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DPM: Move against Najib inappropriate

PRINCIPLES: People must not emulate nations where leaders are overthrown undemocratically, says Zahid

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DEPUTY Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi has urged the people to protect Malaysia's political system, where leaders are elected in general elections.

Zahid, who is also Umno vice-president, said Malaysia had its own political mould, which was suitable to its ecosystem. It should never emulate other countries where leaders were overthrown undemocratically.

Therefore, he said the move to topple Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak was inappropriate as he represented an institution — both in the government and the party.

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"The leader represents an institution. In this case, all quarters, including present and past leaders, must understand the basic principle (of democracy) and support him."

Zahid said this after opening the annual general meetings of Perak Umno branches and their Youth, Wanita and Puteri wings here yesterday.

He was commenting on claims made by certain Umno leaders that they were only interested in removing Najib and were not against the party.

Zahid, who is performing the duties of Umno deputy president, said whatever happened to the prime minister would also affect Umno and Barisan Nasional (BN) as Najib was the top leader of the party and coalition.

"The same principle (of supporting an elected leader) should apply at state and national levels."

He said Umno's internal problems should be settled within the party and members must never open the "floodgates" as weaknesses could be exploited by the opposition.

He said Umno leaders must help explain current issues to the people on the ground, including at branch and divisional meetings.



Deputy Prime Minister **Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi** opening the annual general meetings of Perak Umno branches and their Youth, Wanita and Puteri wings in Ipoh yesterday. With him are Perak Menteri Besar **Datuk Seri Dr Zambrzy Abd Kadir** (third from left) and Second Finance Minister **Datuk Seri Ahmad Husni Hanadziah** (fourth from right). Pic-by L. Manimaran

"We should not go against the norms and party principles. Unity should be given priority and we must reject actions that are against party principles."

He said those who were cooperating with the opposition to topple Umno leaders must be prepared to face the consequences, including the possibility of losing party members' respect.

Asked whether Umno would take action against party leaders, including suspended deputy president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, who signed a declaration to oust Najib, Zahid said the matter was not up for discussion at the moment.

However, he said their decision to join hands with the opposition had made the people more united as they were against such an insincere union.

Earlier, in his speech, Zahid said Umno members would continue respecting former leaders if they did not interfere or take actions that were detrimental to the party.

He said previous leaders should bear in mind that they were able to hold on to their post because of the support from present leaders and members.

"There is no point becoming a general when there are no soldiers and snipers."

"We have worked hard for them before and therefore they must also support us when we are helming the party now," he said.

He said Umno must stay united to face challenges ahead.

Zahid also reminded those who preferred to expose the weaknesses of present leaders that they might also have their past mistakes revealed by party members.

"These people, who also work with the opposition, have not only angered Umno members but also the Malays, BN supporters and fence sitters."

"We can have different opinions but we should never stab our friends in the back or cooperate with our enemy out of frustration," he said.

Zahid also urged party members to continue to give solid support to Najib, to enable him to face the present and future challenges. At the same time, he said Umno members must strengthen the cooperation with the machinery of other BN component parties to ensure that the coalition won big in the next general election.

"Our friends (BN component parties) have gone through thick and thin with us and we must face challenges together."

Present were Perak Umno liaison committee chairman and Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Zambrzy Abd Kadir, Perak Umno liaison committee deputy chairman and Second Finance Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Husni Hanadziah and Umno Veterans chairman Tan Sri Tajol Rosli Ghazali.

In his speech, Zambrzy said ex-Umno leaders should emulate former Perak menteris besar who had never interfered in his administration or held a press conference to bring him down.