

S'wak Umno branch in Johor: No prob, says Taib
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The proposed setting up of the Sarawak Umno branch by the Pasir Gudang Umno division for Sarawakians working and living in Johor to serve as a platform for them to voice their views has the support of Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud.

Taib, who is also Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB) president, said PBB, the backbone of Sarawak BN, and Umno shared the same policy under the BN banner.

bn supreme council mt meeting sapp sabah issue 190608 taib mahmud "Why not, if it is for better management. After all, PBB is a member of BN and quite close to Umno in most of its activities because we happen to fight for the same group of people."

He said this to reporters after launching the "Heart Talk" newsletter published by the Sarawak Heart Foundation at his office in Wisma Bapa Malaysia, Petra Jaya, Kuching.

However, he said, it was preferable that membership of Sarawak Umno be confined to Sarawakians residing in the peninsula.

He was asked to comment on a recent statement by Pasir Gudang Umno chief Mohamed Khaled Nordin that there was no reason why such a branch could not be formed for Sarawakians working in Pasir Gudang to join Umno since there was already Sabah Umno.

Grassroots request

Following requests from the grassroots, Mohamed Khaled had said that there was a need to set up an Umno branch for Sarawakians, especially in Pasir Gudang, where the Iban population alone was estimated to be about 40,000.

At the PBB convention in March this year, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak had given the assurance that Umno would not spread its wings to Sarawak for as long as PBB was still relevant.

Asked if Umno should come to Sarawak, Taib said that remained a theoretical question.

Taib also said the state BN leaders did not meet last weekend purportedly to discuss BN's preparation for the state election, which must be held by July next year.

"No, it's all speculation," he said but added that he had led the state BN for a two-day retreat from June 22 at the Mulu National Park, Miri.

The retreat was for the state BN elected representatives and political secretaries to identify issues and problems that needed to be resolved before the state election.