

Ahmad Zahid: New criteria for GE13 candidates
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Umno vice-president Ahmad Zahid Hamidi indicated there will be new criteria in the selection of candidates for the 13th general election expected to be called soon.

"Candidates would not necessarily come from the hierarchy of the various divisions," he said in an interview with Malay daily Utusan Malaysia.

Ahmad Zahid (right) admitted that lobbying to be candidates does happen. However, he pointed out an empirical study done by academicians found the background of the candidates accounted for 31 percent of his or her success at the polls.

"Internal problems in the division, if resolved, would help ensure another 50 percent towards the candidate's victory. If there are no problems, then the chances of Umno and BN winning are almost certain.

"However, if there are problems in the division which are not resolved till polling day, it is almost certain the party will be defeated no matter how good the candidates are."

Ahmad Zahid however said the problem of infighting in divisions was not as serious as faced by other parties in other countries. But if not resolved, it could cause serious problems.

He urged leaders and members to work together and achieve the objective of forming the next government at state and national levels.

Business not as usual

The Umno vice-president said they had to accept the reality that at present, it was not business was not as usual.

"The theory that division leaders as warlords should be selected as candidates cannot be used now. The approach taken by the leadership of PM Najib Abdul Razak is different.

"Even if there are internal squabbles resulting in various groups, I am certain his choice of the candidate will not create problems.

"Although not all may accept the selection, if the majority does, that would be sufficient," he said.

He also hoped that the Umno General Assembly would be treated seriously by the delegates to understand what Najib (left) as party president hopes to achieve.

"I expect Najib in his winding up speech will give guidelines on the elections. Personally, I hope that problems in branches and divisions be resolved as soon as possible.

"The various factions should call a truce and focus towards winning the 13th GE," he said.

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