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KUALA LUMPUR, APRIL 9, (BERNAMA) -- BARISAN NASIONAL CHAIRMAN DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD THIS EVENING MET PARTI BERSATU SABAH (PBS) PRESIDENT DATUK JOSEPH PAIRIN KITINGAN AND VICE-PRESIDENT MARK KODING IN A BID TO +SAVE+ THE +SABAH FORMULA+ AIMED AT SETTLING THE STATE'S POLITICAL CRISIS.

THE MEETING AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE HOWEVER FAILED TO REACH AN AGREEMENT AND DATUK PAIRIN WAS ADAMANT IN WITHDRAWING PBS' APPLICATION TO JOIN THE BARISAN NASIONAL.

AT THE MEETING, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID, DATUK PAIRIN SAID PBS HAD DECIDED NOT TO JOIN THE COALITION AND WOULD CONTEST ALL THE 48 SEATS IN THE STATE ELECTIONS ON MAY 5-6.

DATUK PAIRIN ALSO HANDED OVER A LETTER ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE APPLICATION TO JOIN THE COALITION, THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE AFTER CHAIRING A BARISAN NASIONAL SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING AT MENARA DATUK ONN HERE

BARISAN NASIONAL SECRETARY-GENERAL GHAFAR BABA HAD RECEIVED A LETTER ON THE WITHDRAWAL EARLIER, HE SAID. -- MORE  
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ON THE WITHDRAWAL LETTER DATED APRIL 7, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE BN HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO ACCEPT THE PBS DECISION.

(THE PBS SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING TWO DAYS AGO GAVE DATUK PAIRIN THE MANDATE TO MAKE A DECISION ON THE QUESTION OF WITHDRAWAL OF THE PARTY'S APPLICATION TO JOIN THE BN).

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE BN SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING TODAY ALSO DISCUSSED THE APPLICATIONS FROM USNO AND FOUR OTHER SABAH PARTIES, PASOK, PARTI CINA SABAH, SABAH CHINESE CONSOLIDATED PARTY AND PARTI MURUT, TO JOIN THE BN.

HE SAID THAT AFTER DELIBERATING ON THE APPLICATIONS IN DETAIL, THE SUPREME COUNCIL FELT IT COULD NOT ACCEPT THESE PARTIES INTO THE BN FOLD FOR THE TIME BEING DESPITE THERE BEING NO OBJECTIONS FROM ANY BN COMPONENT PARTY.

ASKED THE GROUNDS FOR THIS, HE SAID: +THERE ARE NO GROUNDS, WE CONSIDERED.....WE DO NOT WANT TO INTERFERE IN THE ELECTIONS IN SABAH.

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