

**Voting Candidates Based On Race Hampers Power-sharing - DPM
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IPOH, Oct 2 (Bernama) -- Voting candidates based on race in any general election will only make power-sharing practiced by Barisan Nasional (BN) difficult, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

Citing UMNO as an example, Ahmad Zahid said the party, which was set up since 1946 and became the backbone of the government, had never shunned other races or religions in the country.

"Until when can we implement power-sharing if we vote based on race while the Malays, everywhere, have always shared power.

"We must be tolerant. The world has changed, the political situation has changed, Chinese need Malays and Indians and vice versa because this is a plural country," he said when closing the Ipoh Barat UMNO division delegates meeting here, Sunday.

Also present were Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abd Kadir and Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki who has adopted the Ipoh Barat UMNO division.

Ahmad Zahid, who is also UMNO vice president, said the allegation that the Chinese community, specifically in towns, were not with BN was due to the action of certain quarters that sowed hatred towards the party.

"This trend must be changed because the BN government never take into consideration race, religion or background when serving the people," he said.

The Deputy Prime Minister also reminded UMNO leaders never to harbour the aspiration to stay on forever because the posts they held were trusts.

He said a good leader would develop backup leaders to continue the struggle of the party.

In his speech before about 1,000 delegates, Ahmad Zahid also praised the perseverance of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak in facing all ordeals and challenges.

"I asked 'sir you look so cool and calm', but he (Najib) replied...in my heart nobody knows," he said, adding that despite the setbacks the Prime Minister would always give his best to the people.

Earlier Ipoh Barat UMNO Division chief Datuk Shamsuddin Abd Ghaffar said the formation of Parti Peribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM) did not in any way affect the division.

In fact, he said Ipoh Barat UMNO was in good shape at present to face the 14th general election.

"I assure you, none in this division or its wing are joining the party (PPBM). In fact no branches have been closed," he added.

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