

**No compromise with opposition on street protests, says Zahid**  
**Malaysian Insider**  
**May 18, 2013**  
**By Boo Su-Lyn**

KUALA LUMPUR, May 18 — Putrajaya will not compromise but will take stern action against Pakatan Rakyat (PR) if it foments chaos on the streets, says Home Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi .

Umno-owned daily Utusan Malaysia reported Ahmad Zahid today as saying that prevention was better than cure, after tens of thousands of Malaysians thronged six PR rallies across the country to protest against alleged vote-rigging in Election 2013.

"I will not give warning, but just wait for stern action," Ahmad Zahid (picture) was quoted as saying by the Malay-language daily.

The Malay broadsheet's front page today was headlined "KDN: Tiada kompromi (KDN: No compromise)" and the newly-minted home minister was quoted as saying: "Prevention is better than cure, and the price of early prevention is cheaper than solving problems after."

More than 100 people were arrested under the Internal Security Act (ISA) in 1987 in an operation dubbed Ops Lalang that was carried out amid rising political tensions, the second-largest ISA swoop in Malaysian history since the May 13, 1969 race riots.

But the ISA, which allows for detention without trial, was abolished in 2012 and replaced with the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act (SOSMA) that removes the government's option to detain without trial.

Human rights activists, however, have criticised the new law for giving the government broad powers to deem any form of opposition a threat and to prosecute them.

Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has rallied against the legitimacy of the Barisan Nasional (BN) government, saying that the May 5 general election was tainted with electoral fraud.

BN won just 133 federal seats, ceding an additional seven seats to PR, and lost the popular vote for the first time since 1969 when it contested as the Alliance party then.

Ahmad Zahid wrote in Utusan Malaysia last Thursday that Malaysians who were unhappy with the country's first-past-the-post voting system should migrate to other countries that had different voting systems.

The Umno vice-president pointed out that Malaysians needed to accept PR's failure to win federal power in Malaysia's first-past-the-post system, although the pact had won the popular vote.

English daily The Star reported Ahmad Zahid today as defending his statement, saying that his remarks were taken out of context.

"I actually said those who are not confident of our political systems to 'berhijrah' (migrate) to countries with political systems that suited them," he said.

"I am not being racist... I am just being practical in saying such groups should go to countries where they can translate their political beliefs into reality," Ahmad Zahid added.

Yesterday, the DAP criticised Ahmad Zahid, saying that the home minister's remarks smacked of "arrogance and contempt" and reflected the "hypocrisy" of the BN government that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak has promised will be inclusive.

DAP publicity chief Tony Pua pointed out that although the first-past-the-post system allows political parties or coalitions to win elections despite losing the popular vote, Malaysia's electoral boundaries have been "excessively corrupted" over the decades.

The Petaling Jaya Utara MP noted that in Election 2013, the smallest federal constituencies like Putrajaya and Padang Rengas, which were won by BN, have 15,791 and 28,518 voters respectively compared to the largest constituencies like Kapar and Serdang, which were won by PR, that have a whopping 144,159 and 133,139 voters respectively.

He said that such "ridiculous discrepancies" would not be found in other countries that also practised the first-past-the-post system like the United Kingdom and Australia.

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