they can pay back EPF."