

Ahmad Zahid Urges UMNO Members to Close Ranks With Those Outside Party
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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 23 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi wants UMNO members to close ranks with those outside the party.

The UMNO vice-president, who is also discharging the duties of the deputy president following the sacking of Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, said this was because they could be the deciding group to win an election.

"I would like to remind myself and friends not to take people outside UMNO for granted because they are an important group, the deciding group.

"They will decide on victory or defeat of our candidates during general elections," he said on the 'Soal Jawab' interview programme aired tonight by private television station TV3.

He was interviewed by TV3 assistant editor Izwan Azir Saleh, who is also the television channel's news presenter.

Ahmad Zahid, who is also Deputy Prime Minister, said UMNO cannot be 'self-indulgent' with the programmes that they organise for its members, but should take into account programmes that would benefit the grassroots.

He also believed that UMNO could win any political war if the party used the approach of closing ranks with groups outside UMNO and took care of their interests.

UMNO must also be wise in managing perceptions because the challenges of psychological warfare were more challenging than the conventional warfare in the current era of information technology, he said.

"Management of perception must be done even it's hard but should be dealt with," he said.

He said the culture of hatred towards UMNO had long been cultivated by the enemies of the party in order to win the (political) war.

UMNO, Ahmad Zahid said, should not take the matter as 'business as usual'.

"We must gather some specific measures rather than just "fighting fires".

"...not just firefighting, we have to look for total solutions to address these problems," he said.

On UMNO members' loyalty to the party, Ahmad Zahid said it was a fundamental belief which had been spearheaded by UMNO fighters from the past to present, namely members must be loyal to the party and not to individuals.

"That's what we do now, leaders come and go but UMNO remains as a platform of struggle for the Malays," he said.

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