

# Think properly and deeply, Lim tells PBS

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KUALA LUMPUR: Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik yesterday asked Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) to "think properly and deeply" about its decision to rejoin Barisan Nasional.

"In 1986, I was the one responsible for introducing PBS to Barisan. I remember personally handing its application to Barisan chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"But when it left abruptly in the middle of the 1990 general election, it did not even have the courtesy to inform me," he told reporters at Gerakan's Deepavali open house.

Feeling embarrassed about the whole affair, Lim said he felt he had brought the wrong partner into the Barisan.

Explaining his scepticism, Lim said the coalition was not a marriage of convenience.

"Barisan is a coalition of component parties which subscribe to the policies uniting the multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural people of the country," he said.

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"If (PBS) can follow this honestly and forever, we welcome it as we do any other party that wants to join. But its participation must be based on a belief of Barisan's policies and direction."

Opposition parties DAP, PAS and Parti Keadilan Nasional said the PBS move was expected as talk about it had been circulating the last six months.

However, the DAP went one step further by saying that the political aftermath of the Sept 11 terrorist attack on the United States was the precipitating factor.

It was something to galvanise all opposition parties in the country to sit down together in the hope of getting a new understanding, chairman Lim Kit Siang said.

"Otherwise, there is no way for the opposition to make any headway in the next election, let alone defend the seats

which they won in 1999."

Lim said the opposition parties had ignored at their own peril the implications of the Sept 11 events on international and domestic politics.

PAS president Datuk Fadzil Noor said the PBS move could work in the favour of the opposition parties as "everything would be clear now."

"We do not have to worry about PBS anymore and there is no danger of it stabbing us in the back although PBS was never in the opposition pact."

Newly-elected Keadilan deputy president Abdul Rahman Othman said the PBS decision was not a political one but for its state assemblymen to get allocations for their projects.