

## **'Nazir has piled pressure on brother Najib'**

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Nazir Abdul Razak's open support of AirAsia X chief executive Azran Osman Rani's criticism of Utusan Malaysia has only "created more problems" for Umno president and Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

azlanStating this in an opinion piece in Utusan today, Zainuddin Maidin said Nazir has failed to understand the "crisis of confidence" that elder brother Najib and Umno have been facing since the 13th general election of May 5.

On Monday, Nazir, the CIMB banking group chief executive, had backed Azran as having the "mark of a great leader" in describing Utusan as "racist" for its headline targeting Chinese Malaysians after GE13.

Rising to the defence of the newspaper he once headed, Zainuddin, who is widely known as Zam, said Nazir does not understand that Umno would not have retained Malay support in the election if Utusan had not taken on those who were "eroding confidence" in the BN-led federal government.

"Such courageous support and the taking of a financial risk was what contributed to the bigger number of Umno seats in Parliament, the recapture of Kedah and Perak, and more seats in the Kelantan legislature," Zam said.

NONE"Perhaps Nazir was thinking that BN would have gained Chinese support if Utusan did not attack the community's extremist attitude. In truth, Nazir has only added to the problems faced by Najib (left) and Umno."

Zam then went on to lambast Nazir for praising Azran.

"This must mean that Nazir endorses the practice of anarchism among CEOs of big businesses. As capitalism develops, big corporations are becoming powerful, sometimes even more so than governments.

"This threatens media freedom. Those with financial power can influence the media. The people do not see this - they only see the pressure brought to bear by the government."

'Negative things hidden'

He then quoted British author Anthony Sampson in his book *The Essential Anatomy of Britain - Democracy in Crisis*: "The link between newspapers and big business had a longer-term effect: for journalists have been constrained from reporting or criticising the excesses of financial boom by pressures from owners, advertisers and public relations men, who helped set the agenda of the business pages. Entrepreneurial owners naturally dislike the critical and investigative functions of reporters."

Zam, who was a former information minister, noted that in 1990, then prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad had made similar remarks.

NONEHe also said "many negative things about Air Asia" are hidden by Utusan and other dailies in order to get advertisements or money from the airline, but that "this alone is not enough for Azran (left)".

"(Azran) thinks that Utusan must also follow his social and political inclinations (and hence) financial pressure must be exerted on Utusan.

"Naturally, he would have received a boost from the support expressed by Nazir... who does not understand the crisis of confidence being faced by Najib and Umno," Zam added.

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