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I have faith in Zahid, says Najib

PM: Dr Mahathir's attempts to instigate distrust between us will never work

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SHAH ALAM: Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak stepped up to defend Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, saying that Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's attempts to drive a wedge between them will never work.

A week after Dr Mahathir alleged that Dr Ahmad Zahid was disloyal to Najib, the Prime Minister declared that he has faith in his deputy, adding that it was futile for Dr Mahathir to instigate distrust between the two of them.

He also said Dr Mahathir had no idea of the strength of his close bond with Dr Ahmad Zahid.

"He (Dr Mahathir) has no idea. Our relationship goes way back to

Dr Ahmad Zahid has never forgotten the bitter days and the tyranny he went through for the sake of the party and his family.

Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak

1986 and we have been through thick and thin together throughout the years," he said.

Najib said he was Umno Youth

Chief then when he came to Bagan Datuk to defend Dr Ahmad Zahid in his own division when he was being challenged by another party member during the party elections.

"I know all about his misery and his struggles. He is my comrade-in-arms," he said to cheers during his speech at the opening of the Shah Alam Umno division meeting here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir had recently alleged that Dr Ahmad Zahid had asked for his support to topple the Prime Minister. Dr Ahmad Zahid had denied the allegation and on Friday said he had a voice recording of the meeting.

Najib said it would be absurd for Dr Ahmad Zahid, who was detained under the now-repealed Internal

Security Act, to conspire with the same man who had him arrested in the first place.

Dr Ahmad Zahid was Umno Youth chief when he was arrested under the ISA in 1998 for supporting the then deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Najib said Dr Ahmad Zahid was forced to resign as Youth chief and sign a letter to claim that he left the post of his own free will.

"That was how he (Dr Mahathir) used his powers to suppress, like putting a gun to his head.

"Dr Ahmad Zahid has never forgotten the bitter days and the tyranny he went through for the sake of the party and his family.

"That's why it makes no sense for him to ask for Dr Mahathir's sup-

port to topple me after becoming the Deputy Prime Minister. I am confident in my deputy," he added.

On Selangor, he said he chose to attend the party's Shah Alam division meeting because winning Shah Alam will pave the way for Barisan Nasional to win Selangor in the next general election.

"If we win in Shah Alam, we also win in Selangor," he said.

Najib also announced a RM3mil allocation for the Shah Alam Umno division to be used for the development of surau, mosques, temples and churches in the constituency.



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