

Barisan

takes

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LDP

into fold

By K. P. Waran

KUALALUMPUR, Mon. — The Barisan Nasional Supreme Council has accepted the applications from two Sabah-based parties to join the coalition but rejected the application from Sarawak-based Permas.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who announced this after a 90-minute meeting of the council today, said the application of Perengganu-based Ikatan Masyarakat Islam to join the BN was deferred until further discussions were held with the party.

It is learnt that the party is led by Ustaz Haji Wahab Yunus, a former supreme council member of Hamim.

Dr Mahathir said the applications from Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat (Akar) and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) were accepted unanimously.

When asked the reasons for rejecting Permas' application, Dr Mahathir said under RN regulations if any component party objects to the application of a new party the application will be rejected.

Asked how many parties objected to the application, he said there were more than one

He said the parties which objected need not give any reason for it.

The acceptance of the two parties brings the BN membership to 12.

Dr Mahathir said the council also discussed the performance of the coalition during and after the general election and added that there was an increasing number of people who wanted to join the BN.

This, he said, showed that the people realised the BN brought stability and prosperity to the country.

Dr Mahathir said the council did not discuss the dates of the Sarawak State elections and the two State by-elections in Kelantan.

Akar president Datuk Mark Koding, who attended the meeting, said the party was relieved "after waiting so long for the confirmation".

"This will further improve our relations with Umno and we will work hard together to recapture Sabah," he said.

He said Akar would not support PBS' application to join the BN because they had been insincere to the people of Sabah by leaving the BN and there was no guarantee they would not do so again.