

**Touch The Hearts And Minds Of The People To Love The Government - Ahmad Zahid
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KOTA BELUD, Aug 23 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi today urged all UMNO and Barisan Nasional (BN) members and leaders to close ranks and endeavour to win the hearts and minds of the people to love the government.

Ahmad Zahid, who is also UMNO vice-president, said the effort must be carried out continuously from now rather than waiting for the 14th general election, due in two more years, before doing so.

"If we do not inject a love for the government in the people, the government which is committed to help the people in all aspects, then we should wait for the repercussions, when the opposition, with its culture of hatred for us, repeat slanders so incessantly that such defamation eventually replaces truth.

"When the slander appears true in the minds of the people, we will be in a very shaky position.

"As such, I urge the members and leaders of Sabah BN, and other states, not to believe in slander intended to destroy the leadership and government, so that the opposition can fulfill their aim of taking over the existing government," he said.

Ahmad Zahid said this when opening the Kota Belud UMNO division delegates meeting here today. Also present were Kota Belud UMNO division chief Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Salleh Said Keruak and Sabah UMNO Liaison Committee secretary Datuk Seri Yahya Hussin.

According to Ahmad Zahid, it was meaningless to hold important posts in the party if the government upheld by UMNO and BN passed into the hands of the opposition which was bent on planning strategies to wrest the government including via the back door method.

He said although Parliamentary and state seats in Sabah were the permanent deposit of the BN government, it was not impossible for the permanent deposit to liquidify if the Sabah UMNO and BN leadership lineups, and the unity of the party was not strong.

In this regard, Ahmad Zahid urged all grassroots members and the UMNO and BN leaderships to continue to be loyal and united in support of the leadership of the existing government and party regardless of the form of challenges faced by the government.

"Don't be shaken if we are stabbed from the back, front, left or right. We are confident our leadership will always bring the best platform for us all. We should always be together with our leadership at all times and in whatever situation," he said.

Commenting on the accusations by several quarters that he had spun a drama about some people trying to topple the government via the back door, Ahmad Zahid stressed that the

attempt existed and he had accurate information on the matter.

"I am the Home Minister. I receive accurate information. I am responsible for preventing anyone who wants to enter via the back door to take over the government the day. If action was not taken, I think the current government would have changed hands," he said.

Ahmad Zahid said the quarters concerned aspired to set up what was described by them as a unity government but it was actually about taking over the current government which was picked by the people.

He said they with their greed for power, knew they had failed to form a government via the general election but were too impatient to wait for the coming general election, and were willing to resort to toppling the government via the back door.

However, Ahmad Zahid stressed that the effort of the opposition to seize power undemocratically would not succeed and would not be permitted so long as UMNO and BN in Sabah and UMNO and BN in the peninsula were still strong.

"We also do not want if there are people, whether existing leaders or those who have retired, becoming masterminds to topple the government. There is no compromise. The people will not allow this to happen, UMNO and BN members will not permit this to happen," he said.

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