

Zahid tells Umno grassroots to prepare for GE 'war drums'

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All Umno state liaison committee chairpersons have been told to go down to the ground in preparation for the 14th general election, including giving focus on potential areas that could be taken over by the party.

Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, the Umno vice-president who is carrying out the duties of the deputy president, said after camping for almost a week at the Umno general assembly, the time had come for the Umno machinery to step up efforts to win the coming general election.

"Set up the teams, gear up the machinery as the war drums have been sounded, close ranks among ourselves and with various component parties, reach out to the the grassroots to ensure the checklist is completely adhered to.

"InsyaAllah, we can win big with the condition of the DNA of Umno and that of BN component parties are defended. This is to ensure that whoever follows our party's DNA stays within our turf.

"Through this way, I am confident we can redeem several disappointments which we suffered before this," Zahid said when speaking at a dinner and prize presentation of the AZH Cup Golf Championships at Colmar Tropicale Berjaya Hotel & Resort in Bukit Tinggi, Bentong, Pahang, last night.

More than 1,100 participants took part in the tournament which has been organised for the past three years, to vie for the grand prize, a Proton Saga 1.3 CVT.

In the meantime, Zahid, who is also deputy prime minister, praised Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak as he was highly impressed by the spirit shown by the latter at the 2016 Umno general assembly recently.

"We know we've been bombarded with too many issues lately, but I was impressed by our president, starting from his early briefing to the wind-up speech and the Rohingya Solidarity Gathering. He has shown an extraordinary performance," he said.

Zahid said the key factor to Najib's strength had been the undivided support by the Umno members from the grassroots to various tiers of leaders, including all state liaison committee chairmen.

"Last year (when delivering speeches), there were restrictions, not that we're the ones who restricted things but I saw hindrance from within that caused whatever was boiling inside could not be expressed.

"Last year was a pain in the neck too, but there was no such pain this year...with the support from friends and members at the grassroots level, the president can display such

spirit and strength which I described as extremely extraordinary," he added.

As such, Zahid once again urged all party machineries to work hard this time around because defending victory would be far more difficult than winning.

- *Bernama*

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