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## BN defers decision on parties' applications

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - The Barisan Nasional supreme council today deferred decision on the application of four political parties, including a former member, to join the coalition.

BN chairman and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the council agreed that it would be better if the parties strengthened their membership first.

"For the time being, we have deferred any decision to allow everyone to think about the matter," he told a Press conference after chairing a council meeting at Menara Dato' Onn today.

The four parties are the Indian Progressive Front, Berjasa, Parti Punjabi Malaysia and Kesatuan India Muslim Malaysia (Kimma). Kelantan-based Berjasa was once a member of BN but left to join the opposition front.

IPF was formed by former MIC vice-president Datuk M.G. Pandithan in 1990 after he was sacked from the party.

The party had in the past been aligned to the Opposition but in recent years has supported the BN.

Kimma was formed in 1977 to represent the Indian Muslim community in Malaysia and has always thrown its support behind the BN.

Its current president is Sikandar Batcha Abdul Majeed.

Berjasa was formed in January 1978 by Datuk Mohamad Nasir, who was then a Minister without portfolio in the Prime Minister's Department.

Up to 1995, its president was Datuk Wan Hashim Wan Ahmad.

Parti Punjabi Malaysia was formed by J'swant Singh in 1986 and has about 1,000 members.

Dr Mahathir said the council also agreed for the BN convention to be held annually.

Later, BN secretary-general Tan Sri Mohamed Rahmat said it was wrong to say that the applications had been rejected due to objections from members.

"The decision to admit any new member into BN must be by consensus. Various suggestions have been made to resolve this (applications), so we are only postponing any decision until we find a formula accepted by all."

On the delay in reaching a consensus, especially over IPF, which made its first application a few years ago, Mohamed said there was no delay as the council only met twice a year.

On the decision to have an annual convention, he said the event would provide an opportunity for members to foster closer relationship and understanding.

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