

# 'Takeover conditions, retaining staff should be easy to fulfil'

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Investors potentially taking over Malaysia Airlines Bhd (MAS) should find it easy to meet the conditions set by the government, especially on retaining the workforce of the national carrier, analysts said.

In any merger and acquisition deal, it usually comes with the notion that some employees may be redundant. This means that they may have to be let go.

Invesco Asset Management Singapore Ltd investment director Jalil Rasheed, however, believed that MAS employees could be redeployed and re-skilled.

MAS' biggest problem would likely be in network management, fleet optimisation and procurement cost, he said.

Jalil said MAS shareholders should decide soon if they were selling or keeping the airline.

"Until the overhang on ownership is resolved, I doubt management would make big decisions.

"The issues have been there for a long time but never resolved.

"There is a risk that these decisions could be overturned if new management and owners

come in. It destabilises the company more," he said when contacted by the *New Straits Times*.

"After the overhang issue is sorted out, let the new owners or management decide what to do with it," he added.

Most importantly, whoever the buyer was, Jalil said they had to have full accountability on MAS.

"If it fails, it's all on the new owners and the government should not be expected to bail it out again."

Putra Business School associate professor and manager of business development Dr Ahmed Raz-

man Abdul Latiff said maintaining the current staff would still be acceptable for potential investors or new owners.

He said this was because MAS had retrenched one-third of its workforce, totalling around 6,000 employees, a few years back.

"Plus, if the new investor is helping MAS to expand to new markets, they will require the remaining workers to stay and perhaps, hire more staff," he said. **By**

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