

04/01/1997

PM to check storm damage and on-going relief ops today

KOTA KINABALU, Fri. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will arrive in the State capital tomorrow to visit districts affected by rainstrom Greg last week.

He will visit Keningau, the district which bore the brunt of the natural disaster, and is expected to return to Kuala Lumpur later in the evening.

Sabah Umno Liaison committee head Datuk Osu Sukam said the Prime Minister wanted to ascertain the damage inflicted and check ongoing relief operations.

"Newspapers reports claimed the flash flood was caused by excessive and illegal logging activities..."

"This has to be verified," he told a Press conference after chairing the Sabah Umno liaison committee meeting this afternoon.

Osu said he would meet Chief Minister Datuk Yong Teck Lee tonight to discuss allegations of recent indiscriminate transfers of senior government officials.

He said that although several transfers were made according to necessity, Sabah Umno has learnt that there had been several unusual transfers of high-ranking officials.

"Sabah Umno takes this matter seriously and should there be an ulterior motive in the transfers, the party wants it known that it is against such actions.

"We need clarification from the State Government," he added.

Osu said Sabah Umno was fully aware that it was the State Government's prerogative to effect transfers of its officials but it must be done in accordance to procedures.

"We discussed this matter in today's (Sabah Umno) meeting... I am meeting Chief Minister (Datuk Yong Teck Lee) at 10.30pm," he said.

Osu said also discussed in the meeting, his first after being appointed Sabah Umno chief, was the need for leaders representing Umno in the State Government to maintain their credibility.

He said as the backbone of the State Government, Umno leaders must exhibit good leadership qualities and maintain good rapport with other Barisan Nasional component member parties.

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