

Taib wants to discuss with PM on simultaneous polls
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Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud said he will discuss with Prime Minister Najib Razak on the possibility of calling for simultaneous parliamentary and state elections.

Taib, who is state BN chairman, also said that he had "inspirations" on the state election but had not decided on the date.

"The opposition will be disappointed with this," he said in an interview with TV1 last night.

The state election must be held by July this year.

To a question on the challenges faced by the Sarawak BN to remain the BN's "fixed deposit," he said that in Sarawak, politics was still very much about the people's desire for development.

"Discordant politics is getting less attention in Sarawak but in urban areas, where the people are already used to developments, this is a normal thing," he said, adding that in this respect, the Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) would have to play their role in tackling urban issues.

Preparations for polls six months ago

Taib, who is Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB) president, said at PBB, the preparations for the state election had begun since six months ago.

He believed that PBB and two other state BN component parties, the Parti Rakyat Sarawak (PRS) and Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party (SPDP), would not have problems in choosing their candidates in line with the prime minister's advice to field only candidates who can win.

"We already know who should be replaced and most of the incumbents will give way to new faces," he said.

Taib hoped that SUPP would be able to decide on their candidates and attract new supporters and win back eight out of 19 seats it lost to the opposition in the last state election.

In the last election, PBB won all 35 seats it contested while PRS and SPDP won eight seats each.

Taib said politics of development was still very much entrenched in Sarawak, saying that during meetings with the people, especially in rural areas, development issues were among those being frequently raised.

- Bernama

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