

Abang Jo Declines Commenting On Being Taib's Possible Successor
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KUCHING, Feb 5 (Bernama) -- Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB) deputy president Datuk Amar Abang Johari Tun Openg refused to be drawn into a speculation that he was among the party leaders mentioned to succeed Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud as the PBB President and Sarawak Chief Minister.

While confirming that there will be a special meeting of the party's supreme council this Saturday, he declined to comment whether it would be the avenue for Taib to announce his decision to step down.

"You said it (of Taib's retirement) as speculation. I can't comment on speculation," he told reporters here when asked to comment on a front page report in the Malay daily, 'Berita Harian', that Taib would be announcing his retirement as the State Chief Minister before the end of this week.

The report quoting an unnamed source stated that Taib, 78, who had been holding the post since 1981, would also be meeting all the State Barisan Nasional elected representatives on Sunday.

Apart from Abang Johari who is also the State Tourism Minister and Housing Minister, other names mentioned to succeed Taib were PBB senior vice president Datuk Amar Awang Tengah Ali Hasan (State Second Minister of Resource Planning and Environment), State Minister in the Chief Minister's Office Tan Sri Adenan Satem and former Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Effendi Norwawi.

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