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Abdul Hadi: Pas to consider Dr Mahathir's invitation to join BN after

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Pas acting president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang said the party would consider the invitation to rejoin Barisan Nasional only after the next general election.

He said Pas was now busy preparing for the general election and had to hold off addressing the invitation. The Terengganu Menteri Besar said the time was not right for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to invite Opposition parties to join the ruling coalition.

Furthermore, BN had internal problems such as MCA and Puteri Umno, he added.

"The train is running fast; he (Dr Mahathir) opened the door for us to board (the train). Wait until it (train) reaches the station (general election).

"The general election can be called any time now and he is inviting us. Wait until the general election (is over)," he said.

Dr Mahathir had on Saturday invited the Opposition parties to join BN.

Abdul Hadi said Pas' decision to reject the invitation now should not be misconstrued as it not being open or refusing to co-operate with the Government.

"The party holds to the words of Tok Guru Nik Aziz (Pas spiritual leader Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat) that Pas is open and can face problems together (with BN) but we have our own stand, that is, to prepare for the general election," he said.

He said uniting all political parties under the ruling party, at a time when the country was due to hold its general election, would only weaken democracy and the Government.

"We need to keep democracy alive. In a country which practises democracy, we must have an Opposition to monitor (the Government) and also an alternative party that can take over power from a party which has become weak," he said after chairing the party's political bureau and management meeting late yesterday.

He said Pas has a policy that it would co-operate with the Government on matters of national interest such as security, nation-building and defending the country against external threats.