

Calls for Najib to quit threaten entire BN, says Zahid
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The onslaught of calls for Datuk Seri Najib Razak's resignation not only threatens the prime minister but the entire Barisan Nasional (BN), Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi says.

All BN parties as well as groups aligned with the ruling coalition needed to be cautious about this, he said today, after the signing of the Citizens' Declaration urging Najib's removal from office, led by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Umno stalwarts, opposition politicians and civil society leaders.

"The opposition is excited to go against the highest leadership in BN and Umno, which forms the government, not only (against) an individual.

"If this is threatened, the entire BN and Umno at all levels are threatened," he told reporters after launching Perak Umno's annual general meeting in Ipoh today.

The Umno vice-president, who has taken on added responsibilities as deputy president after Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin was suspended from the post last month, also said BN parties and friendly groups should stay united with Umno to face the 14th general election due in 2018.

Zahid said BN was also threatened by calls for Najib's resignation because "the leader represents the institution".

"In this respect, all parties, whether current leaders or in the past, understand this principle.

"Whether administering a state or nation, the same principle applies.

"Why go against this?"

Zahid was asked by the media to respond to a statement by former Kedah menteri besar Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir that the Citizens' Declaration was not intended to bring down the BN government but only aimed at appointing a new prime minister from the ruling coalition.

Mukhriz said the objective spearheaded by his father, Dr Mahathir, was only to remove Najib from office.

"There is no intention at all to bring down the Barisan Nasional government," Mukhriz said.

Zahid said unity was important and any difference in opinions should be voiced through internal channels.

“Don’t open the floodgates, it will not be good for our political mould and ecosystem, which is different from other countries,” he said.

Dr Mahathir last month quit Umno in protest against Najib and mooted the forming of a “core group” of people to push for Najib’s resignation.

He said many people had the same desire to see Najib ousted but were speaking in disparate voices. He then called for a press conference and signing of the Citizens’ Declaration on Friday. – March 6, 2016.

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