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Sabah Umno to test polls machinery on Oct 17

Jaswinder Kaur

KOTA KINABALU, Sat. - The State Umno liaison committee has fixed Oct 17 to test the election machinery in all 20 divisions.

Its head, Datuk Osu Sukam, said this was necessary to determine the party's preparedness in facing the State elections under "whatever conditions".

He said the elections could be held anytime between now and March next year and that the La Nina weather phenomenon could also hit the State during the same period.

"Umno as the backbone of the Barisan Nasional Government in Sabah should make the necessary preparations to face the elections in whatever conditions, especially when the State is expected to face the La Nina phenomenon."

He said the committee had also decided that 15 Umno members from various Umno divisions would be trained to use the Umno computer network system on Oct 7, in a move to test the election machinery.

Osu, who is also Deputy Chief Minister, said the State Government had instructed all relevant agencies at district level to take the necessary precautions in facing the effects of the La Nina phenomenon.

He was speaking at a Press conference at the Umno office in Kuwasa, near here, today, after chairing a monthly State Umno liaison committee meeting.

He also commented on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement that he (Dr Mahathir) would consult his Umno colleagues on whether or not to appoint a deputy before the party election next year following the sacking of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Osu said it was the culture of Umno to apply the consultative approach.

"We have discussed the matter ... and it seems that the Prime Minister does not want to use the power that he has in appointing his deputy. He wants the decision to come through the consultative approach ... this is the Umno culture."

He also reiterated the need for party members to remain united under the present situation.

"We should remain united as the elections are our main focus. We need unity to ensure victory in the elections."

He said the State Umno information division had been instructed to explain the sacking and expulsion of Anwar to party members.

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