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## Dr M 'out to create friction between PM and DPM'

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi has always been loyal to the party leadership, say Umno Youth leaders amid claims by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad that the party's No. 2 was out to topple the Prime Minister.

Umno Youth exco member Datuk Ahmad Mukhriz Ahmad Fuad said the former premier was attempting to create friction between Dr Ahmad Zahid and Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak after the Deputy Prime

Minister took a dig at Dr Mahathir's Indian ancestry.

"He (Dr Ahmad Zahid) was just stating a fact. Why would anyone be ashamed of their ancestry? Dr Mahathir then manipulated this issue by questioning Dr Ahmad Zahid's loyalty to the party," Ahmad Mukhriz told the press here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir claimed earlier this week that Dr Ahmad Zahid had met him with a view to replacing Najib as Prime Minister.

His statement was in response to Dr Ahmad Zahid's dig at his Indian heritage.

"Dr Mahathir is aware that Umno is a

strong institution and it is difficult to bring it down externally.

"That is why he tried to create friction among Umno members by manipulating the Deputy Prime Minister's statement," said Ahmad Mukhriz.

Pekan Umno Youth chief Datuk Shahrudin Ahmad added that Dr Ahmad Zahid was a prime example of someone who is loyal to the party leadership.

"Not only is he loyal to the leadership, he also shows his compassion towards the party and he is not easily startled by any attacks levelled against him," he said.