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PBDS RETURN TO SARAWAK BN FOLD ALMOST REALITY

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KUCHING; Sept. 17 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the return of Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak (PBDS) to the Sarawak Barisan Nasional (BN) fold was almost a reality.

The decision to accept PBDS was very close, the Prime Minister told a press conference here before he left for Labuan. He was in Kuching to attend official celebrations for National Day here yesterday.

Present was Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud, the Sarawak BN chairman, who echoed what Dr Mahathir said, adding: "It is close now."

Dr Mahathir, who is BN national chairman, said he left the decision on PBDS's return to the state BN fold to both parties to agree upon.

"It is up to the component parties of Sarawak BN to decide, without any coercion," he said commenting on speculation by journalists that a decision would be made during the National Day celebrations.

PBDS is a BN component party at the federal level but in the opposition at state level, following its withdrawal from the state BN in 1987. --

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