

06 DEC 1998

Najib-Schools

DON'T USE SCHOOLS TO GARNER SUPPORT, PBS TOLD

KOTA KINABALU, Dec 6 (Bernama) -- Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today issued a stern warning to opposition politicians in Sabah not to use schools to garner support for the impending state elections.

"I strongly oppose attempts to use schools for political motives. This should not be allowed at all," he said.

He was asked to comment on a local press report that mineral water bottles bearing labels of the portrait of Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) President Datuk Seri Joseph Pairin Kitingan and the party's symbol were found in a school in Papar, about 50km from here.

The matter was reported by "Daily Express" yesterday.

Najib, who is also an Umno vice-president, urged Sabah Umno leaders and members to devote full attention for the preparations of the soon-to-be held state elections and not be pre-occupied with the Umno elections scheduled to be held in June next year.

"What is more important now is the state elections," he told reporters after opening a colloquium organised by Sabah Umno.

He said the state Umno must focus its attention to ensure smooth operations of the Barisan Nasional (BN) election machinery so that government messages could reach out to the people.

This was crucial to guarantee a resounding victory for the ruling BN, he said.

Umno cannot take lightly the challenges it would face from opposition parties in the election which must be held before March 18 next year.

"We have no choice. If we want to win, we must work hard and not take the election for granted," he said.

On tomorrow's meeting of the Supreme Council, Umno's highest decision-making body, he said the meeting chaired by Prime Minister and Umno President Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would finalise the proposed 18-point amendments to the party's constitution.

Najib, who is also a member of the special committee set up to review the constitution, said the age limit to become an Umno member had been retained at 18 instead of 16 as proposed.

The amendments would be tabled for approval at the Special Umno General Assembly on Dec 13.

The one-day assembly would be opened by Dr Mahathir at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC).

-- BERNAMA

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