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# 'NAJIB'S NOTICE OF TIES WITH ZAHID PREVENTS PARTY CRISES'

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Political analyst says it reminds members about solidarity

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**T**HE open declaration by Umno president Datuk Seri Najib Razak, that no one can come between him and vice-president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, serves to remind party members about the importance of solidarity.

Moreover, said Universiti Sains Malaysia political analyst Profes-

sor Dr Sivamurugan Pandian, Najib's public defence of Zahid against attacks by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad recently was a message for Umno members to be there for one another through thick and thin.

He said the declaration would prevent internal crises.

"What is more important than Dr Mahathir's remark is ensuring the party's unity and that no members are influenced by Dr Mahathir's stand on Najib-Zahid relations.

"Open declaration is important to avoid being involved in



Dr Sivamurugan Pandian

internal crises."

The Pakatan Harapan pro-tem chairman had claimed to have met Zahid to help in toppling Najib, when the home minister was appointed as deputy prime minister in 2015.

Sivamurugan said the failure to create an effective dissension in Umno would be a blow to Dr Mahathir's efforts to rock the party.

"If they fail to influence members, then it

is a blow to Dr Mahathir's attempt (to overthrow Najib)."

Universiti Malaya political analyst Dr Awang Azman Awang Pawi said it would be difficult for

the opposition to attack Najib, with Zahid as his staunchest loyalist.

"As long as Zahid is the deputy prime minister and a supporter of Najib, it will be hard for the opposition to defeat Umno in the general election.

"This is a huge blow to Dr Mahathir, who failed to frame Zahid as a traitor to the party."

Awang said any attempt by the opposition to break the good ties between Najib and Zahid were futile.

"The opposition is running out of ideas on how to break the level of trust Najib and Zahid have in each other."

On Sunday, in **Shah Alam**, Najib had said Dr Mahathir failed to understand that he and Zahid were close and had gone through "thick and thin".