

Political storm 20 brewing in Sarawak

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KUCHING, Sun: Former head of state Tun Abdul Rahman Yaakub and former Defence Minister Datuk Abang Abu Bakar Tun Mustapha are creating a political storm in Sarawak.

While Rahman has been criticised for going against his word that he would not interfere in local politics, Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud today accused Abang Abu Bakar for wanting to bring Umno to the state.

"If he wants to do it, he is going against the wishes of Prime Minister (Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad)," Taib told reporters at Agriculture Minister Datuk Effendi Norwawi's Hari Raya open house here.

Abang Abu Bakar criticised for wanting to bring in Umno

Taib, who is Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB) president said Mahathir as Umno president had repeatedly given the assurance that Umno would not spread its wings to Sarawak as "PBB is just like the son of Umno".

Abang Abu Bakar, 58, had said he is prepared to bring Umno to Sarawak "if that is the wish of the rakyat".

Taib also said he was not surprised by the statement as Abang Abu Bakar and the Sarawak Muslims Welfare Organisation (Perkis) had been trying to split PBB.

Asked whether the party would take action against

Abang Abu Bakar, Taib said it is up to the former PBB deputy president to play a role as a good politician.

"And if he wants to sell himself to another party, that's his business," he added.

On Abang Abu Bakar's claim that it was not his decision to be dropped in the recent parliamentary election, Taib said the party decided to field a new candidate in Kuala Rejang as Abang Abu Bakar had failed to serve the area well.

He added: "It is the wishes of the voters in the constituency that he be replaced.

As a matter of fact, they wanted a new MP as early as 1986 but I told them to be patient. By 1999, the constituents no longer had the patience.

"So, if Abang Abu Bakar thinks that he can still represent a constituency without giving good service, then he is living in a different world."

At another Hari Raya gathering organised by the MP for Petra Jaya Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman Haji Daud yesterday, Taib hit out at Rahman, his uncle and long-time political foe.

Claiming that Rahman was sowing seeds of discord openly, Taib said: "He has no regard for the support accorded to him in the past and is now trying to break up the Muslim community in Kuching."