

Dr M: It's too late for PBS to rejoin Barisan

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By Manan Osman

KOTA KINABALU, Fri. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that it was too late for the Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) to be accepted back into the Barisan Nasional.

The PBS, he said, cannot be readmitted to the Barisan because it was "a party without a definite principle and commitment".

Citing an example, he said that after the PBS, as an opposition party, won in the 1985 Sabah State elections, it applied to join the Barisan.

Although it was accepted, he said, this showed that the party was not striving for anything in particular and was even willing to co-operate with the Barisan which fought against it in the elections, just to achieve its own aim.

In the 1990 general election in the Peninsula and parliamentary elections in Sabah and Sarawak, Dr Mahathir said the party once again showed its true colours.

"While we were spending the days campaigning, it suddenly withdrew from the coalition as if there were conflicts between it and the Barisan.

"After the Barisan won and it (PBS) too managed to form the Government in Sabah, it once again applied to join us.

"However, we cannot accept this kind of people who have no principle or any commitment at all," he added.

He challenged the PBS to dissolve the State Assembly to pave the way for State elections.

Speaking to reporters after opening the first general assembly of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) at the Kian Kok Secondary School hall in Jalan Tuaran near here today, he said if the PBS really wanted to rejoin the Barisan, it had to change its attitude.

However, he has detected no change in PBS' attitude even when it directly or indirectly applied to rejoin the Barisan.

There is also no change in its attitude towards co-operation with other Barisan component parties.

The Prime Minister was here on a two-day official visit to the State.

Asked whether he was expecting a snap election in Sabah soon, Dr Mahathir said State elections were under the jurisdiction of the State Governments.

"If the Sabah Government dissolves the Assembly, then an election will have to be held.

"We do not know when but we are always ready," he added.