

BN postpones decision on PBS application to join it

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — The Barisan Nasional has deferred its decision on the Parti Bersatu Sabah's (PBS) application to join the coalition.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Barisan had decided to postpone making any commitment — positive or negative — on the application.

"The Barisan members

feel that the time is not right," he said, after chairing the Barisan Supreme Council meeting today.

The decision did not come as a surprise.

Some members of the coalition have had reservations about admitting the PBS, which ousted Berjaya in the Sabah State election in April.

Dr Mahathir expressed the need for the PBS to show that it is truly a

multi-racial and multi-religious party before it can be considered for membership in the Barisan Nasional.

One reason why the decision was postponed may be that the legitimacy of the PBS Government is at present the subject of a court hearing.

The president of the United Sabah National Organisation (Usno) Tun Datu Mustapha Datu

Harun had filed a writ challenging the validity of PBS president Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan's appointment as Chief Minister.

The Kota Kinabalu High Court will give its ruling on whether the court has the jurisdiction to hear the case later this month.

The BN Supreme Council has not decided when it will meet again but the next meeting will be in Sarawak.